

Lady, stuck indoors thanks to the weather, de-clutters to pass the time – and finds a tin of soup from 1947.

'I couldn't believe it' said the lady. 'I'd been watching the 'Turn Back Time - The High Street' series only the other week, from when they were in the war, and it brought back so many memories. I never dreamt that I'd find things from that era in my own home!

The lady (who, ashamed of her clutter challenge wishes to remain nameless), was stuck indoors and unable to go out due to the snowy conditions, who has been passing the time doing some de-cluttering with the help of The Clutter Clearing Consultancy. She came across the tin while doing a Clutter Clearing Session on her cellar.

Clare Baker, who runs The Clutter Clearing Consultancy (www.clutterclearing.net), helps people throughout the world who are drowning in their clutter to rid themselves of it– and says that December has never been so busy.

'I hadn't been down there for decades' the lady told Clare Baker on the telephone. 'Now I want to de-clutter the rest of the house and find out what else is lying around that I've forgotten I had!

December is traditionally a very quiet time for professional de-clutterers and organisers, mainly because their potential clients are so disorganised they're too busy panicking about Christmas to think about dealing with their clutter.

However it seems that the extreme weather, which is forcing people to spend more time indoors, is compelling people to confront their mountains of clutter nearly a month ahead of the Traditional Spring Clean Season that is the New Year.

'The weather is forcing people to stay indoors more' says Clare 'and consequently, trying to find things to do to pass the time, they're starting on their de-cluttering – when they'd normally wait until the New Year to start their Spring Clean.

We're seeing a significant increase in the number of people phoning in to ask for help – trapped in their homes but wanting advice on how to de-clutter. The phone hasn't stopped – it's as busy as a normal January when everyone has made their New Years Resolution to de-clutter and get organised.

It seems ironic that people who have their clutter because they're disorganised have started a month early...!

'Clutter has an almost pathological hold on people' says Clare. 'Especially in this time of austerity, people are more inclined to keep things 'in case they come in useful' or because they think it's going to save them money in the long run. However

Clare has 3 top tips for anyone stuck indoors because of the weather and has decided to start their Spring Clean early:

1. Be realistic not ruthless with your decision making. People who are ruthless ALWAYS regret their decisions when they realise, a week later, than they needed what they threw away.
2. Think, in detail, about how you want your home to be when it's clutter free. You know you don't want the clutter, but what will you have instead?
3. Never do more than 2 hours of de-cluttering at any one time. Set a timer for a maximum of 30 minutes to sort through the clutter and make decisions, and then spend whatever time afterwards doing the doing. It's the actioning of the piles that people make that never gets done and leads to piles 'moving' around a room or a home.

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Clare Baker is available for interviews, discussions, phone-ins etc on clutter clearing issues.