



THE PERFECT FIT

Kim and Paddy Payne have achieved the ideal combination of style and function in a house full of character – and challenging proportions

FEATURE **KATHARINE CLEMOW** PHOTOGRAPHS **PETER WRIGHT**

After nearly two decades in their home, Kim and Paddy Payne decided the time had come to create the kitchen they'd always wanted. The existing room in their 17th-century barn conversion was situated away from the main part of the house; and with a family and busy work lives, including owning a film editing business, they'd never found the time, funds or energy to improve on what they'd inherited when they'd moved in. As their children Tim and Amelia grew into teenagers, however, the Paynes decided they could finally invest in the perfect kitchen.

The new kitchen was relocated to the heart of the property and Kim's aim was to create an informal

family living space to maximise the times when the children were home and the family was together. They wanted to remove some of the clutter of family life for a more minimalist, grown-up space, which would nevertheless still reflect the character of the people living there. Favourite possessions, including the stained glass ornament above the kitchen table, which was a thank you gift to Paddy from some friends, and pieces of cherished striped crockery, can now be appreciated on display:

After much experience of solitary food preparation in a cramped kitchen with guests waiting in the dining room, Kim also wanted plenty of room to socialise with friends and the plan was to integrate a kitchen ►

ABOVE Zimbabwean granite worktops are hard-wearing and help the kitchen blend with the dark beams of the existing room. They were all oversized and had to be scribed into the walls around the many protruding beams. The stained glass ornament hanging over the table was a gift from some friends

THIS PAGE The central island provides essential storage and a place to enjoy a glass of wine or cup of tea





ABOVE RIGHT An Elica charcoal extractor fan side-stepped the need for a canopy hood

TOP A built-in oven and hob put Kim at the heart of the kitchen so she can spend time with her guests

ABOVE A few pieces of free-standing furniture were added to the room, including this butcher's block, which Kim stripped and painted in a sage colour

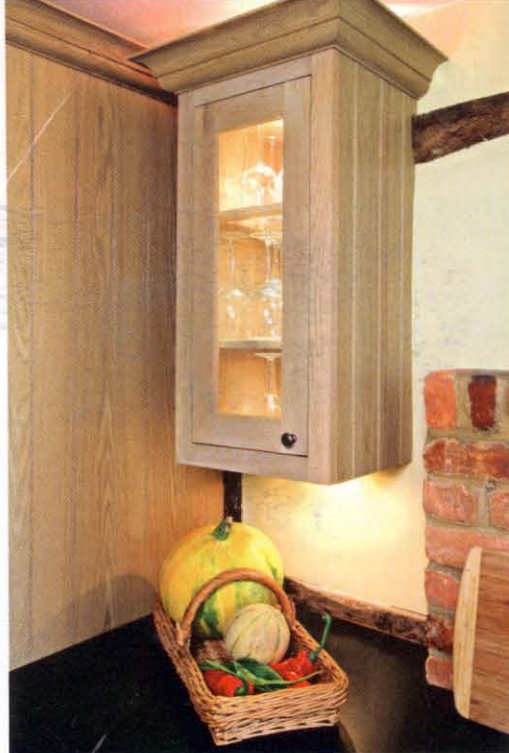
and living area with a green oak extension providing a new eating area. This, Kim says, 'has really brought the outside in as it feels almost like sitting right in the garden, with doors opening out on to the rear patio – and it's great for summer barbecues.' Triple insulation and underfloor heating mean even in winter it is warm.

Paddy and Kim had a tight budget for their project and needed the expertise of an experienced designer to guide them, so it was a relief to meet designer Mark Johnson at Beau-Port Kitchens. He recommended Neptune and together they decided on the Henley Oak range, which blended in better with its surroundings than a painted kitchen would have. It provides what Kim calls 'seamless, timeless design

with a contemporary but classic feel' and helps bridge the different spaces created by the extension – the pale blonde of the wood complements the light green oak perfectly and lifts the light in the whole room. With other work on the house ahead of them, including a new formal dining room where the old kitchen was, the most important thing was to create a kitchen that would last, with a design they would appreciate as much in 10 years as they did the day they chose it.

Making the new kitchen fit the space they had wasn't easy and Mark remembers well how 'the beamed walls proved a challenge in unit planning as there didn't seem to be a straight line anywhere in the house – even the floor was on a slope.' Accommodating all of this period charm meant eight different versions of the plans were eventually drawn up by the end of the project and many hours spent measuring and re-measuring to find ways of attaching the units without disrupting the overall look. Knowing their home and its quirks, the Paynes had foreseen ▶

'The green oak extension has brought the outside in – it's like being in the garden'



such a process and had wisely chosen a designer who worked close to their Hampshire home.

As intended, the central island is the focal point of the room, providing valuable storage, a built-in hob and an overhang, which is the ideal place to relax on a stool for a chat or a drink before a meal. It brings together three separate areas of the room and is well worth the effort of having the Zimbabwean granite worktop scribed around the gnarled existing central beam. A decision was made at the outset that no one feature should dominate the room, which informed the choice of the unusual extractor fan suspended above the island instead of a clumsy canopy hood, door knobs that are so discreet as to be almost invisible, and the absence of a large fridge, which is still in the old room.

To complement the impressive new kitchen, the dated pine boards were taken up and replaced with beautiful slate, which has an interesting texture and attractive flashes of ochre, grey and green running through it. Though for Kim the practical aspect of the floor was just as important – ‘with a busy household

‘The beamed walls proved a challenge as there wasn’t a straight line anywhere’

filled with a constant trail of muddy football boots and dogs it had to be hard-wearing too,’ she says.

The project has been a huge success, adds Kim. ‘It’s satisfying to have finally got what we wanted. The kitchen has been a pleasure to live in and work in and we have welcomed lots of friends here over the last year.’ The sole drawback she does admit is that with the kitchen central to the entertaining area: ‘if a dish goes wrong, there is nowhere to hide, and for the first time in my life I have to start following recipes.’ This seems a small price to pay for a kitchen that was so worth the wait. ➔

Neptune kitchens start from £12,000. Call 01793 881144 or visit neptune.co.uk for a brochure and your nearest stockist. Beau-Port Kitchens can be contacted on 0845 230 1545, or via beau-port-kitchens.com.

ABOVE LEFT The butler’s sink is positioned to offer pretty views of the garden
TOP Uneven beamed walls meant that fitting the units was the biggest challenge but the cupboards now provide an attractive way of storing favourite glasses
ABOVE The skirting plinths gave a ‘fitted cabinet’ furniture feel to the units

12 OF THE BEST OCCASIONAL TABLES



COFFEE TABLES These low tables are the central focus of a seating group **1 Trafalgar coffee table** with two drawers in fruitwood with brass fittings, D56cm x H41cm x L111cm, £429, Multiyork; **2 Garrat oiled oak coffee table** with 12 small drawers and a hinged top chest for storage, D66cm x H41cm x L118cm, £575, Laura Ashley; **3 Henley rectangular oak coffee table**, D65cm x H45cm x L120cm, £495, Neptune; **4 Industrial look metal frame coffee table** with wooden top and shelf, D76.5cm x H52cm x L127.5cm, £202.86, Bass Interiors;

SIDE TABLES Place these alongside a sofa or chair to hold a lamp **5 Boston tripod side table** in French Walnut stained wood, Dia57cm, H53cm, £285; smaller size, Dia40cm, H46cm, £199, Oka; **6 Anjou side table** in cherrywood with rounded corners and one drawer, W45cm x D45cm x H60cm, £830,

From coffee and side to console tables



Wesley-Barrell; **7 Margaux single drawer side table** in French grey, W55cm x D40cm x H76cm, £355.16, Juliettes Interiors; **8 Henley side pedestal table** in oak, Dia60cm, H60cm, £295, Neptune;

CONSOLE TABLES These elegant tables stand against the wall or behind the sofa **9 Burford bow-shaped console table** in mango wood, D45cm x H76cm x L90cm, £450, from The Country Collection at JVB; **10 Suri console table** in lacquered poplar wood, D26cm x H83cm x L100cm, £225, from the Chinese collection at John Lewis; **11 Emma console table** in cherrywood with lacquered panels, D42.5cm x H87cm x L165cm, from £1,876, from Collection Les Provinciales, Roche Bobois; **12 Ermitage half moon table** in beech with painted finish, D38cm x H77cm x L85cm, £800, Grange. ➔ *For stockist and contact details, turn to page 176*