

Busy mum seeks help for a cluttered home and disorganised life

The problem

The downstairs rooms had become completely over run by children's toys, paperwork and laundry. Many of the toys were from the baby days and were no longer played with, whilst the paperwork was a growing mountain that rarely received attention and the washing was as a result of a non-existent laundry routine.

Due to the growing toy pile, the sunniest part of the lounge was unusable and access to the garden through the French doors was increasingly difficult.

The clutter in the living room was a constant source of anxiety - although the toys were cleverly hidden behind a sofa which divided the room in half, everyone knew it existed, but nobody knew what to do about it.

Other piles were growing all over the house including children's art work, homework, unopened post, washing, stuff under the stairs and general paperwork.

The Stakeholders

The whole family was affected by the clutter, but mum was especially finding it a problem as it impaired her ability to run the home efficiently and look after the family as well as work part time.

The professional organiser

A professional declutterer was appointed in a bid to relieve the feelings of frustration which the whole family was suffering from.

Goals & Objectives

The client wanted to feel in control of her home again and know she could find things and not feel in a muddle. The family needed to know that important documents were safe and where to find them. They wanted to stop missing deadlines for payments. Mum wanted to be able to get out of the house on time and with everything she needed. The family desperately wanted their home and lives to be more relaxing and less stressful!

Solution

After an initial one hour consultation, a programme of decluttering was agreed that would tackle the whole house and routines.

We began with a 5 hour session working on the lounge. The client visualised how they wanted the room to look when we were finished. We

discussed what the room would be used for, what activities would take place there and what supplies and storage would be needed.

It was clear to the client that the toys did not belong in the lounge and that we needed to make space for other family activities, such as playing board games, watching TV, entertaining and listening to music.

We handled each toy, letting go of ones no longer played with, binning broken toys and re-homing ones that were still needed.

Old books, CD's and DVD's were cleared from the bookshelves to the charity shop.

We re-arranged the furniture, hoovered and polished. I took a full boot load of bags to the charity shop and recycling point.

Other sessions were used to tackle the kitchen dresser, under stairs cupboard, hallway and dining room.

Research was carried out into shoe storage for the hall way, and a new piece of furniture was purchased. The filing cabinet was freed from under the stairs where it had been buried under other items.

Many areas in the house remain a work in progress and decluttering has been put on hold due to the client suffering from ill health and anxiety.

Time and cost

Overall, 7 sessions were spent working on the living room, dining room, kitchen, utility and hallway – approximately 30 hours. A boot load of items was taken to the charity shop and recycling point after each session.

Outcome & benefits

The family now have more space for relaxing in their lounge and can access and find things more easily from the under stairs cupboard. The filing cabinet is accessible and ready to be used. The kitchen dresser is earning it's keep as a place to store children's craft kits and homework. It's also an information point where post can be opened and dealt with on a daily basis.

Client quotes

When my client's husband came home from work he called me to thank me and said, 'I can't believe what you have done to my house! It's perfect!'

Understairs Cupboard

Before



After



The filing cabinet was buried inside this cupboard and it had to be dug out each time it was used. It was impossible to find things and many items had been long forgotten about.

Once the filing cabinet was rehomed, it was possible to sort through the remaining items and begin using the cupboard to store large household items which needed to be accessed frequently.

Living Room

Before



A huge pile of children's toys was concealed behind the sofa which cut across the room. The bookshelf was at bursting point and the whole area was unusable - except as a dumping ground!

After



Once the toys were cleared, the sofa was moved against the wall. The bookcase was decluttered and moved to the opposite wall, along with the plant. The lamp stayed in the same position. These changes opened up the room, creating a new space for relaxing and also allowing better access into the garden.

Kitchen Dresser

Before

After

