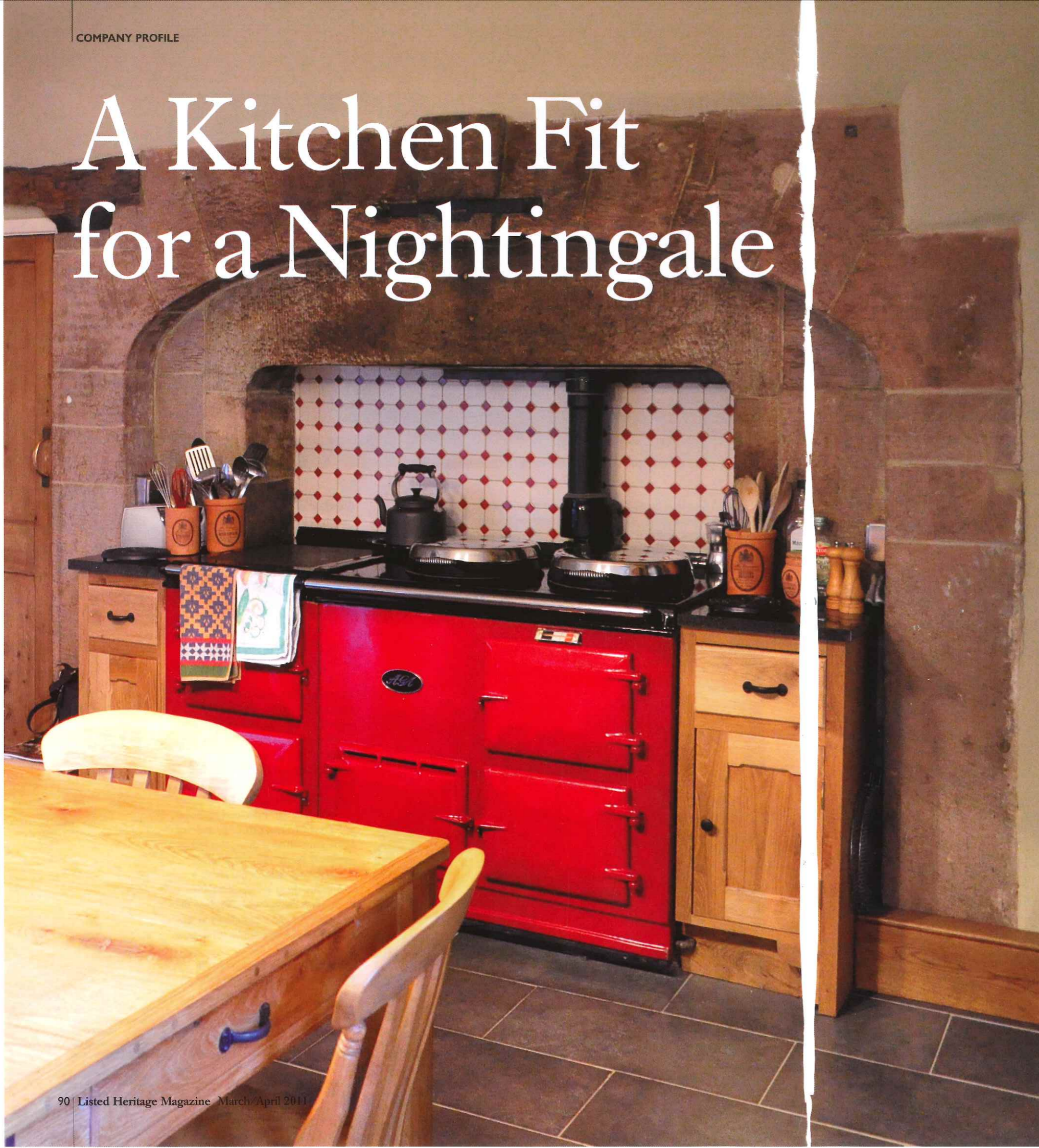


A Kitchen Fit for a Nightingale



In their 25 years of designing and manufacturing bespoke kitchen solutions, family run bespoke kitchen designers and manufacturers, Churchwood Designs of Tideswell, Derbyshire have been commissioned to work on many fine, grade I and II listed properties. Of these, several stand out and 'Cromford Bridge House' is one such project.

With beams that date back 483 years, the most recent extension 261 years and ornate plasterwork; believed to date back to the Jacobean period, it was obvious that an 'off the shelf', high street branded kitchen was never going to do justice to the character and fabric of this Derbyshire property! Furthermore, anyone working on the kitchen had to work round a large period fireplace, an original wall – bread oven. This project was most definitely, not for the faint hearted or indeed your average kitchen company.

To add further to the properties appeal and if you like, the pressure to create a design with the right quality and feel, former custodians

included 'Florence Nightingale's Great Aunt, whom Florence frequently visited; expressing in her letters how much she loved staying at 'Cromford Bridge House' as well as the renowned local industrialist and philanthropist, John Smedley.

The new owners quite rightly felt that 'Cromford Bridge House', with its interesting architecture and history, deserved something not only a little special but also, something that the revered former occupants would probably have approved of.

Having researched several bespoke kitchen companies, the current owners came across 'Churchwood Design'. Churchwood Design are well known, not just within their locality, but across the country, for providing beautiful bespoke, solid timber kitchen solutions that are both in tune with a properties architecture and the needs and tastes of their clients; so much so that they receive high levels of repeat business and recommendations.

Mark Ambler who, together with his daughter Charlotte, designs and manufactures bespoke solutions,



as oppose to offering bespoke tailoring to pre determined furniture ranges like so many of the high profile, high end, in-frame brands. This level of bespoke service ensures that listed properties, Like Cromford Bridge House can enjoy furniture that is perfectly in proportion with its interior dimensions; this just is not possible with a company using standardised cabinet sizes.

Mark comments - *"Naturally, most listed properties present us with something very unique and special but this particular home had interesting features in abundance.*

Whilst the room for the kitchen was large with very high ceilings, there was only one window, making the kitchen appear dark. Because of this, we decided against too many wall cabinets since this would have given the effect of closing in the space and making the room appear even darker.

We felt that the room would benefit from an un-fitted, free standing look, which would be more in keeping with the style and structure of the building. We also wanted to use materials and a design that would blend with the fabric of the property. With this in mind, we used old, reclaimed oak and a simple 'chamfered Shaker' door design, echoing the oak door design used for the internal room doors. We even copied the ironmongery, in terms of door and

drawer handles to further ensure that the furniture blended in.

The un-fitted and relaxed nature of the room was further encouraged with the creation of individual pieces of furniture such as the dresser and kitchen table which allows the kitchen to be used for informal dining.

Whilst our aim was to create the right kind of feel, in keeping with the property, the furniture had to be practical too, catering for all the demands of 21st century living so several modern appliances have been carefully integrated and in some instances, completely concealed, so as not to detract from the look."

The AGA adds a welcome splash of colour and subsequently acts as a focal point. With 15mm either side, it just fits perfectly into the old fire place.

The 'Nero Impala' granite is also perfect for the look of the kitchen since a more patterned, or brighter variety of stone would have perhaps been too ostentatious and flamboyant for what is a very honest and simple kitchen. Once again, with practicality in mind, the granite runs onto the dresser to provide a large and useful work surface; its small details like this that make Churchwood Design commissions such a pleasure to live and work with.

So; would Florence have approved if she was visiting today? We think so. One could almost, picture her boiling a kettle of water on the AGA to fix her Great aunt a pot of tea, whilst making best use of the ergonomically, well planned layout and the practical and fit for purpose furniture!

What would John Smedley think? As an industrialist with a keen eye for design, we think he would approve of such fine details as the use of beautiful natural wood with its aged patina, the dovetail jointed drawer boxes and the fully recessed butt hinges used to hang the substantial, solid oak doors in the cabinets frames.

However, what's most important is that the current owners love the kitchen and it meets their exact tastes and requirements and that it came in at a very reasonable price when compared to Churchwood Designs perceived competition.

For more information

on how Churchwood Design could create a bespoke commission to suit your listed property as well as finding out about the large 25th anniversary discounts, available throughout 2011 call 01298 872422

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