

'We can't believe how bright this space is now'

By adding a conservatory and reworking the kitchen layout, **Rebecca Beal** created a light-filled space for her family, who spend most of their time in here



BEFORE

STEP INSIDE...

WHO LIVES HERE? I'm Rebecca, 55 (@rebecca_anchorban_house), and I used to work for the NHS. I live here with my husband, Martin, 60, and our grown-up children, Joe, 27 and Elanor, 29. Our Edwardian five-bedroom semi is in Derbyshire.

WHAT WAS UPDATED? We built a conservatory off the kitchen and then revamped the kitchen itself, so the spaces flowed together.

WHY THE CHANGE? We wanted a connection with the garden and an entertaining space, but felt a solid roof on a normal extension might make the east-facing kitchen even darker. It also had an awkward layout so we weren't using the space well.

HOW LONG DID IT TAKE? The conservatory took a couple of months and the kitchen didn't take long as the units came pre-made.

TOTAL COST £12,435

Rebecca Beal had always admired period Edwardian properties, having previously lived in a 1970s home, so was pleased to find this house for sale on the same road she grew up on. When she and her husband Martin bought it, it was a real project property, with no central heating and a scant kitchen, so the couple updated it with budget solutions so they could move in. As the years passed, they considered adding a conservatory to give them another living space. 'The kitchen didn't have a lot of light or

much useful storage, but we couldn't justify changing it then,' Rebecca explains. 'So, we went ahead with the conservatory first.'

THE PROJECT

Rebecca searched for a conservatory design and picked out one with a pitched glass roof to tie in with the period looks of her Edwardian home. 'We loved this traditional wooden conservatory, in keeping with the window frames in our house,' says Rebecca. The width was dictated by three external doors. 'We



'The conservatory creates a large entertaining space that everyone gravitates to when they visit,' says Rebecca. 'On warm days we have a fan, but we've also got roof vents to let the heat escape and big windows either side to create a cross breeze'



A pair of matching sofas sit either side of doors to the garden. 'I chose a scheme of pale blues, greens and pinks, which is a better tone in the bright sunlight,' says Rebecca

SAVVY SEATING

Wicker furniture with neutral seat cushions won't fade in the light like upholstered seating. Don't go too expensive with cushions as you might need to switch them out if they become bleached by the sun

Electric underfloor heating runs beneath the Yorkshire flags and on really cold days, the electric stove gives them a boost of heat

My style tips

- SHOP VINTAGE ON EBAY**
I couldn't find a matching trio of frilled opaline glass French café lampshades, so I bought similar but slightly different ones as and when they came up.
- BRING THE OUTSIDE IN**
Wrap fairy lights and faux foliage around the supporting beams to soften the look of the frame, and use the window sill and side tables to display pot plants so it feels like part of the garden.
- STYLE YOUR FLOOR SPACE**
As you can't hang anything on the walls, make use of floor space instead to add character. Dot large pots, lanterns, pillar candle holders and decorative side tables around for a relaxed, eclectic feel.



'I can sit at the breakfast bar and look through the double doors to the garden,' says Rebecca. 'We designed the one on the left to fold back so it could tuck in around the worktop'

had the back door, an old washroom and a store, but access to the latter two was from the garden, which was totally impractical,' Rebecca explains. 'The conservatory now incorporates these spaces, and we turned them into a cloakroom and utility.'

WHAT WE DID

The conservatory was built on a stone-clad base to match the house and was contracted out to a local company, who also laid the underfloor heating and stone floor. The couple then saved up for a new kitchen. 'The cupboard doors were peeling, so we wanted to invest in one that lasted,' says Rebecca. As with the conservatory, the house's period features were key to the look. So, they kept the original diamond floor tiles and chimney breast, where they installed a range cooker. 'I wanted neutral Shaker cupboards that would look timeless and not fight with the floor,' she says. 'We came across Neptune kitchens in a local showroom. It's fabulous quality and the Shaker design was traditional enough to fit in with the house, but not old-fashioned, so it wouldn't date.'

HIGHS & LOWS

Rebecca was glad that they chose to add a conservatory, rather than an extension, as it was so much quicker to build. 'The conservatory company spent three or four

CONSERVATORY MAKEOVER

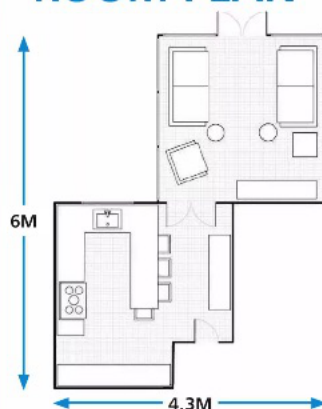
LONG LASTING

Although it's an initial investment, a wooden kitchen will last as you can freshen up the painted doors, or repaint in a different colour when you feel like a change

'A Shaker kitchen works with the old Edwardian floor tiles and chimney breast and we improved the work triangle with a new breakfast bar,' says Rebecca. 'Now the oven, sink and fridge are close together and the seating doesn't clash with the working area'



ROOM PLAN



THE DETAILS

Kitchen	£12,000
Paint	£160
Lighting	£75
Accessories	£200
TOTAL	£12,435

SHOPPING LIST

Suffolk cupboards painted in **eggshell** in Shell, £65 for 2.5L; walls painted in **emulsion** in Driftwood, £48 for 2.5L; Suffolk **bar stools**, £475 each, all Neptune. For similar, try Elise Rangemaster dual fuel **range cooker** in Cream, £3,086, AO. For similar, Angolan Black leather granite **worktop**, £320.37 per sq m, Work-Tops. For similar, Victorian black and red path **tiles**, £91.20 per sq m, The Victorian Emporium. For similar, try Jensen herringbone **throw** in Pink, £22; round woven rope **tray** in Natural, £8, both Dunelm. For similar, try faux sweetpea **garland**, £14.99, Floristry Warehouse. William Morris Willow Bough Vine **cushion**, £28.50, Blinds 2go. Cornishware Blue striped **mug**, £17, John Lewis & Partners. For similar, try tiled **side table**, £139, Urban Outfitters. Albury White garden **lanterns** with TruGlow candles, £199 for 4, Lights4fun.

days putting up the double-glazed frame,' she recalls. 'It was amazingly quick, but that's the beauty of building a conservatory. It's so much lighter than an extension would have been too.'

A new breakfast bar was key to bringing more usable space back into the kitchen, as it provides an extra worktop. The couple are also happy with their decision to widen the doorway between the two rooms. 'It's made such a difference to the light in the kitchen and how the spaces fit together,' says Rebecca. 'My only compromise in the changes was that I couldn't fit in a dresser.'

THE FINAL DETAILS

The couple have recently added tongue-and-groove panelling and repainted the kitchen cupboards from grey to a warm white, which continues to pair well with the matt black granite worktop. Rebecca has also repainted the conservatory in white, and scoured charity and vintage shops for old copper kitchen homewares, crockery, wicker furniture and accessories. 'We now have two good-sized rooms that work so well together,' she says. 'We're not overlooked so I can sit at the breakfast bar and see into the garden, it's a peaceful place to relax with a book or have friends over – we love it.' [via](#)



Martin built cupboards above the off-the-shelf radiator cover and matched the design and paint colour to the kitchen units. 'Concertina doors fold out so I can watch TV while I'm cooking,' says Rebecca