



PLANNING GUIDE – 10 POINTS TO CONSIDER

- **FUNCTION** - While we all want our kitchen to look fantastic, for most people it is the most important room in the home, and if it doesn't work well, it will end up irritating you however beautiful it may be. Ultimately, there is no "ideal" kitchen shape, we can make most kitchen spaces work for you with the right amount of planning and forethought. It is however important to really think ahead about how you will use the space and what you want out of it.
- **WORKING TRIANGLE** – This is the conventional way of thinking of positioning the important things in the kitchen in a triangle – i.e. having the fridge, sink and cooker within a compact area. This obviously makes actually using your kitchen much more practical. Our clients often say that something which is very useful is having the crockery drawers within easy reach of the dishwasher, something you might not think of beforehand but in practice will save you lots of time. Other things to consider are having a dedicated breakfast area or drinks station, which groups the items needed together, planning ahead for these things is very useful.
- **STORAGE** – It's not just about how much you need, but about getting the right storage in the right place: cupboards for everyday cutlery and tableware close to the dishwasher; spices, oils, etc, as well as pots and pans close to the cooker; the fridge and the larder cupboard close by as well. It can be helpful to do a basic storage plan to work out what you need to store and where it would be most usefully placed; look at your current kitchen storage and try and think how you could make it work better for you in your new kitchen. We find that clients really favour drawers in the kitchen, they utilise the space very well and allow good access to everything, the deep pan drawers prove particularly popular.
- **SPACE** – Space is really important in a kitchen and although everyone wants to gain as much storage as possible, it's equally as important not to get carried away and cram too much in. Things like leaving sufficient space around the island is very important, as you don't want cupboard doors hitting people who are sitting down to eat. If you plan to use your kitchen for more than just cooking and will be eating and relaxing in the room too, then you should perhaps consider zoning the room, which will help the space work better. Lighting can be a good way to highlight these different zones.
- **LIGHTING** – This is a very important part of designing the kitchen and one that is often overlooked. Unlike in other rooms in the house, one source of lighting such as overhead lighting is often not enough. Although sufficient overhead lighting is very important, it's also worth making sure that the light is not behind you when you are using your workspace, under cabinet lighting is useful here, as it specifically lights the worktop space you are using. As so many people now choose to eat in the kitchen as well and have a breakfast bar or island, pendant lighting is a good addition as bright lighting is not essential for this. One thing to think about is to maybe have these different lights on separate lighting rings, so that you can zone the room by turning some off and keeping others on, this is very useful when entertaining and can create different moods in the room. Don't forget to also think about the positioning of the sockets for these lights, where are you likely to be in the kitchen when you want to turn them on/off.



- **POWER** – Another point often overlooked when planning a kitchen; it's often hard to think about where you might want power sockets when you have an empty shell of a room and can't see past the walls being plastered. It is however, really important to think ahead about this, as the electricians will come before the kitchen itself is fitted. We can work with you on this and help you visualise using the space and what you might need. Think about all the worktop appliances you might need power for, do you have a microwave/toaster/kettle/coffee machine? Will you want to use the island as a workspace and need a charging point for your laptop/phone maybe? Maybe you will be doing lots of baking and will therefore need extra sockets for your mixers etc. Something we've seen recently is clients choosing to have an "appliance garage" this is a cupboard where they keep most of their everyday appliances neatly tucked away, keeping worktops clutter free but with bi-fold doors giving easy access.
- **WORKTOPS** – Choosing the worktop for your new kitchen is possibly one of the biggest decisions you will make and one many people agonise over for a long time. This is ultimately because a large chunk of the budget is spent on the worktop, particularly if people choose a natural stone such as quartz or granite, both very popular choices. It's wise once again to think about it from a practical point of view, you really do need something which, both looks good but is hard-wearing and hygienic at the same time.
- **BINS** – Not very glamorous but don't forget to think about where you want your bin, it's unlikely you will want a freestanding large bin in your beautiful new kitchen. A popular choice these days, is to have a built-in bin system behind a cupboard door. It then becomes part of the kitchen but when you open the door you have a system which can accommodate recycling, general waste and even food waste, as more and more people are very keen on recycling.
- **FLOORING** – When it comes to flooring, it's very important to keep practicality in mind. Practical floors can still be beautiful and the choice of floor is often a big one for clients as it has to fulfil many requirements: Does it look good? – A lovely floor can finish off your kitchen beautifully. Is it slip resistant? – An obvious one but in an area such as the kitchen, this is very important. Is it easily cleaned and hygienic? - Kitchen floors suffer all sorts of things being thrown at them! Is it hard-wearing? - The kitchen will see a lot of traffic over the years. Is it low maintenance? - Some floors are porous and need re-sealing frequently. Hard natural stone is a popular choice and tends to tick most of these boxes.
- **APPLIANCES** – Often clients come to us not knowing what type of kitchen they want but with a very clear wish list of appliances. The kitchen is after all probably the most technically demanding room of the house and people get very excited by the latest gadgets such as the boiling water tap or the latest wine fridge. It is very helpful for us to have a list of your chosen appliances in good time as from a space point of view, we obviously need to build around them. Questions people often ask us is whether it's better to have a range or built in eye-level ovens; this really is a personal preference and both can work well dependant on your needs.