



A moment of calm

Chance for kids to find out about Mars

FROM THE NEWS 1997

IN the year 2018, man will set foot on the surface of Mars. The chances are, the NASA astronauts who will search for life on the Red Planet in that historic mission will be at school right now. So tomorrow, the Scott Polar Research Institute is giving youngsters aged between 11 and 16 the chance to take part in a Mars exploration training exercise, including looking at the planet's Dry Valleys where temperatures reach -60°C in the winter.

St John's singers to pop up on telly

FROM THE NEWS 1977

CHORISTERS from St John's College are to appear on the BBC, singing pop songs. A dozen choral scholars will be on the Tuesday Music Show on BBC1 doing a Beach Boys number, *Breakaway*, and what the BBC described as a particularly beautiful arrangement of *Every Time We Say Goodbye*. The group, known as The Gentlemen of St John's, are following the choir's tradition of having a close harmony group.

On-the-spot fines for city motorists

FROM THE NEWS 1967

INSTANT traffic fines will be introduced in Cambridge in three months time for motorists who commit meter offences or park in areas restricted by yellow line markings. Offences such as obstruction and parking without lights will still be dealt with by the courts. The system has been held up for the past 14 months because of difficulty in finding an office to collect the fines, but the town clerk now has this in hand.

Latest homes to go on the sale market

FROM THE NEWS 1927

MESSRS Hockey & Son have several newly-offered homes for sale. In Huntingdon Road, overlooking playing fields. A well-built residence is offered, with two reception rooms, five bedrooms, bath and hand basin, and a well-stocked garden: price £1,250. In Chesterton, a family residence containing two reception rooms, six bedrooms, as well as electric light, garage and large garden, can be bought for £2,000.



Kate Sadler's latest interior design project – a blank canvas new build in the Ely countryside – is both cosy and effortlessly elegant. Alice Ryan settles in.

Pictures by David Johnson

KATE Sadler knows how to make a house a home. Her latest floor-to-rafters interior design project, a new build on the edge of Strettham, is testament to that: it's a show home, yet you'd never know it.

There are books on the shelves and pictures on the walls; the sofa is squishy with cushions; there's a tea tray laid and waiting on the kitchen table. The scheme is clean-lined and contemporary – and also cosy and inviting. The urge to kick off your shoes and furl into a chair is hard to fight.

The property was, explains Kate, the very definition of a blank canvas: not only was she given creative freedom, she also put the scheme together off-plan, before the house became bricks and mortar.

"The developers wanted the interiors to be light and airy; to have a sense of connection to the outdoors," she explains. "We're right on the edge of the countryside here: the house looks out on a field of horses. The aim was to make the most of that lovely location." As well as sticking to a stormy-sky palette of greys, blues and white, Kate's used plentiful natural finishes (take the warm wood flooring downstairs) and motifs (a row of wild-flower screen prints by local artist Jo Tunmer, dandelion-clock blinds by Vanessa Arbutnot). All's brought together with an uncluttered Scandi sensibility, and the result is both on-brief and utterly lovely.

It's clear Kate has an artist's eye for both colour and form; her background is actually in History of Art. On graduating she worked for Sotheby's, "where I was surrounded by great design – great furniture, great art. I learned not only about beautiful objects, but how they worked together."

"Looking back, it was mad," continues Kate. "I had a Degas ballerina sculpture standing on my desk for weeks, waiting to go into a sale. You became so accustomed to being surrounded by these amazing pieces; it really was a privilege."

It was while at Sotheby's that Kate got to know acclaimed interior designer Rose Uniacke: dubbed "the queen of serene" by *The Sunday Times*, she is known for both her refined style and fondness for fine antiques. Gradually realising interiors was the world for her, Kate went on to work with Rose.

"We did a lot in Chelsea. There was one project – an enormous bachelor pad – that I always remember: lots of leather, lots of fur. The client was only a young guy, younger than me, and he'd just been given this huge house. . . ." The work was creative, challenging and hugely exciting; Kate knew she'd found her niche.

After marrying and having her two children – Isabella, now 10, and Rufus, 6 – Kate moved out of London to return to her hometown, Cambridge: "I'd grown up here and loved it, and I wanted the same experience for them."



Setting up her own company, Kate Sadler: Interior Design & Project Management, seemed a natural next step. The first solo project came two years ago and she's never looked back: "One thing has led on to another. It's all been word of mouth – I'm very lucky."

The project management side of the business is as busy as the design. Far from being a luxury service, Kate says it can be very cost-effective; among her many skills is sourcing just the right craftspeople, at just the right price.

The same applies to her interior schemes, which pair High Street finds with judiciously selected start-of-the-show pieces. Walk into the sitting room in Strettham and your eye is magnetically drawn to a stand-out Eames rocking chair (which, deliberately positioned in front of the French doors, in turn invites you to look outside). The armchair by the front window, in contrast, was a nifty online purchase.

Among Kate's biggest projects thus far was a Victorian village rectory, whose owners wanted a top-to-toe revamp and restyle. "They wanted a contemporary feel, to completely modernise it," she explains. At the other end of the scale, another client



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Hit refresh

Here are Kate's top three tips for freshening up a room without spending a fortune:



- **Move the furniture around.** "The layout you've got – have maybe always had – isn't necessarily the best. Try shifting the furniture around, working around the room's focal point, such as the fireplace, and see what the possibilities are."
- **Give it a lick of paint.** "Painting the walls is a pretty low-cost way to make an enormous difference. Bear in mind the colours of your existing furniture and accessories, though, unless you're really wanting to start from scratch."

help with his cluttered study; after Kate imagined the space, both redecorating and using its contents, it was a whole new room: lovely to go back and see him enjoying it; the was working for him again."

and her children recently moved from a terrace to a 1960s bungalow, a bit of upper. Switching period of property has led an interiors rethink of her own: "All interior starts with the building itself. I kept some and got rid of the rest; a different house can a different look."

level living is, adds Kate, very practical when got young children; even when they're off bedrooms, there's a sense of togetherness. "I'm working with a client, those are the things I have to consider: their family, their personalities. . . There's no point a high-shine worktop in a kitchen if the lifestyle isn't in-keeping; as soon as someone coffee cup down on that top, it'll need a

ens are, concedes Kate, the biggest challenge, they have to be high-performance as well to look at and live in. Living spaces are, in a favourite. "That's where people spend their time. Some people might like a reading or a study area, or a play area; the pleasure is in getting it all together, and making a space they'll use and enjoy."

ing a home where you feel yourself relax as a kick in the door is a wonderful thing, and for all reasons some people don't have that," adds to leave a project knowing the client's home is working for them – that it's become that place they can truly relax – is brilliant. As a designer, that you're aiming for."



- **Look at your lighting.** "Investing in a few new lamps can completely change the feel of a room. A single light source in the centre of the ceiling is never going to produce a nice atmosphere. Think about putting lights at different levels and in dark corners."



To find out more about Kate Sadler: Interior Design & Project Management, visit katesadler.co.uk or call 07917 726869.

NEW HOMES

Show home pictured on these pages is of the Laragh Homes development on edge of Stretham. Called Manor Farm, includes 11 styles of environmentally-friendly property, including terrace, bungalow, and spanning two, and four bedrooms. The development centred on a communal green and comprises footpaths, cycle routes and alleysways. To find out more visit laragh.co.uk or call (01353) 654900.

