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SMART KITCHENS

Once hidden away at the back of the house where all the labour of housework was carried out, kitchens have become a social space where gadgets rule

THE SMART KITCHEN concept is still a new one to many who still consider the programmable thermostat as the height of technology and perhaps think all this techie stuff is a bit of a fad. So we asked Karen Chugg from Exeter's Intelligent Abodes to share their day in the life of a smart kitchen.

"When we wake in the morning, the kitchen is generally the first place we go, for that morning cup of tea, this is so easy with the instant Zip hot water tap. Super convenient.

"On cold winter days, it's great to turn the heating up from my smart tablet next to the bed – it makes it perfectly warm when I get downstairs. Mornings can be a peaceful opportunity to catch up on my paperwork, so I select my 'Reading mode' on my Lutron light switch, providing focus where I need to work and a gentle dimmed effect throughout the kitchen, so it feels cosy and doesn't alert the animals that its breakfast time.

"As the natural light of the day increases, the automated blinds intuitively and gradually open. The children appear eager for breakfast, select their favourite radio station on the Multiroom system and adjust the lighting to 'Morning mode'. And so the day begins!

"At weekends, the kitchen is definitely the place to congregate – friends gather to chill, animals find cosy places to sleep and children are in and out for food and company. The responsive heating and lights that can be changed to suit

Casa in Vino by Rational Kitchens at The Fitted Kitchen Centre Plymouth fittedkitchencentre.co.uk

Add colour through your feature pieces like this ESSE range from hearthandcook.com

The kitchen but not as we know it: high tech design from Intoto Kitchens (intoto.co.uk) working with Intelligent Abodes to provide the home control (intelligentabodes.co.uk)

The award-winning 'hidden kitchen' designed by Sapphire Spaces sapphirespaces.co.uk

Add colour with this Ted Baker splashback from £35 at britishceramictile.com

Painted wooden kitchens remain one of the most popular choices combined with exceptional cabinetry

'On the days when I have prepared a meal in the morning, as I leave work, I can switch the oven on from my smart phone, knowing it will be perfectly cooked when we all get home hungry.'

the task makes the room feel intuitive, creating the right mood for whatever you want to do.

"On the days when I have prepared a meal in the morning, as I leave work, I can switch the oven on from my smart phone, knowing it will be perfectly cooked when we all get home hungry. Once again the home is the centre of activity as we share the day's events over dinner. We select 'All On' lighting mode as we clear the kitchen and stack the dish washer; then we adjust to 'TV mode' and settle down to watch a family programme while we all relax.

"Later in the evening, the kitchen becomes a peaceful haven for the adults to enjoy a glass of wine, listening to our favourite music, dimming the lights and shutting the blinds from the comfort of our cosy chairs."

Today's kitchen is the central meeting point of every household. From breakfast to relaxing with friends, its design needs to meet the requirements of all of its users.

Clockwise from top The new Houston Sink and Farmhouse Belfast Sink (both from rangemaster.co.uk) and the traditional goes tech: the AGA with an induction hotplate (agaliving.co.uk)

Above Refresh your kitchen's look with ccecssories from Danish company Lene Bjerrre from Devon's own Dottyhome.com

FROM THE COLOUR EXPERTS AT FARROW AND BALL

For some the kitchen is the hub of the home, for baking, cooking, eating, and entertaining. While for others it's simply a functional room to create food as quickly as possible. However you use the kitchen, there is a style and colour for you.

The kitchen is the perfect place to introduce colour, whether it's a soft accent or a bold statement. Green hues help to bring some of nature back into the home, especially if you have a kitchen that looks out onto your garden. Cromarty like the stronger Mizzle is a beautiful muted pastel that could be used on your cupboards to complement a neutral shade on the wall, such as Shadow White, one of our new nine colours for 2016.

For those seeking some real excitement, there is the vibrantly bold Vardo – another of our new shades. This effervescent yet versatile shade provides a wonderful injection of colour for a kitchen, whether it's used on walls, cupboards or furniture. Vardo works incredibly well with whites and is fantastically elegant when combined with gentle Pavilion Gray.

When painting your kitchen we recommend using our high performance Modern Emulsion which is washable, scuff and stain resistant. Available in all 132 Farrow & Ball colours, Modern Emulsion offers the rich depth of colour and low sheen you'd expect, but with the added durability required in a kitchen environment.

farrow-ball.com

Shaded White kitchen from Farrow and Ball farrow-ball.com