

# 'We spend so much time in our light, open kitchen'



Removing a dividing wall gave **Emma Solomon-Moore** and Lee Moore a kitchen-diner that's in harmony with their converted chapel's original



BEFORE

## STEP INSIDE...

**WHO LIVES HERE?** I'm Emma Solomon-Moore (@thesolomoores), 33, and I live here with my husband, Lee Moore, 33, and our French bulldog, Didier and we're expecting our first child. We both work at the University of Bath and we bought our four-bedroom converted chapel in Holcombe in November 2017.

**WHAT WAS UPDATED?** The small kitchen. We removed the wall to the living room to make more space and light.

**WHY THE CHANGE?** It was a squeeze for both of us to be in the room at the same time!

**HOW LONG DID IT TAKE?** About three months as we had to wait a month for the floor fitters.

**TOTAL COST** £4,488

Emma Solomon-Moore and her husband, Lee Moore, were drawn to the character of this converted chapel when they moved to Bath, and since the building had only recently been turned into a house, the magnolia canvas was ripe for decoration.

'The estate agent only had a back-door key, so we walked straight into the kitchen at

the back, which was the most disappointing room in the house!' Emma recalls. 'It was small with wall cupboards everywhere and access through the dining room. We knew we wanted to make the kitchen bigger, but we weren't sure how.' So, they took their time – years, in fact – looking at the options for how best to make the most of this unique space.

Displaying artwork and trinkets on open shelving makes the kitchen feel more relaxed than functional wall cupboards. Emma sanded down a scaffold board from Wickes and sealed it with wood stain



Upcycling a pine ladder in the dining room, with the same handles and dark green paint as the kitchen, ties the two rooms together

## GO FOR GOLD

The gold leaf cabinet lettering is Emma's own work, self-taught following a YouTube tutorial on sign writing.

## THE PROJECT

The couple rejected the idea of extending into the garden as it would change the chapel's beautiful architecture. They considered knocking through to the dining room because a door opening was already there. 'The chapel's a quirky shape and the kitchen is slightly set back, so the opening wouldn't have been that big,' says Emma.

After a couple of years of pondering, they settled on knocking through into the living room and turning it into a dining room; their existing dining room would then become their living room. 'It was a great decision,' says Emma. 'Seating around the lovely big bay windows gives us a connection to the garden that we didn't have before.' Emma worked up a design towards the end of 2019 and her dad, a building estimator, drew them into buildable plans. Due to the pandemic, though, the building work didn't start until the following September.

## WHAT WE DID

After the wall came down, a skylight was installed and the doorway to the old dining room was blocked-up. Emma was keen to get on with updating the existing kitchen. 'Our goal was to make the room fresher, more modern and inviting,' she says. 'We replaced wall cupboards with open shelves and added a breakfast bar. Our biggest decision was

## My style tips

**HIGHLIGHT UNIQUE FEATURES WITH PAINT** Use a contrast paint colour to make a feature of your room's architectural details, like my deep window recesses.

**SAVE WITH DIY TILING** If your tiles have a pattern or texture, plan the layout before you start.

**MATCH ALL THE WOODWORK** I painted the doors and skirtings in the same hue as the cabinets for a co-ordinated finish.

The breakfast bar links the spaces and is part of the original kitchen layout, which Emma and Lee made wider with a new worktop



Emma chose a black granite worktop with silver flecks to reflect the light in the room. The textured brass handles from B&Q add a luxurious touch

Feature Jane Crittenden Styling Maribah Taylor Photos James French

## KITCHEN MAKEOVER

keeping the kitchen cupboards and painting them. I'd been looking at similar Shaker styles and decided there was no point in changing them for the sake of it when these solid oak ones were in such good condition.'

Emma chose a green and pink scheme to tie in with their garden and picked a rich, forest shade that expresses her love of bold colours. 'The dark green cupboards and black granite worktop ground the kitchen, and then I used lighter pastels above,' she says. 'The minty window reveals are the feature I get the most comments about on Instagram.'

### HIGHS & LOWS

The couple updated the appliances, sink and tap, but kept them in the same place to save money. Another saving was the tiling, which Emma did herself. 'I spent time planning as each tile was a slightly different shade and I wanted them to graduate from light to dark,' she explains.

Wanting more light, but unable to make the window openings bigger due to the chapel's architecture, the couple changed the back door to a glazed one and installed a rooflight. 'The ambient light has made such a difference to both rooms,' says Emma.

### THE FINAL DETAILS

All that was left for Emma to do was fill the windowsills and shelves with colourful artwork and trinkets to complement the playful colour scheme, along with bold botanical blinds. She also added luxurious green velvet banquette seating in the new dining area, one of Emma's favourite buys.

'Spending money on opening up the room, and saving on the cupboards, was well worth it; the change has impacted how we use the whole of downstairs,' she says. 'We enjoy the garden as we walk through to the kitchen and spend more time in here than ever before.'

A William Morris leaf print blind and potted plants reflect the green paintwork and nature outside



The family-friendly eating area boasts a solid oak oval table – a bargain buy for £30 through an eBay auction



NEW PERSPECTIVE

Instagram inspired Emma to paint the window recesses in a bright mint hue to frame the view.

### ROOM PLAN



### THE DETAILS

PAINT	£164
KITCHEN HANDLES	£98
TILES	£85
WORKTOP	£2,885
FLOORING	£400
APPLIANCES	£518
SINK & TAP	£338
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,488</b>

### SHOPPING LIST

Cupboards painted in eggshell in Spruce Things Up, £49.99 per 2.5L; Window reveals painted in supreme matt emulsion in Make A Mint, £49.99 per 2.5L; Miami Pink Tinkisso kitchen tap, £139.99, all Dowling & Reynolds. Equipe Artisan Rose Mallow 6.5 x 20cm tiles, £36.92 per sq m, Tiles Direct. Cosmos Black granite worktop, £540 per m (including installation), Avon Marble. GoodHome Dukkah Brass-effect cupboard handles, £14 for two, B&Q. Shelf: timber scaffold board, from £26, Wickes. HISENSE I6433C electric induction hob, £299, Currys. Bluci Turano 1.5 Black granite sink, £251, Sinks-Taps.com. Sylvia bar stool in Forest Green velvet, £139, Cult Furniture. Polyflor Camaro Cambridge oak parquet vinyl tile flooring, £14.50 per sq m, Oakleigh Flooring. Turquoise gluggle jug, £39, Graham and Green. Dining table, £30, eBay. Chairs and larder cupboard, £120, Facebook Marketplace. Bespoke banquette seating, £1,000, Light Furniture. William Morris Acanthus velvet forest roller blind, £42.75 per m, Blinds 2go. Medium Poppy Field rug, £125, French Connection. Large Gold palm tree floor lamp, £275, Olive and Sage

## 3 OF THE BEST... pink & green

**1** £29.99 from Celina Digby  
This cushion is made from water-resistant fabric, a practical choice for a kitchen-diner, and it can be taken outside to the garden, too.

**2** £8 from Wilko  
The contrast of matt and shiny glass on this simple blush vase gives it a sophisticated edge.

**3** £11.50 from Bluebellgray  
Keep this painterly mug on display – it's too pretty to hide away.

