





Coastal Cool

This beachside home in Hollywood, Co. Down has been given a new lease of life and the final result is the perfect mix of classic and contemporary styling.



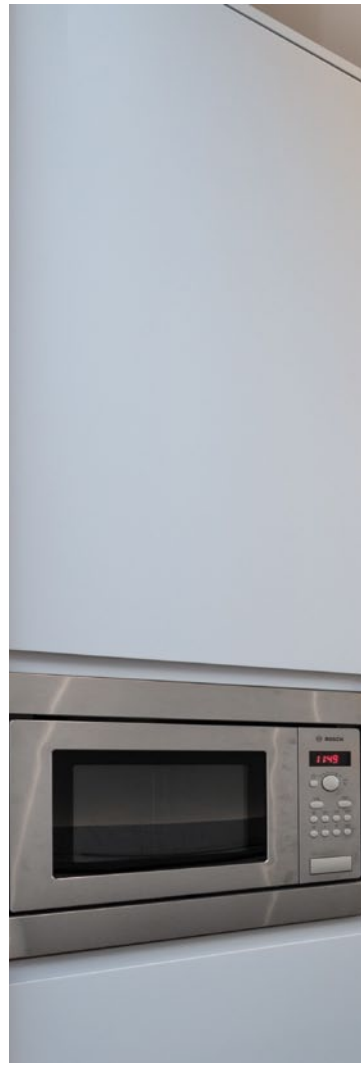
When ex-Miss Northern Ireland, Instagram influencer and estate agent Tiffany Brien purchased this house in August 2018, she wasn't daunted by the work that lay ahead to bring it back to life and inline with how she wished to live in it. 'There was just something about this place which kept drawing me to it and even though I was aware of the condition it was in, I did approach the homeowner with an offer and it was accepted.'

One of the biggest draws for Tiffany, apart from the fact that the house is located in Holywood, County Down where she grew up, is the fact that the beach is only 100 metres from her front door. 'I am a keen sailor and love the sea, always have. To have a home in Holywood this close to the sea was always a dream, but with house prices the way they are in this area, it would only be a project such as this one that would allow me to make my property dreams a reality,' she explains.











At the very beginning of her renovation project, Tiffany engaged the services of the award-winning Des Ewing Architects to bring their expertise to the table and breathe life into this property once again. ‘I am familiar with Des Ewing’s work and knew that if anyone could achieve what I was after he could,’ says Tiffany.

Des was able to look at various layout options to introduce light into the ground floor. As he explains, ‘This house is unique in that it has no windows to the rear and side but only from the front. We looked at introducing lightwells with gardens within them but ended up with an airy vaulted ceiling and three rooflights.’

Des goes on to say, ‘We worked on ground floor layout options and placed the kitchen to the front of the house (which is unusual), as it provided a brighter environment and an efficient compact layout. We used a crittall-style sliding door from the hall into the kitchen/dining area centrally located so there’s no need to pass through the kitchen. The dining area has a built in bench seat to create a cosier atmosphere and to keep the table over to the wall side to allow space to pass into the living area. A new rear return was also created to provide a storage area and an enlarged bathroom.’

Tiffany used all of the space available when it came to reconfiguring the house and one of the main changes when it came to the layout was changing the position of the kitchen from the back to the front of the house. ‘It was my mum who suggested this switch when we were struggling to get the flow we wanted between the kitchen/living/dining space



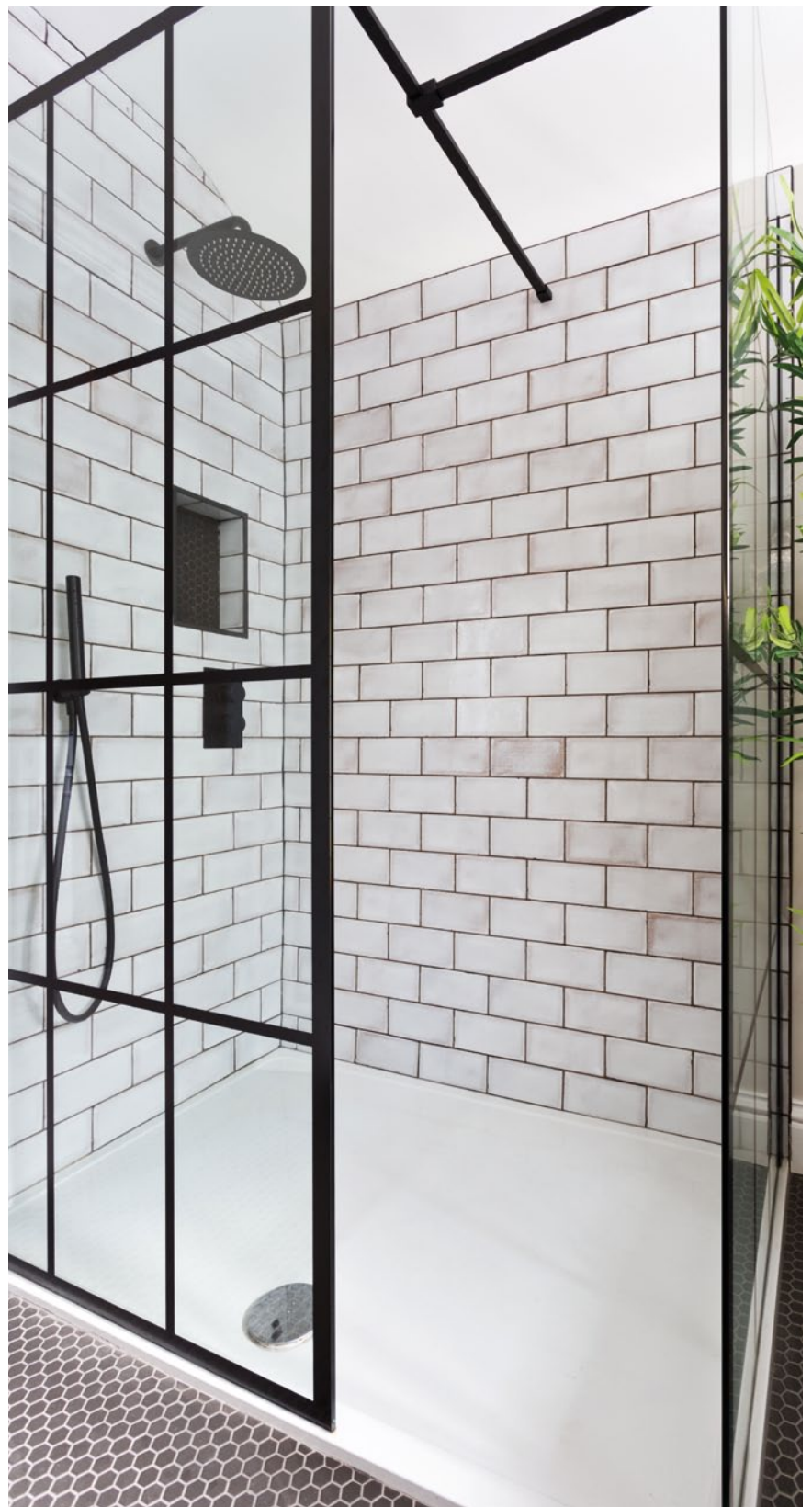
on the ground floor. It has worked so well and I love how this whole space blends together now.'

Tiffany's kitchen was designed by Laura Dallat Interiors and offers everything she hoped for from this space. Laura's bespoke sleek, handleless German kitchen design makes best use of the space. The majority of the appliances are integrated, including the extractor above the hob, again in line with the no-fuss, clean finish. The inset mirror was a request from Tiffany who had always admired similar features within the kitchens of many of the homes she is selling and it also works to reflect light and make this area feel brighter and larger. The

island offers casual seating as well as a practical food prep area and is finished in Siquastone Quartz in Calacatta Dior.

The adjoining dining area has built-in booth seating, with Tiffany taking the inspiration for this from the National in Belfast city centre. 'I happened to be in the National for lunch and admiring the décor, I decided that the wood panelling and finish of their seating would work well in my new dining room! I really do take inspiration from anywhere and everywhere!'

Tiffany approached Precision Joinery Works to help her with this bespoke dining area and, as well as making her dining table, they also



created the bespoke hall console table, the undersink cabinet in her downstairs bathroom and fitted out a changing room for her in one of the unused bedrooms.

‘Precision have helped me to create a number of bespoke pieces that are not only made to perfectly fit the space available in my home, but also at a fraction of the price of the original item. I would take a number of pictures of what I would like and show it to them to recreate to suit my measurements and available budget.’

Another one of these bespoke features is the panelled wall (painted in the same Farrow & Ball Inchrya Blue as the panelling on the wall of

the dining room) at one end of the living room which has a concealed door leading in to the downstairs bathroom and utility room.

Tiffany would definitely recommend working with local brands as much as possible. The corner sofa in the living room is from Drumbriston The Sofa Maker who perfectly recreated the sofa from her family home that she loves so much and the carpet she has used on the stairs and in the bedrooms is Ulster Carpets Ulster Velvet, a luxurious wool-rich flooring that, as the name suggests, looks and feels as smooth as velvet.

When it came to sourcing tiles, Gareth at David Scott Tiles was

on hand to help her achieve the look she was after in the entrance hall and bathrooms. With Gareth's guidance Tiffany opted for a bespoke black and hexagonal mosaic in the hallway and porcelain wood-look tiles throughout the kitchen/living/dining areas. Lily Pad off black tiles were used to dramatic effect in the downstairs toilet and upstairs in the bathroom a black hexagon mosaic was placed on the floor and on the walls, Spatula Bianco hand-made white bricks.

Staying in the bathrooms, the sanitaryware throughout Tiffany's house came from KE Plumbing, who supplied custom-made vanity furniture. The wetroom screens and toilet are from brand Sonas Bathrooms and the brassware from MyLife bathrooms all supplied by KE Plumbing.

Tiffany went to Kildress Plumbing for the stove for the living area and selected a Gazco Loft gas stove. Tiffany decided to go for this stove as she has natural gas in her home, and while she wanted a stove to give her heat, she didn't want to have to light and maintain a real fire. This stove is switched on via remote control so is a lot quicker, cleaner and there's no ash to clean out. Perfect for the homeowner with a busy lifestyle like Tiffany!

Last but not least, Thompson Clarke Interiors helped her to effortlessly pull everything together. As Sara Thompson explains, 'We did floor plans for the living room, dining area and the master bedroom as these were the key rooms we were working on, together with a full paint schedule throughout.

'We designed the kitchen dining space – including the bespoke bench, the table, sourcing the chairs, lighting and upholstery. Our local upholsterer made the banquette seating in green leather and velvet.

'We sourced the bar stools and lighting over the kitchen island to help finish off the kitchen interiors as well as advising on the shutters in here.







‘Tiffany had an upholsterer to make her modular sofa based off a design from her parent’s house, and we helped choose the fabric. We pulled the whole room scheme together sourcing the rug, tables, footstool fabric, cushions, chests, lamps, armchair, etc to ensure it all worked cohesively.’

In the master bedroom, Thompson Clarke Interiors also designed and made the bespoke headboard and end of bed bench using Manuel Canovas fabrics, as well as sourcing lighting, the occasional chair and artwork for in here.

Being in and out of houses every day, Tiffany knew she didn’t want a home that was purely grey. ‘I see grey homes every day and knew I wanted to use colour, however, I don’t have a lot of spare time to go shopping for fabrics and finishes and I knew that an interior designer would be able to work with me and quickly achieve what I was after. Whether I selected a colour I liked or a cushion, this was then used as a starting point for the rest of the scheme and I have to say I love how it has all turned out.’

Tiffany also has colourful artwork adorning her walls including the sailing boat painting by Andrew Cranley sourced from Canvas in Stranmillis and the pink Champagne bottle by Irish artist Anna McKeown at Pop & Toast and taking pride of place, a framed handstitched patchwork by her granny is a piece she is particularly attached to.

‘My granny has made a handstitched patchwork for all three of us including my sister Jess and brother Jack. I decided to frame mine and I love that it has a place on the walls of my new home. I have another colourful painting that I have my eye on for my bedroom which I am hoping Santa will bring for me this year!’

So, if she had to pick a favourite place in her home where would it be? ‘Definitely my living room! I love nothing better than getting tucked away out of sight in here with the stove lit and the TV on – bliss! It is such a cosy, cave-like room and I just love spending time in here.’ 🏠