

BEFORE



## HOW CAN I GIVE THIS BATHROOM A MORE UNIFIED LOOK?

Interior designer Tina McFarlane provides expert solutions for a reader's bathroom

**THE CLIENT**

ELIZABETH GOODRICH, LEFT

I'm really not sure what to do with this bathroom and I need help pulling it together. It has interesting features, such as a fireplace and a porthole window, but it doesn't fulfil its potential. I'd like a contemporary, understated scheme geared towards utility, but without compromising on comfort. I favour clean lines and I'm not worried about preserving original features just for the sake of it, though I do like the Shaker-style doors on the cupboard. Storage is paramount: everything should be neatly concealed. Currently, there's just one cupboard, largely taken up by a hot-water tank, and a MDF shelf at the far end of the room that gets cluttered. My husband would like to keep the bath, but the colour doesn't work with our new floor – do you have any suggestions? Also, I'd like to incorporate a shower with a traditional showerhead and a double sink with a vanity unit beneath it.



keeping with the rest of the house. I'd suggest a back-to-wall lavatory with a simple bulkhead that has a removable top to conceal the cistern and pipe-work. To make the existing roll-top bath work with the new scheme, have a decorator re-paint its body and feet in metallic silver using a heat-resistant enamel paint.

There's no storage beneath the pedestal basin, so messy bathroom paraphernalia is left out on display. Your idea of a double sink with a vanity unit below will solve this problem – choose Shaker-style doors and a smart Corian surface (alternatively, Formica or marble are less expensive). Replace the MDF shelf opposite with a low-level cupboard that lies flush with the chimney breast. There's also room to position a shallow medicine cabinet on the wall above. The disjointed cupboard at the front of the room could be rebuilt to fit in more seamlessly and the pipes re-routed inside it to give you additional shelf space. Moving the hot water tank to a landing elsewhere in the house would give you even more space, but would be expensive.

While the moulding adds character, at points it's off centre. I'd suggest replacing it with a large rectangular mirror above the new vanity unit and with your old metal-framed mirror above the fireplace. You could fit mirrors inside the mouldings above the bath to make the room feel even larger.

*Tina McFarlane FIDDA is an interior designer. Consultation rates start at £117.50 hour. Call (020) 7228 2139 for details.*

**ELIZABETH GOODRICH'S VERDICT**

I was impressed with Tina's practical approach and found her a pleasure to work with – she's an example of why it pays to pay for experience. She was focused on use rather than show, and keen to ensure we were thinking along the same lines.

A fine, steel-finish Venetian blind will give you privacy and allow you to control the amount of light entering the room.

Install spotlights that turn on independently above the vanity unit so the fan doesn't automatically go on if the bathroom is used in the middle of the night.



A laundry basket and/or a shaving socket could be neatly concealed in the cupboards below the double sink unit.

If the interior of the bath needs a facelift, have it resurfaced by Renu Bath Services.

Paint bathrooms in eggshell paint as emulsion absorbs water and can't be wiped down.



**THE DESIGNER** TINA MCFARLANE, RIGHT

Planning a large room can be harder than planning a small one as there's more scope for mistakes. There's a mixture of styles here – an Edwardian-style bathroom suite, Queen Anne-style mouldings and Shaker doors – which don't really work together. First, detract attention from the disjointed cupboard at the front of the room by making the other end more interesting. Make the pretty porthole window a focal point by installing a shower with a round curtain rail centred above the bath, then frame it with a curtain that can be hooked back on either side when not in use. Choose a chrome shower-stand and paint the porthole's glazing beads with chrome paint to complement it. The existing Edwardian bathroom suite isn't really in

1. Venetian blind colour 8081, from £55 for 610 x 610 mm drop, Luxaflex.
2. Paint on bath Metallic Silver H46, heat-resistant enamel, £16-80 litre, Technical Paint Services.
3. Vanity unit top, shelf, bulkhead, cupboard top and mirror frame above vanity unit; all Corian in Jewel Black Quartz, 19 mm thick, £360 sq m, John Lewis.
4. Chrome basin taps LB1216, £222; 5. Chrome bath, shower mixer, riser and rose LB1744, £564; 6. Chrome wall-mounted tumbler LB4933, £34; 7. Chrome wall-mounted soap dish, £34; 8. Chrome towel ring LB4931, £25; all Lefroy Brooks at West One Bathrooms.
9. Shower

- curtain rail CR3-30, £135, Myson at West One Bathrooms.
  10. Marta basin, £116, West One Bathrooms.
  11. Towel rail AD1, £772, Vogue Arcadia at West One Bathrooms.
  12. Downlights Proseal D180X/WH, £23-40 each, Illuma Lighting.
  13. Wall lights BW/550/2/C, £106 each, Chelsom.
  14. Paint on walls Quiet White, eggshell, £24-25 for 2.5 litres, Papers and Paints.
  15. Floor Gregorian Marble White and Florentine Marble Black vinyl tiles, from £75 m including fitting, Amtico at M & M Carpets.
  16. Towels, from £6-95 for a hand towel, The White Company.
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PRODUCED BY GEORGIA HADDEN; ILLUSTRATION: MAIRIANE TOPHAR; MAIN PHOTOGRAPHS: GEORGIA HADDEN; CUT-OUTS: PETER CAMPBELL SAUNDERS