

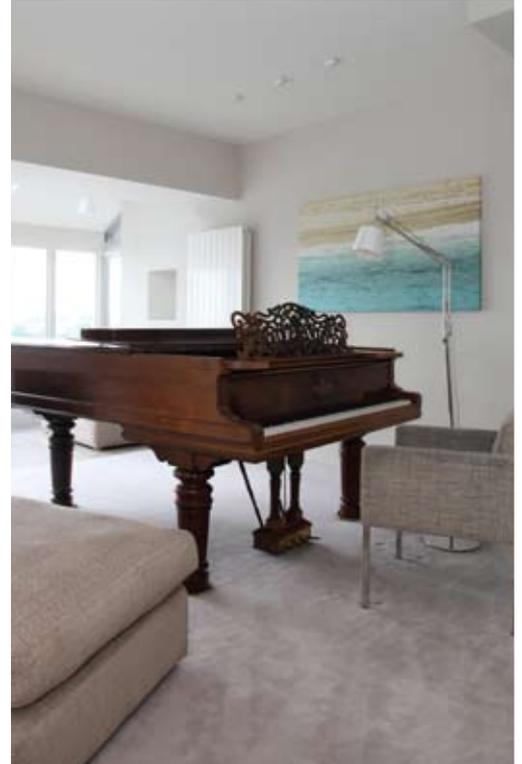


A HOUSE THAT HITS

the heights



Below: It's a house for parties



David Brockbank has fond childhood memories of Craggy, the house his grandfather built. 'I used to spend a big chunk of my childhood there, but my grandfather died when I was 11 or 12 and the family sold the house. I wanted it back ever since,' says the 57-year-old.

He achieved that dream five years ago when he and partner Annabel Williams purchased the house built high up on a crag with stunning views over Staveley, the Kentmere Valley and the Howgills.

Over the years, Craggy had had many different owners and at one point was divided in two. Annabel and David set about modernising the place, a project which took three years to complete.

'You could not see any of the views. The position is incredible and you have to take advantage of that,' says Annabel. 'We wanted space and light, the main thing was to bring the views into the house. It focused more on the rock at the back, so we have turned the house around so it faces the light.'

It was a major restoration project. They

Main image: The large windows flood the house with light

Left: David, pictured with Annabel, spent childhood holidays here



Idyllic childhood memories sparked a major restoration project in lovely Lakeland, writes Sue Riley

PHOTOGRAPHY: KIRSTY THOMPSON



Above: An area for relaxation

Right: Stunning views from the master bedroom

Below: An ornament guaranteed to make you smile

removed the five conservatories attached to the sides of the house and a lot of the internal walls, installed a marble staircase and huge windows to make the most of the 180 degree views, new bathrooms, kitchen and heating system were also put in. 'It was higgledy-piggledy, it needed modernising, reinventing,' explains David.

The couple designed the layout of the property and then employed a structural engineer, builders and local interior and kitchen designers to turn their dreams into a reality. The result is an open plan living area with a state-of-the art kitchen, French doors lead to the outdoor terrace and it's all decorated in a palette of neutral colours with a marble floor leading to a marble staircase. 'I do the cooking and I like to be a part of things,' says David. 'It's a very sociable house, it's a real party house, absolutely idyllic when the sun shines,' adds Annabel.

David has wonderful memories of his grandparents Edwin and Alice and the time he spent at Craggy as a boy. His grandfather built the house in the 1920s as

he wanted to look out over the mill he owned. David still owns the land and has converted it into the successful Staveley Mill Yard, featured on Page 30.

'My grandmother was an artist and grandfather built a studio right at the back of the house by the rockface! He had the study at the front.' Now that study is a home office for Annabel who runs a photography business – again, it's been opened up to take full advantage of the views. There's also a door leading to a charming set of old stone steps which descend to the outdoor patio where they do most of their entertaining.

The property has four bedrooms (the study is used as a fifth guest bedroom), including the master with spectacular views over the valley. From the huge bed you can gaze at the view and the couple have installed electric roller blinds on all the windows and patio doors to ensure privacy. There's also a dressing room and en-suite bathroom with a power shower for David and a rainfall head for Annabel. The house has a tennis court, garage, paddocks and 11 acres of land within the Lake District National Park.

'Because we were going to live here forever we did everything we ever wanted!' says Annabel. There's also a double bath beside a large window overlooking the Lakeland fells. 'It's like a piece of art to me, every day the picture is different.' The other bedrooms are all spacious, with accent colours used on the walls; one has a mezzanine and another overlooks the



“It's a real party house, absolutely idyllic when the sun shines”





rock on which the house is built.

David and Annabel - they became partners 12 years ago but have known each other since childhood - finally moved into Craggy 18 months ago. So it came a big surprise to them when they decided to put the house on the market this autumn. (It's with Fine & Country Estate Agents, offers over £2.5m)

'We planned to live here for a long time and then we discovered Key West in Florida on holiday and have been drawn there. We live there a lot over the winter.'



Guest bedrooms with colour beanbags



Above: Local craftsmen were used for the kitchen and other areas

Right: The dining table adds a subtle splash of colour

“It’s like a piece of art to me, every day the picture is different”

We planned to live here forever but we would prefer to have a small house in Key West and a small house in the Lake District. We wish we had this house ten years earlier, because the kids could have played here. All the children are grown up now and it’s too big for us,’ says Annabel. ‘Such a shame to have a wonderful house like this empty now.’

David has two daughters, one is a teacher and the other has recently qualified as a doctor; Annabel’s daughter Polly started university in Buckinghamshire last year.

‘We would love to be able to keep it, but we are only here during the summer really,’ she says. ‘It’s a shame to have it sitting empty,’ adds David, who takes part in sailing races around the world. ‘That’s the draw of Key West for me, good sailing and great weather.’ ‘And I love the light for the photography,’ says Annabel. 🌹



Right: The hillside location gives Craggy its name

Below: The couple removed many of the internal walls



If you have a stunning house that cries out to be featured in Lancashire Life, drop a line to the editor at roger.borrell@lancashirelife.co.uk