

## Taking the middle ground

### Uncommon Projects designs multi-zone, period-matched living area at the heart of a 1960s terrace

Determined to bring the soul back into a neglected 1960s house, bespoke kitchen specialist Uncommon Projects introduced a novel layout that broke the space up into distinct zones and installed a luxe-feel oak-veneer kitchen – bang in the middle.



Dartmouth Road by Uncommon Projects. All photography by Jocelyn Low.

When Uncommon Projects first stepped inside, the ground floor of the terrace on Dartmouth Road, South London, was an empty and characterless open-plan space. All traces of the interior's period identity had been stripped out by previous occupants, leaving the house's new owners with a vast but soulless living area – but also a blank canvas.

Uncommon Projects have earned a reputation for working closely with clients not only to help them choose and install their ideal plywood-based kitchen design, but also to develop creative approaches to the architecture of the space itself – including areas beyond the kitchen. In this case, that included working with the

clients to establish the optimum location for the kitchen area – not at the front of the house as the owners had initially assumed, but in the centre of the ground floor. This unconventional layout allowed them to fulfil the brief by creating the largest kitchen possible, introducing floor-to-ceiling storage to the living room, and also opening up the space around the front door to make for a more welcoming entrance.



Dartmouth Road by Uncommon Projects.

Although there are still no doors, the ground floor of the property is divided into distinct functional areas, but retains a sense of openness and flow. Now open to the kitchen, the dining area overlooks a front courtyard garden, whereas the living room – now at the back of the house – is a separate but connected space looking out to the rear garden. This compartmentalised layout maintains the air of spaciousness and fluidity associated with open-plan design, but gives each zone a distinct function and feeling, allowing members of the household to engage in their own activities, sociable but separate.

*'In the last couple of years we have definitely noticed a move away from open plan living. Families are beginning to favour spaces that allow different family members to do their thing without disturbing everyone else.'*

– Alan Drumm, Uncommon Projects

In terms of style, the owners were keen to respect the property's 1960s origins, traces of which were still visible in the exterior details such as glazing and cladding.

Uncommon Projects, with its use of plywood and minimalist but rich design language, proved the ideal choice of designer.



Uncommon Projects' workshop in North East London.

While the client worked on restoring the parquet flooring and floor-to-ceiling balustrades on the open staircase, Uncommon Projects worked to complement key period features. For the kitchen cabinets and living-room storage, for example, the studio employed a material palette that would not have looked out of place in the 1960s home.

Like most of Uncommon Projects' designs, the cabinets are constructed from birch plywood, with oak veneer on the panels, black laminate (Fenix NTM) on the drawers and hinged doors, and cork veneer on the sliding doors. This creates a graphic, ordered visual impact that helps anchor the kitchen within the space.

From initial enquiry to the tightening of the final screw, the Dartmouth Road project took just six months, and was completed in June 2019, after a fit-out lasting just two weeks.

## Notes to editors

The Dartmouth Road kitchen is the latest in Uncommon Projects' growing portfolio of residential and commercial commissions across the UK – for further details and images, please contact Jodi Moss and Georgia Maxwell at [uncommonprojects@zetteler.co.uk](mailto:uncommonprojects@zetteler.co.uk), or reach them on +44 (0)20 3735 5855.

### About Uncommon Projects

Founded in 2011 by an architect and a product designer, Uncommon Projects designs, makes and installs bespoke plywood furniture for residential and commercial clients across the UK. Based in London, the award-winning company has earned a reputation for inventive contemporary design, function-first personal approach and material-led aesthetic, consistently winning industry awards for its fitted and freestanding kitchen design. Everything is designed and made in Leyton, East London.

[uncommonprojects.co.uk](http://uncommonprojects.co.uk)

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## Images



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