

SPACE *to* LIVE

Refurbishing a neglected Victorian house gave Alastair and Sheila the opportunity to create a kitchen for everyday family life and socialising

Feature SARAH WARWICK Photography MIA LIND & LINDY CUMINGS

Modern classic

The solid-wood cabinetry and granite worktops complement the age of the house and are combined with contemporary elements to create a space that's practical and good-looking

The detached home Alastair and Sheila bought in 2011 is a period gem. Built in 1890, it's located in one of the original London 'garden suburbs'. However, when the couple moved in, the kitchen was small and dark, and adjacent to a warren of similarly poky rooms. Despite this, the couple had a clear vision of a bright, spacious place for day-to-day living, plus a well-equipped food preparation zone.

The house is in a conservation area with strict planning regulations, so coming up with a design that was sympathetic to the original architecture was absolutely vital. Having

rejected one architect's suggestions for a modern extension, Alastair and Sheila opted to build an orangery to create their kitchen-living area. They invested a lot of time formulating the detailed renovations. Interior designer, Mary Boston at Firefly Interiors, introduced them to Sofia Bune Strandh at Sola Kitchens. 'We spent a year working with our architect, interior designer and Sofia,' says Alastair. 'It meant that once the builders finally started, the work only took them six months because every aspect had been carefully thought through.'

Like the orangery, the kitchen also needed to complement the character of the house. 'The Sola

cabinetry has a very contemporary appearance, but it's constructed from solid wood with a grain, so it will achieve the attractive patina of age that occurs in wood over time,' says Alastair.

The way the space worked with the other rooms was very important, too. 'We wanted the kitchen to connect with the formal dining room because we thought it wouldn't get used otherwise,' explains Alastair. So the couple created a panelled walkway in the same design as the kitchen cabinetry to help one space flow into the next. 'The new layout works much better for us as a family,' says Alastair. 'I'm glad we did all the careful planning – it has really paid off.'

Project profile

THE OWNERS Alastair and Sheila, who both work in the finance industry, and their one-year-old daughter Audrey

THEIR HOME A five-bedroom detached house built in 1890

THE PROJECT The couple renovated the entire house, and added an orangery extension to create a contemporary kitchen with seating and dining area

ROOM SIZE 6 x 7m

DESIGNER Sofia Bune Strandh at Sola Kitchens

CABINETRY Frillen range by Sola Kitchens, £37,200, cabinetry only

PROJECT BUDGET £60,000, excluding building work

DESIGN SOLUTION *Sofia Bune Strandh explains...*

What was the brief?

Alastair and Sheila wanted a large kitchen with breakfast and dining areas and uninterrupted views to the garden. They didn't want wall units, but needed lots of storage and work space.

Were there any particular issues?

The biggest challenge was the short corridor between the formal dining room and kitchen. Our solution was to panel the walkway and when the doors are open they are completely flush.

How did you make the layout work?

We worked with the concept of keeping the room very open. The peninsula unit and bank were designed so that whoever is cooking feels included in the rest of the family. Despite the extensive worksurfaces, there is still a large amount of circulation space, which is important for maintaining an open feel.

What about the storage?

As well as the larder cupboards, we also created

a dresser-style cabinet on the wall with the ovens, which has space for glasses and cups on the shelves. There are narrow pull-out drawers for herbs, spices and oils.

How were the worksurfaces chosen?

The couple were clear that they wanted granite and that it should make a statement. They saw this Alaska White and liked it straight away.

Tell us about the appliances

There are two large ovens as well as a steam oven, combination microwave and two warming drawers that create a symmetrical arrangement. There's a wine cooler, too, and an undercounter fridge – for Alastair's beer.

Why are there two sinks?

They wanted a large sink in the main run of cabinets, and another sink in the peninsula unit nearer to the main food preparation area. We chose a smaller design here so it wouldn't take up too much worksurface space.



FROM LEFT *Space efficient* Twin cabinets create food storage either side of the walkway to the formal dining room, while shelves on the backs of the doors maximise the interior space and make the contents more easily accessible

Artistic flair Alastair commissioned artist Shuby to create an original piece to complement the kitchen's colour scheme

Set the tone A row of three lime-green pendants creates a pop of colour against the indigo-painted cabinets. The look was inspired by the kind of schemes used by the painter Patrick Caulfield, known for his bold canvases



Relaxed entertaining

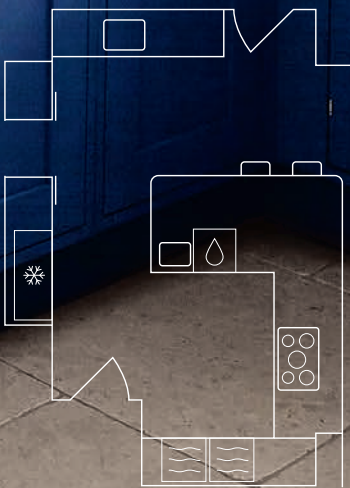
The couple chose a reclaimed teak table for its pleasing textural finish and opted for chairs in different styles and colours. A disco ball above the table adds an element of fun and indicates that the room is a party space, too

Sparkle and shine

The pronounced crystals in the granite worksurface create a bold textural contrast with the rest of the scheme



The layout



‘BUILT-IN CEILING SPEAKERS AND A SONOS SOUND SYSTEM ALLOW US TO ROUTE MUSIC TO ANY ROOM IN THE HOUSE – OR TO JUST A SELECTION OF SPEAKERS FOR PARTIES’



FROM LEFT *Clever extra* The three-drawer unit next to the wine cooler includes hidden sockets so that mobiles and tablets can be charged without electrical wires trailing across surfaces

Sociable room The breakfast bar means Sheila can still interact with guests and family when she's cooking

Party time The kitchen is a space for entertaining and relaxing, so Alastair opted for a wine cooler and a separate undercounter drinks fridge

The details

CABINETRY Bespoke units from the Frillen range, handpainted in DH Indigo from Dulux's Heritage range, by Sola Kitchens, £37,200

SURFACES Alaska White granite worktop, around £350lin m, Sola Kitchens. Dijon tumbled limestone flooring, £54sq m, Mandarin Stone

APPLIANCES Two built-in ovens, £800 each; built-in steam oven, £1,350; built-in combination microwave, £1,250; built-in warming drawers, £600 each; four-ring gas hob, £840; fully integrated undercounter

fridge, £650; fully integrated dishwasher, £750, all Miele. Ceiling extractor, with flat ducting and without any spotlights, £1,935, Westin. Left-hung fridge freezer, £768; right-hung fridge freezer with ice and water dispenser, £882, both Fisher & Paykel. Wine cooler, £275, Caple

SINKS AND TAPS Single-bowl sink in stainless steel, £309; single-bowl sink in stainless steel, £219, both Franke. Monobloc mixer tap with pull-out spray in chrome, £286; monobloc mixer tap in chrome, £224, both Gessi

FINISHING TOUCHES Unmilled natural teak dining table, £1,125, Raft. Eames style DSW dining chair in red, £49.50; Sherwood dining chair in white, £49.50; Lodovico dining chairs in green and orange, £45 each, all Atlantic Shopping. Leksandstol bar stools, £595 each, Sola Kitchens. Endon Alzira 1 light ceiling pendants in green, £66.24 each, Ocean Lighting. Disco ball, for similar try mirror ball 40cm, £28.80, Lighting Partners. Sofa, for similar try Karlstad, £275, Ikea. For similar cushions try Colourful Square by Bluebellgray, £70 each, Dovetail-Living. Painting by Shuby, price on application

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