

THE CLASS MENAGERIE: MEET BRITAIN'S ANIMAL-MAD ARISTOCRATS

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Richard, rivalry &  
her Scottish retreat

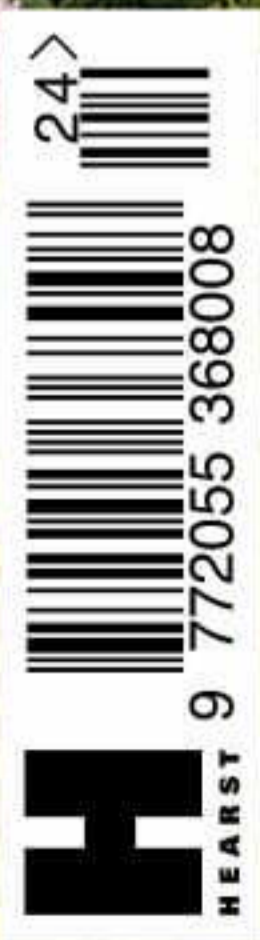
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THE MASTER BEDROOM IN TARA CRAIG'S CHELSEA HOME. BOTTOM: THE LIVING ROOM

## INTERIORS

RIGHT: THE LIVING ROOM IN A HAMPSTEAD PROJECT BY PANDORA TAYLOR



*The eclectic modernist*  
PANDORA TAYLOR

The places Pandora Taylor returns to time and again for inspiration – Sir John Soane's Museum and a bluebell wood overlooking a meadow in the Hampshire village where her parents live – perfectly symbolise her approach to design.

Her admiration for 'the sheer innovation of Soane, and the way his house is a lesson in being bold' is reflected in her fearless mixing of avant-garde and antiques, and in the sculptural headboards she designs herself. She softens her schemes with natural materials such as old tapestries and pale burr walnut.

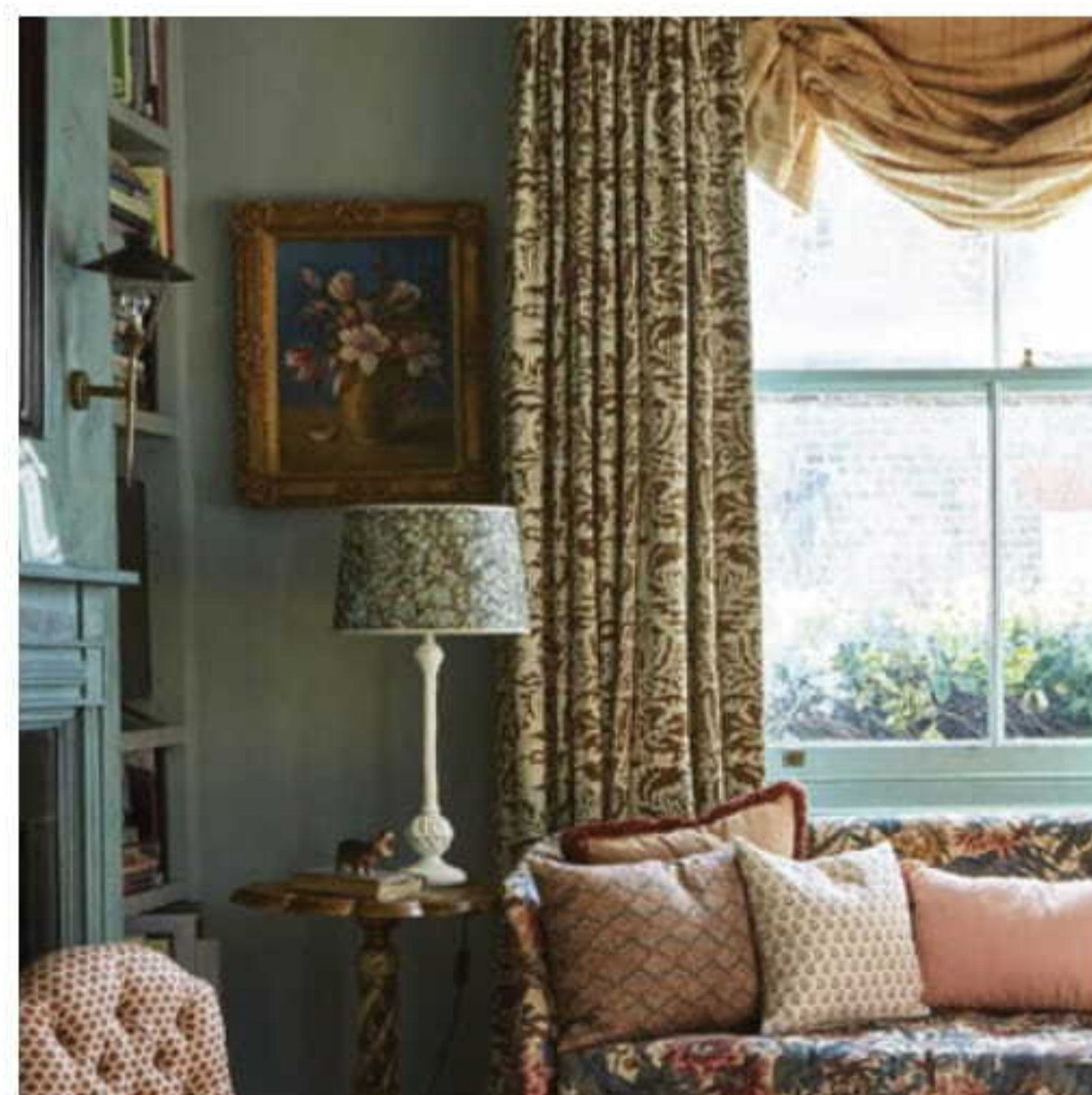
Having set up her own studio in 2018, Taylor is currently working on a country retreat and a Primrose Hill pied-à-terre, while finishing off the glorious transformation of her own Victorian home, which she shares with her Sealyham puppy, Mr Bingley. [www.pandorataylor.co.uk](http://www.pandorataylor.co.uk)

## INSIDERS' GUIDE

Meet Britain's new wave of female interior designers, from the art aficionado to the colour curators

BY CHARLOTTE BROOK

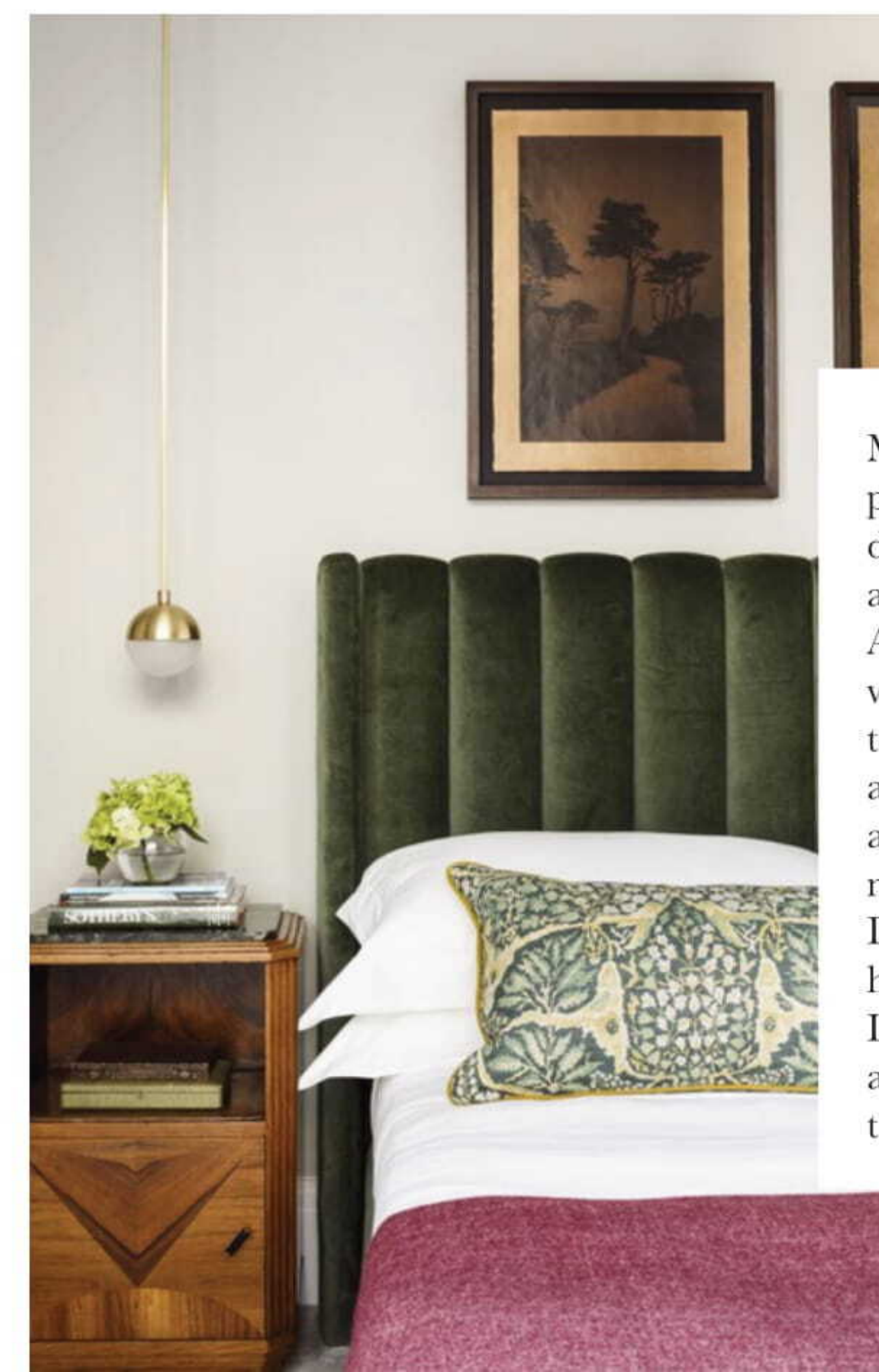
The UK has been home to some of history's best-loved doyennes of interior decoration. The 20th century saw the rise of the fabulously well-connected Lady Sibyl Colefax, who joined forces with John Fowler to form a thriving business they subsequently sold on to the London-dwelling American heiress Nancy Lancaster, known for her exquisite taste. More recently, the country has been blessed with the talents of Jane Churchill, her sister Melissa Wyndham and Nina Campbell, to name but three. Happily, there is a wave of new female talent set to follow in these esteemed women's footsteps, whether by bringing an artfully old-world sensibility to contemporary spaces or subtly refreshing historic houses. We meet six of them.



*The contemporary antiquarian*  
TARA CRAIG

Having studied fine art in Florence and taken a postgraduate course in 20th-century design at Sotheby's Institute of Art, Tara Craig has a unique aesthetic influenced by both Italian mannerism and British modernism. In 2014, she founded the furniture company Ensembler, specialising in bespoke products made in the UK; more recently, she has started taking on interiors projects, and has thus far brought her furnishing flair to residences in London, Paris and Surrey. As in her own Chelsea flat, set inside a Georgian building, all of her designs look timeless, which may come from the fact she sees equal beauty in the clean lines of contemporary architecture and in period homes. 'I'm obsessed by how things wear – longevity is important to me,' she says. 'Beautiful interiors don't happen overnight. Any noteworthy space is embellished over time.' [www.taraig.co.uk](http://www.taraig.co.uk)

PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON BROWN, © STUDIO ASHBY/© 2017 PHILIP DURRANT, JON GORRIGAN



LEFT: A BEDROOM IN MAYFAIR DESIGNED BY SOPHIE ASHBY

*The art enthusiast*  
SOPHIE ASHBY

Moving house 14 times before she turned 13 taught Sophie Ashby that no place felt like a home until the pictures were up on the walls. Following a degree in art history, an interior-design course at Parsons in New York and a placement with Victoria Fairfax, purveyor of the grand English aesthetic, Ashby established her own Notting Hill studio six years ago. Her projects, which range from the actress Gabriella Wilde's family house in Somerset to her husband Charlie Casely-Hayford's tailoring atelier in Marylebone, all pivot around artworks. The starting point could be a photograph of a rugged landscape, reminding her of her Devon childhood, a Picasso masterpiece ('in my head – they don't have to own it!') or a 17th-century Dutch still-life, after a trip to Frieze last year converted her to Old Masters. 'A painting has the power to change your mood more than a chair does,' she says. 'So that's where I begin.' Though Ashby's work is primarily residential in scope, she is keen to take on a few larger-scale venues. 'A house is so intimate,' she says, 'while with hotels, because they're all about escapism, you can be a bit more theatrical.' [www.studioashby.com](http://www.studioashby.com)



# INTERIORS

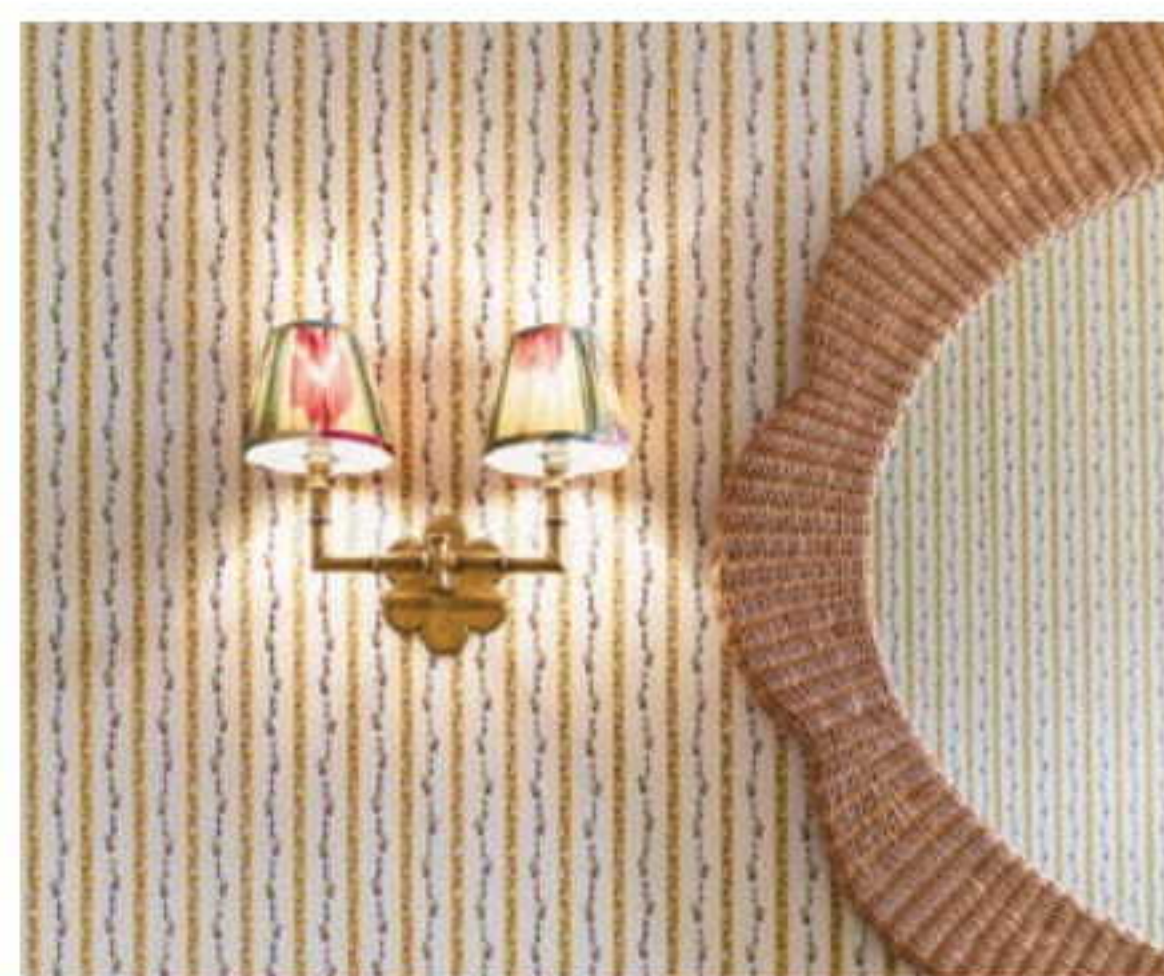


CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: HIGHLIGHTS FROM TWO OF LUCY BARLOW'S RECENT DESIGN SCHEMES IN HOLLAND PARK AND NOTTING HILL



## The embellisher extraordinaire LUCY BARLOW

Being one half of a dynamic duo seems to suit Lucy Barlow, who co-founded her eponymous studio Barlow and Barlow with her brother Max, a lighting specialist, in 2013. When he (entirely amicably) decided to go solo last year, her husband Joshua Sear, an architect and builder, stepped in – and with eight projects currently on the go, business is booming. ‘We can now do a house top-to-toe, from re-terracing the garden to picking the fringing for an ottoman,’ she says. Indeed, embellishment is a constant in her interiors, whether tassels, braiding or any permutation of passementerie – a collection of which Barlow is about to launch in collaboration with the weaver Jessica Light. ‘I tend to channel the English country-house style, but for a younger generation,’ she says. ‘I don’t want a room to feel too precious – there’s always a bit of happy clashing.’ [www.barlowandbarlow.com](http://www.barlowandbarlow.com)



## The queens of colour YELLOW LONDON

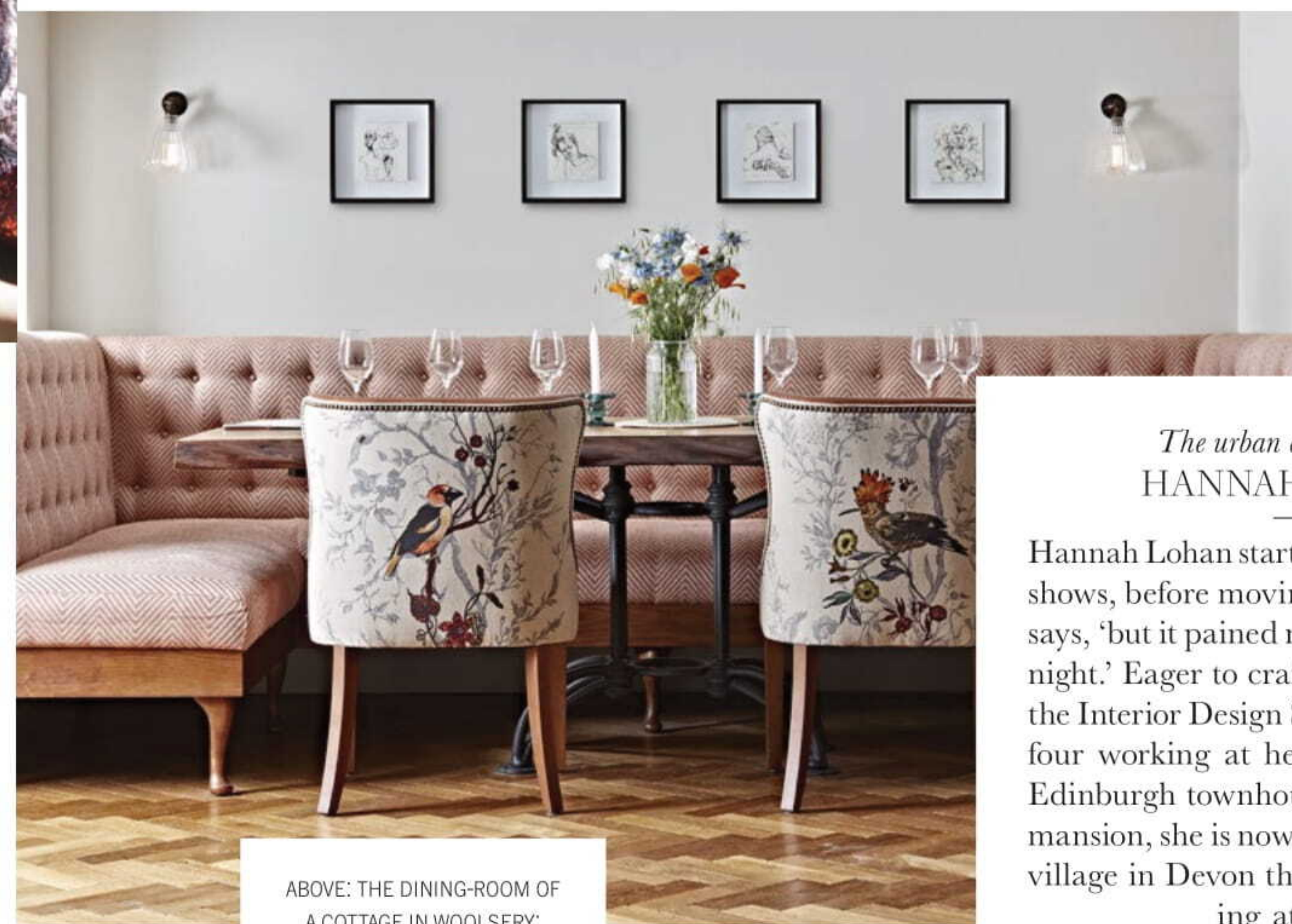
Liv Wallers and Cath Beckett discovered their mutual appreciation of interiors with a sense of fun while working together for the leading English decorator Joanna Wood, and joined forces in 2018 to launch Yellow London. The pair share a passion for pattern: their Ladbrooke Grove studio is a maximalist’s heaven, brimming with jewel-coloured velvet swatches from

De Le Cuona, hand-blocked parakeet-green chinoiserie wallpaper samples and embroidered borders from the Notting Hill-based fabric designer Susan Deliss. They extend some of this eccentricity to their use of textiles, as evidenced in their revitalisation of an Elizabethan manor in Gloucestershire. ‘Matching the bright-pink Christopher Farr wallpaper to the headboard was a pretty hard sell,’ Beckett says, ‘but it ended up being the owner’s favourite room.’

Another recent project – the parlour of a west-London townhouse – saw them create new cushions in a graphic grass-green fabric to decorate a pair of cane-work chairs that flank a much-loved antique mahogany dresser. ‘We love all things vibrant,’ says Wallers, ‘but when you can deploy colour and print to update a client’s existing set-up in an organic way, it’s particularly rewarding.’ [www.yellowlondon.com](http://www.yellowlondon.com)



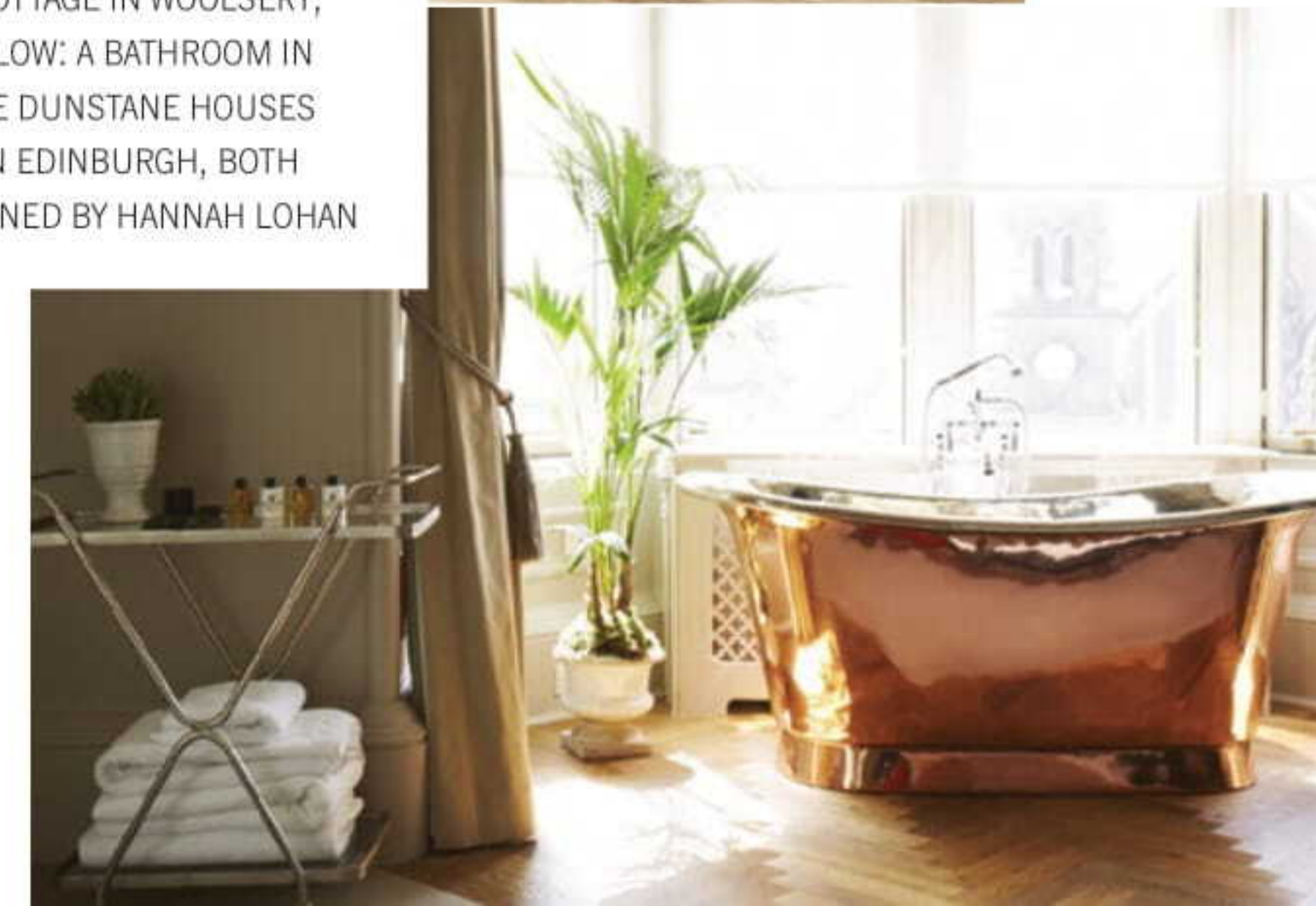
A BEDROOM FROM YELLOW LONDON'S PROJECT IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE WITH MATCHING WALLPAPER AND HEADBOARD COVERED IN CHRISTOPHER FARR FABRIC. LEFT: LIV WALLERS AND CATH BECKETT, THE FOUNDERS OF YELLOW LONDON



ABOVE: THE DINING-ROOM OF A COTTAGE IN WOOLSERLY; BELOW: A BATHROOM IN THE DUNSTANE HOUSES IN EDINBURGH, BOTH DESIGNED BY HANNAH LOHAN

## The urban countryphile HANNAH LOHAN

Hannah Lohan started her career as a producer for BBC interiors shows, before moving into events. ‘I loved the drama of it,’ she says, ‘but it pained me having to tear down beautiful sets every night.’ Eager to craft more permanent spaces, she retrained at the Interior Design School in Paddington and now has a staff of four working at her eponymous company. Having updated Edinburgh townhouses, a Cotswold manor and a Kensington mansion, she is now focusing on Woolserly, a formerly forgotten village in Devon that is being brought back to life, one building at a time, by the tech millionaire Michael Birch. Its 18th-century pub, the Farmers Arms, has been converted into a cosy brasserie, and a quintessential village house is now a chic bolthole, while the Manor House, a work in progress, is due to open as a hotel in 2021. To bring a flavour of Lohan’s style into your own home, pay a visit to the Old Cinema in Chiswick, where she runs a small boutique selling vintage furniture. [www.hannahlohaninteriors.com](http://www.hannahlohaninteriors.com)



PHOTOGRAPHS: HARRY CROWDER, MATT CLAYTON