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- 1960s Homes Become Modern Classics
- Practical Advice and Design Ideas

THE BARN CONVERSION DESIGN GUIDE

By Charlie Luxton

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20 Inspiring Projects

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How to Make the Right
Door Choice for Your Home

Self-build Made Easy

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A man in a light blue shirt and tan trousers stands near a large bi-fold door, looking towards a woman in a red dress who is standing behind a dining table. The room features large windows and a modern interior with a wooden cabinet and a log stack. The scene is bright and airy, emphasizing the connection between the indoor and outdoor spaces.

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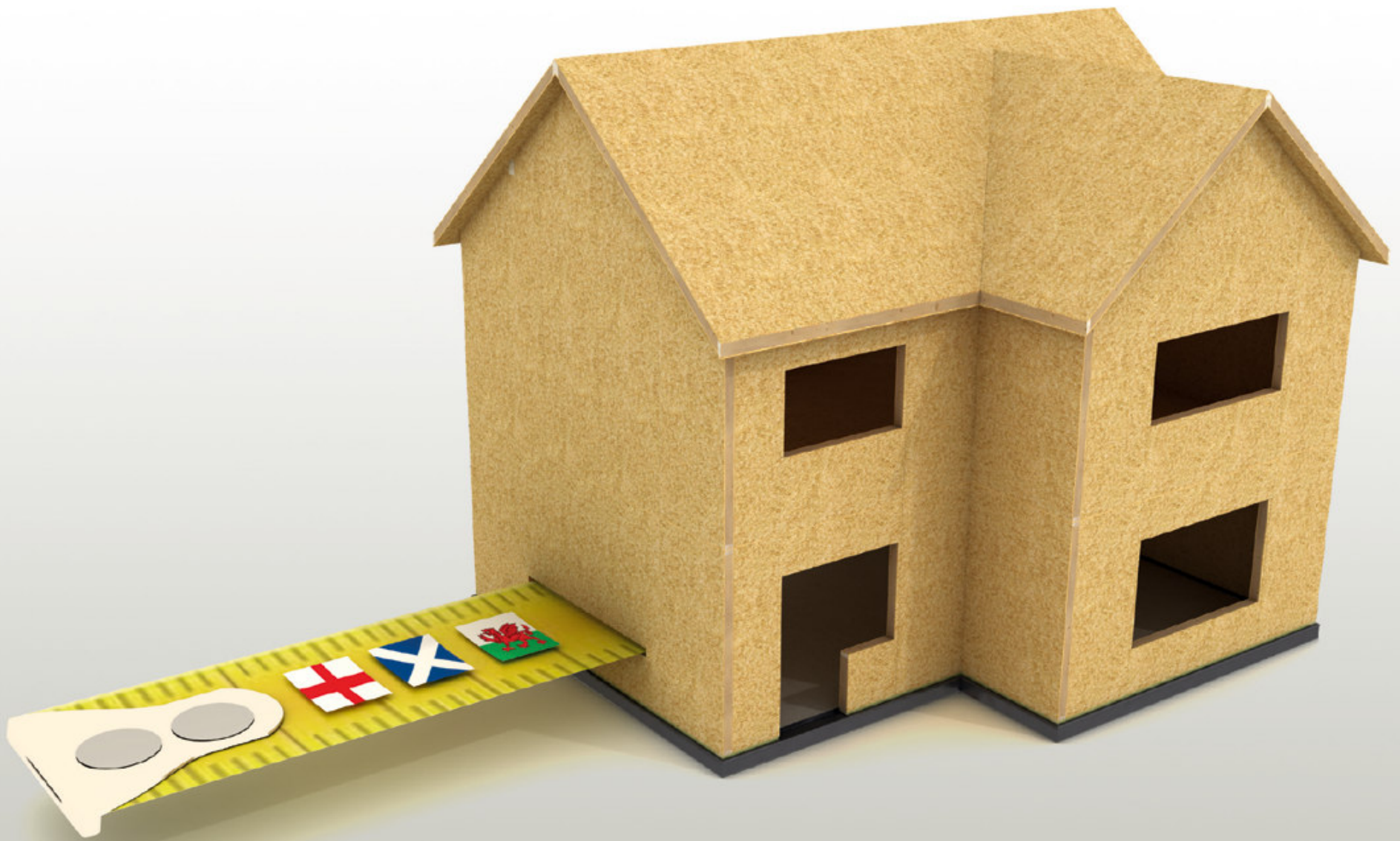
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Homebuilding &Renovating

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What I really enjoy when designing is to create a blend of influences and styles which will give a building rhythm and movement and ultimately its own character.

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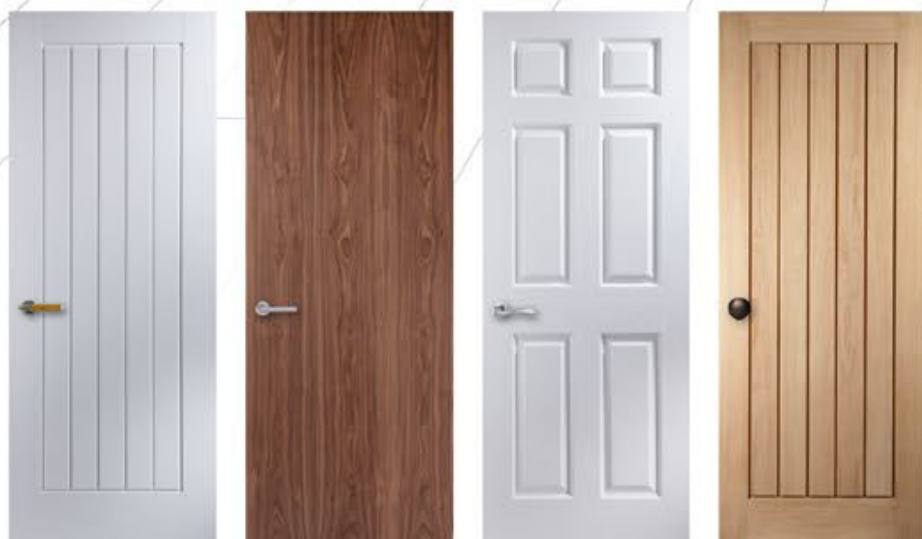
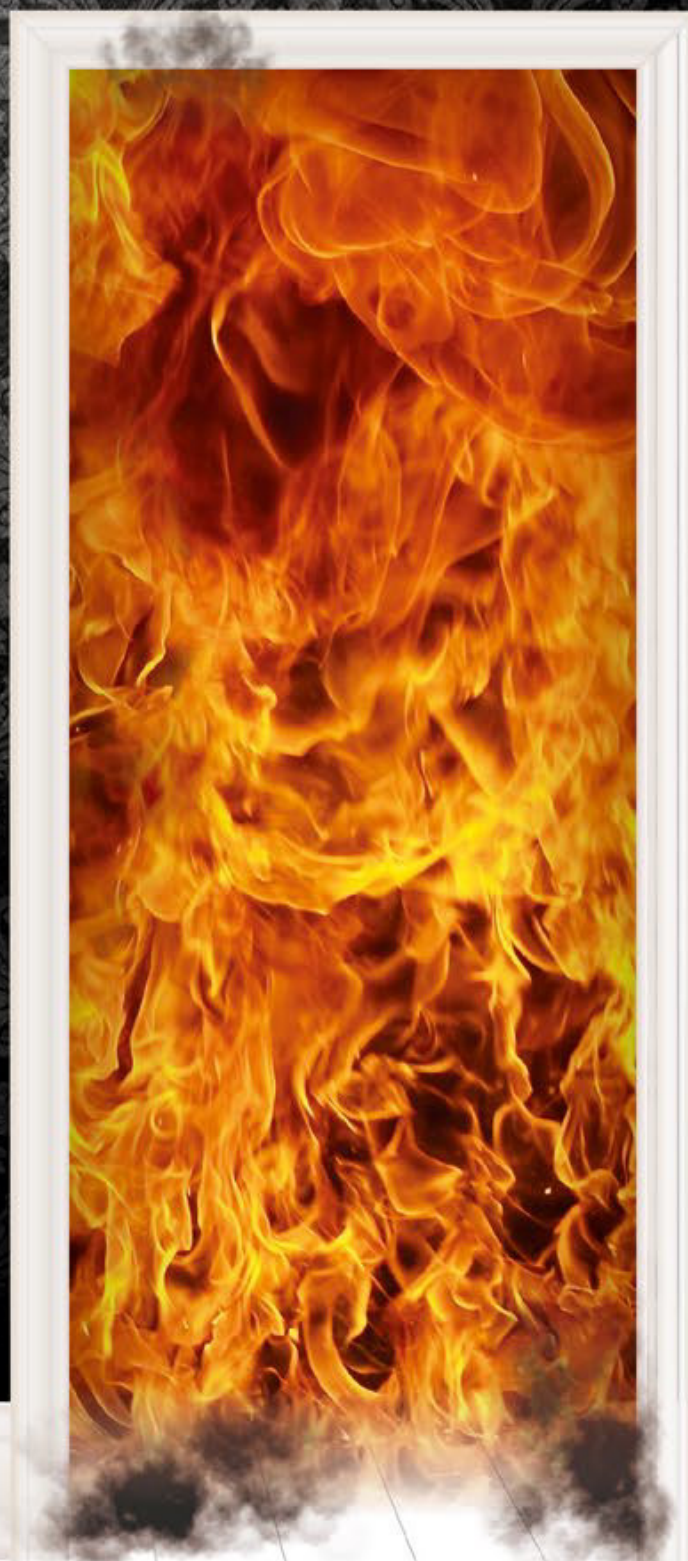


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WELCOME SEPTEMBER 2015

Postwar Housing Made Good

Jason Orme is the Editor of
Homebuilding & Renovating

The ugly ducklings of the housing world are post-war homes. Anything built from 1950 until, frankly, the present day is tarnished with the brush of what it isn't — namely, characterful, charming, pleasing and, perhaps, quintessentially British.

The renovators amongst us have been spending our time worrying about being in keeping with this, or matching that. But a growing number are now finding that those homes built after the war offer a rich seam of opportunity for creating a modern, light, spacious family home without the constraints of having to work with something that needs saving. Unshackled by history, we can take on these ugly ducklings and create fabulous homes. This is what our special Toolkit (p.133) is all about this month — what to do, and how to achieve it.



Elsewhere, our resident design expert, TV's Charlie Luxton, tackles a pet topic of his — barn conversion design (p.42). Thanks to changes in planning rules more of us are converting barns these days and, I'm afraid to say, not all of us are doing a good job. Charlie's guide is essential reading.

Finally, a note for our London Homebuilding & Renovating Show this September. With a new venue (ExCeL), wealth of expertise, free seminars and more, this is the perfect day out. See you there. 

 @JasonPOrme
homebuilding@centaur.co.uk

Jason Orme is currently rebuilding a 1960s house (described as 'Frank Lloyd Wrong' by HB&R's Contributing Editor Mark Brinkley) and is an experienced self-builder and renovator



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Bob is a project consultant with 30 years' experience running a mix of residential and commercial projects. He has particular expertise in cost estimation and project scheduling, and is a regular expert at the Homebuilding & Renovating Shows



NATASHA BRINSMEAD

Our Associate Editor Natasha is also an experienced renovator. She's in the middle of a major renovation and extension of an Edwardian home — a lot of it DIY



CHRISTIAN ENGELKE

Christian is responsible for boiler manufacturer Viessmann's product performance and systems design, as well as the project division covering industrial boilers, biomass and combined heat and power (CHP) technologies



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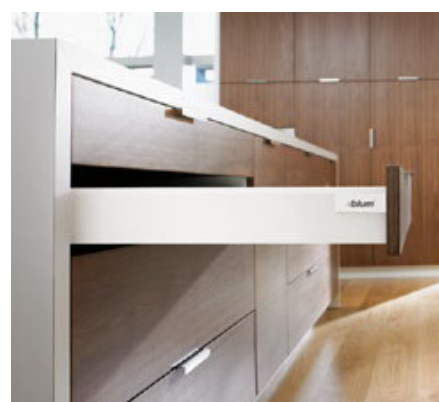
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UPFRONT

DESIGN DIGEST

The latest house design ideas and news from around the world

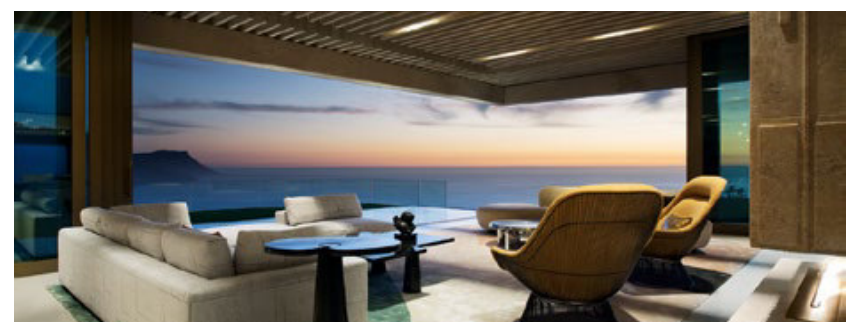
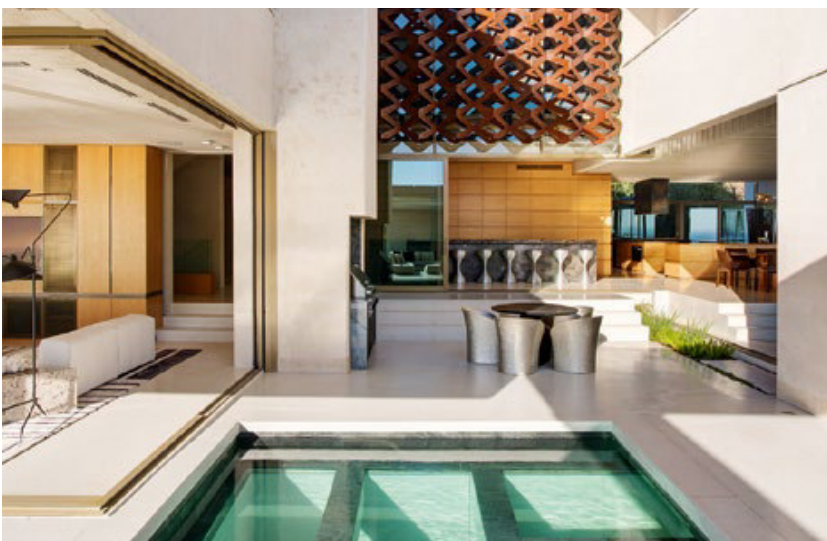


Beyond the Bay

This newly built, one-off home in South Africa has views to die for — and the architecture isn't too bad either. Wishing to encapsulate the expansive 360° mountain and sea views from the excellently positioned mountain ridge site in Bantry Bay, Cape Town, architectural practice SAOTA has worked hard to balance views with privacy.

The spectacular contemporary building is limited to two storeys and so the main living areas, pool terrace and garden are placed on the ground floor, with the family bedrooms strategically positioned on the upper level for privacy. A courtyard 'cuts' into the main living areas, with a water feature and a delicate woven Cor-ten steel screen that provides a tranquil, sheltered area. Secondary spaces have been positioned on a lower level with care taken to limit excavation.

Meanwhile, the exterior façade features a mix of Cor-ten steel, white concrete, timber cladding, cast bronze, glass, polished concrete and in-situ concrete, above which a lightweight zinc roof with the slimmest of eaves subtly hovers. ➡



IMAGES: SAOTA



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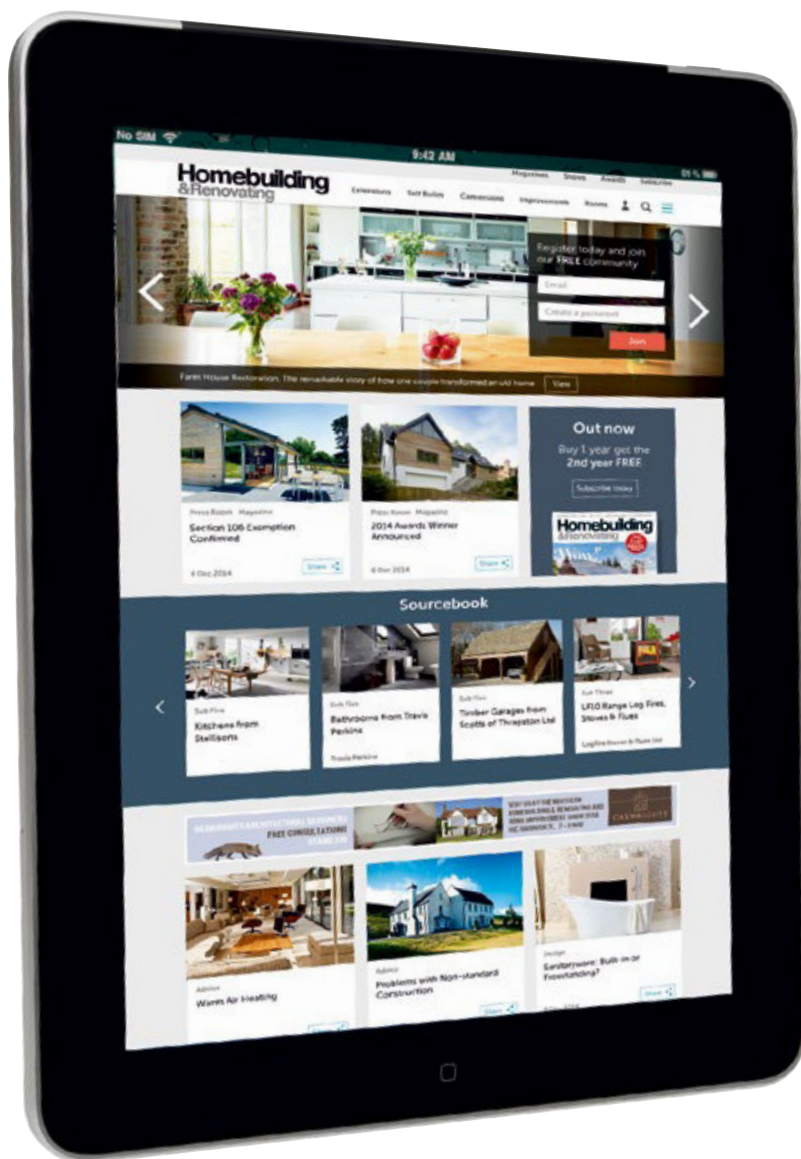
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THE FRAMING YARD, EAST CORNWORTHY, TOTNES, DEVON TQ9 7HF

UPFRONT

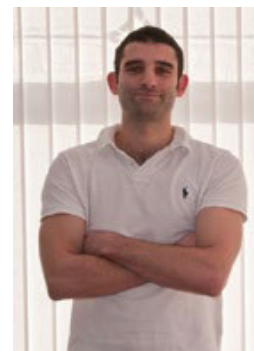
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Your projects, views, moans and more



“The House is Now Starting to Take Shape”

We catch up with self-builder Joe Shimbart, who's building an energy-efficient oak frame house in Hampshire using natural materials



The carpenters from Carpenter Oak were on site this month, and progress was rapid as the oak frame was going up and the house started to take shape. However, as the sun faded on the first day of this stage of the build, the winds began to rise. Storm braces were fixed to the partially raised frame, and the wind and rain battered the site throughout the night.

The second day was inclement — the wind remained high and the rain continued to fall. Doing what they could, the carpenters assembled the trusses and cross frames on the ground. The plot turned into a sticky clay bog, but by the end of the day much had been achieved. As they packed up their tools, the sun finally returned and the oak and the ground began to dry.

Day three was quicker still — by midday the last piece of the frame was being lifted into place. Oak pegs, levelling and fixing followed. By six o'clock in the evening, nearly everything was done. The team sat down to a well-earned BBQ and rest. **For more updates on Joe's project, visit homebuilding.co.uk/blogs**

From Facebook

Q. Are SIPs (structural insulated panels) any good?

A. “My husband and I have built two SIPs houses over the past 15 years and we are just starting our third, and can honestly say the product is incredible — exceptional insulation, airtightness, design flexibility, strength, speed, etc. It can leave you with a plain interior, though, so consider this from the outset and use a company/supplier that really understands how to work with SIPs and how all the layers, junctions and secondary trades integrate. Choose someone with experience and knowledge of the product and also make sure you design your home with SIPs in mind from the beginning. SIPs aren't cheap, but the qualities and benefits are undoubted.” **Merry Albright**

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“#RightToBuild will help meet demand more closely. #NaCSBA meet #DCLG today on #selfbuild & #custombuild” **@HolmesMike**

“What gets us up in the morning?! Architecture! Then we slick back our hair, slide on the polo neck top, jump in the SAAB, and look distressed” **@MATT_architect**



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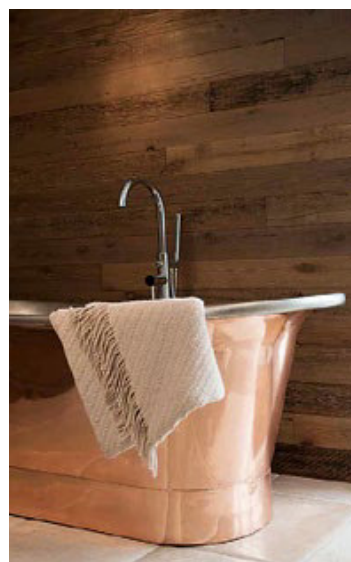
Lunar Kitchen from Crown Imperial

Perfect for injecting industrial style into your kitchen concept, the new concrete-style Lunar kitchen from Crown Imperial, launching 1 August 2015, offers a utilitarian twist to suit contemporary schemes with its grey tones. POA.



J. Rotherham's Aurelius Fireplace Surround

Winning 'Fireplace in Stone of the Year' at the Hearth & Home Exhibition Awards, the Art Deco Aurelius fire surround from J. Rotherham combines Neolith stone and Portland limestone, framed by Corian® pillars and integrated LED lighting. POA



Metallic Tubs from Indigenous Bathroom Collection

Introducing two metallic designs to its range of freestanding baths, Indigenous Bathroom Collection now offers a traditional bateau tub with either a tin or copper (shown) finish that has been polished to give a metallic sheen – perfect for both rustic and contemporary-style bathrooms. The new baths in the collection are offered alongside a range of furniture and surface materials to suit any bathroom scheme. POA.

The Latest Stoves



1



2



3



The Cape Cod Range from Duravit

Designed by Philippe Starck, Duravit's new Cape Cod bathroom collection combines solid real wood with an innovative ceramic formula that allows for especially thin basins and coordinated bathtubs. The range also includes New England-style furniture, which can be combined or used individually. POA.

Series 10 Shower Walls from Merlyn

The new Series 10 shower walls from Merlyn offer a modern wetroom solution, but also avoid water spraying around the bathroom. With the option of a 300mm swivel panel (shown) – as well as an additional side panel for a different look – or a vertical bar for easy walk-in access, the shower walls range in sizes, from 1,000mm to 1,400mm wide and up to 2,100mm high. They also feature 10mm-thick toughened glass and come with a lifetime guarantee. POA.



1. Dean Forge's Dartmoor Baker stove is DEFRA approved and is priced from £1,095
2. AGA's Ellesmere family of woodburning stoves start from £795
3. The Bellingham 8kW solid fuel stove from Dimplex costs £1,099



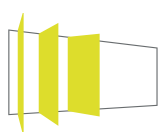


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THE LATEST

Events, news, tips and ephemera

Potton Founder Peter Hutchinson, 1932-2015

We're sad to report the passing of the inspirational founder of Potton, Peter Hutchinson, in July. Peter founded Potton in 1964 as a timber company making everything from pallets to fruit-packing cases, but a trip to the United States in the 1970s excited him as to the prospect of building timber frame properties in the UK. For many years Potton established itself as a leading company, building timber frames for hotels, commercial developers and council houses, and in the late 1980s, after Peter's daughter enjoyed discovering the structural beams behind the plasterboard as she renovated her own cottage, he decided that there was a demand for a company to help design and build post and beam country cottages.



Peter was born in Potton (a town in Bedfordshire and home to the company that shares its name) to modest means. His determination, vision and ambition has resulted not only in establishing Potton as a leading self-build company (it's now owned by Kingspan), but helping lay the foundations – alongside his contemporary Murray Armor – for the modern self-build world we know today. Potton's MD, Mark Stevenson, says: "Peter was a true visionary and perpetual entrepreneur who revolutionised self-build by introducing the package home concept. He inspired many thousands of people to build and his legacy will remain within the heritage cottages and rectory houses that became his signature self-build homes. Peter's legacy reaches far beyond the houses that he helped to build."

Thanks to Peter, thousands of people now live in their dream homes. He received an OBE in 2007 and will be much missed by us all.



Homebuilding & Renovating featured Peter and his wife Rita's own self-built home in 2010. View it on the archive at homebuilding.co.uk/hutchinson



SIMON MAXWELL

A Reunion for Two of the UK's Biggest Oak Frame Companies

Bringing together some of the country's most talented timber frame designers, two of the UK's most well-known oak frame companies, Carpenter Oak and Carpenter Oak & Woodland, have announced that they are reuniting, nearly 15 years after going their separate ways in 2001.

In a move that will create one large business with a regional presence across the UK, the reunion will bring back together Carpenter Oak & Woodland's founder Charley Brentnall, Carpenter Oak's Managing Director Adam Milton and Frame Design Director Paul Kirkup.

Off-Site Construction Boost

Modular off-site construction could be the way forward for housebuilding in the UK, according to a report from the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. The report suggests that the Government should "support investment in the UK supply chain for off-site construction technologies" in order to boost innovation and expansion in what has already proven to be a popular build method in the UK and across Europe. By encouraging growth in off-site construction, the report argues that this move would diversify the UK housing supply market, opening up greater opportunities for self-builders. 

UPFRONT SHOW PREVIEW

Got a Home Project? Come to Our Show!

Ticket Giveaway!

We have 1,000 pairs of tickets for the Homebuilding & Renovating Show at ExCeL, London, from 25 to 27 September, up for grabs — to get yours simply enter your details at homebuildingshow.co.uk/september*

*Maximum two free tickets per reader.
Offer expires at 3pm on 24 September, or when all 1,000 pairs of tickets are allocated.
Children under 16 go free.

We preview September's London Homebuilding & Renovating Show — an essential day out



Whether you are renovating, adding an extension or building a new home from scratch, a visit to the London Homebuilding & Renovating Show at ExCeL this September is a must. With over 350 exhibitors, a comprehensive range of free seminars and masterclasses as well as our renown free 15-minute expert consultations, you'll find everything you need to get your self-build or home improvement project off on the right track.

The London Homebuilding & Renovating Show, sponsored by Anglian, is at ExCeL from 25 to 27 September.



Details

When: Friday 25 to
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Tickets: £18 on the door

More Information:
homebuildingshow.co.uk/london





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Help Us to Help You!

Let us know what you'd like to see in Homebuilding & Renovating — for a chance to win one of five £100 John Lewis vouchers



It's only by knowing more about you and your projects that we can help to tailor the magazine better to you. Our survey will only take a couple of minutes to complete — it's quickest to do it online at homebuilding.co.uk/survey (you can also cut out this page and return it to us at our FREEPOST address overleaf). What's more, you'll be entered into a free prize draw to win one of five £100 John Lewis vouchers. We look forward to hearing your views — and thank you for your time.

Jason Orme, Editor



ABOUT YOU

1. What is your age?

- ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44
☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75+

2. What is the occupation of the chief wage earner in your household (or if retired, the occupation prior to retirement)?

- ☐ Professional company director
☐ Senior manager
☐ Manager
☐ Clerical worker
☐ Craftsperson
☐ Manual/shop worker
☐ Self-employed white collar
☐ Self-employed manual worker
☐ Driver
☐ Student ☐ None of these

3. What's your total annual household income?

- ☐ Up to £10k ☐ £11-£15k
☐ £16-£25k ☐ £26k-£35k
☐ £36k-£50k ☐ £51k-£75k
☐ £76k-£100k ☐ £101k-£150k
☐ £151k+ ☐ Prefer not to say

4. Are you in the building trade? ☐

If yes, what do you do?

- ☐ Architect/designer
☐ Builder/main contractor/project manager
☐ Tradesperson
☐ In materials industry
☐ Other

ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

5. Why are you building or renovating? (tick one)

- ☐ Want a better home built for us
☐ Want to move up the housing ladder
☐ Energy efficiency ☐ Downsizing
☐ To sell for profit ☐ Upsizing ☐ Other

6. Are you currently, or intending to:

- ☐ Build a new house
☐ Renovate/extend an existing house
☐ Convert a building into a house
☐ Haven't decided yet
☐ I read for general interest

7. Is your project underway, or being started within the next six months?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what stage are you at?

- ☐ Gathering ideas
☐ Looking for land/renovation opportunity
☐ Design/planning permission
☐ Finding builders
☐ On site, pre-weathertight
☐ On site, internal works

8. Have you completed a project of this sort before?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many projects?

(please state).....

9. What is your anticipated project cost (excluding purchase price of plot/property)?

- ☐ £1-£50k ☐ £51-£100k
☐ £101-£200k ☐ £201-£300k
☐ £301-£500k ☐ £501-£999k
☐ £1m+

10. Do you currently own the plot/property for the project?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. How did you find your plot?

- ☐ Plotfinder.net
☐ Local estate agent
☐ Word of mouth
☐ Auction
☐ Zoopla
☐ Rightmove
☐ Custom build developer
☐ Part of existing property garden

12. If you're building a new house, how much do you expect to pay for your plot?

- ☐ £1-£50k ☐ £51-£100k
☐ £101-£150k ☐ £151-£200k
☐ £201-£300k ☐ £301-£500k
☐ £501-£999k ☐ £1m+
☐ n/a

13. How will you finance your project?

- ☐ Entirely privately/savings
☐ Mainly self-build mortgage
☐ Other finance e.g. bridging, commercial
☐ Stage payment
☐ Mortgaging ☐ n/a

14. Are you interested in the custom build route to building your own home?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Don't know what it is

15. Have you already commissioned design work?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ n/a

16. What size will your new home be?

- ☐ 1-100m² ☐ 101-150m²
☐ 151-200m² ☐ 201-250m²
☐ 251-300m² ☐ 300-500m²
☐ 500m²+

17. What style will it be?

- ☐ Mainly traditional style
☐ Mainly modern/contemporary
☐ Other (please state).....
☐ Haven't decided yet
☐ n/a

18. If you're building a new home, how will it be built?

- ☐ Masonry ☐ Timber frame
☐ SIPs ☐ ICFs
☐ Other (please state).....
☐ Don't know yet

19. If you're doing work to an existing house, does it require planning permission?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. If you're building your new home, how will you reclaim VAT?

- ☐ Through builder/package supplier
☐ Through own company
☐ Through designer
☐ VAT 431 scheme
☐ Don't know yet
☐ n/a

READER SURVEY

21. If you're building your own home, how would you describe the project?

- ☐ We're self-builders
☐ We're having a house built
☐ Other, please state.....
☐ n/a

PROJECT ROUTE

22. Which build route will you be using?

- ☐ DIY self-build
☐ DIY + subcontractors
☐ Self-managed subcontractors
☐ Subcontractors + project managers
☐ Main contractor to shell stage, then subcontractors
☐ Main contractor
☐ Package build company
☐ Custom build
☐ n/a

23. Who will be choosing the products?

- ☐ Mainly you
☐ Mainly your designer
☐ Mainly your builder
☐ n/a

24. If you're using a builder, how did / will you find them?

- ☐ Through your architect
☐ Through recommendation
☐ Through registered sites e.g. Rated People, FMB, Checkatrade
Other (please state).....
☐ Haven't looked yet

YOUR MEDIA

25. Which of these magazines do you regularly read (at least once every four months)?

- ☐ *Homebuilding & Renovating*
☐ *Grand Designs* ☐ *Build It*
☐ *Self-build & Design*
☐ *Real Homes*
☐ *Elle Decoration* ☐ *Living Etc*
☐ *Period Living*
☐ *25 Beautiful Homes*
☐ *Homes & Gardens*
☐ *House & Garden*
☐ *Ideal Home* ☐ *House Beautiful*

26. Which one do you find most useful?

- ☐ *Homebuilding & Renovating*
☐ *Grand Designs*
☐ *Build It*
☐ *Self-build & Design*
☐ *Real Homes*
☐ *Elle Decoration*
☐ *Living Etc*
☐ *Period Living*
☐ *25 Beautiful Homes*
☐ *Homes & Gardens*
☐ *House & Garden*
☐ *Ideal Home* ☐ *House Beautiful*

27. Have you visited a Homebuilding & Renovating Show in the last 12 months?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

28. Where do you source most of your design ideas?

- ☐ Magazines ☐ Architect/designer
☐ Online ☐ Other.....

29. Where do you source most of your project and technical advice?

- ☐ Magazines ☐ Architect or builder
☐ Online ☐ Other

30. Which other shows have you visited?

- ☐ National Self Build & Renovation Centre (Swindon)
☐ Grand Designs Live ☐ Build It Live
☐ Ideal Home Show
☐ Other, please state).....

31. How often do you visit our website, homebuilding.co.uk?

- ☐ Regular user ☐ Every few days
☐ Occasionally ☐ Never

32. Do you use the following websites?

- ☐ Homebuilding.co.uk
☐ Realhomesmagazine.co.uk
☐ Plotfinder.net ☐ Periodliving.co.uk
☐ Houzz.co.uk

33. Do you use our social media sites and if so, which? (Tick those that apply)

- ☐ Twitter ☐ Facebook ☐ YouTube
☐ Instagram ☐ Pinterest ☐ None

34. How often do you read Homebuilding & Renovating?

- ☐ First copy ☐ I'm a subscriber
☐ Buy it regularly ☐ Buy it occasionally

35. Typically how many people read your copy of Homebuilding & Renovating?

- ☐ Just me ☐ 2
☐ 3 ☐ 4+

36. How did you hear about us?

- ☐ Browsing at newsagent/supermarket
☐ Through a HB&R Show
☐ Through the Homebuilding website
☐ Internet browsing
☐ My designer or builder recommended it
☐ Friend recommended
Other, (please state).....

37. Why do you buy the magazine?

- ☐ Readers' homes ☐ Advice
☐ Design advice ☐ Inspiration
☐ Source products
☐ Source expert advice
☐ Find builder ☐ Find architects

38. Please write the name of your three favourite features in this month's magazine.

- a).....
b).....
c).....

39. What key areas do you want to know about?

- ☐ How to get started e.g. finding a plot
☐ Technical advice e.g. timber frame
☐ Project advice e.g. managing builders
☐ Design ideas/advice e.g. barn ideas
Other (please state).....

40. What one thing would you like to see more of in the magazine?

- ☐ More homes ☐ More project advice
☐ More technical advice
☐ More design ideas/images
☐ More supplier information
Other (please state).....

41. Would you recommend Homebuilding & Renovating to others?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

42. Is Homebuilding & Renovating good value for money?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

43. If you read the magazine regularly, what's your main reason for doing so?

-
.....

44. Would you be willing to pay for in-depth expert guides or tools (e.g. VAT reclaim companion) and if so how much?

- ☐ under £5 ☐ £5-£10
☐ £10+ ☐ Wouldn't pay

45. What one thing would make the magazine better?

-

46. What would make you re/subscribe to Homebuilding & Renovating?

- ☐ Discount ☐ Free gift
☐ Discount and free gift
☐ Working on a project and find it essential

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Green and Innovative Solutions for Damp Homes

Two brand-new solutions – developed after two years of research and development – could see an end to damp problems in the home

Properties in the UK increasingly suffer from condensation issues due to current building methods being more precise, and therefore more airtight. Typical signs of condensation are damp patches or black mould in corners, behind furniture or just above skirting boards. Until now, condensation has been a difficult problem to solve with traditional chemical damp-proofing techniques. However, Schrijver Damp Proofing UK has developed a new product specifically to eliminate condensation issues – the dryskirt.

A remarkable damp solution, the dryskirt allows natural, outside air to flow through channels incorporated into a skirting board. This makes the dryskirt slightly cooler than any other parts of the wall, intentionally allowing damp to condensate on to the surface of the skirting board. The damp will then pass through the porous material of the dryskirt, at which point the natural airflow expels it to the exterior. This ongoing process allows the dryskirt to extract all excess damp from the interior of the house, making it a warmer, more comfortable and healthier place to live. Any signs of condensation will then disappear rapidly.

Another innovation, a redesign of the Schrijver System, is the dewbrick, which stands for Damp Extraction Widget. Dewbricks are installed into exterior walls at regular intervals, and extract damp using the natural airflow. A dew point inside the dewbrick causes damp to condensate, after which it is expelled to the outside. The improved aerodynamics of the design achieve a 40 per cent increase in damp extraction, and the dewbrick also features adjustable insulation that improves energy efficiency once the wall is dry. Furthermore, the new design uses 50 per cent less materials and is made from 100 per cent recycled resources (limited to certain colours). With this complete redesign, the solution has become significantly more effective and sustainable.

With these two new innovations, the Schrijver System has provided an up to date, green answer to the different types of damp facing UK homeowners. Both products will be available for installation from September onwards. For more information on the system, visit greendampsolutions.co.uk 



Two Innovative Solutions to Damp

Top: The dryskirt attracts all excess damp from the inside of the house and exports it to the outside, using the natural airflow to guide the moisture

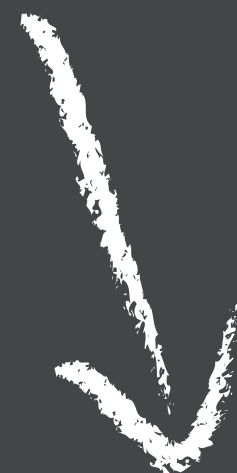
Above: The dewbrick is installed into the exterior wall from the outside. The porous cylinder creates a dew point and collects damp, after which the natural airflow exports it to the outside



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Assessing Your Project for Renewables

Nearly any property, new build or renovation, can benefit from renewable technology, whether you're seeking an efficient alternative to an old oil boiler by opting for a heat pump or adding solar thermal to help with hot water generation

Whilst the majority of properties can enjoy some type of renewable solution, there are a handful of important considerations to ensure that the system installed is efficient and worth the initial investment. Nu-Heat, experts in fully integrated renewables, talk through a simple six-step checklist to help you assess your project for renewables:

1 How old is the property and how well is it insulated?

Insulation is extremely important when installing a heat pump as they operate at their most efficient when producing lower flow temperatures. If your property is a new build (built in the last 10 years), the insulation should be up to current Building Regulations, meaning it ought to be suitable for a heat pump.

Properties undergoing refurbishment are also suitable, providing the insulation levels are being brought up to Building Regs standards.

2 Does the property have access to mains gas?

Heat pumps are ideally suited to properties without access to mains gas as you're likely to see a greater return on investment when compared to the cost of oil, LPG and direct electric fossil fuels.

A heat pump could still be a renewable solution for a new build on the gas grid, as the high levels of insulation mean the heat pump will operate very efficiently.

3 Does the site have plenty of free land?

When it comes to choosing a heat pump, the site plays a big part in the type of unit required.

A ground-source heat pump (GSHP) requires free, accessible land that is approximately three times the total floor area of the property to accommodate the ground loops. There is also the option of drilling boreholes, although this is considerably more expensive.

If space is not available, an air-source heat pump (ASHP) is a good, cost-effective alternative.

4 Will the work require planning permission?

It's important to check if your property requires planning permission before installing an air-source heat pump.

They are varying criteria for different planning authorities, so it is best to obtain clarification on planning permission. The main consideration is around the heat pump's proximity to neighbouring properties and also the noise levels emitted. The majority of installations will fall under Permitted Development (PD) rights. Solar is also covered by PD, however you must check with planning if you are in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Conservation Area or if the building is listed.

As a GSHP unit is situated inside the property, planning is not required.

5 Access RHI funding One of the big appeals of a renewables system, aside from the on-going savings to fuel bills, is that the installation cost can be offset by applying for the RHI.



6 Choosing the right supplier

Nu-Heat designs and supplies fully integrated ground-source and air-source heat pump systems as well as solar thermal. By choosing a reputable supplier, such as Nu-Heat, you can be confident that you are investing in a renewable system that will perform.

The importance of system design, installation and commissioning support should not be underestimated — they provide you and the installer with peace of mind that the installation is being handled by experts. 

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Home

This section: Everything you need to create a brilliant individual home — from ideas, expert guides and designers' advice to other people's inspiring projects



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Rear Elevation

This self-build replaces a fire-damaged cottage, which previously stood on the glorious site. The sympathetic oak frame new build is clad in a blend of reclaimed stone (with the front elevation, overleaf, clad entirely in stone), recovered from the demolished cottage, and render. Magnificent full-height gable end glazing fills the interiors with light

HOMES OAK FRAME SELF-BUILD

A Meeting of Minds

When Colin and Amanda Sheppard found the perfect village plot for their oak frame self-build project, the next challenge was to reach a harmonious compromise of their tastes and styles

Words: Karen Darlow Photography: Simon Maxwell

PROJECT NOTES

Project:

Oak frame
self-build

Location:

Oxfordshire

Dates: April 2012

– June 2013

Size: 300m²

Plot cost:

£465,000 (2011)

Build cost:

£586,000

Value: Unknown

HOMES OAK FRAME SELF-BUILD



HOMES OAK FRAME SELF-BUILD



Rear and Front Elevations

The front, road-facing elevation (left) appears as an old stone cottage, with the oak frame porch being the only sign of the construction system at the heart of this new build. The rear, meanwhile, makes the most of the surrounding views over open countryside through plentiful glazing

Moving house and getting married are among the most exciting but also most stressful life events going, yet Amanda and Colin Sheppard added two more challenges into the mix: finding a plot and building their own home.

With their wedding date set for midsummer's day 2013, Colin and Amanda decided to sell their separate houses and build a new home together prior to their big day.

"We were both interested in oak framed buildings, so it seemed a great idea for us to design and build one from scratch," says Colin. "The difficulty was going to be finding the right plot in the right location."

Finding a Suitable Plot

The couple registered with Plotfinder.net in spring 2011 and prepared themselves for a long wait to find somewhere suitable in an area that stretched from the southern reaches of Oxfordshire and

THE QUICK READ

➤ On the site of a derelict, fire-damaged cottage, Colin and Amanda Sheppard have built a traditionally styled oak frame home, to a cost of £586,000

➤ The inner workings of the house are concealed in a central hub, with all the living spaces positioned around the outside perimeter to increase the feeling of space and the connection to the landscape

➤ The property features an oak framed balcony to the master bedroom and expansive glazed areas, which make the most of the rural setting and views across the south Oxfordshire countryside



Living Spaces

The double-height drawing room, with its imposing focal-point fireplace and Jotul woodburning stove (underfloor heating, powered by a ground-source heat pump, also keeps this home warm), was the starting point for the couple's plans for the house. Meanwhile, the single-height living room (bottom right) provides a more intimate space, and features bi-fold doors to make the most of the outdoor space and sunsets over the fields

HOMES OAK FRAME SELF-BUILD

across the Cotswolds and the Chilterns to Salisbury. Remarkably, though, within just a few weeks, a plot came up for sale five minutes' away from Amanda's property. The corner plot on the outskirts of the village of Great Haseley, with the wreck of a fire-ravaged, 16th-century thatched cottage on it, looked a likely candidate; Amanda visited the site straight away.

"I knew of the house, but as I looked round the site, with its views of open fields on three sides, and sheltered by woodland at the back, I saw it with fresh eyes," she says. "We'd been advised that if the right plot comes up you should act quickly, especially in the south-east where it's so hard to find somewhere to build, so Colin joined me at the plot that same afternoon, and we put in our offer and shook hands on it there and then.

"It was actually in a more prime position than we needed, but it was just such a good spot. We didn't really think twice about it," she adds. "And even though we didn't actually like the existing plans, they were for a good-sized house and we knew it wouldn't be difficult to get them changed because the footprint was already agreed."

Designing an Oak Frame Home

With the offer accepted, Amanda and Colin could start the design process. "We asked four different oak frame companies to show us a selection of their builds," says Colin. "We must have seen more than 10 properties, but it was the best way to get a feel for what each company could offer — and further down the line, because we'd seen things that worked well, it gave us some great design ideas for our own build."

The couple consequently chose Carpenter Oak & Woodland to supply the frame. They wanted to make the most of the natural beauty of the oak frame, and were looking to steer away from the contemporary look that some builds achieve. "One of the reasons

we chose Carpenter Oak & Woodland is that we didn't want the house to look too angular. We really liked the curved beams that we'd seen in their houses. That really appealed to us; it softens everything," the couple explain.

The drawing room — which now boasts a grand, double-height inglenook fireplace — was the starting point for the couple's ideas for the whole house. One clever solution Colin came up with was concealing all the heating and ventilation systems away from the main living spaces. All the plumbing and electrics would also be stowed in a utility hub in the centre of the floorplan, so that none of the workings of the house would detract from the beauty of the building and its stunning setting. This is the only wet area of the house, so all the drains and pipes feed into this space; the bathrooms are positioned around it. At the back of the kitchen, the utility room is part of this hub and contains the washing machine and a large dishwasher used when entertaining.

Architect Jason Jackson of Jackson Architects, experienced in designing oak frame buildings, was hired to turn the couple's ideas into plans. "He did a fantastic job of making our ideas for the designs aesthetically good and was really helpful through the planning for us, too — in fact, he got us a 25 per cent increase in volume on the original plans," explains Colin. "The footprint wasn't bigger, but with the extra height upstairs with the oak frame, it's really made it seem more spacious."

Once the revised planning application was approved, the contractors were on site to demolish the derelict cottage — damaged well beyond repair by the fire — and clear the site in April 2012.

Going on Site

With their architect based in Taunton, Amanda and Colin started out managing the project themselves. However, after a few issues ➡



HOMES OAK FRAME SELF-BUILD



Kitchen

The kitchen was supplied by local company Constable & Phillips Interiors. The contemporary units, combined with minimal oak on show, give this room a modern edge

with the original builders, they decided that it would be prudent to bring in chartered surveyor Andrew Eades to oversee the build and liaise with the builders to ensure the job was completed satisfactorily.

This proved a good move. In fact, Andrew helped the Sheppards reach the conclusion that it would be better to part company with the first set of builders and take on a new company to finish the build, which though difficult at the time, turned out to be for the best.

The couple were still keen to be involved in the process, however. "By this time, Colin had sold his house to finance the first bit of the build, and had moved in with me, so we were both nearby to check on the build every other day," says Amanda. "We were fascinated by the building process, so we really wanted to be around," adds Colin. "Plus, we were quite keen to buy a lot of the materials ourselves. We like choice, and we felt we could get materials we wanted cheaper ourselves."

Being able to visualise the completed house at an early stage in the build process was a critical factor in ensuring that they were able to create their ideal home, Colin explains: "We wanted to create an open plan house that was light and airy and made the most of the wonderful views. The oak frame provided a number of challenges," he adds. "The best frame designs have a simplicity and regularity, so we had to make sure our ideas worked within the frame and yet made the most of the wonderful qualities of the oak." The couple invested a lot of time in building their own 3D model of the house, so they could see exactly what it was going to be like before a single



Drawing Room and Office

The couple's office has been positioned above the drawing room, with the double-height space and glazed balustrade to the A-frame planned in to allow this first floor room to enjoy the views over the countryside beyond



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First Floor Rooms

The vaulted ceiling in the master bedroom allows the green oak frame to take centre stage. With windows on two sides, plus an oak frame balcony, the room gives wide views of the surrounding countryside. Concealed within a void above the bank of wardrobes is the ducting for the ventilation system. Meanwhile, both the en suite (above right) and family bathroom (right) feature flooring from Mandarin Stone; sanitaryware by Buildbase was specified for the latter

stone had been laid. “This made it easy for us to get the fine detail exactly right,” says Amanda. “It made it possible for us to try out our different ideas and collaborate to produce something that worked perfectly for both of us.”

Colin and Amanda’s different perspectives materialised into one coherent, beautiful home. As if building a completely original new home wasn’t stressful enough, the couple had the additional pressure of an unmovable deadline for completion. “Well before we started the project, we had set the date for our wedding for midsummer’s day, with the intention of a joint house warming and marriage celebration in the garden,” says Amanda. “We thought we had allowed ourselves more than enough time to get everything finished, but with a few delays here and there, things got later and later,” adds Colin. “Two weeks before the big day there was still a huge amount to be done but everyone pulled together and worked around the clock and, on the day, everything looked absolutely amazing.” 



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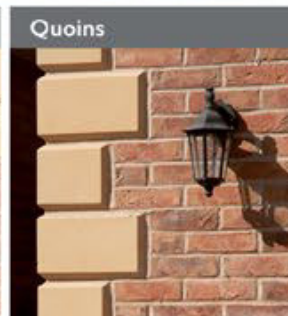
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HOMES OAK FRAME SELF-BUILD

The Project



Jason Jackson
Architect

ARCHITECT'S VIEW

True greenfield sites for single new houses are relatively rare. From a planning permission point of view, a 'replacement dwelling' (demolish and rebuild) is a much easier proposition, with the added bonus that the cost of demolition is normally more than offset by having the services and drainage already in place. However, there are limits on how much larger the new house can be over and above the one being demolished. Colin and Amanda found a large derelict house, on a beautiful plot, which gave them precedent for all of the floor space they required.

The couple really wanted a green oak framed house, but the plans attached to the original planning consent simply couldn't be built in this material. We are specialists in oak frame projects, but one of our first jobs is to explain to clients that a true frame dictates the plans – not the other way round. They took some convincing to rip up their plans and start again, but Colin is a great project manager and quickly got his head around the new approach. Even more impressively, Colin learned to use the Google SketchUp modelling program to help visualise the finished house.

Building a home like this is a huge challenge and takes a lot of drive, dedication, careful decision making and hard work. We were pleased to be involved in guiding Colin and Amanda through the intricacies of the project, but a huge amount of the credit must go to them for the beautiful results.

SUPPLIERS

Oak frame supplier Carpenter Oak & Woodland.....01225 743089
.....carpenteroakandwoodland.com

Architect Jackson Architects
.....jacksonarchitects.co.uk; 01823 443742

Chartered surveyor Andrews Eades.....
.....01844 261222

Second main contractor Luxon & Cross Construction01628 482192

Kitchen supplier Constable & Phillips Interiors.....01844 208003

Ground-source heat pump and under-floor heating supplier Ice Energy
.....0808 145 2340

Ventilation system supplier ADM Systems
.....01756 701051

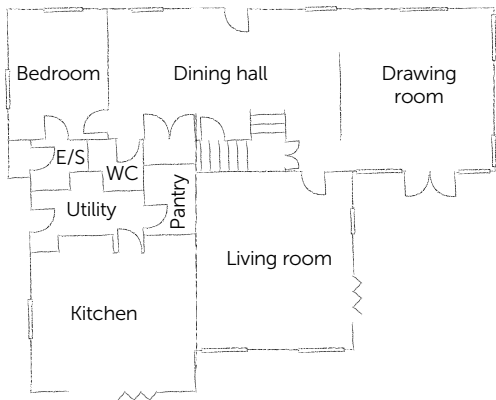
Staircase and specialist joinery supplier Woodrows Joinery01844 201449

Oak flooring supplier Everything Wood
.....01865 367888

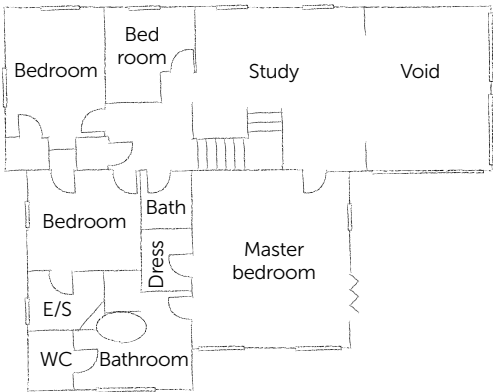
General building materials Buildbase
.....buildbase.co.uk

Decorator Oxford Painting Company.....
.....theoxfordshirepaintingcompany.com

Ground Floor



First Floor



BUILD TIME

- | | |
|--|--|
| Apr 2011 Land purchased | Jun 2012 Oak frame erected |
| Jul 2011 First planning application | Sep 2012 Watertight shell completed |
| Sep 2011 Planning approved | Jan 2012 First fix |
| Jan 2012 Revised planning application | Mar 2012 Second fix |
| Mar 2012 Revised permission approved | May 2012 Final decoration;
the couple moved in |
| Apr 2012 Work started on site | Jun 2013 Landscaping completed |
| May 2012 Foundations completed | |

BUILD COST BREAKDOWN

Demolition	£11,000
Foundations	£57,000
Oak frame (including porches and cleaning)	£74,000
External walls and stacks	£55,000
Internal structure	£34,000
Roof	£52,000
Internal and external joinery, and glazing	£69,000
Internal and external finishes	£39,000
Electrical installations, including security	£33,000
Plumbing, bathroom fittings and woodburning stoves	£31,000
Heating and ventilation	£35,000
Kitchen and utility room cabinets and appliances	£39,000
Garage	£25,000
Misc	£32,000
Total	£586,000

The Art of Designing Barn Conversions

The secret to a successful conversion is working with the existing building, rather than shoehorning in 'traditional' domestic features, says designer Charlie Luxton



CHARLIE LUXTON

Architectural designer Charlie is the director of Charlie Luxton Design and a popular broadcaster, presenting 'Building the Dream' on More4

With a practice in rural north Oxfordshire I've been lucky enough to work on lots of barn conversions and I love designing them. I relish the challenge of creating a functional, dramatic home while maintaining the core 'barn-y-ness' of the building. For me, the Litmus test for the success of any conversion is that, if led blindfolded into one and then unmasked, you should immediately know what kind of building you're in. Too often conversions obliterate and obscure a barn's origins so that it looks and feels like an ordinary but oddly proportioned house, and not a celebration of the utilitarian beauty of the existing building.

In many ways, barns are a bit like relationships — if you hope to take one on because you want to change it, then don't. If you can love it for what it is, quirks and all, then a barn's life is for you.



Successful Barn Conversions

Left: This contemporary design by Pack Associates — clad in zinc and timber — stays faithful to the original Dutch barn structure;

Above: Double-height, voluminous spaces and opportunity for large glazed openings are big attractions for those converting these former agricultural buildings. The Bisca staircase, with its oak treads and handrail and glazed balustrade, is a sympathetic but statement addition. The window is also by Bisca; **Opposite top:** The best conversions, like this project by Julian Cowie Architects, are free from domestic features such as porches, and as such, allow the existing structure to shine; **Opposite bottom:** Barn conversions can provide the opportunity to experiment with materials, such as OSB — as this project by Carl Turner Architects demonstrates



DESIGN MASTERCLASS BARN CONVERSIONS

TIM CROCKER PHOTOGRAPHY (JULIAN COWIE ARCHITECTS)



EMBRACE THE FUNCTIONAL BEAUTY

The recent changes to planning rules have opened up the possibility of residential conversion for many agricultural structures previously considered not worthy. Dutch barns (opposite, left), corrugated metal barns and pole barns are supremely functional. Embracing the ‘barn-y-ness’ of these buildings is even more important in getting the best out of this latest crop of agricultural buildings ripe for conversion. I find real beauty in their pragmatic simplicity, but you do have to work with their core character and make the structure, form and materials work for you rather than force them to be what they are not.

The barn form lends itself to so much of what we want in a modern home — space, height and massive openings for walls of glass. They allow for experimentation in affordable, interesting materials, too. Metal, timber, fibreboard, rubber, you name it, pretty much anything goes with these buildings — except trying to make them what they are not. They are not constructed from traditional house materials, for instance, so trying to re clad them in slate, tile, brick or stone will more than likely end up looking wrong. Nor are they ‘polite’, with regularly spaced portrait windows which conform to the Golden Ratio. They shouldn’t have porches, dormers, brick chimneys or fiddly domestic details. If you do want these features, go and buy a house! If you want to go on an adventure into design and a home full of architectural interest, barns are a good bet.





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GETTING THE INTERIOR SPACES RIGHT

Another challenge with barns is fitting in all the rooms and functions necessary in a modern home without subdividing the space too much; again, think back to the blindfold test. I also always try and make a 'moment' in a barn conversion when you can understand the entire height, width and length of the original space; a memory of the raw, untamed building. Architecture needs drama and barns can provide this through wonderful uncluttered space — keeping this alive as you transform your barn is key to success.

The blindfold test should also apply to the interior design and fit-out. The interior and exterior should chime. This could be through simple, rustic, agricultural-inspired construction using traditional materials, or contrasting super-sleek modern minimalism (the Kitchen Architecture Bulthaup kitchen, above, being a prime example). It is not for me to say how it should be or look, but it must communicate and be in dialogue with the buildings roots. ➡

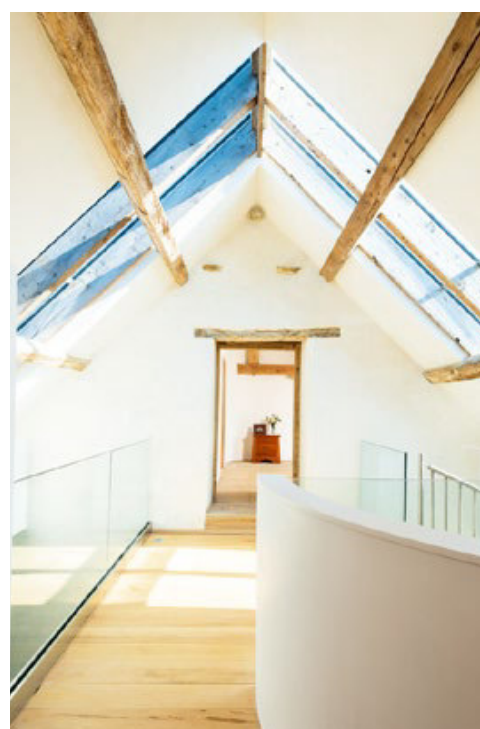


INTRODUCING LIGHT

When built, barns were not conceived for human habitation. As such, they usually have very few openings, but those openings which they do possess tend to be either massive – designed for loading and unloading industrial-scale machines and/or animals – or very small, for purposes of cross ventilation. Getting light into all the rooms without punching the building with too many new openings, is one of the single biggest challenges facing converters.

There are no hard and fast rules but I tend to start with the light and view, locating the principal habitable rooms where the main openings are, while accepting that some parts of the building will, most likely, be dark. Utility, plant rooms and WCs may only have borrowed light but if handled well and contrasted against spacious, light-filled living and circulation areas, they can be an interesting counter note in the wider composition of the design. Dark, cosier spaces may well lend themselves to snugs and living rooms used in the evening.

Do all you can to avoid new openings. Where they are absolutely crucial, consider them in the same vein as the existing structure. Fewer larger openings are nearly always better than multiple smaller ones. Single openings that span between floors or rooms so that externally they appear as one opening rather than two, can help maintain a building's integrity. Barns were not generally designed with polite symmetry in mind, they are often a bit random and asymmetric, so try and continue that in your alterations. Most barns are a simple rectangular shape, so rooflights are key to getting light into the middle of the building while maintaining the monolithic integrity of the walls. Here too anything domestic is the enemy so think large single rooflights rather than multiple small ones. **H**



Introducing Light

From top: Cosy living rooms and utility spaces may be best placed in areas with less natural light (a well-planned artificial lighting scheme can work wonders instead); Large openings which span both floors can lend natural light to principal spaces and bedrooms above; Large rooflights or glazing work better than lots of small openings



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Inspiration for low-cost traditional and contemporary-style self-builds



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This timber frame house on the Isle of Skye draws inspiration from simple vernacular forms



£171,000

Built in cottage style, this 165m² home in Hampshire features quality natural materials



£98,500

The self-builder of this Welsh home took on an oak framing course to complete it



£115,000

This 100m² energy-efficient home by Ecohouse resembles a Cornish cottage



£185,882

Photovoltaic solar panels and a ground-source heat pump complete this new build



£139,000

This three storey SIPs house in Leeds was designed by Halliday Clark Architects



£95,000

The retired joiner owner of this 72m² timber frame home self-built it almost entirely



£123,000

This striking, sustainable self-build, designed by Rural Design, was built in SIPs



£180,000

Log Cabin UK designed and erected this 170m² highly insulated home in Derbyshire



£175,000

This low-energy home in Milton Keynes complies with the Lifetime Homes standard



£200,000

Once Border Oak erected the oak frame, the owner took this project to completion



£140,000

This new 165m² home on a sloping Perthshire site was designed by CASA Architect



£59,000

Though just 40m², this clever home by The Wee House Company still packs a punch



£139,000

Buying in bulk helped the owners build this four-bed, 300m² home for under £150k



£200,000

With walls of straw bale and natural insulation, this low-cost build is also eco-friendly



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This three bedroom modern cottage in Surrey replaces a rundown bungalow



£100,000

Constructed in ICF, this new Scottish home was self-built almost entirely by its owner



£120,000

This modern farmhouse in Devon belies its traditional oak frame construction



£90,000

The self-builder of this timber frame home in Brighton designed it to suit its tight site



£140,000

Drawing inspiration from the vernacular, this Norfolk blockwork house is clad in flint

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HOMES CONTEMPORARY

Bland to Grand

Kate and Andy Stoddart have transformed an ordinary 1960s house into a contemporary, open plan family home

Words Karen Darlow Photos

Nick Huggins

Open Plan Living

Exploring the possibilities of open plan living in a contemporary home

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PROJECT NOTES

Project:

Contemporary
remodel and
extension

Location:

Surrey

Dates:

Feb 13
- Sep 14

Size:

210m²

Building cost:

£440,000

Build cost:

£193,100

(£920/m²)

Value:

£940,000



HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL AND EXTENSION



HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL AND EXTENSION



Front Elevation

A two storey extension forms a new gable end to this 1960s house, which is almost recognisable thanks to grey render to the ground floor and Kebony cladding to the first floor. A new glazed entrance adds wow-factor

THE QUICK READ

➤ Kate and Andy Stoddart have extended and remodelled a 1960s brick-clad property, creating a modern, open plan family home, which is clad in render and Kebony timber

➤ SIPs (structural insulated panels) was the construction system of choice for the new extension, providing both a quick build and an airtight, well-insulated envelope

➤ The build project, designed by architect Kate and managed by Andy, provided a sounding board for the couple's clever design ideas

Kate and Andy Stoddart and their young children, Tom and Ava, are living the rural dream. Their home might not be a typical country cottage but, as Kate is an architect with her own practice and plenty of new ideas to try out, 'typical' wasn't part of the brief.

The couple had been looking for a village home within easy reach of London for many months when a 1960s three-bed detached house came up for sale not far from Andy's parents. "I'd be lying if I said it was love at first view, but I was excited because I could see exactly how we could make it work for us," says Kate. "I started sketching up my ideas as soon as we got back from the viewing, and, before long, I had a really clear idea of what we would need to do to transform it."

Developing the Design Concept

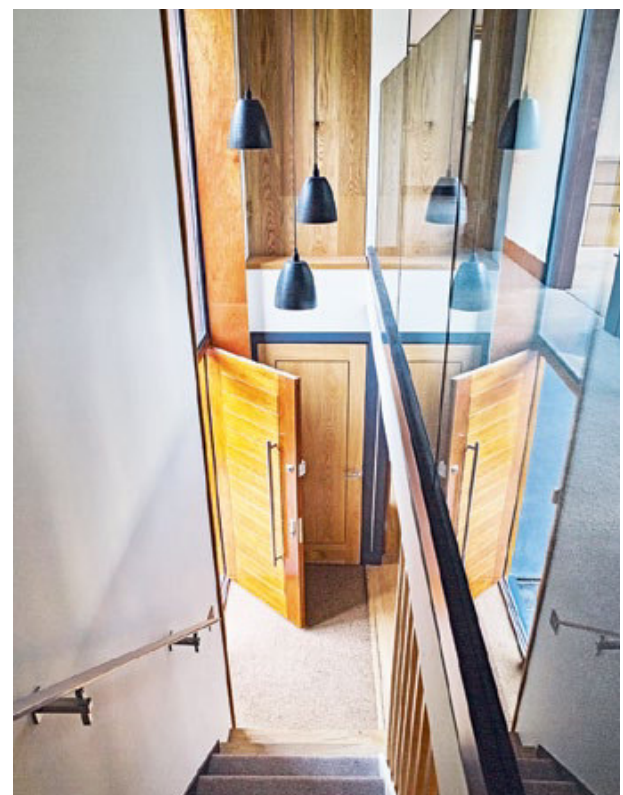
One thing that particularly struck Kate was that the site was carved in two by a detached garage, which completely cut off the house from the garden. Moving into the property in May 2012, the Stoddarts had approval by October to demolish the garage to make way for a two storey extension featuring an open plan kitchen/dining/living space downstairs, with a new master bedroom, bathrooms and home office above it.

"I sent the plans in for pre-application advice – something I always advise my clients to do if it's a controversial site – and they wanted us to pull the extension off the boundary slightly, so we revised that," says Kate. "The plans then went through first time. I think the fact that the property was a fairly ordinary, brick-built, tile-hung house meant that the planners weren't too concerned about it. And my feelings were very much that it was a 1960s house, so if you're going to renovate it, make it look of its time — there was no point in making it appear older.

"The house is surrounded by trees, so I knew I wanted to use timber cladding," continues Kate. "The answer was Kebony, a renewable material derived from Scots pine and treated with a sugar cane waste product. It was a bit of an experiment as I hadn't used it before, but it's very hardwearing and the wood weathers to an attractive grey colour."



HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL AND EXTENSION



HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL AND EXTENSION

Extending in Structural Insulated Panels

Andy gave up his job in engineering in order to work on the build, with help from his father and input from a few trades, such as a plumber and Andy's electrician brother. He completed much of the work himself, including all the steelwork, bathroom tiling and plastering. Plus, he fitted the kitchens and the bathrooms.

The couple decided to use a structural insulated panel (SIPs) system for the extension, both for the speed the build method offers on site and to create a highly insulated, airtight structure. However, the site initially proved to be problematic, with a steep slope and natural springs, so the ground required careful preparation, especially after a wet winter. "We had to get a team of groundworkers in to pour a massive slab of concrete over the soggy ground," explains Kate. "So, after the garage had been demolished, they set to work."

With the concrete slab in place, the panels were erected. "The upper floor overhangs by 500mm, cantilevered out to give a bigger footprint," says Kate. "Despite sub-zero temperatures, by day 10 the SIPs sections were in place and the roofers could come on site to cover the structure."

The family were able to live in the original part of the house while the new section was sealed off and worked on independently. "We only had to move out for one night, when relocating the staircase from one end of the old house to a more central position," recalls Kate. "We were able to continue using the old kitchen, now a utility room, throughout the 18-month build, and, although for a few weeks the old bathroom became part of the landing and we had to brush our teeth in the bath, the arrangement worked well."

Creating Variations in Level

Besides uniting the house with its garden, the new extension allowed Kate and Andy to create some interesting variations in floor and ceiling levels inside. For instance, two smart oak steps lead from the entrance hall down to the new downstairs living space to enable the sliding doors to be flush with the garden. The result is

an unusual ceiling line, with three different heights — the highest at the far end of the room, where a Contura woodburning stove creates a focal point, framed on either side by a wide bench from IKEA and topped with a plinth, custom-made in situ by Andy, in cast concrete. Kate chose taller than average sliding doors (2.4m high rather than 2m) to allow more daylight into the room and to balance the extra height in this family space.

The middle section, with the lowest ceiling, is the cooking area, where a vast island workspace houses an induction hob. Like the bench at the other end of the room, the kitchen worktop is made from cast concrete. The lower ceiling height here allows for specific task lighting in the preparation area, and houses the cooker extractor. "The different parts of the room each need their own style of lighting, and it works very well to divide and define the space in this way," says Kate.

A further change of level creates additional height in the dining area, where a high-level, letterbox-shaped window illuminates the space, but prevents people looking in on the Stoddarts' family mealtimes. "The house is on a bridle path, though, and the window is at horse's head-height, so occasionally we get some unusual passers-by as we're eating our lunch!" says Kate.



First Floor Rooms

A dramatic double-height entrance hall (opposite bottom right), with glazed balustrade to the landing and pendant lights from Dunelm, leads to the first floor. A clever three-quarter-height partition wall conceals a dressing area in the master bedroom (below), while in the family bathroom (below left) Kate chose a simple monochrome scheme, with tiles from Topps Tiles and a suite by Victoria Plumb





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HOMES CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION AND REMODEL



Creative Design Solutions

As the house is effectively a showpiece for her practice, Kate was keen to try out new ideas. The windows have lacquered plywood cills, a stylish contrast to the grey aluminium frames that reference the house's 1960s roots. The doors are the reverse: grey-painted MDF architraves with the oak doors. The newly positioned stairwell balustrade is louvred with two layers of laminated plywood, in keeping with the window surrounds.

The concrete worktops were also an experiment (Andy poured the concrete himself to create the worktop), and, priced at just over £750 for the island and the bench in the living area, proved to be cost-effective. "Cast concrete is not a faultless material, like Corian, but it was surprisingly easy to work with and it's wearing very well," says Kate. Andy had to act quickly once the concrete was mixed, but now he'd be confident doing it again.

The vibrant orange glass splashback behind the sink was another good buy. "We saved so much money by using an online supplier," says Kate. It was, however, one of the very few things that went wrong during the project. "We were told it was completely opaque and you wouldn't be able to see through it, so we stuck it to the wall with some leftover grey tile adhesive," explains Kate. "However, as it dried, the glue started to show through, so we had to rip it off the wall and scrub it clean before starting all over again — this

Rear Elevation

Two sets of sliding doors, positioned either side of the new extension, provide access to both the sheltered courtyard and lawn to the other side

time with a clear adhesive. Even with all that hassle, we're still very pleased with our splashback," says Kate.

The fact that the couple were building their own house to their own plans meant that snags and mishaps were very rare. "When you're doing your own build — and doing it as slowly as we were — you tend to resolve any issues and modify your ideas as you go along, whereas normally you don't get that chance to correct things."

For all its creative design solutions, the house is first and foremost a family home and had to work well for Kate, Andy and the children. Having put it through its paces for almost nine months, Kate feels that it more than meets the brief. "I love the style of our house from the outside," she says. "It's like a kind of contemporary barn; a simple form of architecture. It seems huge now that it's finished, because you get used to living in so few rooms and being surrounded by all the building materials and dust, but now that has all gone and we also have an extra room downstairs, it feels really luxurious." 

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HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL AND EXTENSION

The Project



Kate Stoddart
Architect and
homeowner

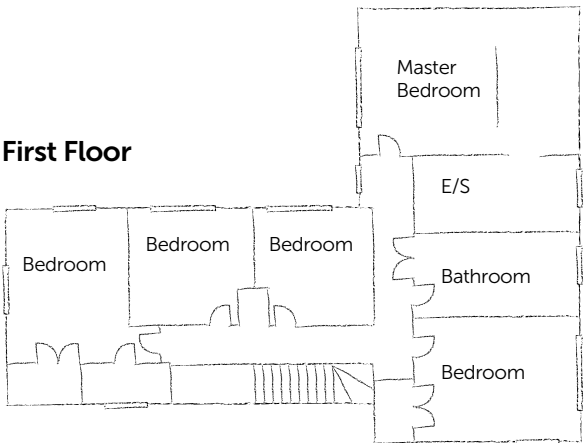
THE ARCHITECT’S VIEW

At ground floor level, the extension needed to accommodate the main living spaces so the whole family could be together during the day, while still allowing the two garden spaces on either side to visually connect. When sitting in the living area, you have glazing on either side to both garden areas, which is fantastic. Once the doors are open, the extension becomes part of the gardens. A bank of storage sits underneath a concrete worktop at the seating end of the extension; this also doubles up as a plinth for the stove and additional seating.

Due to the slope across the site, the extension sits half a metre lower than the original house, which allows it to connect to both garden levels and also adds headroom to increase the sense of space. The kitchen has been designed to sit centrally in the large open plan area as a place for the family to gather around; the large island is positioned so that the main children’s play areas can be seen.

Upstairs, the guest suite has privacy at one end of the house, while the master bedroom enjoys separation at the other, with the children’s rooms in between.

The staircase needed to be relocated so that it sat more centrally in the floorplan and could be utilised to create a galleried space over the entrance hall with frameless glass balustrading.



SUPPLIERS

Architect Kate Stoddart	01252 851004; katestoddart.co.uk
Kingspan TEK SIPs (structural insulated panels) installation Bentley SIP Systems	023 8036 0455
Roof Johnson Brothers Roofing	01252 763524
Kitchen Benchmarx Kitchens	01372 385915
Underfloor heating Continental Underfloor	0845 108 7001
Woodburning stove Focus Stoves.	01420 561010
Cladding Kebony	 kebony.com

SELECTED COSTS

Groundworks	£18,500
SIPs extension	£37,800
Remaining building work	£44,900
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Kitchen (including appliances)	£13,000
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Bathrooms	£8,400
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Landscaping	£21,000
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REMODELLING

Before & After

A modern facelift and glazed extension transforms a 1960s home



Before



JONATHAN DALE

Co-director at award-winning practice Jane Duncan Architects, Jonathan has been designing private houses for nearly 20 years (janeduncanarchitects.co.uk)

This 1960s house had previously been rented out, and both the interiors – which consisted of a series of individual rooms – and exterior were quite dated. The new homeowners wanted to remodel the property to create something fresh and modern, with open plan spaces, and hoped to bring the entire house up to date.

Our solution for the rear elevation (above) was to replace the conservatory with a contemporary flat-roofed, glazed extension, and to relocate the kitchen here. This new addition has been unified with the existing dining room and living room, to create a large L-shaped, open plan space.

The house is positioned on a sloping site that overlooks a valley to the rear, but the existing elevation did not exploit the views. So, we replaced much of the main rear wall with glazing. Four large fixed glazed panels were specified, both for cost-effectiveness (opening glazing is more expensive) and to

REMODELLING



minimise sightlines. Two sets of sliding doors have been introduced to the kitchen and to the side; they open up to the patio.

We worked with a structural engineer to ensure adequate support was provided for the large openings. The steelwork was the biggest challenge, particularly when it came to the new kitchen extension, which features a cantilevered edge. Considerable effort was made to ensure this steelwork was concealed; there's a single corner column on show in the living room.

When it came to the 'facelift', the idea of using render developed quite quickly. A building will often dictate what you can and can't do to it. For instance, the tile-clad gable ends were of timber frame construction and so we needed a lightweight cladding system to prevent the need to rebuild the gables. Render lent itself here; it also offered a solution for covering the junctures between old and new, and provides a clean, crisp look. New clay composite dark-grey Marley Eternit roof tiles, aluminium windows and black rainwater goods complete the look. **H**

Retaining Elements of Brickwork

The brick piers on the front elevation hint to the property's previous incarnation. Each pier protrudes from the wall by 150mm; it would have been difficult to cover the entire elevation with render without the piers still 'reading' as columns, so the brick was retained as a feature. The brick cladding to the lower floor on this sloping site has also been kept; it grounds the building, giving it a solid base. To the front and back, the existing brick garden walls have been left untouched, too

HOMES CONVERSION AND CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION

Red Wedge

A striking steel-clad extension to a granite steading in Aberdeenshire offers open plan living to its owners

Words: **Caroline Ednie** Photography: **David Barbour**



Steel-Clad Extension

This new home combines a converted farm building with a contemporary triangle-shaped addition; the latter is clad in Cor-ten steel, which offers zero maintenance. The task of cladding the exterior was undertaken by homeowner Gavin Robb, along with a local blacksmith, who had to bend and shape each Cor-ten panel individually. A balcony with intricate detailing completes the look

PROJECT NOTES

Project:
Conversion and contemporary extension

Location:
Aberdeenshire

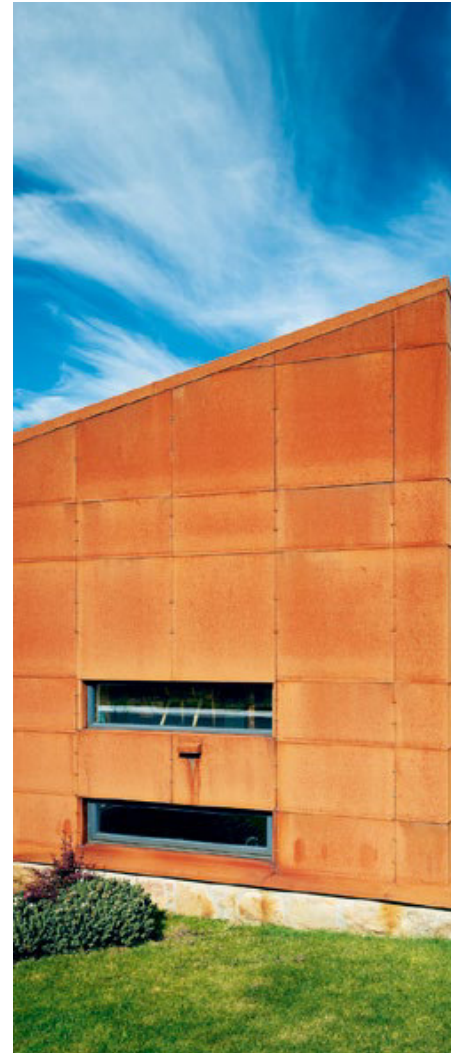
Size: 205m²

Land cost:
Undisclosed

Build cost:
£400,000
(£1,951/m²)

Value: Unknown

HOMES CONVERSION AND CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION



Above: Prioritised Glazing

A series of glazed panels from NorDan help to break up the steel exterior of the extension. Double-height glazing – including doors opening to the balcony – captures the main views to the front, while rows of linear picture windows to the side allow natural light to enter the home at eye level as well as from above

THE QUICK READ

➤ Gavin and Angelique Robb have converted a granite farm building and added a Cor-ten steel-clad, wedge-shaped extension to house their open plan living quarters

➤ A feasibility report suggested the couple transform the collection of farm buildings on site into two houses instead of one in order to spread the large infrastructure cost

➤ Sheep's wool insulation and a sedum roof allow the eco-friendly house to breathe, and a ground-source heat pump and underfloor heating further help to reduce energy bills – which are, in fact, less than the couple's previous city flat

There are many homeowners who would have been put off by a farm steading consisting of a collection of cow sheds next to a pile of potato boxes. However, Gavin and Angelique Robb rose to the challenge of what has been something of a Herculean exercise, and the couple's efforts have certainly paid off. The result is an eco-friendly family home, Skye Steading, which combines one of the existing granite buildings on site with a dramatic new Cor-ten steel-clad, agri-industrial wedge.

The long and labyrinthine journey that the Robb family embarked upon nearly 10 years ago when they bought the farm steading was one Glasgow-based architect Andy McAvoy tried to steer them

HOMES CONVERSION AND CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION



away from initially. “The site had many issues,” explains Andy. “Topography, large amounts of tricky demolition, requirements for on-site recycling, 150 years of adaptations, and also drainage and infrastructure needed to be dealt with upfront to make the site accessible and workable. However, when I brought up all these issues, Gavin and Angelique seemed unfazed, and of the major works involved they said: ‘We can deal with that — in our industry we are dealing with logistics all the time, this is nothing’.”

Indeed, with Gavin working as a construction consultant in the oil industry, and Angelique (who is originally from Lafayette, Louisiana, in the US) having previously relocated to Aberdeen to work as a drilling engineer in the oil industry, the couple did have something of a head start in terms of project managing nous.

Forming a Project Plan

Having purchased the collection of derelict and semi-derelict former agricultural buildings in rural Aberdeenshire – even though, at the time, the couple lived happily in a flat in Aberdeen city centre and had no plans to move or take on a project of this size and nature – Gavin and Angelique then had to work out exactly what they wanted in terms of accommodation. The final resolution was as surprising as it was challenging.

The feasibility report suggested converting the buildings into two houses instead of one and splitting the large infrastructure cost over the two properties — something the planning department would have to agree to. However, there were other conditions that the couple would have to abide by. “One planning snag on

Above: Lying Low

While the couple wanted to build a two storey extension, the planners stipulated that any new addition could not be any higher than the existing building. The steel-clad extension has been sunk down into the landscape as a way of solving this issue





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HOMES CONVERSION AND CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION



this build was that the extension shouldn't override the existing granite building," explains Gavin. "So we had to sink the triangle of the new build element."

As well as two houses, plans also included a separate home-working environment and a landscaping arrangement with polytunnels and growing spaces to make room for Angelique's landscaping and garden design business. The home is, in essence, the first part of the grand development to emerge, with a commercial space and workshop also completed recently.

The couple, who moved into caravans on site to project manage the build, were keen to use honest, good-quality materials — the spirit of which is evident throughout the home, with traditional green oak combined with steel to form the internal framework of the new home. Dismantled roof slates and granite stones were all numbered and reinstated, too. Gavin also took on the arduous task of cladding the new Cor-ten steel wedge alongside a local blacksmith, even during one -20°C winter. "It was a lot of work trying to bend ➡

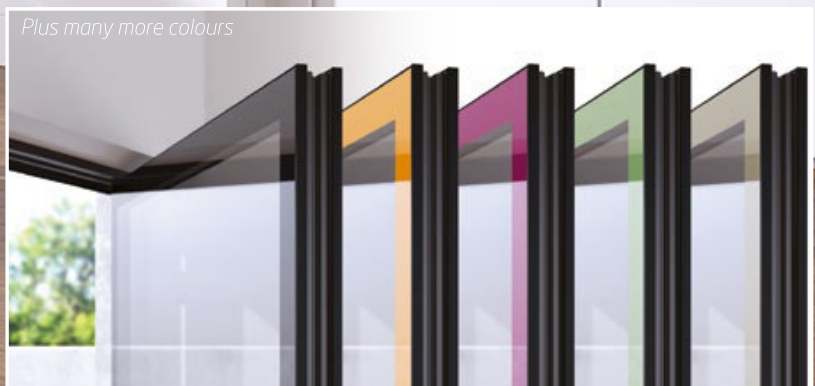
Above and Right: Kitchen

A modern monochrome kitchen from IKEA, complete with island and contrasting stools from Bontempi, sits within the new extension, with the living area above. Polished concrete flooring and exposed green oak and steel framework give an industrial look





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Right: Living Space

Natural light floods into the upper living space thanks to full-height glazing (bottom right) with doors opening out to a balcony. Maple flooring saved from a demolished school gym has been laid here and complements the neutral palette of the interiors

and shape each panel individually to give it a sculptural rather than a homemade sheet look,” he says. The new wedge now projects forward to face the main view via huge glazed elements, while the thin end of the wedge ‘disappears’ into the ground, sheltering the property from the harsh north-easterly winds. Since this form will be exactly mirrored in the adjoining house, the final result will create a dramatic visual effect like the outstretched wings of a bird.

Designing a New Home

In design terms, the couple were keen to retain the agricultural aesthetic — indeed, the design was inspired by the neighbouring ‘tattie’ (potato) sheds and box stacks. Architect Andy also managed to unearth a mid-19th century map of the farm buildings and decided to follow the original U-shaped arrangement around a courtyard, with the design proposal for the two new energy-efficient houses (Skye Steading and the second home yet to be built) sharing the entrance courtyard but having private aspects and gardens.

Essentially, Skye Steading is a cleverly constructed combination of a converted granite farm building and contemporary extension, connected by a reinforced glass floor internally. The farm building now houses three family bedrooms (including master en suite), bathroom and an office (which is sized as an additional bedroom if needed). “I think what’s really nice is that all the bedrooms are in this part, which doesn’t have as many windows, so they are darker and smaller rooms. That was intentional, and it’s worked out perfectly,” says Angelique.



HOMES CONVERSION AND CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION



Above: Steading Accommodation

The former granite farm building is now utilised as sleeping accommodation, housing the master bedroom complete with en suite, one of the children's bedrooms (right) and a family bathroom (above). The family bathroom/wetroom, supplied by Victor Paris, features Altro flooring as well as Duravit, Vitro and Vado sanitaryware



The new open plan extension is the most audacious part of the home and features a kitchen, dining and living area with a large separate living space above that makes the most of the views through full-height glazing. Gavin and Angelique managed to save some materials from landfill when a handful of 19th and early-20th century schools were being torn down in Aberdeen, so the new upper level living area includes thick solid maple flooring, formerly a fixture in an old school's gym.

Energy-Efficient Solutions

The home, which Gavin describes as “one step away from Passivhaus standards,” has been insulated with sheep's wool, which, along with the new sedum roof, allows the house to breathe while maintaining a cosy indoor climate. This clement environment is further enhanced via the thick polished concrete floors that store heat from the underfloor heating, powered by a ground-source heat pump. Furthermore, the courtyard-facing trombe granite walls store sunlight filtered from the glazed exterior ‘walls’ and air space created in the main circulation corridor. Unsurprisingly, the couple's energy bills are considerably less than they experienced in their previous flat, which was half the size of their current home.

“We wanted the challenge of a project like this when we bought the site. We were keen to build it ourselves, but now I wonder, ‘what were we thinking?’,” laughs Angelique. “It hasn't deterred us, though, and the second house will get built, but it's a great wee playground for the children at the moment.”

Far Right: Glazed Corridor

To connect the new extension to the existing granite building, the couple introduced a glazed link, which also cleverly allows the exposed granite to become a trombe wall — a passive solar technique that allows sunlight in through an unvented glass exterior, built on a winter sun-facing elevation. The heat captured is stored by the wall and in turn warms the inside of the home



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HOMES CONTEMPORARY CONVERSION AND EXTENSION

The Project



Andy McAvoy
Architect

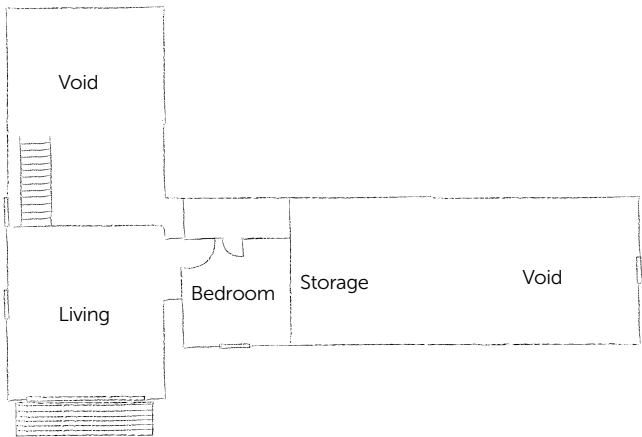
THE ARCHITECT'S VIEW

On different projects I try to reduce the palette of materials down to those that suit the landscape best. With the existing agricultural building and surrounding buildings made of granite and with concrete floors, and the nearby potato sheds made of steel, we decided Cor-ten steel would work well as a cladding material for the new extension. With the existing building, however, we wanted to respect the robust material of the granite with its thick walls. It would have been wrong to add walls of glazing here so we chose not to mess around with this part of the home.

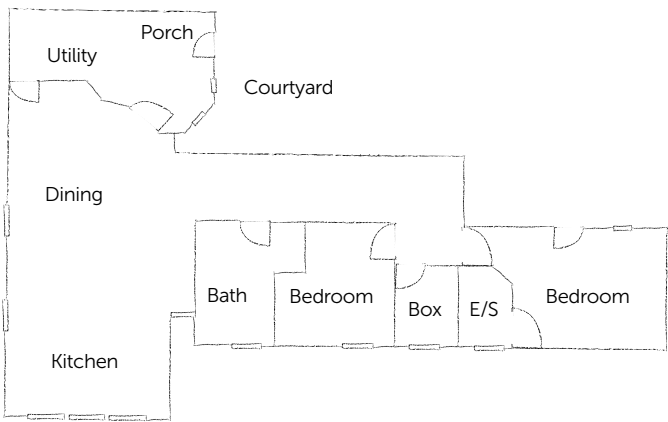
We took the decision to dig down into the site in order to make better use of the high-level space within the new extension – which has a double-height void over the open plan space below – without going above the ridge height of the granite building.

Now, you enter the home via the new courtyard and through the open plan living space within the extension. The bedrooms have been placed within the granite building and the positioning of these quieter spaces works really well for the flow of the house – keeping the busy, daily routine in the new, open extension and the areas of retreat in the more cosy spaces.

First Floor



Ground Floor



SUPPLIERS

Architect	Andy McAvoy Chartered Architect.....	01414 232955
Main contractor	Campbell & Macintosh	01975 651458
Construction frame and exterior finishes	Ferguson Shipbuilders ..	01475 742300
Roofing	Site Sealants	01324 832175
Windows	NorDan	nordan.co.uk
Sheep's wool insulation	Black Mountain Insulation	01745 361911
Landscaping works	Papillon Designs and Landscaping	papillonlandscape.co.uk
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Left to right: Velfac's bi-parting sliding door; Here French doors add character to this traditional home; Located in a Conservation Area, it was important that the design of this extension blended in — so traditional-style timber bi-folds were custom made



LEFT: BRIDGET PIERSON; RIGHT: KITCHEN BY HAMILTON-KING



DESIGN DOORS

Patio Doors: Bi-fold, Sliding or French?

(...or even Belgian?) **Natasha Brinsmead** reveals the trends and design advice for this all-important choice

The desire to 'bring the outside in' is a bit of a cliché these days, but there are few self-builders and renovators who don't want the extra light, as well as connection with a patio or garden, that glazed doors bring. Recent years have bought more choice for those looking to specify a patio door — the bad news is that the choice can be quite confusing and have a deleterious impact on the overall house design. So how do you make the right decision? It helps first to know your options — as well as what the current thinking is.

Bi-folds

Also known as folding sliding doors, bi-folds have seen a huge surge in popularity in recent years. The key advantages are that they allow for whole walls of glass to be opened up completely, and as they commonly run on tracks that lie flush within the floor, the lines between inside and out can be blurred.

However, they can be quite frame-heavy, meaning less glazing, and the stacked (folded) panels can provide quite an obstacle to the more modest-sized patio or kitchen (they can be specified to stack inside or out). Typical costs are £1,000 per 1m-wide panel.

French Doors

Although still often thought of as the reserve of traditional-style homes, French doors are actually available in plenty of designs (and materials, such as aluminium) that will also sit quite happily within a contemporary home.

Compared to bi-folds and sliding doors they tend to bring in less light given their typically smaller dimensions — although combining them with sidelights or positioning them within a run of glazing will increase the amount of light drawn in. They also sit well within an elevation that includes bi-folds or sliding doors elsewhere, and provide quick and easy access to the garden when you don't want to open up a whole run of glazing.

Sliding Doors

Sliding doors are shaking off their 1960s associations and are a hugely popular choice in contemporary homes at the moment. They provide lots of light thanks to narrow (and in some cases, practically invisible) frames.

Other benefits sliding doors have over bi-folds include no sections to fold back, saving on space and being visually cleaner — they can even be designed as 'pocket doors' that slide away into cavities within the wall when open.



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Trends in Doors

- Bi-folds remain popular but interest in sliding doors is booming
- The demand for French doors is steady; but Belgian doors are a new option

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Design Tips

- Frame choice is critical: aim for the thinnest possible
- Loadings and weight need to be considered for smooth operation

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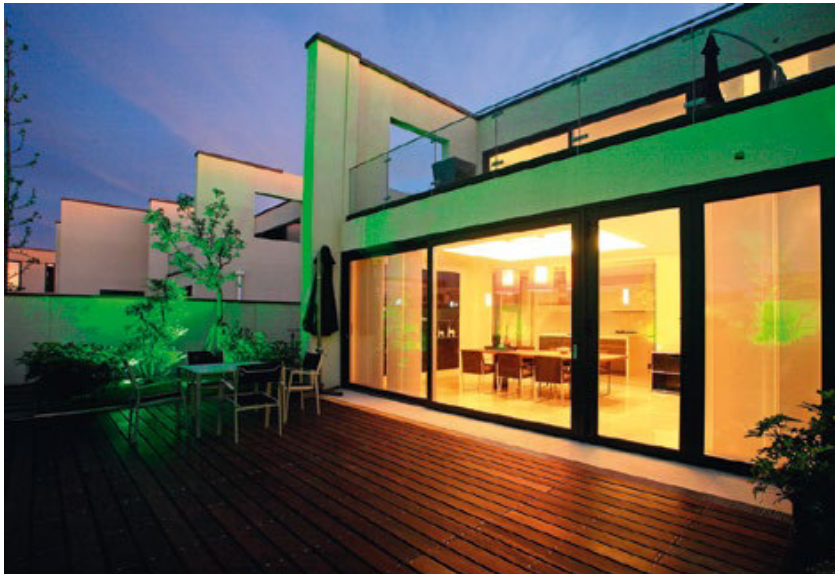
- Timber is a popular choice for traditional homes but cheaper models can be prone to warping
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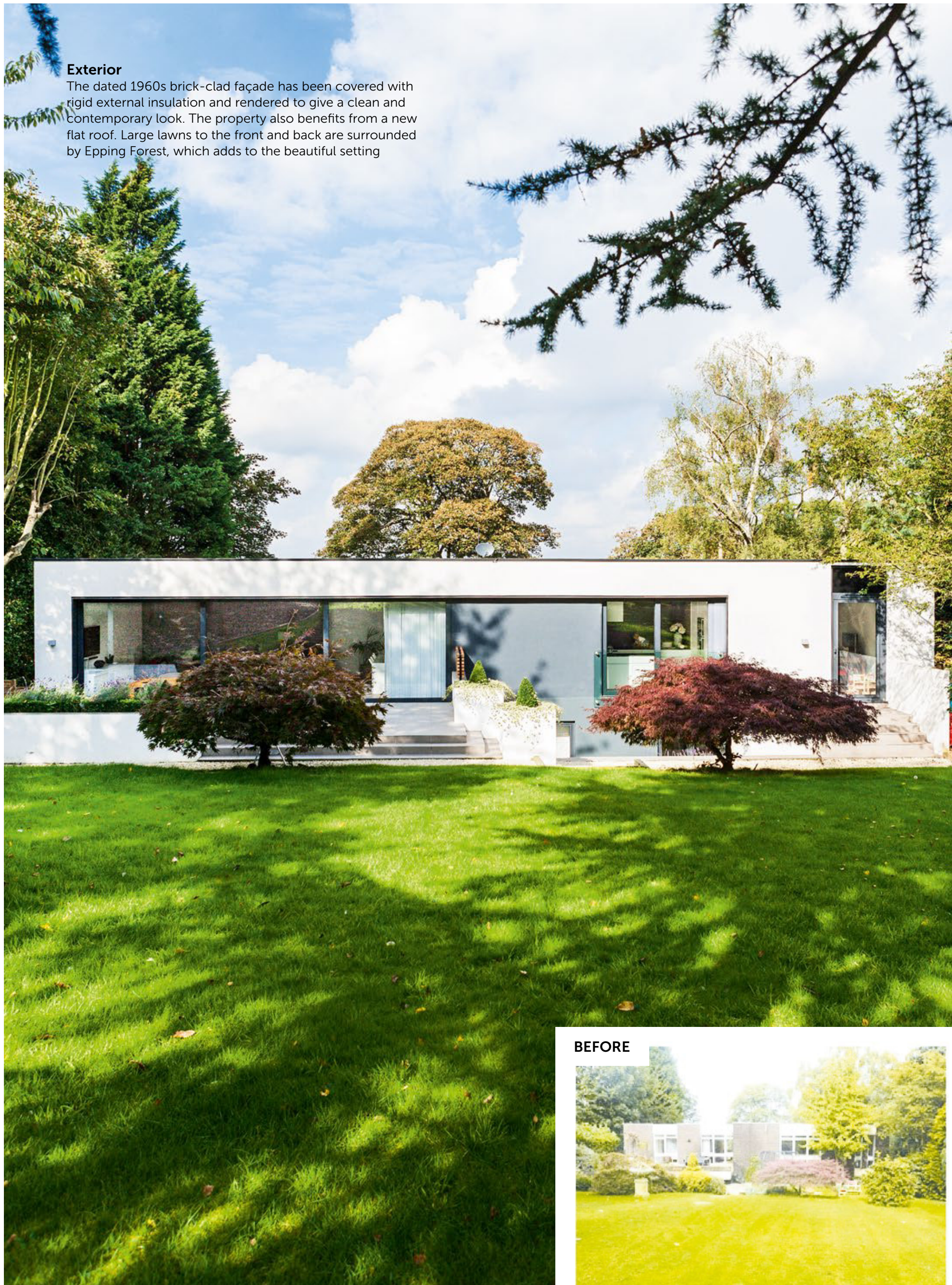
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Exterior

The dated 1960s brick-clad façade has been covered with rigid external insulation and rendered to give a clean and contemporary look. The property also benefits from a new flat roof. Large lawns to the front and back are surrounded by Epping Forest, which adds to the beautiful setting



BEFORE



Next Generation

The contemporary-style remodel and extension of a 1960s Bauhaus-inspired property in Essex provides a spacious family home

Words: **Ely Price** Photography: **Anthony Harrison**

PROJECT NOTES

Project:

Contemporary extension and remodel

Location:

Essex

Dates:

Nov 2011 - Sep 2012

House cost:

£710,000

Build cost:

£433,000

Value:

£1.7million



THE QUICK READ

⇒ Jennifer Burkinell and Mark Tarplett have remodelled and extended a 1960s Bauhaus-inspired home in a contemporary style, with the help of Gregory Phillips Architects

⇒ In order to create a home fit for their family, the old basement space has been utilised effectively and now houses four double bedrooms and three en suites

⇒ Changes to the external façade – the house has been clad in crisp white render, the glazing has been replaced and a new extension has been added to the rear – leave this home unrecognisable from its dated former appearance

As a teenager, Jennifer Burkinell often walked past the large 1960s Bauhaus-style property that she and her family now call home. “There’s actually a bridle path that runs along the back of the house,” remembers Jennifer, “and when I was at school, we used to go on nature walks that took us along that very path. I can remember looking over the fence at this house and thinking ‘oh my gosh, who would want to live there?’, and now it turns out that I’m living here!”

Built in the late 1960s by architect John Overy as his family home, the house is set among the lush green trees on the edge of Epping Forest and, despite its unusual appearance for the time, its serene setting and open plan living space set it apart from the traditional houses that surrounded it.

After living in the property for over 20 years, the architect put the house on the market, where it remained for some time due to its controversial looks and the amount of work that needed doing. “The property was very dated when we moved in, but still looked fantastic and had a lot of the original ’60s features, such as the wood ➤



HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL



cladding and unusual staircase,” says Jennifer. “When it was built, the open plan space was completely innovative whereas now we’re used to it, but it must have seemed totally revolutionary at the time.”

Forming a Project Plan

When Jennifer and her partner Mark first bought the upside-down house, there was a tiny kitchen in the centre of the property. “It would have been very appropriate for that period as the kitchen was seen as a purely functional space. There was an indoor garden, too, which took up valuable room, and a big, dark basement with no windows that the previous family used as a games room, which seemed somewhat redundant,” explains Jennifer. “We wanted to utilise the space better and we initially thought of loads of daft ideas, but then realised that it just made sense to put four bedrooms down there as you don’t need lots of light and amazing views to go to sleep, so it worked out really well.”

Not only did the couple want to create four bedrooms in the former basement, they also wanted to completely reconfigure the internal layout of the house — taking the open plan living model that had been integral to the home’s original charm one step further. “We needed to bring it into the 21st century and totally redesign it internally so that it would suit us as a family,” explains Jennifer.

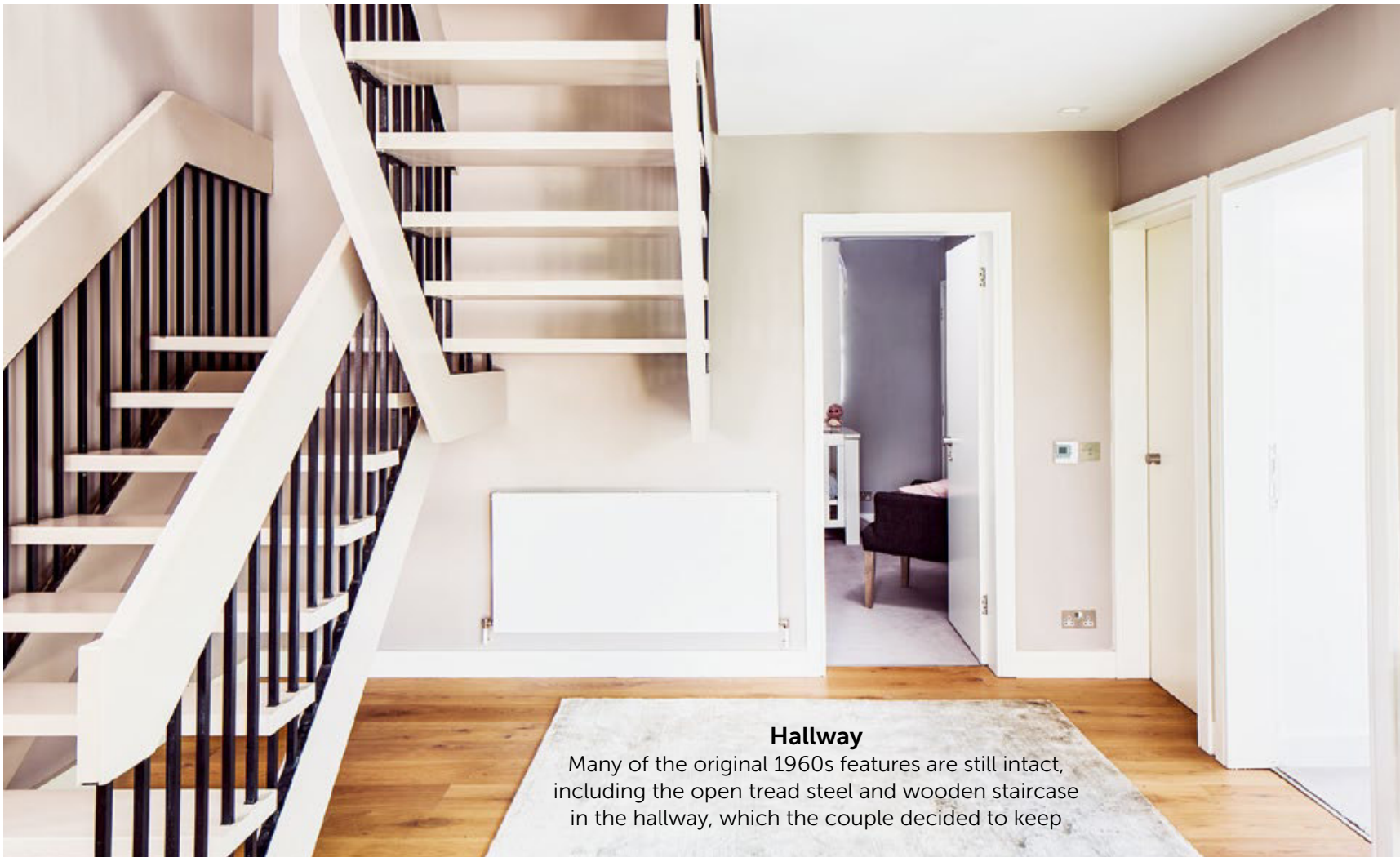
While the family moved into the house in 2009, work didn’t actually start until November 2011 as the family needed this time to gather the funds necessary to pay for the work. “When we bought the house it was already at the top of our budget, so that extra time was vital as we had to save up,” says Jennifer. It also gave them time ➡

Above Left: Living Room

The redesigned open plan living area, with a muted colour scheme, is where the family likes to spend their evenings. Wooden flooring from Havwoods has been laid throughout. Expansive doors from Sunparadise frame the picturesque gardens that surround the house, and open out onto a large outdoor patio, which provides the ideal place to enjoy alfresco family meals in summer

Left: Dining Space

A long white table has been placed in the centre of the open plan area of the home, acting as both divide and natural progression between the kitchen and living area — perfect for family dinners and entertaining. The large picture window offers glimpses of the surrounding landscape



Hallway

Many of the original 1960s features are still intact, including the open tread steel and wooden staircase in the hallway, which the couple decided to keep



to find the right architect, who they found in Ralph Hill-King from award-winning practice Gregory Phillips Architects, who helped the couple to realise their vision for the house.

Reworking the House

With Ralph acting as both architect and project manager, the builders were tasked with essentially ripping out the interior of the house and reworking the layout. As the property sits on a hill, the couple were keen to keep the living room and kitchen on the upper level so that they could make the most of the picturesque countryside views. “It’s lovely and green and that’s what we love about it,” says Jennifer.

Due to the open plan nature of the living spaces, with the kitchen flowing seamlessly into the living room, Jennifer wanted to ensure that the kitchen would have the wow-factor. “I’m a mum, so I’m in the kitchen three times a day and I love cooking,” says Jennifer. “It’s part of our living area and we sit in that room every evening, so we didn’t want a kitchen that was only practical — it needed to look beautiful too.”

Externally the house has pretty much stayed true to its original design, apart from receiving a contemporary makeover with new glazing and crisp, white render — replacing the former ’60s brickwork. A new roof was also installed, which ended up seeing the couple go over their initial budget. As well as the many structural changes, the existing garage was converted into a new master suite, which benefits from beautiful views of the stunning surroundings. The couple chose to add a small extension to the rear of the property so that the back wall sits flush to rest of the house.

Above: Kitchen

There was previously a cramped, dark kitchen which acted purely as a functional space in the house. The new design, by Lauren Nicholas, has been moved into the open plan living area on the upper storey of the home. Bar stools from Lloyd Loom offer additional informal seating and this space also includes a built-in bar area, which is put to good use when entertaining guests. The Sierra Elvira Spanish marble worktops were chosen for their hardwearing, durable nature



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HOMES CONTEMPORARY REMODEL



Above: Master Suite

The master bedroom has been created from the old garage and utility room. It features a space-saving sliding door that leads into an en suite complete with dark large-format tiles and a contrasting white suite, all from DesignSpace London

An Improved Family Home

Despite a slight schedule overrun, the project was completed in late 2012 and the couple have been left with the spacious, contemporary home that they had always dreamt of. Thanks to the internal reconfigurations, each of the couple's three children now has a large double bedroom, Jennifer and Mark have their own luxurious master suite, and the family are able to spend time together in their open plan kitchen/dining/living room. The rolling green gardens give the children plenty of space to play and, for Jennifer, the years of planning and saving were well worth it.

"Mark used to live in London so he was used to small, cramped flats," she explains. "We then bought a tiny two-up-two-down in another part of Essex, with a postage stamp-sized garden. Therefore, it was a bit of a shock when we moved from there to this house, where we've got lots of space and lovely big gardens at the front and back, while still being relatively close to London."

While the house's original exterior may have not been to everyone's taste, the newly renovated property is gaining attention for all of the right reasons now, with its sleek white lines and contemporary layout reviving the '60s shell.

"The old house basically looked like a police station when we first saw it, but we could see its potential and, from a practical sense, it really works for us," concludes Jennifer. "We feel like we've struck gold." 





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The Project



Jennifer Burkinell
Homeowner

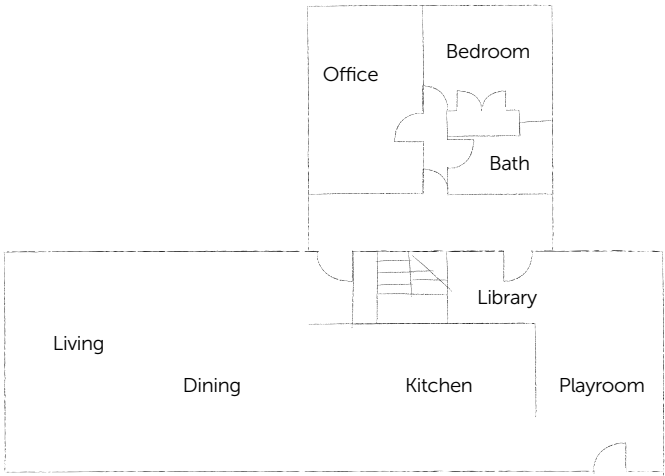
HOMEOWNER’S VIEW

We were so lucky to have Ralph from Gregory Phillips Architects there to help us, as he acted as a real go-between with the tradespeople. This was particularly useful when our schedule overran and we needed to get back into the house. Everyone that was involved with the project, from start to finish, was great, and really understood what we wanted to achieve.

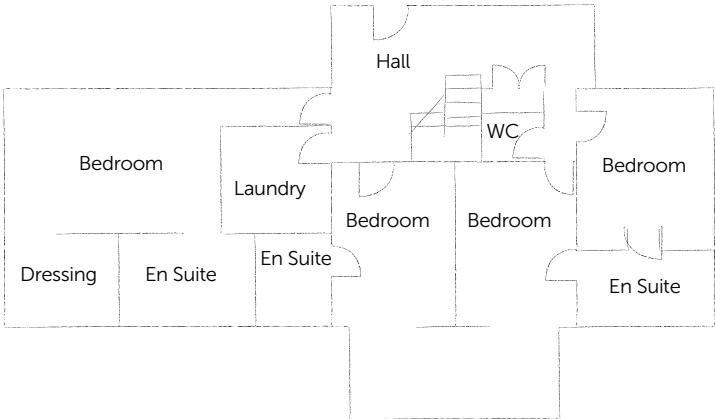
The kitchen is definitely our favourite space in the house. It has lots of cupboard space and is U-shaped, so it’s easy to cook in. It looks lovely, and before we even started the project we knew that we would end up spending a lot on that particular area. It was definitely worth it, as we’re always in there. The big windows are also amazing, as we have great views from the kitchen/living room, as well as lots of natural light.

In hindsight, we wish that we had changed the staircase. Although it’s nice that it is original to the house, and it looks great from a structural point of view, it’s not really to our taste, so we might change it in the future. We also went for very dark tiles in a couple of the bathrooms, but as the rooms aren’t huge, it makes the spaces look smaller than they are.

First Floor



Ground Floor



COSTS

VAT	£73,864
Plumbing and rewiring	£60,000
Extension	£58,000
Structural work	£55,000
Fees	£26,320
Glazing	£26,000
Miscellaneous	£25,000
New roof	£24,000
Garage conversion	£18,500
Kitchen	£18,000
Sanitaryware	£18,000
External render	£14,500
Landscaping	£14,000
Flooring	£12,000
Total	£443,184

SUPPLIERS

Architect Gregory Phillips Architects	020 7724 3040
Main contractor Wow Contracting	01932 865821
Glazing and patio doors Sunparadise	020 8538 9585
Flooring Havwoods flooring	020 7940 0000
Kitchen design Lauren Nicholas	laurennicholas.co.uk
Bathrooms DesignSpace	designspacelondon.com

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DESIGN DETAIL

Internal Glazing

A window doesn't always have to look outside. Used well, it can make for an interesting and practical room divider, says Natasha Brinsmead



Replacing solid walls with glass is an instant way to open up spaces that might otherwise feel small or dark. On a smaller scale, a well-placed internal window, glass internal doors or sections of glazing within the walls of a room lacking in natural light, all have a similar effect. There are lots of reasons why people choose to incorporate glazed walls into their interior design scheme. Aside from making an architectural statement, glazed internal walls are a useful tool in homes that might be lacking in natural light sources, help cramped spaces feel more open, and divide spaces without having to go down a fully open plan design route — creating both a visual and physical separation without being imposing.

Using glass walls that are double glazed is also the ideal way to create an area that will have a good level of sound insulation — far more so than a standard stud wall. This makes glass walls the perfect choice for home offices and entertainment rooms where sound needs to be kept out or contained, respectively.

While glass walls are great between bedrooms and bathrooms, to separate stairwells from hallways and to create home offices within living spaces, privacy can be an issue. A budget solution is to use blinds or curtains, but this can somewhat spoil the crisp, sleek look often being sought. Using a glass such as PRIVA-LITE will overcome the problem. Electronically controlled, it switches from clear to opaque when required.

It is, however, a relatively expensive option. Another less costly alternative is to use translucent glass or a window film over the glass. This will allow light through, but maintains a sense of privacy.

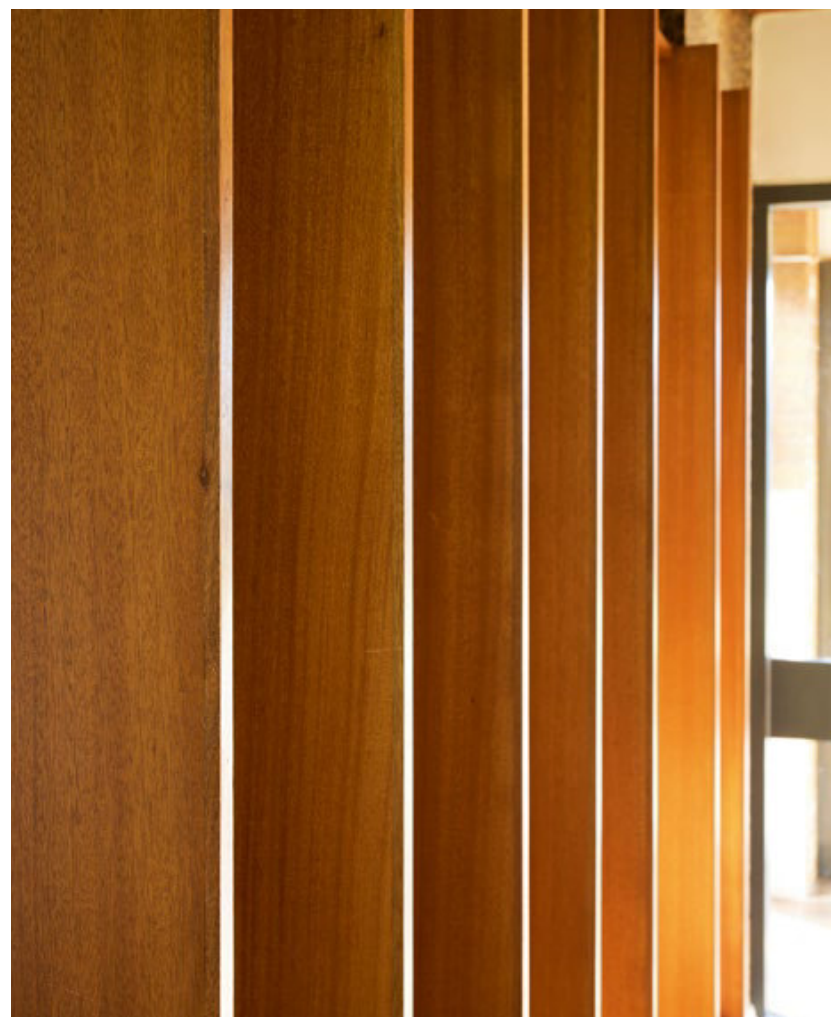
The most common way for a frameless glass wall to be fitted is within recessed channel frames installed within the surrounding floor, walls and ceiling. If doors are being incorporated into the wall, they will be mounted off the surrounding glass panes. The norm is for 10mm or 12mm toughened safety glass to be used.

Finally, incorporating glazed panels into your home need not mean whole walls of glass. Using glazed panels within stud walls works well too — clear panels placed up high above eye level between bedrooms and bathrooms or kitchens and living rooms will maintain a level of privacy while still allowing light to penetrate between the spaces, as will using a product that is designed to scatter light but still appears translucent, such as Pilkington's Optifloat Opal.

Practical Considerations

While glass walls undoubtedly look stunning, there are a few practical considerations to bear in mind. Firstly, think about access — will one large glazed panel fit through your door or window openings, or will you require several smaller glazed panels?

If a whole glass wall seems a bit too much, there are other ways to introduce areas of glazing into the home



JEREMY PHILLIPS

Balancing Interior Glazing with Privacy

This hallway detail shows wide frames around narrow glass, allowing privacy at certain angles and plenty of light all the time

Secondly, in rooms where you plan on installing several glass walls, think about where you will place your heating source if you are not planning on underfloor heating.

Remember too that glass can scratch fairly easily, and large, frameless glazed areas can pose safety issues in homes with children — ensure they realise it is there to avoid bumped heads and faces, and always choose safety glass.

Alternatives

If a whole glass wall seems a bit too much (and it can be an expensive choice), there are other ways to introduce areas of glazing into the home. Consider large, frameless glass internal doors, internal windows (these work well in corridors, landings and stairwells where a lack of natural light can be an issue), glazed balustrades and even floors.

Costs

Although the cost of glass can vary, as an approximate guide, toughened safety glass costs from around £80/m². However, adding glass walls to a room will mean additional installation costs, plus you need to factor in frames, channels and any structural work that may be necessary. **ⓘ**



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HOMES CONTEMPORARY NEW BUILD

A Multifaceted Home

This award-winning new build in Yorkshire demonstrates the art of making the most of a challenging plot



ADAM CLARK

Architect Adam is founding director of award-winning practice Halliday Clark Architects (hallidayclark.co.uk)

HB&R: When did the clients originally approach the practice?

Adam: They first contacted us five years ago, having heard about Halliday Clark Architects through a local estate agent. They were looking to sell their Victorian house and buy a building plot.

Around 12 to 18 months later, the clients purchased this site. There were existing plans for a three storey home, which was fairly traditional and pedestrian in design, so the clients decided to set up a mini competition, presenting a short brief to three architectural practices and providing two weeks in which to respond with designs and a fee proposal.

I visited the site and noted that the neighbouring properties all tended to place their garden furniture on the south-facing side, which is adjacent to the road. So, I came up with the idea of creating a private sunken courtyard on the road-facing side, shielded by a garage, which would become a sheltered suntrap. I created a 3D model and we were subsequently hired by the clients.



Front Elevation

This new build has been designed around its south-facing courtyard, which is a suntrap. Along with the ground floor rooms, it receives privacy from the adjacent road thanks to the garage (not seen here), which Halliday Clark Architects designed. A zinc-clad 'tower' marks the entrance to this stone-clad façade. White render, meanwhile, brightens the rear, north-facing elevation (opposite)



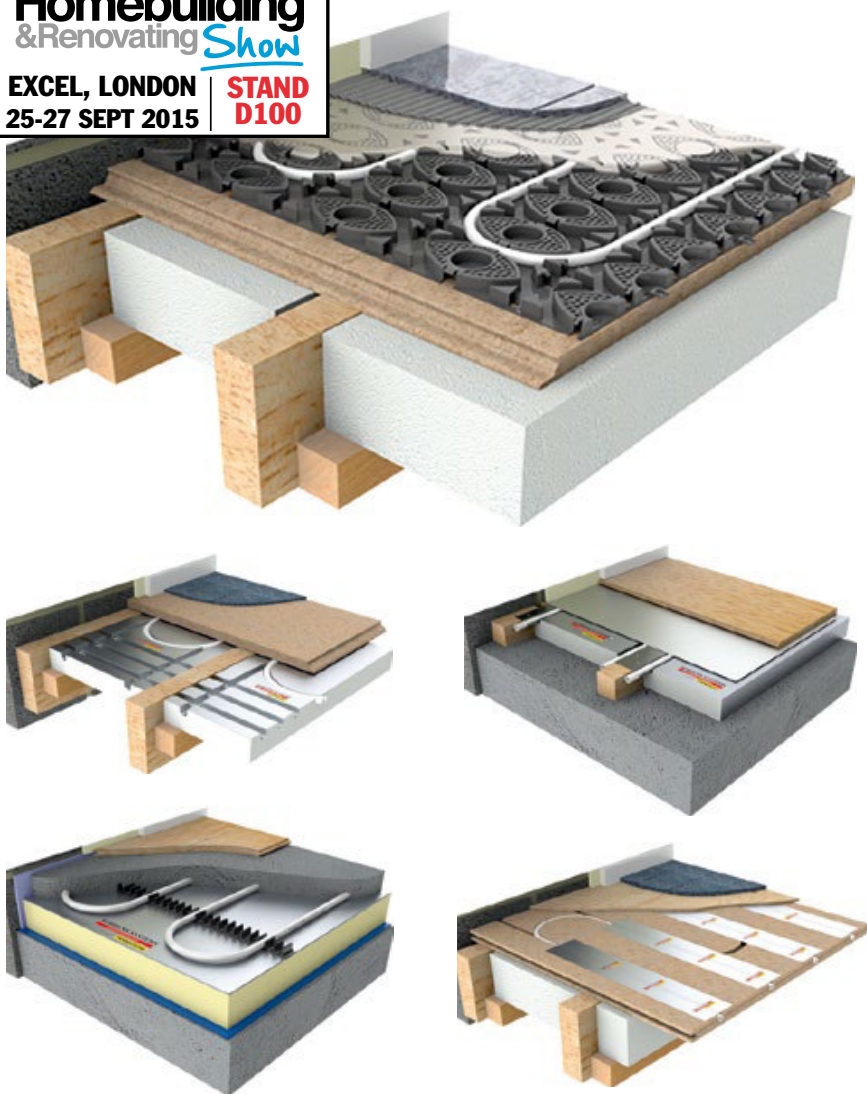
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THE DESIGNER'S VIEW CONTEMPORARY NEW BUILD



Below: Open Plan Kitchen, Dining and Living

Large areas of glazing offer the open plan kitchen, dining and living space views over the rear garden and the surrounding scenery beyond. A green-tinted glass splashback lends a hint of colour

Did the clients have a detailed brief?

They wanted a minimum of four bedrooms, and had set sizes in mind for these. We asked the clients to put together cuttings and photos of houses and features they liked. From this we could deduce that the couple didn't want a contemporary home with a flat roof; they wanted a pitched roof. They also liked render. The critical thing was that they wanted a new house that was light and bright, but didn't look like a show house; they wanted a home.

There was an element of futureproofing, too. Because of the levels, we introduced the main entrance at first floor level. While there's not a lift here, the first floor includes two en suite bedrooms and a central living space, where an elderly relative, for example, could be accommodated.

There's an interesting mix of cladding — why did you choose render for the rear and stone for the street-facing elevation?

The planners didn't want to see a white box, so just the northern elevation has been rendered; it brightens the house and is softened by the rear lawn. White render on the south-facing side would potentially have been too bright on a sunny day, so instead local split-faced stone tones down the front elevation.

Why did you opt for zinc as a cladding for the staircase 'tower'?

We wanted a sharp, clean modern material to articulate the vertical staircase tower, and to complement the stonework. Zinc is a quality material. It's also very low maintenance. The company who supplied, folded and cut the zinc on site, and then installed it, was fantastic. I designed the hoppers and rainwater goods, and the neat verges which line the pitched roof, which were also created on site. ➡

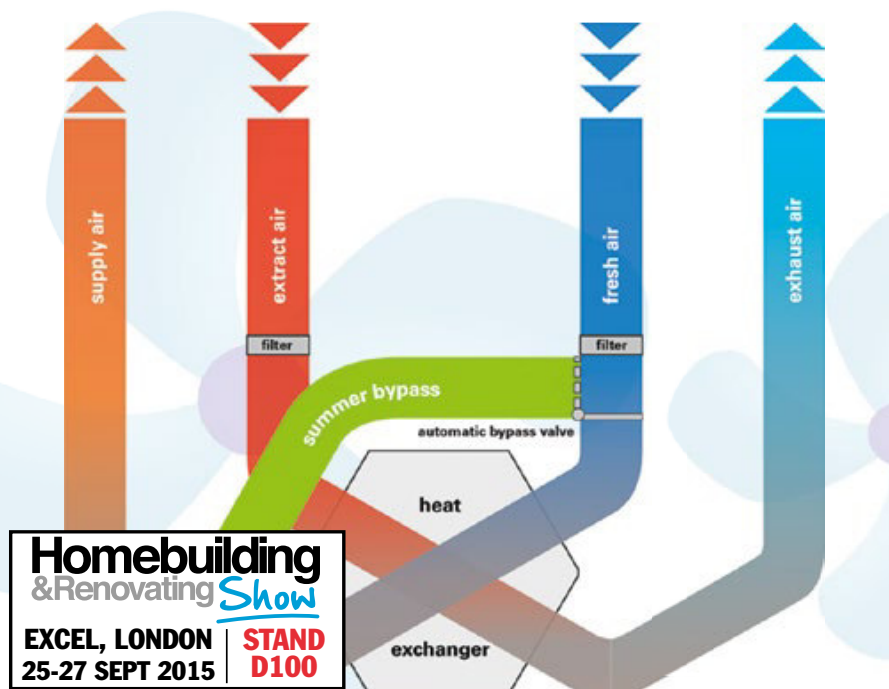


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THE DESIGNER'S VIEW CONTEMPORARY NEW BUILD



Top: High-Volume Interiors

Impressive double and triple-height spaces create wow-factor inside this new home. An electric Velux rooflight has been installed above the internal atrium; this automatically opens when temperature exceeds a preset level, helping to cool the house



What construction system was used here?

We use all sorts of build methods – cross-laminated timber and SIPs (structural insulated panels), for instance – in our projects, and the contractor on this house, Roger Tiffany, is also accustomed to different construction systems. However, the build was quite traditional; we used masonry due to limited site access, although this system does require closer management on site to ensure a reasonable level of airtightness is achieved.

Was energy efficiency a priority?

It wasn't the main priority, but the clients were mindful of building a home with low running costs. We therefore specified wide cavities between the blockwork walls for insulation, and there's a high level of insulation to the roof, well beyond Building Regulations.

The clients didn't want a mechanical ventilation heat recovery system either: they wanted to naturally ventilate the property. And so features like the three storey central atrium aid with stack ventilation; there's an automated rooflight at the top which opens when the temperature rises above a set level. Underfloor heating has been installed on the ground floor, and the heat rises to the floors above (which are served by radiators).

Were there any challenges on site during the build?

We were retained on a traditional form of contract, putting the scheme out to tender and overseeing the project. The build went fairly smoothly. We've worked with Roger Tiffany previously, and one thing that stands out here is the quality of the finish. In fact, this was commented on during the judges' visit when the house was shortlisted as part of the RIBA Regional Awards [the house went on to win a RIBA Yorkshire Award this summer]. 





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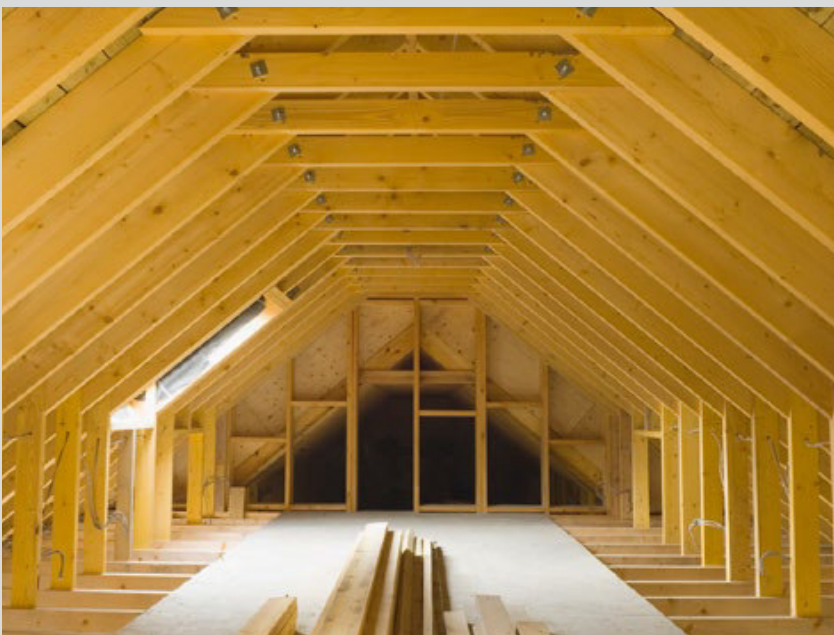


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ASSESSING — Immediately arrange a survey. In order to avoid unnecessary payments, make sure your surveyor is approved to handle valuations for your chosen lender. If it's a plot, a call to the local building control department would be worthwhile to ask if any known ground conditions exist. As most surveyors take one to two weeks to find time to visit, and then a further one to two weeks to prepare a report, start early.

FINANCE — Unless you can access funding through, perhaps, the remortgaging of your existing property, savings, etc., then the funding is likely to be the factor that gives you the most sleepless nights. You could try a specialist broker who will be able to guide you through the process — they are likely to know of the handful of 'regular' lenders who can offer a fast-track process to give you a mortgage offer within four weeks and be able to release funds in an additional four. Not to mention that most regular lenders will not lend on properties that are deemed uninhabitable. Most auction buyers use specialist finance providers (e.g. Auction Finance), all of whom are set up for fast completion and will lend in the same way that commercial development finance lenders would — namely with high fees and rates at around 0.5-1% a month.

How to Buy at Auction

Auctions are both the best places to find property bargains and the most intimidating for those of us who aren't professionals. Jason Orme advises

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IF YOU'RE SUCCESSFUL
You'll need to have arranged funding prior to the auction. If your bid is successful, you'll be expected to pay 10% of the purchase price as a deposit there and then, with the remaining 90% within 28 days. You'll also need to bring along some ID (passport is best) on the night

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AUCTION ROOM TACTICS DRILL

How to approach it like a professional

- Sometimes an auction is easy to follow. Sometimes, however, the delivery is so stylised or so fast that it all goes by in a blur. For that reason, it makes sense to go to a few local auctions before the one that contains anything you might be interested in. It will make you much more comfortable with the processes.
- If you're going to bid, make yourself known to the auctioneer beforehand and sit somewhere in the room where you can be clearly seen by them and where you can see all of the other people in the room, especially the other bidders. You'll have to look closely because many of them have developed ways of bidding, such as a slight raising of the eyebrows or a twitch of the nose, that the auctioneer is looking out for but are designed to conceal their interest.
- One of the more amusing aspects of auction rooms, particularly those that aren't quite full, is the 'move to the back'. People will sit down near the front initially but when it comes to bidding time, many people will abandon their chairs and decide to stand on the back wall — in order to get a better view of proceedings (and their competition) and perhaps take themselves out of the spotlight a little.
- The first bids will be spoof bids designed to get the auction going and are often made by members of the

agent's staff. You may experience a surge of hope as the process seems to reluctantly get into gear. But then it will speed up. Don't join in the bidding until it starts to slow down again, and the increments by which the price is rising become smaller. Then you can see by the turn of the auctioneer's head and his outstretched arm, just who you're really up against.

- Watch out for the telephone bidder: the person, possibly also a member of the agent's staff, who confers into a telephone before making a bid. There may or may not be somebody on the other end of the line. It might just be a ruse to get the bidding up.
- Don't get carried away. When you go into an auction room you need to have a clear idea of your strategy and the maximum price you can/will pay. But don't lose your plot for a few hundred pounds. If the bidding is creeping up, try topping it by one last throw of the dice, doubling the increment rise.
- If the reserve isn't reached, then that's when the real bargaining begins and you need to make yourself known immediately to the auctioneer to enter negotiations to buy by private treaty. You won't be alone but if you can ascertain what the reserve was and make an offer close to or exceeding it, you stand a good chance. **H**

GUIDE PRICES AND ASSESSING WHAT TO PAY

So how accurate are the guide prices you'll see in catalogues? Well, in short, it depends on the lot in question, but in general they are a lot more accurate than they used to be. Before the recession, bidding often used to start well in advance of the top guide; these days it's a much more realistic assessment of what you might end up paying. Bear in mind, of course, that there might well be a reserve price set in place by the vendors which, if not met, means that the lot will not be sold.

One of the basics of buying at auction is to set a limit price which should be a price you're happy to pay and which makes sense. In order to come up with this price, you'll need to assess the value of the plot. Work this out by establishing an end value for the completed project, subtract your estimated build costs (using the tables in this magazine as a starting point) and an extra 10-20 per cent (for contingencies and profit) and the figure you're left with is the true value of the plot on offer.

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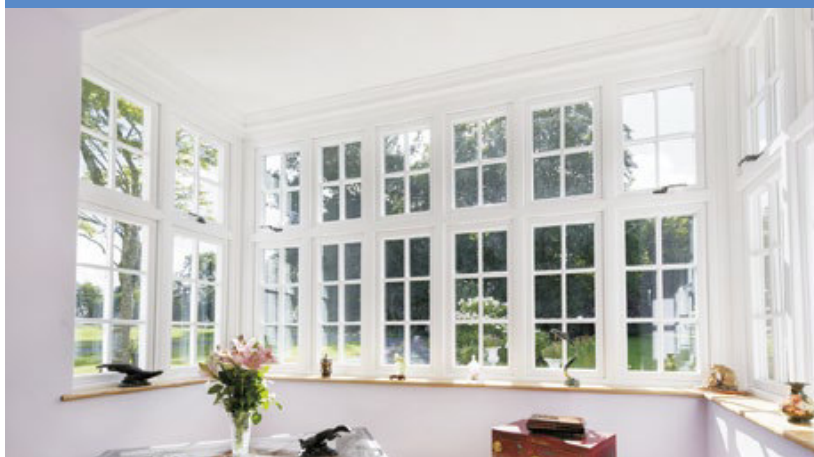
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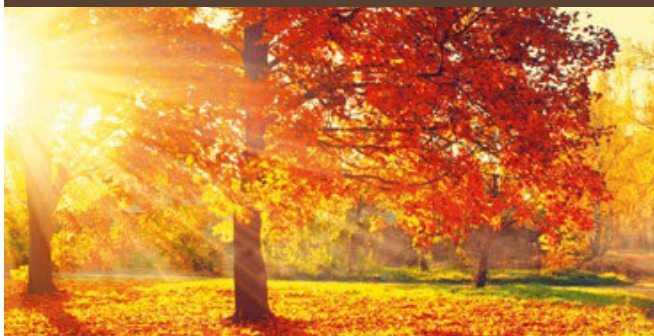


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BUILD COSTS

How Much Will My Roof Cost?

The roof structure itself will account for a relatively small proportion of your overall costs, but it can vary considerably, says David Snell

The roof structure isn't just there to provide a lid on the 'box'. It has to be able to carry the heavy load of the roof covering in all kinds of weather — wet, dry or covered in snow. It provides lateral support for the walls and it helps turn, what would be an enclosure, into a home.

Roof structures have evolved over the centuries from simple cross supports to complicated crucks, hammer beams, principal and common rafters. Up until the mid-20th century, most roofs were created on site using loose lumber. But then came the advent of the prefabricated trussed roof and today most new homes employ roof systems that are factory manufactured, brought to site for erection.

With the loads that the roof has to take and the stresses caused by the wind and weather, building any roof is not a simple matter and its design and construction must follow strict rules and conform to known strengths. That is one reason why the trussed roof has gained such popularity. Truss manufacturers can design and prove their systems by testing them to destruction, whereas a cut roof has to overemploy timber to create a greater degree of certainty.

Not that the cut or purlin and spar roof has gone away — far from it. Many people still prefer this type of roof and, in many other cases, roofs are a hybrid mixture of trusses and cut sections. A truss relies on being in company with other trusses and each has to maintain complete integrity and be bound to each other in a prescribed format. You can't cut a truss around obstacles — if you do it loses all strength.

With most pitched roofs it is the rafters, from ridge to eaves, that carry the weight, and the tie beams — that form the ceiling of the floor below — which hold them together and stop them spreading apart. And it is this principle that governs the three main forms of roof seen on the homes of today. The costs outlined below apply to a 10x8m rectangular roof.

Fink Trussed Roof

Undoubtedly the cheapest form of roofing for most situations, a 'fink' truss (pictured above right) is identified by having



DAVID SNELL

David is the author of Building Your Own Home, a 13-time self-builder and has been building homes for 50 years



a 'W'-shaped formation of cross beams and supports within the basic triangle formed by the rafters and the ceiling joists. There are other slightly different forms but they employ the same principles.

The trusses are light and often seem quite flimsy when taken or handled individually. But by being very light allows them to be lifted on to the scaffolding and the roof plate by one man and an assistant, and then stood up and held into place with a temporary batten, nailed across each truss, while the binders and bracings are fixed, locking all of them into a homogenous structure.

An average cost for each truss, assuming a span of around 8m with a 30° pitch, including supply of the necessary binding, bracing and truss clips, would be £56.

Fink trussed roof costs

17 trusses with bracings, bindings and truss clips.....	£966.67
Labour (carpenter plus mate) for one and half days.....	£462.00
Total.....	£1,428.67

Attic Trussed Roof

The huge advantage of the traditional purlin and spar roof (overleaf) was the fact that it provided clear space within the attic that could easily be converted for use as living space.

The attic truss, however, provides that option by doing away with the 'W'-shaped supports within the main triangle and replacing them with upright supports close to the eaves, together with a cross tie support at what would be ceiling level. Effectively this creates an open space along the length of the

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BUILD COSTS ROOFS



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roof with sloping ceilings to the occupation section, together with eaves storage.

Not unnaturally, the timbers have to be bigger, not least to what becomes the floor zone of the attic storey. And the result is a much heavier truss, which can't easily be manhandled on to the roof and may need a crane or some other form of lifting assistance. Once they are up on the wall plate their erection proceeds in much the same format as for the fink trussed roof.

An average cost for each attic truss, assuming a span of around 8m, with a 45° pitch (necessary to provide sufficient headroom in the proposed attic), including supply of the necessary binding, bracing and truss clips, would be £163.

Attic truss roof costs

17 trusses with bracings, bindings and truss clips.....	£2,769.74
Labour (carpenter plus mate) for two days.....	£616.00
Crane hire.....	£325.00
Total.....	£3,710.74

Purlin and Spar Roof (or Cut and Pitch)

A traditional cut roof (right) is constructed on site using loose sawn lumber with the timber sizes determined by a set of tables or by the recommendation of a structural engineer. Because the rafters do not have support struts within the triangle formed by them and the ceiling/floor joists, they require some form of support at their mid span between the eaves and the ridge. This is provided by heavy timbers, on each side of the roof, running counter to the rafters and built in, and supported by the end and cross walls of the house.

The pile of lumber that arrives on site can be quite daunting and the labour involved will be counted in weeks rather than days, which tends to put the cost up.

Purlin and spar roof costs

Sawnlumber.....	£2,448.60
Labour (carpenter plus mate) for seven days.....	£2,156.00
Total.....	£4,604.60

What Affects the Price?

One of the main factors that affects the price of the roof structure is the same factor that impacts on the price in so many other elements of the building: complexity. Consequently, the simpler the shape, the cheaper the price.

Undoubtedly, moving away from a fink trussed roof to either an attic truss or a purlin and spar roof will add to the costs. But, even so, it provides the opportunity for 'cheap' space either immediately or at a later date and is therefore cost-effective in real terms. Thought does, however, have to be given as to how one is to gain access to this additional storey and the knock-on effects, such as the need for fire doors if a third storey is provided.

How to Reduce Costs

You can't skimp on the materials. The trusses have to be what the manufacturers say they must be and the timber sizes have to be what the architect or engineer specifies.

What you can do is shorten the time that labour will be on site. With light trusses, getting them up on to the wall plate yourself can save at least half a day's labour. Sorting out the piles of lumber into sizes and, if possible, uses such as rafters, joists, purlins, hips etc., will save at least a day and possibly more of an expensive carpenter's time. **H**



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» The Build Cost Calculator

A simple cost-estimating guide for people building their own home

One of the most important aspects when planning your self-build or home renovation/extension project is working out how much it is going to cost.

This figure will depend on the size and shape of the house, the level of your own involvement, where in the country you intend to build, and the materials you're going to use. If you can make even rough decisions about these factors, then you can begin to work out how much it is going to cost.

As a very general rule of thumb, expect a building plot to cost between a third and a half of the end value of the finished house. The costs of building a house will then depend on the variables listed above. All building work is usually quoted on a cost/m² basis. For example, a typical new four bedroom self-built home is around 200m² (with 100m² on two sto-

reys) and usually varies between £900-£1,500/m² (although self-builders achieve costs between £300-£3,000/m²).

Renovation costs are more difficult to establish as they involve many variables, but allow at least £1,000-£1,300/m² for work. This, added to the cost of the plot/house and with a 10-30 per cent contingency, should result in less than the final end value of the house.

The table below, based on information from the Build Cost

Information Service (part of RICS), is updated monthly to help you work out a more accurate estimate (note, however, that these figures are for build costs only and do not account for VAT, which is not charged for self-build projects). There is an interactive online version at www.homebuilding.co.uk/calculator which guides you through the process. **H**

HOW TO USE THE TABLE

1. Identify your build route from the four options; 2. Identify your expected level of specification: 'standard', 'good' or 'excellent'; 3. Identify the estimated size of your finished house (either single or two/more storeys); 4. Choose your location; 5. Multiply the figure by your house size (the internal floor area).

		BUILD ROUTE A (DIY + Subbies)			BUILD ROUTE B (Subbies)			BUILD ROUTE C (Builder/Subbies)			BUILD ROUTE D (Main Contractor)		
		Standard	Good	Excellent	Standard	Good	Excellent	Standard	Good	Excellent	Standard	Good	Excellent
SINGLE STOREY													
>90m ²	Greater London	1193	1380	1660	1263	1461	1758	1333	1543	1855	1404	1624	1953
	South-East	1046	1211	1456	1108	1282	1542	1169	1353	1627	1231	1425	1713
	NW, SW, East & Scotland	951	1102	1325	1007	1167	1402	1063	1231	1480	1119	1296	1558
	Mids, Yorks, NE & Wales	910	1053	1267	963	1115	1341	1017	1177	1416	1070	1239	1490
91-160m ²	Greater London	1092	1326	1723	1157	1404	1824	1221	1482	1925	1285	1560	2027
	South-East	958	1162	1511	1015	1231	1599	1071	1299	1688	1128	1367	1777
	NW, SW, East & Scotland	872	1058	1376	923	1120	1456	975	1182	1537	1026	1245	1618
	Mids, Yorks, NE & Wales	834	1012	1315	883	1071	1392	932	1131	1470	981	1190	1547
161m ² +	Greater London	973	1276	1601	1030	1351	1695	1087	1426	1789	1144	1501	1883
	South-East	853	1118	1404	903	1184	1487	953	1250	1569	1004	1316	1652
	NW, SW, East & Scotland	776	1018	1278	822	1078	1354	867	1137	1429	913	1197	1504
	Mids, Yorks, NE & Wales	742	974	1221	785	1031	1293	829	1088	1365	873	1146	1437
TWO STOREY													
90-130m ²	Greater London	1148	1328	1631	1216	1406	1727	1283	1484	1823	1351	1563	1919
	South-East	1007	1165	1431	1066	1233	1515	1126	1302	1600	1185	1370	1684
	NW, SW, East & Scotland	916	1060	1303	970	1123	1380	1024	1185	1457	1077	1247	1533
	Mids, Yorks, NE & Wales	876	1014	1245	927	1074	1318	979	1133	1392	1030	1193	1465
131-220m ²	Greater London	967	1171	1485	1024	1239	1572	1081	1308	1659	1137	1377	1746
	South-East	848	1027	1302	898	1088	1379	948	1148	1455	998	1208	1532
	NW, SW, East & Scotland	771	935	1185	817	990	1254	862	1045	1324	907	1100	1394
	Mids, Yorks, NE & Wales	738	893	1133	782	946	1199	825	998	1266	868	1051	1333
221m ² +	Greater London	892	1142	1434	945	1209	1518	997	1276	1602	1050	1344	1687
	South-East	783	1001	1258	829	1060	1332	875	1119	1406	921	1178	1480
	NW, SW, East & Scotland	712	911	1144	754	965	1212	796	1018	1279	838	1072	1346
	Mids, Yorks, NE & Wales	681	871	1095	721	922	1159	761	973	1224	801	1024	1288

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Concrete Reborn

Concrete cladding is shaking off its 1960s associations, and reinvented as GRC is emerging as a viable choice for modern homes, says Natasha Brinsmead

For so many years concrete suffered from its association with 1960s regeneration projects. It has since been reborn as an attractive option for worktops and flooring internally, and is now beginning to enjoy an exciting renaissance externally too — as a cladding material. It's sleek, contemporary and, although undeniably industrial in its appearance, brings with it plenty of character and individuality to a home.

Poured concrete and pre-cast concrete panels have been used for many years as cladding systems but usage has never really extended to mainstream residential design. Some architects believe them to have issues around insulation and watertightness and others can't get past their associations with 1960s urban projects (these are disputed by concrete advocates who point to its thermal efficiency and rainscreening properties). One form in which concrete cladding is being increasingly used as a cladding material these days is as GRC (glassfibre reinforced concrete) panels. "This is a million miles from what most people would understand concrete to be," explains designer Hugo Tugman. "GRC is basically the same idea as fibreglass, but it has some sand/cement in the mix which makes it look more granular and less plastic, giving it slightly different properties which tend to be more suitable for buildings.

"The great thing about GRC is that the glassfibre means that it can be thin and lightweight, which is why it can be used to make panels suitable for cladding." The other benefit is that the panels can be manufactured to exact colour and size requirements. **H**



Above: Concrete Cladding

"Pre-cast concrete was not practical, so we used lightweight glassfibre reinforced concrete (GRC)," says architect Sam Tisdall of the cladding choice for the remodelling and extension project of this 1920s house in Chiswick. "The material is truly bespoke and can be practically any colour or size. Each and every one of the 150 panels was made by hand and has a lovely surface quality. It is, however, expensive — approximately £100/m² or more — and therefore usually only used on larger buildings when economies of scale reduce the cost"

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Larch or cedar are the most popular choices coming in at around £40-£45/m² installed. There are also a growing range of modified timber products which are usually heat-treated (often for visual as well as stability benefits).



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- The subtly textured surface of Cedral gives it the visual appeal of timber without warping or expanding.

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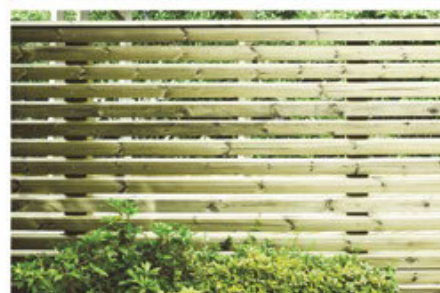
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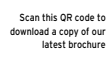


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CHRISTIAN ENGELKE

Christian is responsible for boiler manufacturer Viessmann's product performance and systems design, as well as the project division covering industrial boilers, biomass and CHP technologies

If you've replaced your car recently, you'll know that even a newer basic model is packed full of gadgets and gizmos. Most people, however, are unaware that domestic heating technology has come on in leaps and bounds in much the same way over the last decade. The good news is that improvements in the boilers themselves, as impressive as they are, have been more than matched by innovations in the world of heating control. The result is that, if you choose correctly, you'll end up with a system that is not only cheaper to run but is easier to use.

What's more, in 2005 it became mandatory for all gas-fired boilers fitted in homes, whether new installations or replacements, to be condensing boilers (oil boilers too, since 2007). They are more efficient – as they can recover the latent heat contained in waste gases – and are suitable for all homes.

Choosing a Replacement Boiler

The first step is to decide which boiler is best for you: combi (short for combination) or system? Combi boilers – Britain's best-selling type of boiler, as they are compact and quick to install – provide heat for your radiators and hot running water on demand. They don't need a water storage cylinder and so take up less space, making them ideal for smaller properties.

For larger households, however, system boilers will be the answer, or for those seeking the convenience of being able to run hot water from more than one tap at a time.

To ensure you have enough hot water for your family from a standard single-coil cylinder, the rule of thumb is to allow 25 litres per person per day. We do, however, recommend that all new installations have a twin-

coil cylinder instead, to futureproof the home for the potential retrofitting of a solar thermal or renewable heating system.

It's also worth considering upgrading from a gravity-fed system (where pressure is generated from a cold water tank, often placed in the loft) to a four-pipe system. While most boilers in the UK have two pipes, which provide hot water and heating concurrently, Viessmann's set-up uses four pipes to deliver hot water separately to both heating and hot water circuits. In doing so, the boiler prioritises hot water to ensure its immediate availability and heating water temperature is reduced so the boiler fully condenses most of the time. As a result, a lower output, more affordable boiler can be installed that uses less energy.

Heating Controls

Improvements to boilers have been matched by advances in their controls. Rather than the traditional single thermostat in the hallway, intelligent zoning controls enable different temperatures and timing programmes to be set around the house, avoiding heating empty rooms. You can also remotely control and monitor energy usage using a smartphone app.

Weather compensation controls can boost the efficiency of a condensing boiler by as much as 15 per cent. Thanks to a small sensor on the exterior of the building, the boiler increases or decreases the radiator temperature to compensate for outdoor temperature changes. These small adjustments consistently maintain the room at your chosen temperature, regardless of a temperature drop or rise outside.

There is a common misconception that weather compensation controls can't be fitted on old properties in order to boost the boiler's efficiency. Actually they can, as long as the installer has correctly set the boiler's operating gradient. This is largely determined by how well the property is insulated.

We take our time choosing a new car, considering which will be most economical to run or comfortable. We live with our boiler for much longer – so it pays to invest the same efforts in your heating system.

A twin-coil cylinder will futureproof the house for renewables

● **An important footnote: Make sure you use an installer on the Gas Safe Register (which replaced CORGI in 2009) or OFTEC for oil.** 



The

TESLA POWERWALL

The 'game changer' development in solar storage, the Tesla Powerwall, is a 1,300x860mm wall-mounted, rechargeable lithium-ion battery. (The Powerwall consists of Tesla's lithium-ion battery pack, liquid thermal control system and command software.) The wall-mounted unit is integrated with the local Grid to harness excess power and give customers the flexibility to draw energy from their own reserve where possible. In theory, it makes the storage of photovoltaic (PV)-generated power possible.

The battery charges during low rate periods when demand for electricity is lower and discharges during more expensive rate periods when electricity demand is higher.

It can store surplus solar energy not used at the time it is generated and can use that energy later when the sun is not shining. Also, one nice benefit is that it could potentially take the house away from Grid reliance for electricity — acting as a back-up during Grid outages.

Powerwall is available in 10kWh, optimised for back-up applications or 7kWh optimised for daily use applications with a continuous load supply of just 2kW (a kettle requires 3kW). Rumours abound that this will in fact be boosted to 5kW continuous and 7kW peak by launch. It also pairs with a number of inverters (a required extra).

The price is likely to be in the £3,000-£5,000 region, plus inverter and installation. There is no word yet on UK availability but 2016 looks likely, by which stage expect more significant outputs.

Solution for Solar?

Feed-in Tariffs treated the symptom not the cause of solar power's great problem — storage. Tim Pullen looks at new innovations that might solve the problem of panels generating energy when it is needed least

From the time electricity was first discovered, we have tried to find ways to store it. By 1800, Alessandro Volta (for whom the volt is named) had already developed the first usable battery and we are still working on that same basic principle. But batteries are not the only option and we now have no less than four potential, practical ways of storing electricity — covered right in more detail.

The problem has existed for years and, until a decade or so ago, we were fairly happy to live with it. The vast majority of self-builders and renovators didn't even attempt such a thing as generating their own electricity. That all changed with the take-up of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels which now sit on over a million homes in the UK. That they have enjoyed such success is due to a slightly unusual solution to energy management: a Government incentive (Feed-in Tariff) to produce electricity regardless of what you do with it. It was a generation game rather than a question of effectively using what's generated.

Increasingly, however, canny homeowners have begun to find ways to use this 'free' electricity. Storing it for future use, in the home, is the next — and highly sensible — step forward.

THE FOUR WAYS TO STORE ELECTRICITY

We've been 'managing' electricity for years. Here's how:

LEAD-ACID BATTERIES

Well-known, well-developed technology that has been used for many years. Batteries from milk floats and even submarines have been used by intrepid renewable energy users. The problems are cost, relatively short lifespan (they have a limited number of charge/discharge cycles) and disposal.

SOLID STATE BATTERIES

The batteries used in laptops, etc., are solid state batteries. These are usually lithium-ion (Li-ion) or nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd) batteries and can be three to four times more efficient than lead-acid batteries. They have low power density (poor for things that want power all at once) but can store lots of energy in a small space.

THERMAL

There are a number of products available that will enable electricity from renewable energy sources (PV, wind turbines, etc.) to run an immersion heater in a hot water cylinder. Storing electricity as heat is not a new idea and it means that the electricity (usually — at a domestic level) cannot be converted back to electricity.

THE GRID

The default option for most renewable energy system owners is to 'store' surplus electricity production on the Grid. That is, to sell it (at around 4.7p/kWh) to an energy supplier and then buy it back (at around 13p/kWh) when they need it. Obviously this isn't ideal considering that around 50 per cent of PV energy is exported back.

OTHER ELECTRICITY INNOVATIONS



IMMERSUN

Diverts electricity produced by PV panels into an immersion or storage heater. Claims to save £250 per year



SONNENBATTERIE

Stores up to 16kWh (usable capacity) of electricity from solar in wall-mounted batteries, with basic models starting at 4kWh

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A UK solar PV battery with sizes upwards from 5kW allowing you to use stored electricity when you need it

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» Storing Electricity: The Expert View



TIM PULLEN
An expert in sustainable building and energy efficiency, Tim runs the green home consultancy Weather Works

As with all these things, considering the cost/benefit analysis can be a complex process and has to start with some idea of how much electricity is to be stored. Perhaps obviously, storing a small amount of electricity is cheaper than storing a large amount.

We take the Grid as the default option, as it has no capital cost, irrespective of how much electricity we want to store, but has a 'running cost' being the difference between the sale and purchase prices — currently about 8p/kWh. It is then reasonable to suggest that any storage system needs to be cheaper than that to justify a capital investment.

Until recently, lead-acid batteries were the only viable option and a typical domestic-scale system could cost upwards of £10,000 — including racking, a shed to house it and disposal costs. If we assume that the batteries are storing surplus from a 4kWp PV array and that they will last 10 years, that equates to a 'running cost' of perhaps 52p/kWh — making the Grid look exceptionally cheap.

Solid state battery technology has advanced in leaps and bounds in recent years and the Tesla Powerwall is a result of that development. It will store up to 10kWh in a weekly cycle, which is a reasonable amount for a domestic user. A 4kWp PV array (i.e. typical domestic scale) will, in spring and summer, generate around 12kWh per day and the Powerwall is designed to store the peak energy for evening demand. It comes with a 10-year warranty. At a capital cost of around £2,500 (installed) that equates to a 'running cost' of about 13p/kWh — which still leaves the Grid looking cheap.

Thermal storage systems are lead by the ImmerSUN unit — this will enable the electricity produced by the PV array to operate an immersion heater in a hot water cylinder. All of these options have an efficiency factor and in the case of thermal storage we also need to consider losses from the hot water cylinder. This sort of conversion unit will cost around £500 installed and if it similarly lasts about 10 years will have a 'running cost' of about 3p/kWh — cheaper than the Grid, but is now energy that can only be used as heat, of course.



SHUTTERSTOCK

ELECTRICITY & YOUR HOME

Fun facts for the energy nerd

Using an immersion to heat the water from 20°C to 70°C in a typical 150 litre hot water cylinder will require 8.75kWh

A 4kWp (16 panel) solar PV system will produce up to around 25kWh on a good day, so should be more than capable of providing all the hot water required

Approximately 50 per cent of the electricity generated by PV panels is exported to the Grid

The typical home consumes 9kWh of electricity every day

A kettle requires a supply of 3kW. The (current) continuous supply of the Tesla Powerwall is just 2kW — which means that it would struggle with powering a kettle

The average home uses 3,300kWh of electricity a year

Above: Size is Key

With most kettles requiring 3kWh alone to work, batteries storing electricity generated by roof-top panels needs to be able to handle between 4-10kWh peak to be effective

CONCLUSION

Electricity storage is not purely a hardware problem. The Tesla Powerwall also contains software that determines when to store electricity and when to use it; something the Grid cannot do. It optimises its performance to provide the best result for the house, so the pure 'running cost' calculation might not be wholly valid.

If renewable energy has a future in the domestic market then battery storage will have its place — be it as a principal energy source, as back-up or merely for those wishing to safeguard themselves against an apocalypse! If you want the surplus electricity to be usable as electricity, then storing on the Grid is still the cheapest and most convenient option. But that may not always be the case. History tells us that the Powerwall will be copied and improved. What the Powerwall has done is open a market and that has to be good for all domestic-scale renewable energy producers. Indeed Mercedes-Benz have a similar 2.5kW product available — and you can guarantee there will be more to come. 

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Don't Get Caught Out by Conditions

In the euphoria of gaining planning approval, don't overlook (or dismiss) the conditions attached. You ignore them at your peril, says David Snell



DAVID SNELL

David is the author of *Building Your Own Home*, a 13-time self-builder and has been building homes for 50 years

Planning conditions really are the small print of the building world. All planning permissions are granted with conditions attached and it's easy in the euphoria of the big headline to ignore the detail — but do so at your peril. When you're buying a building plot with planning permission already in place, it is vital to read and understand those conditions — and to make sure that they are capable of being satisfied or discharged by you, within your remit.

Failure to do so is bad news — if you don't address all of the planning conditions it can invalidate the consent and, therefore, any work that may have been carried out relevant to that consent. Planning conditions cover a whole range of works and come in different shapes and sizes.

Pre-application Conditions

Not all local authorities have a formalised pre-application process and it is, therefore, incumbent upon the self-builder to find out what requirements the local authority have in order for any application to be validated.

Many local authorities will not accept an application unless it is accompanied by a flood risk assessment, a wildlife survey and/or an archaeological survey. Others may require a car parking survey. All of these cost money and it is money which, in the event of the application failing, is not recoverable.

The Hidden Cost of Conditions

A local authority can charge £97 for each letter of application to discharge conditions. So if there were 15 conditions and you applied separately for each one to be discharged, the fee would be £1,455.

THE QUICK READ

➤ All planning permissions are granted with conditions attached, outlined (usually) on the same document. They must be discharged (satisfied) formally by letter by the local authority, usually before commencing work — otherwise the approval is invalidated

➤ Conditions usually focus on prior approval of external materials, landscaping and boundary schemes and other aspects of a project too detailed to be included in the planning application

➤ The most important condition is the time condition, detailing by which date a project must have started

It makes sense, therefore, to gather all of your material and make just one application to discharge all of the conditions at the same time. Unfortunately, that may mean that you are having to eat into the available time in the run-up to the consent's expiry while you wait for the necessary information and/or plans to be drawn up.

Time Conditions

The most important condition on any consent relates to the length of time that it will remain valid. Over the years, successive governments have endeavoured to shorten the duration of planning consents in the — often mistaken — belief that by doing so they will speed up the process between the granting of planning permission and the development of the land. In fact, the complexity of the planning process and the length of time taken, not only in consideration of the application but the clearance and discharge of conditions, has meant that there is an uncomfortable shortness of time between obtaining planning consent and being ready to commence work.

Most outline consents last for just three years, during which time approval of reserved matters (detailed planning consent) must be obtained. Work must then be commenced within two years of the detailed approval being granted.

Full permissions last for three years from the date of consent

PLANNING CONDITIONS

Now this is important. If your application for approval of reserved matters runs beyond the three-year period and fails, then the original outline consent could find itself out of time. If it succeeds, of course then the consent will last for another two years during which time you must start work on site. All of this makes it even more important that anyone contemplating buying land or a property with a planning consent should study the conditions and, in particular, the dates in great detail.

Because an outline consent requires so much detail these days, many applications are for full planning permission which means that, as soon as the consent is granted and conditions are discharged, work may commence without a second or subsequent application (subject of course to a Building Regulations application being lodged). Most full planning permissions last for three years from the date of consent.

Materials

Notwithstanding what it said on the plans or in the correspondence that accompanied or resulted from the original planning application, most local authorities will impose a condition requiring the agreement in writing, often following the production of samples, for any or all of the external materials.

The self-builder or renovator ignores this condition at their peril. If you proceed with the building without clearing this condition, you may find that your failure invalidates the consent and that any work you have carried out, even if approved by the local authority building control department, is invalid.

Your local council can no longer hold you up. From 15 April 2015 an applicant will be able to serve the council with a "deemed discharge notice" six weeks after applying for confirmation that a condition has been discharged. The notice will specify a date, at least two weeks later, on which the relevant condition will be considered to be discharged unless notice is received of the council's decision.

Code for Sustainable Homes

Many local planning authorities enthusiastically adopted the Code for Sustainable Homes and made compliance with it a condition of any new build planning consent.

The responsibility for the building practices and standards brought about by the Code will now be subsumed within Building Regulations. But there are many legacy planning approvals out there which require the appointment of a Code Assessor. Applicants will have to ask the local authority to confirm whether compliance with Building Regulations will be deemed to satisfy this condition.

Parking and Driveways

There is often a condition relating to the provision and the surfacing of any parking or driveways. The layout will be noted on the plans but the choice of material for the surfaces will have to be agreed. If there are trees in the vicinity it may be necessary to prove that any surfacing work will not disturb the roots and that water can still percolate down to them. It may also be necessary to demonstrate that any surface water will not be running into the carriageway.

Boundary Treatment

Full details of any fencing or walling will have to be provided prior to commencement of works being carried out — this may include the treatment or augmentation of any hedges.

Trees and Tree Planting

Many consents will have a condition requiring the protection of certain trees and this is easy to demonstrate and comply with. Others will require a tree planting and landscaping scheme to be approved prior to commencement of work. This will entail designing your garden before there is even a home on the plot. But, while that may seem to some like putting the cart before the horse, it is nevertheless necessary to comply with this condition, which may go on to require details as to future maintenance of any planting regime. The good news for self-builders is that putting a detailed landscaping scheme on the planning application means that you can reclaim the VAT on most of the materials (e.g. trees, turf and plants) as part of your overall reclaim.

Drainage

All planning applications have to detail the method of disposal of both surface and foul drainage and this should be reflected in the plans. Nevertheless, most local authorities will require subsequent detailed drawings and proposals showing the precise arrangements to be employed, prior to commencement of any work starting on site. This means that, technically, one cannot get on with services and the like while waiting for clearance of conditions.

Permitted Development Rights

An important consideration in any planning consent is whether or not Permitted Development rights (the work you can carry out to a property, such as small extensions, without needing planning consent) have been extinguished or curtailed as a condition of the consent. They often are, particularly on approvals given on sensitive or controversial sites.

Any limitation may mean that any extensions in the future or, in extreme cases, the erection of something as innocuous as a garden shed may need express planning permission.

Appealing Against a Condition

An appeal can be made against a condition or conditions contained within a planning permission on the grounds that they are unfair, unreasonable or unlawful. But beware, the inspector can revisit the original application, change other conditions or impose fresh conditions. They can even reverse the original approval; although if they intend to do any of these things, they must give notice of their intention, giving the appellant(s) the opportunity to withdraw the appeal. 

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A new build, renovation, extension or conversion project is a big investment, so you need to make sure it's adequately covered. Identifying the risks you face and who is actually responsible for the works in progress is absolutely crucial, because if a loss occurs you might not be in a position financially to rectify the damage. Most homeowners assume their builder has adequate insurance or their home insurance will provide cover if anything goes wrong, but this isn't the case. What's more, relying on your builder's insurance tends to mean you're just relying on their Public Liability cover, which isn't always going to provide you with the protection you really need.

If you are undertaking a project, most home insurers will exclude any alteration to the existing structure, meaning they will not cover you if anything happens to the structure while building works are being carried out. Self-Build Zone can cover your buildings insurance in this instance, and once complete, the cover will then be reverted back to your original home insurer. You will also have the option for a Build-Zone Structural Warranty, insuring the new works for 10 years.

If you are managing a self-build project on site, you will have responsibility under workplace health and safety law to consider, as well as getting the right insurance. Self-Build Zone can cover you, your employees and your building project, including any existing buildings, from the moment you own the plot, throughout the works, right up to completion. We are also able to facilitate your building control and technical audit surveys needed through the course of your build using our Approved Inspectors, saving you time, money and minimising disruption to building site for inspections.

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Extension Project Step-by-Step Planner

What does a typical extension project look like? What are the critical paths and construction schedule? Here's our week-by-week guide and checklist

BEFORE WORK STARTS

- Find trades, obtain quotes and inform them of your schedule
- **Check lead-in times for materials to avoid delays**
- Advise Building Control of commencement
- **Arrange/amend insurance**
- If living on site, put measures in place to keep the building work separate from your living spaces
- **Arrange toilet facilities for trades if necessary**

WEEK
1

PREPARATION WORKS

- Ensure clear access to site
- **Have bricks,**

blocks and associated materials delivered to site and stacked in place

- Hire mixer and digger — this is only necessary if you are project managing, otherwise your builders or contractors will organise this on your behalf
- **Ensure the site is safe, particularly if you have small children**

WEEK
2

GROUNDWORKS

- **Builders arrive on site**
- Groundworkers dig foundations

- **Building Control visit to approve the foundations**
- Reinforcement laid within foundations, if required
- **Pipework, drainage or services laid within foundations**
- Concrete footing poured and levelled
- **Building Control visits to approve**

WEEKS
3-4

SUPERSTRUCTURE

- Bricklayers to build up to damp-proof course
- **Drains installed**

and trenches dug for associated pipework

- Insert concrete lintels into brickwork if a drain run requires it
- **Sand is then laid before damp-proof membrane is put down**
- Insulation fitted
- **Concrete slab poured**
- Arrange for Building Control inspection

WEEK
5

EXTERNAL WALLS BUILT

- **Check that the required materials**

are on site for the superstructure to commence, including lintels, door and window frames and wall ties

- Whether the brickwork or blockwork is built first will depend on your builder, but work now starts on the superstructure
- **Cavity wall insulation fitted**
- Wall ties inserted to fix the new walls to the existing
- **Lintels for windows and doors fitted**
- Door and window frames should be inserted as the walls go up

WEEK
6

INTERNAL WALLS BUILT

- **Internal walls are constructed**
- Order materials

such as windows, roof tiles, etc., which can sometimes have long lead times of up to five weeks

- **Check that the carpenter is all set for the following week and all materials are ready — including lead**

WEEK
7

ROOF STRUCTURE

- The carpenter will start building the roof structure

— or in some cases prefabricated roof trusses may be used

- **If you are having rooflights, the carpenter is usually in charge of fitting these at this stage**
- Dormers will be constructed if they are being introduced

WEEK
8

ROOF COVERINGS

- **Roofing membrane is laid over**

the newly built rafters

- Roof battens cut and fitted over membrane
- **Tiles/slates laid**
- Ridge/hip tiles laid and bedded
- **Valley tiles laid, along with finishing details, flashings, etc.**
- Fascias, soffits and verges primed/stained/painted
- **Floor screed laid**

WEEKS
9-10

WINDOWS AND DOORS

- External rendering if required

- **Windows and doors fitted into linings and frames that were (hopefully) put in place when walls were being built**

- Guttering and downpipes fitted
- **First fix carpentry, plumbing and electrics**
- Studwork walls built, door linings fitted and pipes boxed in

Right: Superstructure

The trick with building extensions is to delay breaking through to the existing house to as late as possible in the build schedule. Here, existing bricks have been removed ready to take the new junction

WEEK
10

BREAKING THROUGH

➤ Now is a good time to ensure you get sealed off from

the building work as things will get messy

➤ Steels are put into place, along with padstones — sizes should have already been approved by Building Control

➤ Joins made good

WEEK
11

PLASTERING

➤ Walls are boarded, with insulation placed between battens on

existing uninsulated external walls

➤ **Plastering — followed by a period of drying out (around a week before decorating can begin)**

WEEK
12

SECOND FIX

➤ Second fix electrics carried out (sockets made live,

switches put in place, lights fitted, etc.)

➤ **Second fix plumbing (taps, connections, etc.)**

➤ Flooring laid (sometimes people choose to lay flooring after the kitchen is fitted)

➤ **Kitchen units installed (if this is a kitchen extension)**

WEEK
13

SNAGGING

➤ Leaks, electrical problems, heating system issues, sticking

doors and windows — report them all to the relevant trades as soon as possible after finishing **H**



JEREMY PHILLIPS

Extension Checklist

Make sure your project runs smoothly with our handy 'don't forget' checklist

- Obtain planning permission, if required, prior to works commencing
- **Submit application to your local Building Control**
- Arrange access for delivery lorries and consider where skips can be placed
- **Get quotes from trades**
- If living on site, arrange schedules to minimise impact on day-to-day living
- **Agree timescales and schedules with trades to avoid delays on site**
- Arrange or amend insurances as necessary (you may need a new policy)
- **Inform neighbours of work commencing**
- Organise the hire of plant, toilets, etc.
- **Set up accounts with your local builders' merchants**

- Check lead-in times for materials and order where necessary
- **Notify Building Control that you are commencing works**
- Make space available to store materials safely on site
- **Make sure water will be available for cement mixer (and later plastering) where it will cause minimal mess inside**
- Arrange scaffolding if required
- **Make second fix decisions (such as the position of lights and sockets) as early as possible**
- Build in time for plaster to dry out before decorating commences
- **Make sure plasterers and other trades know if you are carrying out aspects of their jobs on a DIY basis**



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Toolkit: External Makeovers

A Successful External Remodel

A new Tudor-inspired exterior, thanks to a makeover and series of extensions, encases the former boxy brick Georgian house — the remnants of which can still be seen on the ground floor and in the chimney stacks



Before



JEREMY PHILLIPS

This section: An in-depth design and building project guide. Edited by Daisy Jeffery

134 Beginner's Guide to External Makeovers

How to get started, the styles to factor in, the rules and regs, design ideas, the material options explained, plus the on-site requirements needed during an external remodel — our must-read guide explains how to give your property a facelift

140 Case Study: Bungalow Reborn

A dated bungalow in Dorset is given a complete transformation thanks to a new storey and updated exterior

142 Case Study: A Sensitive Remodel

A small one bedroom seaside flat above

a row of garages is transformed into a three-bed family home thanks to a remodel project that combines its 1980s characteristics with a modern twist

159 Source Book

A directory of useful external makeover contacts



EXTERNAL MAKEOVERS



THIS PAGE: DAVID BARBOUR; OPPOSITE (CLOCKWISE): SIMON MAXWELL X 2; DARREN CHUNG; SIMON DENISON

Boring to Brilliant

Changing a home's exterior, be it drastic or modest, can transform a rundown property into your dream home — here we detail the key things to consider

Homeowners have been remodelling properties for centuries, adapting their houses to meet modern standards and to be up-to-date with current trends. There is something quite appealing and even glamorous about taking on a beautiful but dated or unloved Georgian country house or a Victorian townhouse and restoring it to its former glory, or sprucing it up for modern times. While these properties are undergoing renovation projects across the country, it is also the boxy, less appealing inter-war and postwar house styles – from the 1920s all the way up to the '80s – which are crying out for a makeover and have become a popular choice for those looking to tackle a large renovation project.

“There are many reasons people want to remodel the exterior of their property. It can be because they feel the appearance is dated, or there may be a desire to get rid of unwanted or miss-

matched materials, such as pebbledash or a poorly bricked up window that does not match the surrounding brickwork,” explains architect Lesley Hally of LA Hally Architects. Often though, it is the desire to extend the interior and sometimes something as simple as wanting a window to frame a particular view that sparks off the whole process.

“In more recent years there’s also the justification to carry out work to the exterior as it provides the opportunity to upgrade and make the building better insulated and airtight, so the investment will help reduce running costs,” explains designer Tony Holt.

Consider Styles

Before taking on an external makeover you should first consider the period in which the house was built, as different periods tend to carry with them a common theme which can flag up both pros and cons for remodelling. Some styles will lend themselves



better to a change in cladding, while others might benefit from an extension to increase the living space within. As architect Lesley Hally points out, 1950s properties are one of the period styles which lend themselves to makeovers: “These homes are generally well-built and attractive properties but often have deep plans, preventing light reaching the central areas. This prompts changes to the fenestration, moving away from latticed glazing, if deemed appropriate, and enlarging openings usually to the rear of the property. There may have been many changes over the years, but rarely do the additions complement each other perfectly, and often use materials which, while similar, do not actually match. Details in one section may be better removed to match with another section — alternatively they can be kept to contrast against,” says Lesley Hally.

“Generally properties that are constructed in the ’60s, ’70s and ’80s are good candidates for a makeover,” adds designer Tony Holt. “The condition of the structure is normally good enough to be retained and after the ’50s concrete ground floor slabs were more commonly used, so no suspended timber floors to deal with.”

“We are also working increasingly with detached 1970s homes,” says Lesley Hally. “They tend to lend themselves to more open plan interiors and larger areas of glazing, and can be quite interesting in plan and elevation, i.e. for more unusual layouts where the living accommodation is on the upper floor. The room sizes are generally quite large but often the kitchens are small and give us the opportunity to remodel the interiors, which will, in turn, impact on the exterior. We have added some really interesting

Giving Homes a Facelift

1: White render and stone cladding under a new roof has given this former dated home a contemporary makeover thanks to the vision of architect Alastair MacIntyre; **2:** A new tiled roof and replacement timber windows give this 1930s Surrey home a much-needed update, while side and rear extensions double the property’s footprint; **3:** Marley Eternit’s Cedral weatherboard cladding looks like timber but is in fact fibre cement, and offers a New England style to this rundown 1950s house; **4:** This 1950s home has benefitted from an extension and remodel, being reclad in white render and featuring new glazing for a contemporary façade; **5:** From 1970s bungalow to Modernist-inspired home — thanks to a two storey rear extension with full-height glazing, a new flat roof and cladding

extensions to these properties, including cantilevered timber extensions and single storey extensions with grass roofs. This age of property really lends itself to modernisation.

“Houses from ’70s with hanging tile in my opinion are perhaps the easiest to makeover,” says Lesley Hally. “Externally it’s relatively inexpensive and easy to change from hanging tile or PVCu to timber cladding, and replace the windows and doors to modern equivalents, ideally in darker shades to complement the wood.”

Extensions

An extension is often viewed as the simplest way of remodelling a property, particularly if the extension is single storey. The latter are ➡



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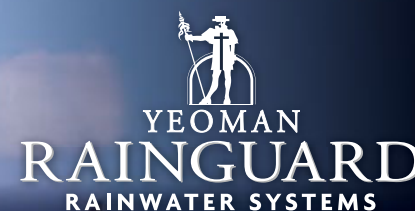


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often specified as a solution to a lack of internal space or to add an open plan element to the home such as a kitchen diner, and in some cases can even be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission (more on p.139). Two storey extensions on the other hand, whether that be to the sides or rear of the property, will sit at the more drastic end of the remodelling scale and open up the opportunity to completely transform the look of the property. Consideration as to how these additions will match or contrast with the existing house is key.

Cladding

During an external makeover one of the elements you are likely to change is the cladding. If the home was built between 1950 and 1980 (and for a lot of typical developer houses, right up to the present day) then chances are the house is clad in brick. If you're looking to keep the brickwork of a bungalow, for instance, but are planning to add an additional storey and struggling to find a matching brick for the new floor, then you could consider cladding the new storey in render. In some areas this will be typical of the local vernacular, so it pays to look around and see what would fit in and also appease the local planners should you require planning permission for the works.

If the existing cladding is dated or in poor condition then you may wish to go down the route of recladding the whole exterior, and will need to consider the material options available. Obviously choices are not only cost dependent, but should be carefully considered to look aesthetically pleasing and match/contrast with the existing house. Your choice of cladding material will also depend on the style of the existing house.

"On our projects, timber is probably the most popular choice of cladding," explains Lesley Hally. "Cedar is cost-effective, is popular due to being relatively knot-free and can offer reddish tones if treated or can be left to weather to a silver grey. Larch is a popular alternative which, while a little more expensive, is more durable and offers a different texture."

"For contemporary homes, render is a popular cladding option," says Tony Holt. "Fibre cement weatherboarding from the likes of Marley Eternit is proving very popular too."

For those looking for cladding materials to break up an elevation, natural materials such as stone or slate can create an impressive feature, while metal cladding such as copper or zinc can look attractive, but tend to be far more expensive.

"Also, it should be noted that it is not just the material that is important, but the use of the material — we tend to try to use materials in playful and interesting ways to give a contemporary feel," explains Lesley Hally.

Roof Coverings

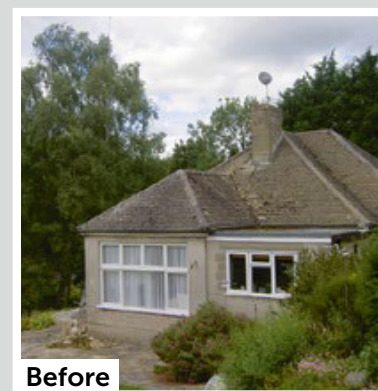
Many postwar houses were topped off with poor-quality concrete roof tiles which failed to add any kerb appeal to these bland, utilitarian homes. Changing the roofing for a material better suited to the house design, and even the local vernacular, can be a great way of transforming a house. Slates are an attractive option and suit both contemporary and traditional-style properties. Prices and quality vary, with Welsh slate being one of the more expensive choices, and imported slates from countries such as Spain and China being cheaper. Clay tiles are another option, although it's



SIMON MAXWELL

Ordinary to Extraordinary

Architect Penny Shankar transformed her 1950s bungalow (right) by adding a flat-roofed timber-frame structure on top and recladding the exterior in vertical oak boarding and grey render, creating a modernist two storey home (above). New windows have been effective in updating the home's façade too



Before

important to note that handmade tiles will be more expensive than machine-made alternatives.

You may however wish to opt for man-made substitutes such as replica slates or clay tiles and although some may argue that they fail to achieve the same natural look, there are some better quality replicas now on the market that prove extremely convincing.

For something a little more contemporary, you may wish to consider a zinc covering, popular with many top designers at present. "If you are replacing the roof covering though you will be required to upgrade the insulation levels to meet the Building Regulations," warns Michael Holmes, Content Director of *Homebuilding & Renovating*.

Windows and Doors

If you are keen to keep the external work to a minimum then tasks such as repainting, repointing and replacing windows and doors could make all the difference in boosting your home's kerb appeal.

The windows of a house make up a significant proportion of its façade and so changing them to ones which are more in keeping with the era of the home (i.e. replacing old PVCu windows with aluminium or timber alternatives) can make all the difference. Updating old windows to double or triple glazed will also boost the thermal performance and soundproofing of your home too.

Timber windows are available in pretty much any style you require and need not cost the earth if you choose softwood over hardwood — just ensure they are primed and painted to avoid them warping or rotting. "Unless you have a period property or ➔

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From London to Miami

This 1960s semi has been remodelled by Inglis Badrashi Loddio Architects. A rear extension, new storey with roof terrace and white cladding add to the home's new villa style, while large glazed panels enable light to enter this once dark home

are going down the traditional route it is sometimes best to avoid timber windows due to the maintenance," says Tony Holt. "Most people now seem to be going for powder-coated aluminium windows, or composite if you have a healthier budget." Likewise, replacing an unfashionable front door with a design more suited to the style of house will also alter the appearance of a building.

It is worth reviewing the orientation and size of your windows and doors too. If you are extending the property you might want to capture certain views and therefore wish to widen an existing opening or create a new one. You may too wish to reposition the front door. This will depend on the size, shape and style of the house you are working with, as well as the area it is in, but don't feel restricted by what is already there. New windows and doors will also be subject to Building Regulations approval, and on properties in Conservation Areas or on listed buildings, may well require planning consent.

Changing other external fixings such as rainwater goods can also be a small step to making a big difference in your home's appearance, as designer Tony Holt points out: "When replacing rainwater goods many people think that white plastic ones won't stand out. What they forget is that these get dirty and need cleaning. Black plastic rainwater goods on the other hand blend in better and work well on traditional houses. For more modern properties go with aluminium, and a box gutter with hidden brackets will offer a slick look. Galvanised or coated steel options from companies

such as Lindab are very cost-effective and offer great quality too." Yeoman Rainguard also offer gutters and downpipes in a wide range of materials including copper, GRP (glassfibre reinforced plastic), aluminium and cast iron.

Planning and Permitted Development

"It is possible to alter the external appearance of a house without having to apply for planning permission by making use of Permitted Development (PD) rights," says Michael Holmes. "It is always worth checking with your local authority, but on most houses in England you can add a porch, demolish unwanted parts, convert an attic or an integral garage, and subject to certain design criteria you can even add a single or two storey extension to the rear, and a single storey extension to the side, all without needing planning permission." All of these will however be subject to restrictions, will depend on where you live (i.e. in a Conservation Area or listed building) and will depend on whether the PD rights on the house have already been used up. It is always best to consult with the local planners in the first instance to check what you will and will not be allowed to do and this will help you to avoid running into problems later on. For more on what can and cannot be achieved without needing planning permission, visit planningportal.gov.uk for a full list.

"If you are changing anything drastic, such as using materials different from the existing, you will likely need planning," says Lesley Hally. "I would recommend talking to your local planning department before starting any work and it is also a good idea to seek pre-application advice. All councils should offer this service, but may charge for it."

Going On Site

Like with all building projects, it is worth making a note of what you will likely require on site prior to works commencing. "If you're going to re-render the entire house, you may need scaffolding, which can be expensive. For less extensive makeovers it's often more cost-efficient to get separate companies in to do the various work required," explains Lesley Hally. "However, for larger refurbishments having a main contractor to coordinate the works is often the best route."

"If you opt to use a builder on a fixed-price basis then it's important you use a contract," says Tony Holt. "I would normally advise for minor works to use the JCT Home Owner Contract, which has two versions — one for the homeowner using a consultant to oversee the works and the other for those project managing this themselves. It really comes down to the experience of the homeowner and how comfortable they feel with monitoring the works and dealing with the builder direct."

Consult the Experts

External makeovers will have a big impact on the overall appearance of your house — meaning there's no place to hide if it goes wrong. So it's important to consult a design professional to ensure your project is a success both design-wise as well as with the planners. "An architect will be able to look at your home with fresh eyes and bring ideas you may not have thought of. Their experience can be invaluable in deciding the best approach to take before commencing planning applications, etc.," says Lesley Hally. 



TONY HOLT DESIGN

Bungalow Reborn

A new façade and second storey sees one bungalow realise its full potential



TONY HOLT

Tony Holt is an architectural designer and chartered architectural technologist specialising in bespoke property design (tonyholt-design.co.uk)

HB&R: Did the clients approach you with a specific design brief in mind?

Tony: Yes, because the clients' budget was restricted, a replacement dwelling was out of reach and therefore the design was restricted to a remodel. To make this work we knew the majority of the walls to the ground floor had to be retained, or rebuilt on the existing foundations. Fortunately, the existing two bedroom bungalow was structurally sound and checks were taken early in the design process to confirm that the foundations were suitable to take additional loadings of a new storey.

A contemporary palette of materials has been used here. Why were these materials chosen?

Most of the materials were chosen for being low maintenance — except the cedar cladding, which was used sparingly to create

warmth and texture against the acrylic white render, which gives a fresh, contemporary feel. We continued the modern theme by replacing the bungalow's old glazing with aluminium windows and doors, switched the rainwater goods for galvanised steel replacements and the new roof has been relaid in man-made fibre cement slate which is not only cheaper than natural slate but also gives a more uniform look, and by choosing a lead roll ridge there is a slicker finish — using a standard ridge tile would have made the roof look bulky. The natural stone cladding was the most expensive material but again this was used sparingly as a feature where it would provide the most impact visually.

How did you achieve a new storey?

In order to provide the clients with additional space we knew a second storey was the best option — we didn't actually extend the ground floor at all. The whole top floor is new and was fabricated in timber on site using carpenters. The principle structure was formed in post and beam supported on a steel grid at first floor level. We chose to use the steel grid as the existing bungalow was an irregular shape. But placing a rectangular steel grid on top meant that the new roof would be kept simple, which would keep costs down and solve the problem of the ground floor shape. The new storey, which houses four bedrooms, is in fact larger than the ground floor, and the steel grid allows for overhangs on certain elevations which offers a more interesting exterior.

How has the glazing been considered here?

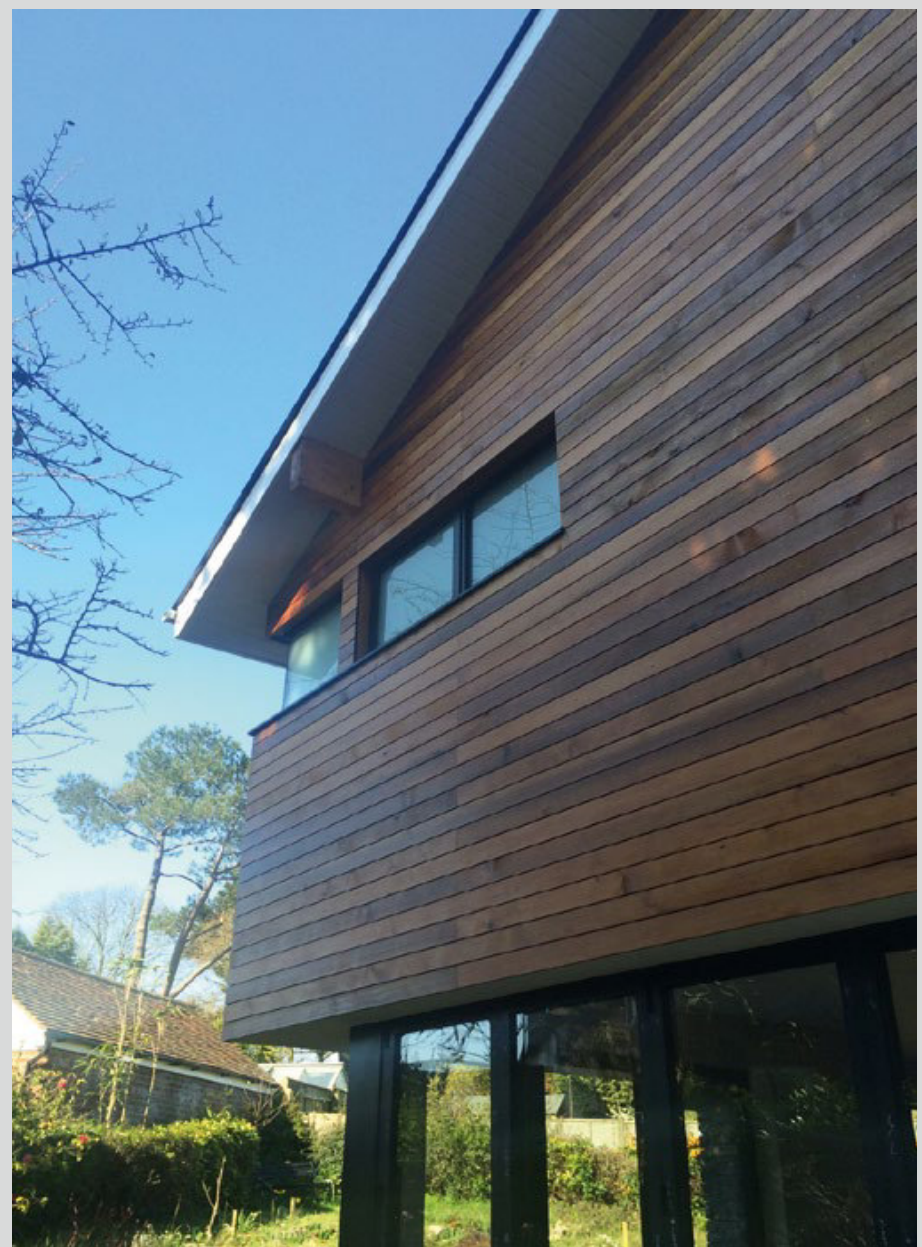
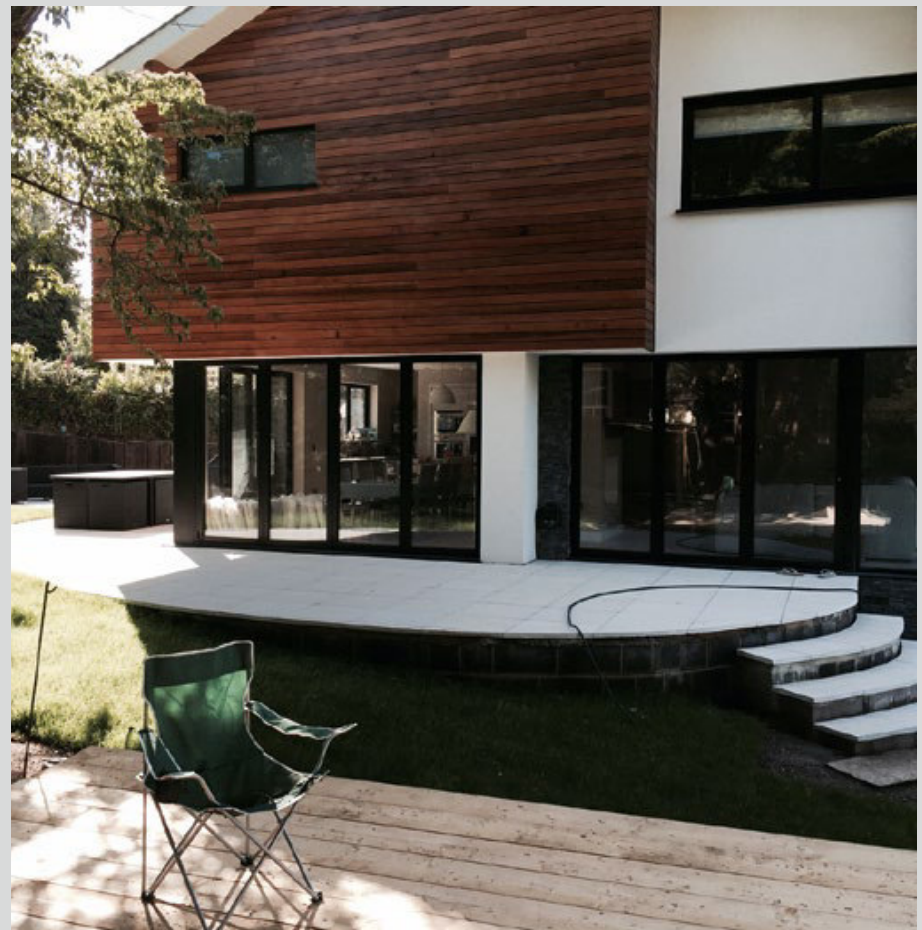
The property benefits from a wrap-around garden and so on the elevations breaking out to the garden we removed the walls and replaced them with full-height glazing with modern aluminium frames. Corner windows at ground level and on the new first floor have been specifically placed to make the most of the different aspects on site and to capture certain vistas.

Were there any issues with the planners?

At the last minute the planners tried to control the development by requesting we utilise a hipped roof to reduce the mass and bulk of the building. Negotiations took place and I explained that this would dilute the architectural quality of the design and that the site's prominent location deserved something that had impact. Luckily they agreed and we secured permission.

How have the external changes impacted on the interior living spaces?

As a result of the new storey, the internal layout was opened up and fenestration added to maximise natural light to enhance the internal living environment. The existing bungalow was 118m² with two bedrooms and separate living and kitchen areas. Thanks to the project the home now achieves 260m² of accommodation with open plan living more suited to modern life. 



A Home Transformed

From two-bed bungalow to a four bedroom home, this property in Dorset has benefitted from a contemporary makeover which has seen the dwelling double in size thanks to a first floor extension and makeover. Modern glazing and new cladding materials meanwhile allow for a more exciting exterior, all under a new fibre cement slate roof



Sensitive Remodel

A cramped and dated 1980s flat becomes a modern family home



LESLEY HALLY

Lesley Hally is the Principal Architect at the practice LA Hally Architect (lahally.com)

HB&R: Did the clients have a detailed brief when they approached you about the project?

Lesley: The client, Rob Langley, is a property developer and owner of Black Lion Gate Ltd. who specialise in turn-key developments, and so he knew from the outset what he wanted to achieve here.

The existing property was a one bedroom flat which had originally been designed for a couple or single person as a fisherman's retreat in Hamble-le-Rice, Hampshire, straddled above three garages. Built in the 1980s, the flat was very dated and

was set in a row of six similar properties laid out in a communal courtyard style, which sat alongside a larger housing estate of similar '80s properties. When Rob found this flat he knew that he wanted to turn it into a three bedroom family home and, considering it was originally a one-bed flat with garages below, he was quite clever in his approach to transform the building.

The entrance has received a contemporary transformation. Was this something the client was keen on?

During the design process we looked at creating a nicer, more street-friendly way of entering the building as the previous entrance to the flat was via a communal courtyard and involved having to walk through a gate and garage/boat store up some stairs. It wasn't the most pleasant way of entering a home and was very dark. We chose to reposition the front door and internal staircase, and what was originally the old boat store has now been infilled in order to create a habitable ground floor space with room for a new guest bedroom with en suite. The front door was also

EXTERNAL MAKEOVERS CASE STUDY



changed for a contemporary timber replacement with a glazed side panel and raised timber-clad surround to enhance the new front access — this also hides the meter box for a sleek look. Large opaque glazed panels adjacent to the back door also bring in more light to the new habitable ground floor space.

We didn't want to make it look like a new building as it is surrounded by '80s properties and would have looked out of place. Instead the aim was to incorporate the existing garage/store, enhance the views through lowered cill heights and new glazing, and create a greater street presence. It was important to retain the characteristics of the building but adding materials which would give it a contemporary feel. We wanted to create the feeling of a family home and not a garage.

Glazing is important here — how did your ideas develop?

The old high-level rooflights offered no views and so we chose to remove these and lower the cill height in order to make the most of the views towards the marina. We removed the old Juliette balcony to the rear and replaced this with a set of French doors under a new dormer to increase the internal head height, and a glazed panel — as opposed to the old metal railings — offers uninterrupted views. We added another dormer window to the rear too. We were lucky that this was the only house in the row that faced a dental practice to the front, which allowed us to argue in the Design & Access Statement that as the practice included no habitable rooms that we would be able to make changes to the windows as well as include more contemporary glazing as there would be no overlooking. Another set of French doors with glazed panel was added to the front elevation to help break up the façade and hints to the contemporary interiors within too.

How was the project received by the local planners?

The planners were very accepting of the changes we were making to the modernisation of the building — if anything they felt it was an improvement. We had to appease them on certain areas such as making some of the windows opaque for privacy reasons, but otherwise they were happy. The only concerns really were from the neighbours as we were working above occupied garages. The planning process took about three and a half months as the plans had to go to committee stage.



Above: A Modernised Entrance

Showcasing how even small homes can benefit from an external makeover, this former one-bed flat above three garages has been transformed into a contemporary family home thanks to a reconfigured ground floor and new entrance to the front, with modern French doors above allowing light into the remodelled open plan interiors

What steps were taken to ensure this was a sensitive remodel?

Luckily the property sits outside of the nearby Conservation Area but given the other homes in the local area we didn't want to make this home look too separate from its neighbours. Externally we modernised the rainwater goods, switched old rooflights for modern, double-glazed dormer windows and French doors which meet current Building Regulations standards, and we retained the existing brickwork and first floor timber cladding too. Inside, however, the property was stripped back to shell stage and work started from scratch — it is now a modern family home. 



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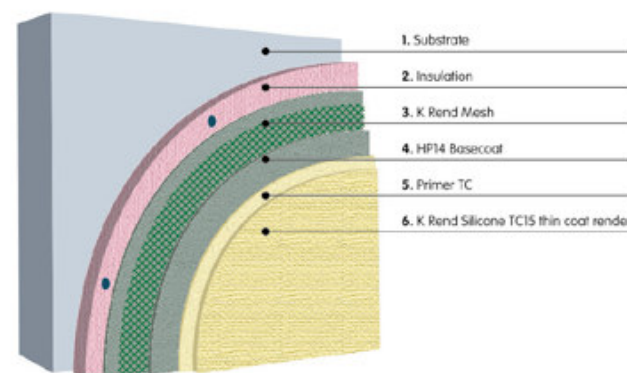
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2 First launched 23 years ago, demista™ heated mirror pads have been sold to hotels, specifiers, architects, house builders, and supplied through electrical wholesalers and bathroom retailers. The self-adhesive pads are slimline and easy to install, simply fix in position and wire in to the electrical system either through the lighting or a separate switch. www.demista.co.uk

3 An attractive detached house dating back to the 18th Century, situated on the edge of this historic village of Hurley-on-Thames is one of the latest properties in the UK to benefit from a truly bespoke staircase from British Spirals & Castings; in fact not just one staircase but four! All staircases were made from Solid Oak, some featuring glass balustrades supplied by VISTA GLASS, and incorporated a variety of designs including straight, kited and spirals to suit each installation area. www.britishsc.co.uk

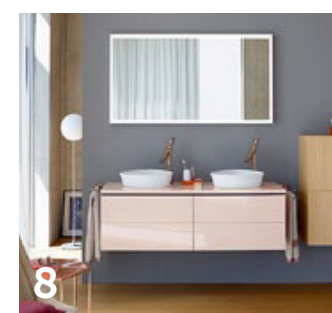
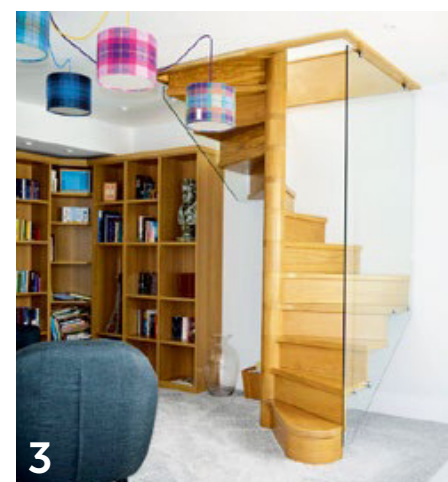
4 JB Kind's new painted timber effect door range is perfect for the current trend for neutral colour tones. The gorgeous grey Nuance Ardosa (pictured) looks stunning in a contemporary interior and is enhanced with a stylish grooved panel design. With other colour tones to choose from, plus matching glazed partners, you'll be impressed by the superior finish and excellent value for money. www.jbkind.com

5 Conservation™ box sash windows by Mumford & Wood have been specified in the extensive and sympathetic refurbishment of a 260-year old coastal property in South East England. Conservation™ timber windows and doors are manufactured entirely in Britain from clear grade, engineered timber which won't twist, stick or warp. Bespoke windows and doors by Mumford & Wood offer beautiful aesthetics combined with excellent U-values that achieve ultimate levels of thermal and acoustic performance and many are Secured by Design accredited. www.mumfordwood.com

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7 Cellular PVC Cladding from Swish Building Products is a low maintenance alternative to timber. It can be fitted horizontal, herring-bone or diagonal; some profiles can also be used vertically. Available in Shiplap, Open V, Tee Gee and FeatherEdge the profiles can be fitted quickly and are available in a variety of colours and finishes, including the new Gale Grey. www.swishbp.co.uk

8 Duravit's new L-Cube furniture collection, designed by Christian Werner, is defined by geometric lines with rectangular and square furniture fronts. With over 30 different surfaces, from high gloss finishes such as Jade or Apricot Pearl (shown) as well as real wood fronts such as brushed dark oak, L-Cube offers a vast number of different design combinations. www.duravit.co.uk



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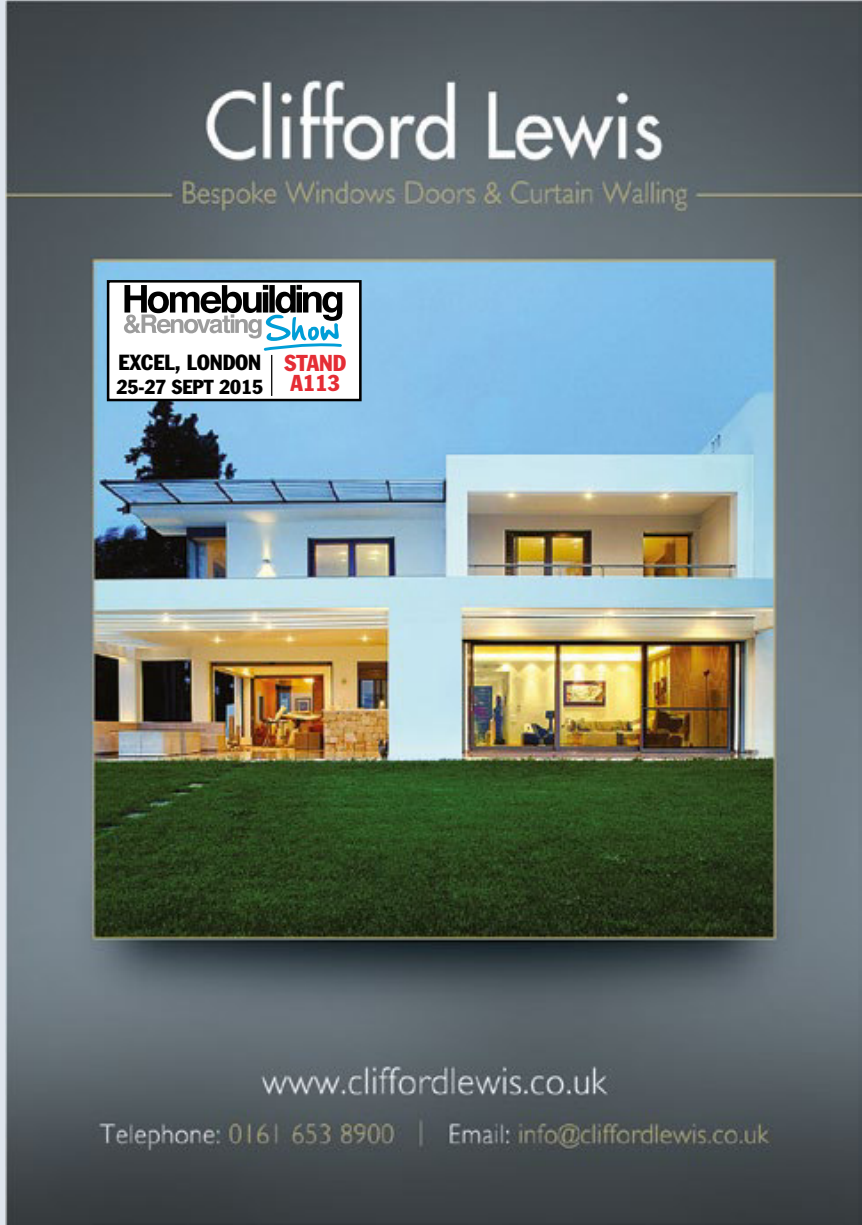
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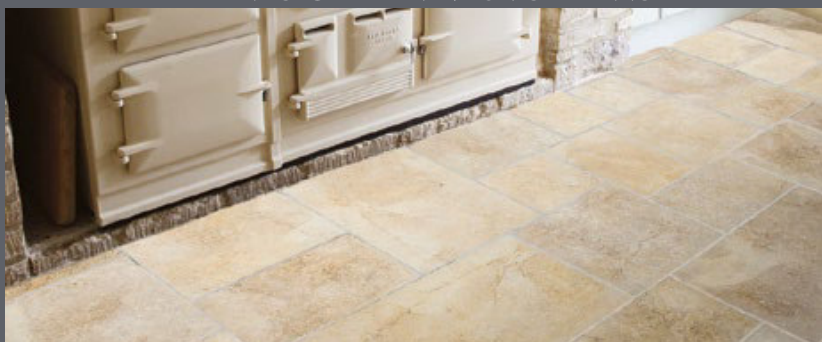
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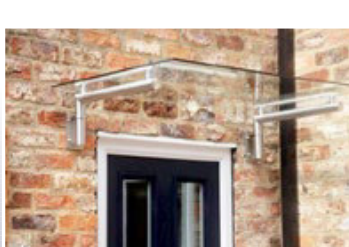
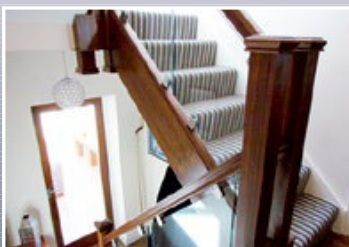
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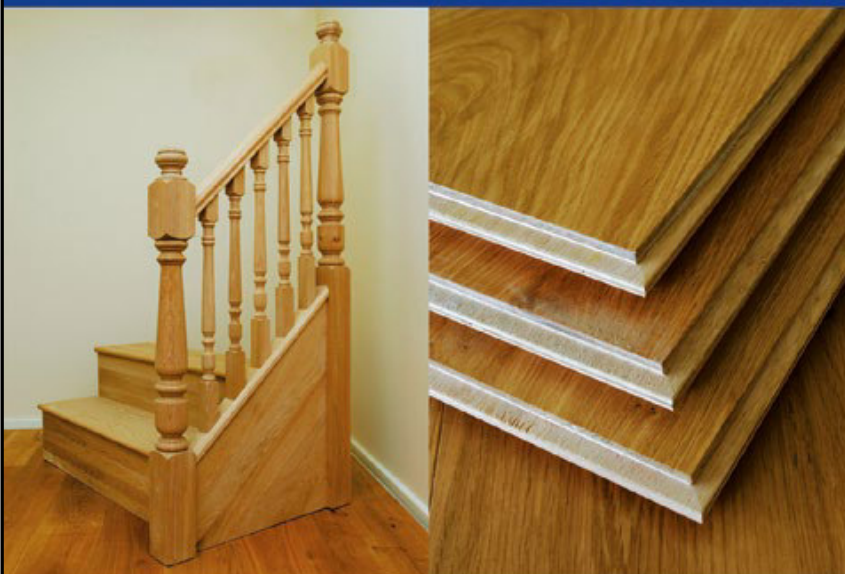




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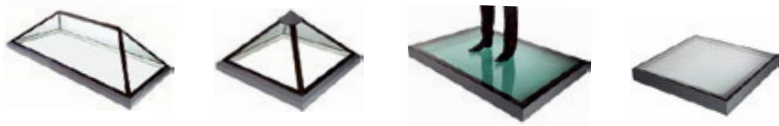
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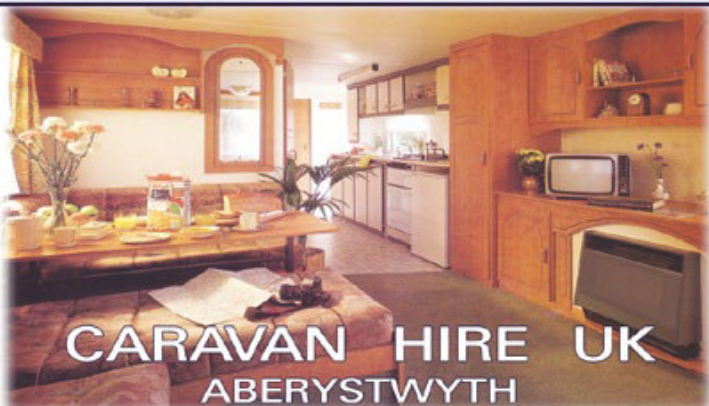
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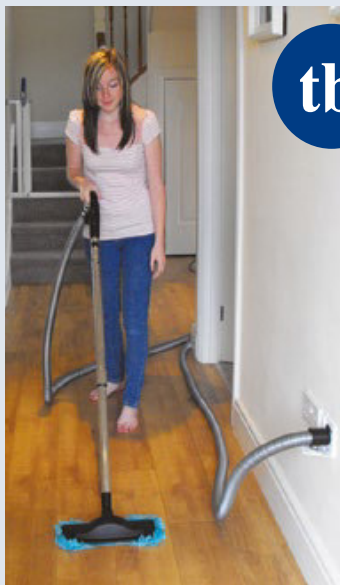
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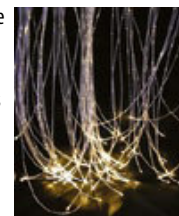
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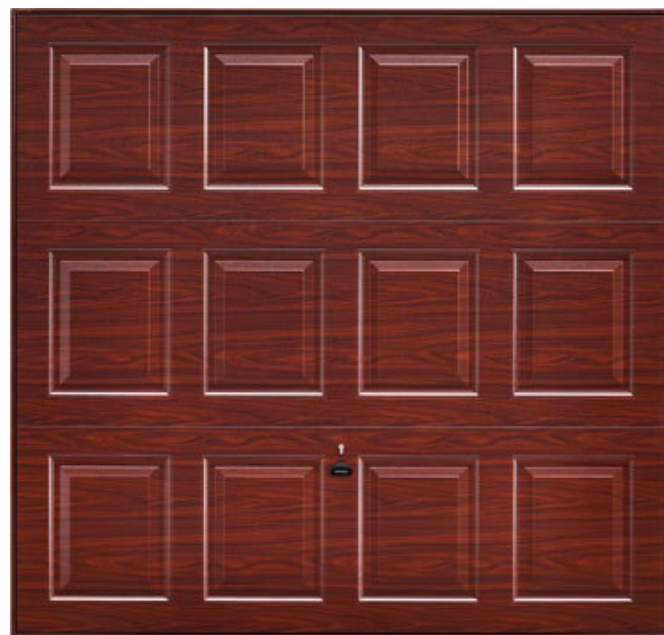
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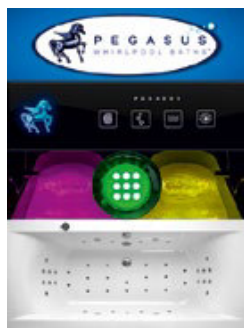
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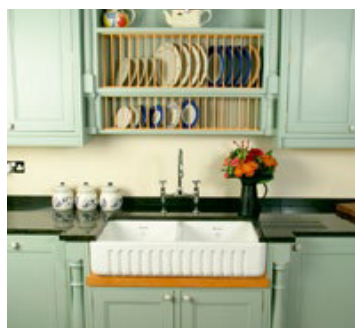
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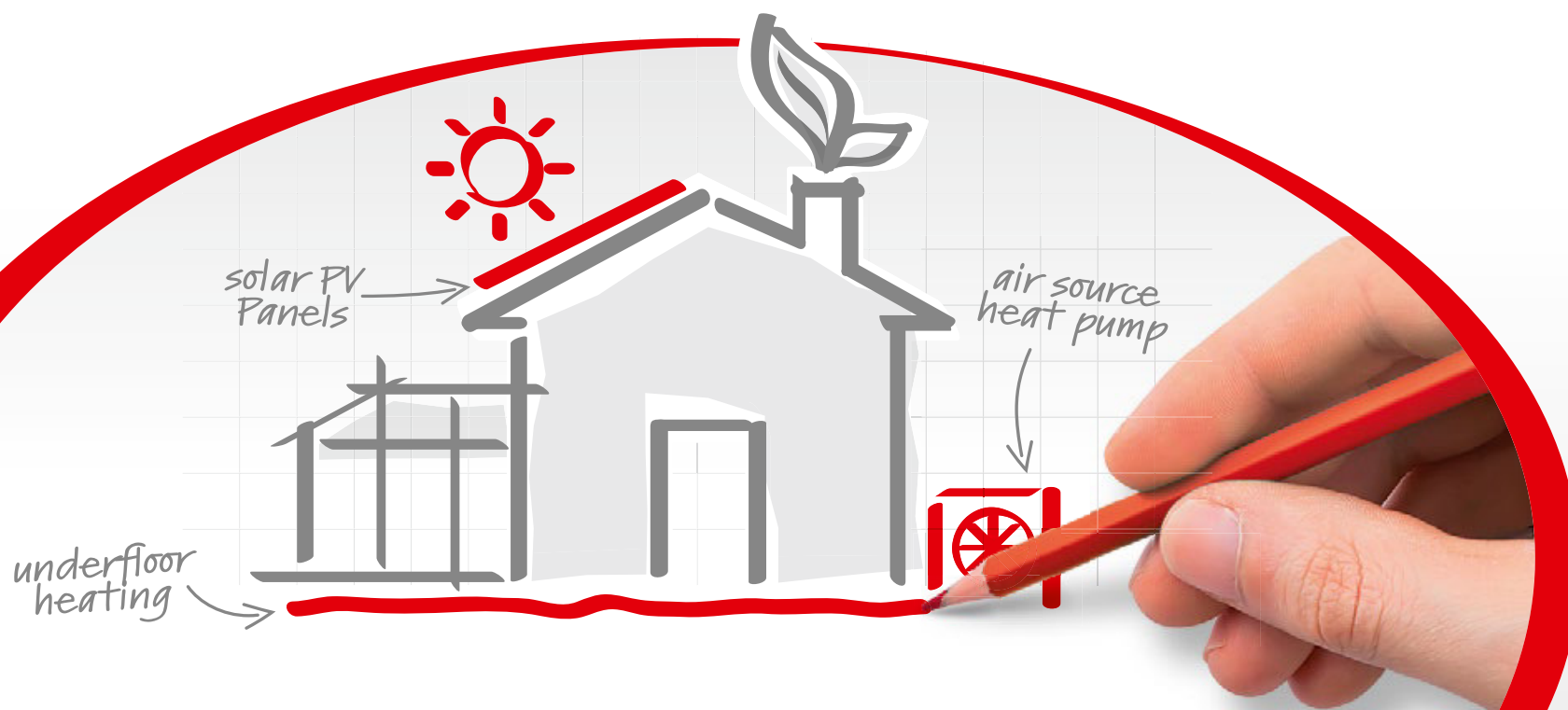
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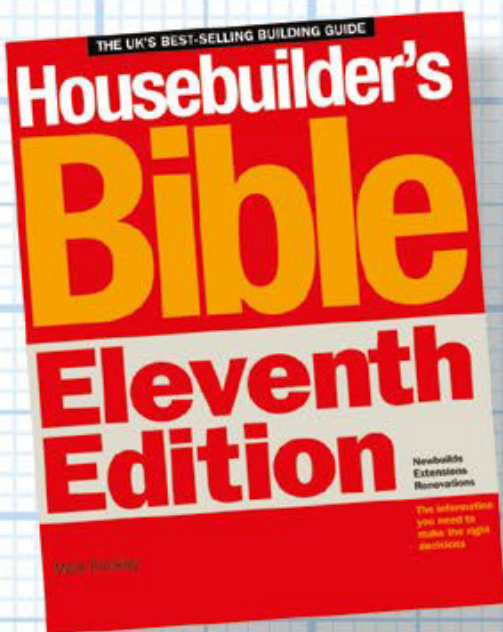
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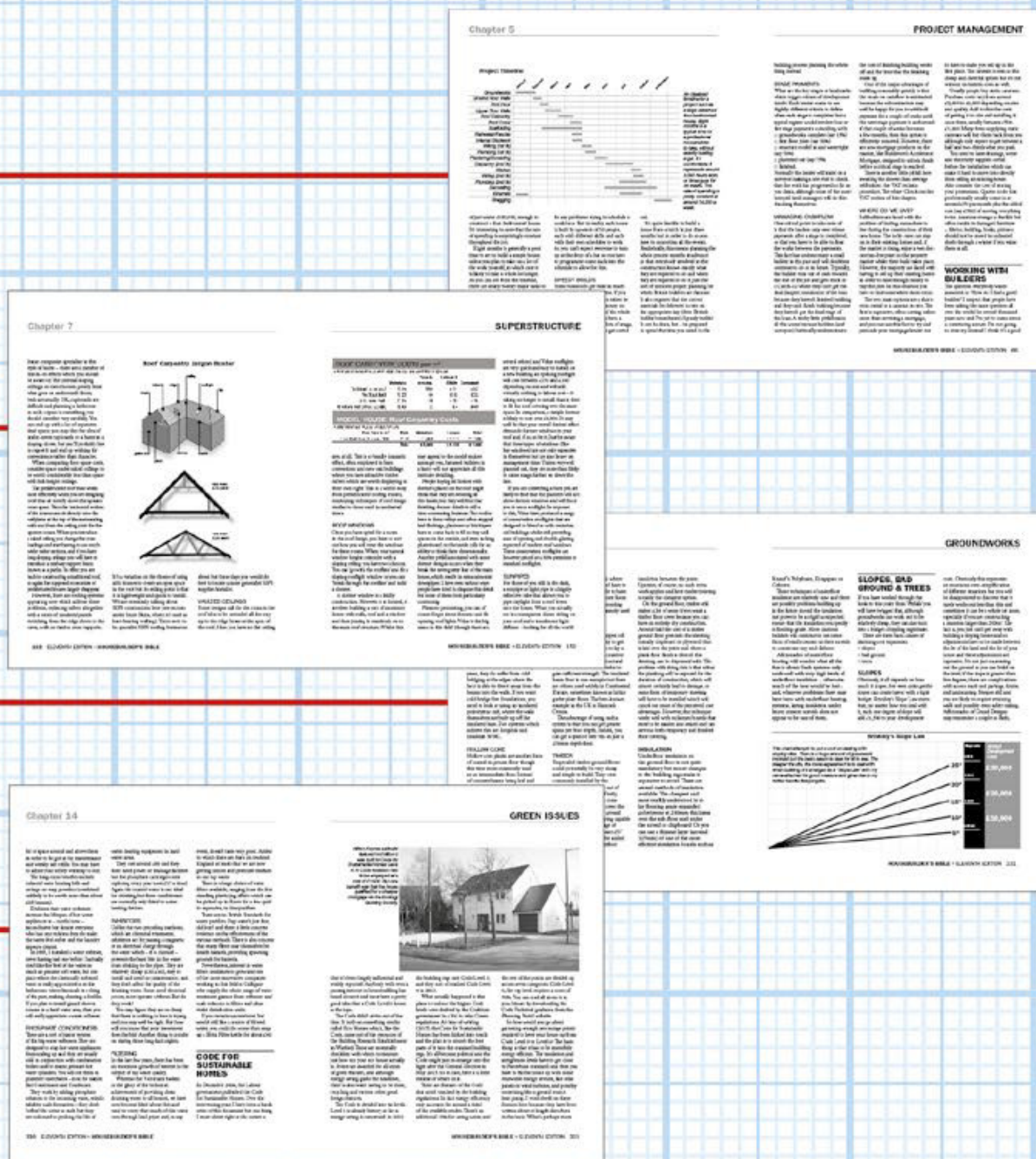
How is a house actually built? What are the pros and cons of using a factory-built home? What are the best types of insulation for each situation? What are the comparative costs of brickwork v timber, or slates v tiles, or roof trusses v traditional carpentry.

GROUNDWORKS

Detailed look at the challenges facing you when you 'open up the ground'. How to spot a difficult site? What are the problems you need to overcome? How much will it all cost?

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Crown Imperial..... crown-imperial.co.uk
Dean Forge 01364 643574
AGA agaliving.com
Dimplex dimplex.co.uk

PATIO DOORS (P.78)

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The Aluminium Sliding Door &
Window Co.....aluminiumslidingdw.co.uk
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Centor..... centor.com
Solarlux..... solarlux.co.uk
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..... expressbifolds.co.uk
Kloeber kloeber.co.uk
Vufold vufold.co.uk
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Town and Country 020 7091 0621
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ID Systems idsystems.co.uk
ecoHaus Internorm
..... ecohausinternorm.com
Arbor Bifold arborwinsys.co.uk
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INTERIOR GLAZING (P.97)

Innovation Windows.....0161 456 0501
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Livingwood.....livingwoodwindows.co.uk
Pilkington Glass pilkington.com
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JB Kind..... 01283 554197
Todd Doors..... 0800 633 5050
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Mumford & Wood 01621 818155
Marvin Architectural 020 8569 8222
JELD-WEN 0845 122 2890
Ideal Combi idealcombi.com



CLADDING (P.118)

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Ibstock ibstock.com
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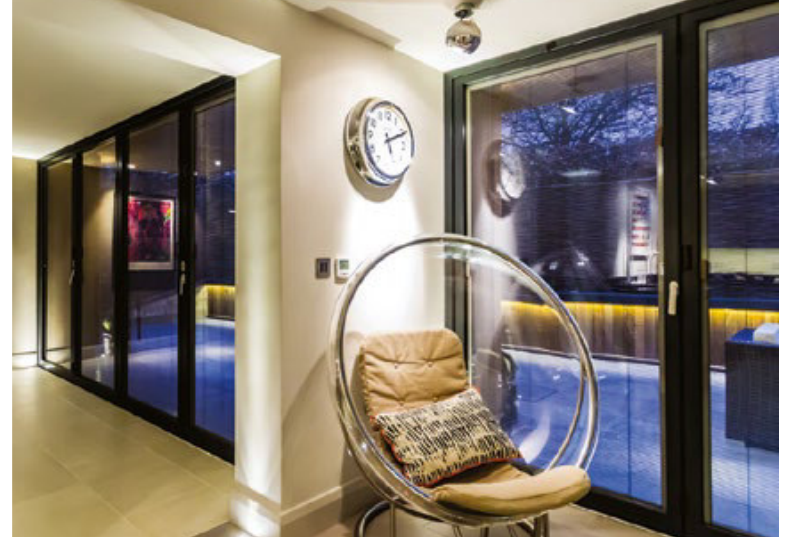
SOLUTIONS FOR SOLAR (P.122)

Tesla Powerwall.....
..... teslamotors.com/en_GB/powerwall
ImmerSUN immersun.co.uk
Sonnenbatterie sonnenbattery.com
Save Energy saveenergygroup.co.uk

EXTERNAL MAKEOVERS (P.133)

Lindab lindab.com/uk
Yeoman Rainguard..... rainguard.co.uk
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Smart Daylighting

Architect John Nortcliffe shares one of his practice's favourite design tricks

One of the challenges of converting agricultural buildings, such as barns, for contemporary residential use is daylighting. These buildings were initially built with few, if any, windows as their primary function was for storage or sheltering livestock. But modern domestic living demands plentiful natural light to create well-lit internal spaces, to reduce the need for artificial lighting and keep energy costs down.

Our preferred way of introducing daylight while preserving the agricultural character of an original building, is through concealed rooflights — an innovative solution to this tricky design challenge.

In certain circumstances, the planners may not want any new roof glazing to be visible from the ground, and so you have to be creative in your approach — as was the case with one of our

projects, Feering Bury Farm Barn (above), where we removed the existing roof and placed a series of large polycarbonate rooflights beneath a new roof surface of expanded steel mesh. The openings within the mesh are orientated towards the sky and allow light from above to flood the interior with daylight. From the ground, however, these openings are completely invisible and the roof reads as a solid, uninterrupted surface, keeping the industrial character — which the planners were keen to retain — intact. 



Architect John Nortcliffe is an associate of award-winning practice Hudson Architects (hudsonarchitects.co.uk)

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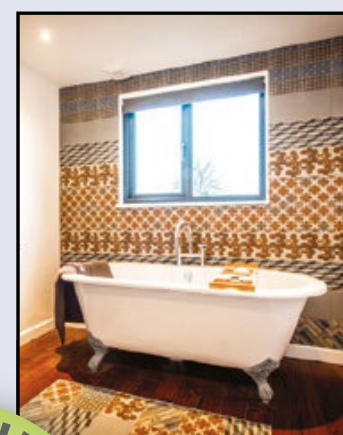
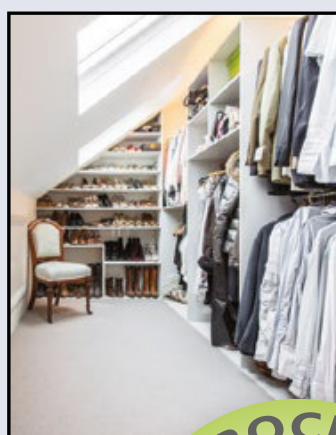
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