

OPEN-PLAN ADDITION TO A 1970S HOUSE

Clare and Simon Rodemark have added a carefully planned kitchen-diner that's perfect for entertaining

WORDS ANNABELLE GRUNDY PHOTOGRAPHS COLIN POOLE

We've always loved the idea of a big, modern kitchen for entertaining,' says Clare. 'In fact, it was one of the main reasons for moving here.' After five years in their previous home, Clare and her husband Simon had upgraded it as much as they could and were ready to take on a new challenge. 'The layout was the main problem with our old house,' recalls Clare. 'The kitchen was away from the entertaining area, and whenever we had guests over, whoever was cooking would be cut off from everyone.'

The couple began looking for a new home with the potential for a spacious, multi-functional kitchen, dining and living area. After several months of searching, they found this tired 1970s-built property. 'The kitchen and through dining-living room were both at the back, and



PAST ITS BEST
The original kitchen was outdated and ready to be replaced

BEFORE

AFTER



'We wanted a clutter-free kitchen with clean, modern lines, and a big island as the focal point'

THE OWNERS

Clare Rodemark, HR manager for a utility company, lives here with husband Simon, a medical sales manager

THE PROPERTY

A 1970s four-bedroom detached house in Lindfield, West Sussex

THEY LOVE

Pinterest – for inspiration

Jaguar F-Type coupé

Our big fridge-freezer
Sushi
The Harry Potter books
Any Leonardo DiCaprio film
Diving in Bali
Gin and tonic with lime
Skiing

TOTAL PROJECT COST
£158,025

the garden was large enough for us to extend outwards as well,' says Simon. 'We had no qualms about replacing the 40-year-old kitchen, either. It was at the end of its life.'

While the purchase progressed, Clare drafted plans to transform the ground floor. The kitchen and dining room would be knocked through, and the living room separated off with a new dividing wall. Across the back of the house, they planned to build a new, four-metre-wide extension with bi-fold doors. The result would be a light-filled, L-shaped kitchen-dining and relaxation space, with an opening through to the living room.

The couple used an augmented reality app called Room Planner Home Design, and visuals drawn up by Clare's father, an artist. Local builder Alistair Taylor, who had worked on Simon and Clare's previous house, was >

CRISP LOOK

Left Bi-fold doors and rooflights maximise the natural light. Eames-style DAW chairs, Vertigo Interiors. For a similar table, try Willis & Gambier

FRESH IDEAS

Below A pop-up socket in the island has both electricity and USB points. Socket, Mr Resistor. Work surface, Silestone

SOCIAL SPOT

Bottom image The island is the hub of the kitchen. Bar stools, About a Stool. Pendant light, Tufnells



contracted to work on the new extension. Luckily, planning permission wasn't needed as it was classed as within permitted development rights.

'We knew we'd have plenty of light, so we wanted a clutter-free kitchen with clean, modern lines, and a big island as the focal point,' says Clare. 'We cook a lot, so well-functioning appliances were another must-have.'

Sarah Henshall, at The Kitchen People, helped the couple chose white and grey high-gloss Tomba furniture from Second Nature, teamed with slim-profile Silestone work surfaces and a vibrant green glass splashback.

Clare and Simon acted as project managers throughout the build, sourcing and scheduling the arrival of flooring, appliances, the bi-fold doors and rooflights. Fortunately, their builder helped them to co-ordinate deliveries. 'It was a real collaboration,' says Simon. 'Clare and I felt we were in control, but we could also call on Alistair's expertise and knowledge when we needed to.'

Although the couple were both working full-time, they used their spare hours to do thorough product research, shopping around for deals. They were determined to track down wider-than-standard bi-fold doors, so they visited an interiors exhibition where they found Express Bi-folds. The company also supplied them with a new window and two large rooflights.

Clare and Simon designed the complex lighting scheme during a marathon four-hour planning session; while several weekends were devoted to finding the perfect, large, rectangular floor tiles. 'We thought through every issue very carefully,' says Simon. 'We were investing a lot, so we were determined to get things right first time.'

Building started in spring 2015 and for three months, Clare and Simon made do with the old kitchen units set up in the garage. The project progressed smoothly until towards the end, when the work surfaces arrived and some of the Silestone was the wrong depth, 'Replacing it set us back another four weeks,' says Simon. 'It was very tempting just to stick with what had arrived but I'm glad we decided to reorder and not compromise.'



SLEEK AND STYLISH
Units and appliances are efficiently arranged. Oven, and hob, Neff. Fridge-freezer, Fisher & Paykel. Flooring, Extra Special Tile Company

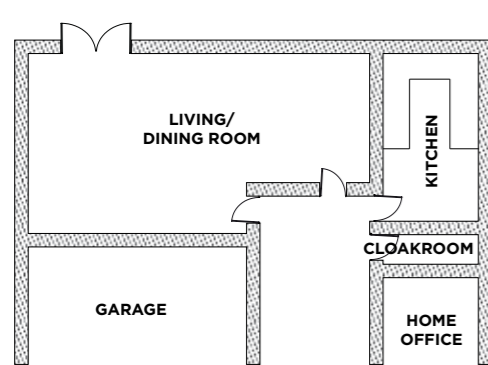
Several weeks beforehand, the couple had invited numerous friends and family over for a summer barbecue. The delay caused by reordering the work surfaces meant the kitchen was only just ready in time. 'It was literally finished off the day before the barbecue,' says Clare. 'Next afternoon there were 50 people milling around admiring it.'

Since then, the new kitchen and living area has really come into its own, 'We both really enjoy just being at home now - it's perfect,' adds Clare. ☺

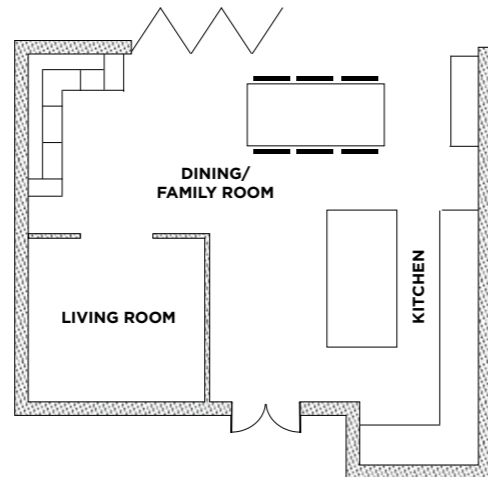


GARDEN ACCESS
The glazed panels in the bi-fold doors, from Express Bi-Folds, are bigger than standard. Inside, units matching the kitchen create sideboard-style storage

BEFORE



AFTER



RECONFIGURED LAYOUT

An extension was added and internal walls knocked down to make a lighter, more open space for eating and entertaining

LIGHT-FILLED AREA

Two rooflights make a striking feature. The corner sofa was brought from the couple's previous home; for similar, try the Cooper from John Lewis



THE COSTS AND CONTACTS

Building work
£90,000

Kitchen units
£22,000

Bi-fold doors and roof lights
£20,000

Appliances
£7,700

Flooring, including underfloor heating
£7,500

Work surfaces
£6,000

Architect and structural engineer's fees
£2,200

Accessories
£1,400

Splashback
£1,225

TOTAL
£158,025

Construction and building
Taylormade Property Services, 01444 412855, taylormadepropertyservices.co.uk

Kitchen design and supply
The Kitchen People, kitchenpeople.co.uk
Kitchen units Second Nature, sncollection.o.uk
Bi-fold doors and rooflights Express Bi-folds, expressbifolds.co.uk