

'A side return extension has given us a light and spacious kitchen-diner'

Guy and Fiona Walkinshaw built out to the side of their home to create the ideal family space

WORDS ANNA MORLEY PHOTOGRAPHS ADAM CARTER STYLING SOPHIE MARTELL

BEFORE



EXISTING REAR ASPECT
Left The original house had a separate kitchen and dining room with limited access to the garden

NEW LOOK
Below In addition to extending the house, the couple raised the level of the rear patio and fitted bi-fold doors from Grabex to create a better link to the outside space



SOCIAL SPACE

In the kitchen-diner, Yara cabinets in matt Pearl Grey have been teamed with an Organic White Caesarstone worktop and a breakfast bar in Wild Brasilica, all from Espresso Design. The Marazzi Treverk Teak floor tiles continue out to the garden. With its large tree and decorations from John Lewis, the space is perfect for a family Christmas



FACT FILE

THE OWNERS

Guy and Fiona Walkinshaw live here with their son Thomas, nine (all pictured left). Guy is a marketing consultant in advertising and media, and Fiona is a maternity services manager

THE PROPERTY

Five-bedroom Victorian semi

THE LOCATION

Streatham, south-east London

WHAT THEY SPENT

The couple's extension project cost around £177,000

Celebrating Christmas with family and friends in our home is fantastic now that we've extended to create a sociable entertaining area,' says Guy. 'It's great that we can all be in the same part of the house rather than being stuck in separate rooms.'

The modern family space is a far cry from the small kitchen and dining room that the couple inherited when they bought the Victorian house back in 2008. 'We'd been living in a flat in nearby Balham for several years, but we were ready to upsize into a family home to gain more space,' explains Guy.

Shortly after moving in, the couple began transforming the property, starting

with essentials such as fitting a new boiler, radiators and double glazing. 'After we'd lived here for about five years, we felt the time was right to extend the house,' says Guy. 'We wanted to knock the kitchen and dining room into one open-plan area, relocate the cloakroom, and update the garden to make it feel like one big indoor/outdoor space.'

The couple started their project by researching local construction firms with experience of building similar extensions. 'We came across Buildteam, who offers a one-stop service,' says Guy. 'At our initial meeting we opted to go with one of the company's design packages, which meant we could use its in-house architects. The team also took care of



MODERN FIRE

Above The living area is designed around the Riva Studio Edge wood-burning fire from Stonewoods, with a large corner sofa from Made.com providing a space to unwind. The walls are painted in Tungsate Green by Farrow & Ball

CLEAN LINES

Below To achieve a streamlined look, the cupboards feature hidden handles, the main appliances are built in and the Stella 90 ceiling extractor by Falmec sits flush with the ceiling. For similar bar stools, try the bicycle seat design from Etsy

planning permission, which was really useful as we had concerns about getting approval for bi-fold doors because we live in a Conservation Area.'

With the plans approved, building work started in October and the project lasted eight months, during which time the family continued living in the house to save on costs. 'We had a makeshift kitchen and the builders screened off the construction work so they could just get on with everything,' explains Guy.

In order to create the large space the couple wanted, several steel beams had to be fitted to support the structure of the house. To retain the traditional high ceilings of the original property, the steel beams were cut into the ceiling rather than lowering the ceiling and boxing in the beams, which would have been the cheaper option. 'We only lost about one centimetre of ceiling height, and we're very pleased with how it looks,' says Guy. Luckily, as Guy often works from home he was able to be on site each day and project-manage the build. 'I created a spreadsheet so I could keep track of the timing for each aspect of the extension,' he explains. 'It also meant that I could answer any of the builders' questions as soon as they cropped up.'

Improving access to the outside space was also a large part of the project, so rather than stepping down from the kitchen-diner to a patio or decked area,

Guy and Fiona wanted the floor and terrace to be on the same level, creating a seamless link between indoors and out. To achieve this, the ground level at the rear of property was raised and the wood-effect porcelain tiles used inside were continued outside to create a seamless transition between the spaces.

Following advice from friend Francesca Green of Green Eye Garden Design, the terrace area was extended by around one metre and the new design incorporates white borders, angled raised planters and a spacious dining area. Combined with smart cedarwood fence panels and the newly rendered rear wall, the formerly uninspiring patio is now a smart outdoor entertaining space.

When it came to choosing the fixtures and fittings for their new kitchen, Guy and Fiona knew they wanted the overall look to be both contemporary and practical. As Guy is a keen cook and Fiona loves baking, it was important to have a well-planned kitchen that they could both enjoy working in, plus they wanted to include a comfy family area where Thomas could do his homework or watch TV.

To find the perfect kitchen design, Guy and Fiona compiled another spreadsheet detailing various companies they had come across while searching through interiors magazines. 'We looked at both ends of the market and, after visiting around eight showrooms, we realised

DINING AREA

New Grabex sash windows in the kitchen mirror the designs used elsewhere in the house. For a similar solid oak table and leather dining chairs, try Barker & Stonehouse



we wanted something with a high build quality and an uncluttered, modern feel,' explains Guy. 'We narrowed down the list to around three potential companies, eventually settling on Espresso Design. Ben Jones, the designer, was great and came up with several ideas we liked, such as the asymmetric wooden breakfast bar. One of our top priorities was a streamlined look for the units, so Ben suggested integrating all the handles in the tops of the doors, creating a sleek finish in the kitchen area.'

The couple spent a long time trying to find the perfect sofa for the new living area, finally opting for a large corner-shaped design. 'It really makes the room,' says Guy. 'It wraps around the built-in fireplace, creating a defined seating area.

It's also plenty big enough for us all to sit down and relax together.'

To maintain the uncluttered look of the kitchen, the wiring for the wall-mounted TV and computer have been channelled into the wall. 'It's very easy to ruin a beautiful space by having lots of messy wires trailing down the wall,' says Guy. 'Our TV now looks as if it's suspended.'

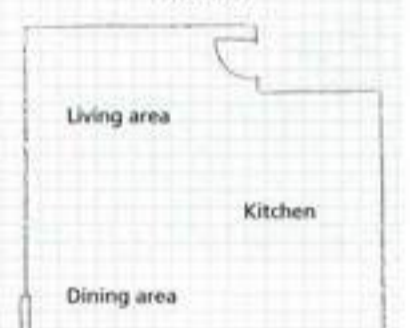
'We're delighted with our extension and redesigned garden after all the hard work, cost and effort that went into creating them,' adds Guy. 'We've now got a versatile, sociable space that's ideal for entertaining, whatever the time of year. Whether it's barbecues outside in summer, drinks around the kitchen island, or big family parties at Christmas, it all works exactly as we wanted it to.'

THE PLANS

BEFORE



AFTER



The wall between the kitchen and dining room was removed and the WC relocated. The space was also extended to create a large open-plan room

THE CONTACTS

Design and construction Buildteam, 020 7495 6561, buildteam.com
Kitchen Espresso Design, 020 7078 9912, espressodesign.co.uk
Garden Green Eye Garden Design, 01206 548812, greeneyegardendesign.com
Bi-fold doors and sash windows Grabex
Flooring World's End Tiles

THE COSTS

Building work (including architects, planning permission and fees)	£95,000
Kitchen units, appliances and installation	£54,000
Garden work (including planters, bench and fencing)	£12,000
Interior flooring	£7,800
Exterior flooring	£5,300
Lighting (electrics)	£3,000
TOTAL	£177,100