

Alloa & Hillfoots Wee County News (GBR) - Great Britain		Print
Mediatype:	Wochenzeitung	circulation: 7250
pubdate:	03.09.2008	circpaid:
page:	26	circspread:
adequiv:	335 EUR	coverage:

Householders pay cost of wasted space

IN A survey of UK households, **IKEA** UK has found that most homes add up to a waste of space – wasting up to £100,000 in mortgage payments.

An independent survey by Henley Centre HeadlightVision, suggests that our poor use of space squanders the equivalent of one whole room in our homes.

Across the UK, the average cost of that wasted space over a 25-year mortgage is an eye-watering £54,290. Scotland average is a staggering £39,857. So, where are we wasting space, and money, in our homes?

Well, we might love the kids equally, but it seems we don't love our rooms equally. While 47 per cent of people said the lounge was their favourite room, 25 per cent like it best in the bedroom. And energetic young householders (18-24 years old) spend a lot more time in the bedroom – 49 per cent of them named it their favourite room. Perhaps worryingly for their partners, almost 10 per cent of men said their happiest room is the home office/study. Another 5 per cent even favoured the loft, spare bedroom, utility room, garage or shed.

The survey also showed that Scottish residents feel more secure and relaxed in their homes than residents in any other part of the UK, and they are the most likely to be happy to go naked around the house.

Whether it's loving the living room, or lusting for the bedroom, the 'happy rooms' in the home justify their share of the mortgage costs. They also give us the emotional payback of a happier home. But if we don't love it, we don't use it. The key culprits in the 'great

space waste' are that 16 per cent of us can't stand the kitchen and 9 per cent absolutely dread the spare bed-

room. Also, per cent of us have a big problem with clutter in our homes. Valuable space around the house is being used as an untidy dumping ground for anything and everything.

Property specialist, Roger Southam, explains: "IKEA's findings are very revealing, and never forget, absolutely every square inch of your home costs you money.

If you're not using it, you're losing it. "Firstly, don't automatically use rooms the way they've always been used. Think of them as blank spaces and work out which room types actually suit your family's needs.

"Then get rid of the clutter by using smart storage systems and making better use of space.

"The result can be anything from creating a family entertainment room, which saves on spending going out, to creating a room to rent, which actually brings money in. Whatever you choose, focus on making every room in the house work for you."

Home and Lifestyle commentator, Lindsay Blackman, emphasises how the right rooms will deliver emotional returns too. She said: "Property is not only a vital financial investment, it's an emotional investment too.

"A house is all about creating a home and developing the lifestyle your family wants and enjoys.

"The survey shows that instead of simply worrying about house price movements, many of us could easily make a bigger emotional return on our homes through relatively simple and inexpensive changes.

"By aligning your home more closely to your own specific needs and making it work better for you, it will actually improve the quality of family life."