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A juggling act

Despite working as long-haul flight attendants and running their own business, Nick Housley and partner took on the challenge of turning their Sussex bungalow into a 'des res'. Roseanne Field reports

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Cover image of Holden Decor wallpaper from I Want Wallpaper See page 48

EDITOR'S LETTER



ello and welcome to your first *Selfbuilder + Homemaker* of 2018, I hope this issue finds you well and that your self-build project is progressing smoothly after what has no doubt been a patchy few weeks, weather-wise!

It's good to hear the National Custom & Self Build Association received some positive data for once on the progress of Right to Build from England's councils, following its 'Freedom of Information' request last year on how many people have signed up.

Yes, 33,000 people is a big number, but it's still only the population of Glossop, a relatively small place just outside Manchester if you're not familiar. This select band of people cannot truly represent the scale of demand for self-build out there, so it would be a mistake for councils to assume that's all they need to provide sites for. It's true to say they might be the more affluent 'early adopters,' however.

Currently, even finding sites for those 33,000 will prove challenging. In order to capitalise on this situation and provide at least the 20,000 homes the Government is aiming for, councils need to up their game and at least embrace the opportunity. The Right to Build's Task Force's Mario Wolf admitted recently that they needed to do much more to increase "willingness to support custombuild". Let's see some action.

James Parker

DIARY

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Printed in England

Over 33,000 people now signed up to Right to Build registers

New research by the National Custom & Self Build Association (NaCSBA) has found that since 1 April 2016 over 33,000 people have signed up to Right to Build registers across England.

This is more than an 80 per cent increase on this time last year, at which point 18,000 people had signed up.

Local authorities across England must give permission for enough serviced plots to meet the growing demand under the responsibilities placed on them by the Right to Build legislation. The deadline for consenting the 33,000 plots demanded is 31 October 2020, with around half to be consented by 31 October 2019.

It was also revealed that around 3,000 people have been removed from the registers by local authorities for a number of reasons including people having found plots, councils applying local connection tests or introducing a fee to join or stay on the register.



NaCSBA is monitoring whether any local authorities are using unreasonable or unjustified local connection criteria or charges as a means of reducing their obligation to consent.

According to the NaCSBA, the registers will play a vital role in assessing the demand for serviced plots. Councils are also under a duty under planning policy to consider how many people in their borough would like to design and build their own home over a longer timeframe, to tie in with longer term planning functions.

Building Societies Association (BSA) research found that 53 per cent of people have the ambition to design and build their own home at some point in their lives. NaCSBA believes that "as people's awareness of self- and custom-build grows, the number on the registers should more closely reflect the BSA research". It is therefore planning a national consumer campaign in 2018 to increase awareness of the Right to Build registers and make people aware of their rights under the legislations.

Michael Holmes, chair of NaCSBA, commented on the figures: "Over 15,000 more people joining the Right to Build registers is extremely positive given that last year's figure of 18,000 was obtained after only seven months of most registers launching. However, despite the increase, the promotion undertaken by councils varies hugely. Those that are proactive are reaping the benefits custom- and self-build housing can bring to diversify and grow local housing supply."

Richard Bacon MP, chair of the All Part Parliamentary Group on Self-Build, Custom and Community Housebuilding and Placemaking, said: "I'm delighted to see that the number of people on the Right to Build registers has now grown. However, we know that true demand is much higher and more needs to be done to promote the registers and really make them work as an evidence tool in local planning."

NSBRC ends 2017 with trio of awards

The National Self Build & Renovation Centre (NSBRC) was recognised for its performance as an employee-owned business at the UK Employee Ownership Awards at the end of last year.

The annual awards celebrate all aspects of employee-ownership and the NSBRC team (pictured) were Highly Commended in the Rising Star of the Year category. The judges were impressed with the year on year growth the business has seen and its continued investment in the facilities at the centre.

The award completes a trio for the Homebuilding Centre, who operate the NSBRC, with the business also winning Newsquest's Wiltshire Small Business of the Year and *Build It*'s Outstanding Contribution to Self-Build in 2017.



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NSBRC managing director Harvey Fremlin commented: "This award goes to show that the model of employee-ownership, with all our team having a genuine stake in the business, makes all the difference. We celebrated the NSBRC's 10th anniversary in 2017 and to end the year with three awards was beyond our hopes for the business."

He continued: "It's been a fantastic year all round, the NSBRC's busiest since 2008. We all love what we do here and I believe the team's passion and dedication to providing a wonderful experience for all our visitors shines through."

The NSBRC is open six days a week (Tuesday – Sunday) from 10am – 5.30pm. For more information visit www.nsbrc.co.uk

Experts outline possibilities and hurdles to overcome at Right to Build Summit

At the end of last year NaCSBA held its Right to Build summit which saw key figures in the industry share their insights into the current self- and custom-build market.

TV presenter and architect Charlie Luxton told the audience the custom- and self-build sector will play an essential part in remedying the broken housing market. In particular, he highlighted the lack of quality in new builds in a market lacking plurality, as well as the disconnection between generations in home ownership and a lack of engagement with the planning process.

According to Luxton, self-build could be the answer to people not wanting to live in a developer-built home. He said that it "encourages community engagement, boosts local economies and reconnects planning to the people". He





summarised that "self-build creates fantastic housing, built by normal people who value space and community."

However, construction sector analyst and author of the 'Self and Custom Build Market Report 2017,' Brian Green offered statistics that show the existing self-build market currently relies on the wealthier baby boomer generation, with the average self-builder being aged 51 with an income of £50,000-59,000. He explained that the custom- and self-build sector needs to "normalise" in order for it to survive beyond this generation: "It has to find a way to become relevant to the less financially lucrative".

Former mortgage strategist and NaCSBA finance committee member Andrew Baddeley-Chapell explained how he is working with NaCSBA to develop a new approach to make self-build more affordable. Right to Build is paramount in this, he said, as is reforming the planning process and making land available as the first step in "refreshing the self-build market".

Mario Wolf, director of the Right to Build Task Force told the audience how the Task Force, set up to assist local authorities with Right to Build and support the Government's aims of delivering 20,000 custom- and self-built homes by 2020, "wants to do more." He asserted: "Local authority knowledge of the sector is weak and we need to unpack that to create a willingness to support custom-build," he said.

He explained how they wanted to take the Task Force's duties one step further and educate a wider audience. There will be a series of expos running over 12 months, in areas where custom-build has already had an impact on the local housing market. "NaCSBA's real challenge is that it needs to engage consumers, as currently most people don't know that the registers and custom-build even exists, nor the opportunities it presents," he concluded.

NaCSBA is also working with housing and planning consultancy Three Dragons to develop a tool that can prove there is a long-term demand for self- and custom-build. Director Lin Cousins said they "need to estimate the size of the market in different areas, to ensure that the market is ready to satisfy the demand."

Cousins said that proving the demand will also encourage developers considering custom-build to realise it's not as risky as they might think. "'Better informed' will mean a common evidence base that all partners can work to," she said.

AN INDIVIDUAL ECO HOME IN RURAL SUSSEX, APPROVED THANKS TO 'PARAGRAPH 55'



Architectural practice Studio Bark has received full planning permission under 'Paragraph 55' provisions for The Grain House – an innovative eco home in the Sussex countryside. Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allows individual rural homes to be built providing they reflect the highest standards of architecture, sustainability and innovation.

The Grain House is required to be a "multi-generational family home". Its sculptural form consisting of a series of monolithic walls takes influence from historic ox-ploughed 'ridge and furrow' field patterns, as well as the undulating ridge and valley landforms that characterise the area.

The living spaces will be partially lowered below ground level, still providing views of the fields. The house will be separated into two parts: the main house and an annexe, giving the elderly parents privacy in their own space.

The walls are to be constructed from what's claimed to be the world's first carbon negative building block. Studio Bark worked with environmental consultants Atmos Lab on the house's design, making strategic decisions in response to solar paths, drainage and views.

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Modern take on English country house wins House of the Year

'Caring Wood', a "reimagining of the traditional English country house" was the winner of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)'s House of the Year 2017.

Designed by James Macdonald Wright and Niall Maxwell, the house is



inspired by the traditional oasthouses of Kent. It revives local building crafts and traditions with its inclusion of locally sourced handmade peg clay tiles, local quarries' ragstone, and coppiced chestnut cladding.

The house comprises four towers with interlinking roofs that echo other oasthouses in the distance.

Commenting on the decision to crown 'Caring Wood' the winner RIBA House of the Year 2017 jury chair Deborah Saunt said that it had a deeper significance: "Beyond the impression of sublime craftsmanship and spatial grandeur this house offers, it leads us to fundamentally question how we might live together in the future. At a time when we increasingly atomised, individually preoccupied and lost in personalised digital worlds, designing homes where families can come together in an increasingly important aim."

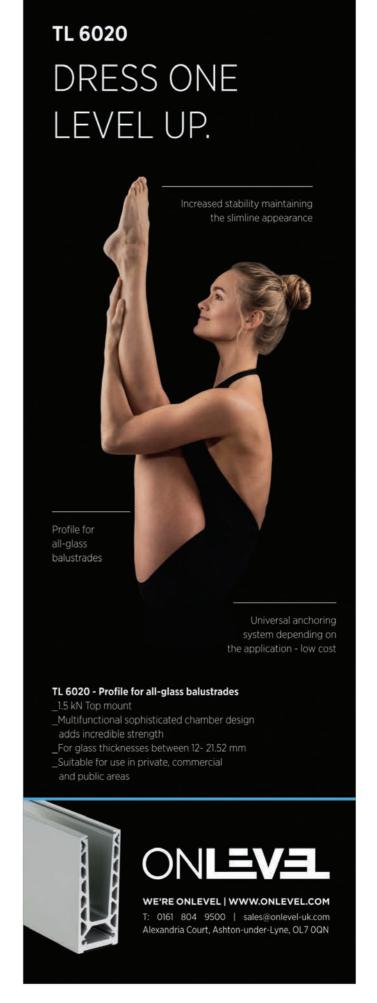
She continued: "This is a brave project offering a new prototype. In deploying homes that cater for extended families across urban, suburban and rural sites, this may offer solutions not only to the country's housing crisis – where families might live together longer – but also by providing care solutions for young and old alike, freeing people from punishing costs."

James Macdonald Wright of Macdonald Wright Architects said of the win: "Sustainability in architectural practice is expected, but I believe regionalism, craft and the interpretation of the vernacular are also important. I'm delighted that, in 'Caring Wood', they are being recognised. This project proves that by joining together, small practices can do big things."

Niall Maxwell of Rural Office echoed Macdonald Wright's sentiments. He commented on their win: "This would never have happened without James inviting us to work with him on the project. Collaboration with many talented people enabled us to realise the design for this contemporary country house. This demonstrates what small practices are capable of when given the chance by enlightened clients."

RIBA president Ben Derbyshire said: "This ambitious house explores new architectural methods, materials and crafts and allows us to question the future of housing and the concept of multi-generational living."

The RIBA House of the Year award is presented annually to the best new house or extension designed by an architect in the UK. As in previous years, the 2017 shortlist was revealed week by week in the four-part Channel 4 series *Grand Designs: House of the Year.* The other finalists were: Shawm House by MawsonKerr Architects; Ness Point by Tonkin Liu; 6 Wood Lane by Birds Portchmouth Russum; The Quest by Strom Architects; Newhouse of Auchengree by Ann Nisbet Studio; Hidden House by Coffey Architects.





INTERIOR **INSPIRATION:**

HOME OFFICE

With more and more people working from home, the inclusion of a home office is becoming a must in many self-build projects. Selfbuilder+Homemaker showcases some of the latest products that will ensure you create an on-trend as well as productive space

1. The Mayan Walnut Twin Pedestal desk from Wooden Furniture Store features a pull-out keyboard drawer, storage for a computer tower unit, a suspension filing drawer and three stationary drawers, providing all the practical space required for a home office. The desk is crafted from the highest-grade solid walnut and is priced at £764.

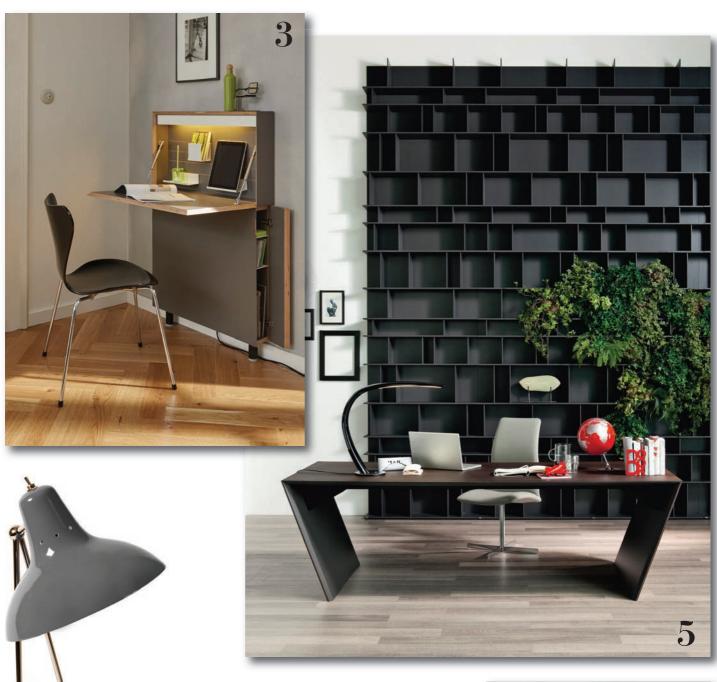
www.wooden-furniture-store.co.uk

2. Sofas by Saxon's traditionally styled Captain's Swivel chair combines a classic design with modern requirements. The seat is height adjustable and swivels and tilts, providing the practicality needed from an office chair. The chair is available in a range of fabrics, woods and studs pictured is Harris Tweed Huntsman Check Slate Grey. It's priced at £864.

www.sofasbysaxon.com

3. The Flatmate desk from Furl has a floor area of just 0.09 m² meaning it can sit virtually anywhere in your home if you're tight on space. Despite its size, it has storage space, an integrated power supply - which can also be used when the desk is closed and a glare-free light. The desk is priced at £880.

www.furl.co.uk



4. The Diana Table Lamp's fresh yet vintage design makes it an ideal addition to almost any home office. The light features an adjustable extending arm so it can be positioned to suit your needs. The lamp comes in a range of colour options for both the shade and base, and is available from DelightFULL.

www.delightfull.eu

5. The contemporary Vega desk is designed by Italian designer Giorgio Cattelan and offers the perfect working space for a modern home. Available in three colours – Canaletto walnut (pictured) burnt oak, and stainless steel – the desk comes with the option of a two drawer unit for additional storage space. The desk is available from Chaplins Furniture. www.chaplins.co.uk

6. The Renoir shelf features a top crafted from authentic reclaimed wood, meaning each one is unique. The shelves are supported by a black frame featuring cast iron feet, their form being inspired by early 20th century French industrial design. The Renoir shelf is available from MY Furniture for £269.99.

www.my-furniture.co.uk







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Safety first in the bathroom

Yvonne Orgill of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association explains why knowhow on CE marking of bathroom products can be safety-critical



ou are probably used to looking for a CE mark on toys and electrical appliances. But did you know that bathroom accessories (shower enclosures, shower trays, glass and plastic shower screens, baths and ceramic ware like toilets, basins and bidets) must also carry the CE mark? The UK market is being flooded with products that simply don't meet stringent safety and quality requirements; this makes it especially important for you to look for the CE Mark when designing your new bathroom as part of your self-build project.

So what does a CE mark mean for you as a self-builder, and what exactly is it? A CE mark is an assurance that a product that has been made or imported

has been certified "fit for purpose". The CE mark demonstrates the manufacturer has subjected their products to rigorous performance testing to ensure they meet an agreed – or 'harmonised' – standard.

But it's not just quality that is important – safety is also paramount when it comes to bathroom products. At the planning stage of your self-build project, here are some important questions to ask yourself when considering what products should be included in your bathroom designs.

WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT LOOKING FOR A CE MARK?

This is essentially the same as asking 'why should I care about my safety and that of



my family?' The danger of not installing products that are classified as 'fit for purpose' is that you're potentially leaving yourself and your loved ones open to serious accident or injury. A toilet, for example, is unfit for purpose if it tips over and smashes when a person sits on it. A glass shower screen is not fit for purpose if it shatters when being opened or closed. You may think these sound like freak accidents, but they can and do happen in the home. You would clearly not want them to happen to you, your child or elderly parent, or a visitor.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ME IF I BUY PRODUCTS THAT AREN'T CE MARKED?

To be clear, you are not breaking the law if you buy non-CE marked products; it is the manufacturer placing illegal products onto the market that is liable. However, if you – knowingly or otherwise - install illegal products into a bathroom, you are breaking the law. If you buy illegal products and you ask someone else to install them, the installer is breaking the law. To be sure you're buying CE marked products, always use products from reputable manufacturers - you can find a list of them on the Bathroom Manufacturers Association website (www.bathroomassociation.org). And if you're buying on the internet, look out for the Declaration of Performance a manufacturer will display on their website.

WHAT IF MY INSTALLER RECOMMENDS PRODUCTS TO SAVE ME MONEY? HOW WILL I KNOW IF THOSE PRODUCTS ARE SAFE?

The best way is to ask your installer. If they can show you the CE mark on products or packaging you know they are not installing illegal products. If there isn't a CE mark clearly visible, ask why not. And if you can't ask why not, don't let them install it. If a non-CE marked product is installed and you suffer as a result, you will have no comeback. For total peace of mind, always ensure you choose a professional installer/installation service.

HOW DO I KNOW IF A RETAILER IS SELLING NON-CE MARKED PRODUCTS?

According to a recent survey, a staggering 89 per cent of people assume

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ASK THE EXPERT

that UK retailers only supply products that are CE marked and fit for purpose. Sadly, this is not always the case. As we become more price-aware consumers, we are often attracted to installers who offer a 'cheap' service proposition. These companies are able to reduce costs by compromising on the product – a product that doesn't meet the CE mark of assurance. Again, if there isn't a CE mark clearly visible at a retail outlet you visit, ask why not, and if you can't, don't risk buying it.

WILL MY HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE COVER ME IF I INSTALL ILLEGAL BATHROOM PRODUCTS?

To be 100 per cent sure, we advise you to check directly with your own insurance company. The CE marking of bathroom products is an important legal requirement and consumers buying non-CE marked equipment do so at considerable peril. Consumers need to realise that saving a few pounds by buying non-conforming products can be very expensive in the long term. If this type of product fails it can cause major



damage to an owner's property and quite possibly, severe personal injury.

It is highly unlikely that a manufacturer who supplies non-conforming product will be properly insured against any claims which would arise, and a householder's own insurance may well refuse to meet a claim in these circumstances. If a visitor is injured, a homeowner may well face criminal sanctions as well as personal claims.

A few more pounds spent with a reputable supplier will avoid all of these risks.

To buy or specify compliant bathroom products with confidence, make sure you always seek out reputable bathroom product manufacturers. You will find a list of them at the association website.

Yvonne Orgill is CEO of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association

Tailor made construction to suit your needs



Build Assistance (SBA) Ltd has achieved the Commitment to Excellence Award 2017 for its outstanding work in the building industry. SBA Ltd have also built up a reputation to give to a charity close to

14

David, the St Joseph's Hospice.

Self Build Assistance Ltd aims to produce top quality services in the building industry. David is able to offer services in both concrete and light steel frames and also Trad build and timber frames. SBA is sought after by customers up and down the nation for help in transforming their homes, kitchens, bathrooms, loft conversions and extensions. Listed as a member of The Chartered Institute of Builders. David believes in great customer care and satisfaction from the very start and beyond. The business is able to meet the needs of customers and clients by doing what is most important, listening to their requirements. Stellar workmanship has always been at the heart of the business.

SBA also offer maintenance help, whether it be council or estate agent properties and also incudes private landlord properties.

SBA Ltd is hoping to expand their network in the near future, building on their connections, to give existing customers and new customers a great all round service. SBA are also expanding into the investment market over the next 24 months, we will have some opportunities coming up and are currently looking into private investment as well as possible crowd funding possibilities. We are currently forecasting possible profits between 16 per cent to 20 per cent based on the current house market and we will be rolling a project out shortly to show how it will work. All investments are for the duration of a specific project and will not be tied into any other investment. For more infomation contact us on:

0207 889 2013 www.selfbuildassistance.com

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CASE STUDY

A JUGGLING ACT

Despite working as long-haul flight attendants and running their own business, Nick Housley and his partner took on the challenge of turning their Sussex bungalow into a 'des res'. Roseanne Field reports

elf-build is in Nick Housley's blood, his parents are serial self-builders who have taken on several projects over the years, and have passed on the tricks of the trade. Perhaps this is why Nick and partner Mark's already hectic lifestyle didn't put them off taking on their first large-scale renovation project.

Nick and Mark work as flight attendants for British Airways on long-haul flights, meaning they're both often away for days at a time. Nick also runs his own entertainment business singing and DJ-ing at weddings, which Mark helps out with. So the pair were already trying to balance more than most could easily manage, but they decided to add another big plate to the ones they were already spinning.

Clearly a highly motivated individual, Nick was adamant that they could create their dream home, despite the three-bedroom new build they were living in providing all the basics.

A SELF-BUILDER'S HISTORY

Having had first-hand experience of self-build projects growing up, the concept wasn't daunting to Nick, and in fact it was how he got the bug. "I'd always wanted to do a project because my parents had done self-builds," he explains. "We lived in a caravan when I was five when they did their first self-build, they did another when one I was 16, then they did a place out in Spain." However, for Mark it was an entirely new experience. "I've just been dragged along!" he jokes.

They bought a modern home together on a small development of five new houses in the village of Crawley Down, handy for Gatwick Airport, but dreamed of owning something bigger. "Even after we'd moved we were constantly looking around big show homes, so we knew we weren't settled," says Mark. Nick explains that he knew self-build could be the key, given their limited resources: "I had this vision of what we could achieve because we could never afford to buy a house this size".

The pair began hunting for a suitable plot of land, but immediately ran into problems. "We were looking for a garden plot or anything where we could build from scratch," says Nick, "but there was nothing because land's so hard to come by around here."

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The bungalow as it was when Nick and Mark bought it

BELOW

The transformed house, with only the ground floor rendering to be completed

LOW POINT

Doing the insulation and the plasterboarding

"It was all new to me and I was trying to learn everything because I didn't want to be ripped off by anyone"

Nick Housley







The stairs leading to the newly built first floor





submitted an amended planning application, bolstered by the knowledge it had already been through the process once.

There was a small snag in the form of a lack of documentation to prove the foundations could support the weight of a two-storey building, something Nick's parents' wisely flagged up as a potential issue. Luckily everything was fine, but as he says, it meant "£1,000 straight away just for some soil checks!"

Although achieving planning was reasonably hassle-free, it didn't come without its stresses later down the line. On both flanks of the house, a certain size of opening was dictated for the windows, but when their architect said it would be "fine" to install a slightly larger opening, the self-builders did just that. Unfortunately the neighbours on one side objected, so the planners were summoned, who informed Nick and Mark they would have to go back through planning but were likely to be rejected. This meant that just two days after they had been installed the windows had to be taken out and replaced.

As the neighbours on the other side didn't object, Nick and Mark put the increased window size to the planning department. There was an important safety dimension, as being a bedroom there was a need to have a means of escape, which the smaller opening wouldn't provide. Were it to have been rejected, they would have had to install fire doors throughout the entire property. This meant a nervous eight week wait, which Nick says "was really stressful because the timber frame was going up, and they couldn't put the weatherboarding on because if it didn't get approved the window was going to have to come out."

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GETTING THEIR HANDS DIRTY

Being on such a tight budget, Nick and Mark took on almost all of the work themselves, but with help from family and friends. This meant making some huge sacrifices for the duration of the project. "Our life's been on hold for 18 months," says Mark.

They began work in May 2016, completely stripping out the bungalow, with the help of Nick's dad. This included the roof, so all they were left with was the four outer walls.

Unfortunately, the unpredictable British weather had its part to play. "We had the most horrendous rain, and because were keeping the existing floor downstairs, we couldn't let it get wet," explains Nick. This meant covering the building with huge tarpaulins which needed to be constantly emptied of the large amounts of water pooling on them. "Water started to drip through so we had buckets everywhere, and it was a bit of a 'what have we done' moment," says Nick.

With money being very tight, Nick also took on the role of project manager. He managed to take a little time off being a flight attendant at the beginning of the project while Mark continued working, meaning he was often only in the country for 11 days a month. This meant at the start of the project Nick was taking a large share of the project on his shoulders. "It was all new to me and I was trying to learn everything because I didn't want to be ripped off by anyone," he says. "When Mark got back, he was my support while I was tearing my hair out!"

When Nick did return to work it meant sometimes neither of them was around to manage the project, leaving it in the hands of the builders who were doing the timber frame

HIGH POINT

Nick: "I would say when the stairs went in."

Mark: "For me, it was finishing all the painting and decorating."

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The kitchen/diner is a generous space for entertaining

and the roof – the only elements of the work not undertaken by themselves. "We'd built up a good rapport so we felt comfortable leaving it with them," says Nick. They would do a full 'handover' for each other when either of them left to explain where the project was at, as well as keeping in contact as much as possible. "We just had to try and communicate as best we could from the other side of the world," Mark explains.

Their time away from home also meant sometimes taking a creative approach to placing orders. "We were organising materials and other things from far-flung countries via Skype and FaceTime," says Mark.

Once back on site, they were living in the log cabins at the bottom of the garden. There were some issues with the cold and mould and damp during the winter months, but they did their best to make it homely as possible, including managing to put a Christmas tree up. Mark says such efforts helped with stress levels: "You've got to try and maintain some sort of normality because if you don't, you'll go stir-crazy".

One of the biggest challenges was the plasterboarding – something they'd never attempted before. "It was just never-ending," says Nick. Installing the loft insulation was also particularly torturous. "It's a big space and with the way the roof is structured it's really difficult to get to the front," Nick explains. "We were balancing on the beams trying to cut insulation with a saw," adds Mark.

As well as Nick's parents' expertise, Nick's uncle did all the electrics, and Mark's dad helped out with the plastering, while Mark did almost all the decorating and coving. "That was how I was spending my days off."

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Somehow they managed to keep their entertainment business running successfully at the same time, with Nick hosting a resident DJ slot at a local hotel every weekend as well as singing at weddings and Christmas parties, and attending wedding fairs.

Eight months in to the project, in January 2017, Nick decided he wanted to get the house finished in time for Mark's 40th birthday in July, despite Mark's reluctance to impose this deadline: "I didn't want to add to the stress and pressure Nick was already under," he says. Nevertheless, Nick was typically determined: "His 40th was on a Monday and we moved in on the Sunday before."

The couple are now just left with the rendering around the ground floor to be done, which will be an off-white colour, and the landscaping to the front and back.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The original bungalow was 1,000 ft², and with the extra storey they've doubled its floor area. The front door sits on the left-hand side of the hallway, with a useful storage cupboard to its right. The stairs are further down the hall, while to the right, double doors open to the large living room.

There's a small utility room with a toilet between the lounge and the kitchen/diner, which stretches across the width of the house at the back. This impressive space features a large island with a partial false ceiling containing fixed uplighting hanging above it, along with a double oven and steam oven, a large Americanstyle fridge freezer and a long dining table and seating area. Double doors lead out onto the garden.

PROJECT STATS

- * Bungalow cost: £427,000
- * Cost of build: £110,000
- * Estimated current value: £750,000 £800,000
- * Bungalow size: 1.000 ft²
- * Finished house size: 2,000 ft²

NICK & MARK'S TOP TIPS

- * Attend self-build shows
- * Be organised with paperwork and trades
- k Support each other
- * Research and learn
- Don't put pressure on the timescale
- * Ask for advice
- * Be flexible



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The couple do a lot of entertaining which had a big impact on the internal layout. "Initially we wanted to have a through-lounge, but the drainage wouldn't allow for us to put the toilet on the other side," explains Nick. "But actually it's done us a favour because we like having a separate lounge to relax in."

They've installed PVC skirting boards throughout the entire house. "We tried to use some new, innovative ideas," says Mark. The downstairs is heated by an unusual type of underfloor heating which is surrounded by aluminium plates that slot into the suspended floor, as opposed to being installed in a screed. The upstairs, which includes the main bathroom plus the five bedrooms – two of which are en suite – is heated by the combi boiler, which also provides their hot water. The couple use one of the bedrooms as an office for their entertainment business.

A lot of their interior design ideas and furniture were inspired by and sourced from far-flung places they have visited with work. "We were lucky that way," says Mark. "A lot of people don't have the opportunity to travel and get things from all four corners of the world."

MAKING IT WORK

Although there were inevitably moments throughout the project when they felt overwhelmed, Nick and Mark managed to stay positive and keep going. "It is really tough, but once you've started there's no going back," says

Nick. "You just have to keep going forward, you've got no choice because you're living in a building site!"

Their job requires them to take annual flying exams, and Mark was also learning to drive, meaning a lot of studying had to be worked in to the schedule. They put the success of their project largely down to their support for each other during the particularly challenging times. "You have to take the pressure off each other," says Mark, adding, "you've got to become a unit."

The couple also made sure they put time aside every week to have a 'date night' to get away from the project. "It was our release, just to go out for a couple of hours and not talk about the house," Mark says.

Despite the many challenges they faced, they realise they were lessened by having knowledgeable parents on hand to help. "We were lucky we had the guidance of my mum and dad," Nick says. "It really was a family affair that has got us to where we are," adds Mark.

The project has been a labour of love, but satisfying: "It's been horrendous, but in a good way!" says Mark – and they're proud of what they've achieved, particularly given the money available. "It is achievable on a budget with the right determination," Nick stresses. While they still have a few bits to finish with the house – which they'll tackle alongside planning their wedding – they already have plans to have another go in a few years: "We will do another one," Mark says confidently.

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A warm outlook in Perthshire

John and Katie Langley found the perfect structural solution for adding a substantial, energy efficient extension to their traditional Scottish farmhouse

ohn and Katie Langley, who have a construction business in Scotland, bought their 80-year-old farmhouse in rural Perthshire in 2004, just after they got married. A traditional stone built property sitting in an acre of land, the couple fell in love with it straight away.

Not only were they looking for a family home in Perthshire, they also saw the potential for converting the outbuildings into a holiday cottage and offices to use as the base for their housebuilding and engineering firm, JML Contracts.

After two years in the farmhouse and the arrival of their first son (and expecting their second), John and Katie decided that now was the time to undertake a serious extension, and increase not only the amount of bedrooms, but also the living space needed for their growing family.

Katie reflects on the decision to extend: "We immediately fell in love with this house for so many reasons, including its location, traditional stone built architecture, and the ability to create additional revenue by using the outbuildings. However, given its reasonable age there were the accompanying draughts, lack of appropriate insulation and space limitations for a modern family.

She continues: "Our business specialises in building with Structural Insulated Panels, or 'SIPs'. Until this point we had only worked on newly built properties constructed in SIPs, but with our knowledge of the product and also the help of a specialist architect (Kerry Smith) we decided that this would be the ideal technique for our extension".

The couple wanted a modern layout and a much more thermally efficient home which would reduce their energy bills. "However," says Katie, "we still wanted to maintain its traditional look and for it to appear as a seamless

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continuation of our home".

After they finished the conversion of the outbuildings, they decided to move into the cottage while they carried out the extension works. "This was ideal as it meant we were on site to oversee works and could ensure that our schedule was met. The imminent birth of a second child was a very good driver for sticking to schedule!"

Katie continued: "Our extension plans were ambitious as we planned to double the size of the original house. However, as housebuilders we knew that the majority of the cost of an extension is in its foundations so it made sense to us to build above and create as much extra living space upstairs as downstairs. We knew we had to move out of the house to carry out the works, so we decided the only way to do it was all at once!"

Kerry Smith Architects are based not far away in Angus, and the couple briefed the architect to design an extension which included all the extra living space desired, was in keeping with the house's original architecture but which would be built in SIPs so that Katie and John could have the cosy, thermal efficient living space they longed for. The double storey extension took the house from approximately 180 m² to 360 m². The design included a huge kitchendiner, a downstairs WC, spacious boot room (essential for country living!), and laundry room accessed by a new back door and hall. Upstairs two new double bedrooms, a master bedroom, en suite and dressing room were added.

The whole extension was built with SIPs using high quality sustainable materials. It took a year to build from start to finish, and the super-efficient insulation means the house is warm but also not susceptible to draughts from the sometimes inclement Scottish weather!

Building with SIPs also meant that extra height could be achieved in the bedrooms upstairs as it removes the need for roof trusses. As a result the bedrooms were not only cosy – the vaulted ceilings also provided a more spacious feel.

It also meant the construction process was quicker as the SIPs panels are all manufactured offsite. It was a tricky erection process on site, as adding a SIPs extension to an old existing building meant that all measurements and drawings had to be precise. However it was only 10 days before the skilled SIPs team had erected the extension and made it watertight ready for the next stage.

The walls and roof are all SIPs panels making a very strong and thermally efficient external envelope. The U-values and air tightness are well above other construction methods, and as a result the thermal efficiency is really impressive. However proper ventilation had to be ensured as a result, as Katie explains: "We were very keen to ensure that the space was properly ventilated and we installed an HRV (heat recovery



SECRETS OF SUCCESS

ventilation) system to recover the heat from downstairs and help circulate fresh air around the new extension. Our eldest son suffers from allergies and the improved air quality from using the HRV is very noticeable."

The added benefits that this self-build has brought to the family's life are huge. Not just from a warmth and space perspective, but also the flexibility the extension has allowed them. Katie says: "I love the fact that my boot room and cloakroom are all at the back door so the kids can dump their kit there and avoid dragging it all through the house! The

"We wanted more space, a modern layout and a much more thermally efficient home"



luxury of the extra space downstairs and bedrooms for all the children has been brilliant. It has meant we now throw a lot more parties as well as work gatherings!"

The family have noticed they now tend to use the older part of the farmhouse less often, as the temperature change and draughts are noticeable! All the family bedrooms are in the new extension with the spare rooms relegated to the original house. They also installed underfloor heating throughout the downstairs extension, but the thermal efficiency delivered by SIPs means it has never needed to be switched on.

The heating bills have actually shrunk dramatically despite adding 50 per cent



of space, and with an Aga heating much of the kitchen-diner, they find themselves opening windows to let the heat out.

Katie explains: "The difference in warmth is noticeable between the old and new parts. We put the key living areas in the extension, and the guest rooms and more formal living spaces are in the older part. We wanted to maintain the house's traditional feel however so we still have our open log fires in these areas, but there is no need for extra heat in our new extension. It has provided us with the extra, modern living spaces we required for the family and thanks to the SIPs method, our ongoing energy bills are kept to a minimum."

Ancon to launch products at Ecobuild



Double winner of the Queen's Award for Enterprise and holder of a string of innovation and product development accolades, **Ancon** will be launching its latest fixing innovations at Ecobuild on stand number C62. Ancon's stand will focus on structural fixings that are opening-up new possibilities in zero and ultra-low energy construction by minimising thermal bridging, including its insulated balcony connectors and ultra-low thermal conductivity cavity wall ties. It will also

showcase a brick-faced support system that allows designers to achieve exciting masonry facade aesthetics, quickly and easily on site. For more information, call Ancon or visit the website.

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Ecobuild takes on a new shape

ecobuild

)6-08 March 2018 / ExCeL, London

Ecobuild is returning to the ExCeL London in March 2018 and under the new ownership of Futurebuild Events, things promise to be very different

cobuild 2018 is being designed and built around the industry, bringing to life the latest technology, freshest thinking and most innovative materials.

The event is not only being shaped through comprehensive industry feedback, but also with direct input from leading industry influencers. These influencers are members of the Ecobuild Steering Group, which is helping to set the agenda for the event.

ECOBUILD SUSTAINABILITY SHOWCASES

Surrounding the conference arena will be the ecobuild sustainability showcases, home to the some of the most innovative solutions to the issues facing the built environment. The showcases will truly put sustainability at the heart of the event.

They will feature two full-scale builds, including the zero net carbon home from ZEDfactory – designed to minimise fossil fuels and annual energy bills. It offers a complete response to the housing crisis.

Another highlight is the WasteZone, curated by architect, academic and activist Duncan Baker-Brown, which will allow visitors to discover waste's true potential.

THE FUTUREBUILD DISTRICTS

The conference arena and sustainability showcases are surrounded by the futurebuild districts, each of which will act as an immersive and stimulating area where people, brands and companies will be able to network and develop profitable relationships.

The Building Performance district is where you can look far beyond the construction and design of buildings, instead considering the wellbeing agenda across new build and refurb projects.

This district will also be home to the RIBA bookshop and lounge, a vibrant architect designed space next to the seminar area. This area will be designed by Freehaus, a young architecture practice, which won a competition in association with leading brands

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Rockpanel and Rockwool.

In the Energy and HVAC district, the latest innovations across renewables, smart buildings and HVAC will be presented through a series of seminars and workshops. The Green and Blue Infrastructure district will offer solutions in water management, external landscaping, biophilic design and biodiversity.

New for 2018 is the Timber district, in association with the Structural Timber Association and supported by Wood for Good and TRADA. This will be a showcase for the latest technological innovations and systems, alongside the Timber Talks seminar programme.

Another new addition is the Concrete district, delivered in association with The Concrete Centre and This Is Concrete. Here, information and inspiration will be shared to realise the potential of concrete as a sustainable material, as well as its range of solutions for housing.

Following its success last year, offsite technology will return for the second year in partnership with Explore Offsite. The district will feature a ground-breaking exhibition of offsite construction solutions and masterclasses.

This year will again see District Energy taken to the next level. The district will be hosted by the ukDEA and is in association with the Danish and Swedish Embassies. It's set to include a programme full of key speakers and debates, a networking lounge and a product launch pad.



THE CPD ACCREDITED CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

This year's conference takes its lead from global environmental targets, with sessions reflecting the concerns of the built environment industry and formulating practical recommendations. Some of the big issues represented by the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement will provide the focus. Speakers include experts in their field, including Jane Duncan, Paula Caballero, John Elkington and Bill Dunster.

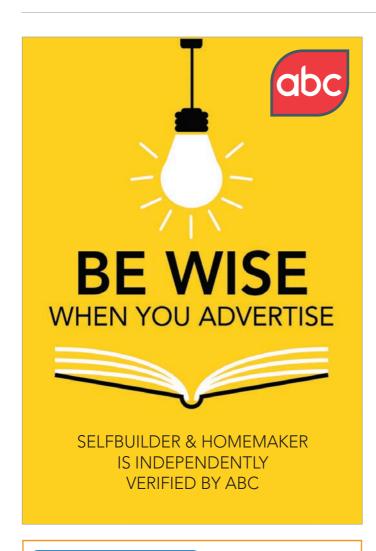
KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Ecobuild is working with a number of strategic partners who are contributing to the overall strategy and shape of the event. Notable partners include the CCS, the RIBA, CIAT, NLA, Bioregional, CIBSE, The Edible Bus Stop and the Edge. The event will also host the BREEAM Awards and the Offsite Construction Awards.

WHEN & WHERE

Ecobuild takes place at the ExCeL, London from 6 - 8

March. For more details and to register for a free ticket visit www.ecobuild.co.uk









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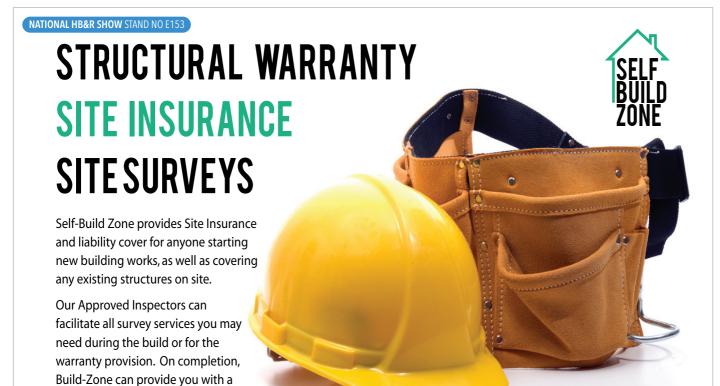
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Packed to the rafters for 2018



The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show returns to the NEC in Birmingham from 22 - 25 March with an array of expertise on hand

atest figures released by the National Custom & Self Build Association (NaCSBA) reveal that 33,000 people have signed up to the Right to Build register since October 2017, which means that at least half of the demand for serviced plots will have to be authorised by October 2019. To support more people in their desire to build homes in the region and inspire remodelling projects, The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show is returning to the NEC, Birmingham from 22 - 25 March 2018. Over four packed days, visitors will benefit from more than 500 exhibitors and 16 free daily seminars and masterclasses in the extended venue.

The event is a best-in-class marketplace for all the latest products and services provided by specialist companies in industries ranging from kitchens, bathrooms, doors and windows, heating, energy efficiency, architecture, design, financial services, planning permission and much more. Aside from providing advice and guidance, experienced self-builders will also be at the show to discuss the dilemmas they faced during their self-build/renovation experience, to help visitors with similar problems.

Visitors will be able to book bespoke consultations with celebrity experts who present their favourite TV property programmes. Charlie Luxton, sustainable architectural designer and presenter of Channel 4's Best Laid Plans will be onhand to discuss homes of the future, new architectural ideas and eco living. Julia Kendell, interior design expert for BBC's DIY SOS: The Big Build and ITV's 60 Minute Makeover will also be there to meet with visitors and talk about trendy interior adaptions and offer inspiration to anyone who wants to revamp their home.

The Advice Centre, a drop-in hub for one-on-one impartial guidance, is open to people who are interested in running ideas past property specialists with years of experience in their field. This show



area will see the return of the Ask the Builder zone, where visitors will be given tips on locating approved construction workers from members of the Federation of Master Builders.

Visitors who are interested in free one-on-one appointments with chartered specialists from RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) will want to stop by the Ask the Architect area, which will cover a wide array of topics such as extensions, new builds, internal alterations and much more.

For objective tailored advice, the Ask the Expert zone will provide 15-minute consultations via interactive sessions with some of the UK's leading property specialists. Visitors will be able to talk through their plans with Michael Holmes (director of content and product development for Homebuilding & Renovating magazine), Jason Orme (editorial director of Homebuilding & Renovating), Mariana Pedroso (interior designer and architect), Hugo Tugman (chair and founder of Architect Your Home), Tim Pullen (eco-expert of Homebuilding & Renovating), Bob Branscombe (building expert at Homebuilding & Renovating), Allan Corfield (self-build expert at Homebuilding & Renovating) and Sally Tagg (an expert on planning permission).

Across the four days, Oakwrights



Design Consultation and The Potton Lounge will be offering free consultations with members of their design teams. They will help visitors envisage, create and deliver their own tailored new home from scratch. Attendees who are interested in these consultations can pre-book an appointment on the event's website.

The show app is also available for download on Android and iPhone. The app will facilitate consumers visiting the venue, having the option of scheduling and sending alerts for key seminars and masterclasses, browsing through the list of specialists available at the Advice Centre, and accessing the latest offers and travel information.

WHEN & WHERE

The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show takes place at the NEC in Birmingham from 22 - 25 March. Book your tickets now by calling 0844 854 0503 or visiting homebuildingshow.co.uk

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Norcros relaunches its 4 into 1 Grout range

Norcros Adhesives is relaunching its successful 4 into 1 grout range with new improved formulations, new colours, packaging and marketing support. The new products have been reformulated to be both efflorescence-resistant and water-repellant. The formulations contain Norcros Stop Mould Antibacterial additives to protect against mould and discolouration. The new range has been considerably expanded and now includes a total of 15 colours, reflecting current tile trends, in particular the escalating popularity of wood effect tiles. To assist specifiers and architects at the design stage, the colours of the new range can also now be quoted as RAL numbers. Autumn Chestnut, Forest Acorn, Tropical Ebony and Rustic Cedar are the new colours joining the range. They are also supported by a new A4 Colour Samples folder. This comes on a durable heavy duty card. It includes product and application guidance on all Norcros grouts and sealants, including the 4 into 1 range. It also features sample sticks which can be used to test against actual tiles, providing a real benefit for fixers who are looking to coordinate grout lines with their tiling selections. For more information contact Norcros by calling or visit their website.

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New year, new products

Freefoam Building Products have got off to a cracking start in 2018 with the launch of two new products ranges – Anthracite Grey Round Gutter System and an Acrylic interior panelling range. Colin St John, Commercial Director, explained "We're delighted to launch these new products at the beginning of the year. It shows our commitment to creating new openings for our customers and these new products will open up new markets and give customers the range to meet demand from both housebuilders and the refurbishment sector". Acrylic panels – Freefoam has now added a new range of Acrylic panels to augment the product offering. The ultimate modern wall panel giving the perfect balance of style and convenience and the ideal alternative to tiles - saving time and money. Designed to be easy to fit the Acrylic panel range features a unique tongue and groove fitting system. Anthracite rainwater range - The popularity of Ral 7016 Anthracite Grey for windows and doors has been phenomenal over the last few years. The addition of a round gutter system is the next logical step to give Freefoam customers more choice and the flexibility to meet demand from housebuilders and specifiers. For more information contact Freefoam by calling or visit their website.

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It's time to upgrade

Revised regulations in England for septic tanks discharging to watercourses will be introduced in 2020. Andrew Baird of wastewater specialist WPL explains how this will affect self-builders with onsite treatment, and when they will need to upgrade

omeowners using off-mains treatment prefer to think about it as little as possible, but with Environment Agency rules about to change, it may be time to give yours some attention.

Unlike other parts of the UK, homeowners in England with private sewage treatment do not require a licence or registration provided that they are not discharging to an area of outstanding natural beauty or directly to groundwater where domestic and commercial abstraction is being undertaken. However, those whose facilities are found to be polluting the land or water do still risk prosecution.

The situation in Scotland is different, as householders need to purchase a Controlled Activity Regulations (CAR) licence to discharge anything to land or water. In Wales, onsite sewage treatment systems need to be registered with Natural Resources Wales and in Northern Ireland the discharge of domestic sewage to any surface water or groundwater requires the consent of the NI Department of Environment.

POLLUTION RISK

Traditional septic tanks pose a high pollution risk due to low-grade treatment within the tank and the poor quality of the wastewater discharged. Many are 'legacy systems' from a time before dishwashers and washing machines, when domestic water use was lower and are not suited to modern consumption.

The updated Environment Agency rules means that householders in England with a septic tank discharging to a watercourse now have until 1 January 2020 to carry out an upgrade. If they want to sell an affected property before this date the upgrade must happen first.

If the Environment Agency finds evidence that a septic tank discharging to surface water is causing pollution, it will need to be replaced or upgraded prior to 2020. Usually this has to take place within a year, although it tends to be agreed on a case-by-case basis.



Domestic sewage treatment plants have improved massively over the last decade

According to the Environment Agency, the options available to householders needing to upgrade are:

- Connect to mains sewer where available
- Install a drainage field so the septic tank can discharge to ground instead of water
- Replace your septic tank with a small sewage treatment plant

ROBUST TREATMENT

Domestic sewage treatment plants have improved massively over the last decade and much more robust systems are now available. There are packaged treatment plants on the market that meet all the requirements of the new rules and incorporate an aerated process designed

to handle the increased flows associated with contemporary lifestyles.

Sizing is very important when selecting any domestic sewage treatment system and ideally householders are advised to select a supplier accredited by the industry trade association British Water. They should ask their supplier to demonstrate that the system they are recommending complies with British Water's Flows & Loads code of practice for package treatment plants.

To deal with our water-intensive contemporary lifestyles, the recommendation is for 150 l/d per person throughput. Less scrupulous suppliers may recommend smaller plants to cut costs, but upsizing at a later date will incur additional expense down the line



QUESTIONS TO ASK

Before selecting your sewage treatment plant, here are some important questions to ask your supplier:

- * Does the proposed site meet Building Regulations?
- *Will the discharge meet environmental regulations?
- *What size plant do I need for my property?
- *Am I in an exclusion zone?
- *Does the plant conform to the EN12566-3 standard?
- * Is the supplier accredited by British Water?
- *Can my installer manage the whole process?
- *What will the upfront costs and running costs be?

and potentially cause issues when the property comes to be sold.

While it is possible for self-builders to install their own package treatment plants, WPL only works with a network of independent experts to ensure that their plants are always fully compliant. Drawing on decades of experience gives homeowners peace of mind and provides access to an end-to-end service from plant selection, through installation, to maintenance and desludging.

Installing the plant is often the easiest part of the process. Meeting environmental and Building Regulations can require more specialist expertise so that problems do not emerge down the road.

An experienced independent expert can also help clients calculate whole lifecycle running costs for their treatment plant, including energy consumption, maintenance and desludging intervals. Households can reduce their environmental impact and relax in the knowledge that the risk of fines for unintended breaches of the new rules has been eliminated.

EASY TO INSTALL

It is no surprise that investment in quality wastewater treatment can improve the resale value of a house. Find a product that meets the current British and European Standard for small sewage treatment plants and is fully compliant

with Environment Agency regulations. Top-grade equipment will comfortably exceed most discharge consent standards, though where sites have more stringent ammonia consent standards, an expert installer can advise on additional processing requirements.

The latest single-tank wastewater treatment systems are easy to install and boast up to three-year intervals before desludging. This compares favourably with septic tanks, which often require annual emptying. The lower maintenance requirement is much more compatible with the busy lives and high expectations of today's homeowners.

Andrew Baird is technical director at WPL





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The doors are suitable for single and double door situations with compatible sliding door hardware.

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VELFAC composite aluminium / wood doors offer impressive performance whatever the weather – keeping draughts out, heat in and controlling solar gain, allowing home owners to enjoy their house any time of year.

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Duration's Emperor Concealed Aluminium Bifold door is truly unique. There are no unsightly hinges breaking up the clean lines of the doors. When closed, the cleverly engineered patented hinges are fully concealed within the door leaf, resulting in a contemporary and aesthetically pleasing bi-fold door. The Emperor Concealed Bifold doors are not only thermally efficient and strong, but they are also highly secure and have passed PAS 24:2012 for enhanced security. Constructed from a low maintenance polyamide thermally broken aluminium profile, these doors will create an open, flexible and modern space for both living and working environments.

www.duration.co.uk

Glazing solutions to design your ideal home

Valley 21 showcases a range of windows and doors from aluminium systems company Reynaers at Home that offer superior design, security and energy efficiency.

A combination of the Concept Patio 155 door with the Concept System 86 window creates a home that is coherent, both in terms of appearance and performance. Glazing panels at juxtaposing angles follow the sun through the landscape, filling the rooms with light throughout the day and providing spectacular views of the mountain scenery.

The project represents a step away from urban landscapes, replacing noise with serenity and comfort. Specific variants of the glazing systems, a lift-and-slide door across the front of the home together with high-insulation windows, allow for vast areas of glass even in the harsh climate of Romania.

The CP 155 is a premium insulating slide or lift-and-slide aluminium door with multiple variations to suit individual project requirements, facilitating extreme dimensions and glass weights up to 400kg. Whilst the lift-and-slide variation will allow users to open huge doors with ease, this can be taken further with automatic opening and a low threshold option for increased building accessibility.

For those homeowners who are conscious of energy consumption, the system can be upgraded to High Insulation (HI) – a specific version of CP 155 monorail has achieved the soughtafter Swiss Minergie® component label, a trademark signifying high quality and low energy in both new and refurbished buildings.

The lift-and-slide door is compatible with CS 86 inward opening aluminium windows, which are also showcased



across Valley 21 – specifically the HI variant. The unique insulation concept not only ensures extreme stability and elevated water-and air-tightness, but also makes it suitable for triple glass applications.

The window is one of the most energy-efficient available and has also achieved the Swiss Minergie® and Minergie-P® component label, with a Secured by Design option available.

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Mitsubishi Electric has launched a new fan-assisted radiator that works superbly with either traditional or renewable heating systems and delivers a faster heat up time and lower running costs than the equivalent output double panel, double convector radiator. The i-LIFE 2Slim is available in 1kW and 2kW models and offers a high heat output from 50 per cent less wall space (based on 45°C flow). Paired with a renewable heating system such as an Ecodan heat pump, and choosing lower

design temperatures, the i-LIFE 2Slim can also potentially increases the payments homeowners can receive from the Renewable Heat Incentive. For further information on the i-LIFE 2Slim, visit the website or call.

01707 278666 library.mitsubishielectric.co.uk

Is your building ready for winter?



As part of its commitment to winter safety and the provision of simply installed, energy efficient heat tracing products, **Raychem** has launched five videos to guide users through a number of common winter issues that can be easily overcome by using the correct Raychem products. Raychem offers a comprehensive range of energy-efficient trace heating systems, designed for exposed pipes, gutters and downpipes and access area surfaces. Installing heattracing systems for protection against

snap-weather conditions is a sound long-term investment. The videos are complemented by a winter safety blog which highlights winter problems and suggests the ideal solutions.

lp.pentairthermal.com/winter-safety



Prepare your home for Winter

Winter conditions adversely affect many homes, causing water pipes to expand and rupture in properties and ultimately causing irrevocable damage, as well as triggering what has been reported as the most common type of homeowner insurance claim during the winter period. This widespread household winter insurance claim could be avoided through some basic preparation tips. Traditionally brass stopcocks have been the control valve for a home's mains water supply, however they are not always located in the easiest of places to reach and due to being susceptible to limescale damage. There is however now a modern alternative to brass stopcocks, Polypipe Surestop stopcock. Fitted in easy to reach places, the Surestop stopcock features a lockdown button, that can be simply and easily pressed to instantly stop the water supply. There are no electrics or batteries involved, it works purely on the water pressure and it will not seize up or be affected by limescale - unlike brass. The Surestop stopcock is also available with a version that includes a discreet, remote lockdown switch, that could be fitted in a kitchen cupboard or surface area, for even easier access and visibility. For more information contact Polypipe Surestop by calling.

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Breathe easy

Phil Harrison of EnviroVent offers advice on the best ways to achieve optimum ventilation and energy efficiency when upgrading the home or undertaking a self-build

growing number of homeowners and self-builders are realising that ventilation is an essential part of achieving a healthy as well as energy efficient home.

The most visible signs of a lack of ventilation are condensation and mould growth, which is unsightly, while the spores released by mould can exacerbate health issues such as asthma. As self-builders are building to greater levels of airtightness they are turning to a whole house ventilation approach.

There are several options available when it comes to whole house ventilation, all of which comply with current Building Regulations. However, there are a number of factors to take into consideration including the airtightness of the property, number of occupants, the type and age of property, and its potential space restrictions.

The entry-level option would be System 1: intermittent extract fans with background ventilation – usually trickle vents in the windows. The extract fans would be located in the wet zones of the property – the kitchen, utility room, bathrooms and en suites. The potential downside is that this is not the most energy efficient method, owing to the heat loss incurred through the extract fans.

Many self-builders also don't like the aesthetics of trickle vents in the windows and some extract fans can be noisy, especially if they are not regularly maintained. There are low noise options on the market which operate with exceptional performance and the minimal sound levels.

Option two is passive stack ventilation. This is a non-mechanical form of ventilation which works through vents that are located in wet zones and uses the principle of convection to allow the movement of air via currents. Background vents need to be installed in conjunction with passive stack. The downside to passive stack ventilation is that the airflow rate is weather dependant, which means there is a risk of either over



ventilating or under ventilating.

The third option is System 3: mechanical extract ventilation (MEV). This is a continuous extract system designed with multiple extract points to draw moisture-laden air out of the wet zones such as bathrooms and kitchens through a central unit before being ducted out to atmosphere. This negates the requirement for numerous extract fans throughout the property and can therefore be a lower cost and quieter option if the property has a large number of wet rooms. As with individual extract fans, trickle vents need to be installed in order to meet the whole house ventilation rate.

A better solution for self-builders is System 4: mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR). Heat recovery systems work by extracting the stale, moist air out of the wet rooms, which is ducted to a central unit, normally located in a loft space of a house or a utility room or cupboard in an apartment. This extracted air passes over a heat exchanger before being ducted

to outside.

At the same time, fresh air is drawn into the unit from outside via a filter and is warmed by a high efficiency heat exchange cell. This tempered, fresh air is then delivered through supply vents into the living, dining and bedroom areas. This system maintains a stable humidity level, free from condensation and mould. Anyone with asthma or other respiratory problems should also find this method of ventilation much more beneficial.

Heat recovery systems require no background ventilators or extract fans, in fact, MVHR relies on a high level of airtightness throughout the property. That is why, with homes being built to greater levels of airtightness, energy-conscious self-builders are choosing heat recovery (MVHR) for all-year-round efficient and balanced ventilation.

Ultimately for self-builders who are energy-conscious and are looking to design and build to specific construction standards such as Passivhaus, MVHR is one of the few options to satisfy the requirements.

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Finally, there is an alternative option for self-builders or home renovators that includes systems with BBA accreditation, such as positive input ventilation (PIV). PIV units draw in fresh, filtered and clean air from outside, gently ventilating the home from a central position on a landing in a house or the central hallway in a flat or bungalow.

Moisture-laden air is diluted, displaced and replaced to control humidity levels around 55 per cent. This significantly

reduces or eliminates surface condensation, which is the main cause of mould growth. With lower humidity levels, there is less opportunity for dust mites to proliferate which means that asthma sufferers can experience the immediate health benefits of better indoor air quality. Trickle vents are generally not required unless the dwelling volume is greater than 120 m³, and airtightness is greater than 3 m³ (m²h)-1 at 50 Pa for two storeys and greater

than 5 m³(m²-h)-1 at 50 Pa for three storeys, however wet zones that are situated remotely from a central hallway may need extract fans to be installed.

The systems can also be extremely energy efficient, providing heat distribution benefits, which can reduce annual space heating costs by 10 per cent.

Poor indoor air quality is a growing problem in our homes and as new properties are required to be built to be more airtight than ever before, ventilation needs to be given equal consideration. Condensation and mould are one of the biggest concerns for householders, with a recent survey revealing that 20 per cent of people reporting it was causing them an issue in their home. And, with a recent study by Professor Awbi of University of Reading revealing that asthma cases are set to increase by 80 per cent by 2050, there is a very real need to address the issue of installing efficient ventilation systems into a property. Aside from the healthrelated benefits, another consideration is that choosing the right ventilation system can also add value to a property.

Phil Harrison is domestic ventilation manager at EnviroVent

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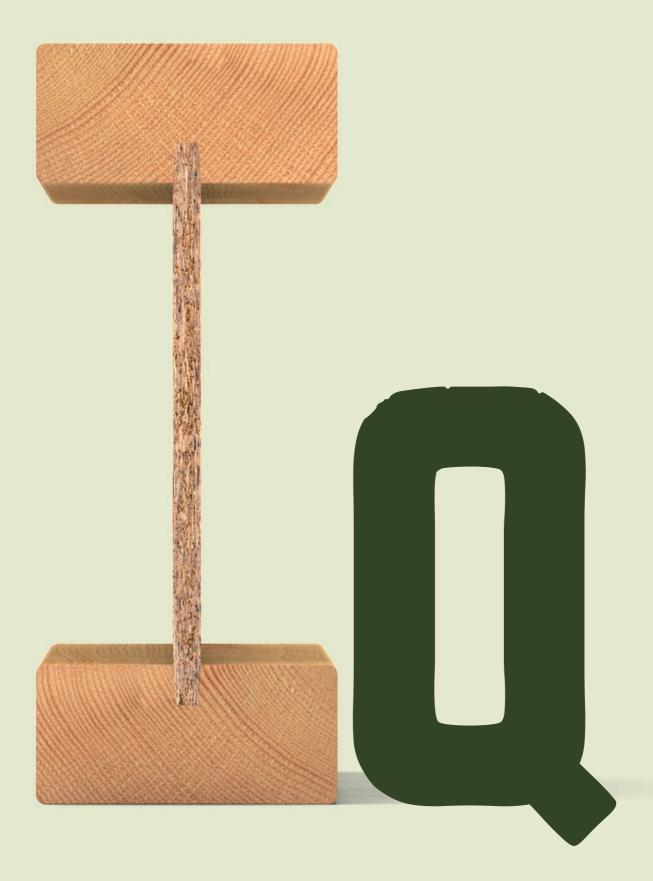




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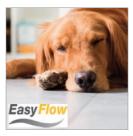


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Getting under your feet

The considerable benefits of underfloor heating are now widely understood but should you install a wet or electric system? Gaia Climate Solutions' Steven Rooney weighs up the options

hile many people now appreciate the benefits an underfloor heating (UFH) system can bring, the question still asked by many is which is better – a wet (hydronic) system or an electric system?

Choosing any heating solution is invariably closely geared to meeting Building Regulations. Until recently, electric underfloor heating was widely employed, but today's SAP calculations tend to weigh against the sole use of electricity for heating in new build residential developments. Ultimately though, as gas and oil reserves dwindle, prices rise, and electricity generation becomes less reliant on fossil fuels, it seems likely that electricity may be seen as the preferred form of heating once again.

Higher levels of insulation and the consequent reduction in the level of heating required can push the balance towards electric systems. With Passivhaus in particular, the need for heating is minimal so it may not seem as necessary to install a radiator or wet underfloor system fed by a gas boiler – which takes up space and needs servicing – when an electric underfloor system can do the same job on the few occasions heating is needed?

Similarly, electric systems are frequently the first choice in the retrofit market because of the availability of mat systems that are less than 4 mm thick, so can be laid on top of existing floors. Wet systems are simply not that thin, although wet UFH can be installed within suspended timber floors.

Wet UFH is a clear winner where air or ground source heat pumps or district heating systems are employed as it requires water temperatures of only 45-50 degrees celsius; much lower than radiator systems.

While comfort for the end user will be exactly the same whichever system is chosen, it is worth remembering that electric mats installed near the surface offer the advantage of a much shorter reaction time than pipes or cables set into a screed. This can be useful in situations where 'instant' heat is required.



Overall, supply and installation cost comparisons typically bring both wet and electric systems in at a very similar figure of around £12-14 per m², including the relevant thermostats. This cost parity results from a number of factors. When making direct comparisons between wet and electric systems, the speed with which the pipe or cable is installed is much the same for both. However, while the pipe used with wet systems is relatively cheap, overall installation costs are higher and the cost of a boiler or heat pump must be added. With electric UFH, the installation costs are less, but the cable is more expensive.

When it comes to running costs, electric systems are marginally more expensive but maintenance is inevitably greater with wet systems, especially if the boiler or heat pump is included in the equation. There are also moving parts in the manifold and annual safety checks are required. Taking these factors into account, the comparative running costs for heating a two bedroom, new build, semi-detached house over 20 years are around £17,804 for a wet UFH system running off a gas boiler and £12,623 for

Complementary wet and electric UFH systems may be installed in a single building

electric UFH. Although electric UFH is invariably promoted as being 'maintenance free', these figures include replacement thermostats.

Both wet and electric systems generally come with 10-year insurance backed warranties, while the pipe for wet systems frequently carries a 50-year manufacturer's warranty. The associated controls tend to be backed by a two-year warranty. Realistically, the underfloor elements of both systems are usually considered to last the lifetime of the building.

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The overriding commonality between wet and electric UFH systems lies in the controls and considerable research and development in this area has benefited both systems. Importantly, this has made UFH even more efficient as it allows systems to operate only when needed and to the exact level of heat output required. Wireless systems offer further flexibility and can link to building management systems with touch screen control or even control from a mobile

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phone. Wet and electric UFH systems may be linked to operate through a single controller.

Consequently, complementary wet and electric UFH systems may be installed in a single building. This allows for the highest levels of user comfort while achieving exceptional energy efficiency. For example, in tiled areas, an electric system may be installed to take the chill off the floor in the summer without the need to fire up a boiler or heat pump. Meanwhile,

Choosing any heating solution is invariably closely geared to meeting Building Regulations

a wet system is installed in those areas where heating is only required during colder periods. On occasions, the two systems are combined to an even greater degree with heating pipes laid into the screed while cable mats are laid above to achieve the ultimate in energy efficiency and comfort.

When it comes to answering the question of 'which is better', wet and electric UFH systems have almost equal merit, and it is very much a case of horses for courses.

Steven Rooney is sales director of Gaia Climate Solutions

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WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

I Want Wallpaper's head of design Alex Whitecroft takes a look at the key 2018 trends for wallpaper and explains the benefits of being bold and brave with your choices

allpaper has been the product of choice for interior designers for decades. They can not only bring an interior design trend or theme to life in homes, but can also be a way of interpreting a client's unique style.

It's for these reasons that wallpaper is currently enjoying a revival amongst consumers too, many of whom are bypassing the once-favoured feature wall and applying the latest trends across the whole room with wallpaper.

We work with key trend forecasters and wallpaper brands to ensure the widest breadth of options is available. This means however homeowners want to introduce the trends into their self-builds, it's achievable – be that bold, striking outand-out looks or more subtle ways to incorporate a style.

We also continually track and monitor what consumers are searching for on our site to see which predicted trends and colour schemes are really taking hold for UK homeowners.

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We're expecting many of the popular themes from 2017 to continue into 2018, but with new twists and adaptations, and some even appearing in more striking and bolder forms.

GET JUNGLE FEVER

As we saw the 'bring the outdoors in' trend move into an even stronger adoption of botanical looks in 2017, 2018 will see this evolve further. Tropical designs will be more vivid and intense with the addition of neon brights such as dazzling fuchsia pink.

There are so many fabulous ways to incorporate this look with wallpaper, from subtle embossed palm leaves to wild jungle creatures. There are also pineapples and parrots, palm leaves and petallics (metallic petals!), all predicted to be in popular demand.

Within this trend, a key look is to combine lots of rich colours, an abundance of accessories and an array of sumptuous fabrics – when set against a strong wallpaper it's a great look for 2018.

EMBRACE INDUSTRIAL CHIC

Loosely termed 'industrial', wallpapers that replicate the look of natural/synthetic core materials are not going away in 2018. Hyper realistic effects can be achieved with papers that mimic slate, brick, stone, wood, concrete, marble and metal – a key way to incorporate this trend that won't break the bank either!

GO TO THE DARK SIDE

Earthy tones and dark woods will also make a comeback; a striking shift away from the blonde woods and the Scandinavian style, that have been popular in recent years. A new type of earthen luxury that focuses on a sense of wellbeing will influence everything from



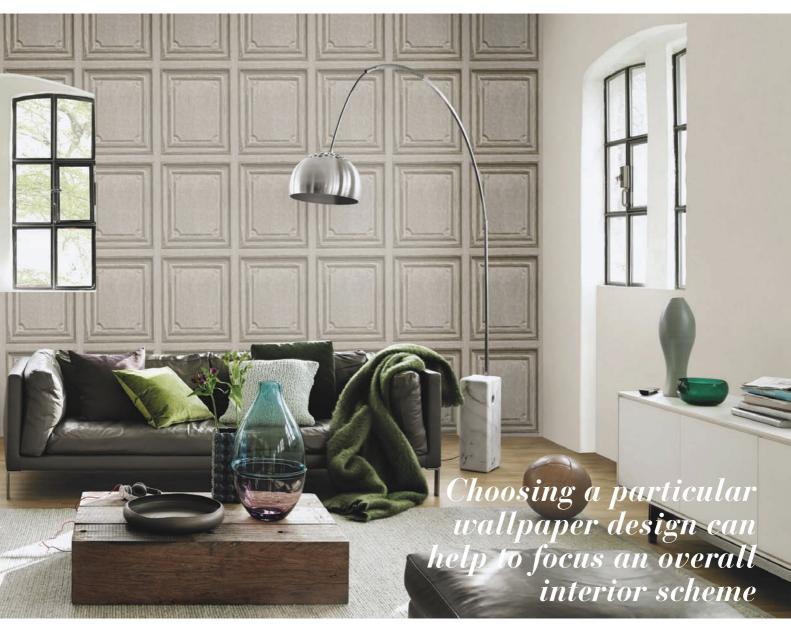
our choices in wallpapers to homewares. Rich walnut and mahogany look stunning, with exotic jewel tones that are coming through for the early part of 2018.

SHINE BRIGHT WITH METALLICS

Metallics and designs that incorporate sparkle and shine are another hot trend in wallpapers at the moment and are great for all seasons. With the benefit of reflecting daylight they add an extra dimension to a room during bright sunny days and are mood enhancing with internal lighting effects. They're also great for rooms with little natural light as metallic papers will help to bounce light around a room and give the illusion of space.

Copper has been hugely popular for many years, but we're predicting the return to favour of matt silver.

Textured and patterned metallic



paper works extremely well, as subtle details and contrasts are highlighted when light illuminates the paper.

LIVE IN LUXURY

Luxurious, tactile, opulent walls will be a major theme with many of the newest wallpapers launching for 2018, so look out for lots more luxury designs in the coming months.

CULTIVATE A FLORAL SCHEME

Floral as such is a wide genre when it comes to wallpapers, and it's a theme that transcends the seasons as well as suits all types of home interior. Classic florals will be updated in 2018 with new printing techniques and a fresh focus on detail. Upscaled, oversized florals with a watercolour hand-painted style will also be popular.

CREATE A HEART WOOD HOME

With the announcement of Dulux's colour of the year as a dusky mauve named Heart Wood – we're expecting to continue to see feminine colours, such as pale pinks and more subtle shades of purple as key looks.

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH WALLPAPER

Revamping a room can sometimes be overwhelming and, with the huge selection of furniture, flooring, soft furnishings and wallcoverings on the market, it can be difficult to know where to begin.

Choosing a wallpaper design that you love is a great starting place and can help to focus your overall interior scheme, styling and product choices.

Once you've picked your paper, add furniture and accessories that follow the

theme and colour scheme. For example, there are some great retro wallpaper designs that look fantastic when styled with vintage or mid-century style furniture and accessories.

If you're adding a new wallpaper design alongside existing pieces of furniture, select one of the prevalent colours within the room and match your paper to that. Online search filters are an easy way to narrow down your selection around your chosen colour.

Being brave with pattern will continue into 2018. Homeowners have an abundance of inspiration at their fingertips, increasing their confidence to mix and match coordinating wallpapers for a striking look. Try large samples on walls first to see how the designs work together in the space and at different times of the day.



Durable, professional paints



Teknos is at the National Painting and Decorating Show headlining its Futura Aqua joinery range, along with its Timantii interior products and Siloksan masonry paints. Futura Aqua waterborne urethane alkyd based paints are ideal for exterior and interior joinery items and provide varying sheen levels. Incredibly durable, the products are suited to professionals requiring a hand applied brush finish that flows easily with few brush marks, as well as application by roller or spray. The Timantti

product family comprises a series of professional grade interior paints for walls and ceilings in dry and humid spaces where good washability and abrasion resistance is required.

www.teknos.co.uk

High quality wood finish for Veneer doors



Designed specifically to protect and preserve internal veneer doors, **Osmo** Door-Oil is easy to use and gives a professional touch to doors, ensuring a high quality, tough and durable finish. Door-Oil is the perfect solution for any modern home, as it will provide utmost protection against common household spillages and stains. After application, the wood's true beauty is enhanced, with the wood's grain and natural characteristics providing a warm and rich effect to ensure that any interior room looks

luxurious and elegant. Osmo Door-Oil is a solvent-free solution, created from natural vegetable and plant oils and waxes. These organic properties ensure the treatment is quickly and deeply absorbed into the wood.

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Finding the right radiator

Choosing radiators might sound like an easy job, but with a ever-increasing number of options available it's not as simple as it seems. Simon Morris of The Radiator Company offers his advice

hen it comes to choosing radiators, it's no longer just about the standard white column or panel steel ones. There's a huge array of colours, designs and sizes on the market, each with their own benefits.

A GUIDE TO EFFICIENCY

With such a large variety of radiator designs, valves and accessories to choose from, it has become far easier to choose a style that complements your interior and unique sense of style. But before deciding on the perfect design for your home, it is important to take into consideration the other aspects that ensure your new radiator functions efficiently in your home.

Choosing the correct size of radiator has a direct impact upon its ability to heat your room. To accurately gauge how much heat you require from your new radiator, head online where free heat output calculators are available. The results will be listed in BTUs or watts, which are standard measurements of heat output used by all showrooms and merchants to ensure you are able to find the correct size and style of radiator for your home.

When considering the purchase of a new radiator, investing in a high quality product will give you peace of mind for the future. A minimum guarantee of at least five years should be available for your chosen design, with some guarantees ranging up to 20 years depending on the materials used. The heat output is the most important factor and selecting a good quality radiator with certified outputs will set your mind at ease that the quoted measures are correct and will deliver the warmth required to heat the room effectively.

Traditionally, radiators are placed in the coldest parts of the room, such as under windows or against outside walls, to counteract the cold convection of air entering the room. With double-glazing

and use of high-tech insulation commonplace in modern homes, this is not always necessary. When planning, look at the layout of the room and then make a decision on the best place to position the radiator to optimise the use of space. Consider all available options, including underutilised areas such as chimney breasts, alcoves and tight corners that are ideal for tall, thin radiators.

A vast majority of radiators available on the market will provide you with the option to select different dimensions in order to achieve your desired level of heating within the proportions of the room. For example, selecting a radiator with a greater depth allows you to achieve higher heat outputs without increasing the height or width of your radiator.

Traditional multi-column radiators offer the option to increase the number of columns within each section, while more contemporary radiators offer single, double and triple variants. Using multiple radiators helps to dissipate heat evenly throughout a room, so don't be tempted to plan all of your heat output from just the one radiator, as this will not be effective in heating the space.

Always consult your plumber or merchant early on in the planning process to discuss the location of your radiators and placement of the pipe work. This helps to ensure that you have positioned the product in a place that allows the best use of the surrounding space. One of our top tips is to avoid concealing your radiators behind large objects such as your sofa; this will inevitably reduce the radiator's ability to heat your room and will prevent you from feeling the full benefits of your radiator.

POPULAR MATERIALS & TRENDS

Radiators come in a variety of styles, sizes and colours to meet almost any interior design need. Traditionally



radiators are manufactured from steel as it provides an excellent combination of strength, efficiency and flexibility, allowing for the creation of statement designs and unusual shapes. There are however a number of other materials used to design radiators, each with their own individual characteristics.

The 'best' material to use depends on a number of factors, including the style you want to achieve (traditional or modern), your heat source, and whether you're using renewable energy or traditional fuel sources.

Aluminium is lightweight, energy efficient and environmentally friendly with excellent conductive properties that make it incredibly easy to control.

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Aluminium is also very thermally efficient so requires less water and can work effectively with lower water temperatures (often produced when using renewable energy sources).

Steel is still the most popular material to use and is often used for designer styles due to its flexibility. It can be used in both traditional and more modern styles. Due to the flexibility of the material there is often a much larger than normal variety of sizes available in each range.

Cast iron is a traditional material dating back from the Victorian era. Cast iron radiators take longer to heat up, but once the heating is switched off they can hold their heat for longer than other materials, continuing to heat the room. These are best suited to period homes with less insulation needing a constant heat source.

Depending on the your price range, a vast collection of colours and special finishes could be available. White is no longer the staple choice, with chrome, black and anthracite becoming more popular choices for radiator designs. Colour is an increasingly important selection criteria, with hundreds of colours and special finishes to choose from when matching your interior scheme.

Whether you want your radiators to blend in with neutral tones or make a focal point with vibrant colours and mottled effects, you can opt to have your radiator powder coated in a colour or finish of choice prior to delivery. Not only does this produce a far better quality of finish, it's actually more cost effective than having them painted yourself. However, something to bear in mind in your planning and decision process is that 'specials' are made to order and can take between four and six weeks to be delivered.

New colours and finishes are often introduced in response to the latest interior trends. One exciting development that promises to prove popular in 2018 is galvanised finishes. Colours such as antique copper, antique brass and satin nickel will seamlessly integrate the metallic trend into your home.

From traditional radiators to modern designs, products are available in a range of dimensions and colour options to ensure you are able to find the perfect radiator to match both your style preferences and efficiency requirements in the home.

Simon Morris is marketing manager at The Radiator Company



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Coloured Rads for Self Build



Stelrad has made a name for itself as a 'one stop shop' for all things radiators with the widest range of styles and designs.

The options in its decorative and designer ranges are ideal for providing a focal point for self-build homes, rather than simply a functional supplier of heat.

The latest trend is for coloured radiators – many of Stelrad's designs come in up to 35 colours.

Please contact Stelrad or visit the website for further details.

0844 543 6200 www.stelrad.com

Bespoke staircases designed for you



Every staircase project that **Jarrods** creates is unique and totally bespoke, specifically designed to fit perfectly into each client's home and the lifestyle that they lead. At every step of the way the company focuses on delivering the utmost quality products and customer service. This new Monolithic Kubos staircase was designed to be more like a statement art piece rather than a conventional staircase. Jarrods worked closely with the clients and created a

feature staircase that sits comfortably in their Grade II listed building complimenting their period interior beautifully. Visit the company's website for more information.

www.jarrodsstaircases.co.uk

Easy, Safe access between floor levels

Easy Stair provides easy, safe access between floor levels from the very earliest stages of construction. Easy Stair is now available for hire making it suitable for one off builds and self builders.

The temporary staircase really does make life on site much easier, why climb up a ladder when you can walk up a flight of stairs?

Easy Stair also allows the later installation of quality timber stairs, thus preventing damage from site activities or water ingress.

Easy Stair is available at low weekly hire rates, and is available ex-stock, so delivery is just a couple of days.

To order your Easy Stair or to discuss your requirements please contact Safety Platforms or visit the website.

01924 420820 www.safetyplatforms.co.uk



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Steel for Kitchen Kudos

'Metallics' will be everywhere, say interior trend experts. So, if you're revamping your kitchen, for glamour and elegance, you can't go wrong with 'on-trend' steel partitioning screens and windows. Rather than putting in a dividing wall, blocking-out light, a great alternative is installing an interior steel screen, which lets light flood-in. Crittall brings a further dimension to a kitchen through its minimalist style windows and its InnerVision glazed steel partitioning screens. Designed for modern living, they provide a sense of space and light with clean lines, subtle detailing, excellent technical properties. Elegantly slender, the slim steel framing, with single or double opening doors, is unobtrusive. The distinguished-looking installation makes a wonderful talking point. Natural illumination inside is maximised, while enhanced acoustic properties ensure privacy and reduced noise levels, without compromising on security. Chilly draughts are prevented, warmth kept-in for year-round comfort. InnerVision steel frames can be powder-coated to your choice of RAL or BS colours. Each screen is bespoke to your application - panel shape and size, single or double glazing, decorative or obscure glass. Natalie Benes, associate architect at Stiff+Trevillion comments: "Crittall windows are a great on-trend option if you want a light and airy feel with an industrial aesthetic. Their slender minimalist frames allow as much light as possible into a space.

01376 530800 www.crittall-windows.co.uk

BLANCO's new online dealer portal



Allowing quick and easy access to pricing, a new dealer portal has been launched by **BLANCO** on its website. The portal also provides retailers with online product ordering, the latest details of product availability and order status, together with downloadable marketing materials on BLANCO's extensive range of kitchen sinks and taps, induction hobs, extractor hoods and accessories. The password protected area is available via personalised log-in

details and is designed to support BLANCO's partners by providing easy, time-saving access to up-to-date and individually tailored product information.

www.blanco.co.uk

Making self-install projects easy



SureSet now offer self-installers an easy to use TradePack designed to achieve a resin bound installation at a time to suit the installer. The paving packs use the same resin bound technology as in any of SureSet's fully installed projects. Each TradePack consists of sufficient bagged aggregate and resin to install larger areas from 30m² at a 16mm depth. Available in the most popular colours of SureSet's range – Sterling, Barley Beach and Norwegian Pearl - TradePack is

delivered palletised and shrink-wrapped, with prices starting at £1,200. The launch came from the smaller self-install option DIY Kit – a kit that provides a durable, eco-friendly material ideal for small areas.

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Preparing smart home installations for the future

att Nimmons, Managing Director of CEDIA® EMEA, provides self-builders with the latest advice on how to install smart home installations that can stand the test of time and what elements need to be considered when designing a wider home integration project.

Every smart home project is different as every self-builder has different priorities and needs. For example, whilst one person may want to install multi-room audio, another may want to create a comprehensive AV system that integrates automated blind control, projection screens, multi-room audio, and integrated smart lighting to create an all-encompassing smart home.

One of the most important factors to consider before starting any home integration project is to establish the level of technology you require for the property. The simplest way to do this is to look at a floor plan of the house and highlight the kind of technologies you'd like to install in each room. It is possible to start off with a basic level of technology and slowly raise the level of complexity as you get used to the technologies installed. The best way to prepare any smart home installation project for the future is to ensure you have a wiring infrastructure in place that can deliver all current and new technology efficiently and reliably.

PLAN FOR TODAY, DON'T FORGET ABOUT TOMORROW

Any smart home system needs to be expertly planned out beforehand. This will provide a clear idea of how rooms will work once furnished, so TVs and speakers can be positioned in the optimum locations and all power points and cables can be terminated, so as not to be seen when the equipment is finally installed.

A properly designed wired and wireless infrastructure has the potential to deliver reliable content and services throughout the home for many years, but it is essential to work with a technology integrator, as they understand the requirements and can provide a solution that fits with your scheme and your expectations.

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THINK CABLING FROM THE OUTSET

The basis of any smart home project is the infrastructure, the cables. Not all properties require technology at an early stage, but it is crucial for the correct wiring to be in place so that it is ready for the future. A common phrase heard amongst the home technology industry is "the most expensive cable you have to install is the one that did not get installed in the first place".

Cables cannot be easily retrofitted, nor can space for the essential boxes driving a system be easily found, once the property has already been decorated. A wired infrastructure can set up the home for future applications, whilst still preserving the décor of the home and adding value.

To achieve any degree of wireless technology implementation in the home, a certain level of cabling for power and communications for 'wireless' equipment will still be required.

HOW CEDIA CAN HELP

When working on a self-build project, it is important to build a relationship with



a technology integrator from the getgo. CEDIA members are the best informed and trained in the latest technologies, design, project management and installation techniques. They understand that technology in the home is a significant investment. Working with a CEDIA member is the best insurance you have that the final system will meet your expectations.

CEDIA offers a free resource to help self-builders to understand the key steps that they need to take in the home technology installation process. The CEDIA Smart Home Infrastructure Recommended Guidelines can be downloaded via the CEDIA website www.cedia.org.

CEDIA also provides an online Finder Service on its website, which allows self-builders to locate their nearest technology integrator. Users can search CEDIA member companies by postcode, services, and certification.

01480 213 744 info@cedia.co.uk www.cedia.org

Be smart, save energy

Karen Chugg of Intelligent Abodes discusses how using smart home technology in your self-build can save energy

t was not that long ago that a smart home was considered aspirational but now, with all the latest products on the market, it is a possibility for everyone. But what does a smart home actually mean, how do you achieve it and is it worth the investment?

In a smart home you may have several apps to control a variety of activities or devices such as lighting, heating, curtains or blinds, music, TV, security systems and door entry. Alternatively, a smart home control solution brings everything together in one easy to control app on your phone, tablet or watch.

There are a variety of home control solutions available and in order to determine the ideal solution for you, it requires a decision about what you want to control, the level of control you want, your level of involvement in setting up the solution and crucially, your budget.

One of the things we love about home control solutions, like Vantage and RTi, is that they offer one step solutions – with the press of one button you can transform a room into your perfect relaxing environment, with dimmed lights, closed blinds, the TV switched on and even initiate the water feature in the fish tank!

So can app control of devices save you energy and more importantly money?

The answer to that question is yes, but the amount of money you save will depend on the system installed.

NOT SO DIM

Traditional dimmer switches reduce the load to the light fitting across a resistor, so the energy is dissipated, rather than reduced. This means there are no energy savings, just a 'hot' dimmer switch. The introduction of the electronic dimmer from Lutron lighting control meant lighting control got smarter, regulating the energy to the light, meaning you save money. Principal application engineer at Lutron, lan Rowbottom explains: "Dimming your lights even by 25 per cent saves nearly 20 per cent in energy consumption. Dimming them more, saves even more."

Some of the best tips for saving energy



with smart lighting control are:

- Dimming extends the life of your light bulbs, and can provide even more of a saving with longer lasting LED bulbs.
 Every dimmer also automatically saves you 4-9 per cent in electricity – even when used at the highest lighting level – compared to a standard on/off switch.
- Lighting control encourages you to really think about the lighting in your home. The engraved switch gives you the option of task lighting, such as for cooking, dining, watching TV. You select the light scene you want and when you move on to the next task you can change the lighting again, so you are less likely to use unwanted lights and turn them off.
- Avoid lighting an empty room with motion sensors.
- An 'all off' button at the front door or next to your bed means you never forget to turn the light off.
- All types of light sources can be dimmed, including low energy sources
 so that you get double savings.
- Light sensors can be used to automatically adjust the brightness of the lights according to how much

natural light is available in the room, so you maintain the perfect ambiance and reduce light consumption.

INTUITIVE HEATING

Heating control systems, like Nest and Heatmiser, respond intuitively so that heating is used efficiently when required and all without the need for re- programming, perfect for those who don't have a regular pattern; if you get home late the heating will not be keeping an empty house warm, as it automatically reduces the heat when you are not at home.

Imagine having all rooms at an ideal temperature and being able to change settings instantly to suit your immediate needs; not only will you optimise family comfort, you will maximise your energy savings too.

KEEP THE WARM IN & THE COLD OUT

Using the latest technology, modern blind fabrics can diffuse light and absorb or deflect heat, allowing you to quickly adjust them to keep the warmth in during the winter, and in the summer manage heat gain. You can either programme your

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blinds or use them in combination with a heat sensor so that they automatically shut when the solar glare or heat is high.

CONTROL SAVES YOUR TIME

Smart home control gives you control at all time of the day whether home or away. For example, you can avoid waiting for deliveries or spending time collecting them from the depot – smart door entry

systems can be managed with a phone or tablet, so when you get that call at work, advise them where to leave your parcel safely.

As well as enhancing our living environment, smart home control, particularly lighting, heating, blinds and curtains, can really help save energy and reduce bills. In other words, we use less electricity to light and heat our homes as

we target our needs and reduce losses.

CASE STUDY

At a luxury penthouse in Devon we designed and developed a schematic that reflected the client's wishes. They were looking for a complete home automation solution – lighting, blinds, audio-visual, networking, HVAC and security.

The clients travel frequently so it was important they could manage their home effectively while away, and make modifications in preparation for their return. To conserve energy, they can 'power down' certain equipment such as music systems and the TV when they go away, and power it back up on their way home. The lighting and blinds application provides a holiday setting which means the penthouse looks 'lived in' even when they're away.

Security was also an important factor and CCTV, a door entry system and the lighting link to provide an integrated system. The penthouse features a lot of glass so they also required a heating/cooling system that would respond intuitively to maintain a constant temperature, regardless of the weather.

Karen Chugg is managing director of Intelligent Abodes

ERA launches Cloud-based HomeGuard Pro

ERA, one of the UK's home security specialists, has launched the new HomeGuard Pro, the first of its kind, cloud-based alarm system to combine security with smart living. The Cloud takes away constraints that a localised alarm system brings, with the immediate benefit being no control panel, just a hub. There is no complicated set up, as this is all done via smartphone app and should the panel be damaged, all settings and data is safely stored in the cloud. Just get another hub and you are quickly up and running again. HomeGuard Pro will simultaneously alert all stored contacts and provide real time data. Log in, flip between IP cameras, review arm/disarm logs – quick and easy home security management. Another key difference is that the cloud, similarly to a 'middle-man', allows communication with other smart devices that a local alarm wouldn't easily be able to do. HomeGuard Pro comes ready to work with Lightwave to automate your home alongside arm and disarm functionality and is also due to integrate with TouchKey (Keyless Smart Lock) and DoorCam, (Wi-Fi Video Doorbell) bringing to life a fully integrated suite of Smart Home Products all connected and managed by one easy-to-use Smartphone App. Finally, the Cloud offers money saving benefits for the Householder over the longer term because as new integrations are released, or new features become available, the hub can simply be upgraded via the Cloud.





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TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION









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NEW CONCEPT

The Idealcombi Concept

Having listened to our customers, we are now introducing a new concept at Idealcombi - with services to match the high quality of our windows and doors. We are now offering our customers two simple price options to choose from plus the option to have a site survey. Learn more on idealcombi.com

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CONTEMPORARY WINDOWS



FRONT DOORS

NEW OPTIONAL SERVICE

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