What goes on behind closed doors?

A report about *Life at Home* in the UK
The walls may not really have ears...

...but we do at IKEA. It's part of our everyday behaviour to find out the challenges, needs and dreams of life at home in the UK. And we're always listening and learning from these valuable insights, as they inform everything we do.

For this report, we've been busy reviewing peoples' changes in life on the home front, today, yesterday and tomorrow.

We then talked to architects and designers, historians, lifestyle gurus and government statisticians, to get the experts' perspective. Then we went straight to the people and asked them a few home truths.

And this is what we discovered.
The nesting instinct...

...is as old as the hills. 25,000 years BC, human handprints in red ochre, teamed with a nice auroch and mammoth motif, were probably the first attempts at bespoke wallpaper.

We've come a long way from the cave, but some things are eternal, and universal. Wherever they happen to be born in the world, people like to personalise their living space to suit their own needs, and sense of style. It's a Homo sapiens' imperative for the home.

The physical structures in which we build our nests are constantly changing over time, as are, (hopefully), the male/female boundaries as to who does what within them, along with attitudes towards the planet which generously hosts our brief individual tenure.

At IKEA, as we celebrate 25 years of helping to enhance daily life at home in the UK, with affordable, practical, and desirable design, we thought it would be a good time to turn the clock back to where we started, compare things to where we're at today, and see where we might be heading, in what each one of us calls home sweet home.

It makes for interesting reading..........
After 25 years, we know quite a lot about what it is that people are looking for, to make everyday life at home, happier, more practical and more stylish.

But you don’t just have to take our word for it. We asked experts Ipsos MORI to frame the questions and find the answers, in a specially commissioned piece of research. It takes a look at home life in the UK today, versus a quarter of a century ago, when IKEA arrived with flat-packs in lieu of longboats. It also explores peoples’ personal projections for changes that may come on the home front in the next 25 years.

The report has been compiled using a 3-pronged research methodology:

- Desk research: reliable sources providing a 25-year picture of past and present home life, identifying emerging trends during that time.
- An omnibus survey exploring individual opinion, direct from the home front.
- What the experts say: analysis and interpretation from respected figures across a range of fields, from interior design and architecture, to geography and ecology.

OLIVER HEATH, Interior designer and eco-design consultant
With three books on interior design under his belt, plus regular press articles, Oliver has appeared on television design programmes including BBC’s Changing Rooms and DIY SOS, and ITV’s Dream Homes, and campaigns for environmental groups such as the Waste Recycle Action Programme and the Energy Savings Trust.

HUMA QURESHI Features writer and design blogger
Formerly of the Guardian, Huma is a freelance features writer for national newspapers and magazines, specialising in interior design and fashion. Her popular design and lifestyle blog, herlittleplace.com shows a finger firmly on the pulse of style news and "pretty places and quirky cool stuff."

ELEANOR JOHN Head of collections and exhibitions at the Geffrye Museum
At the famous London museum of the home, Eleanor has co-curated a wide range of exhibitions over the past decade, and helped to create the museum’s excellent 20th century gallery. Her research interests focus on middle-class London architecture from 1570-1800.

SUZANNE REIMER Senior lecturer in geography, University of Southampton
You may not have enjoyed geography at school, but Suzanne brings it all to life with her specialist knowledge of design, creativity and innovation, including the gendering of creativity and design labour. With ongoing interests in the furniture industry, her recent work includes a study of Britain’s wartime utility furniture scheme.

DAVID LIDDICOAT Architect, British Homes award for best small house 2011
Named by design icon Wallpaper Magazine as one of their ‘Future 30’, David’s practice Liddicoat & Goldhill, goes from strength to strength. Founded in 2007 with his wife Sophie Goldhill, the practice recently became an RIBA award winner for their ‘Shadow House’ design, listed for the Manser Medal.

PENNY SPARKE Design writer and academic
Professor of design history and Pro Vice-Chancellor at Kingston University, Penny is a Senior Fellow of the Royal College of Art, specialising in the history of design, and interior design in particular. She is a prolific published author, with works such as ‘An Introduction to Design and Culture’, or the intriguingly titled ‘As Long As It’s Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste’.

What goes on behind closed doors? © Inter IKEA Systems B.V. 2012

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What goes on behind closed doors? 7
Bricks and mortar...

Who owns what?

Over the last 25 years, we have seen some striking changes in home ownership. In 1987, 65% of households in England owned their own homes. The percentage then peaked at 71% in the mid-2000s, rising from 12 million in 1987 to 14 million in 2010.

But there’s been a slow-down. One obvious reason is price.

1. EHS data, Office of National Statistics, data applies to England
In 1987, the house price to income ratio was about 3.5, rising since then to 5.0. So home buying has become out of reach for a large number of people.

At the same time, the number of households in social housing shrank from just over 5 million to 4 million. The percentage of households in privately rented homes has increased from 10% to 16% over the past 25 years. Less social stock, more landlords.

Since 2007, there has been a decrease in the number of households who expect to own property in two years’ time.

Projections by the British Social Housing foundation show that if current trends continue, private renting will have overtaken social renting by 2013.

1. Data from Nationwide, data applies to UK.
2. EHS data, Office of National Statistics, data applies to England
The size of our homes is changing too...

Newly built UK homes have some of the smallest floor spaces in Europe, barring Italy, at 83 sq m.¹

Smart storage solutions and multi-functional furniture respond to the needs of small space living and shared space living, and are areas to which we devote a lot of time and energy at IKEA in product development terms.

If our homes have to work twice as hard, so must our product designs.

¹. Space per person in the UK, Williams, 2009
So where does this leave us?

The changes in home ownership and renting, in floor space and shared space, can have a precise impact on interiors and product design.

First off, there’s an increased tendency to extend those homes we own. Already 1 in 5 British homes have a conservatory, and 1 in 5 have loft conversions. Furniture designs can be tailored to suit these trends with, for example, natural, organic materials suited to conservatory living spaces, or versatile storage for limited loft areas in pitched roofs.

If house prices keep people living in the same homes for longer, there is likely to be an increased desire to renew and refresh interiors. 56% of 2-person households have lived in their homes for more than 10 years.

If a change is as good as a rest, people are likely to think of making regular changes to their decor, rather than their door number.

Predictions may be for more sofas with removable, changeable covers, and seasonal soft furnishings, for a change of curtains, cushions and colour schemes to revitalise the home and keep boredom at bay.

In some European countries, it’s not uncommon for people to take their entire kitchen with them when they move home. Not so in the UK, even if they do occasionally dig up the dahlias and hijack the hibiscus from the back garden. But the genesis of free-standing kitchen units, which can readily go with you if you up sticks and go, may feature increasingly in the rental market.

Design trends for flexible, rather than fitted furniture may be key, along with soft furnishings and other accessories, as people seek to personalise their homes, with or without property ownership. Owners or renters, our research showed that everyone seems to care equally about their home environment, even down to considering themselves to be house-proud: 74% owners and 72% renters.

“When you look at how difficult it is to get on the property ladder, for some, renting is a long-term option...

But there’s no reason why you wouldn’t want to make a rented property feel more like your home...

There was one blogger who was renting, but wanted to put up wallpaper. So instead she just hung a couple of rolls over her wall. People still want a nice interior for their home, it’s just a matter of doing it more creatively.”

HUJA QURESHI
Freelance features writer and design blogger

1. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA, all GB adults aged 16-75, base = 2030
2. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA, all GB adults aged 16-75, 2-person households, base = 890
3. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA, all GB adults aged 16-75, base = 2030
Number crunching...

Key statistics from the IKEA Life at Home report:

77% of houses (base: 1581) have been bought with a mortgage or are owned outright.

49% of bungalows (base 161) are owned outright.

70% of flats (base 238) are being rented, with 35% being rented from a private landlord.

44% of 25-34 year olds and 61% of 35-44 year olds (base 368) are buying a home with a mortgage.

62% of 55-75 year olds (base 584) own their properties outright.

25% of 16-24 year olds (base 348) and 26% of 25-34 year olds (base 357) are renting privately.
Who’s been sleeping in my bed?

The IKEA report about Life at Home in the UK found that the more household members there are in the home, the more people like to take off to their own space.

18% of single households feel most comfortable in their bedroom versus 33% of 4+ person households, and 55% of people living with their parents or other relatives say the bedroom is where they want to chill.

What that means for us (apart from wet towels on bedroom floors) is that we may see shifts in how people decorate their homes, perhaps with living space style increasingly influential in bedroom design, as the bedroom morphs into a key living space.

“Children might be up in their bedrooms, or adults will be escaping children to their super-gorgeous bedrooms with en suite bathrooms. It’s that act of disappearing up to the attic, giving space to other people.”

ELEANOR JOHN
The Geffrye Museum, London

There’s a trend cited by many experts that multi-generational homes may gain in importance, for practical and financial reasons.

As our mums always told us, we have to learn to share.

“You might imagine a trajectory where, given pressures on housing in Britain, the home isn’t so sharply structured by the nuclear family. People might have to think of home spaces in different ways as they come to live with a more extended family... The home is a shared space and the decision-making process which shapes what it looks like is not the same as an individual buying clothes for her or himself... A notion which developed from the 1950s onwards - that DIY and home-making were something done by couples as an expression of their relationship - might potentially look different if the making of home involves a parent and an adult child, for example.”

SUZANNE REIMER
Senior Lecturer in Geography, Southampton University

In 2009, more than half a million households in Britain contained three or more generations. That’s a 7.6% increase on 2005, likely to continue with today’s cash-strapped younger generation being unable to move out, plus a linger longer generation at the top of the family tree. But it’s not necessarily a bad thing. 77% of people in multi-generational households say that this is a situation with which they are happy.

“People now talk about ‘lifetime homes’ where homes are designed for the changes throughout your life. When you buy a home you can convert it to have another bedroom if you have children, you can convert the downstairs so you can take in an elderly relative. Our homes are becoming more adaptive to take in changing family models.”

OLIVER HEATH
Architectural and interior design and sustainability consultant
And changes there have been...

Over the past 25 years, we have moved away from the nuclear family, into a world where single households and couple households are also on the up. It’s a trend that’s strongly projected for the coming 25 years, too. The proportion of the UK population under 16 has decreased by over 5% over the past 40 years, and as people delay marriage and settling down more and more, we can expect the number of childless households to go up.

Childless couples have risen from 26% of British households in 1981 to 28% in 2011.

Single parent households have increased from 14% to 25% between 1981 and 2010. In Northern Ireland, the figure is 26%.

In design terms, the singleton/childless lifestyle can facilitate a tendency towards sophistication, perhaps paler colours or luxury finishes, with people feeling able to choose things they like, without the practical dictates of living with kids.

At the same time, one in three men and one in six women currently live with their parents, compared with one in four men and one in seven women in 1997. Fast forward to 2011, and we find 1.8 million men and 1.1 million women aged 20-34 living with parents.

“One of the issues that we’re all going to face is that there simply isn’t enough housing. Now we’re encouraging students to stay at home to keep costs down... how do you adapt your house to accommodate these adult children? I suspect there’s a maximisation of space, you’ll have to do your extension out the back, do up your basement, do up your loft, and then there’s the ‘super-shed’. Could you deposit said child at the bottom of the garden?”

ELEANOR JOHN  
Head of collections and exhibitions  
at the Geffrye Museum, London

As young people are forced to stay home, or move back in with their parents, and elderly relatives are housed by grown-up children, we may see a continuing rise in communal households, where shared space is used less and less, and people retreat to personal spaces such as bedrooms, basements and converted lofts, for sanity and privacy.

“This house has changed from when I was the mother and they were the children. Now my daughters have come back from uni and we share the house together; it feels a bit like being a student again. It makes the house less like a family home and more like a bedsit with a common living room. It’s a very different experience from the family with 3 children under 10.”

PENNY SPARKE  
Design writer and academic
What goes on behind closed doors?

1. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA, all GB adults aged 16-75, base = 2030, all adults with children aged 16-75 in GB, base = 662, GB one person households, base = 149, GB 4+ person households base = 561, Living with parents base = 354, Living with other relatives base = 154

Not in front of the children?

Grown-up offspring aside, society’s attitudes towards the place of young children in the home have undergone a considerable shift.

The kids have made a land grab.

Our research showed that people believe children were not allowed in certain rooms of the house 25 years ago, and that nowadays 61% of parents let their children play anywhere in the house. When asked what, if anything, they thought had changed most in living rooms across Britain over the last 25 years, people’s comments included:

"Children play and have more toys in the living room. It’s a lot less formal than years ago. The room isn’t kept for ‘best’ anymore."

Architecturally, this trend is clearly expressed in through-rooming, but living in the open does have its problems. Architect David Liddicoat says of a recent client’s home, "When it was very open, he wasn’t able to find intimate moments of comfort and privacy. I think there’s something eternal about shutting the door and having your own space."

Access all areas is increasingly the motto in family life, and this architectural trend may even reflect changing ideals of childcare among middle class parents, according to Eleanor John of the Geffrye Museum.

"They are aspiring to have this super engagement with children, so you feel guilty as a parent if you haven’t stimulated the child’s environment, and then running against that is the attitude of just popping them in front of the television. You can move your children to digital media if you want to and they can be perfectly entertained."

So flexibility becomes the mantra for life at home, facilitated by interiors that allow us all head space as well as come-together space. And in this context, there are interesting findings as to how we use the home and how we all rub along together...
It used to be the kitchen. But our research shows that the heart of the home now beats loud and clear in the living room. Today we see it used for eating, relaxing and watching TV. When asked what their favourite item of furniture is, almost a third of respondents said a sofa, armchair or suite.

We also use the living room for doing exercise, perhaps with the latest Zumba DVD. We work or surf here on our ever more portable computers, phones and electronic devices. Why not? We have more leisure time than we used to. Fewer people today work over 45 hours a week, and more work between 16 and 30 hours, than back in 1987 when IKEA came to town.

The living room is now the principle area for households coming together to share space and time.

Many of the people we asked said that, 25 years ago, meals were mostly eaten in the dining room. (41% aged 45+). But today, more people said they eat in the living room, and 36% think we will still be doing so in 25 years’ time.

72% of those asked said that their living room had replaced the kitchen as the heart of the home.

Here are some of their comments.

“There are only two of us and we eat our meals usually in the lounge. If we have company we eat at the dining table. It’s knocked through... We live in all downstairs rooms comfortably.”

“People have more than one settee and they lounge around more.”

“Living rooms have now become the more focal point in the house. Meals are eaten in front of the television; entertaining is more usual here and gaming has become more apparent due to the various games available.”

Top mentions in our report for changes in the living room over the last 25 years:

1. More technology (31%)
2. More casual and multi-functional (22%)
3. Changes in decor (11%)
4. More eating in the living room (8%)
5. Changes in size (mostly smaller) 6%
The TV has tended to be the focal point of living rooms since the 60s. But the colonisation of the home heartland by technology has resulted in a major shift in British homes, as we all segue seamlessly into cyberspace.

"Wi-fi releases you from sitting around the television together, so it’s one of the huge step-changes in what people do around their homes."

ELEANOR JOHN
The Geffrye Museum, London

Particularly in the living room, technology impacts on the way in which we design and furnish communal space. We might want to share it, but we may equally want to do our own electronic thing, undisturbed. It’s a lifestyle shift that demands tables to take a laptop, or a sofa with a chaise longue feature, to provide personal surfing space. Not to mention enough living room storage for the plethora of must-have gaming gizmos, DVD box sets, books and more.

"We have a couple of clients at the moment who say, ‘We don’t want to have a room with a television because most of the time we watch iPlayer on a laptop or a tablet and we have a projector if we really want to watch a movie or the football.’ It’s changed that classic image of the three-piece suite around the TV; we just don’t do that anymore. Something as simple as the portability of technology has changed how people have arranged their house."

DAVID LIDDICOT, Architect

In 1985, only 13% of us owned a home computer. In 2009, this number stood at 76% and 70% were online. By 2011, we already saw 77% of households in Great Britain having access to the internet, 71% in Northern Ireland.

Almost one fifth of adults told us they regularly work from home in the living room, but the cursor incursion is a full-on familial phenomenon, making its presence felt in pretty much every nook and cranny of the home.

“Technology is integrating into every room in the home in some way, whether it’s on the luxury level of fridges connected to the internet, or bathrooms with TV, to just having a laptop or tablet device floating around so that we can access the internet for cooking or paying bills or doing home shopping."

OLIVER HEATH
Architectural and interior design and sustainability consultant
So what, meanwhile is happening in the kitchen?

For starters, the men have moved in (a bit).

When asked how often their father did, or does cook, 43% of 55-75 year olds said 'NEVER!'. Amongst today’s 16-24 year olds, this figure drops to 14%.1

Clearly, dads now have a better idea, not only of which side their bread is buttered, but also of how to butter it themselves.

In fact, cooking ticked the box as the favourite domestic task all round (39%). It beats doing the ironing big time, the most hated job at 29%. So we can all look forward to a future of fabulous soufflés but crumpled shirts.

Ask people how often they reckon they do the cooking, and they’re happy to spill the beans. 66% of women claim to cook every day, compared to 32% of men.3

Ask about partners, and you go from the frying pan into the fire. 41% of males say that their partners cook in the kitchen every day. Only 12% of females can say the same of their male counterparts.4

Kitchen design hinges massively on who’s going to be taking the decisions, and common sense largely dictates that this will the one doing most of the cooking.

Which leads us on to the next hot potato...

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1. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 55-75 base = 584, All Adults aged 16-24 base = 348
2. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75 base = 2030
3. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, Females base = 1009, males base = 1021
4. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, Males base = 851, females base = 1009
What influences people’s design decisions?

In the beginning was the word ‘chintz’...
Then IKEA chucked it out.

Frills and frou-frous were the order of the day when we arrived on the UK scene, waving the flag for sleekly independent thinking, form and function. The 1980s rise in home ownership opened the door for people from every background to aspire to create a home with style. And we opened the doors of our first store, in Warrington. The modern, personalised, affordable design revolution in the UK had begun.

“In the 80s, the home became a site for self-identification. More people cared what people thought of their home interior. ‘Changing Rooms’ came in (1996) when the interior had ceased to be functional and became a more symbolic marker of social status. This had always been the case for the upper classes, but this sort of attitude spread through society during this time.”

PENNY SPARKE
Design writer and academic
Who says you should never trust a bloke in a frilly shirt?

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen’s innovative take on transforming your home became a powerful force in British public attitudes to design. According to Penny Sparke, “It was powerful TV which expressed the idea that a designer could wave a magic wand and the interior could become starkly modern or otherwise. It hit a note on how important home had become.”

Minimalism, and the uber smooth lines of an Ara desk lamp from Starck, quickly elevated everyday objects to design icon status. Designer influence ushered in a new mood, and it was one with which Scandinavian ice cool was well in sync, and remains so today.

According to architect David Liddicoat, the new design emphasis and ‘Cool Britannia’ zeitgeist opened people’s eyes “…to the possibility that doing something contemporary or modern could be OK, and didn’t have to be like something from the 60s. That’s something that IKEA’s done. They’ve democratised high design.”

Mass media exposure has continued to raise the profile of interior design for everyday living. In our survey, 54% of people said they believe that TV design shows are even more influential today, compared to 25 years ago, when IKEA first set foot on Terra Britannica.

Another key area of impact today on decision taking, is still the printed word.

Each year, the new IKEA catalogue is as well-thumbed as it is ubiquitous. Less of a product list than a source of inspiration, it aims to guide the consumer towards the possibilities of personalising interiors.

And we are not alone. The plethora of interiors magazines feeds the evident hunger for ideas, contributing to the personalisation of design influence.

“There is now a much broader spectrum of home magazines, not just architectural design magazines without any people in them, or interior magazines with stories of, for example, an elite couple who have knocked through their Victorian terrace… There has begun to be more of a change in the idea of where home design ideas come from.”

SUZANNE REIMER
Southampton University

The increase in travel over the past 25 years has meant greater exposure to hotel style interiors as another source of influence. This is probably nowhere more evident than in the British bathroom, which has undergone a steady transformation to spa status. And we have more of them nowadays. In the 80s, about a quarter of new houses in the UK had a second bathroom. This rose to almost a half during the 90s, a trend expected to continue inexorably on into the future.

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“The 80s, the bathroom would still have been a standard design. The innovation then would have been to move away from white to use colour. In the 70s you might have had your avocado, but in the 80s it was dark blue…. then there was a liberation of forms. You just think that for a long time the pedestal sink was very static, but then Philippe Starck did his beautiful washbasin bowl.”

ELEANOR JOHN
The Geffrye Museum, London

Outside loos and influences aside, there’s the question of who’s influencing whom within our own four walls at home. And on this crucial point, our survey showed who wears the trousers.

Only 17% of males believe that they have the most influence on updating their home decor compared with 56% of females. Meanwhile, 53% of males believe that their female partner has the most influence, and 21% of females believe that their male partners do. So that’s a tick in the decision-making box for ‘er indoors.

In our survey, we also asked what people are primarily looking for when choosing home furnishings. The response clearly highlighted the importance of getting value for money, as the number one motive for 35% of those asked in our survey. Other important factors include choosing home furnishings that are functional and last a long time.

So where are people doing their hunter-gathering for the home? A visit to IKEA is intended to provide inspiration and the final decision taking that’s unique to the hands-on experience of a physical retail environment. But we are aware of the bigger picture. Our survey indicated that the retail environment is no longer the sole key influence in decision making.

While 24% of 45-75 year olds believe that visiting retail outlets had the most influence 25 years ago, ‘only’ 19% of all respondents believe that it has still the most influence today. And only 4% believe it will have the most influence in 25 years’ time.

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1. EHS, data applies to England
2. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, Females base = 1009, males base = 1021
3. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, all adults 45-75 base = 936
4. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, base = 2030
5. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, base = 2030
The internet has taken up the slack.

On surfing turf, the trawl for ideas has travelled to a new dimension. Our own web site at IKEA clocks up 7.3 million visits a month. This year’s IKEA catalogue also features interactive elements, with customers being able to access further product details, e-films, and 3-D modelling via their mobile devices. Swipe your iPad any day of the week, and you’ll find umpteen sites to trawl for ideas, examples and inspiration. Houselohome.co.uk attracts over 600,000 unique users a month, whilst design blog Design Sponge draws 2.7 million visitors every month. Journalist and blogger Huma Qureshi says, “If you don’t know where to start, you can have a look at how creative people have been.”

23% of all respondents believe that internet design websites and blogs will have the most influence in 25 years’ time.

Visualisation through TV, press and web, enables people to envisage the role of technology in their own home interiors. Today, even fridges are connected to the internet and bathrooms have televisions. There’s always a tablet or laptop available to make browsing the internet possible anywhere in the home. Another recent survey showed that roughly half of tablet users use their devices in the kitchen, and two thirds in their bedroom.1

Tablet usage in the home:
• 92% in the living room
• 65% in the bedroom
• 47% in the kitchen
• 37% in any other part of the home

Clearly, technology both informs and influences our choices. But while the tablet sets its sights firmly on the place of the book in our lives, it’s interesting to note the trend-bucking bestseller performance of cookery book sales, which have increased by 366% in the last year.

From Nigel to Nigella, Billy bookcase has his work cut out for some time to come.
So where do we go from here?

The future impacts on the present, and concern for the planet and its resources is something that we at IKEA take very seriously.

You could take the view that it all needs to start with sustainable design, be that in where we live, or the way in which we do so.

“When I began my career, sustainable design was an area where there was a real lack of knowledge and communication, and I think it’s one of the most important changes to the way that we live, the Industrial Revolution of our time. It affects everything that we consume, use and get rid of. It’s a major physical, cultural shift.”

OLIVER HEATH
Architectural and interior designer and sustainability consultant

Eco-friendly dwellings, energy usage awareness, and recycling must all contribute to the drive to batten down the hatches on wasteful consumption.

“Essentially the way we think about and use basic resources is changing. Fuel prices are going up, our weather’s changing, our access to water isn’t necessarily a given. Things have become a little bit more unpredictable. We’re moving from a point where energy was relatively affordable and we didn’t need to think about it very much, to massive fluctuations in energy. Fuel poverty has risen enormously.”

OLIVER HEATH

The more gadgets and gizmos each individual deems essential, the greater our personal levels of energy consumption, regardless of how we lag our pipes and insulate our loft spaces.

“What we see is that there are a lot more electrical items in the home, and a lot more things being left on standby, which is one of the biggest wasters of energy at the home.”

OLIVER HEATH

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1. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA, all GB adults aged 16-75, base = 2030, all adults with children aged 16-75 in GB, base = 662, GB one person households, base = 149, GB 4+ person households base = 561, Living with parents base = 154, Living with other relatives base = 154

What goes on behind closed doors?

Price is always a great persuader, but education and awareness are key to driving the public conscience forward, as far as energy usage is concerned. Although energy saving light bulbs had been available to consumers for longer than 25 years, uptake massively increased only in the wake of the recession.

Recently, IKEA announced that its entire lighting range would be converted to LED by 2016. Sustainability is a cornerstone of our business model.

"LED is a light revolution. With household electricity bills continuing to rise rapidly, and global energy consumption increasing, a small LED bulb can have a very big impact. A YouGov survey this July showed that 74% of the UK would be interested in converting to LED lighting, as it uses 85% less energy and lasts 20 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs."

STEVE HOWARD
Chief sustainability officer, IKEA Group

Thinking of the homes which all these bulbs are going to illuminate, the advent of co-housing is a potentially interesting development in eco-friendly terms.

"Co-housing is a concept where people get together and say, 'There are forty of us, we're going to get together and have a primary school on the ground floor, a swimming pool at the back and car parks and shared cars.' An important environmental solution is combined heat and power systems which are an efficient way of heating water and heating spaces. I think that's going to change how we look at architecture and how we think about putting homes together."

DAVID LIDDICOAT, Architect

But wherever we opt to live, there's always the burning question of our rubbish. Looking back to 1987 it's evident that people recycled almost nothing. Now, we recycle around a third of all our household waste. The percentage of people in England concerned with household waste as an environmental issue jumped from 22% in 1996/7 to 33% in 2001. Data for Northern Ireland in 2011 shows a similar level of concern, with 34% considering it an important environmental problem.

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Data for Northern Ireland in 2011 shows a similar level of concern, with 34% considering it an important environmental problem.
Recycling has gone mainstream.

Our survey found that 95% of the UK population recycle household waste, with 44% of people admitting they could recycle even more.1

“The government had a major campaign headed by WRAP (the Waste and Recycling Action Programme) to boost doorstep recycling programmes and it has worked. There has been a massive uptake of recycling in the UK and I think people have woven that into their lives. The next challenge is that people already feel that they are doing enough.”

OLIVER HEATH

So what’s stopping everyone from doing it? 2

Our survey showed the biggest complaint about recycling for people who don’t, is that they don’t have enough space in their homes to store recycling (31%). To counter this issue, our designers at IKEA are on a constant drive to come up with small space solutions that will enable and encourage more people to recycle.

Sustainability is also hardwired into our thinking in product development terms. Eco-friendly materials, and designs that cut out waste in materials, are at the forefront of our approach. It’s part of our whole philosophy of making everyday life at home better all round.

And for the future... that’s the way it’s going to stay.

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1. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, base = 2010
2. Ipsos MORI omnibus survey for IKEA GB all adults aged 16-75, all adults aged 16-75 who do not recycle base = 79
In a nutshell...

The emergence of "Lifetime homes" will place a massive emphasis on redecoration: Houses that accommodate the changes throughout your life and are adaptive to family models are becoming increasingly common, given the cost associated with moving house. This will place great emphasis on room conversions as family models evolve.

Long term renting is placing an emphasis on flexible furniture: The rising costs of buying a property are increasing, forcing more people rent in the long term. The percentage of households in privately rented homes has increased from 10% to 16% over the past 25 years. This is causing an increase in the demand for adaptable furniture that can be transferred from home-to-home, such as free standing kitchen units along with soft furnishings.

Multi-generational homes are on the rise: According to our research, more than half a million households contained three or more generations in 2009 (a 7.6% increase from 2005) as cash strapped younger generations are unable to move out and older generations become increasingly reliant.

Childless houses will see a boom in luxury furnishings: Our report shows that couples are not only having children later in life, but that there are also more childless couples. Childless couples have risen 2% in the last 30 years which, in design terms, may cause a shift towards sophistication, paler colours and luxury finishes.

Women still in control when it comes to updating home décor: Only 17% of males believe that they have the most influence on updating their home décor compared with 56% of females.

In today’s climate, practicality is still the main driver of consumer choice: Our report has revealed that 35% of people primarily look for good value when purchasing home furnishings and 20% of consumers look at durability as the key driver in purchasing decisions while only 15% choose furnishing on their appearance. Interestingly, only 2% of consumers prioritised home décor that is eco-friendly.

The living room has replaced the kitchen as the heart of the home, with this space used as a multifunctional place. Today, it is used for everything from eating, relaxing, socialising, watching TV and films, doing exercise and working from home.

‘Access all areas’ is the motto for modern family life: Flexibility, openness and a relaxed atmosphere are characteristics that are becoming increasingly common in the family home. For example, nowadays 61% of parents let their children play anywhere in the house.

Cooking is a household favourite: Cooking in general is being seen as a pastime rather than a chore, with 39% claiming it as their favourite household activity. In contrast, doing the ironing is the most hated activity, with 29% of people surveyed outlining it as their most hated job. Further to this, in an era where the electronic tablet is beginning to dominate, cookery book sales are up 366% in the last year.

Men are becoming more noticeable in the kitchen: 43% of 55-75 year olds said their father never cooked, whereas only 14% of 16-24 year olds said that their father never cooks. With kitchen designs hinging massively on who is doing the cooking, we could begin to see an evolution in kitchen design.

As houses become busier, the bedroom is morphing into a key secondary living space: Our research shows that in 4+ person houses, 33% of people say that the bedroom is where they like to relax.

Recycling has gone mainstream: Our report found that 95% of the UK population recycle household waste, with 44% of people admitting they could recycle even more.

Small space solutions hold the key to increasing recycling in the home: While it is true that recycling has increased dramatically since the end of the 20th century, our report showed that the biggest complaint about recycling from the people that don’t, is that they don’t have enough space in their homes (31%). IKEA has been combating this, and has been on a constant drive to develop innovative, small space solutions that help to tackle this problem.
Questions? Comments?

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