



Family banks on Brett Martin to light renovation project

Architectural skylights from Brett Martin Daylight Systems are proving the crowning glory of a London couple's nine-month home renovation project.

Two Ritchlight Ultra skylights flood with daylight the loft and ground-floor extensions to Holly and James Gellatley's home in Barnes, ensuring the family's new living space is a pleasure to be in.

The Gellatleys bought what was then a three-storey, six-bedroomed house early in 2007, aware that they had a lot of work ahead of them. They certainly had. Renovating the property from top to bottom has taken an intensive nine months and seen them and their two young children living with family, friends and in their own attic.

A loft extension was completed first. This involved replacing a large part of the original pitched roof with a flat one on which a small Ritchlight Ultra skylight was installed.

The second phase included a 200ft² ground-floor extension that incorporated a kitchen, dining area, living room and playroom, the total depth of which required a lot of light to optimise the space.

This requirement has been met with a 4.485m long x 2.480m wide, 30° sloped, and hipped end Ritchlight Ultra TE22 glazed skylight including electrically operated top-hung hinged windows for natural ventilation.

To maximise natural light, builder Mark White had recommended several skylight suppliers but the Gellatleys found Brett Martin's area technical sales manager, and promise of complete service from site survey to final fixing, particularly helpful. James, 33, an investment banker, had also seen a Brett Martin skylight on another property and was impressed by its appearance and quality.

The project was managed mainly by Holly, 34, who before becoming a full-time mother was a radio producer. She explained there had been several aspects of the loft extension, which another builder had carried out, that they were unhappy with.

"The previous builder had very little consultation with us about the design and installed a skylight which was made of UPVC and which was too deep and just wrong," she said.

So having chosen Brett Martin's Ritchlight Ultra for the flat roof of the kitchen/dining extension, they then decided to change the unwanted skylight on the loft extension for a smaller version of the Ritchlight Ultra hipped end skylight. "The scaffolding was still there so it added only about a day to the whole project," said Holly.

The Brett Martin skylight units are supplied factory-assembled and this controlled build allows

the company to assure clients not only of a 'zero-defect' fitting but also reduced installation time on site - a bonus if this is an issue.

The Ritchlight Ultra unit is newly thermally broken which means that for the first time the frame of the skylight matches the performance of the glazing to dramatically reduce any possibility of condensation.

"We've been moved back in for several weeks now and had no problems with condensation which would have been a worry with the kitchen, and opening the vents is easy with the electric control panel," said Holly.

The couple chose double-glazed Coolite glass for both Brett Martin skylights to minimise overheating as well as a privacy-enhancing mirrored finish to the ground-floor one as this could be overlooked by neighbouring properties.

The best part of the build, for Holly, is the ground-floor extension. "It's a stunning, light, airy room, and the play room allows us to put away all of the toys and have adult space when required. It's certainly future-proofed the house for us and a bonus is that it has a real wow factor with visitors."

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