

Real Homes  
KITCHEN REDESIGN

# BOLD CHANGE

WORDS AND STYLING **CASSIE PRYCE** PHOTOGRAPHS **JEREMY PHILLIPS**

Knocking two rooms into one has given Carrie and Ben Russell a spacious kitchen-diner that they have filled with vibrant colour and personal touches

#### OPEN PLAN

A stylish island helps the flow between kitchen and dining areas. The worktops are Silestone quartz from Stone Connection Wood. Metal stools from Simply Barstool provide informal seating. Parquet design floor tiles by Neisha Crosland from Harvey Maria. Metallic pendant light, Leyton Lighting. Clock, Ikea



‘We loved the contemporary feel of the design and knew we could mix in traditional elements to stop it from feeling clinical’



THE LARGE-SCALE  
FORMAT OF THE TILES  
HELPS TO CREATE AN  
ILLUSION OF SPACE

**COLOUR  
CONNECTION**

A palette of yellow and grey helps to unify the different zones. Walls painted in Dulux's Chic Shadow matt emulsion, chimney breasts painted in Fired Earth's Hustle at 5pm. The armchair and footstool are from Ebay. Copper floor lamp, Aldi. Grey curtains, Dunelm

hen Carrie and Ben moved into their house back in 2015, remodelling the kitchen was high on their list of priorities. A cramped layout meant it was barely big enough for more than one person to be in there at a time, and the units and tiles

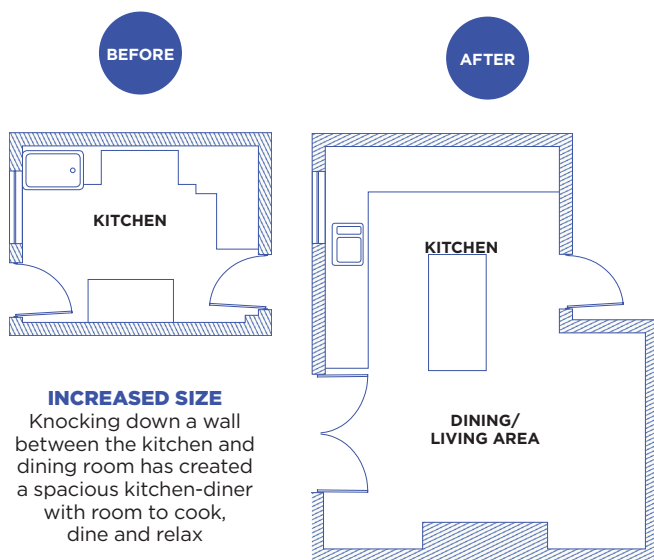
made it feel very dated. 'There was also a separate dining room next to the kitchen, but we felt this was a waste of space as we knew we'd only use it occasionally,' says Carrie.

Knocking down the wall between the two rooms was the obvious solution as it would give the couple a larger space for an open-plan kitchen-diner. Thanks to Ben's background in kitchen design, the couple were able to play around with layouts and ideas on his design software before approaching their builder. 'We had a clear idea of how we wanted the space to look from an early stage,' says Carrie.

Having measured up the kitchen and dining room, Ben drew up the new layout of the room. Luckily, the space proved to be large enough for the kitchen island that both were keen to incorporate into the layout. 'Ben has designed so many kitchens over the years he knows how an island can transform the look and function of a kitchen,' Carrie reveals. 'Not only does it act as a social hub, but it also provides additional storage space – something we definitely needed.'

With the plans finalised, the couple got stuck in and removed the old kitchen and tiles themselves to help keep costs down. 'We managed to sell the old kitchen and range cooker on Ebay, which worked out perfectly as the buyer came to take everything away and it meant we gained some extra cash towards the cost of the remodel,' says Carrie. With help from a builder friend, the couple removed the dividing wall between the kitchen and dining room then

## PLANS



**THE OWNERS**  
Carrie Russell, a card store manager, and her husband, Ben, a director at Arlington Interiors, live here with their cat, Stella

**THE PROPERTY**  
A four-bedroom, semi-detached Edwardian house in Bramley, Leeds

**CARRIE LOVES**  
The kitchen, as it's the heart of their home  
**Zara Home for homeware and accessories**  
The colour blue  
**Andy Warhol**  
Versace

**TOTAL PROJECT COST**  
£23,093

**HANDMADE TOUCHES**  
Right Ben found the scaffolding boards in a local reclamation yard, then bought supports from Ebay to turn them into wall shelves. Their rustic finish contrasts with the white metro tiles from Leeds Tiles and Bathrooms, and the sleek units from Arlington Interiors

inserted an RSJ to support the new opening. 'This took a little longer than expected as the RSJ had to be clad with a fire-resistant plasterboard to meeting building requirements,' Carrie explains.

With the structural changes completed, Carrie and Ben were able to finalise their choice of kitchen units, worktops and appliances. Keen to go for a sleek, modern look, they settled on a Beeck handleless system with matt grey units. 'We loved the contemporary feel of the design and knew we could mix in more traditional elements elsewhere to stop it from feeling clinical,' says Carrie. 'We replaced the old range cooker with an induction hob to work with the modern units, and the worktops are 12mm Silestone quartz to complete the contemporary look.' With Ben keen to include lots of high-end gadgets, they also fitted a stylish wine cooler into the side of the island, a Quooker boiling water tap by the sink and integrated fridge under the oven.

To unify the different zones within the space, the couple opted for a punchy yellow and grey colour scheme throughout, with vibrant feature walls in the kitchen and dining areas. Carrie also fell in love with some bold geometric floor tiles from Harvey Maria. 'The grey and white colour ties in perfectly with the kitchen, and the pop of pattern contrasts against the minimalist units,' she says. A built-in fireplace in the dining room makes this space feel welcoming in the evenings, while a cosy reading nook in the corner is the perfect spot to sit and chat while either Ben or Carrie is cooking in the kitchen.

To add character, Ben made a set of wall shelves from reclaimed scaffolding boards, which he cut down to size, sanded and then coated with a watered-down stain to let the wood grain show through. 'They add a different colour and texture to the room and mean we have extra storage without the need for bulky wall units,' says Carrie. 'Ben even fitted LED strips to the undersides of the shelves to provide extra lighting for the worktops.'

The whole project has been a positive experience for Carrie and Ben and, although some parts took longer than anticipated, they're thrilled with the end result of the redesign project. 'As with any renovation, there were highs and lows,' says Carrie, 'but we now love spending time in here, entertaining our friends and family.' 🍷





AFTER



BEFORE

**COSTS & CONTACTS**

- Kitchen units **£7,372**
- Appliances **£6,620**
- Worktops **£4,256**
- Building work including plastering **£1,600**
- Windows and doors **£1,500**
- Flooring **£1,245**
- Decoration **£500**
- TOTAL £23,093**

**Builder** Martyn Cana, 07738 666759  
**Units and appliances** Arlington Interiors, 0113 218 8218, arlington-interiors.co.uk  
**Decorators** Richardson Painting & Decorating, 07894 247931  
**Worktops** Stone Connection, 01904 405405  
**Windows** Leeds Windows & Doors, leeds-windows-and-doors.co.uk

**OLD KITCHEN**

Above Brown wall tiles and worktops made the room feel dark and dingy. The unwanted range cooker was sold and the money used for the new kitchen-diner

**DINING AREA**

The mismatched dining chairs are from Ebay and they add to the eclectic style of the space, teamed with the upcycled vintage bureau from Done Up North. The canvas above the fireplace was painted by Carrie. A vintage piece of stained glass from Ebay brings in light. For a similar origami-style shade, try Iconic Lights

