



FAMILY LIVING

The space once occupied by an old conservatory that had become barely useable, has been transformed into a practical, family living space that is bright, airy and ultimately beautiful.

Photography: Kirsten Platt

The conservatory on Diane Spooner's semi-detached family home had never been a great success – it was old, dilapidated and last year she noticed that the structure was slowly but surely coming away from the back wall of the property.

"It was the full width of the house, my garden is on a slope and the conservatory was literally falling off the back wall," recalls Diane, who works from home as an HR consultant. Needing a reliable contractor to sort the problem out, Diane did her research and looked for companies with positive feedback on the internet.

"I shortlisted Whalley Home Improvements as they had some fantastic reviews and invited them to give me a quote for the work," says Diane.

Emma Hodgkinson, who founded Whalley Home Improvements with partner Graham Fielden four years ago, visited Diane at her three-bedroom home.



"Emma was fantastic! We discussed what I wanted and how we would use the new space," explains Diane, who decided she wanted to replace the old brick and Upvc conservatory with a solid, single-storey extension.

"When the children were small we used the conservatory as a playroom but it was always too warm in summer and extremely cold in winter. As they grew up, we reluctantly used it as a dining room and then it became barely useable."

Diane was keen to replace the conservatory with an extension that would open up her existing kitchen: "The kitchen adjoined the conservatory. It's cream gloss, handleless and very sleek with sparkly black worktops – it's only three or four years old so I couldn't justify replacing it."

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It was agreed that the new extension would complement not compromise the existing kitchen and work began in earnest: "I knew some of the work would be noisy so I asked Emma if I should take some time off work. But she assured me it would be fine. And she was right!

"It was good that I was on site while the work was being done and to give them credit the Whalley Home Improvements team were marvellous. They were always polite, always tidied up after themselves and were really good at communicating – they let me know in advance if there was going to be any disruption."

The extension has transformed Diane and partner Hugh's lifestyle – giving them more space as well as creating a living area that is light and airy.

The luxury vinyl oak-effect flooring that was already in the kitchen now runs through to the extension where Diane has sourced new oak furniture to match her existing dining table.

"The flooring is a perfect match to the kitchen," says Diane, who opted for sliding glass doors with views over the garden.

"I find bi-fold doors quite heavy so went for sliding doors across the full length of the back wall.

"It's beautifully light during the day and when the sun goes down we can sit here stargazing, taking in the night sky – it's wonderful!" adds Diane, who has a daughter, a son in the army and a 16-year-old still living at home along with two step-children and three grandchildren, who regularly visit: "We are very mindful that this is a family space and it works really well.

“ WHALLEY HOME IMPROVEMENTS' COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER SERVICE IS OUTSTANDING! ”

"We also have two French bulldogs who love the extension as they are able to look outside at the garden while I'm working, which keeps them occupied."

Asked if she would recommend Whalley Home Improvements Diane says: "Yes absolutely! We think our new living space is fantastic – it really works for us and that's largely due to Emma's excellent communication skills. Before going ahead with the extension, she really wanted to know about our lifestyle so it would become a really useful space that is used by all the family. Whalley Home Improvements' commitment to customer service is outstanding!" ■



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