

‘A local joiner solved our space crisis’

Creative thinking can save you the hassle of extending, as the Howarths found out

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN THE PAGE

After their first child was born, Lisa and John Howarth decided to relocate from their north-London flat to a five-bedroom Edwardian house in Poole, on the Dorset coast. The house had a dark and awkwardly shaped kitchen, which they didn't like. They were considering extending it to make it more family friendly, but then their architect suggested rejigging the layout instead. There was a dining room next to the kitchen, so they decided to knock down the dividing wall, move the kitchen into the dining room and replace the dining-room windows with patio doors. 'We didn't want the hassle of doing an extension and felt all that was needed was to reconfigure the space we had,' says Lisa. 'But convincing builders was hard, until we got in joiner Jonathan Weber who runs Weber Creative Interiors. He understood exactly what we wanted. Thanks to him, we were able to stay in the house - with a makeshift kitchen in the living room - while his team did the work.'

The Howarths went for a classic, neutral colour scheme, with traditional Shaker-style units and granite and wooden worktops. 'Our eldest son chose the granite worktop,' says Lisa. 'He liked it because you can see razor-clam fossils in it'



Dining area
The Ikea table and chairs, which the couple already had, work well with the wooden worktops and bar stools



BEFORE



Love their STYLE?
THESE UNITS ARE BY HIGHAM FURNITURE £££. FOR SIMILAR, TRY B&Q'S IT IVORY CLASSIC STYLE £ OR HOWDENS JOINERY CO'S BURFORD WHITE ££

Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A detached five-bedroom Edwardian house in Poole, Dorset, bought in March 2006.

WHAT IT COST

Units.....£11,200
Worktops.....£1,644
Splashback.....£134
Appliances.....£5,860
Sink.....£205
Flooring.....£821

Lighting.....£849
TOTAL.....£20,713

WHO LIVES HERE

Lisa and John Howarth and their children, Alexander, six, Olivia, four, and Charlie, one.

WHAT THEY DID

Knocked their small, dark and awkwardly shaped kitchen into the dining room next door and

swapped the rooms around so they had a large kitchen and a smaller dining area.

THE LOOK

Modern country, with off-white Shaker-style units, neutral walls and lots of stone and wood.

LESSONS LEARNED

‘‘ With young children, we had to be super-organised and make sure the workmen didn't leave doors open or tools lying around. ’’



THE LAYOUT The units are in an L-shape, apart from the central island, which houses the sink and integrated dishwasher. The dining table's at the far end

Space swap
Thanks to a local joiner's creative thinking, Lisa and John managed to avoid the cost and hassle of building an extension. Instead, they knocked the kitchen and dining room into one and swapped the rooms around, creating a spacious kitchen-diner that's both elegant and family friendly

TURN OVER TO FIND OUT HOW
Lisa and John created their new kitchen



BUILDING WORK
Think creatively like the Howarths and knock down a wall to get the space you want instead of extending.



Relaxed space
Warm woods and a sophisticated neutral colour scheme link the two halves of the rather awkwardly shaped room, making it one flowing, sociable space

Where to buy
ITEMS SHOWN

Hand-made and hand-painted **units**, £11,200; **oak worktops**, £120 per linear m; both Higham Furniture. Units and worktops fitted by Weber Creative Interiors. **Units** painted in Shaded White Estate Eggshell, £48.50 for 2.5ltr; **walls** painted in Light Gray Estate Emulsion, £32.50 for 2.5ltr; both Farrow & Ball. Flash Blue **granite worktop**, from £300 per sq m, Eaton Stonemasons. Retro Metro **wall tiles**, from £69.70 per sq m, Fired Earth. **Floor tiles**, £23 per sq m, Floors of Stone. CPX160P Franke **sink**, £205; for similar **tap**, try the Franke Rotaflow Pro Value, £74; both Ukkitchens.com. LG1052GCT Cluny **range cooker**, £4,360, Lacanche range, Fourmeaux de France. Drop 1 Grouping of six **pendant lights**, £599; Hector **pendant lights**, £125 each; all Original BTC. Bosse **bar stools**, £25 each, Ikea. Unframed 'You Look Lovely Today' **print**, £14; unframed 'Hi' **print** in Gold, £20; 'You Wash' **tea towel**, £9; all Keep Calm Gallery

FOR DETAILS TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Larder
Bespoke shelving means groceries can be stored in an ultra orderly fashion in the large larder



Pan drawer
This narrow corner cupboard has clever pull-out racks for pots, pans and other cooking essentials, so they're easy to access



How we did it

“ We worked closely with a local joiner, who proved invaluable in helping us. He organised and oversaw the project and managed the other tradesmen, as well as patiently managing us. The work started in September 2009 and took about six to eight weeks – I was surprised by how quickly it all happened. A friend of ours recommended a bespoke kitchen company – and we were hooked as soon as we walked through its door. It designed and made the beautiful bespoke Shaker-style units, and our joiner installed everything for £2,500. ”

FEATURE NATALIE FLAUM STYLING LIZ COOPER PHOTOGRAPHS ALISON HAMMOND PLAN PERSONA-ID