

## FACT FILE

## THE OWNERS

Carmel Reynolds, who owns a launderette, and her husband John, a retired builder, live here with son Harrison, 18

## THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom, semi-detached house built in the 1930s

## THE LOCATION

Leeds, West Yorkshire

## WHAT THEY SPENT

The couple's kitchen project cost around £26,000

## BEFORE



## EXTENSION PROJECT

Above John built the new two-storey extension from scratch. A local building control inspector reviewed his work to ensure it was consistent with regulations

# 'We used a bold colour as the starting point for our scheme'

Carmel and John Reynolds overcame a serious personal setback and delays to create a vibrant open-plan kitchen extension full of character

WORDS **HEATHER DIXON** PHOTOGRAPHS **COLIN POOLE**

## NEW KITCHEN

The RWK Rialto units in Mignonette Green are teamed with granite worktops from Stone Connection for definition – all supplied by Arlington Interiors. The floor tiles are from Ceramodo, while Leeds Windows and Doors supplied the windows. Vases from Dunelm Mill are displayed on glass shelving from Homebase to add interest

## DINING AREA

Left Calm tones have been used in the dining space, with a wall painted in Celtic Forest by Dulux. For a similar table try the Alaska by Julian Bowen. A Velux skylight helps to illuminate the dining space, which is positioned between a living area and bi-fold doors from Express Bi-folding Doors



For years, we had dreamt of having a spacious kitchen-diner that opened on to the garden,' recalls Carmel.

'The old kitchen was too small, and family meals in the separate dining room tended to be special occasions. As we have a large garden, we could build outwards at the back without losing too much outdoor space, so we decided to add a two-storey extension across the width of the house.'

The couple hired a local architect to draw up plans for an extension to double the size of the kitchen by creating an L-shaped room with a dining area and bi-fold doors opening on to the patio. Upstairs, there was to be an extended family bathroom and bedroom.

With planning permission approved within six weeks, John quickly set to work digging the concrete foundations, as well as building the walls with breezeblocks and bricks to the damp-proof course level.

'When we started making plans for a bigger kitchen, we knew we would have to wait a few years until John had time to build it because of his busy work schedule, so we were excited when he finally started to dig the foundations,' says Carmel.

John's work was checked periodically by a building regulations inspector as he took the walls to roof level, and added a pantile roof to match the original property.

To make the shell watertight, the extension was fitted with new windows

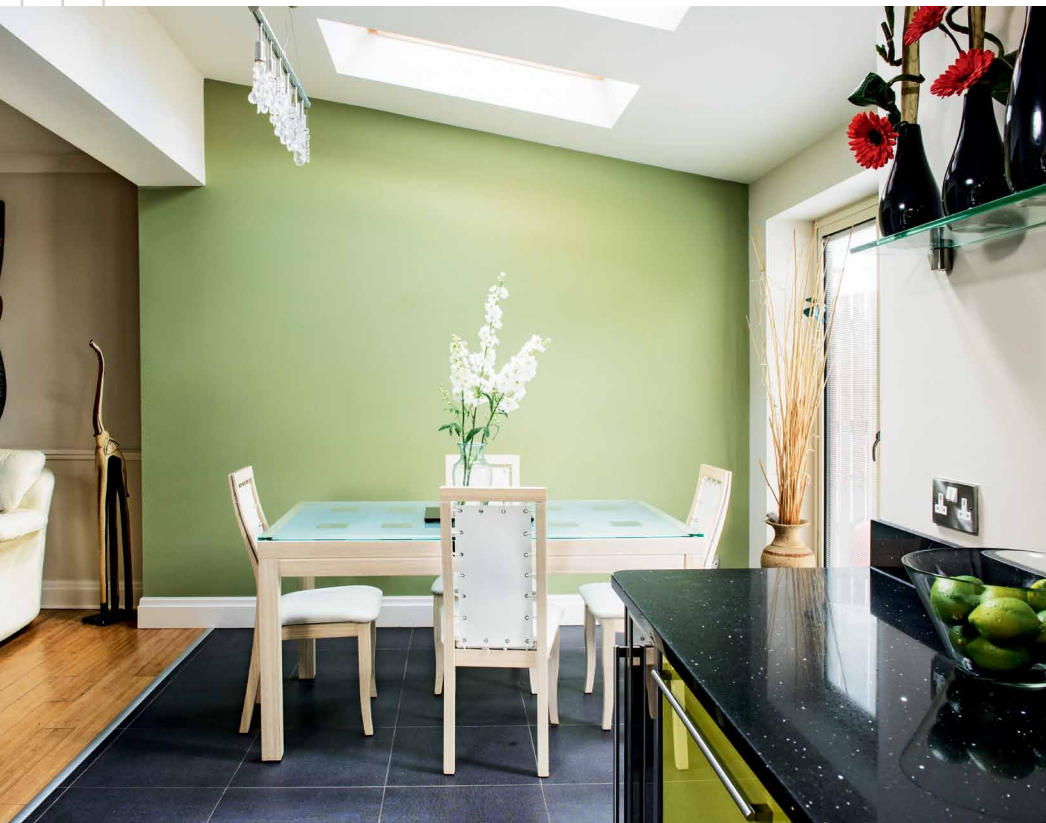
and bi-fold doors across the width of the property, and the old kitchen window was reinstated along the kitchen side wall to draw light into the dark end of the room.

A few weeks into the project, however, when only the shell of the extension had been built, John fell downstairs while vacuuming and tore a ligament in his shoulder. Work on the extension came to an abrupt halt and it took a year before he was well enough to start building again. 'We could only view the extension through the window and imagine what it was going to look like,' recalls Carmel.

Despite this setback, Carmel and John used the extra time to fine-tune the details of their long-awaited kitchen and research ►

## DESIGN TIP

To ensure that different floor finishes end up level, choose your materials early on and include the detail of the depth on the construction drawings





## SIMPLE LAYOUT

Right Appliances are integrated into a bank of full-height Armano units in dark oak, supplied by Arlington Interiors. The Siemens hob is positioned near the Blanco tap and sink, also all from Arlington Interiors

## STORAGE SOLUTION

Below A hinge mechanism allows the cupboard doors to be lifted upwards without much effort, so that all the space within the wall units can be used and accessed easily



down the old external rear walls, inserting four steel beams to support the new openings and the extended rooms upstairs.

'We taped up all the doors into the rest of the house to stop dust getting through, but no matter how hard we tried, it still went everywhere,' remembers Carmel.

All the plumbing and electrics were extended from the original part of the property into the new build, including electric underfloor heating laid in two sections – with one mat in the kitchen and the other in the dining area so that they can work independently of each other. These are supplemented with a radiator in the dining area.

When it came to choosing their kitchen, Carmel and John already had a supplier in mind.

'We always knew we would buy our kitchen from Arlington Interiors in Leeds,' says Carmel. 'It has a great reputation for quality and service and we wanted to buy the best we could afford. As we were only planning to update our kitchen once, the units had to be right.'

At first the couple considered dark wood and cream units, until they saw the same design with green doors and loved the vibrant contrast. 'It's really striking,' says Carmel. 'Our old units were white and traditional in style. This time we wanted to make a statement with a modern kitchen.'

Carmel and John wanted to position the sink so it would be possible to look at the garden through the window while washing up, with the hob within easy reach at a right angle to the sink. They were also keen to have a wall of full-length cupboards incorporating the integrated microwave and oven, and the fridge-freezer, plus plenty of storage space.

After the first-fix stage, the kitchen units were installed in only two days by John and one of his brothers, who runs a joinery company, so that the underfloor heating,

screed and floor tiles could be fitted up to the kickboards.

Within a week, all the appliances were installed and the second fix completed ready for the finishing touches.

'Day to day, we managed really well while the kitchen was being installed,' says Carmel. 'When the wall between the old and new parts of the building was removed, John relocated the sink next to the back door and left the cooking facilities in so that we could still make meals and wash up without too much bother. It was a bit chaotic, but we were able to escape to the living room at the front of the house to get away from the mess.'

'Apart from John's accident the build was very straightforward, and once he'd restarted work on the project afterwards, everything was finished within 12 weeks,'

**We saved ourselves thousands of pounds by shopping around and getting the best prices**

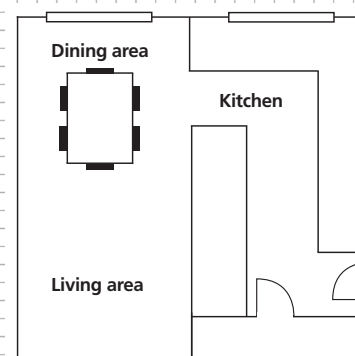
everything from the cost of appliances to the colour of the accessories.

'We probably saved ourselves thousands of pounds by shopping around and making sure we got the best prices for everything,' says John. The couple partly financed the project with money they had inherited, while the rest was funded by their earnings and savings as the work progressed.

By the time John restarted the project, progress was swift. The first major job was to open up the extension by knocking

## THE PLANS

### AFTER



A two-storey extension was built across the rear of the house, extending the galley kitchen and creating a new dining area. The old external rear walls were then removed to link the new and old spaces, for an open-plan layout. The former dining room has been turned into a living area

## THE COSTS

Kitchen units	£10,800
Appliances	£6,360
Bi-fold doors	£3,500
Worktops, splashback and edge detailing (including fitting)	£2,496
Furniture and accessories	£1,420
Floor tiles	£600
Eco underfloor heating mats	£500
Sink, tap and accessories	£480
Light fitting	£100
Paint	£100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£26,356</b>

## THE CONTACTS

Electrics E Fletcher & Sons, 0113 281 3345  
Kitchen units Arlington Interiors  
Worktops Stone Connection  
Bi-fold doors Express Bi-folding Doors  
Windows Leeds Windows and Doors, Velux  
Floor tiles Ceramodo  
Appliances Siemens, Fagor  
Underfloor heating STS Specialist Tiling Supplies

adds Carmel. 'The secret is to prepare well and do as much work as possible yourself.'

Carmel and John love their new light-filled kitchen space. 'We eat at the dining table as a family for every meal now. The old dining room has become a living area, so we are in the new space most of the time when we're home,' Carmel says. 'In winter it's so light and warm that it makes you feel good, even on a rainy day, and in summer we can open the doors and step straight into the garden. I only regret that we didn't start the project sooner.'

## EXPERT ADVICE

# HOW TO PLAN YOUR KITCHEN EXTENSION

Experienced renovator **Michael Holmes** offers useful tips for the key stages of your project

Once you are confident of getting planning permission for your kitchen extension, you need to start working on the construction detail. This includes the large-scale drawings (usually 1:50) that show how the extension is to be built, and how it will comply with the building regulations.

By this stage you will need to have finalised the layout of your kitchen and the final position of the main appliances, as the drawings will include a wiring plan, plumbing layout and the routes for any ducting required for extractor fans.

## PLANNING AND SPECIFICATION

Your architectural designer should also produce an accompanying specification document detailing the standards required. The drawings will usually need to be sent to a structural engineer to calculate the size of steels required for any openings between the existing house and the new extension, plus for the roof. The plans and specification notes, together with a copy of any contract you intend to use, form the basis of the tender documents that will be sent out to builders to provide quotes.

When you have chosen a builder, you can then schedule the work. A key issue to consider is the lead-in time for any bespoke items, such as windows or kitchen units, that may take weeks to be delivered and could hold up the build unless ordered well in advance.



## THE BUILDING WORK

The local authority building control department (or statutory inspector) will need 48 hours' notification of the start of work, as well as payment of the appropriate fee – visit your local authority for the current fee scale.

Work will begin with any demolition and site clearance, followed by the groundworks and the oversite slab (concrete base). The structure will then be built to weathertight stage (roofed in, with doors and windows), usually followed by knocking through to link the extension to the existing house. The next stage is known as 'first fix', and involves fitting door and window linings, and all of the plumbing, wiring and ducts that will be hidden by the plastering, which follows. Once the plaster is dry, it is time for 'second fix', which includes laying flooring, hanging doors, fitting architrave and skirting, lighting fittings, and the kitchen. The final stage is decorating and tiling.

