

Installing a new kitchen is the number one renovation among homeowners in the UK, new research shows.

Date: July 23rd 2013

Published: Strutt & Parker

Comparison website Gocompare.com found that updating kitchens (42%) topped the list of home improvements carried out in the last three years, while it is also the top improvement planned for the future (34%).

A new bathroom (41%) was the next most popular home renovation since 2010, followed by a new boiler or central heating (31%).

People also splashed out on an extension (18%), gave their garden a makeover (11%), knocked through rooms to create more space (11%), installed solar panels (8%) and went for an attic conversion (6%).

Fitting new kitchen cabinets and worktops around a new cooker and other domestic appliances can improve or increase living space and add to the value of a property, just like any other home renovation or extension.

In doing so, the value of the property's rebuilding costs and household contents can also increase.

Worryingly, however, 43% of home owners who undertook major home improvements in the last three years didn't inform their home insurance provider of the changes they had made, potentially invalidating their home insurance.

"Whether you are planning an extension, installing a new kitchen or other major renovation, you should consult your home insurer before you start work so that you can review your sum insured and make sure your plans don't invalidate your cover," advises Mark Greening, Gocompare.com's home insurance spokesperson.

"Premiums are partly based on the cost of rebuilding the structure of your property, so your insurer will want to know about any renovations which affect the value of your home."

He also recommends thinking about the aesthetics of a renovation, including security, as most insurers offer discounts for properties fitted with good quality door and window locks and burglar alarms.

Ed Church, head of the Strutt & Parker Canterbury office, says: "If you're thinking of doing work, a kitchen renovation should be at the top of your list, since it's the heart of a home - the room where families spend most of their time."

In terms of future home improvements, an extension (30%) was second on the list, followed by a new bathroom (29%) and a garden makeover (20%).



A new boiler or central heating (15%), attic conversion (11%), knocking through rooms (8%) and installing solar panels (8%) are also popular. "Upgrading to stainless steel appliances and installing countertops made from engineered stone or granite are fairly easy changes will improve the aesthetic appeal of the kitchen space and appeal to potential buyers," adds Church.

Link : www.struttandparker.com/news/residential-property/new-kitchens-top-homeowner-wish-list/