



# TASTE FOR TRADITION

A new kitchen has injected warmth and period character into Ian and Angela Bramley's restored Victorian vicarage

FEATURE **CAROLINE WHEATER** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARTIN HOLLIDAY**

**S**olidly built from red engineering brick, Ian and Angela Bramley's restored vicarage sits confidently in the flat landscape of East Yorkshire, a fine example of mid-Victorian architecture. But a decade ago, when they first set foot inside their new home, it was a very different story: of an unlisted period house that was neglected, blighted with a large flat-roofed extension – since removed – and with few remaining original features.

'In the early 1970s the vicarage had been converted into an old people's home and became institutionalised as a result,' explains Ian. 'Period features such as doors, architraves, fireplaces, cornicing and skirting boards had been removed. We wanted to restore the house to its original 1850s style, so we took everything back to bare plaster and started again. I found an excellent reference book, *The Elements of Style* by V&A curator Stephen Calloway, which became my bible.'

The industrial scale kitchen that had served the elderly residents was one of the first rooms to be

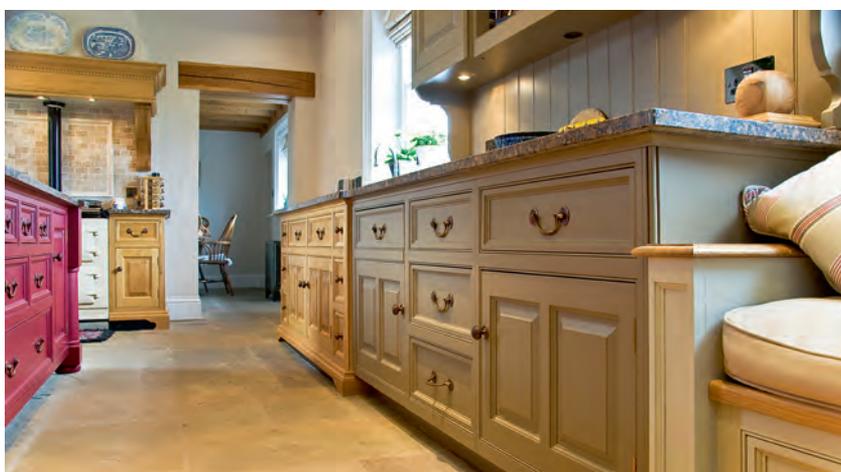
emptied of defunct appliances and unwanted clutter. A partition wall was knocked down to increase the size of the room, and a four-oven Aga with additional electric oven was installed to provide heating and hot water. 'For several years, while the renovation was going on around us, we brought in sofas and used it as a sitting room, and with the Aga on it was extremely cosy,' recalls Ian.

By 2007 the project had reached the stage where Ian and Angela were poised to move out of the coach house or 'matron's cottage' they had been occupying while the major building work went on, giving them the green light to plan a whole new kitchen. A friend also replacing a kitchen in a period house recommended Chiselwood and the Bramleys drove down to Lincolnshire to visit the showroom and workshops, and meet owner and design director Martin Holliday.

'We both liked what we saw,' remembers Ian. 'The bespoke furniture was individually designed for each >

**OPPOSITE** The four-oven, oil-fired cream Aga plus electric oven is the centrepiece of the kitchen, framed by a splashback of tumbled marble bricks and a hand-carved oak canopy with castellated moulding  
**THIS PAGE** A blend of painted and plain oak cabinets plus island, with raised and fielded panels, are finished with Baltic brown granite for an understated look

## READERS' KITCHENS



*'We don't have a built-in coffee machine but we always have two kettles warming on the Aga'*

### TOP LEFT AND ABOVE

Over the years, Ian collected reclaimed Yorkstone flags from various auctions until he had enough for the kitchen floor. The flagstones meet a stretch of oak floorboards that lead out into the hallway. The narrow wine store next to the painted larder is an effective use of space

**TOP RIGHT** The window seat is painted in Sunflower Seed from the Chiselwood Paint Collection. The blind fabric is Rogelio Ruby by Romo from Janice Walker Interiors (01377 256687)

kitchen, and we had confidence that Martin could come up with a design that would suit our particular period house.' Martin Holliday, who designs every Chiselwood kitchen, followed up with a site visit to East Yorkshire.

'I took inspiration from several pieces of Victorian furniture in the house, and from the period style of the property itself, to come up with a very traditional scheme that would fit Ian and Angela's brief of a smart yet comfortable and practical kitchen,' he says. 'We wanted the kitchen to look as though it had evolved with the house, hence the tall cupboards with raised and fielded panels, the dresser and the window seat.'

Ian and Angela didn't want a lot of gadgetry or appliances – an Aga and a Miele dishwasher meet their needs – and opted instead for a simple scheme with plenty of storage and food preparation space. 'We don't have a built-in coffee machine but we always have two kettles warming on the Aga so we can make a cup of tea quickly,' says Ian. In addition to the Aga, the island is their other favourite element: 'We wanted a wide surface unencumbered by sinks or griddles – and we use it for everything, from chopping up vegetables to spreading out the newspaper.'

The island is painted in a rich shade of purple called Beetroot from the Chiselwood Paint Collection, a range of 45 paints devised by Martin Holliday that is inspired by the colours of plants, fruits and vegetables, and made by Little Greene. Says Martin emphatically, 'I like colour – it helps create a focal point in a room and I encourage clients to be a bit braver with it than they naturally choose to be; they're usually really pleased with the results.' Elsewhere the cabinetry is a mix of painted and plain oak, which the Bramleys wanted from the outset to avoid a heavy, overbearing look.

The kitchen floor is laid with reclaimed Yorkstone flags and salvaged oak floorboards that Ian bought over the years from various auctions. 'We had a heap of stone flags stacked up outside in the garden and chose the most harmonious ones to put into the kitchen. I cleaned them with a scrubbing brush using Stardrops diluted with water, then finished them with slate seal,' he explains. The honest, natural materials suit the simplicity of the kitchen, which in turn chimes with the vicarage's generous Victorian spirit.

Chiselwood kitchens start from £35,000 (01522 704446; [chiselwood.co.uk](http://chiselwood.co.uk))