

# SLICE OF HISTORY

Karen and Greg Bracken took inspiration from their home's historic past to create a timeless kitchen that will last long into the future

FEATURE LINDA CLAYTON | PHOTOGRAPHY DARREN CHUNG



## PROJECT DETAILS

**OWNERS** Greg and Karen Bracken

**HOUSE** A six-bedroom Tudor property in north Essex

**WORK** After extending the ground floor kitchen by more than half again, the couple created a spacious kitchen-diner overlooking landscaped gardens





**FRESH LEASE OF LIFE**  
Retaining the existing Aga and mantel was important for the couple. A full refurbishment of the Aga gave it a shiny new enamelled coat.  
Aga refurbishment, price on request, Blake & Bull



**AT YOUR SERVICE**  
The top section of the customised pantry acts as an elegant bar area for entertaining. Cabinets in Pointing and Green Smoke estate eggshell, both £67 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

**F**or Greg and Karen Bracken, an incredible sense of history is what sealed the deal when they went house-hunting in 'Constable Country'. Having dreamt of living in the countryside for many years, the London-based couple bit the bullet in 2015. 'When we viewed this original Tudor house, built in 1483 and full of character with ancient exposed beams, ogee door frames and even a priest hole, we knew we'd found home.'

#### THE BRIEF

The couple were warned that the original kitchen was disproportionately small compared to the size of the house. Undeterred, they added an extension to their renovating to-do list and proceeded with the purchase. Working with the local listed building department and with the designers at Davonport, the couple wanted a generous space that would feel like a natural addition to the existing room that would also allow them to entertain more easily.

#### DESIGN SOLUTIONS

The main kitchen units are configured in a U-shape with the island centrally located within easy reach from all sides. Davonport's Signature Pantry is positioned closer to the dining table to provide easy access to glassware and refreshments. An additional prep sink at the island allows hot drinks and hand-washing when the main sink is in use. By splitting the layout into three main zones for cooking, dining and entertaining, the new extension has really transformed the way the Brackens live.

#### MATERIALS USED

For the cabinetry, Davonport's Tillingham design, with its curved pilasters and beaded doors, was selected for its timeless, classic look. The hand-painted units in Farrow & Ball's Pointing and Green Smoke connect beautifully with the surrounding countryside, while the exposed brickwork on the chimney brings visual warmth to the room.

#### FINISHING TOUCHES

Positioned neatly above a prep sink in one corner of the island, the Quooker 3-in-1 boiling tap is already proving a firm favourite. 'We make so much tea and coffee each day that we wonder how we ever managed without it,' says Greg. The Wi-Fi-linked induction hob and extractor is also particularly clever. The extractor automatically reacts to changes in the hob temperature settings to ensure the kitchen is kept steam-free.

#### LESSONS LEARNT

Although they could have been put off by the thought of planning issues and the challenges of extending an old building, the couple's perseverance has paid off. 'Our kitchen is now the true heart of our home and it allows us to entertain on a larger scale and with greater ease,' says Karen. 'We feel so lucky to have a home with such an amazing history as well as all the comforts of modern life.' 25





## MODERN CLASSIC

The cabinetry, with its curved pilasters and beaded doors, was chosen to chime with this Tudor home's other period details. The couple love how the polished Angola Silver granite worktops help to reflect light back into this enlarged kitchen space.

Kitchens start from £40,000; worktops in Angola Silver granite, from around £450sq m, all Davonport. Burlington Ivory porcelain floor tiles, £59.98sq m; Soho Crema ceramic wall tiles, £47.98sq m, all A&M Tiling. Ede light grey PU bar stools, £189 each, Fishpools. Main walls in Dimpse estate emulsion, £47.95 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. H2860 BP single oven, £1,199; H7240 BM microwave combi oven, £1,749; KM7474FR induction hob, £1,269; DA2698 built-in extractor, £1,899; KWT 6321 UG wine conditioning unit, £2,499, all Miele. Icerock undermount sink, £332, Kohler. Flex Pro 3 boiling water tap in polished chrome, £1,150, Quooker. Butler 800 sink in white, £555, Shaws of Darwen. Juliet C-Spout mixer in chrome, £368.88, Perrin & Rowe







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#### CO-ORDINATED CHOICES

**A bespoke sideboard with built-in wine cooler helps to connect the dining area with the rest of the kitchen.**

Wall in Pigeon estate emulsion, £49.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Deben pendant lights in nickel, £155 each, Jim Lawrence. Copeland dining chairs in Light Grey, £189 each; Colossus dining table, from £1,499, all Fishpools

