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PARKERELLIS

publishing limited

Cointronic House, Station Road
Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8DF

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Annual subscription costs just £48 for 12 issues, including post and packing. Phone 01435 863500 for details. Individual copies of the publication are available at £5.50 each inc p & p.

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Mira Showers will be showing examples from its new range of eco-friendly showers, namely the Mira Minilite Eco and the Mira Miniduo and Eco Showerhead, at Ecobuild.

Minilite Eco combines the successful Minilite mixer with the eco benefits of a factory fitted 6 lpm flow regulator (8 lpm alternative included in the pack), while the Miniduo and Eco Showerhead, as its name indicates, combines the Miniduo with the eco friendly Eco Showerhead. Both showers have the option of being surface mounted or built in.

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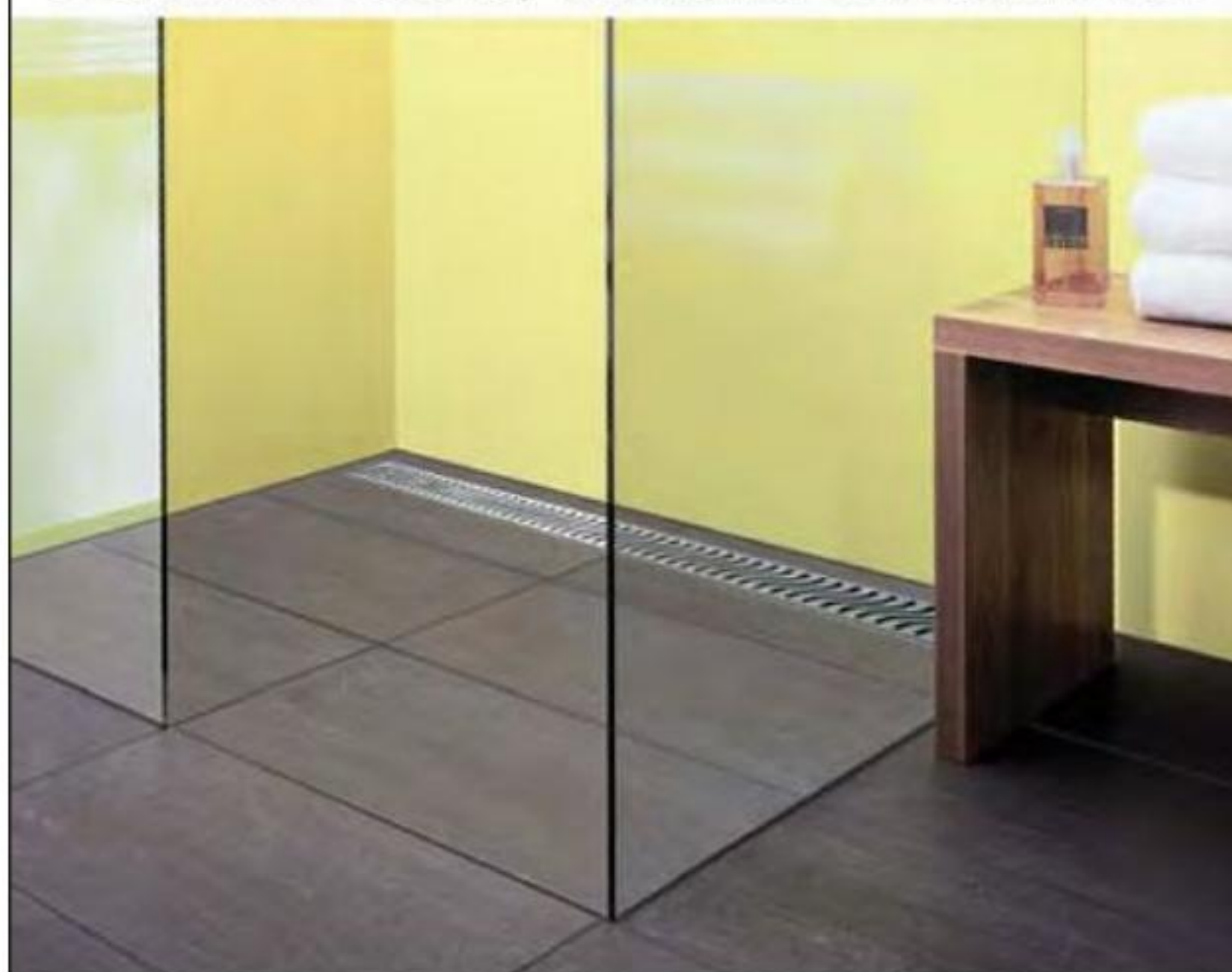
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British Fenestration Rating Council

The British Fenestration Rating Council (BFRC) is launching its new look website from at www.bfrc.org. This marks the completion of the first stage of its 2009 marketing campaign that aims to grow the market for Energy Efficient Windows. This redesigned site not only supports BFRC registered users, it also provides householders with a definitive guide to Energy Efficient Windows. The site now includes all the information that consumers need to make an informed choice when they are having new windows fitted as well as a directory of BFRC registered businesses.

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Putting the Heart Back Into Harton

By Heather Dixon

Photography by Dave Burton



shell as best they could.

"We liked it just as much inside," said Andrew. "We could certainly see its potential. In effect, we bought it by candlelight. Everyone thought we were mad. We didn't bother with a surveyors report because we knew it was going to be a full-scale renovation job and just expected the worst. It was actually advertised as a building plot, but we thought it would be cheaper to renovate the school rather than knock it down and start again."

They each secured a mortgage for half the amount, and as soon as planning permission was granted to convert it into a family home, they started work.

"We were going to live in a caravan, but the people in the village were so supportive of what we were doing that a neighbour, who was going away, said we could house sit for her rent-free for as long as we needed to."

Lucy and Andrew knew they wouldn't be able to do everything themselves, but after working on community build projects in Scotland they understood the benefits of many hands making light work.

"Traditional architecture has become very divorced from modern building work, so we thought it would be useful to create a situation where selfbuilders and architectural students could learn practical skills," said Andrew, who was lecturing at five different universities at the time.

So they launched a series of selfbuild workshops that offered hands-on experience in return for food and accommodation.

"This was in the early 1990s when there was a pioneering spirit among selfbuilders," said Andrew. "There were always 12 people on site at any one time, and people kept coming back for more. It was a great way of working."

Lucy's friends would also turn up in a group

Continued on page 9

If Andrew and Lucy Yeats hadn't run out of milk one morning, another Yorkshire village landmark might have bitten the dust.

However, when they took a fateful detour through Harton on their grocery trip to York, they noticed a small, dilapidated old school for sale on the edge of the village green.

The playground was swamped by five-foot-high nettles and the long brick building was sagging under the weight of

12 years of neglect, but eco-architects Andrew and Lucy took one look at each other and said, 'this is the one'.

"We had returned to the UK after living abroad for six years. Lucy was working in York and we wanted a place to buy," said Andrew. "We didn't have much money, but we fell in love with this place the moment we saw it."

The property was completely boarded up and there was no electricity, so they went back with a couple of candles to view the 15m x 5m



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for a weekend of renovating, while the villagers watched with approval as the old school started to breathe with new life.

"We heard stories of children walking for miles across the fields to school, barefoot in summer and with rags tied round their feet in winter," said Andrew. "Their soaking rags would be dried round a stove during lessons ready for the long journey home again."

Lucy had slightly more protection on her feet when she literally stamped on the ceiling in hob-nail boots to knock it through, but Andrew had no protection when he took a sledgehammer to the front wall which was on the verge of collapse.

"It keeled over without much effort," said Andrew. "Unfortunately, we broke every rule in the book along the way. We couldn't afford scaffolding so we borrowed pallets and stacked them on top of one another to create a stand. On the first day I fell off and twisted my thumb."

So while Lucy continued to take the rest of the wall out, Andrew sat on the tarmac for the next two weeks, chipping mortar off the bricks with one hand.

The challenge was how they were going to rebuild the wall for a reasonable cost.

"We had a few quotes which were very steep, then one man called in on his way to church to

Continued on page 11



Garador

Garador have released a new PVC garage door panel that provides a clean, crisp and impact resistant surface. The Sherborne PVC door is available in standard sizes and comes with all the benefits of a Garador, as well as the additional options offered by the manufacturer. The PVC panel is built around the robust Garador box section chassis and provides high quality engineering with a material that perfectly matches the PVCu doors and windows commonly found on homes throughout the UK. Simon Hipgrave, managing director of Garador commented: "There are so many advantages that this new PVC panel offers. "The fact that PVC panel is maintenance free is hugely appealing to customers while aesthetically it suits modern houses and comes with the same inherent security and durability advantages of our other products." An additional lock kit and Retractable Plus gear - which provides a greater area for drive through, are available as extra options on the Sherborne.

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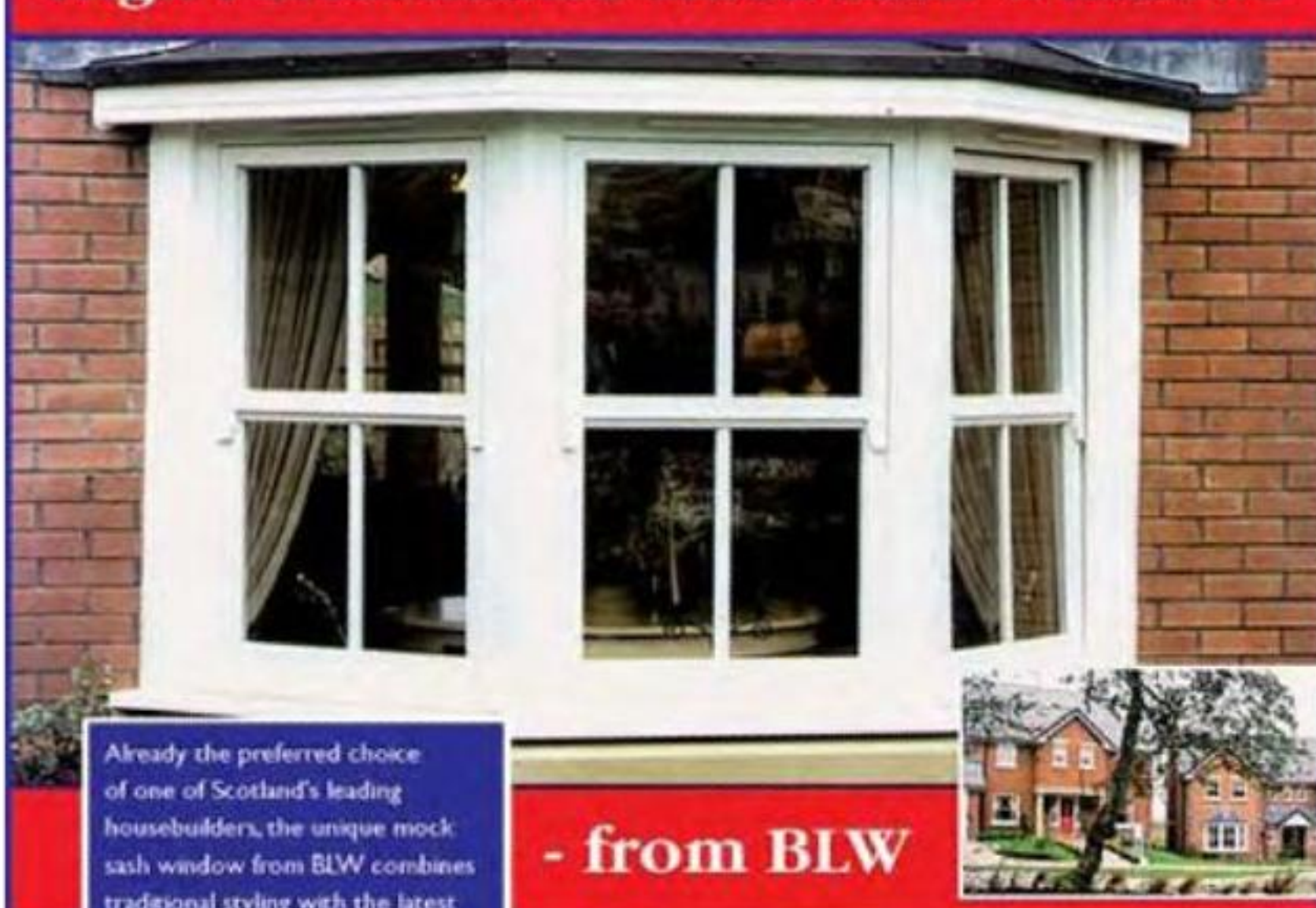
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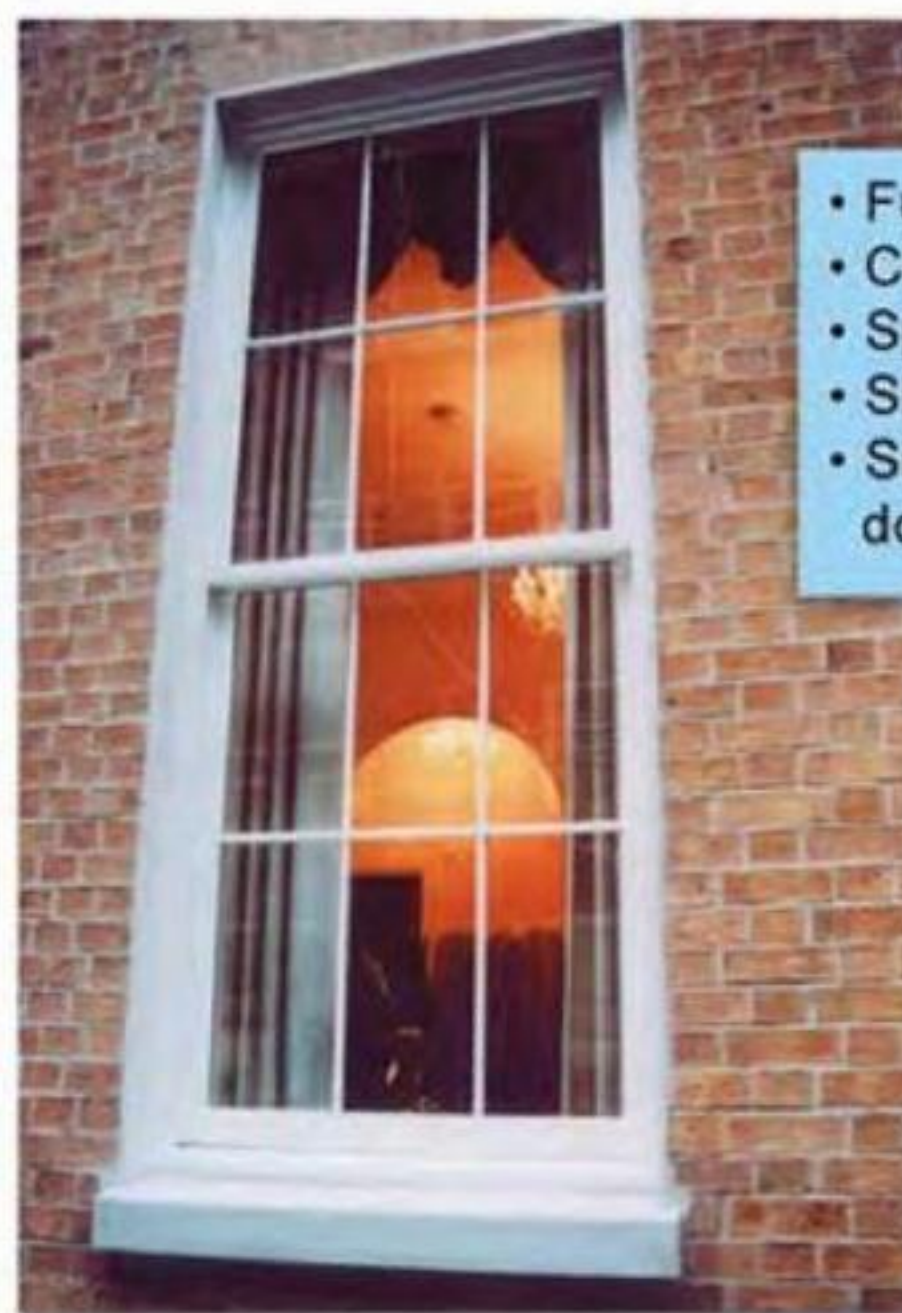
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Fact File:

Owners: Andrew and Lucy Yeats
Professions: Architects who run their own business, Ecoarc
Style of House: Former school house built 1880
Land Cost: £43,000
Build costs: £40,000 for phase one which created a three bedroom house. £90,000 for Phase two which created office, bathroom, study/bedroom, bedroom upstairs
Total cost: £130,000
Main construction took: One year (first phase), nine months (second phase)
Current value of property: £725,000



have his wedding banns read. He was so besotted with his bride-to-be that he under quoted by half the amount of everyone else."

What he hadn't accounted for in his £4,000 quote was the fact that the building sloped by almost a foot into one corner and the brick courses had to slope with it.

"He had to undo several layers and create sloping string lines for it to work," said Andrew.

With the wall rebuilt and the ceilings down, they ferried all the rubble to a skip which was then taken by the local farmers to use for field tracks.

Every inch of original skirting board, architrave and beam was removed by hand, labelled and numbered, ready for re-fitting at a later date, the collar ties were raised and the

building dry-lined. Roof lights, insulation and upper floors were installed and the original windows were repaired and refitted. Fortunately the roof, which had been replaced

in the 1980s as part of a Youth Training Scheme, didn't have to be touched.

Behind the main school room was a

Continued on page 12



cloakroom and toilet block, which Lucy and Andrew converted into a dining area and utility room.

The school had been divided into two sections by a sliding screen, which was stripped back to bare wood and reused. Reclaimed doors from a remand home were used in other areas, then Andrew built the kitchen himself for just £200, including the worktops, plus £75 for a slightly damaged Belfast sink. The Aga was given in lieu of fees for a job he did and the original classroom floors, which were 'treacle black' with polish, were sanded so hard that the old cast nails

showed through.

"We decorated and furnished the house, buying all kinds of things on eBay, and then had a period of consolidation," said Andrew.

It would be several years before they applied for planning permission to start the second phase, which would create a spacious office, study, bathroom and another bedroom, turning the original T-shaped house into an H-shape.

"It was a real shock to be told that this would take us over the permitted development threshold, so Lucy fired off a seven-page letter, delivered personally to the chief planning officer of Ryedale District Council, outlining all

the reasons why this wasn't the case," said Andrew. "Permission was in the post the following morning."

The spec of the new section exceeded all the Building Regs requirements of that time and the build was more straight forward, with a joinery firm and brick layers turning Andrew and Lucy's architectural drawings into reality. The result is an office with a high, white painted beamed ceiling and a glazed passive solar room, linking the old and new sections, at the heart of the house.

The house has taken, in total, 15 years to complete and they have only just added the



final, finishing touches. However, Andrew and Lucy are ready for another challenge. Having put the heart back into the tiny village of Harton, they have now bought another building which is 'ripe for renovation' in Cumbria. Both Lucy and

Andrew love walking, climbing, sailing and cycling, so the house is perfectly located, and will ultimately become an eco-house in the truest sense of the word.

Contacts: Enquire to these companies at www.sbhonline.eu

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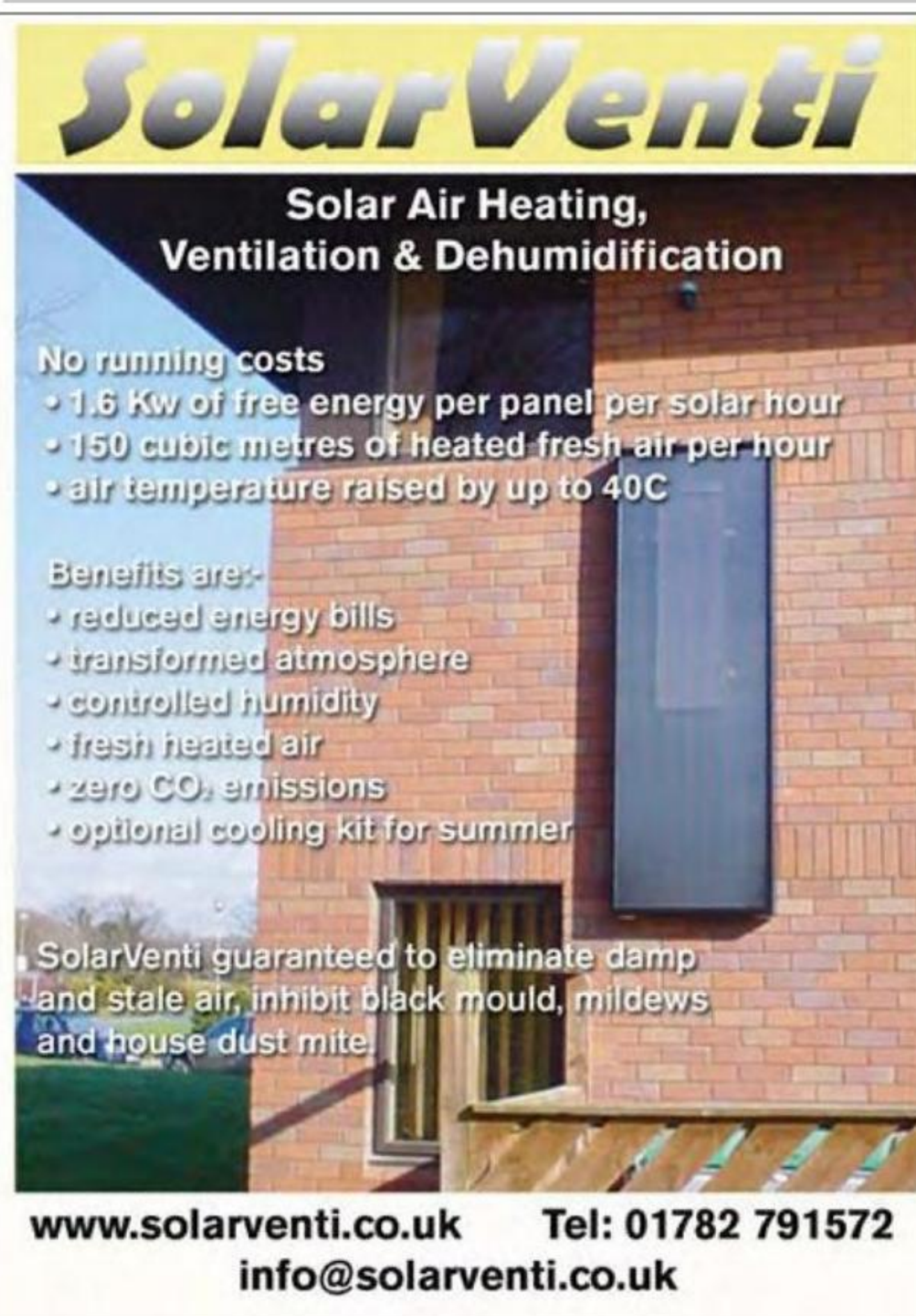
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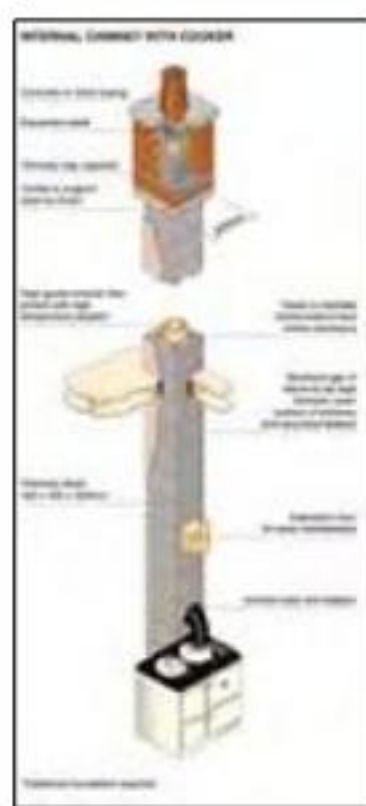
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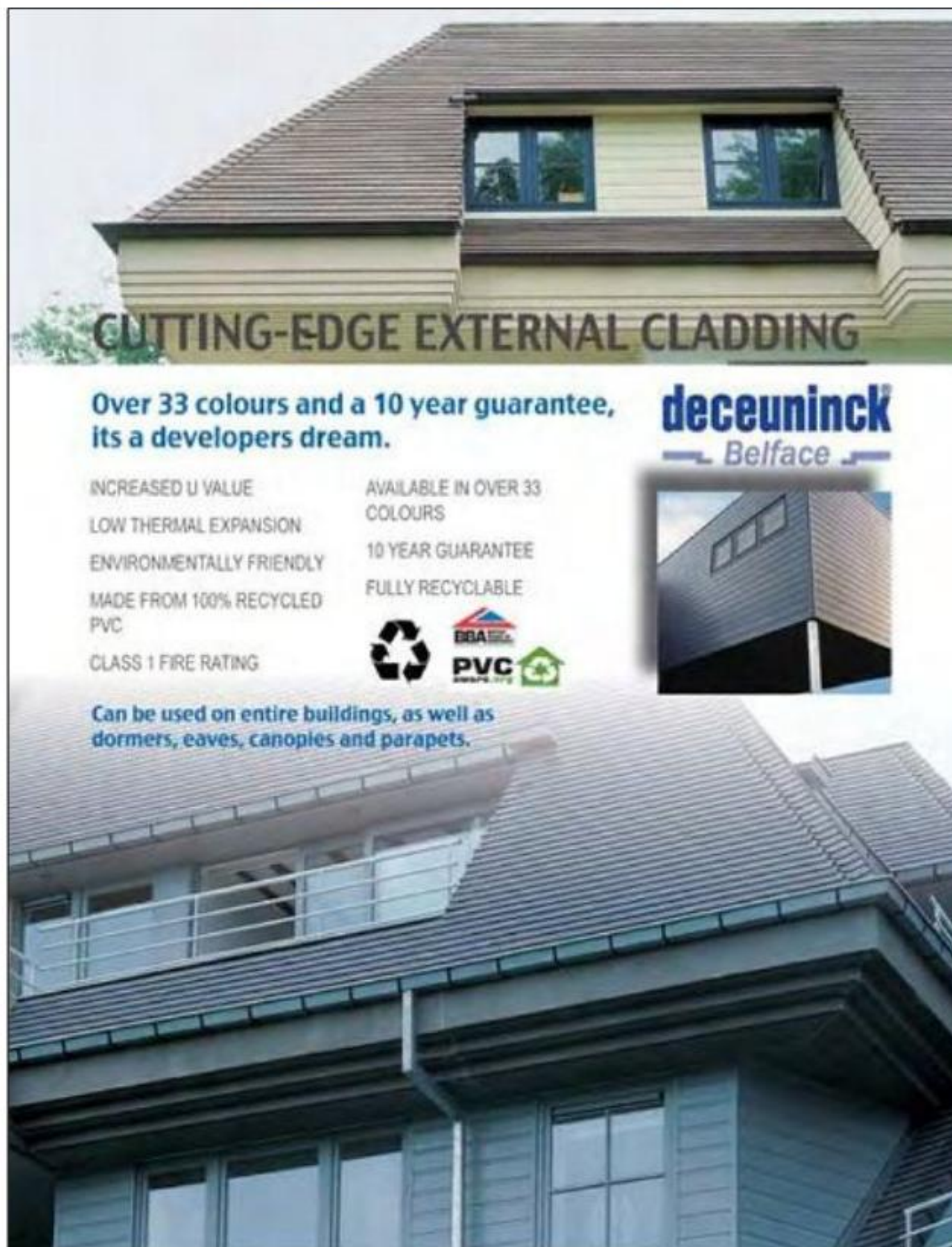
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Having Fun on the Floor

2008 saw a revival of 70's style across the board. High-waisted, wide leg trousers and floaty, floral maxi dresses littered the fashion magazines, while Eagles and Led Zeppelin concerts sold out nationwide. Coming into Spring/Summer 2009, in terms of the home shagpile carpet and deep shades of Biba-esque purple are becoming leading trends in interior design.

Leading carpet manufacturers have announced a massive 400% increase in sales of Shagpile carpet since 2006. The main focus in

new carpet sales is in new-style, textured flooring, from jumbo yarns and irregular hand knotted styles, to carpets made to look like pom poms.

Interior Designer Danielle Proud, spearheading the Fun on the Floor campaign, says: "People are searching for something that little bit different and want to make their homes stand out whilst still remaining contemporary. 70's colour palettes and carpet styles are making a comeback. Deep shagpiles in aubergine, tangerine and forest green are suddenly looking right again, while patterns from 70's style to Victorian flourishes, are the big story of Spring/Summer 2009."



Victorian Room

The room has a modern "gothic" feel with a definitive wow factor. Lots of sleek dark colours and traditional furniture shapes, give a modern edge. Huge outsize sofas are covered in cool mulberry and deep red carpet tones, while the seat-pads echo the ornate pattern in the bespoke monkey print carpet. The focus for this room is to create a darkish stately backdrop, with a distinctly Victorian feel, and a layer of colour and modish elements over the top. The main carpet in this room is a

luxurious, soft pile pure wool carpet in deep red, with antique monkey illustrations digitally printed over the top. The main carpet is framed within a claret border. Ornate standard lamps feature different dressings on top adding a playful edge. Lighting is key in this room, especially around the huge furniture which will be uplit or down lit to create areas of dramatic tension. The curtains are exquisitely made and hand finished, using a patchwork of silks. While the resurgence in Victorian style dovetails perfectly with the carpet comeback.



Kidult Room

A grown up version of the kid's playroom, this is the new breed of a leisure room that people are creating in their homes as dads are playing computer games as much as their children and the football /movies aren't as fun to watch on a screen that's not cinema sized. This is a cross between a family media room and a chill out room. This room is the result of all the professional consumer technology on the market (home cinema screens at affordable prices, everyone with video

cameras now, etc), and a result of people's irritation with the price and discomfort of commercial cinemas. It's ultra comfy, fun and the colours and textures make you want to just dive in and slob out. It has the feel of a modern chill out room. The room is packed with huge comfy rocker chairs covered in snazzy red and navy zebra print, facing a big TV screen, while the walls are carpet "booth style" with seating built into the walls. The carpet is jet black, deep shag pile and wonderfully soft and comfy underfoot.



Jungle Room

A wild, hand crafted "jungle bunk bed" is custom made in the corner of the room with huge carpet "leaves" spilling over the edge for the ultimate bespoke furniture. The chair in the middle of the room is made again using neon pink and orange carpet "petals", while the floor is bright

green and stain resistant (perfect for a children's room). The walls are painted with jungle illustrations in big panels. Vine and floral designs that echo the wall art have been inlaid into the floor carpet. The feel of this room is fun, bright and in your face; perfect for any child, no matter what their age.



Natural Room

This room focuses on super-naturals: real wools, sisal and huge chunky textures. The vibe in this room is an ultra-cosy escape from the stresses of urban living and work. The credit crunch has kick-started a return to home comforts and falling back in love with the place you're in. People are entertaining from home and making their home a retreat that enlivens the senses and brings them closer to nature: an antidote to concrete, computers and harsh city life. The carpet is made from huge scale looped yarns that form a pom pom

effect across the floor, while a chandelier made of amber, clear and white glass globes cascades from the ceiling. For this room, different elements of nature being brought inside are key. The look hints at the aesthetics of a good boutique country retreat, with lots of modern day takes on traditional arts and crafts. Handmade furniture includes an outside sofa covered in the same pom pom carpet as the floor, sprouting surreally out of the floor. The focus for this room is a feeling of sanctuary, a stylish yet simplistic haven from the harsh outside world.

*Danielle Proud, Interior Designer,
Fun on the Floor*

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Hot Property

The selfbuild market has historically led the way with new technologies, pioneering such concepts as underfloor heating and rainwater harvesting, and is widely recognised to be at the forefront of the zero-carbon movement.

As selfbuilders continue to construct some of the most environmentally friendly homes in the UK, the majority of existing low and zero carbon homes are also selfbuilds. In its January 2009 report, entitled 'Self build as a volume housing solution', the National Self Build Association (NaSBA) stated that the green credentials of selfbuild homes meant that 100,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year could be saved if an extra 25,000 were built.

With heat responsible for around 47% of the UK's total carbon emissions, the when, where and how of its provision in any new build is a major design consideration. To date, A-rated gas boilers, heat pumps and biomass systems

have all been touted as the solution but, as the energy crisis deepens and we move to ever tighter building regulations, a new contender is coming to the fore; electric heating.

Paving the way for this latest development are the proposed revisions to SAP and Part L, which mean that many homes will no longer need space heating for much of the year due to improved HLP values, and the increased availability of clean, green electricity, whether generated on or off site.

In contrast to traditional plumbed heating systems where the heat is either 'on' or 'off' with radiators and rooms often hotter or colder than desired, electric heating systems can enable the creation of a heating schedule that is tailored to the exact needs of a property's occupants, reflecting not only when and where they want heat, but also the specific temperature they want each room to be.

Moreover, each individual radiator constantly monitors the room temperature against what it

As we move towards zero carbon new homes, heating remains a hot topic of debate. David Garrity, Managing Director of Heat Electric, examines why electric heating is getting a warm welcome from selfbuilders across the UK

has been programmed to achieve. If the room is too cold the radiator will activate until the desired temperature has been reached at which point it will immediately stop drawing electricity. In this way, cold spots, overheating and energy wastage are avoided.

Continued on page 21

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Ideal Stelrad



Ideal Stelrad has launched Softline, a contemporary approach to traditional solutions that features a unique curved shaped grille for those looking for the ultimate in radiator design and performance at an affordable price. With 94 models available in a wide range of sizes and outputs, Stelrad Softline offers installers, developers and the new build sector a high quality and innovative radiator that can add a new dimension to any room in the home. The Stelrad Softline range comes complete with a 10 year Manufacturer's warranty.

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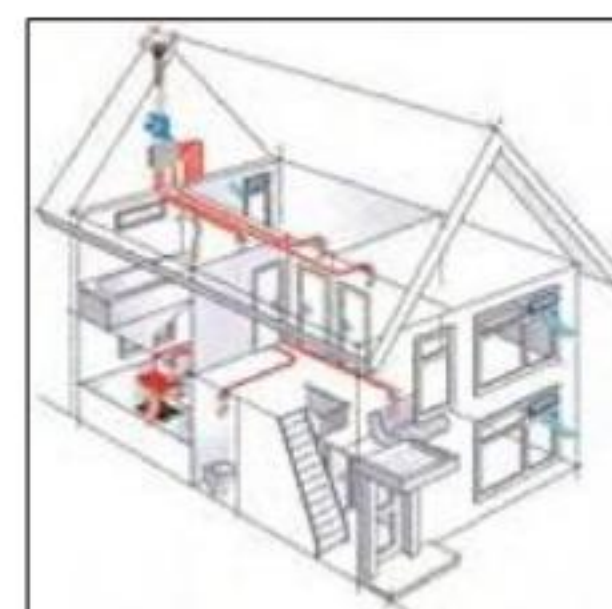
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Itho Ventilation

Taking the future of domestic ventilation to new levels, the Itho DemandFlow is a fully automated Demand Controlled Ventilation system providing the best possible air quality whilst generating maximum savings in energy without the user having to do a single thing for it. This innovative 'breathing dwelling' concept is based on CO₂ measurements in every room, both wet rooms and habitable rooms. If the occupant has a party, the system will continue to operate until deep in the night. If the occupant is on holiday, ventilation automatically reduces to a minimum.



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It is therefore the superior controllability of this latest generation of electric heating and its ability to deliver heat only when and where it is needed combined with its use of renewable energy, that make it the ideal solution to the current heating debate.

The role of electric heating was recently examined by the Energy Saving Trust (EST)

in the short term, direct acting electrical heating can be specified subject to excellent HLP values and, where required, the installation of solar hot water heating, while emissions can be further reduced by the use of micro generation systems such as photovoltaics.

Post 2020, the report states that dwellings with direct acting heating will be able to achieve similar

against current and proposed building regulations along with the Code for Sustainable Homes. The calculations were based on the use of grid electricity and a predicted reduction in its carbon content through initiatives such as the Government's Renewable Energy Strategy, due to be published this spring, which seeks a 30% cut in CO₂ emissions from grid electricity by 2020.

Unveiled in November 2008, the technical report concluded that, in

CO₂ emissions to those served by an A-rated gas boiler while in 2050 and beyond, they will have lower CO₂ emissions than those with either A-rated gas boilers or biomass systems.

The latest generation of electric heating also offers self builders a number of other key benefits over alternative space heating systems:

- Lower purchase and installation costs
- Ability to run on the low cost Economy 10 tariff
- Maintenance free; electric radiators do not need to be bled, topped up or serviced
- Speed of installation
- Greater choice in terms of the design and layout of a room as no pipework is required and there is no central boiler to locate
- Consistency; while in a plumbed central heating system heat loss through pipework means the first radiator fed by the boiler is always warmer than the last, each electric radiator operates independently, reaching its optimum temperature every time
- Reliability; if a boiler fails in a plumbed central heating system the entire system goes down, leaving a home without heating or hot water and potentially costing hundreds to repair or thousands to replace. In contrast, if an individual electric radiator fails, the others will continue to operate as normal

Ultimately, the success of any new heating initiative will be determined by the end user but I'd like to put forward electric heating as a 100% efficient, 100% effective and, most importantly, a sustainable solution to our current heating crisis.

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Grundfos Pumps



Grundfos are pleased to announce the release to sale of their new condensate removal pump the Conlift L, which means there are now two models of condensate removers, the original Conlift and the

new, more compact, Conlift L. The Conlift L has 4 inlets for flexible installation and new fittings that allow connections to be made to standard 32mm & 40mm pipework. Condensate pumps can be used everywhere that condensate produced from latent water vapour needs to be removed on a regular basis.

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www.grundfos.co.uk

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Honeywell



The new Honeywell heating controls web site provides a wealth of advice and tips to save energy and enhance comfort, with radiator, underfloor and electric heating. It includes wireless controls, which are fast and easy to install – and make it easy to divide a home into heating zones, each with a different profile to match heating with lifestyles. Many heating installers fit

only Honeywell because reliability is second to none and they are easy to use. Visit the web site – then insist on Honeywell!

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www.honeywelluk.com

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make a house a sustainable home with Ecodan, the low carbon alternative to a traditional gas or oil boiler. Installing Ecodan will reduce a home's running costs and its CO₂ emissions, as well as helping to comply with the Code for Sustainable Homes.

For more information visit www.mitsubishielectric.co.uk/heating

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Honeywell Home Comfort Controls



Households can cut fuel consumption and ease the pain of high fuel prices, simply by upgrading the home heating controls, advises Honeywell, the world's leading controls manufacturer. The simple room thermostat fitted in many homes controls to one single temperature whenever the heating is on, but a programmable thermostat saves energy and enhances comfort by adjusting room temperatures automatically through the day, depending on how rooms are used. Honeywell wireless controls do not need control cables, so are quick and easy to fit.

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Tel: 01344 656511

www.honeywelluk.com

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CVO Fire



The Rectangle is part of the new CVO Geometrix range. This stunning "Hole in the Wall" fire has been designed used award winning burner technology to create a dramatic flame with shimmering flames and a sea of crisp sparkles. The Rectangle is supplied as a complete suite with integral burner, enclosure and fascia. With a depth of only 330mm it is suitable for

installation into both new and old properties. The complete fireplace suite is created from high quality Brushed Stainless Steel.

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Tel: 01325 301020

www.cvo.co.uk

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Myson

Myson has listened to its customers and reviewed market needs as part of a review of its towel warmer and designer heating products. As a result of the review, all products will be supplied from stock, abolishing manufacturing lead times, while a new, easy-to-use combined brochure and price list will be produced, ensuring all information is in one place. The newly configured range will allow customers at all levels, from end users to specifiers and installers, to access information more easily and quickly. New installation instructions and technical drawings will be downloadable from the company's website.

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KingspanWater

Kingspan Environmental has created a new umbrella brand, KingspanWater, for all its sustainable water solutions. The company's existing product portfolio of Envireau, Raintrap, above-ground commercial Rainstore, and domestic Rainstore waterbutts, will be united under this single banner, making KingspanWater one of the largest suppliers of rainwater harvesting equipment to the UK building industry. Other current and future innovations in the field of sustainable water solutions will also be part of KingspanWater.

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Grundfos Pumps



Since its launch last year, the Grundfos E-Cademy is as popular as ever! Thousands of people have already signed up to take advantage of this innovative website. The program is made up of a series of training modules giving technical information on pumps. There are now nine modules, but they are already

working on the next one so look out for it. The most recent module is about the Grundfos Magna Pump, so be sure to go online and check that out. After each module there is a short multiple choice quiz.

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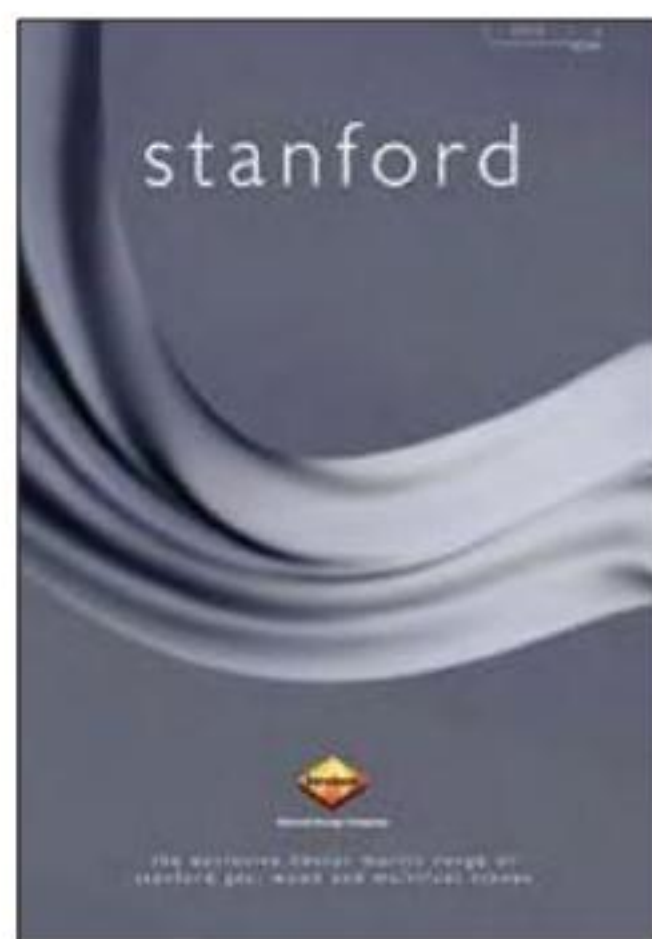
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Euroheat

Euroheat has brought out its new Stanford heating stove brochure, displaying a stunning winter range that will inspire anyone looking to turn an ordinary space into a room with a feature centrepiece. The brochure contains easy to digest technical information on the heating stoves and their features and options. This sits alongside stunning photography showing how the Stanford models marry the traditional qualities of cast iron with an aesthetically modern design. The new brochure is also a useful read as it contains several user reference guides.



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Toolstation

HB&R Show
Stand No: F174

Toolstation's stand F174 at this year's National Homebuilding & Renovating Show will be live and interactive. The Toolstation team will be demonstrating the new toolstation.com to visitors to the stand. Toolstation's Promotions Manager Hannah Kersley Baker explained, "A major new feature of the site is live stock-level information. Users can now simply log-in and click on a product and it will show how many are available for same-day despatch on a next-day delivery service. It can also be used to check stock availability in any of our Sales Counters across the country."



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NEC Birmingham 19 - 22 March 2009

HOMEBUILDING & RENOVATING

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home. Additionally, with the opportunity to negotiate hard on labour and materials prices in the current economic climate, potential selfbuilders and renovators could make significant savings on their budgets if they plan carefully, shop around and do their homework.

Whether you are renovating, extending, building or wanting to make the most of your home, now is a great time to visit The National

Homebuilding & Renovating Show. In its seventeenth year and attracting almost 50,000 visitors over the four days, the 2009 Show offers over 500 exhibitors, 96 free seminars and master classes, The Eco Homes Show, 'Ask the Experts', Specialist Technical Zones and much more.

High energy prices are still hitting the headlines, so the organisers of the show have put together some top tips on how to improve the energy efficiency of your home:

Increase Insulation Levels

Insulating your home is a great way to reduce energy costs. For the average house 30% of the heat simply escapes through the walls and roof. There is a range of grants available to help with insulation costs.

Consider Alternative Energy Technologies

Grants are available for solar panels and other micro generation technologies via the Low Carbon Buildings Programme.

Work Your Windows

Around 20% of the heat lost from an average home is through the windows. Consider double glazing your windows or secondary double-glazing if you live in a period property. Double-glazing cuts heat loss through windows by 50% and could significantly reduce your heating bill.

Use Radiator Reflector Panels

Shockingly over 50% of the heat from our radiators is simply used to heat the walls behind them, which means that less than half is used to heat our rooms. Energy saving radiator panels are like tin foil sheets that reflect the heat back from your walls into your room. They can save as much as 20% on your heating bill.

Buy Low Energy Appliances

Make sure white goods like fridges, freezers and washing machines are A rated (or A++ for fridges and freezers). This means they are very efficient and, with washing machines, use less water than other models. Remember to turn off

Continued on page 27

Would-be renovators and selfbuilders should see 2009 as an excellent time to start a building project. The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show, on at the NEC from 19 to 22 March, can help you make the most of your home.

A 34% nationwide increase in the number of plots available for selfbuilders makes 2009 an excellent time to consider building your own



Sunfold are at HB&R2009 this year with their new SFS455 lift and glide aluminium sliding door. There will also be examples of their other market leading products on stand F112.

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HB&R Show
Stand No: F140

Hörmann UK

Hörmann UK has moved an integral part of its Series 2000 garage door manufacturing process closer to home. The painting of the garage doors will now be carried out here in the UK, a move which will benefit customers as lead times will be significantly reduced. The full range of 15 RAL colours will still be available for all double-skinned doors. Hörmann UK is now also offering the full 15 RAL colour options, as well as a black option, for the single skinned LTE range of garage doors. The LTE's were previously supplied as standard in traffic white, but customers are now able to specify the perfect colour to suite their property. David Newcombe, Sales Director Domestic Division & Marketing Manager, commented: "We are constantly exploring ways to increase customer service and reducing lead times is always a major priority. The fact that we have our range of colours available for the LTE range means we have a painted offer on a price leading product which should appeal to customers." Hörmann UK offers the widest range of garage doors and accessories, front entrance doors and gate operators under one roof.

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Dreadnought Tiles

HB&R Show
Stand No: F119



Dreadnought are recognised as the roof tile of choice for the discerning selfbuilder. Their naturally coloured traditional plain clay tiles have been repeatedly acclaimed with the Best Self Build Clay Roof Award. Lakewood House pictured here won the prestigious 2008 award. The mixed coloured roof is Dreadnought's Collingwood Blend which was chosen to blend in with the rural surroundings and add a rustic feel to this modern house.

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Tel: 01384 77405

www.dreadnought-tiles.co.uk

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Vistamatic

HB&R Show
Stand No: A186

Homebuilders can find out how to design out crime with the new secure vision panel, Vistamatic X, due to be exhibited at Homebuilding and Renovating Show 09 (19-22 March 2009), Hall 5, Stand no A186. Vistamatic will demonstrate how this new product, integrated within a colourful range of GRP composite doors, can reveal the identity of a caller by a simple half turn of a handle. By turning a handle, users can switch between a clear glass panel for discreet observation of a caller and an opaque design for complete privacy. Vistamatic X uses Pilkington Optilam 6.4mm laminated glass and is manufactured in the UK.



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computers, TVs and video/DVD players rather than leaving them on stand-by when not in use, as this will substantially cut energy use.

Be Clever with Lighting

Use energy efficient lighting throughout your home. Good quality low energy light bulbs are a great investment as they use a lot less power and last longer. Priced from just £5, they last 12 times longer than an ordinary light bulb.

Heating Hints

Use individual thermostatic controls on radiators in every room. If the room isn't in use, keep the control turned to low to avoid heating rooms unnecessarily. If you're thinking of a new boiler the most efficient type of gas fired boiler is the condensing boiler which recycles otherwise wasted energy from the combustion gases.

Continued on page 29



Rainharvesting Systems will be showcasing their products at the National Homebuilding & Renovating Show on stand A150 with expert advice on hand.

169



Kloeber UK is a manufacturer of high performance timber glazed products and a specialist in folding sliding doors. We are able to supply a complete package.

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HB&R Show
Stand No: J121

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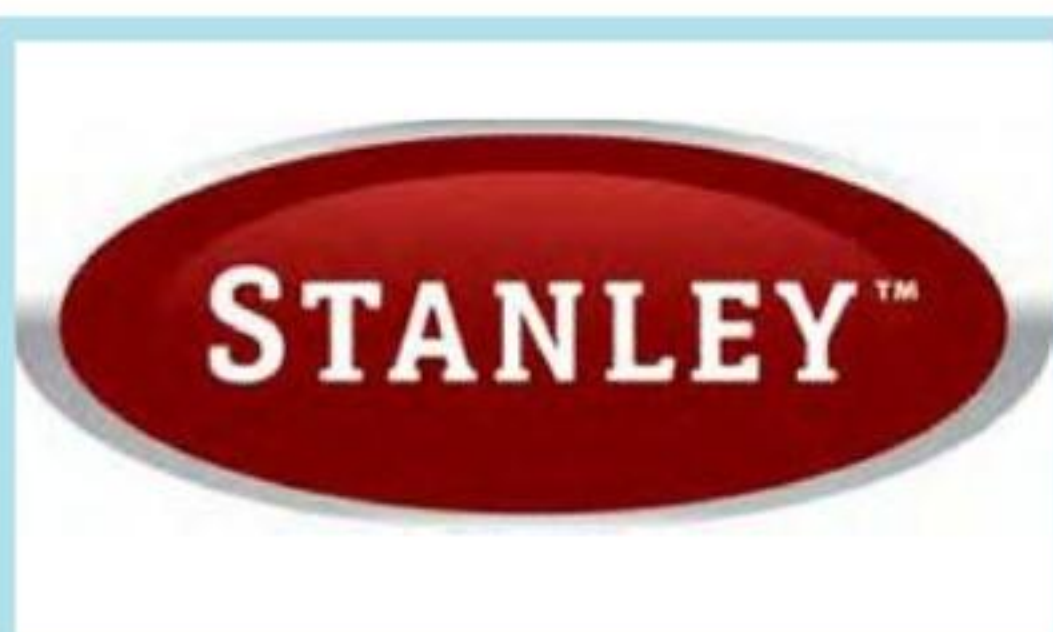
Do Your Homework

Do your homework and get as much information as possible. Visit websites like those for the Association for Environment Conscious Building, the Centre for Alternative Technology and the Energy Saving Trust.

Visit The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show at the NEC, Birmingham from 19 to 22 March 2009.

Tickets are £10 in advance or £14 on the door (children under 16 go free).

For more information visit www.homebuildingshow.co.uk or call 0871 945 4547.



Waterford Stanley are launching our new Donard Woodburning Cooker. WI members can secure a £1000 discount voucher through our "double your money" offer.

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Sensible Heat will be showcasing the Honeywell Hometric Advanced Heating Controls and, new for the show, will feature integration with electricity metering and Philips Pronto.

177



SolarTech guide you through the various sources of funding available and you can even enter our free prize draw for a fully installed solar hot water system worth up to £5000!

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Double Your Money! Homebuilding & Renovating Show

NEW Donard Woodburning Cooker to be launched at the show

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Visit us on **Stand H135**

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*Terms and Conditions apply. Offer available only at the Homebuilding & Renovating Show. Offer exclusive to UK (excluding Northern Ireland).

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Haddonstone

HB&R Show
Stand No: G100



Haddonstone will be exhibiting at the National Homebuilding and Renovating Show at the NEC. Visitors to stand G100 will see designs in Haddonstone's revolutionary TecLite material. It is lighter and denser than traditional Haddonstone making it ideal for self build

projects, including retro-fit. It is also suitable for places where weight is an issue such as balconies. Copies of Haddonstone's inspirational 200-page catalogue and CD-ROM will be available on the stand.

...searchable information archive at www.sbhonline.eu

Tel: 01604 770711

www.haddonstone.com

180

Evolved Design

HB&R Show
Stand No: B173



Oswestry based Evolved Design has recently launched, providing environmentally friendly and carbon smart homes across the UK for small to medium size builders and the self building market.

Evolved Design offers a range of design and build solutions that major on environmentally friendly construction techniques using Modern and Traditional methods of construction to provide energy efficient homes. Evolved Design offers three levels of service; Design, Build, and Design and Build.

...searchable information archive at www.sbhonline.eu

Tel: 01691 778 846

www.evolved-design.co.uk

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Distinctive Doors

HB&R Show
Stand No: G150

Distinctive Doors are suppliers of quality interior and exterior doors in Oak as well as other hardwoods. Speciality ranges include 'Pre-Hung exterior Door Sets', 'SupaFold Folding & Sliding door sets' and their superbly crafted 'Elegant Entrance exterior combination frame and side panels door sets'. A nationwide delivery service is provided on their own vehicles to ensure all goods arrive in showroom condition. Visit their website to view the full range.



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Tel: 0114 220 2250

www.distinctivedoors.co.uk

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Velfac

HB&R Show
Stand No: G148

Velfac composite aluminium and wood glazing is widely employed in new housing projects such as the award-winning Melody Lane development in London. Here, the high-performance, low-energy glazing is used to maximise natural light within the mews-style townhouses, and to provide access to balcony and garden spaces. The internal pine frame also adds warmth and texture to the interior, whether the finish is a clear lacquer or paint. Velfac glazing delivers architectural versatility and requires minimal maintenance.



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www.velfac.co.uk

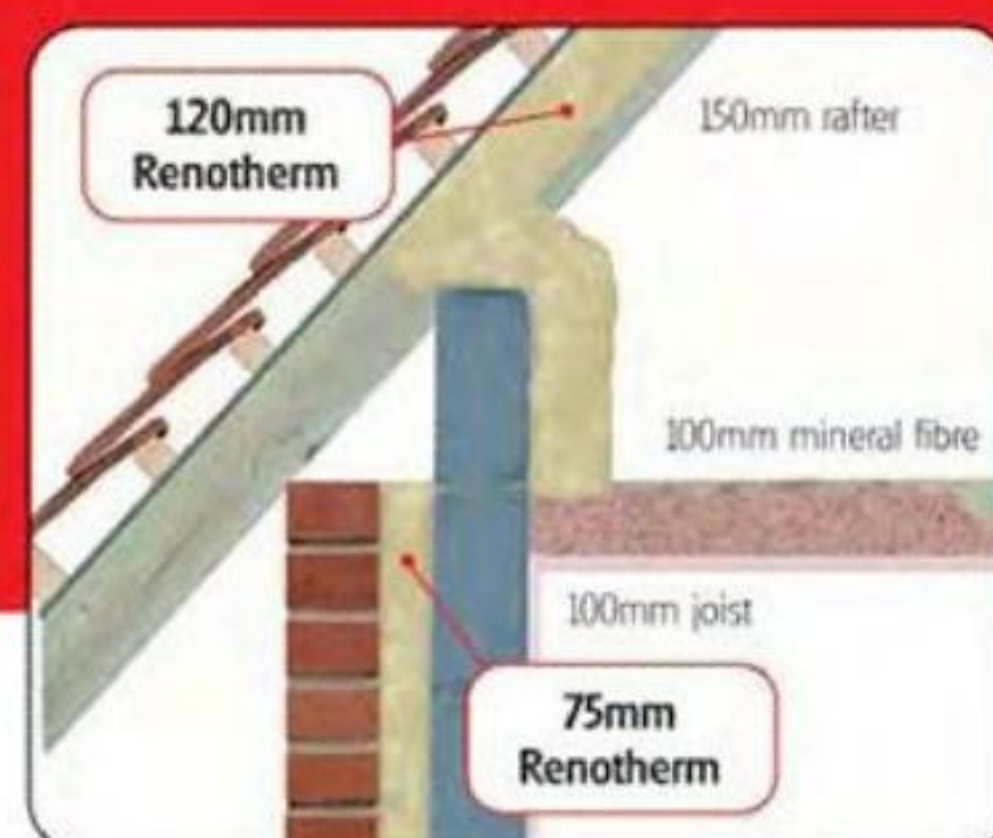
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HB&R Show
Stand No: C196

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*Figure based on unventilated loft space with 100mm mineral fibre at ceiling level

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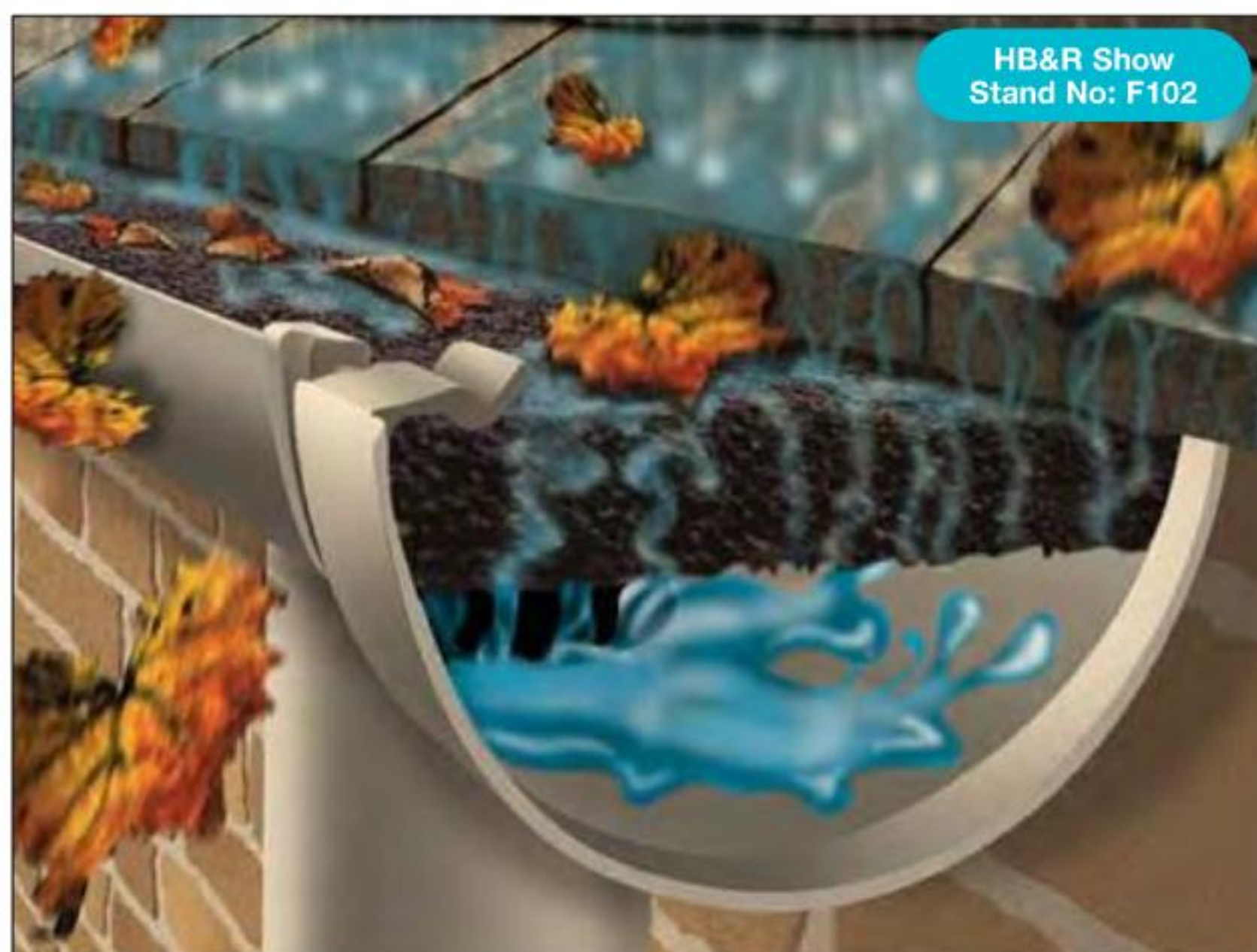
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Bristan

HB&R Show
Stand No: C148



Bristan has launched a comprehensive range of water efficient products to provide a total solution when it comes to saving water in the bathroom.

The 'ecosmart' collection comprises a choice of taps, showers, sanitaryware and flow limiters, all designed to deliver exceptional water saving benefits in the bathroom, and help builders to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Leading the range are 35 products that have been endorsed by the Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA) under its Water Efficient Labelling Scheme.

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Tel: 0844 701 6271

www.bristan.com/ecosmart

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Polypipe

HB&R Show
Stand No: H174

According to Polypipe's Martin Dootson, the Polypipe 123 Solution, a new web and disc-based quotation system for underfloor heating, has been warmly received by installers since it was launched last year receiving 1500 hits per week on the website. "It really is as easy as one-two-three" he says. "All you do is state the floor type, floor area and the control pack needed for a single room or whole house. The software does the rest and will give helpful guidance along the way."



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Tel: 01709 770000

www.ufch.com

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JG Speedfit

HB&R Show
Stand No: K140



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Tel: 01895 449233

www.johnguest.com

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Focus SB

HB&R Show
Stand No: L156

The new Prism2 clear acrylic wiring accessory range, from Focus SB, has incorporated a clip fixing system to avoid the requirement for screw fixing. This innovative design offers the market a discreet see-through look, which complements the client's chosen style of décor. This plate puts the emphasis on the wall covering rather than on the accessory itself. To further enhance its appearance the plate has a rounded raise edge which gives it a clean crisp look that is ideal for both contemporary and traditional interiors.



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Interior



With Spring settling in at Trendenza we're already gearing up for Summer 2009 and the eclectic mix of products winging their way to our showroom.

This summer sees key trends emerging in wall coverings with something for everyone and all budgets. Looks to keep an eye out for are, Modern Rococo, Nurture Nature, Sexy Back and East meets West with Fresh Oriental.

Modern Rococo still uses the key fundamental styles in the original rococo designs seen in many country houses and mansion properties styled today. Designs however have catapulted the classic styling baroque and flock wall coverings into the twenty first century and offers a tantalising assortment of rich berrylicious shades and flamboyant brights, mixed against crisp creams and deep blacks to add modern sophistication to the look and turn the heads of young

professionals everywhere. These new seasonal ranges hit the trend right on the button with their colourful and fresh take on the old original.

Fabric ranges too are dramatic statements this season, with several new fabric collections introduced, which marry this trend and transcend the traditional styling with a modern, grown-up evolvement in dramatic colour ways for luxurious elegance. What's really pleasing to see and what we have been keen to use more of for a while is companies, particularly wallcovering producers, that are becoming more environmentally aware and this includes

the designers and manufactures of wall coverings. Some of these ranges rather than being one dimensional include a diverse selection of more tactile wallcoverings with velvet finishes to the design, whilst others are more folk art in their design and others hark back to nature as an influence. However, what they all have in common is one resounding theme, and that is environmentally friendly forestry operations and the non use of PVC or harmful solvent use.

Another sleek look that's big this season is understated. Where its best been used to its

Trends 2009

most perfect advance is when designers understand subtle brilliantly and their collections of fabrics are in a combination of textures which can be a feast for the interior senses. The tactile delicateness of 'Ice' ranges which I saw recently both complements and enhances the wall coverings offering dimensional and transparent fabrics and really completed the interior setting magnificently

Bringing Sexy Back, has many of us in the showroom clamouring and cooing over the decadent textural wall coverings on offer. Trends see metallics and embellished iridescent swirling patterns in an abundance of textures for that all important high octane glamour and luxury we all aspire for. Be seduced by tones of Aubergine, Teal, Chocolate and mesmerising tones of Golds and Blush Neutrals.

Some designers this season are also using animal prints with dramatic effect including faux wallcoverings which last seasons cow hide and other animal prints progress and safari has moved on to crocodile, zebra and tiger prints to name a few.

The animal theme has also progressed into soft furnishings, curtains and upholstery. These textures are both visually striking and tactile to the touch. These current animalistic trends afford grown up styling to bring the tiger out in all of us. Also new for the summer look out for leather flooring and wall tiles; these are robust and provide warmth to the rooms they are used in, from living rooms to bedrooms and other high traffic areas.

East continues to meet West with the ever popular trend for all things Asian with Fresh Oriental. Colour palettes have become more varied and designs have seen the strong introduction of flowers, leaves and scenic, crackled backdrops providing inspiration.

Peaceful shades of Mink, Silver, Cocoa juxtaposes with energetic tones of Turquoise, Orange and Pink.

Masters of this look have this season created fabulous designs by using an array of Orient inspired vivid colours in their collections; rich reds and oranges against the contrast of

harsh black finer design lines. These collections are offered in a captivating selection of matching fabrics for any room setting.

All these key looks are easily adapted and brought together. Coverings are growing beyond the compound of the infamous feature wall and today's consumer is embracing corresponding papers to add depth and texture within their homes. However, for the paper shy person who has yet to be converted feature walls can add a fresh dimension when mixed with the vast array of coloured emulsions available on the open market.

All the top names in paint now offer a spectrum of choice and backdrop colours have been injected with life to bring 'Delicate Neutrals' and 'Cashmere Beiges' into summer 2009 and to sit perfectly with the strong wall coverings mentioned.

To really complete the look flooring is key with the strong renaissance of Carpet and flooring Art-Rugs! Whilst we have all done the minimalist look of laminate and preached it's durability to all, nothing can quite compare with walking across a soft, warm, welcoming floor and that means designers have been sourced from across the globe and enticed to work with large companies to inject life into the wool pile and really mix up the designs, colour ways and textures of carpets. Durability, maintenance, suitability and price are paramount.

Key looks emerging are Retro stripes, Sisal, Bamboo & Paper and Velvets alongside updated versions of the favourite Wools and Coirs in understated tones of cream, Linen, Hazelnut and Mocha.

For the consumer prepared to be adventurous then understanding the dynamic that floor Art-Rugs can bring to a room is key in encapsulating the interior trends in '09. Bespoke made in any variation: material and design to dyed skins in a scintillating array of colours there is an abundance of choice, texture, style and look that the only limitation is our imagination and confidence when putting trends together.

Becki Linley,
Trendenza

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Thermal Economics



Thermal Economics foil enhanced cavity wall insulation systems now offer two low cost solutions to meet current SH code requirements. Alreflex 2L2 has been in use by Britain's biggest house builders for over 20 years and at a cost of around £2.00 per m² it is still the cheapest way to meet code level 3 cavity insulation requirements. The new 50 mm thick Alreflex Platinum board product can achieve code level 4. Both products offer the unique benefits of reduced cavity width and overlapping rain waterproof joints.

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Tel: 01582 450814

www.thermal-economics.co.uk

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Jaga Heating

New from Jaga for 2009 are two products inspired by traditional column radiators that have been given an added contemporary twist. The Jaga Pinch has soft, sculpted curved ribs that suit it for the hippest hotel, office or home, while the Jaga Twine Piano, with its distinctive alternating black and white colouring, has a cool authenticity to ensure that it complements and enhances any setting be it traditional or modern. Both new products work well with modern modulating condensing or heat pumps in a low water temperature system.

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HB&R Show
Stand No: J118



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WS Westin



Westin are the only UK Company to manufacture and supply custom-built domestic kitchen extractors. Westin's wholly bespoke service gives designers the flexibility they demand to create functional yet beautiful living spaces. John Reed, MD of Westin, explains "Custom-build is the

art of re-creating the client's exact design and allows our clients to design without compromise and commission any shape or style of hood to work alongside the theme of a kitchen or home."

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Shaws

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2 Kitchens123 sells a wide range of quality kitchens: Solid-wood fascias, modern vinyl finishes, painted kitchens, or primed ready to paint. The best news is that the average kitchen only costs around £1700 (including VAT, but excluding appliances). Kitchens123 offer affordable designer kitchens, over 50 years of experience, options to suit your budget, thousands of door styles and free friendly advice. **206**

3 There's something tantalising about kitchen living when it's touched by the mastery of raw design talent. The difference is palpable, yet understated and subtle. At **Asolo** we look after our project from conception to completion. Discover the difference: visit Asolo, Italian by Design. **207**

4 Diapol Granite Ltd. specialises in the production of granite kitchen worktops. We service mainly end clients and our service areas cover most parts of the UK. Our aim is to supply clients with outstanding quality products, templating and fitting services at the very best prices. We offer a large stock of carefully selected granites from quarries all over the world to give you the best choice of materials. Currently, we have over 3000 m² of slabs in stock. **208**

5 This single lever kitchen mixer with swivel spout and extendable spray is just one of eight designs of kitchen taps in the Technovation range from **Cifial**. This contemporary collection can be found in the new March 2009 brochure which also includes bathrooms taps, accessories, shower fittings and sanitaryware **209**



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Buck & Hickman



The first 'Toolastic' counter service for builders, DIY experts and tradesmen has been launched by Buck & Hickman. The trade counter section of Buck & Hickman branches are being branded as 'Toolastic' to meet demand from a wide range of customers who might not have taken advantage of the

company's excellent stock availability and customer service in the past. The Buck & Hickman branch in Southampton is the first of 15 'Toolastic' counters to be rolled out across the UK in 2009.

...searchable information archive at www.sbhoneonline.eu

Tel: 08450 510150

www.buckandhickman.com

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Grundfos Pumps

Grundfos Pumps have completed a full review of the training courses they offer and are now pleased to advise on their new training schedule for 2009. The diverse range of course topics covers a range of applications including: heating, water boosting, ground water & sewage as well as courses that look at variable speed technology and solutions. All are available on a range of dates throughout 2009 and at a choice of three different geographical locations.



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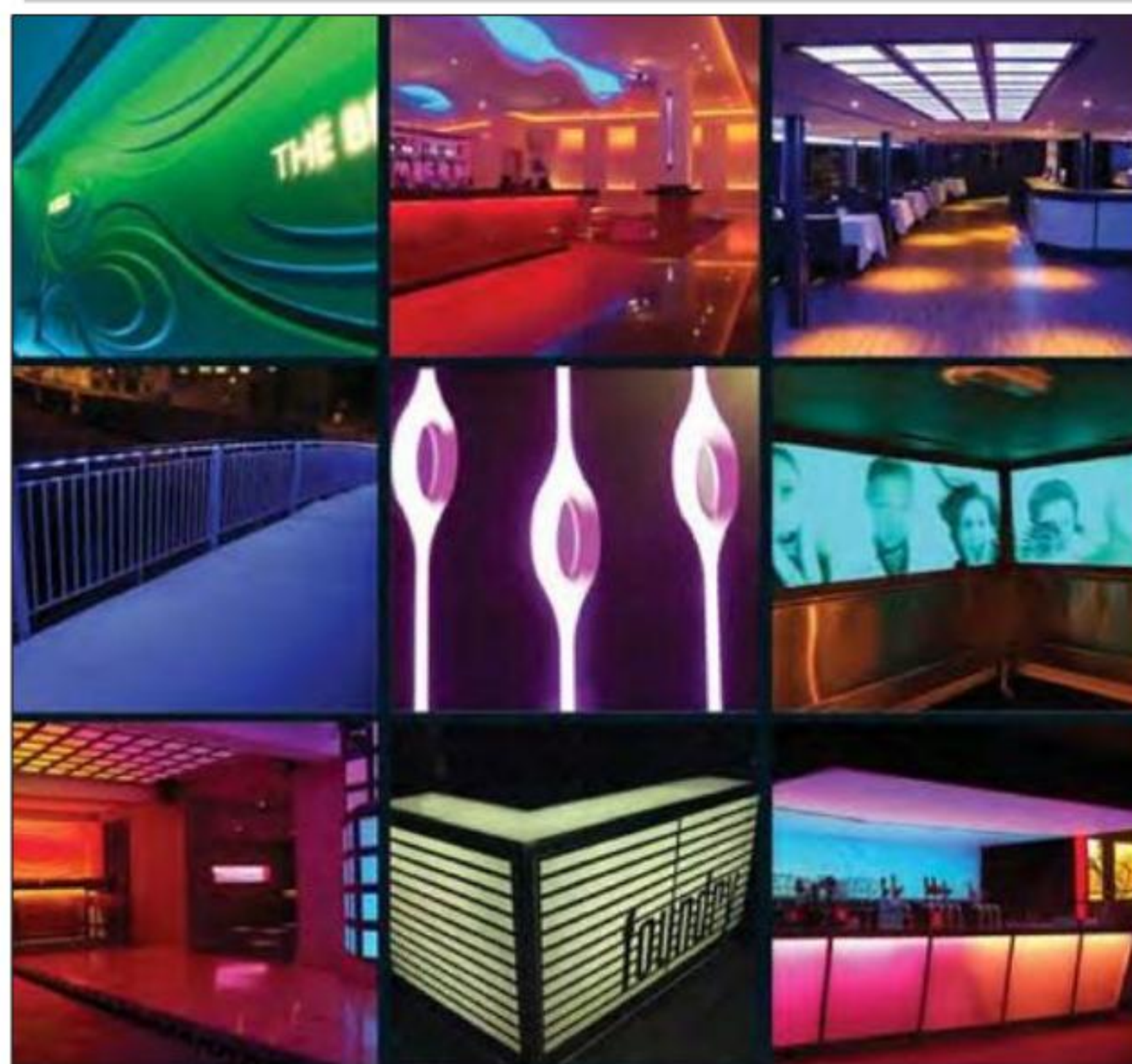


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Multi-Purpose External Extra 'Rooms'



First impressions are all important. The outside of your home is the first thing people see, and a well designed, well kempt exterior is as important as the interior, especially if you are intending to sell. A beautifully landscaped and maintained garden, and a well laid drive, paving and patio areas, could add up to 7% to the value of your home and make it more attractive to potential buyers. Of course, if you are not intending to sell your home, the creation of pleasant exterior areas that add an 'extra room' to your home, and which can be used for relaxation, recreation, dining and entertaining, will make your home feel a great deal more spacious.

Domestic landscaping does not always enjoy the same high profile media coverage which interior design enjoys. Makeover programmes on TV generally focus on interiors, often with the result that some people may feel daunted about exterior landscaping. The reality is; that planning and installing hard landscaping such as patios, is a lot easier than many people realise and a beautiful, long lasting patio can be installed by the competent DIYer.

There is a wide choice of materials and finishes available for patios created from both natural stone and man-made materials. Natural stone products feature variations in colour and textures, while

man-made products provide a more consistent colour and are made with finer tolerances on size and thickness. Both can feature fine detail and character. Common natural stone products include slate, granite, travertine, sandstone or limestone, each of which deliver their own particular characteristics and aesthetic. The biggest difficulty is choosing how you would like your patio to look!

There are four basic steps to planning and installing a patio. First, you need to get inspired. Visiting garden shows, friends and neighbours and reading magazines will provide you with lots of ideas and inspiration. Secondly, you need to set a budget for the project. You should remember to set aside an extra 5-10% to allow for unexpected costs. Next you will need to plan your patio carefully and choose your materials. Talking to your local builders' merchant or contractor is a good idea, as they can advise on the benefits for most product types and how to get the best from them. You then need to plan your installation.

It is important to remember that there are new regulations governing the installation of driveways, patios and other hard surfacing if it is at the front of the house and if the area being installed is over 5sqm. These new regulations are intended to combat the increased threat of flooding. If your project is in the front garden, you will need to carefully consider how water runoff is handled. If you cannot control water run-off within the boundaries of your property, an application for planning permission may be required.

However, there are allowable options which do not require planning permission. These come under the category of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), which provide surface water management that replicates natural drainage patterns. The easiest option is to ensure that any

water runoff flows into a soakaway or rain garden.

When laying small areas, buy project packs of flagstones that feature mixed sizes. These are economical and provide a balanced mix of sizes for a traditional look. You will need the following basic materials to install a flag paving patio to ensure it looks good and performs well for many years to come; your choice of paving, building sand, washed sharp sand, cement, DTp Type 1 Sub-Base. You will also need a range of tools including; a disc cutter, mechanical compacter and cement mixer.

Depending on the size of the project, installation of a patio can usually be done by one person, however, remember to take care when lifting heavy flagstones. If you need to cut flagstones to fit, use adequate protection and measure carefully to avoid wastage.

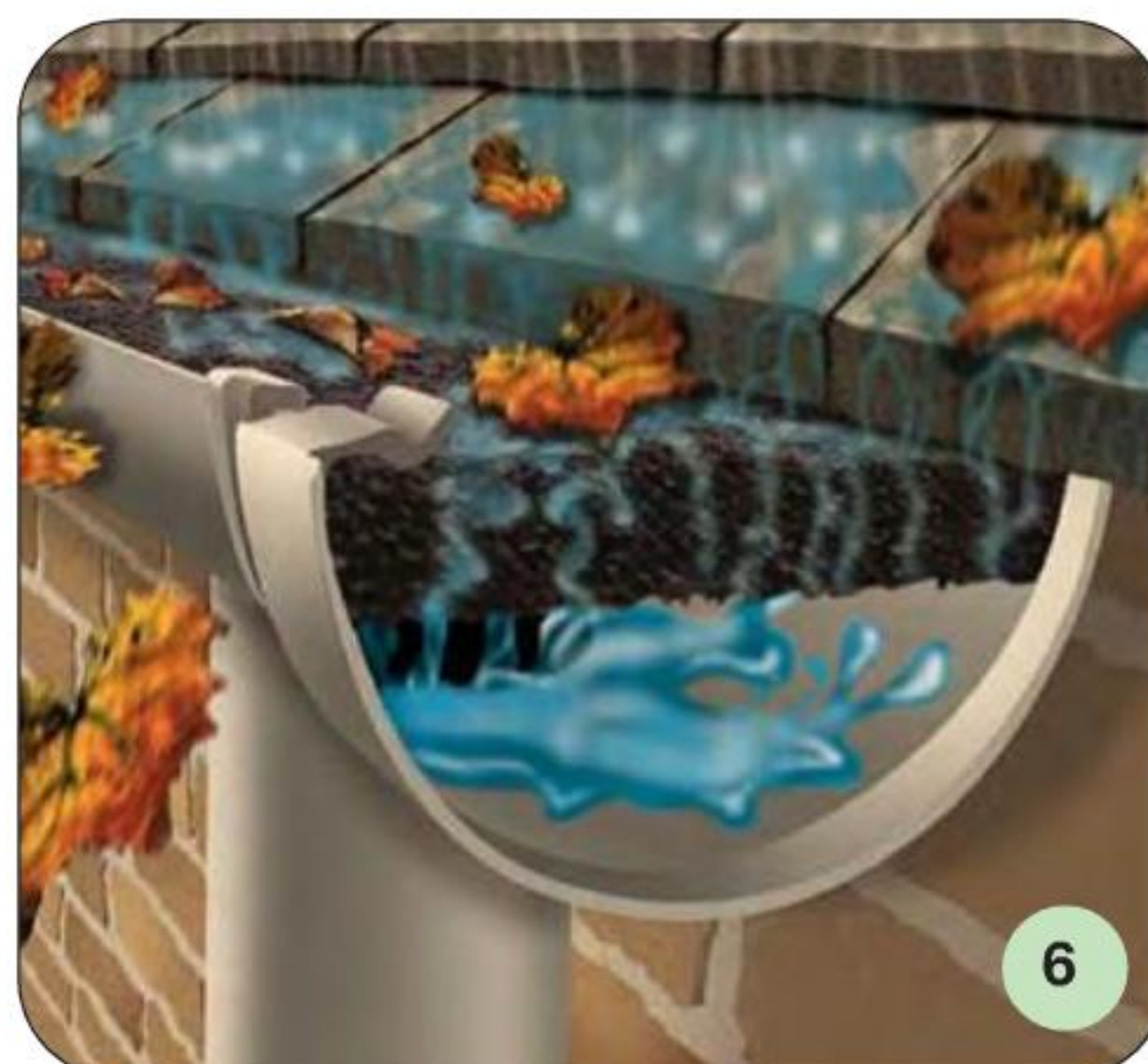
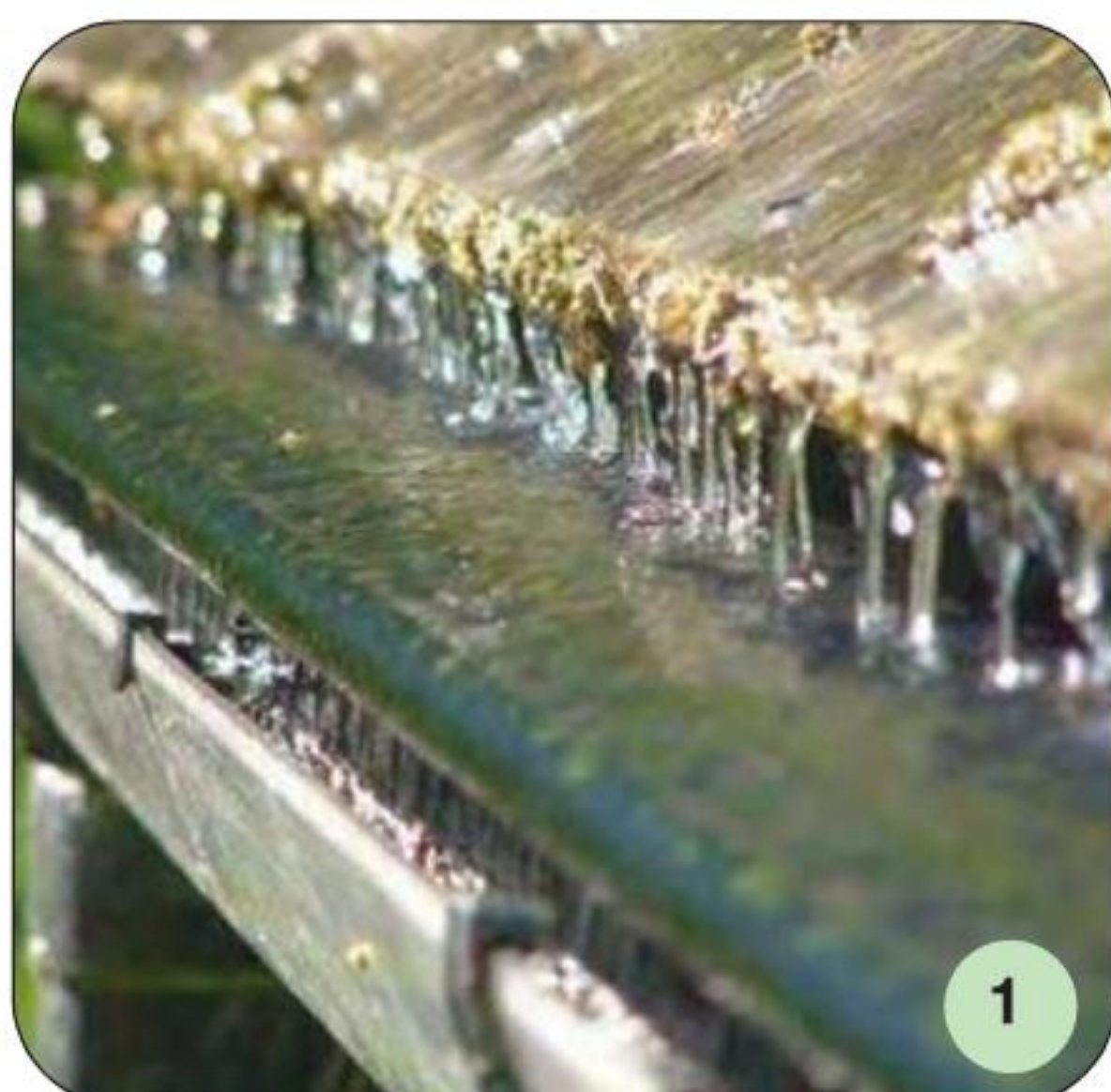
Once you have marked out the area using pegs and string, clear all vegetation and topsoil and level the ground to a suitable depth. To ensure the paving remains solid and stable it needs to be laid on a firm and level sub-base, laid to approximately 100mm and compacted well to 75mm. Prepare a mortar of one part cement to six parts building sand. For man-made flagstones lay a perimeter bedding of mortar at least 25mm deep with a dab in the middle. For natural stone lay a full bed to allow for variations in thickness. Lay each flag in turn, tapping down with a rubber mallet and using a spirit level.

Once the paving is laid, leave to set for 24 hours and point the joints using an almost dry mortar mix of one part cement to four parts washed sharp sand. Trowel into the joints and point with a pointing tool or round piece of wool.

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Zack Barrett, Brett Landscaping

Product News



1 MCM Special Products

Gutter Gard is a unique high quality anodised aluminium system that prevents rainwater gutters from becoming blocked by falling leaves, moss, pine needles and other debris and eliminates the need for regular gutter clearance or maintenance. Gutter Gard is a scientifically modelled aluminium profile that fits on top and over the rainwater gutter, totally enclosing it, preventing debris that would normally have fallen into the open gutter from doing so. Surface tension ensures that the very heaviest rainfall will adhere to curved surface, then travel around the front edge, washing debris away, before cascading clear into the gutter below.

www.mcmproducts.com

216

2 Hall, Stairs and Landing

Suppliers and manufacturers of the best loft access solution on the market today, Hall, Stairs and Landing Limited have been established since 1991 and have had great success with the amazing 'Space Saver' alternating tread loft access stair. This stair is manufactured in our own workshop in West Yorkshire to your specific dimensions. The 'Space Saver' is designed to give access to loft conversions where space is at a premium, we use only the highest quality materials in the manufacture of this stair and make sure they are fully compliant with UK building regulations and can deliver nationwide normally within 10 days.

www.loftaccess.com

217

3 Solo Heating Installations

Solo Heating Installations are installers of all wet based green and renewable energy systems. From Biomass Boilers to Ground Source Heat Pumps, Solo will take you from system selection to final commissioning. We offer our clients a turn-key service including all plumbing, above ground drainage, heating and heat recovery systems.

www.soloheatinginstallations.co.uk

218

4 Cheshire Mouldings

Cheshire Mouldings has chosen the National Home Building and Renovation Exhibition to formally launch three of its new star products for 2009; Clarity, Solo and Evolution, stunning new lines in its ever popular Axxys range of stair parts. As a launch promotion for both consumer and merchant, Cheshire Mouldings is offering visitors to its stand a 5% discount voucher for all three ranges, redeemable over the counter and in turn through the merchant's trading account with the company. This excellent offer benefits both buyer and seller during these challenging times.

www.cheshire-mouldings.co.uk

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5 Malham Lighting Design

Malham Lighting Design have introduced new High brightness 1Watt LED lamp modules to their range. Designed for concealed lighting applications, both inside and out, these flexible LED Modules are sealed to IP 68 and can be used for sign boxes and backlighting of channel lettering, or to produce a halo of light in ceiling coves, coffers or pelmets. This Product has a near horizontal light distribution which produces a perfectly even, continuous linear light source, Without any visible scalloping or shadows. Each module is backed with 3M self adhesive tape for easy installation.

www.malham.co.uk

220

6 GutterStuff Pro

GutterStuff Pro is an easy to install specialist foam insert that fits right inside your gutter. This means any debris falling on top of the gutter does not enter the gutter channel but stays on top and the wind blows it from the surface. However when it rains, the water passes straight through the foam and runs away in the clear channel underneath.

www.gutterstuffpro.co.uk

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Product News



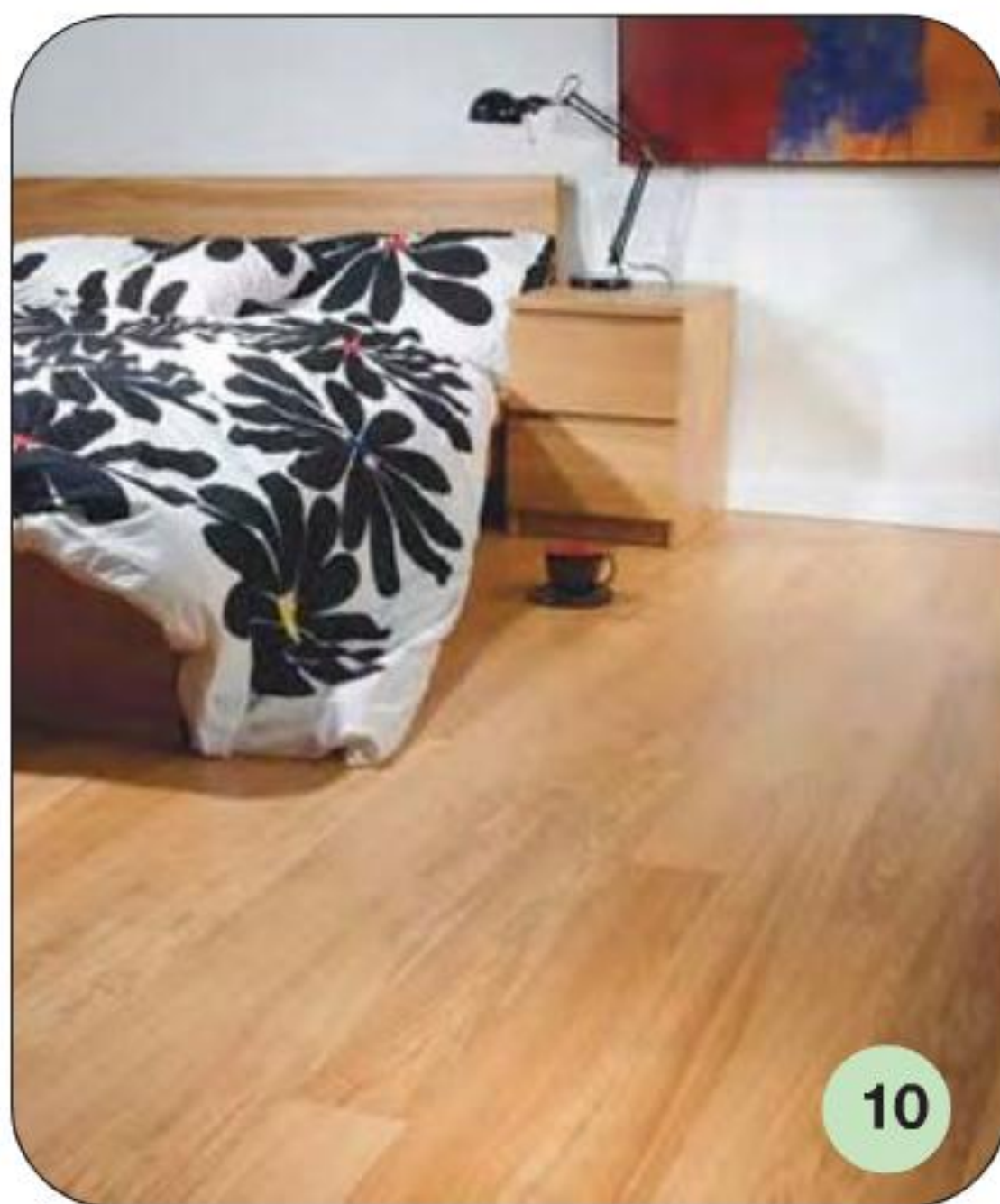
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8



9



10



11

The **Wood Window Alliance**



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12

7 Greys Artstone

Greys Artstone roofing products are hand crafted from glass reinforced cement to provide a light, yet durable, roofing material. Realistic detailing and colour give a truly authentic roofscape, while an easy to lay format, ridges and in-line ventilation systems create an extremely cost effective alternative to natural products. Stone slates available in three different shades. Slates available in Welsh Heather, Welsh Blue and Westmorland Green.

www.greysartstone.co.uk

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8 Selfbuild & Contract Floors

Selfbuild & Contract Floors primarily lay flowing screed and underfloor heating for clients building their own homes. Formed by two friends with over 28 years of construction industry experience, we have a very strong focus on customer service and have built our business on individual recommendation. As a company we undertake a wide range of underfloor heating and screeding projects, large and small, from cellar conversions, refurbishments and extensions to entire houses and apartment blocks.

www.selfbuildfloors.co.uk

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9 Swish Windows

Swish Windows have over 40 year's heritage in the home improvements market. By using a Swish Authorised Installer you'll be using a local company backed by a national brand. Our installers supply the complete range of windows, doors and conservatories in a wide range of colours and styles. Not only will your new windows look great but by fitting energy rated windows from Swish you could save over £250 off your heating bill in the first year alone.

www.swishwindows.co.uk

224

10 Kenton Floors

The Woodpecker range of beautiful wood floors by Kenton Floors offers a complete range of 176 Wood, Laminate and Estilo Cork Floors. All illustrated in 160 page catalogue which is available to you free of charge. Illustrated above is the recently launched Goodrich Oak Real Wood Engineered floor with a specially formulated lacquer that is as hard as laminate but with all the natural beauty of a real wood floor.

www.woodpeckerflooring.co.uk

225

11 Mini Soil Surveys

We at Mini Soil Surveys have found that approx 25% of sites prove to be of low risk of problems and standard footings can be planned, 50% will involve manageable additional cost and about 25% will involve considerable extras such as piling, or much deeper dig, ground water pumping, or the ground is contaminated and the finances of the whole project are severely threatened. Remember that your builder will have a clause somewhere in the contract that says that you not he will pay. He therefore has no incentive to pay for a ground investigation. If you pay for one you can use it to obtain the best price for your foundations.

www.minisoils.co.uk

226

12 Wood Window Alliance

Choosing the right window is an easy way to contribute to a high energy rating for your home. Not only are Wood Window Alliance (WWA) quality branded windows easy to maintain, durable and beautiful, now more WWA windows than ever are available A-rated under the BFRC energy rating scheme. To ensure that A-rated wood windows are the highest quality, look for the WWA's distinctive heart and tree brandmark.

www.woodwindowalliance.com

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Classical Rainwater

The latest in top-quality cast iron rainwater products can be viewed and ordered through cast iron technology leader Saint-Gobain PAM UK's revamped website at www.classicalrainwater.co.uk. With the theme 'Build green, build for life', the site details Saint-Gobain PAM UK's acclaimed Classical rainwater product range with useful tips on specifying and installation. Visitors can find out more about how the range is produced to stringent quality standards at Saint-Gobain PAM UK's dedicated manufacturing facility at Telford, as well as ordering guttering, pipes, and the company's innovative Classical rainwater diverter kits, for rapid delivery anywhere in the UK. Mike Rawlings, Soil & Drain Product Manager at Saint-Gobain PAM UK, commented: "The revamped website is a complete one-stop shop for anyone considering using cast iron rainwater products on their project. It details the many benefits of cast iron, durability, performance, appearance, strength and acoustics, not to mention environmental advantages, and allows visitors to order quickly and easily from the extensive Classical range."

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Saving Energy in the Home

Dr Lee Juby, CEO of VPhase plc, looks at the way energy saving in the home is likely to develop over the next few years

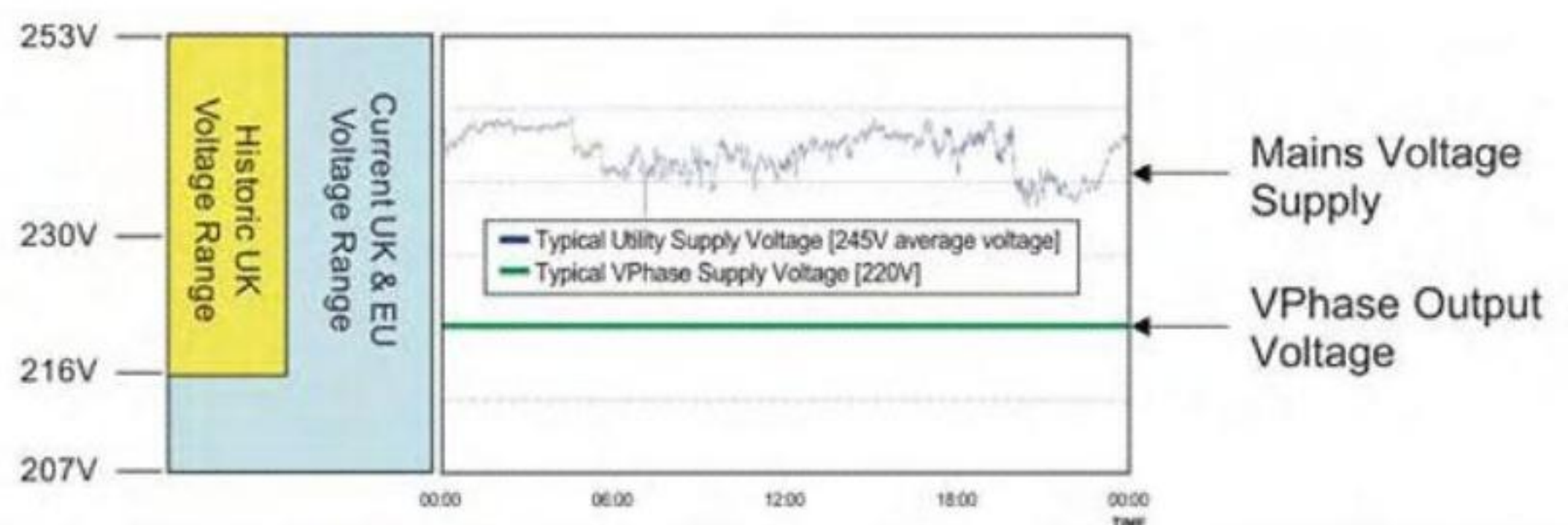
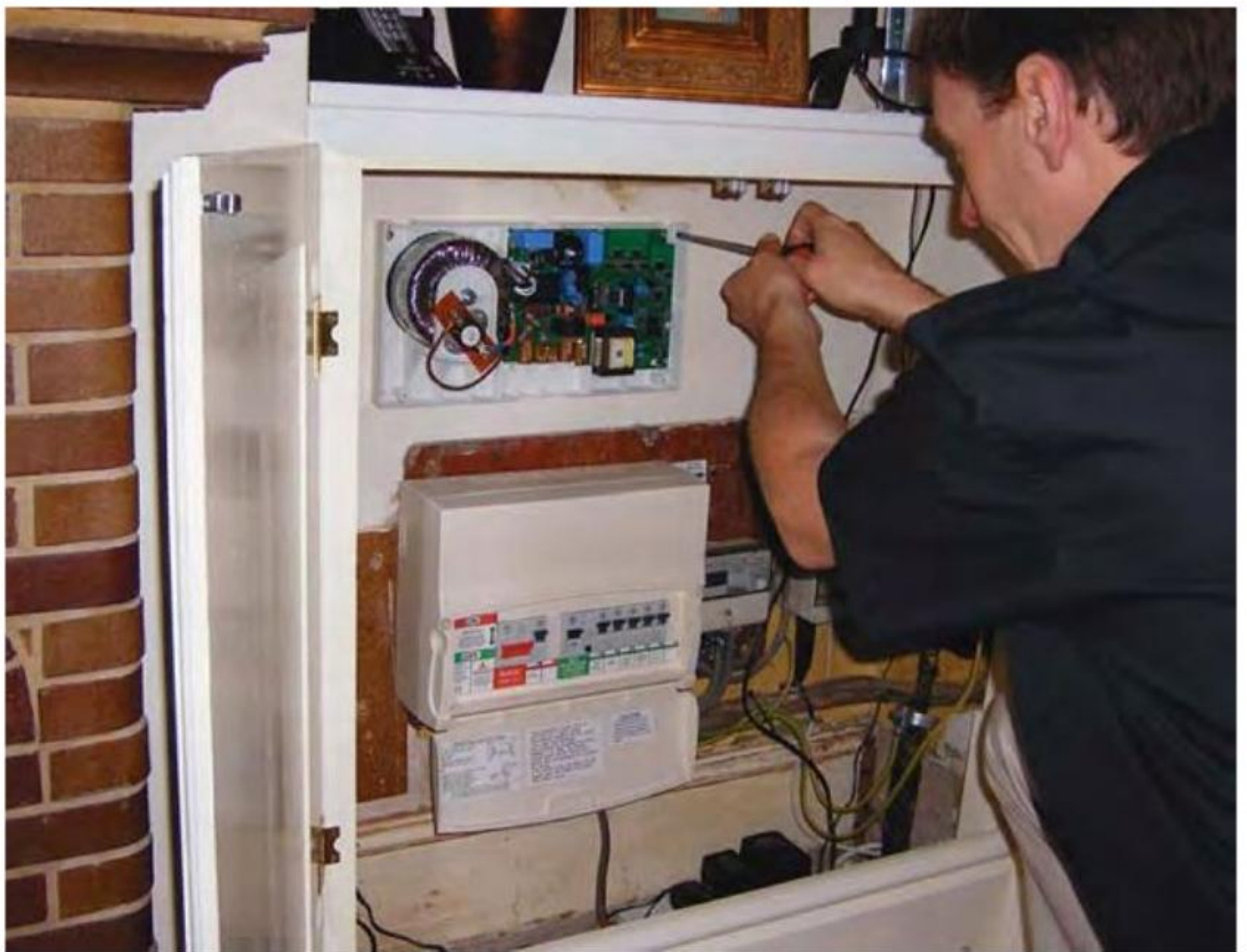


It is estimated that the energy used in lighting, heating and living in our homes accounts for around 27% of the total UK carbon emissions. Energy saving in the home has therefore been high on the Government's agenda, as it seeks to meet the commitments made to reduce CO₂ emissions. The rising cost of energy has, to some extent, helped stimulate this initiative with ever reducing payback periods, particularly for the installation of more effective insulation and the growing use of low energy products, such as electrical appliances and light bulbs.

However, these measures with low payback periods can only take us so far. Now there are a number of other options available, such as various sources of renewable energy micro-generation including heat pumps, solar and wind. Unfortunately, the technology for many of these products is still in the early stages of development and, as such, these measures tend to have a longer financial payback period and therefore do not hold the same attractiveness for many householders. However, as energy costs rise and technology brings product costs down they will ultimately reach a volume market status. In many cases it is a matter of utilising proven and trusted technology from an industrial and/or large scale application and translating it into a cost effective format for the small scale domestic market.

There are also new technologies emerging that may bridge that gap between volume energy saving products and those products yet to reach that stage in their product lifecycle. These are likely to be incremental measures that deliver further savings and still give a rapid return. A good example is the effective usage of waste energy from central heating systems together with the development of cost effective products to turn some of that heat into electricity. Combined heat and power (CHP) systems built into the central heating boiler are likely to deliver quicker financial returns than other forms of electricity generation currently available.

Of course work is under way to further increase the energy efficiency of many of the energy consuming products and appliances we



use on an individual basis, but innovative new ideas to work on a large number of devices at the same time are those that will succeed in the short term. One such new technology that is being developed from large scale applications to be cost effective on a domestic level is smart voltage management. The principle of decreasing incoming voltage levels to reduce the energy used by electrical appliances, whilst still retaining performance levels, is well established. Many multi-site businesses, including major supermarkets, already control the incoming voltage at each site to optimise performance, accruing significant savings on energy costs as a result.

All incoming voltages vary throughout Europe and the allowable supply range is quite wide at 230V +/- 10%. Appliance manufacturers need to make sure that their devices will operate satisfactorily within that range. Historically, the distribution network in the UK has been based at around 240V and, for the network to work efficiently, many properties have an incoming voltage higher than that. For most domestic appliances, this extra voltage is not necessary and they will consume less power at reduced levels. Depending on the appliance, a 10% reduction in voltage can deliver energy savings of anything between 5% and 20%. This of

course directly translates into an electricity cost saving and a reduction in carbon emissions at the point of generation.

Of course not all appliances will benefit from voltage reduction. Electric cooking and heating is thermostatically controlled and will use the same energy whatever the incoming voltage, as long as it is within statutory limits. However, many houses use alternative energy sources, such as gas for cooking and heating, and even where electricity is used it only represents a small proportion of the total house load.

Introducing smart voltage management in the home has been too costly in the past, but products are now being developed to make it cost effective to do so. Such technology is likely to become one of the latest domestic energy saving methods as the Government seeks more ways to help meet its emissions targets.

Such measures will not be used in isolation. Smart voltage management is likely to find a place alongside existing methods, such as insulation and draught proofing, and will work hand in hand with the new cost effective energy micro-generation technologies that will soon be available. More technologies will also follow as we strive to reduce our household reliance on external energy sources to the absolute minimum.

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Flight Design Projects



Flight Design specialise in the design and installation of architectural features such as staircases, balustrade, mezzanine floors and bridges. We undertake work for both residential and

commercial projects, working with architects and interior designers, as well as private clients. Working with a wide range of materials, we look to stretch the boundaries of both material and design, to produce fascinating structures.

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Joinerystore

HB&R Show
Stand No: C193

Joinerystore is launching its innovative stair renovation system at the Homebuilding and Renovating Show, Stand C193. Designed to refurbish tired or basic staircases to provide a solid oak finish, the system is easy to fit and much cheaper and faster than replacing the entire stair. When teamed with Joinerystore's comprehensive oak stair balustrade offer, this is the perfect solution for that renovation project. When you place your order at the show, we'll also give you a further 10% discount!



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www.joinerystore.com

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SSQ Roofing Slate

SSQ Riverstone® roofing slate has been chosen by Back To Front Exterior Design for use on the Ideal Home Show's 'Extreme Home Makeover' show house. For a closer look at SSQ's products, please visit Stand 1N51 where it will be exhibiting some of the finest roofing slates



currently available and offering advice on slate roof design, planning considerations, slate selection and installation.

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www.ssqgroup.com

237

SSQ Roofing Slate



SSQ is opening a new showroom at its base in north-west London. The company offers an extensive range of some of the finest roofing slate and architectural stone available under brand names that include Riverstone® and Del Carmen®. The showroom gives customers the opportunity to see SSQ's complete range and get on-the-spot, expert advice about slate roof design, planning considerations, slate selection and installation.

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Tel: 020 8961 7725

www.ssqgroup.com

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Hamilton Litestat



Hamilton Litestat has just introduced its new and improved Woods range of electrical accessories which has been re-engineered to provide a contemporary feel. Utilising Hamilton's own range of inserts, which are of durable polycarbonate construction featuring contoured

lacquered metal rockers, it creates a modern, neat and up-market styling that is able to maximise buyer appeal. The rocker switches are available in a choice of bright chrome, satin chrome, antique brass and polished brass.

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Gutter Guard is suitable for all fascia fitted plastic, aluminium or cast iron gutters of any shape from 110mm to 215mm wide. Easy to fit during gutter installation.

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www.sbhonline.eu

*By Patrick Kennedy,
Designer/Estimator,
Spiral Staircases.*



Planning Ahead

Planning ahead and seeking specialist advice early on gives you the greatest flexibility and potential; the experts can advise you of the regulations and necessary procedures. Indeed, opting for a full design service can save you time and money as the designer takes the responsibility to run the project from beginning to end, overseeing every aspect of the work and ensuring the quality of detail is maintained throughout.

Space

Light can play an important part in creating a feeling of spaciousness. The staircase can open the space from ceiling to floor, or draw shafts of light from juxtaposed windows. Cut-away shapes in treads create patterns in light that circulate through the space.

Health & Safety

It is good to approach local district surveyors early in the process as you might need permission for certain alterations or installations. Discuss any project with an architect or interior designer and find out how regulations will affect the design.

Open Your Mind to the Possibilities

There's an overwhelming temptation to be conservative. Open your mind and don't forget your staircase is probably the most used architectural feature of your home. Whether your aim is simplicity or drama, the staircase needs to work aesthetically and functionally.

To make your staircase work, you need to find an experienced supplier you trust to guide you through the possibilities and benefits. A good designer will work with you to realise your vision for the interior through careful choice of materials and dimensions. When that staircase is in place, it will add value to your home while offering you the sensory pleasures of good design from every angle, with every step.

Finally, a staircase must be carefully considered, planned and designed. It does have an important functional role and an impact on light and space, as well as safety issues. The key to success is taking time to consider the full picture, what the staircase can do for the entire home and what statement you want it to make. Don't underestimate the results.

Stairs: The Heart of a Home

Stairs are usually the focal point of a home that links the different levels/environments. Your stairs can be a statement about how you want to present yourself and how you want to feel about your home when entering it. Proportions, details, the effects of light and the use of materials can be crucial in the design and how it links different areas in a house.

The staircase offers you the opportunity of installing the single largest sculptural element in a house. This is an opportunity that should not be overlooked until a few months before the completion of a project; it is too important and as such should be considered at the initial stages of the design of a development from a practical as well as aesthetic point of view.

There are many things to consider when thinking about your staircase, not least the impact that the Part K building regulations and British Standards (BS 5395 Part 2) have on a design. It is important to research what has been done before and to have an open mind initially about design. Look at the many books on the subject and online where there are many examples, staircases being very photogenic. Try not to be seduced by large dramatic stairs that may work well in the lobby of a shop or office,

as the proportions may not reduce down to a domestic environment as much as one might like. Also, try not to be seduced by images of very minimal stairs; often in countries where the building regulations are more lax than in the UK you can see a stair designed seemingly with no consideration to safety whatsoever.

Regulations regarding the designs of stairs in the UK can be quite stringent, and it is worth being aware of these regulations; consult an architect or specialist company. However, in the end it is your local district surveyor who will have the final say on what you can and cannot have in the way of a stair, so it is important to present your plans and designs to the surveyor's office in advance to get their approval or comments.

If you have the luxury of starting from scratch, either with a new build or a gutted refurbishment, try to avoid squeezing a staircase into a tight space. From a financial as well as aesthetic point of view, keeping the layout of the stairs to a simple shape is better. A straight flight without winders for example, or a spiral/helical stair without straight sections, is the way forward being more economic to build and pleasing to look upon.

To highlight, these are our top tips:

Sustainable Rainwater Systems



Core recycled material
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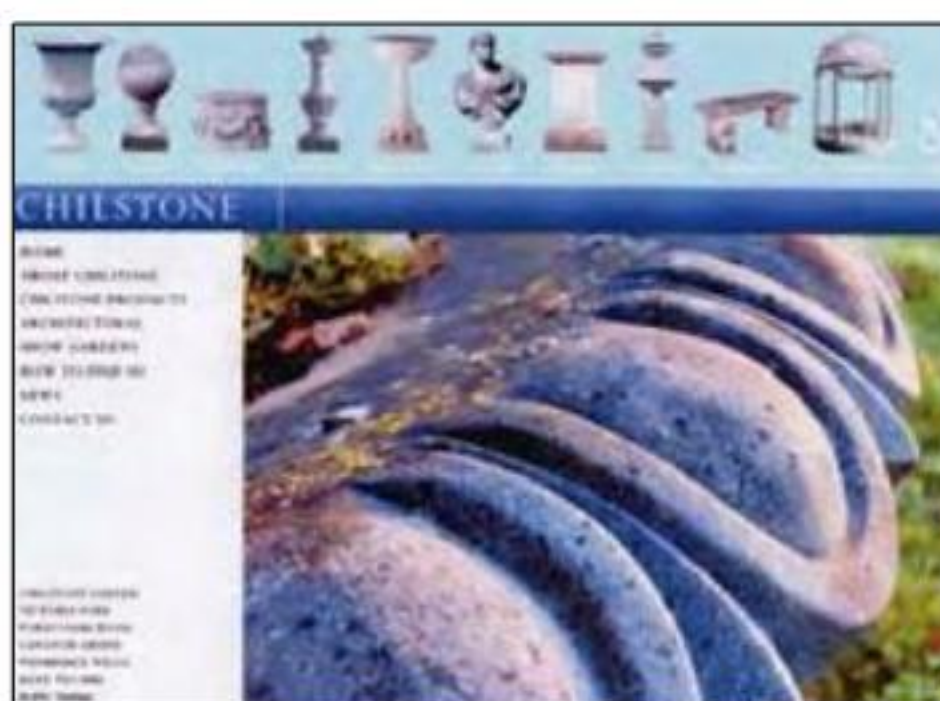
Donaldson Timber Engineering

Donaldson Timber Engineering's SIRS is a TRADA and NHBC approved, structural insulated roofing system, incorporating SIPS panels, roof trusses, cassette floors, and excluding purlins. SIRS is designed to make things easier for the builder. It's simple and quick to build, saves up to 25% more floor space, can reduce erection time by up to 80% and can be used with masonry, steel frame & timber frame. Made from sustainably sourced timber and insulated panels, SIRS exceeds all required insulation values.

...searchable information archive at www.sbhonline.eu

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Chilstone



Kent stone makers Chilstone have announced the launch of a completely new website. The website, designed by Walton Creative, acts as a visual guide through the company's comprehensive range of garden and architectural stone products. The site is particularly easy to click through and offers a

very full range of architectural details and drawings. The site also offers Fastrack downloads and features the company's noted range of hard landscaping products. The site is a celebration of 50 years in the business and can be visited at www.chilstone.com.

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The only alternative to natural stone and slate



All the characteristics of natural stone and slate with all the advantages of a modern building material

Greys Artstone roofing products are hand crafted from glass reinforced cement to provide a light, yet durable, roofing material. Realistic detailing and colour give a truly authentic roofscape, while an easy to lay format, ridges and in-line ventilation systems create an extremely cost effective alternative to natural products. Stone slates available in three different shades. Slates available in Welsh Heather, Welsh Blue and Westmorland Green.



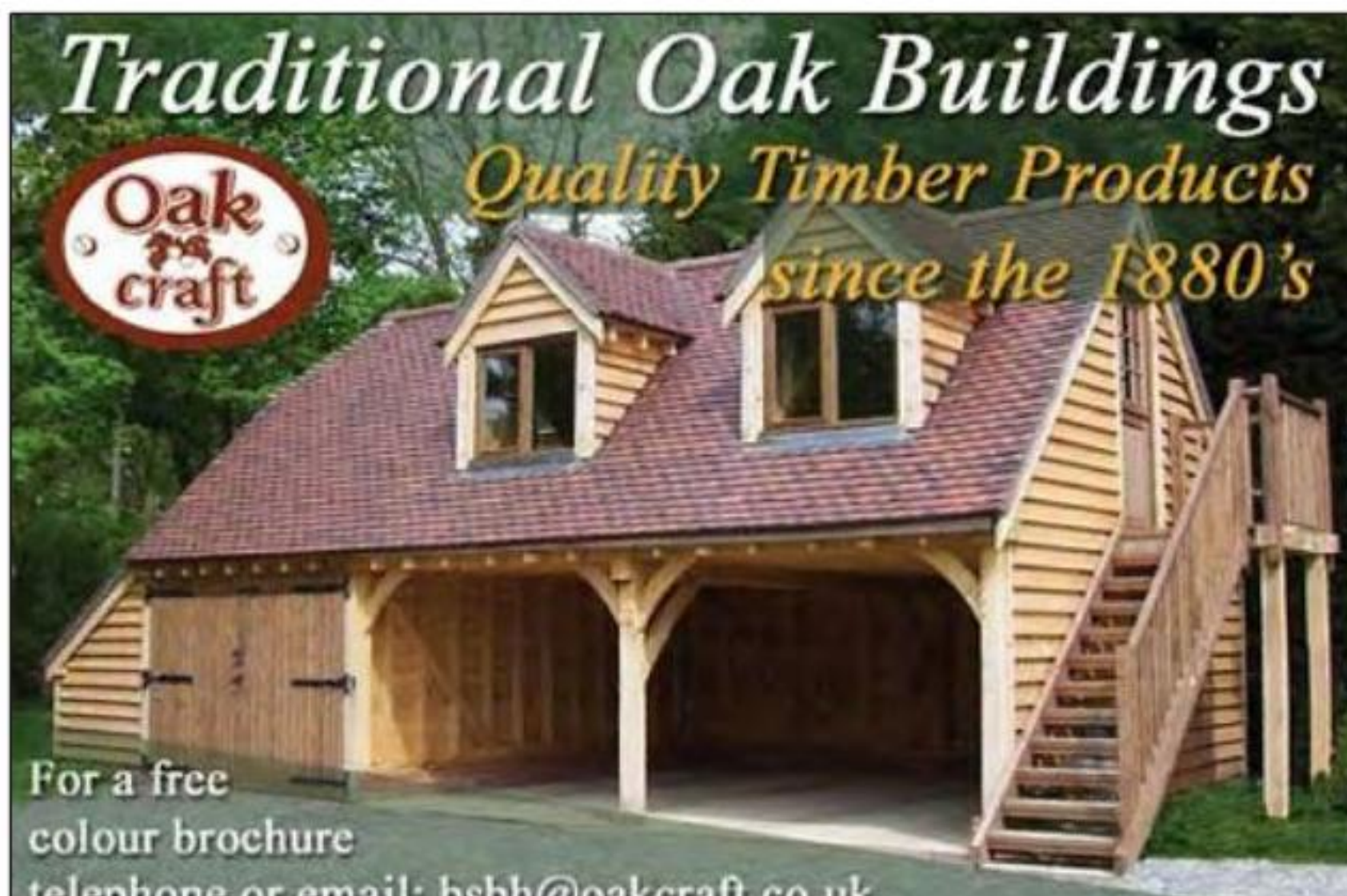
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Building Your Own Home Has Never Made More Sense



Against today's backdrop of tumbling house prices and restricted mortgage funding, there has never been a better time to build your own home.

The self-build sector across the UK is taking full advantage of the current property market uncertainty and negative sentiment by making the most of the numerous benefits which can be gained in the present climate, over and above those already on offer.

One of the big challenges for people building their own home in recent years has been finding the right piece of land, in the right location and at the right price. The evidence at present shows this is becoming less of an issue, with many builders and developers actively selling off ground and plots, in many cases at substantial discounts, in order to recover much needed corporate revenue to ensure their stability during this difficult trading period.

The consequences of this are that the market has, to some extent, moved in favour of the buyer and those individuals looking to purchase land to build on, are now finding it more likely they will not just obtain their preferred plot, but also at a more attractive price.

The majority of selfbuilders will also avoid paying Stamp Duty as the tax is only levied on the cost of the land and not the value of the completed property. As such a great many plots will fall under the £175,000 threshold, after which between 1% and 4% is levied depending on the purchase price. This is a far cry from the mainstream property market where the two higher tax bands have become an unpleasant but everyday reality for a lot of buyers.

Another unpleasant tax which those building their own home will avoid is VAT. All of the VAT charged on the project can be claimed back

and there are excellent guidance notes and forms to download from the HMCE

website, specifically designed for selfbuilders. The VAT paid is refunded and could run to many thousands of pounds in all but the smallest of projects.

In the current climate there is understandably a lot of consternation amongst home owners over the value of their property, and those looking to move up the ladder are nervous about buying into what is currently a depreciating asset, in most parts of the country. However, in the selfbuild market, the completed property is normally valued at between 20% and 30% more than the total build cost, including the cost of the land. This means selfbuilders are investing in an appreciating asset and immediately create substantial equity in their property which will both protect and serve them well in the future.

Mortgage lenders are well aware of the extra security this cushion provides and even in the present climate specifically designed selfbuild mortgages are readily available for borrowers, providing for up to 95% of the land value and build costs. This type of mortgage is also structured such that the customer can remain in their own home for the entire duration of the project.

The present environment in the construction sector also means that selfbuilders are seeing prices move in their favour when it comes to building and labour costs. In the face of stiffer competition, tradesmen are having to price themselves more keenly to attract business and this will further help drive down the overall costs of a self build project. Although the lure of such

savings is undoubtedly attractive, many potential selfbuilders continue to be anxious over the practicalities of such a project.

The very name selfbuild is slightly misleading, as the majority of people choose to oversee the project, selecting from one of the four main options available to them which will suit their own circumstances best. They can elect to have a builder carry out the entire project on a turnkey basis, project manage themselves, contract in a third party project manager or in rare instances, organise and carry out the works themselves.

Certainly there is no need for customers to be worried about their own abilities when it

comes to the practicalities of designing and building their home. Selfbuilders come from all walks of life and range from single people to couples, families and those looking to retire in comfort, and most actually prefer to take a back seat for the majority of their project.

Whatever they decide,

timber frame construction is by far and away the most popular choice for selfbuilders in Scotland and this is quickly becoming mirrored across the rest of the UK. Timber frame companies who specialise in providing complete timber frame packages can support the customer with a "one stop shop" thereby making life a whole lot easier for those setting out to build their own home.

Customers can select from a vast array of standard designs for their new home, which can then be customised to suit their own lifestyle or, as many selfbuilders do, they can consult with an architect to prepare a bespoke design which is unique to them. Also, as part of the timber frame package offered by companies, the customer can tailor the design and "feel" of their home by selecting from a huge range of doors, windows, stairs, skirtings and internal finishes.

Manufacturers will also work closely with the customer and their builder or agents on technical and production matters to ensure the building complies fully with current building regulations. This is especially important where the energy efficiency and thermal engineering of the structure is concerned and companies are authorised to issue the now statutory Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for the building.

Taking into account the healthy savings which can be found on land and build costs at present, together with highly sophisticated services offered by timber frame package companies, there has never been a better time for people to build their own home.

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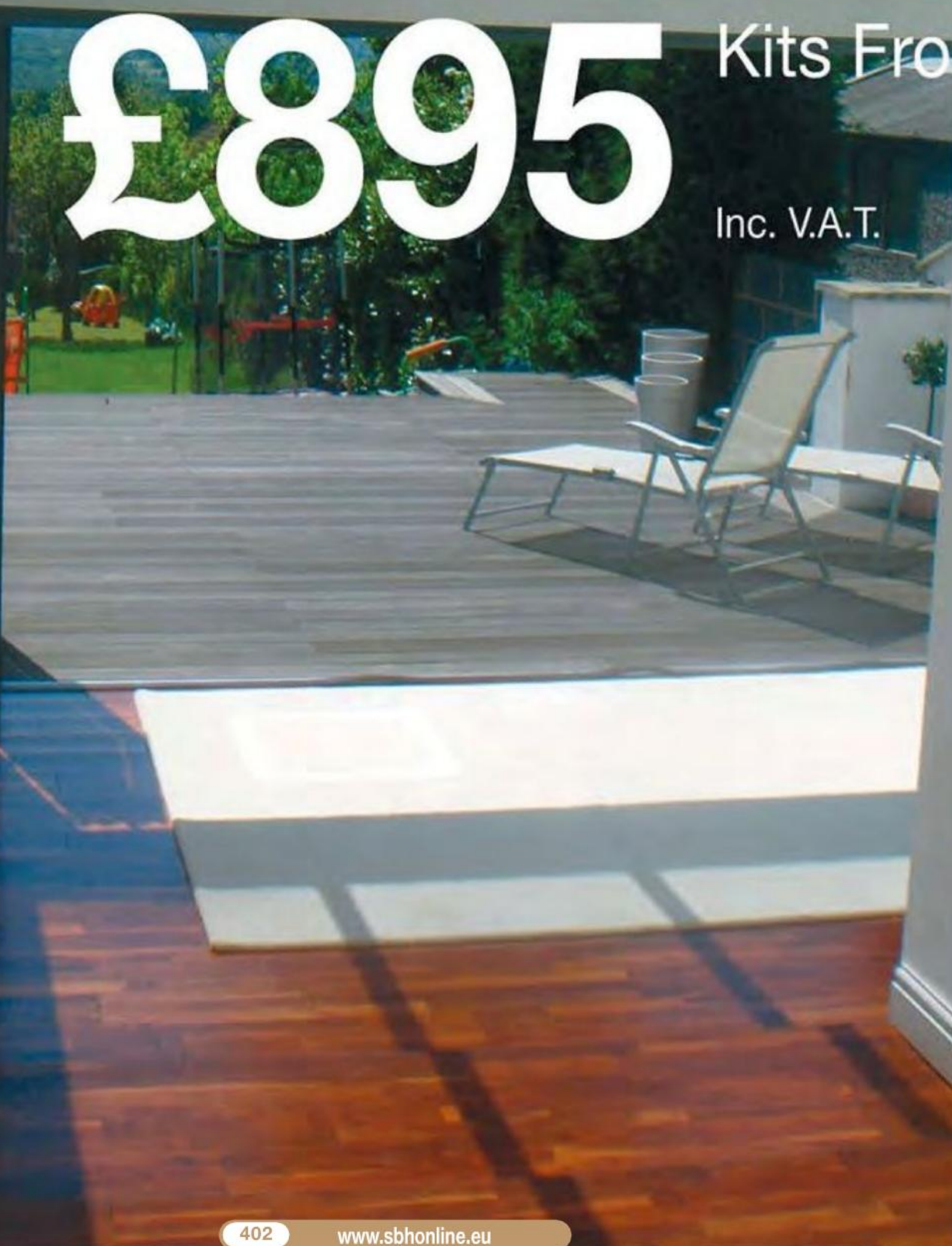
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