

## Smart, small and perfectly formed Uncommon Projects brings beauty and purpose to a compact kitchen space

Since 2011, Uncommon Projects has been transforming homes with bespoke kitchens and furniture, all designed and made at its HQ in Leyton, East London, and personally installed by its team.



Photography by Jocelyn Low.

Established by architect Alan Drumm and product designer James Hoy, Uncommon Projects combines the best of both its founders' disciplines to offer something unique in the kitchen-design market. The company has earned a reputation (and a fistful of awards) for its function-first approach, personalised end-to-end service, and a unique aesthetic that celebrates the material versatility and durability of plywood. A newly completed project in Whitstable illustrates precisely why.

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The owners of a three-bedroom interwar bungalow were engaged in an ongoing room-by-room renovation of what had been their family home for many years. A rear extension had turned their existing kitchen into a transitional zone – effectively a corridor to be passed through en route from hall to living room – but options for improving the layout were limited by the positioning of the radiators and a brick pier.

Uncommon Projects were commissioned to design and install a fitted kitchen that restored the kitchen's status as a room in its own right, while responding to the architecture and scale of the room – including its distinctive pitched ceiling. Both the clients and Uncommon Projects were keen to preserve the inherent modesty of the house, while introducing a coherent and considered feel to the space.



Photography by Jocelyn Low.

Removing an existing set of double doors and demolishing the brick pier created space for tall corner units containing the oven and fridge freezer, and allowed the installation of a L-shaped arrangement of base cabinets in the lower-ceilinged area opposite.

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Photography by Jocelyn Low.

Replacing the old radiator with a low and long column version created space for the installation of a bespoke wall-mounted ply bench – a striking but profoundly practical feature of the new kitchen. Although the room is comparatively small, the pitch of the roof creates a considerable feeling of volume above the dining table, which Uncommon Projects playfully accentuated by installing an oversized paper pendant light.

To avoid the kitchen become cramped and cluttered, the client did not want to use wall cabinets, but there was still a need for storage space above the main worktop – as well as somewhere to house countertop lighting. Uncommon Projects' response is a flush, wall-length plywood shelf, fitted with concealed strip lighting, that also works to draw the eye to the small window above the sink – now framed in plywood to visually connect it to the shelf.

*"The room feels less like a corridor and more like a space to spend time in. The cabinets, bench and table sit in the space seamlessly. There are no awkward corners; everything has just enough space, without feeling cramped. By using*

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*a floating bench and by not bringing the wall units and tall units right up to the ceiling, it means the corners of the room are not obscured, making it feel as open as possible.”*

– Alan Drumm, Uncommon Projects

Like many of Uncommon Project’s designs, the Whitstable kitchen is full of small, easily overlooked details that dramatically enhance its functionality and everyday appeal – such as the light switch and socket mounted to the side of a base cabinet to avoid cluttering the wall by the hob; and the custom-made drawer and cupboards inserts built specifically to hold what the clients planned to store in them – whether cutlery, utensils mugs or bins. It’s a kitchen designed for decades of everyday use, built with high-quality durable materials that will last for a lifetime or longer.

The cabinets are made from maple-veneered birch plywood, topped with a Corian worksurface and fitted with White Fenix NTM doors – which creates a gentle and appealing contrast with the warm, blush-pink walls and duck-egg blue floor. This colour palette also helps to underline the kitchen’s distinct identity within the home – no longer a transitional zone, but a visually engaging 'destination' space.

## Notes to editors

The Whitstable 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)