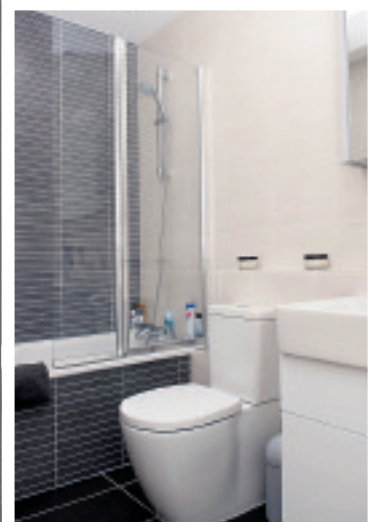
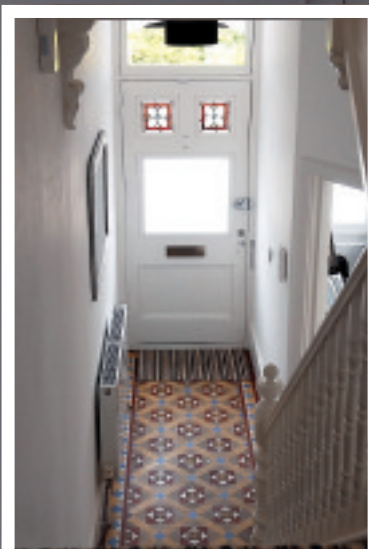


# LABOUR OF LOVE

Ness and Scott Grant bought their Balham home Under the Hammer last year, but not all went to plan finds **Lorraine Crighton-Smith**







## Through the key hole...

### Who lives here?

Scott, Ness and nine-month-old Monty Grant

### Where's the property?

Balham

### What's the story?

Scott and Ness bought this house at auction just over a year ago, and were subsequently filmed by BBC's *Homes Under the Hammer*. The first building contractor they hired went bust, hindering the renovation process from the start.

Scott and Ness Grant bought their Balham terrace in June 2010. Looking to upgrade their two-bedroom property in Tooting as they planned to start a family, the Grants looked at no fewer than 25 homes – all in south-west London – before Ness spotted the auction sign. Scott was eager to take on the property, which was in dire need of refurbishment, so after some thorough research, they decided to go for it.

Once they had won the bid for the property, Scott and Ness were approached by the crew from BBC's *Homes Under the Hammer*, asking if they would be interested in being on the programme. "We said yes," Ness explains. "We haven't seen it yet [the programme is due to air this autumn], but we thought it would make a nice record for us – of the before and after."

The before and after will be cherished, as it was not all plain sailing

to get there. The transformation of the former three-bedroom house in a state of disrepair was hindered at the first hurdle, when the building contractors they had hired went out of business – leaving Scott and Ness thousands of pounds out of pocket.

Scott, who is the Head of Project Management at Built Asset Consultancy, EC Harris, and Ness, who works for an investment bank, had researched the company prior to hiring them but after a few months they began to suspect that something was wrong.

"By February alarm bells started to ring," reveals Ness. "Things were taking a long time, the back of the house was still open, the bi-folding doors hadn't been ordered – nor had the windows. The schedule of works was falling behind so Scott started calling companies to check if orders had been placed." When he discovered some orders had only been part paid-for,



Images by Dave Vickers  
Photocoordinates.co.uk



Scott confronted the contractors, who admitted they were facing problems.

As the company went out of business, Scott and Ness were left with just the shell of their dream home completed. With a baby on the way, they were keen to be in the new property as soon as possible and so they went back to the drawing board and put their trust in another building contractor. Enter Wandsworth-based design and build experts HNC London, who picked up the pieces and completed what the first builder failed to do. HNC London said: "This is never an easy introduction to a project, as the clients have invariably lost valuable money, time and confidence. We came up with solutions to technical issues, introduced the clients to highly recommended landscapers and delivered the whole project – close to the original deadline, and with time to spare before the film crew and presenters returned."

Scott and Ness were responsible for the design, sourcing the majority of their furniture, fittings and fixtures locally. Summerstown in SW17 was a one-stop-shop for flooring requirements with Jordans Wood Flooring and Wall to Wall Flooring supplying the floors and carpets respectively.

Their tiles came from Style in Colliers Wood, their sanitary ware from Burge & Gunson, also in Colliers Wood and Stonewoods in Wandsworth supplied the gas fires.

"It's been a stressful journey," states Scott. "But now it's all done, it's all been worth it – which is what everyone says, isn't it?" Perhaps, but looking around this bright, spacious, high-spec home we can see why.

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