

# It's coming home

An open-plan kitchen and living space where family and friends can gather was the first priority for Amy and Shaun Harrad when planning their dream family home

PHOTOS *Paul Craig* | WORDS *Yvette Murrell*



**WIDE OPEN**

Amy wanted to create a family-friendly kitchen and living space where everyone could be together



‘We wanted an open-plan space where we could spend quality time all together’



#### SURFACE AREA

Silestone quartz in Blanco Stellar was used on the worktops, upstands and hob panel, balancing out the dark cabinetry



#### IN THE ZONE

The new chimney breast design helps make a feature of the Stoves Sterling 110cm dual fuel range cooker

When Amy Harrad saw that a property had come on the market in her childhood village of Ruddington, Nottinghamshire, she just knew she couldn't miss the opportunity to snap it up. 'We were looking for a bigger house with good schools nearby and a strong sense of community around it,' she explains. 'My parents still live in the village, so when we found this house was up for sale, we decided to go for it.'

Amy, who works in insurance, and husband Shaun, a footballer, live in the five-bedroom detached house with their two sons – Mason, five, and Jaxon, two. 'The only downside was that the configuration of the property didn't suit us as a family,' says Amy. 'At the time, it only had three bedrooms, and the kitchen was a small box room, whereas we wanted an open-plan space where we could spend quality time all together.'

Initially, the family moved into the property and started planning the renovation. 'We were under the illusion we could continue living there while work was being carried out,' says Amy. 'But once we had a project manager and architect on board, they advised us it wouldn't be practical with young children, given the size of the project, so we moved out for six months into local rented accommodation.'

During this time, the house was stripped back internally, an old conservatory was demolished and a new extension built, which is where the kitchen now sits. Having spent time researching thoroughly, Amy and Shaun both had a clear idea in their minds of how they wanted the new space to look and function. 'We really liked the style of Masterclass kitchens, so we looked these up online and came across Owen Williams Kitchens in nearby Leicester, which fits them,' says Amy. 'They were helpful from the offset and listened to all of our ideas.'

The couple enjoy entertaining friends and family, so an open-plan area with a large island was a must. They were keen to make a statement with cabinetry, opting for a dark shade of graphite. 'Because it's such a big space, we felt that white or cream would get lost. Plus, we've had lighter shades before and they're a bit of a nightmare with kids,' adds Amy.

A utility room, complete with washing machine, tumble dryer and an area to iron was also key for the family, plus they added a clever bespoke touch. 'We had a laundry shoot put in from the main bathroom upstairs to the utility room. It was our son, Mason's suggestion when we were watching *Home Alone* together! I thought it was a great idea,' says Amy, smiling. The final area of focus was a bespoke bar. 'We didn't want it to look distasteful, and it needed to be in keeping with the rest of the space. Paul Walster and the team at Owen Williams came up with the design and it's better than we could have imagined,' adds Amy. 'We sit at the dining table if it's just the four of us – but if we have friends over, we are by the island. It works well in all scenarios.' **EKBB**

#### TAKE A SEAT

There are separate zones for friends and family to hang out in throughout this kitchen-living space, from a formal set-up around the dining table to casual seating by the island





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**HIGH PITCH**

The roof and skylights make the space feel light and airy. Handmade wooden beams help connect the inside to the canopy above the patio outside





#### ON DISPLAY

A fun neon sign adds a playful touch and looks great in conjunction with mood lighting

#### KITCHEN PROFILE

Masterclass Shelford door fronts in a striking dark Graphite have been paired with Tuscan Walnut cabinetry throughout this open-plan space, complemented with Silestone Blanco Stellar worktops for a sophisticated and unified look.



#### WHAT'LL IT BE?

Open shelving and wine racks in Tuscan Walnut are framed with graphite panels to add some cosy ambience to the bar area



#### PERFECT SCORE

Owning a white baby-grand piano was a dream of Amy's and this one fits in perfectly by the bar. Amy and Mason are enjoying having piano lessons



#### ON THE ROCKS

Amy and Shaun enjoy hosting family and friends, so wanted a sophisticated bar area. 'We're partial to a glass of whisky, and like to pop open a bottle of Prosecco when we're entertaining,' says Amy



#### BARISTA STYLE

Shaun loves coffee, so the couple wanted to create a coffee station. The blackboard is used as a family noticeboard and to display the children's artwork



**Q&A**  
**PAUL WALSTER**

DESIGNER AT OWEN WILLIAMS KITCHENS

**How did you plan the layout?** This was a project of grand scale and, from a designer's point of view, very exciting to be a part of. Because the project was much more than just about designing a kitchen, we broke it down into four areas: the main kitchen; coffee station; utility room; and sociable bar area. We concentrated on each element individually, to ensure all of Amy and Shaun's specifications and expectations were fulfilled.

**Were there any challenges?** There was an existing chimney breast that Amy and Shaun wanted to keep in order to have a mantle type feature. Unfortunately, this was not central on the wall. Initially, we tried several different design options to work around this. However, none of them looked right due to the lack of symmetry caused by the chimney breast being off

centre. To overcome this, we made a suggestion to the couple and their building contractor. Given that the chimney breast was of shallow depth we could build a false wall over it which would give a flat surface enabling a timber and plasterboard mantle to be constructed and positioned centrally, giving an aesthetically pleasing result.

**Do you have any details that you're particularly proud of?** I love the bar area. It was made using open shelving and wine racks in Tuscan Walnut framed with Graphite panels, complemented with a mirror-board back panel to add a touch of retro styling. The sink/serving area was constructed from 3 x 600mm base units with a raised wrap-around countertop made from 54mm Tuscan Walnut block panels to create the seating area. It fits perfectly within the space.





#### LINED UP

The designers repositioned the mantle for a more symmetrical effect

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## PROJECT DETAILS

**DESIGN** Owen Williams Kitchens. A similar kitchen would cost around £20,000.

**CONSTRUCTION** **Architecture** Pam & Ian Storm of Storm Design **Project Manager** Trevor White of Ash Developments Limited

### APPLIANCES

Franke VBK 710 ceramic white **Belfast sink**, £382; Franke LAX 110/45 Largo **sinks**, £198 each; Franke Athena **taps** in Silksteel, £116 each, all supplied by Owen Williams Kitchens. Sterling 110cm dual fuel **range cooker**, £1,599, Stoves. HP90IHCB3 90cm canopy hood **extractor fan**, £529, Fisher & Paykel. Pro 3 Flex 3 in 1 **boiling water tap**, £1,150 Quooker. IQ-300 WM14N201GB **washing machine**, £669; IQ-300 WT45N201GB **tumble dryer**, £629, both Siemens. Caple WI6140 60cm undercounter **wine coolers** in stainless steel, £669 each, Appliance City.

### FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

Masterclass Shelford **doors** in Graphite with Tuscan Walnut **cabinetry**; Silestone Blanco Stellar 30mm **worktops** with 100mm upstands and hob panel, all supplied by Owen Williams Kitchens. Form stainless steel **bar stools** with backrest in Soft Grey faux leather, £159 each, Danetti. ELK **3-light pendant**, £459; Rawley **12-light pendant**, £660, both Nottingham Lighting Centre. Arlington Light Mist Porcelain **floor tiles**, from £36 per sq. m, Quorn Stone. Iona large **dining table** in Solid Pine and Pebble Grey, £499; Iona extra-large **bench** in Solid Pine and Grey, £279, both Made. Moda CD2 **dining chairs** in grey and white, £75 each; Heather velvet upholstered **bar stools** in Pale Pink, Royal Blue and Charcoal Grey, £119 each, all Cult Furniture.

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#### CLEVER CONTRAST

The interplay of dark and light elements creates a dramatic, sophisticated effect