

Below The room was formerly a spare bedroom attracting clutter



Transformed! FAMILY BATHROOM

As part of a full-house renovation, the Robinson family have created a luxurious new space with true eco credentials

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FACT FILE

THE OWNERS

Liz and Malcolm Robinson live here with their sons, Joey, three, and Jamie, 18 months. Liz and Malcolm own and run a luxury holiday-letting company, www.devonretreat.com

THE PROPERTY

A detached, late-Victorian house with seven bedrooms. The family moved in here in January 2007

THE LOCATION

The east Devon coast

WHAT THEY SPENT

£10,331 to create the bathroom from scratch, including design, installation and all fittings



PRACTICAL TIP
When you're tiling a floor, start from the centre of the room. Plan out the design to see if you end up with an even amount each way. If not, adjust the starting point to get an even pattern

THE PROBLEM

'When we began renovating our house, we soon realised that the one thing it lacked was a large family bathroom, and with two small sons that was absolutely essential. We'd been in London for years and longed to move to the country. We looked at Devon and found this house.'

'The whole place needed renovating and we wanted to be as eco-conscious as possible. Having thought hard about what we needed, we decided the best option was to sacrifice a guest bedroom and create our dream family bathroom.'

WHAT WE DID

'Right from the outset, we knew the bathroom would be a challenge, as the space had once had a fireplace in the corner. As a result, one of the walls was uneven and there was no plumbing connected in here.'

'It was not a large room and we wanted it to feel as spacious as possible, so we decided to get professional design advice. We enlisted the help of Joe Mühl, the senior interior designer at Ocean Bathrooms. This is a local firm that sells bathroom fittings with an eco focus.'

'Joe created a computer-generated layout for us, to give us a sense of what the finished bathroom would look like. We were then able to make suggestions before we settled on the final design.'

'Our main priorities were to have a luxury bathtub, a double shower cubicle and twin washbasins. As we wanted to include the latest energy- and water-saving fittings, we were really pleased to discover that there were plenty of stylish options available.'

'We chose special water-saving showerheads, called Raindance from

Hansgrohe. Hi-tech air injection makes the water droplets larger for a really luxurious feel and the result is that it uses around ten per cent less water than a standard showerhead. We also chose water-saving taps and a chromotherapy spa bath by Airbath. This has built-in colour-changing lights for a relaxing effect – an extra touch of luxury.'

'In order to save money, Malcolm did all the stripping out and the first fix on the taps, basins and toilet, as a while back he'd done a plumbing course. But we needed new plumbing and a soil pipe

installed as well, so Ocean Bathrooms put us in contact with Mark Howells' design team to complete the installation. The twin showers were fitted in a glass-fronted enclosure designed to fit in the far corner, which works well with the awkward shape of the wall there.'

'We also hired a local carpenter and tiler to work unsupervised and so save us commuting back and forth from London. Using our car less helped us to keep the project as eco-friendly as possible, too.'

'Before we decided to move out to Devon for an all-new lifestyle, we both ▶

Above Small Sabbia mosaic tiles on the bath panel and glass tile sheets in green shades highlighting featured areas complement Blanco natural limestone wall and floor tiles. These were bought from Devon Tiles and Original Style



'We set out to create a large, luxurious family bathroom with the highest possible eco spec'

Above The odd-shaped corner ruled out a standard shower cubicle, so non-absorbant Wedi tile-backer board, bought from Plumb Centre, and Sabbia tile sheets, from Devon Tiles, were used to create the bespoke enclosure, over a tray from Lakes Bathrooms

had jobs in the city that involved a lot of foreign travel. We loved the luxury feel of the hotels where we'd stayed during business trips.' The couple decided they wanted to recreate the hotel bathroom style in their new family home.

'Limestone tiles were our preferred choice for the floor and walls, but we didn't want the room to look bland, so we added some striking green glass tiles and smaller limestone mosaics to create contrast and texture.

'I couldn't find a unit that I liked for our twin basins to sit on, so we had our local carpenter custom-make a washstand for us to fit the space. The tiler then finished it with tile sheets with small green glass mosaics, matching the stripe that runs right round the room.

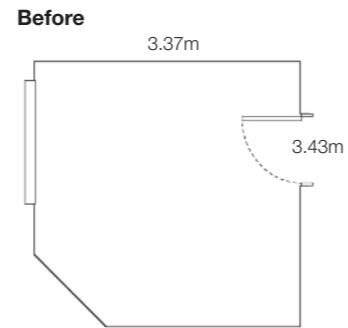
'The bathroom took about a year to completely convert and install, but as the rest of the house was being renovated at the same time before we moved in, it wasn't a problem. And Malcolm and I are both really pleased with the result.

'We set out to create a large, luxurious family bathroom with the highest possible eco spec – and that's exactly what we've achieved. The bathroom is every bit as stylish and relaxing as the ones we remember from hotels on our travels. And all our guests love it, too.

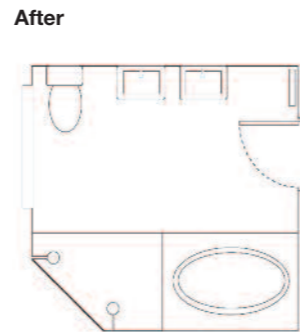
'A bathroom like this was never going to be cheap, but we think it was worth every penny.' 🏠

CONTACTS
Design and installation Ocean Bathrooms: 01308 420011 www.oceanbathrooms.com

PLANS



The former bedroom, including its fireplace, was completely stripped and plumbed, transformed into a luxurious and yet environmentally friendly bathroom with a hotel style



COSTS

LABOUR	£1,600
FIXTURES & FITTINGS	£6,337
ACCESSORIES	£338
WALLS & FLOOR	£2,056

Labour: Carpentry, plumbing and tiling, inclu. materials, £1,600

Fixtures & fittings: Chromatherapy lighting, £345; **Bath**, £2,424; both Airbath. **Taps**, £593; **showers**, £373; all Hansgrohe. Vero **basins**, £284 each, Duravit. **Taps**, £217, Roper Rhodes. **WC**, £170; **toilet seat**, £78; **cistern**, £141; all Philippe Starck for Duravit. **Shower**, £543, Crosswater. **Shower tray**, £185, Lakes Bathrooms. **Shower door**, £700, Roman

Accessories: **Mirror**, £40, The Range. **Radiator**, £178, Stelrad. **Blind**, £120, Inside Spaces

Walls & floor: **Paint**, £21.90 for 2.5 litres, The Green Shop. Bianco limestone **tiles**, £31.50 per m²; Sabbia mosaic limestone **tiles**, £8.50 per sheet, 30x30cm; Wedi **board**, adhesive & grout, £520; underfloor **heating**, £560; all Devon Tiles. Mixed brickbond glass **tiles**, £15.75 per sheet, 30x30cm, Original Style

TOTAL £10,331

GREAT IDEAS TO TAKE AWAY

Keep your bathroom conversion light and airy by adding colour and texture

1 BUY THIS... BESPOKE SINK UNIT

Liz and Malcolm wanted the stand for their twin basins to tie in with the rest of the bathroom, but couldn't find anything they liked on the high street. Instead, they asked their local carpenter to build one from scratch. It's fixed to the wall at the back and has two oak legs at the front, and it's finished with glass tiles to match the border round the room. To find a carpenter in your area, try www.ratedpeople.com



2 TRY THIS... NO-TAPS BATH

For a double-ended bath, a combined filler and waste – an aperture in the side of the tub with its controls separate – can often be more practical than spout taps. Liz and Malcolm's luxury bath, with a diverter for the shower and a concealed mixer valve, cost over £2,400. They also splashed out £345 for the optional extra of underwater chromatherapy spa-style lighting.



3 DESIGN THESE... GLASS TILES

Although the walls and floor have been tiled using large-format natural stone, the side of the bath and the shower enclosure are finished in the same stone but in a mosaic form, to add interest. Small rectangular glass tiles have then been added for the border round the room and the basin stand. Find a tiler in your area through the search engine on the website of The Tile Association: www.tiles.org.uk

3 OF THE LATEST... ART DECO-STYLE MIRRORS

Create a focal point with a statement vanity mirror



Brooklyn mirror, (H)40x (W)32cm, £160, Bhs



Deco stripe mirror in silver, (H)75x (W)106cm, £127, John Lewis



Art-Deco glass mirror, (H)90x(W)60cm, £44.98, the Colours Collection, B&Q