Sorted!

As we start a new year, many of us like to get organised. That includes having a good clear out and organising ourselves better. In our work, home and hobbies we can usually find room for improvement in the way we approach everything. Systems, storage, de-junking – however you choose to improve, it's the perfect time of year to start anew.

Pam Beale, owner of Mission Accomplished, works with people in the Midlands and Staffordshire to do just these things. Pam has experience with organising people's filing systems, procedures and overall efficiency at work. She traces family trees, organises parties, finds reliable tradespeople and has even been a hospital visitor for someone whose daughter lived abroad. Pam is perfect to help with a good sort out and she doesn't let anything go to waste, knowing all the places and resources for recycling, reselling and mending.

"I find that January, April and September are top times of the year for people to start reorganising themselves" explained Pam. "It's almost 'new pencil case time' where we all approach things with a fresh mind, usually after a break of some sort" she finished. Pam operates on a basis where her clients buy time from her. It's a great idea and one that has worked for Pam for a few years now as she has built up her clients from all walks of life. "Sometimes I find that people just don't know where to begin or there are others who know exactly what they want but just need another pair of hands to just get on with it" she explained.

We have also featured our very own wardrobe doctor, Karen Grimsey of Love-Live-Laugh in this issue who can help you organise your wardrobe to maximum effect. Don't miss that feature if you have a chaotic approach to clothes buying!

If you don't have a Pam or Karen in your life but like the idea of organising yourself better, we love some of these ideas to de-junk and get yourself a little more organised at home…

10 Top Storage Tips

There are innovative ways to store items and there are also many creative things you can do in your home to create additional space. Here are some of our favourites:

Double up. Wherever possible, buy furniture that has more than one use. Beds with sleepover beds underneath are one of the best buys you can ever make. Why not also consider hinged benches with lots of storage underneath for your hallway or kitchen?

Think outside the box. You'll never look at your stairs in the same way again! Make each stair a storage box for shoes, hats, gloves and hats. Instead of having empty space under foot as you climb the stairs, put hinges on each one and use the space underneath – clever!

Use wall space. Getting things off the ground not only protects them but makes everything easier to find and opens up lots of floor space so your room or garage look instantly bigger and more open. We're is a big fan of getting things onto walls whether it is your DIY tools or sporting valuables.

Contain everything. It might be something your grandma did but saving tubs, pots and jars is a thrifty and wise way to store things you don't need to display attractively. Old mustard jars are great for storing the variety of different screws, nails and other ironmongery you may have in a confused pile in your garage.

Plan your storage around what will work. If your children hang everything on hooks, then invest in lots of hooks! If bookshelves are the easy option, buy baskets and contain bookcase mess in baskets that sort and hide things from view.

Find homes for everything. If you have a 'messy area' in your home, chances are that the things there have no home. Fill the space with a practical or beautiful object and set about clearing the clutter. If it's a bowl full of hair clips, keys, pens and coins, sort it all out into containers and make sure all the family knows where these things are now stored! If your coats and shoes store is any distance from your front door, chances are they'll end up in a pile by the front door – get it sorted!

Group things together. Put all your gardening equipment in one place. Store sports gear together and so on. It sounds obvious but so many people don't consider this option. StorageMaker slatwall kits are ideal for grouping items together through its useful range of storage devices such as hooks, baskets and specialist fittings.

Look at alternative uses for everyday storage. Towels can be rolled up and stored in a wine rack or newspaper rack for example. A beautiful old armoire creates a focal point as well as excellent hallway or landing storage space.

Throw things away! Don't attempt to store absolutely everything. Consider recycling, the charity shop, ebay or as a last resort – the tip. That's probably the easiest but harshest way of getting tidy and organised – have less of everything!

Look for potential new space. Look around your home and look at the potential on every wall. You could consider using space on the insides of doors, cubby-holes or under the stairs. Make the most of wall space in your utility room, hobby room or garage by taking storage up as high as you can with shelving above wall-mounted storage systems.

Take some time to re-organise yourself this January and make things easier to find and quicker to tidy away – surely that has to be a good thing for everyone! If you have a 'things to do' list that is spiralling out of control, think about getting help. See www.missionaccomplished.co.uk or www.lovelivelaugh.co.uk for more information.