

Time for change

When David and Kate Johnson were forced to replace their kitchen due to a faulty boiler, they seized the chance to create a more family-friendly scheme

Feature ALIX O'NEILL Photography LIND & CUMINGS DESIGN PHOTOGRAPHY

Project profile

THE OWNERS David Johnson, a company director, his wife Kate, a GP, their children Julie, 13, William, 11, Anna, 8, and Rebecca, 6

THEIR HOME A Victorian detached house in west London

THE PROJECT Replacing the existing kitchen and flooring

ROOM SIZE 6 x 7m

DESIGNER Pia Rosling at Sola Kitchens

CABINETRY Bespoke Aspen walnut and grey laminate units, from £15,000, Sola Kitchens

BUDGET Around £60,000

David and Kate Johnson hadn't planned on overhauling their kitchen, but their old boiler system in the basement needed to be replaced and relocated, and the only way to do this was by removing the floorboards and demolishing the kitchen. However, the couple welcomed the opportunity - bearing the wear and tear of two boisterous dogs and four children, the room had seen better days.

The existing scheme looked onto an internal courtyard and garden, and boasted a central island that allowed both

vistas to be appreciated. David and Kate liked these aspects, so they decided to stick with a similar layout, but chose a more ergonomic cabinetry design that would suit the needs of their growing family. David also remembered fondly the kitchen his mother had in the 1960s, and sought to unite Nordic and Mid-Century elements in the new scheme. 'This is the perfect kitchen for hanging out with family and entertaining friends, as it feels modern and minimalist without being cold,' says Frank Harrington of Atlantic Plumbing & Heating, who project-managed the kitchen refit.

Bigger and better

Hard-wearing porcelain tiles are a practical flooring choice for a busy family kitchen. The super-large format gives the impression of more space, too



Let's go outside
Glass doors run along the entire back wall and open up on to the garden – perfect for parties



Seeing red
The bold feature wall adds colour and drama to the scheme, while also serving a purpose



Go with the grain
Wooden detailing lends a retro edge to the modern units



Long shelf life
A built-in bookshelf filled with recipe books showcases the couple's love of cooking



DESIGN SOLUTIONS *Project manager Frank Harrington explains...*

What was your overall brief?
David and Kate wanted a very functional kitchen for their family, with storage for schoolbags and drawers for sports equipment and clothing. They also asked us to factor in space for a food mixer and other baking paraphernalia, as Kate often bakes and cooks with the younger girls, plus a built-in bookshelf to accommodate recipe books.

Were there any particular challenges?
Yes, the room's L-shaped layout was one. Because the couple wanted their family to be able to all work in the kitchen together, we had to maximise the size of the island without compromising the flow in the room. So it had

to be narrow at one end in order to fit the space. They requested seating at the larger, garden end, too, so we designed an elongated pear-shaped breakfast bar, making sure that the narrower part of the kitchen didn't feel cramped. It also provides more storage and work space.

Any other clever design details?
We decided to create a slightly rounded wall built into the back of the island, as it was important that the sink and hob areas were shielded from view when sitting at the table. The wall is painted bright red on one side and tiled with mosaics on the other, providing both an interesting design feature and a practical solution to concealing kitchen mess.

What about storage?
The family's two dogs tend to shed a lot of hair, which ruled out too much open or decorative shelving. There's the slimline bookcase at the garden end of the kitchen, but otherwise all storage is concealed neatly behind doors.

And the flooring?
Replacing and refitting the boiler involved taking up the floorboards, then the surface had to be strengthened, levelled out and insulated before underfloor heating and new flooring could be laid. We chose porcelain tiles because the Johnsons wanted something modern and low-maintenance, and specialist grouting ensures they will look great for years to come.





'The project started out of necessity and culminated in a dream kitchen that is both practical and beautiful'

Frank Harrington, project manager

Divide and conquer

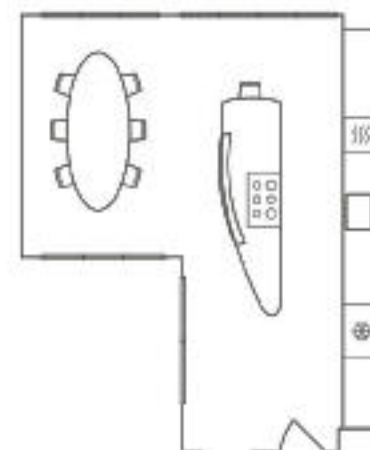
Filled with unusual features, the tailor-made island turns an otherwise simple scheme into something spectacular



Brilliant white

The bright palette makes the most of the light, while abstract artwork introduces colour to this area

The layout



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The details

CABINETRY Bespoke Aspen walnut and grey laminate units, from £15,000, Sola Kitchens

SURFACES Composite worktop in Pure White, from £3,000m, Sola Kitchens. Trend Vitreo 206 mosaic wall tiles, £265sq m; Bluestone 120 x 120cm floor tiles, £126 each, both World's End Tiles

APPLIANCES Built-in oven, £865; built-in combi microwave, £829; gas hob, £619; fully integrated dishwasher, £429, all Neff. Classixx chimney extractor, £480; American-style fridge freezer, £1,299, both Bosch

SINK AND TAPS Kubus KBX undermounted single-bowl sink, £324, Franke. Oxygene Cucina single-lever monobloc mixer tap, £192, Gessi. Basic boiling-water tap in polished chrome, £890, Quooker

FINISHING TOUCHES Eero Saarinen-style marble oval Tulip table, £995, Vita Interiors, has this look. Eames DSW chairs in white, £329 each, The Conran Shop. STUA Monochrome Onda white bar stool, £239, Nest.co.uk. Stockholm fruit bowl, £18, Ikea. Try Etsy for a wire animal sculpture like this one, from £26. For a similar glazed utensils pot try Petersham Nurseries, £17.50