

Hidden BEAUTY

A great kitchen is about more than surface appearances. It has to be beautiful on the inside too, as Louise and Chris discovered

PICTURES MIA LIND | WORDS JO LEEVERS

GO WITH THE FLOW

Timber tones, a stormy dark blue and a softer grey bring the Scandi aesthetic to this functional, flowing space. 'It needs to work hard for all the family,' says Louise

Saving the best until last is a tactic that paid off for Louise Boyd and Chris Keenan. They bought an 'untouched wreck' in South London six years ago and renovated it in stages. Creating a more flowing ground floor space with a side return extension came after they'd installed central heating, extended the loft and installed a bathroom. But it wasn't a job to rush into for the couple, who have three sons, Danny, six, Jack, four and Patrick, one. 'We wanted a kitchen that will look timeless and last,' says Louise.

The thoughtful approach to design at Sola Kitchens struck a chord with the couple. 'Right from the beginning Rhiannon was fantastic. She really listened and understood what we needed in terms of style and practical touches,' says Louise. As Chris is a civil engineer, he has high standards; 'Some kitchens look high-end, but their units aren't as structurally sound as you would expect,' says Louise. 'But we knew we were on to a good thing when we saw that all of Sola's are solid wood.'

The design incorporates some practical considerations, including cookers that are set very slightly lower than usual as, at 5ft, Louise isn't tall. As for storage, they started by drawing up a list of everything they actually needed to have access to on a regular basis. 'If you build loads of storage you'll always find stuff to put in there – but if you only use an item every six months, that's wasted space,' says Louise.

Standout details include a breakfast pantry built into a chimney breast, with doors that open to reveal an interior painted in mellow yellow with walnut shelving. 'I love that this kitchen looks fab on the surface, but open the doors and there are rich details inside,' says Louise.

Chris and Louise also asked Sola to make a family friendly bench that forms a base to the large bi-fold window. 'It has three sections of storage under the cushions, one for each boy,' says Louise.

The kitchen was finished the day before Chris' 40th birthday, which coincided with baby Patrick's christening. 'It was the first time in ages that we'd been able to have a big crowd of family and friends around,' she says. 'The space worked so well, with different conversations happening in different areas, but everyone feeling very much together. It was also a lovely way to celebrate finishing the final but most important space for our family. It's a kitchen with hidden depths.' **EKBB**



MELLOW MOOD

The mustard yellow interior of this pantry with a breakfast bar feels like an added bonus when the doors are folded back. 'I love how this kitchen has hidden beauty behind its doors,' says Louise



WELL PLACED
The drawer insert is another hidden pocket of tactile pleasure in this kitchen

WARM WOOD
Timber tones hint at the Scandinavian vibe that runs through the space



Kitchen profile

Bespoke, solid wood cabinetry has been hand-painted in a soothing grey with the island in rich dark blue. Standout details, including a breakfast pantry built into an existing chimney breast and a bench integrated into a bi-fold window, reflect Sola's Scandinavian ethos of combining practicality with good looks.

SOLA KITCHENS 121 Munster Road, London, United Kingdom SW6 6DH.
Tel 020 3004 0898. solakitchens.com
Bespoke complete kitchens from £35,000.

HOT SPOT

Accessories echo the pop of yellow inside the pantry for a cohesive look

FINE EDGE

Chamfered edges emphasise the bespoke nature of the solid, hand-painted wood drawers with handles



RETRO FEEL

Vintage Ercol chairs and parquet with a subtle weathered character feed into the kitchen's timeless appeal

COOL CRAFTING
Chris made the table from a large panel of walnut, teamed with trestles sourced separately, for a reinvented mid-century feel

'I decided to team paler greys with a richer dark blue island for a look that will endure'

LIGHT INDUSTRY
Left Anglepoise pendants and plain metro tiles keep the backdrop functional and unfussy



PLANNED OUT
Above A pre-prepared checklist helped keep storage drawers focused and in the right locations for ease and practicality

SITTING PRETTY
Below Each child has his own storage box, but from the front the bench is one seamless piece of wood



RHIANNON PHENIX
DESIGNER,
SOLA KITCHENS

Q&a

What considerations did you work into the design? It needed to accommodate a growing family and work not only as a kitchen but also as a living space that opens out to the garden. The style needed to be timeless and very durable with lots of storage, yet without overpowering the space with an overly functional 'kitchen' feel.

What makes this design work? It is set up with all the members of the family in mind. Slide-and-hide appliances avoid the risk of children knocking into open oven doors and there is well thought-out storage - even a dedicated

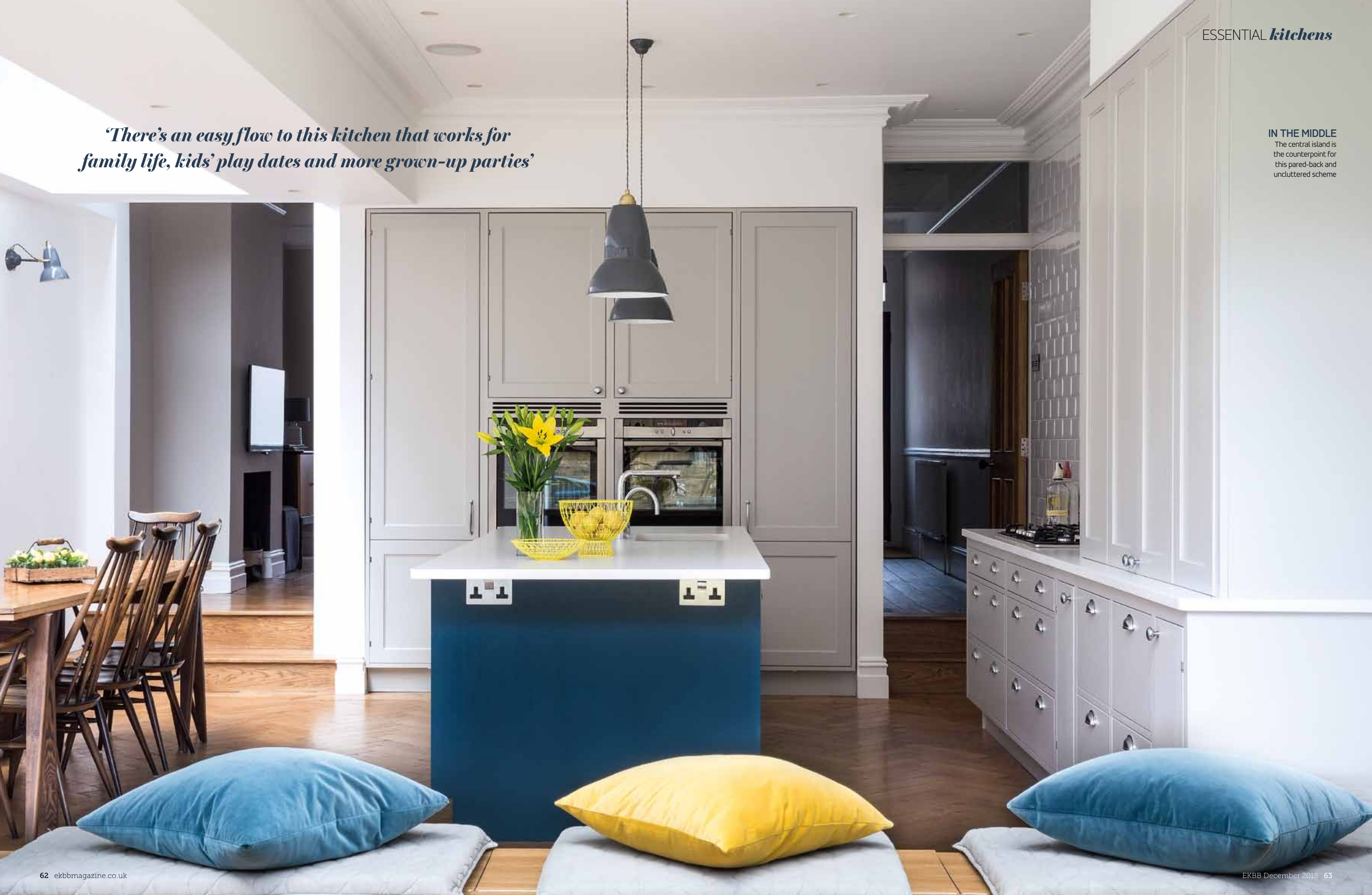
cereal cupboard for the boys! A generous play area between the island and the bench is perfect for the boys and their friends to hang out and, if there are lots of adults and children eating at the same time, an additional table can be set up for the children.

What are the features that set it apart? The bespoke breakfast pantry with its pop of colour and the bench seating with three built-in storage boxes are typically Scandi touches - functional but beautiful to look at. Chamfered edges on the solid wood doors emphasise the kitchen's bespoke finish.

‘There’s an easy flow to this kitchen that works for family life, kids’ play dates and more grown-up parties’

IN THE MIDDLE

The central island is the counterpoint for this pared-back and uncluttered scheme





OPEN HOUSE

The couple opted for a bi-fold window as it creates the same effect as doors but means the wall space can be utilised for built-in seating

LIGHT PLAY

Wall lights illuminate the dining area by night. By day sunlight streams through the rooflight



Stockists

APPLIANCES

Two B46E54N3GB **single ovens**, £855 each; T29R66N1 **gas hob**, £540; S5IT69X3GB integrated **dishwasher**, £580, all Neff. KIV38A51GB **fridge-freezer**, £670, Bosch. Largo LAX 160-36/16 **sink**, £335, Franke. Oxygene 13191 031, **chrome tap**, £175, Gessi. Nordic Round PR03-VAQ, chrome **boiling water tap**, £950, Quooker.

FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

Worktop in White Storm Suede, £540 per linear m, Silestone. Vintage **Ercol chairs**, £120 for six, bric-a-brac shop, find similar on eBay. **Bench pew**, £20, Criterion Auctions. Similar **dining table**, Fjord, £229, Made.com. Anglepoise Original 1227 brass maxi **pendants**, £180 each; Anglepoise Original 1227 brass **wall lights**, £120 each, all John Lewis. Similar **seat pads**, £8 each, John Lewis. Velvet **cushion covers**, £6.99 each, H&M. Oak aged **parquet flooring**, £48.33 per sq. m, The Natural Wood Floor Company, fitted by AD Flooring. **Metro tiles**, £19.50 per sq. m, Topps Tiles. Wire **fruit bowls**, £15 each, Marks & Spencer. Similar kitchen **scales**, £20, John Lewis.

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