The demise of the isolated kitchen is also linked with the gradual abandonment of the formal dining room, which instead was more often replaced by a kitchen/dining room. The kitchen now has become the active centre of the household where the family can meet, eat, work and play. Parents can supervise young children and entertain visitors while keeping an eye on the cooking. So we arrive almost full circle back to Saxon times when everyone gathered round the central hearth. Cabinet makers and appliance manufacturers together have developed kitchens to suit the most modest needs right up to the most expensive fantasies. Today the kitchen is the most highly serviced room in the house, and the room on which most money is spent.

2
Types of kitchen

First considerations

How will the kitchen be used and by whom? What are the clients' particular requirements, if any? While considering these requirements, remember that the basic layout of the kitchen may last considerably longer than the present occupiers of the house and, therefore, should not be so idiosyncratic as to devalue the property. For instance, although it is common knowledge that kitchens are frequently ripped out and revamped, the general disposition of the entrance door, main window, position of sink and cooker if needing a flue, will largely condition future layouts unless substantial re-building is undertaken.

Questions to be asked
- How many people will the kitchen serve?
- Will all meals be served and eaten within, or adjoining the kitchen
- Or should there be a 'breakfast bar' in the kitchen with a more extensive dining area nearby?
- Is the person, who does most of the kitchen, tidy and able to work in a relatively compact area, or would they prefer a more generous layout?
- Do the clients have a once-a-month massive shop, and therefore require a large area of food storage, or even a separate larder?
- Or do they live conveniently near shops and buy food frequently, and can therefore manage with a relatively small area of food storage?