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**ENTRANCE HALL**  
 In this lofty space, the oversized lantern provides a focal point without obscuring the view of the landing. 'Other than cladding the walls to make it feel cosy, the Lenons wanted the hall to be very simple,' says interior designer Lisette Vouite. Interior design, Lisette Vouite Designs, lisettevouite.com. Bespoke oak flooring, Cheville Parquet, cheville.co.uk.

**ALCOVE**  
 Nooks and crannies add a quirky touch to the contemporary interior. This recess in the entrance hall (opposite page) accommodates an antique Swedish settle and sets a welcoming tone from the moment you walk through the front door. Cushions in Boujad, £113m. Travers at Jane Clayton, janeclayton.co.uk. For similar baskets, try India Jane, indiajane.co.uk.

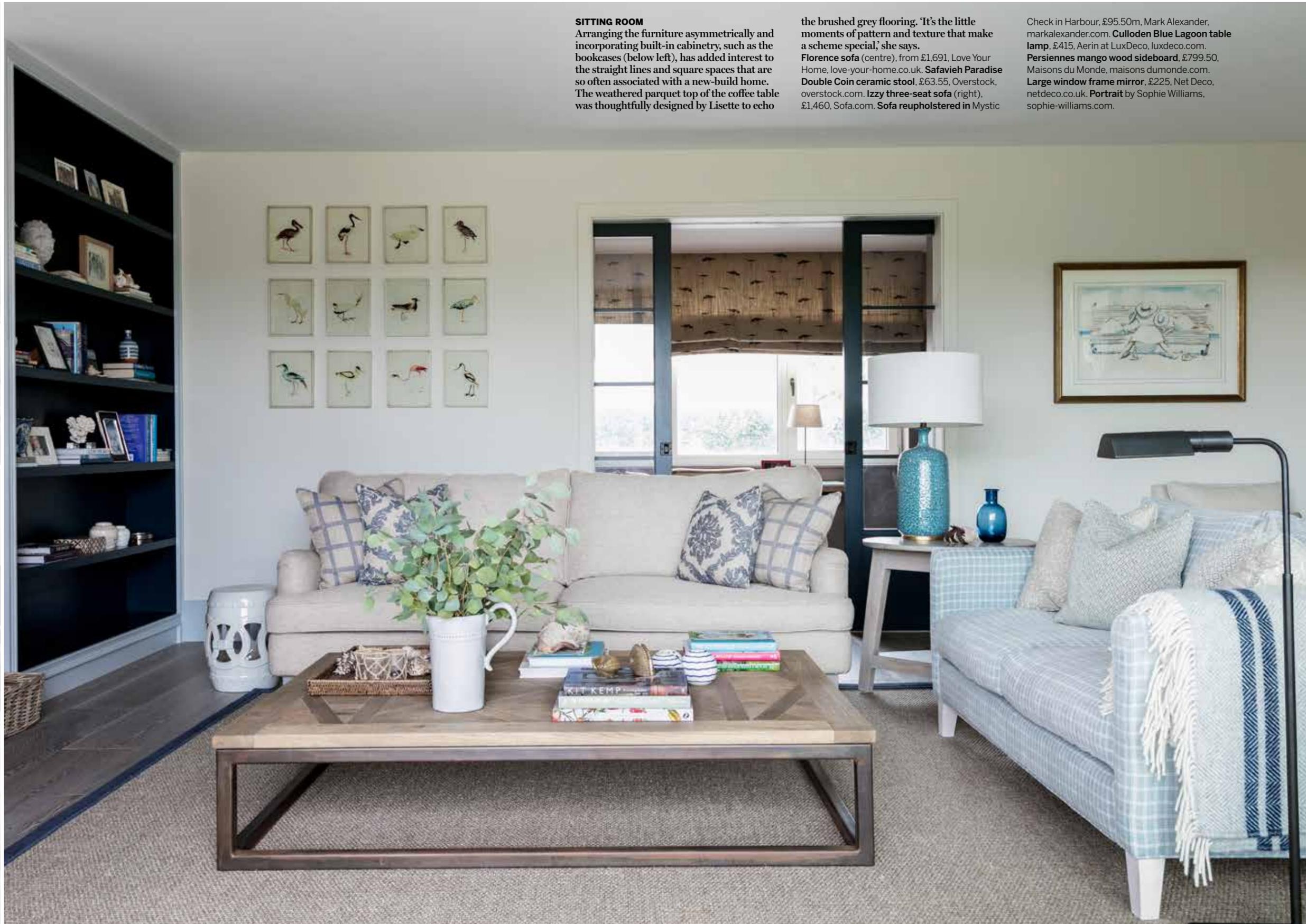
NEW-BUILD HOME

# Turning THE TIDE



*When faced with the option to renovate or rebuild their house on the West Sussex coast, the owners decided to knock it down and start again. Three years on, they have a bright and relaxing family home with inviting interiors inspired by the sea*

WORDS NATALIE WAIN PHOTOGRAPHS NICK GEORGE



**SITTING ROOM**

Arranging the furniture asymmetrically and incorporating built-in cabinetry, such as the bookcases (below left), has added interest to the straight lines and square spaces that are so often associated with a new-build home. The weathered parquet top of the coffee table was thoughtfully designed by Lisette to echo

the brushed grey flooring. 'It's the little moments of pattern and texture that make a scheme special,' she says. **Florence sofa** (centre), from £1,691, Love Your Home, love-your-home.co.uk. **Safavieh Paradise Double Coin ceramic stool**, £63.55, Overstock, overstock.com. **Izzy three-seat sofa** (right), £1,460, Sofa.com. **Sofa reupholstered in Mystic**

**Check in Harbour**, £95.50m, Mark Alexander, markalexander.com. **Culoden Blue Lagoon table lamp**, £415, Aerin at LuxDeco, luxdeco.com. **Persiennes mango wood sideboard**, £799.50, Maisons du Monde, maisonsdumonde.com. **Large window frame mirror**, £225, Net Deco, netdeco.co.uk. **Portrait** by Sophie Williams, sophie-williams.com.



**KITCHEN-DINING ROOM**

Painting the large island unit white helps to emphasise the huge open space, pushing it into the background and forcing the eye towards the details, such as the natural woven lampshades and the dining table and teak and rattan dining chairs, which Julie and Hugh kept from their earlier house. Dining chair seat pads in Khalana in Marine.

£74m; carver chair seat pads in Wendron in Ink, £94m, both William Yeoward, williamyeoward.com. Footstool in Safi Multi, £86m, Andrew Martin, andrewmartin.co.uk. Nomad Tarifa rug (under footstool), from £169, Weaver Green, weavergreen.com. Sofa in Angus Stripe in Nordic Red FA001-041, £42.50m, Ian Mankin, ianmankin.co.uk. Barbade wooden sideboard in White, £399.50, Maisons du Monde, maisonsdumonde.com.

**KITCHEN**

Crittall-style glazed doors were chosen to add a contemporary, graphic note to the kitchen (right) and to complement the clean, unfussy lines of the Shaker-style cabinetry. Similar pendant shades: Woven Basket extra large lampshade, £45, Design Vintage, designvintage.co.uk. Cabinetry in Railings estate eggshell, £60 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball, farrow-ball.com.





**SNUG**

A so-called 'California coastal' look was the inspiration for this scheme. 'There are beachy elements but it is elegant with a little fun, such as the neon sign, thrown in for good measure,' says Lisette. 'We didn't go too crazy with colour elsewhere in the house, but Julie was happy for me to be a little bolder here.' The result is a relaxed muted blue-grey space, lifted by cheerful yellow tones. **Hector sofa**, from £1,691, Love Your Home, love-your-home.co.uk. **Sofa** in Loft 1010536557, £50m, Zimmer + Rohde, zimmer-rohde.com. **Coffee table** in Chester Stripe in Indigo FD760-H10, £79m, Mulberry at GP&J Baker, gpjbaker.com. **Customised neon light**, Bag & Bones, bagandbones.co.uk. **Wall** in Shetland elite emulsion, £52 for 2.5L, Zoffany at Style Library, stylelibrary.com. **Antiqued mirrors** (in cabinet), Chelsea Glass, chelseaglass.co.uk.

**A** lick of paint and new carpets were all that was needed when Julie and Hugh Lenon moved into their coastal home in West Sussex 11 years ago. Fast forward to 2015 and the weather had taken its toll on the house, and the couple and their three children had increasingly begun to find that the property no longer suited their way of living. For several years, they had made do and mend but the time had come, they realised, to make a serious decision about what to do next: should they embark on a substantial renovation of the existing property, or knock it down and build a new home? They decided to do the latter and the result, created with interior designer Lisette Voûte, is perfectly pitched between comfortable beach house and elegant family home. Here, Julie and Lisette tell us more.

**What attracted you to the original house?**

JL The location was the main draw. We had always wanted a place by the sea, and the house opened directly onto the beach and is a relatively short drive from London. When we first moved here, we had two young children, so a big project was out of the question. We made a few small decorative adjustments and were able to move straight in.

**Why build a new house?**

JL The old house was charming but it had various structural problems: the layout was rather higgledy-piggledy and the rooms were on the small side. When the children came in from the beach, they would have to run through the house to reach the only bathroom, so it was not very practical. We wanted to simplify the space and in the end, we decided it was easier to start with a blank canvas. We did not need a bigger house, just one that worked

better for us. While we were at it, we took advantage of the situation and moved the house to the middle of the plot, which has given us and our neighbours more privacy.

**What prompted you to work with interior designer Lisette Voûte?**

JL The architecture of the new house is quite contemporary in style and I needed help to balance this with my desire to create a homely, cosy interior.

LV Julie has an excellent eye, and she sent me hundreds of pictures that she had clipped from interiors magazines. I turned these into workable ideas, which we reviewed together.

**Can you describe the look you were aiming for?**

JL I wanted a practical family home with a classic feel inspired by its coastal setting, but it had to look warm and inviting. We also had a lot of furniture that we were keeping, and I wanted to introduce natural materials, such as rattan and sisal, into the scheme.

**How did you achieve this?**

LV The scheme is very nuanced; nothing shouts for attention. We layered textures and small patterns with subtle nautical shades to add interest and depth to the rooms without making them look fussy, and lined the walls with wood to make the larger areas feel welcoming.

**Do you have a favourite room?**

JL I am particularly fond of the snug upstairs. Both it and the main bedroom were in danger of looking too boxy for my liking, but then we had the idea of opening up the ceilings. Such a simple solution, but it has transformed the rooms and makes them look very special.

**STUDY**

White walls can make small rooms feel washed out and cold, while darker tones like this rich chocolate brown colour (above left) help create a more cosy look. **Chair** in Las Salinas 2, £100m, Andrew Martin, andrewmartin.co.uk. **Asha large sideboard**, £750, John Lewis, johnlewis.com. **Calypso lamp base** in Oxblood Glaze, £115, Pooky, pooky.com.

**CLOAKROOM**

Nautical navy against crisp white tiles makes for a striking look (above). This room is close to the back door so that sand from the beach is not trodden through the house. **Walls** in Hale Navy HC-154, from £27.50 for 0.94L, Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com. **PB Classic sconces** with Flared Glass in Nickel finish, £91.62 each, Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com.



**MAIN BEDROOM**

Shades of taupe and cladding on the ceiling enhance the cosiness of this scheme, without making the room feel small or claustrophobic. The simple style of the headboard (below left) continues the calming effect, while antiqued brass studding adds another layer of detail. **Baltic chest of drawers**, £775.50, Maisons du Monde, [maisonsdumonde.com](https://www.maisonsdumonde.com). **Seaweed framed prints**, £295 set of four, Oka, [oka.com](https://www.oka.com).

**MAIN BATHROOM**

Herringbone patterned tiles in the shower (left) are beautifully offset by the white walls. 'We've allowed little details to shine,' says Julie. **Shelter Island Harbour View tiles** (in shower), £129.87sq m, Fired Earth, [firedearth.com](https://www.firedearth.com). **Admiral 1650 bath**, £1,699, Burlington, [burlingtonbathrooms.com](https://www.burlingtonbathrooms.com).



#### GUEST BEDROOM

'Julie loved the idea of having a dusky pink room (above and right),' says Lisette. 'The rattan mirrors enhance the warm glow.' Walls in Plaster II flat emulsion, £42.50 for 2.5L, Paint & Paper Library, paintandpaperlibrary.com. Rattan mirrors, £330 set of five, Graham and Green, grahamandgreen.co.uk. Bench seat in Candy Stripe Pink FA009-052, £2750m, Ian Mankin, ianmankin.co.uk. Gustavian bedside table, £245; Calabash lamp (right), £145; both Oka, oka.com. Bedside table in Orchard Pink matt emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5L, Fired Earth, firedearth.com.

#### FAMILY BATHROOM

Simple metro tiles in tranquil green (far right) frame the bath and create depth in this scheme. Retro Metro cracked glaze tiles in Lido Blue, £74.98sqm, Fired Earth, firedearth.com. Vanity in Tranquility AF-490, from £24 for 0.94L, Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.com.



#### CHILDREN'S BEDROOM

Smart, bespoke bunk beds (above) provide ample accommodation for visiting friends without taking up valuable floor space. In keeping with the house's coastal theme, Julie sourced naval signal flags (left) - each representing a different letter of the alphabet - and framed them to display on the wall. Paoletti Regatta throw in Red, £39.95, Linens, linenslimited.com. Brian bulkhead lights in Polished Brass, £84.99 each, Dowsing & Reynolds, dowsingandreynolds.com. Knotted cord drawer knobs, £5.99 set of two, Zara Home, zarahome.com. Arlo flatweave rug in Blue and White, £199, Made, made.com.