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# KITCHENS BEDROOMS & BATHROOMS

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## The FACTS

**Who?** Ruby, her husband James, and their 20-month-old son Henry

**What?** A new open-plan kitchen and orangery for a four-bedroom detached property

**Where?** Essex

**Cost?** Davonport kitchens start from \$50,000

**Time?** Eight months

Light and spacious, this sophisticated kitchen, from Davonport, with its large central island has become the hub of the home.

# OPEN HOUSE

Reconfiguring the layout by opening up the ground floor has transformed this four-bedroom 1960s detached property into an elegant family home

Words: **Nicola Hanley**  
Photography: **Darren Chung**



**M**oving house during a pandemic and taking on a renovation project while expecting your first child might seem daunting for some – but not Ruby and James, who were on a mission to find a property that needed a little bit of work. “Before we even chose our home, we knew we’d put in a fresh kitchen to make it exactly to our taste,” says Ruby. So, when the couple found a unique 1960s four-bedroom detached home featuring timbers dating back to the 1400s, they looked beyond its compact kitchen and cosy reception rooms and saw its potential to become their perfect family home. Enlisting local kitchen company Davonport, the couple got to work. Here, Ruby explains how the project came together....

#### What was your previous kitchen like?

It wasn’t a bad kitchen but it was much smaller and we felt that it didn’t really make a feature of the Aga. When we bought the house and saw it came with the green range cooker we were thrilled and wanted to make it a real feature.

#### What led you to Davonport?

Davonport designed my mum and dad’s kitchen about 10 years ago and ever since then I wanted one in my own home, too. My parents’ property is a barn conversion and there are a lot of beams, which Davonport built around, so I knew moving the Aga and creating the mantel around the existing fire place wouldn’t be too tricky for them.

#### Can you talk us through the new layout?

We knocked down the wall between the old kitchen and sitting room, where the cabinetry is now placed, to create an open-plan hub of the home. The Aga sits right in the middle, in the old sitting room fireplace, as the focal point, while the utility replaces the old kitchen. ➤



We also completely knocked down the conservatory and built an orangery where the dining table and sofa are.

#### What was your vision for the new kitchen?

We wanted quite a traditional scheme with our Aga surrounded by the signature Davonport mantel. The one James and I chose is actually from a different range to the rest of the kitchen because we love it so much.

#### What else was in your brief?

We were originally going for a smaller island but tweaked the design and had a bigger one. I knew our orangery would face south and likely get very hot in summer, so although we had the Aga, we asked Davonport to incorporate another oven into the island. It's neatly tucked away so you can't really see it, which is great. We also wanted the Quooker tap with filter because we used to buy bottled water, which is horrendous for the environment.

#### How did you choose your colour scheme?

We were inspired by the Aga and I liked the look of having a dark island and lighter units. The walls are painted in Little Greene Slaked Lime Mid, which is a warm neutral with a slight green tinge. I wanted green in the utility and boot room, so Davonport suggested using Farrow & Ball Card Room Green on the walls and Green Smoke on the units and wall panelling and I was so impressed.

#### What are your favourite aspects of the new design?

I love our utility, with shelving where I can arrange things, and the pantry with its lights. It's really nice at Christmas to open the doors and display things like a hamper. I also love the breakfast cupboard, which houses the coffee machine. >

#### Ruby's WORDS OF WISDOM

- Be mindful that everything takes a little bit longer than you'd expect. We started our renovation in 2021 so a lot of Covid problems had levelled themselves out – but our dishwasher, washing machine and tumble dryer were very delayed and we moved in without the dishwasher.
- When you find a property, look beyond the layout. If it isn't suited to your requirements, don't be scared to move rooms around. I was nervous to open up the ground floor, but it's really worked.
- Make sure you explain and are clear about your budget early on and try and work to it. We would have loved Armac Martin handles, for example, but you have to say no somewhere.



The dining area is perfectly placed in the new orangery to allow Ruby and James to enjoy views of the garden when seated.  
Dining table and chairs, Neptune.





Although the property was built in the 1960s, it incorporates a large beam, dating back to the 1400s, which runs towards the mantel. Wine cabinet, Caple.



The Quooker **tap**, dispenses 100°C boiling, hot, cold and filtered cold water. **Worktop**, Nile Trading.



One of Ruby's favourite spots, the window seat, provides views out to the garden and across the whole kitchen. **Handles**, Broughtons.



Next to the window seat, the breakfast cupboard houses the coffee machine and toaster. **Coffee machine**, Sage; **sink**, Villeroy & Boch.



The freestanding **larder**, from **Davenport**, is engraved with the name of the house.



## The PLANS

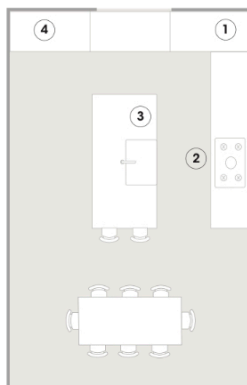
The first and second floor of this detached Edwardian house have been completely reconfigured, while a large rear extension allowed for a new orangery and open-plan kitchen.

**1 Breakfast cupboard** Nestled in the corner next to the window bench, it conveniently houses the coffee machine.

**2 Mantel** Moving the range cooker into the existing chimneybreast and concealing it with the mantel above creates a real focal point.

**3 Cooking** Having a separate oven built into the island means the Aga doesn't need to be switched on during the warmer months.

**4 Pantry** The eye-catching unit, which you see as soon as you enter the kitchen, provides additional storage space. When the doors are open, it is perfect for displaying items.



**SHOP THE LOOK**

1 Cuisinart Precision Stand Mixer in black, £315, Cuisinart [cuisinart.co.uk](https://cuisinart.co.uk) 2 Old White Portrait wall paint, £55.95 for 2.5 litres, Annie Sloan [anniesloan.com](https://anniesloan.com) 3 Cotswold Drawer Pull in burnished brass, £31.55, Armac Martin [armacmartin.co.uk](https://armacmartin.co.uk) 4 Minerva Helix Elect 4-in-1 tap in copper, £1747, Franke [franke.com](https://franke.com) 5 Classic Deluxe 90cm induction range cooker in Racing Green, £3499, Rangemaster [rangemaster.co.uk](https://rangemaster.co.uk) >





Replacing the original kitchen, the new utility continues the colour scheme. The walls are painted in Farrow & Ball's Card Room Green and the units and panelling in Green Smoke.



The boot room features a handy bench and plenty of shoe storage. **Cabinetry, Davonport.**

## SOURCEBOOK

**Kitchen** Davonport 01206 760 800  
[davonport.co.uk](http://davonport.co.uk)  
**Appliances** Range cooker, Aga 0800 111 6477, [agaliving.com](http://agaliving.com), Oven, hob, fridge, freezer, dishwasher, Neff 0344 892 8989, [neff-home.com](http://neff-home.com), Wine cabinet, Caple 0117 938 1900, [caple.co.uk](http://caple.co.uk), Washing machine, tumble dryer, Bosch 0344 892 8979, [bosch-home.co.uk](http://bosch-home.co.uk)  
**Worktops** Nile Trading 01992 639 139, [nilestone.co.uk](http://nilestone.co.uk)  
**Sinks** Villeroy & Boch, [villeroy-boch.co.uk](http://villeroy-boch.co.uk), Shaws of Darwen 01254 775 111, [shawsoldarwen.com](http://shawsoldarwen.com)  
**Boiling-water tap** Quooker 0161 768 5900, [quooker.co.uk](http://quooker.co.uk)  
**Tap** Perrin & Rowe 01708 526361, [perrinrowe.co.uk](http://perrinrowe.co.uk)  
 For full stockist information, see [pages](http://pages) 142. Search for more suppliers at [thesethreerooms.com/directory](http://thesethreerooms.com/directory) **RBR**



The utility houses the Bosch washing machine and tumble dryer. Sink, Shaws of Darwen; tap, Perrin & Rowe.