





‘WE TRANSFORMED OUR HOME WITH A NEW KITCHEN-DINER’

Kathryn and Andrew Smith replaced an old conservatory to create an open-plan space



WASTED SPACE

Top A leaky conservatory had been added at the rear of the house but was rarely used as it was too cold in winter and too hot in summer

NEW ADDITION

Left Kathryn and Andrew replaced the conservatory with a modern, practical extension that links the dining area to the garden. Aluminium bi-fold doors and windows, Origin.

THE OWNERS

Kathryn Smith, owner of a children's clothing business, and husband Andrew, a procurement director, live here with their children, Isaac, eight, and Rosa, five

THE PROPERTY

A detached, four-bedroom house, built in 1990

THE LOCATION

Haddenham, Buckinghamshire

WHAT THEY SPENT

The family spent £95,800 on their kitchen, including building work



We wanted to create an open-plan living space where we could keep an eye on the children as they played while chatting to friends as we cooked dinner,' says Kathryn. She and husband Andrew bought their detached 1990s home in Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, four years ago, having upsized from a terraced house in north Oxford to cater for their growing family. 'We were looking for a house with generous living space to accommodate visiting family and friends, and which offered flexibility for working from home,' adds Andrew. 'As soon as we saw this place, we knew that it fit the bill.'

After living in the house for three years to get a better idea of how they used the space, the couple decided the dated conservatory at the rear of the property needed to go. 'Like >

OPEN-PLAN DESIGN

The ground floor has been opened up to create a large space, and the kitchen made bespoke to fit the bay window in the new extension. Handmade units and wooden island worktop, Kingsey Kitchens. Units painted in Stiffkey Blue and Elephant's Breath, Farrow & Ball. Silestone quartz worktops, The Marble Workshop. Floor tiles, Walls & Floors. Ceiling light, Rockett St George



many conservatories, we found it was cold in winter and hot in summer,' recalls Kathryn. 'It had leaked a few times and, as we were looking to change the layout of the kitchen anyway, it made sense to replace the conservatory with an extension.'

To achieve the space they wanted, Andrew and Kathryn decided to completely remodel the ground floor. 'We wanted a lighter, brighter and friendlier space to spend time in,' says Andrew. The couple called on the services of Building Bespoke, a local company offering a complete design and construction service.

Internal walls were removed between the kitchen, dining room, study and conservatory, with the latter demolished and a brick-built extension erected in its footprint. The kitchen was moved into the new extension, and bi-fold doors were added where it once stood, creating a dining room with access to the garden. At the front of the house, a nine-by-five-metre reception room was divided in two to create a living room and home office.

'We managed to live in the house throughout the project. It was surprisingly easy as the builders built the extension and fitted the

new kitchen before they removed the old one,' says Kathryn. 'The project ran really smoothly as the builders subcontracted out the electrics, plumbing, tiling and decorating for us,' adds Andrew. 'They're a local company and used local tradespeople – so it was nice for us to build good relationships with people we bump into around the village.'

One of the couple's favourite elements of the new space is the big bay windows and bi-fold doors, from Origin. 'They let in an amazing amount of light and look stunning,' says Andrew. They're also particularly proud of the rooflight, which brightens the space.

As the old L-shaped kitchen was dull and dated, with fussy dark-wood units and melamine worktops, Andrew and Kathryn opted for a mixture of industrial, rustic and contemporary influences in the new space to make it as bright and bold as possible. 'We wanted something a bit different but not too wacky,' says Kathryn. 'We chose to have the kitchen units follow the shape of the bay window, so these had to be made bespoke.' They commissioned local company Kingsey Kitchens to make the units and had them spray-painted dark blue. Basic kitchen units were used to create the island, and the sides were then spray-painted in light grey to balance the blue.

'For the worktops, we splashed out on a quartz for the majority of the kitchen, but we wanted something different for the island,' continues Kathryn. 'Our carpenter did a fantastic job bolting together some old planks of timber before sanding, oiling and shaping them. It's a really calm area to relax with a glass of wine in the evening.'

Now the rear of the house is complete, Kathryn and Andrew have been inspired to keep on improving. 'We wish we'd known how bad the front of the house would look once the back was finished,' laughs Kathryn. 'We've got a house of two halves at the moment, but we'll definitely tackle the front in a year or so. Now we've seen how rewarding it is to transform a space, we're inspired to carry on with the rest of the house.' ●

COSTS

Building work (including electrics, plumbing and decorating) **£75,000**
Kitchen **£14,000**
Doors and windows **£6,000**
Floor tiles **£800**
TOTAL £95,800

CONTACTS

Design and construction Building Bespoke, 0845 619 4450, buildingbespoke.com
Kitchen Kingsey Kitchens
Doors and windows Origin