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December 18 Issue 53

20+

Festive finishing touches for your self-build this Christmas

HOT WINTER TRENDS TO WARM UP YOUR SELF-BUILD'S BATHROOM INTERIOR

A ROUNDUP OF THE STANDOUT KITCHEN SURFACING TRENDS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN 2019

COVER STORY:

VALLEY VIEWS

A plot with phenomenal vistas in Cyprus was the catalyst for one self-builder



PERIOD PROPERTY ADVICE

Money-saving tips if you're planning to renovate



ENERGY-EFFICIENT SASH WINDOWS

Steps you can take to improve your self-build windows



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An explanation of the history, application and benefits of using zinc

HANSE HAUS

Genau mein Zuhause.



My perfect home.

Energy efficiency plays a very important role when it comes to building a house. The prefabricated manufacturer Hanse Haus offers the right solution as it builds perfectly insulated houses in timber frame method for low energy consumption!

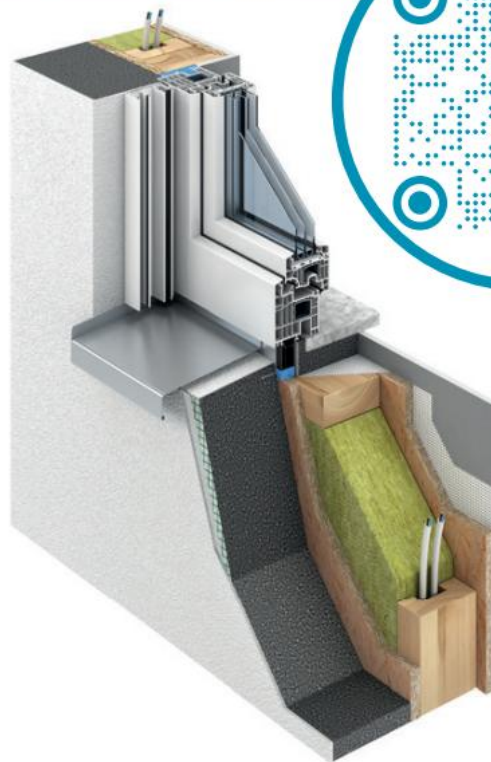
WHY IS ENERGY EFFICIENCY A STANDARD AT HANSE HAUS?

A Scottish family living on the beautiful coast of the British North Sea, owned an old building, being exposed to wind and weather; the heating costs were enormously high. They decided to build a new one with Hanse Haus - and in the end they moved into a house that can now cope with the extreme coastal weather conditions and above all, it's economical to heat. How is this possible? To minimise thermal losses, thicker continuous thermal insulation is used in outer walls, roofs, windows, doors, basements and flooring to better retain heat and use less energy. In wood frame construction, Hanse Haus focuses particularly on narrow spacing between the wooden

beams on the inside walls, as well as the external walls. The walls are fully insulated with mineral fibre insulation, the insulation is bonded within the wall to prevent sinking or slippage, ensuring that thermal bridges do not form.

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No matter if you dream of a passive house or a plus energy house, efficiency is simply a standard at Hanse Haus!



Read more about the Scottish family, their new house and the hanse haus wall construction by scanning the code or on
www.hanse-haus.co.uk/case-study



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Cover story:

Discover how to self-build in Cyprus.

See page 16.



Welcome to the December issue of i-build

With the final month of the year finally here, many self-builders will be spending their first Christmas in their brand-new homes, so this issue there's an abundance of wonderful wintertime decorations for your perusal – you're bound to find something to bring some festive cheer and a touch of the Christmas spirit to your self-build. Turn to page six for this year's festive finds.

Elsewhere in this issue, this month i-build travels to scenic Cyprus where Christopher Ploutarhou's parents had owned the same plot of land for many years. Christopher had always loved it there and the view from the plot was phenomenal. The self-builder described his decision to embark on the project as a "no-brainer". To follow his journey and discover his tips for building abroad, turn to page 16.

Moving on to page 22, we catch up with Kent-based Architect Brian Heron and his wife Ayesha who decided to transform a water tank on the top of an iconic tower block in Bethnal Green. Discover how the pair renovated the 653ft² concrete shell into their dream penthouse apartment with a quirky interior finish.

Here at i-build we understand that not everyone wants to take the leap and build a home from scratch. So, this month Ryan Abell, Owner of Abell Building Services, describes the ways in which a homeowner can make their current household look like a custom-built dream home with just a few tweaks on page 14. And on page 36, Peter Little, CEO of the Property Conservation Company, gives his top tips on how to save money on period renovations.

On behalf of the team at i-build, I would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year, whether you're spending it in your recently-completed self-build dream home or you're about to embark on your journey. I hope you enjoy this issue. Don't forget, if you're coming to the end of your self-build and would like us to feature your home as inspiration for other budding house-builders, then please do not hesitate to get in touch. Alternatively, if you're about to embark on your self-build journey and would be keen for us to document your progress, do get in contact.

Paige

paige@mixedmediainfo.com



Editor's picks

Urban Front introduces new steel doors: See page 51

DRU Fire chosen for luxury townhouses: See page 50

National Ventilation launches the Monsoon Energysaver IntelliSystem: See page 51



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Terrific tree decorations

With the festive season fast approaching, there's something that will surely be on every Christmas lover's mind – the tree. Christmas tree decorations should be chosen with love and care to ensure you create a look that represents you. But where do you start?

With so many baubles on the market, you can really let your creativity flow. If you struggle with constraint and structure, love the idea of picking out quirky, individual pieces that mean something to you and aren't particularly Christmas-themed; there's an abundance of crazy pieces that could adorn your tree. From dinosaurs covered in glitter to spaceships, multi-coloured unicorns and bejewelled bugs, if traditional isn't your bag you can still get excited about decorating your tree and it'll be easy to make your tree a focal point of any room. If you want to add this season's must-have leopard print to your tree, you can! And, if you want to go for bright pinks and purples you can do that too. There's no real rules when it comes to personal taste. So, whether you're a true traditionalist and love nothing more than a classic Christmas colour combination, you want to go wild with animal print pieces, you want to add some shimmer with glitter-covered accessories or you want some weird and wonderful pieces to create a quirky anti-Christmas tree, you're bound to find something to bring some festive cheer and a touch of the Christmas spirit to your self-build.

1. Lacquer pink glass bauble with crushed glitter band, Gisela Graham London, £4.50
2. Red and gold glass balloon baubles, The Farthing, £7.50
3. Botanical Christmas sprout, Talking Tables, EPOA
4. Peacock feather scalloped glass bauble, Gisela Graham London, £5.25
5. Large Christmas panther bauble, Lime Lace, £11.95
6. Velvet Christmas baubles, Lime Lace, £18.95
7. Three space-themed Christmas baubles, Lime Lace, £17.95
8. Matte gold leopard print Christmas bauble, Natural History Museum, EPOA
9. Glass jewel butterfly, Marquis & Dawe, £16
10. Felt penguins hanging Christmas decorations, Hurn & Hurn, £42





Cox&Cox

Based in Frome, Somerset, Cox&Cox is a compact company, where all of its products are hand-selected and styled by with you in mind. From inspirational, beautifully designed furniture and lighting to attractive storage and decorative accessories, its ever-expanding online range combines brand-new products and perennial favourites for a collection with the power to transform any space.



1. Six cream and gold glittered baubles, £16.50
2. 25 miniature owl baubles, £40
3. Six textured vintage-style baubles, £16.50
4. Six flocked white star baubles, £18.50



i-build
loves...

Reindeer accessories

Santa isn't the only one who can have a set of reindeer this festive season.

1. Two-pack glittered reindeer decoration, B&Q, £3
2. Korridor Design concrete moose, White Black Grey, £50
3. Copper reindeer ring holder, Houzz, £8.90
4. Golden antlered reindeer, Red Lilly, £4.25



Dreaming of a red Christmas?

Add the colour red to your Christmas decor this year.



Image © Limeplace

1

Red stars

Add a little glitz and glamour to your Christmas tree with these gorgeous red star tree decorations. Perfect for a traditional tree.

(www.diy.com)



4

Festive storage

This small wooden sleigh with a red-painted finish will be perfect for storing festive sweet treats in.

(www.melodymason.co.uk)



2

Beautiful bunting

Create a festive feeling in your self-build this Christmas with this lovely red and white candy cane wooden bunting.

(www.gingerray.co.uk)



5

Traditional with a twist

This stunning centrepiece comes with festive magnets, making displaying cards and photos easy. An ideal ornament to use for name places on your Christmas dining table.

(www.humandhurn.com)



3

Seasonal stocking

Perfect for all those on Father Christmas' 'nice' list; these beautiful handmade stockings are beautifully crafted from woven glitter hessian and boasts a natural cotton lining. What's more, it will be monogrammed with a letter of choice.

(www.handmadechristmasco.com)



6

Christmas lights

Light up your Christmas and add a soft warm glow to your decor with this charming LED light-up red wooden 'Santa Stop Here' sign. When switched on, this arrow sign evokes a magical Christmas feel and will look perfect on any windowsill, decorative mantelpiece or on any wall.

(www.sueryder.org)





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Stunning snowflakes

Have yourself a wonderful white Christmas without having to deal with the cold.



Image ©Ginger Ray



1

A snowstorm

Have yourself a white Christmas with this snowflake projector light, ideal for walls and ceilings alike. Simply plug in and sit back and enjoy the magical snowstorm.

(www.lights4fun.co.uk)



4

Stylish table

Dress your table in style this Christmas with this gorgeous white glitter snowflake candle. The unique design is sure to stand out, whether placed on its own or with a selection of other Christmas candles.

(www.gingerray.co.uk)

2

Touch of tartan

A fantastic mix of contemporary and traditional design, these tartan snowflakes combine Hogmanay homeliness with a touch of homespun chic – ideal for flinging a bit of the Highlands into your Christmas decorating over the festive period.

(www.thc.net)

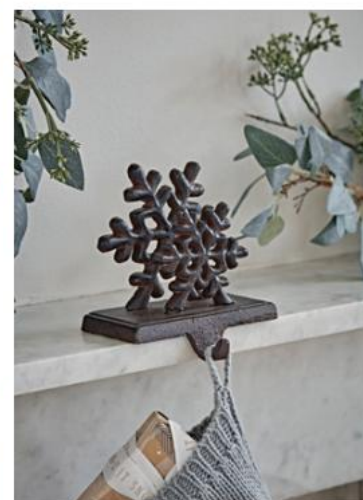


5

Subtle festive touch

Featuring four intricate snowflake designs, this set of 12 laser-cut decorations will add a subtle festive touch to your Christmas decor. Each decoration is finished with a simple clear nylon loop for hanging.

(www.coxandcox.com)



3

Add some sparkle

This Christmas snowflake silhouette light is perfect for adding some sparkle and extra light to your home. This unusual decorative warm white LED light is sure to be a talking point in any interior.

(www.hurnandhurn.com)



6

A white Christmas

Guarantee yourself a white Christmas with this exquisite snowflake silhouette light. The bright white neon effect is cleverly created by energy-efficient LEDs in the flex, which, unlike traditional glass neon, won't smash.

(www.lights4fun.co.uk)



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Tax reliefs on property refurbishment

The cost of refurbishing a property or constructing a new build can be significant. However, tax relief is often available for certain expenditure on non-residential property. The term 'non-residential property' includes furnished holiday lets and staff accommodation. Here, Jodie Tarbin of Whiting & Partners explains more.



Refurbishment of a property creates a wide range of opportunities to obtain accelerated tax deductions with a high cash value. The spend on the refurbishment of a property can create a broader range of tax deductibles than when a property is being freshly constructed. It is not unusual to find that between 50 and 75% of the costs of a refurbishment can qualify for tax deduction with a greater proportion of spend available for immediate tax deduction.

If you are carrying out a refurbishment project, the first question to ask is whether any of the expenditure would qualify as a repair. The repair must be a 'like-for-like' replacement of an existing asset. If this is the case, then it is likely that 100% tax relief would be available for the expenditure incurred. However, if any part of the refurbishment is an improvement as opposed to a repair then this will be treated as capital expenditure. Capital expenditure on the structure of the building (e.g. walls, floors, ceilings etc.) will not attract any tax relief. However, capital allowances may be available if any of the expenditure is for plant and machinery or integral features.

Annual Investment Allowance (AIA)

The AIA provides a 100% deduction for the cost of plant and machinery or integral fixtures and fittings up to a certain annual limit. The current limit of £200k was set with effect

from 1st January 2016, however, the recent budget announced that legislation will be introduced to temporarily increase the AIA limit to £1,000,000 from 1st January 2019 for two years. For expenditure in excess of the AIA, then 'writing down allowances' are currently available at 18% on plant and machinery and 8% on integral fixtures and fittings, although it was announced in the recent budget that the writing down allowance on the special rate pool will fall from 8 to 6% with effect from 1st April 2019 if chargeable to corporation tax, or 6th April 2019 for businesses chargeable to income tax. Therefore, if you are planning a substantial building project, it would be beneficial to consider the timing of your expenditure.

Common qualifying items in a building are set out below (this list is not exhaustive):

- Moveable partition walls
- Storage equipment, including cold rooms
- Fire and burglar alarm systems
- Advertising signs
- Computers and CCTV systems
- Gas and sewerage system requirements
- Cookers, washing machines, refrigerator, basins, toilets etc.
- Swimming pools
- Electrical systems, including wiring and lighting systems
- Ceilings/floors where they perform a function (i.e. an integral part of the heating system)

- Solar panels
- Hot and cold water systems
- Space and water heating systems
- Air conditioning systems
- Lifts and escalators
- Kitchen and bathrooms fittings
- Tax relief on property refurbishment.

Other allowances

Enhanced Capital Allowances (providing 100% tax relief in year one) are also available for energy-saving and water-efficient plant and equipment. This tax relief is in addition to the 100% AIA limit, which is useful in a year with significant capital spend.

The list of qualifying categories is regularly updated and can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/energy-technology-list. Each product must meet specific criteria, but some examples of qualifying 'green' technology items include:

- Pipe insulation
- High-speed hand air dryers
- White LED lighting
- Refrigeration equipment.

If you have recently refurbished or built a non-residential property and do not think you have maximised your capital allowance claim, then do contact us to identify the scope and value of a potential further claim. ■

www.whitingandpartners.co.uk

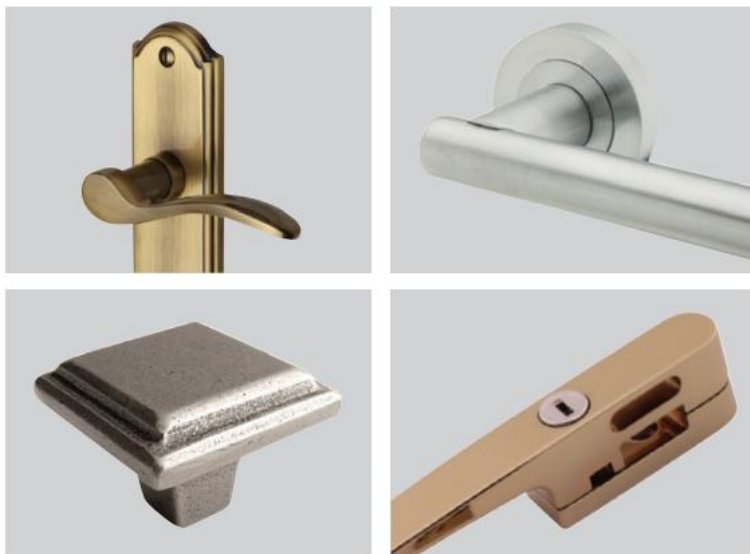
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How to turn your house into a custom-built dream home

With few wanting to commit to the process of building their dream home from scratch, why not go about making changes that make your current abode appear custom-built instead? Ryan Abell, Owner of Abell Building Services, describes the ways in which a homeowner can make their current household look like a custom-built dream home.

The age-old question of transforming a home into a dream home isn't impossible, but telling a large audience how to do it might just be. You see, a one-size-fits-all approach to creating a dream home simply isn't possible. Everyone has their own portrayal of what theirs looks like and the type of lifestyle that they want the house to support.

It isn't possible to give a detailed insight into each and every scenario but there are certainly simple changes that can be made which have a universal impact on the home's appearance as custom-built. In this article the focus will be on potential areas of development. The way these changes are done can then be done to personal taste and preference.

First step

The first thing a homeowner should do when they plan to transform their home into one from their dreams is take an objective view of every room, space and outdoor area. If you feel as though you've lost your impartial view by living in the house for too long, get a designer with fresh eyes to take a look around the property.

The process should identify the best features of the property such as bay windows, an original fireplace, views from the lounge window or characterful roofing as well as negative areas such as poor layout, lighting or tight space. This helps to recognise the areas of focus for the work.

For example, if you own a charmingly rustic cottage but the small, dark rooms are less favourable, installing and repairing windows, adding lighting fixtures, restoring beams and fireplaces, and creating an open-plan will be the priority.

Layout changes

Older properties, in particular, have layouts that aren't suited to the open-style of modern living. A cluster of small and mazy separate rooms often linked to long landings and hallways aren't what most people envisage in their dream home. Therefore, the first action for most is to assess the overall layout of the property and identify which rooms are obsolete.

This is where personal preference and situation impacts the layout. Would you rather have two small bedrooms or knock a wall through and have one large bedroom? Do you prefer to have a separate room for eating or favour an open-plan kitchen-diner?

Remodelling the layout will mean removing walls, which, in most cases, is a relatively simple job and can have a dramatic impact on the house's appearance.



Let the light in

Dream homes aren't often linked to darkness. Light, airy and spacious homes are the preference for most and this, thankfully, is an easy fix regardless of property size. Smaller homes are often limited to small amounts of natural light. This can easily be fixed by installing a skylight, French doors or even additional windows.

Bi-fold doors are a particularly popular option in the kitchen and lounge. The folding glass opens the room up to the garden, bringing in plenty of natural light and making the home feel bigger, totally transforming the property on both the inside and the outside.

Garage conversion

With no planning permission necessary, a garage conversion offers a comparatively cheap and simple solution for people wanting to gain a sizeable amount of new living space. Under-utilised garages are a common site, filled with little more than unused bikes, tools and items from yesteryear.

The space gained by converting the garage can be used as either a new room or be adjoined with another room to create a larger kitchen or living room perhaps. On the exterior, the garage door is removed and

can be fitted with additional windows or something unique to give it a truly custom-built appearance.

Restoring old features

If you are lucky enough to have period fittings in your home, such as an original fireplace, wooden beams and open brick walls – embrace them. Just because you are making new, modern changes to your house doesn't mean that you should hide away and neglect any older period fixtures – it's possible to create a perfect combination between new and old.

Old fireplaces that have been blocked up can be easily reopened into their original state and timber beams that have been painted over numerous times can be sanded down to reveal their original colour.

Before immediately considering moving house when wanting a change, homeowners should consider the opportunities available to them in their current household. It's amazing how much a few simple renovation changes can make to a property. What's more, most projects won't need planning approval at all. ■

www.abellbuildingservices.co.uk



Building for a breathtaking view

Christopher Ploutarhou's parents had owned the same plot of land in Cyprus for many years and he'd always loved it there. The view from the plot was phenomenal so it seemed clear to him what he needed to do.



Special requirements

"The only requirement for the project was to maximise the garden space in front of the house. The house itself sits against the rear boundary. Having the garden at the front enabled us to have a swimming pool there as well, and it all contributes to the stunning views you have from inside the house.

"Getting planning permission for a modern house up in the Troodos Mountains was a challenge! It took quite a while but we got it eventually. We had to do a little bit of persuading, but after it got accepted and was built, everyone was really happy with it.

"The project took slightly longer than predicted. It was four years altogether, with planning taking approximately two and construction another two.

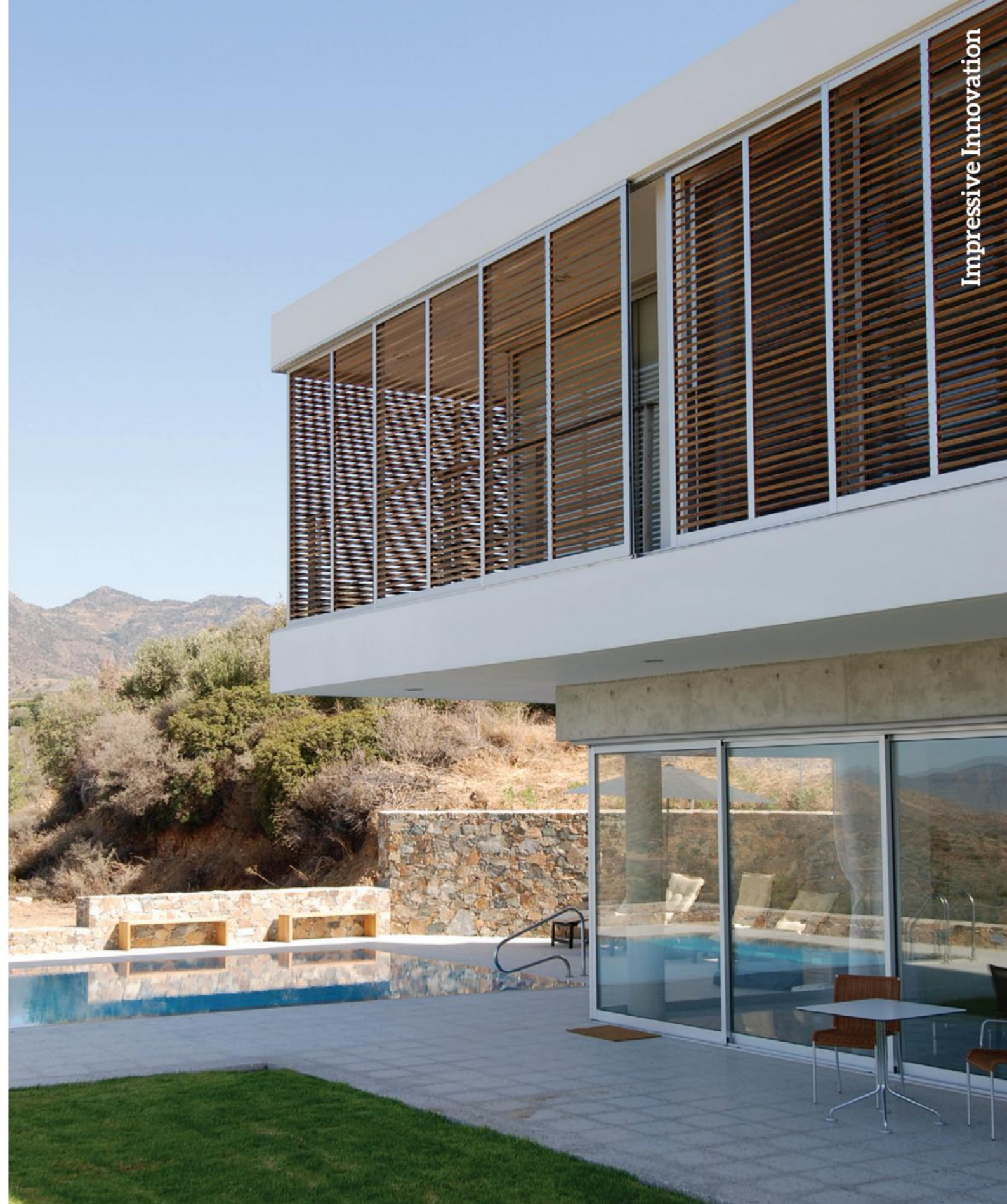
"The biggest challenge was actually to get builders who were willing to do the work up in the hills," explains Christopher. "It's an awkward place to get to and many people in Cyprus are reluctant to travel to build outside the cities there. Luckily, we found a local builder who lived in a nearby village and he did an excellent job."

"It was really a no-brainer," Christopher explains, "the plot of land belonged to my parents who are from the village, called Ora, in Cyprus. I always wanted to build on it, and it seemed like the right thing to do, especially when you consider the magnificent views we have from that spot."

Describing his home, Christopher says: "The house is a four-bedroom holiday home originally designed for a family, which can cater for eight people. The general concept was all about responding to the view. The site is on a hill so we wanted a view from all the rooms over the valley.

"The ground floor is sunken into the hill, so from the back it looks only one storey high. We put the staircase at the back; it's basically two oblongs sitting on top of each other, and the top one is cantilevered by 2.5m over the ground floor to provide some shade. There's lots of glass in all the rooms. The ground floor living area is one continuous space, and the doors all fold in so it can be opened like a pavilion.

"Access to the plot was what guided everything else. We wanted to drive up the hill so it was to one side of the plot. Finalising it came quite naturally because this and the size of the plot put some restrictions on us and then we fit the rest around this plan.







A contemporary look

"I collaborated with a local architect to help manage the process – so an architect employed an architect! They had the local knowledge and were, of course, more familiar with the Cypriot requirements, and how to build there, so you could say that the design was a collaboration between us.

"We wanted a building that looked contemporary, but it was also important to be sympathetic and respond to the jaw-dropping views. Therefore, we chose natural local stone for the perimeter walls, which are dry-built, and this worked really well. We also limited the material palette; most of it is just white, and all the floors were made using a grey, speckled terrazzo, which incidentally hides dust really well!

"The space is naturally ventilated and we don't always have to have the air con on. This is because of electric glass skylights above the staircase, which create a tunnel effect where the hot air comes in, but creates a breeze through the house, and it really works. As it's all south-facing, we installed timber louvres that can slide in front of the full wall of glass on the first floor level. In addition, we also collect the rainwater for showers.



Valley views

"The ground floor is very much open-plan. The living room relates to the outside and to the location of the swimming pool. The kitchen is at the opposite end where the patio is; still a short distance from the pool. The bedrooms are on the first floor and the large windows offer stunning views across the valley. The rear retaining wall sits up against the hill, and the columns inside, are all exposed concrete. The ground floor ceiling is 3m high. And the ground floor internal colour scheme is similar to the external floor finish as well, so it looks like it's all of a piece.

"The entire design concept was about responding to the landscape, so we tried to limit the amount of excavation that we did. In addition, we tiered the garden so it cascades down to the road from the higher level. We used the same local stone to create the terrace effect as the boundary walls.

"We wanted a natural garden, not anything too sophisticated or contrived. However, the plot is a funny shape, like an axe. It's almost as if you drive up the handle and the site itself is the axe head, so this guided what we could do with it.

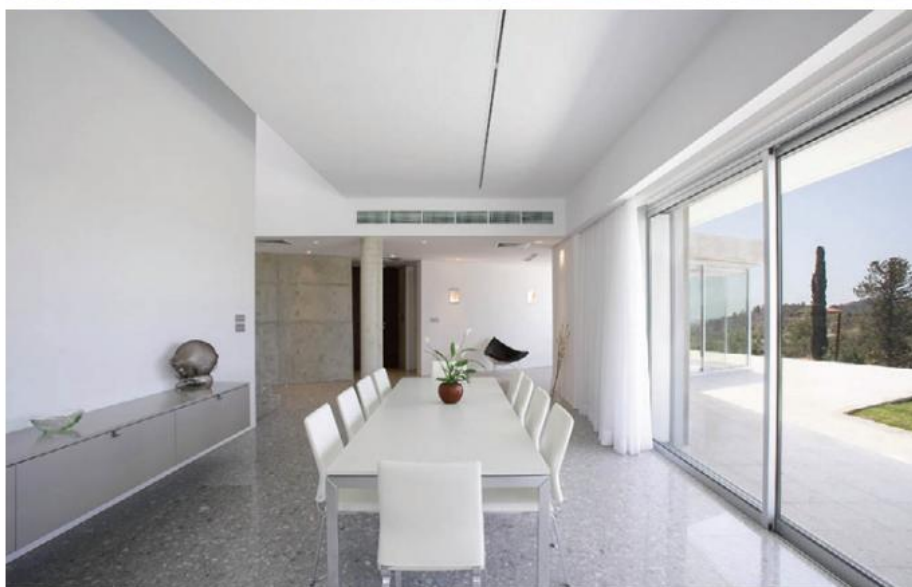
"We've introduced local fruit trees into the landscaping which we also rely on to eat from, which is nice. My dad did the planting, and he built all the tiered stone walls. My parents live in the house a couple of months every year so he loved contributing, especially as he's never had that experience before.

"The local community love it! Although they questioned it in the beginning, it's actually been a catalyst for more people to move into the area.

"I really love the proportions and the openness of the spaces. The vista from within is breathtaking, and it's really lovely how the outside feels part of the inside. I can't actually think of anything that I would change."

When asked if he would do the whole thing again, Christopher said: "I would, and I really recommend collaborating with people who have local knowledge when managing a project in a country you are not permanently residing in even if it is where you originally come from. I'd also say get a really good team of consultants to support you, interview them and get references from other people too. It may slow down the initial planning and getting started, but in the end you will not regret it." ■

www.gpadlondonltd.com





A concrete canvas

When Kent-based Architect Brian Heron and his wife Ayesha discovered a disused water tank space on one of Bethnal Green's iconic tower blocks for sale for residential use, they knew this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create their dream penthouse apartment.

Originally owned by the council, Keeling House is a Grade II* Listed Brutalist block of flats that is steeped in history, having been originally designed by respected Modernist Architect Sir Denys Lasdun in 1959.

Having previously been a tenant in one of the building's other flats that underwent an award-winning renovation back in 1999, the disused 653ft² concrete shell was the perfect canvas for Brian to design a unique home that maximised on living space through clever design and configuration, along with the selective specification of internal building materials.

"As an Architect, there is always a desire to live in a space you have designed yourself," explains Brian.

"The water tank was on top of a Grade II* Listed Brutalist block of flats from the 1960s. We had been living in the block for a few years already

and had been looking around East London for self-build plots. When the disused water tank at the top of our building came up for auction, we knew we had to seize the opportunity.

"We bought the property with planning and listed building consent already in place so externally, we had to keep in line with what was already consented. There were significant planning constraints regarding the exterior of the property to ensure it enhanced the existing building rather than detracting from it. One example of this is that the planners did not allow any projecting balconies or rooftop balustrades to ensure that the overall silhouette of the building remained unchanged.

"There were only six months left before these consents expired. We applied to extend the existing consent and it took a further year before the new consents were issued.

"Internally, the key was really to make a relatively small space work for us as a family," explains Brian. "We wanted to keep the space as honest as possible and true to its origins but also make it a unique space for our family.

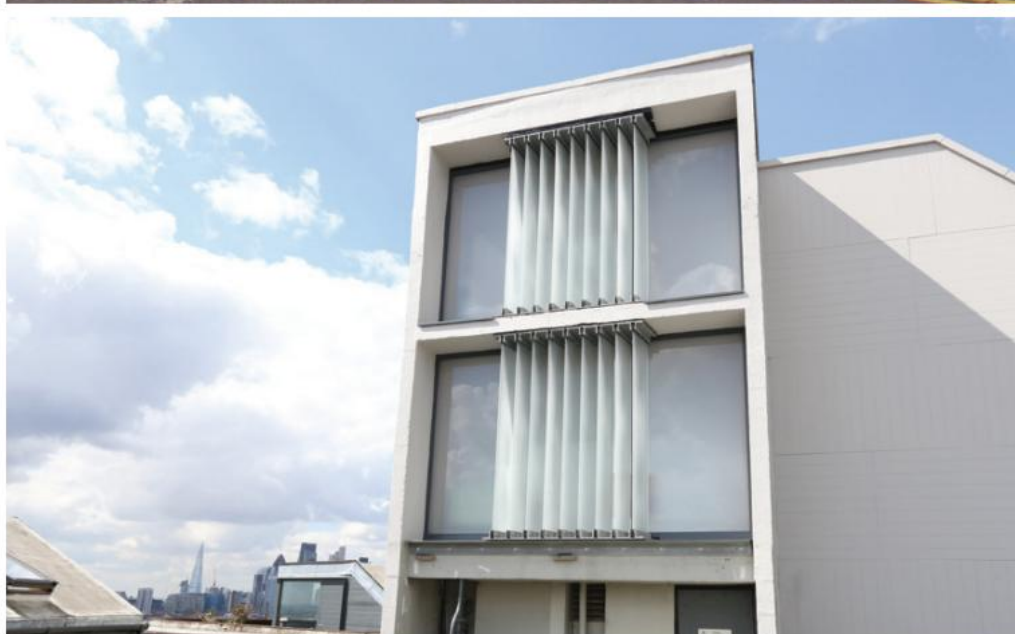
"Being on the 17 and 18th floors was particularly challenging in terms of getting materials up there and dealing with strong winds. We also had to extend the existing stair core up by a further three floors which was extremely difficult in terms of construction logistics and costly in terms of scaffolding."

Throughout the project Brian wanted to stay true to the building's industrial influences, a dedication that required 18 floors of scaffolding and the closure of surrounding roads three times for cranes to install glass reinforced concrete panels.



"The open-plan reception and kitchen occupies the 17th floor, with full-height glazing on both sides looking east and west. This is partly frosted and partly louvred for planning reasons, providing remarkable framed views of the surrounding city. The bedroom is on the 18th floor, containing a raised OSB bed with a child's bed beneath and built-in stepped storage alongside. It faces east so that you can lie in bed and watch the sunrise, and there is an opening rooflight above for stargazing. The bathroom is on the western side and enjoys the sunsets. A freestanding Italian square bath doubles as a shower, with a vertically sliding tap.

"The aesthetic is deliberately functionalist, with walls and ceilings made from OSB, and micro-cement polished concrete flooring. The German flat-pack kitchen continues this narrative."



The concrete structure has been insulated internally with the walls, floors and ceilings all being thermally upgraded to enhance the energy efficiency of the property. Brian wanted to keep the space feeling raw and honest, with references to its former use as an enclosure for water tanks. The walls and ceiling are therefore lined with OSB, which provides a striking visual warmth but is also robust and hard-wearing. It also transforms every surface into storage with the ability to hang things up with ease – providing essential space-saving tools needed in any one-bedroom flat.

Brian explains: “We wanted to keep the space as honest as possible and true to its origins but also make it a unique space for our family. We knew we wanted a polished concrete floor and as the sandblasted glass was already a requirement of the planning consent, we wanted to bring some visual warmth to the walls, hence the OSB walls. This had a double function as it also meant the internal insulation could be continuous, without any cold bridging, and it also meant we could hang shelves or built-in furniture on any wall surface.

“We initially tendered the job to a main contractor but they were too expensive so we took the role of project managing the build on ourselves.”

The inclusion of glazing was a focal point for Brian’s design, offering standout views of the capital city, with sunrises from the bedroom, sunsets from the bathroom and stargazing from the Roof Maker rooflight.

Brian wanted to fit an opening flat rooflight directly above the bed, to help bring additional natural light and ventilation into the bedroom. Triple glazing was also an essential requirement to support thermal regulation. After searching online, he decided on a 1 x 1m flat electric sliding unit by Roof Maker.

“The rooflight is the crowning glory of the bedroom. We designed a raised bed to sit directly below the rooflight, so we can lie in bed at night and look up at the stars. It’s beautiful.

“There is a lovely play of light over the bed during the day as the sun passes overhead. As the rooflight is an electric slider, it can open to provide additional ventilation and access to the roof for maintenance, or just to take in the amazing 360° views of the London skyline.”

When asked what his favourite thing about his new home was, Brian responded: “The quality of the light and the views. The flat is oriented east-west and being fully glazed in each direction, you get to enjoy both stunning sunrises and sunsets over the London skyline. The skies and the ever-changing weather are amazing this high up. ➤



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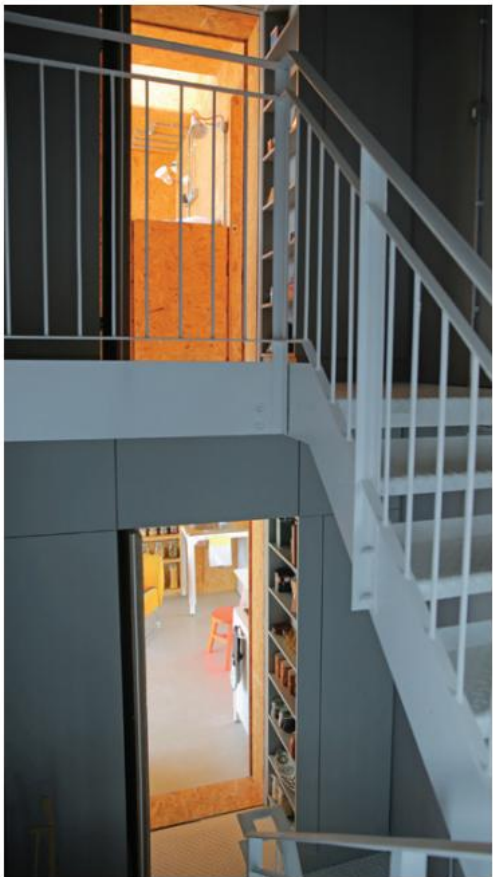
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"The project was completely unique and we are very happy with how it turned out. It was a real labour of love for us as a family and my wife Ayesha Tariq deserves huge credit for the stunning interiors she created and turning it into our home.

"Perhaps unsurprisingly it took much longer than expected. We commenced construction in summer 2014 and moved in May 2016, so the build took almost two years but the main reason for this was that I was project managing the build in my evenings and weekends, fitting it in around my day job as Project Architect for Ian Ritchie Architects on the Royal Academy of Music project.

"If we could have afforded to, it would have been much more efficient for me to take a break from my work and concentrate 100% on managing the build but as it was, I had to do what I could in evenings and weekends which inevitably means the build took much longer than anticipated."

All in all, the project cost £420,000 – which was £170,000 more than initially budgeted. Costs quickly rocketed due to complications associated with the flat being located on the 18th floor of a building within a heavily built-up area.





Brian explains: "The scaffolding was required for much longer than expected so there was an increased cost there and we had to abort a crane lift due to high winds which was also extremely costly both in terms of cost and programme."

Brian's final advice for any budding self-builders is: "Trust your architect and speak to them as early as possible in the process. A lot of value can be added with a few strategic decisions at the start of the project. Money spent maximising daylight is typically money well spent."

"Also, avoid late changes to the design as the cost impact of making changes on site is much more significant than making the same change prior to tender." ■

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Winter trends in the bathroom

During the winter months, our bodies crave warmth and light. This along with the 'hygge' trend from Denmark, are key when enhancing our sense of wellbeing over the coming months.

Here one of the leading international manufacturers of designer bathrooms, Duravit, explains more.

Warmth in the bathroom

A great thing about the cold season is that you can luxuriate in a bath and immerse yourself in a warm bath to unwind, relax and loosen tight, cold muscles.

Hygge in the bathroom

The icing on the cake of any dull, grey, winter day is to create some 'hygge' – the Danish art of homeliness – into the bathroom. Ideal companions for a bath are furniture and

accessories that exude a sense of nature and warmth through their colour and shape. These include untreated woods and authentic decorations in subdued tones.

Light in the bathroom

Alongside natural candlelight, dimmable mirrors and mirror cabinets are ideal as lightening in the bathroom that can be adapted to any requirement. They create a lightening accent in the room and bathe the washing area in a pleasant light. The latest innovation in the field of mirror lighting is the seamless adjustment of the light colour. ■

www.duravit.co.uk



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Image shows our Ballerina LG021 in Polished Brass finish





Single-slab splashbacks

Splashbacks are no longer resigned to just being practical elements, with designers using them to create real focal points in the kitchen. As ever, it comes down to personal choice as to whether a splashback is matched to the worktop or contrasted, however, in 2019 Cosentino anticipates a growing demand for single-slab splashbacks as opposed to opting for standard tiling.

Elegant and simple, it offers practical cleaning benefits as grouting between tiles can be difficult to keep clean. What's more, using a whole slab can show off a stunning design, especially with designs that feature natural-look veining.

The anti-kitchen

For urban dwellers, space often remains at a premium, with open-plan living still the norm in many new-build apartments. In 2019, surfacing will play a role in the trend for 'anti-kitchens' – spaces that can be easily hidden away or transformed when not in use through the use of clever design so as not to impose on a luxurious living area. High-shine worktops inspired by the most premium of natural marbles, offer both high-end aesthetics and practical benefits. These include a high resistance to scratches, stains and heat, meaning that hot pans can be placed straight onto the surface from the hob or oven, removing the need for worktop clutter such as trivets. When paired with handleless cupboards or pocket door systems and appliances such as hidden extractors and frameless induction hobs, these elegant surfaces create sleek spaces that easily blend with their environments.

www.cosentino.com

2019 kitchen surfacing trends

With kitchen design evolving at a rapid pace, there's more inspiration out there than ever before for homeowners considering a refresh in 2019.

Cosentino is looking ahead to next year with its roundup of the standout surfacing trends to watch out for.

'Waterfall' worktops

Already a coveted worktop design, Cosentino predicts that 'waterfall' worktops, or drop edges as they are often called, will continue to grow in popularity. An easy-to-achieve trend, it gives an elegant and seamless finish, ideal for an island or peninsular.

A waterfall edge refers to a surface that appears to flow over the edge of a worktop, covering the side and reaching the floor. Perfect for showcasing a statement surface, an island can be fully covered for a wow factor look, or alternatively a single drop edge can be used to great effect on the exposed end of a breakfast bar or peninsular.

From a practical perspective, waterfall worktops help to protect cabinetry and hide appliances. The worktop can also be extended to create a breakfast bar, leaving a recess where seating can be hidden.

Concrete

Concrete-inspired surfaces is another trend which has gathered pace in 2018, and certainly shows no signs of slowing down. At a recent Cosentino trend briefing, a panel of architects and kitchen designers discussed the industrial trend and its timeless appeal, hailing a softer side that will continue to develop in 2019.

Merging aesthetics and practicality, surfacing that offers an ultra-realistic look with hardwearing benefits such as a high resistance to scratches and staining, will continue to appeal to consumers looking for longevity.



surface textures for better grip, convenient push-to-open fittings for the height of utility and user-friendly-shaped handles for extra comfort or overall design impact. Storage systems will also be top priority, with new drawer boxes, pull-outs and integrated larder systems being introduced for a heightened level of uniformity and aesthetic appeal.

Dark colours

2019 interior colour trends will embrace the darker colour palette, showing fewer primary colours and a greater emphasis on black which is contrasted by rich coffee browns, shades of grey, taupe and biscuit beige.

I believe this change in colour story stems from developments in other areas of the kitchen which are also embracing black. For example, you can now purchase a black PVD-coated kitchen tap to match your furniture, with striking work surfaces and built-in appliances and no longer available in just white. In fact, black remains the most loved colour in fashion, with any new colour trend coined as 'the new black'. Known for its expensive facade, online searches for black and dark colours are up 93% in the last six months and I am confident that black kitchen furniture will continue to rise in popularity throughout 2019.

High texture

Atypical door finishes will be massive in the kitchen next year, with unique glass, metal and marble-effect doors, laminate solutions with innovative surface treatments, pioneering colour-matched worktops, fine black edging techniques and a refreshing approach to modular space planning for the creation of ergonomic kitchen environments that are modern and long-lasting. Rich wood veneers and laminate solutions can now capture masonry-style effects such as marble and stone, to exude a Scandi-noir aesthetic with industrial undertones.

Eco-materials

The need for quality furniture that is environmentally-friendly remains a priority for many of us and as a result, it is reshaping how the market is approaching kitchen design in the modern home to recognise 'resiliency' as the new 'sustainability'. This is filtering down into the kitchen furniture market, where durable materials and designs continue to grow in popularity. ■

www.rotpunktuk.com

Power of possibilities with 2019 kitchen trends

Rotpunkt, designer and manufacturer of quality German kitchen furniture, looks at the latest interior trends set to wow the kitchen market in 2019.

Here Matt Phillips, Head of UK Operations at Rotpunkt, explains more.

I strongly believe as we move into 2019 that furniture will be 'defined by difference' and by this I mean, a brave mix of standout finishes and materials being used to identify different pieces of furniture and create zonal kitchen schemes that are not restricted by four walls or customary layouts.

Asymmetrical design

Broken-plan furniture schemes are dictating the kitchen market and these influences are a welcome preference to the outdated uniform kitchen design in terms of construction, material, finish and space planning. This has

opened up the kitchen market to new and exciting design concepts which are driving trends towards hardworking furniture like room dividers, multipurpose workstations and display cabinetry through to asymmetrical layouts and wall-hung solutions. By playing with different eye-lines, visual weights and modular arrangements, modern kitchen furniture will focus on free-thinking in the next year – creating a feeling of eclectic balance that is dynamically unrestricted.

Utilitarian style

In terms of style, next year will pay focus to the 'jewellery' of a kitchen, making a feature of exclusive handles and knobs that offer new



What is SuDS compliance and what does it mean?

Here, CORE Landscape Products focuses on the facts and myths surrounding SuDS-compliant domestic driveways and patios.

SuDS stands for sustainable drainage systems; it's an initiative developed by the Government to stop surface water run-off from domestic properties becoming a burden on the national drainage network, making each home responsible for the run-off from their land. If you do not choose a porous SuDS-compliant surface for your garden, you will need to apply for planning permission to surface the area.

The easiest way to achieve SuDS compliance is to surface your driveway or patio with a porous system; this means both the top surface (wearing course) and sub-base need to be capable of allowing water to pass through them into the soil directly below.

Years of hard surfacing, directing rainfall into plastic pipes and sewers has highlighted the effects of starving the land of its natural water supply, and studies have shown the detrimental effect this is having on nature's balance.

Apart from relieving the burden on the national network, the SuDS concept of allowing water to permeate the ground helps to maintain the natural ecosystems that rely on the thousands of underground streams and aquifers that exist below ground and feed into the many lakes and rivers across much of the country.

This ecosystem forms a vital part of the natural environment, starting a food chain that culminates in our own produce – it's not just about the local council not wanting to foot the bill for the overloaded drainage system, it's in everyone's interest to make SuDS compliance a standard practice. So how do you begin?

How to create a SuDS-compliant base

A SuDS-compliant base should have no dust in it – in fact, no particles smaller than 2mm. As long as your sub-base is well confined by a perimeter edging it will compact sufficiently to provide support for your intended traffic load.

Once your porous sub-base is installed, you have to choose your porous surface (wearing course).

There are several options available, porous concrete paving, porous macadam, resin bound stone, gravel in a gravel stabiliser grid, loose gravel or grass reinforcement grids.

Porous concrete

Porous concrete paving is usually in the form of block paving; these blocks have to be laid on a bedding layer of 2 to 6mm clean grit rather than sand to be SuDS compliant, they have a wider gap between the blocks which is also filled with the grit to allow water to flow through.

Porous macadam

Porous macadam is a specially formulated mix that allows the passage of water through the tarmac, this can be laid over the same porous sub-base.

Resin bound

Resin bound surfaces also need to be laid over a porous sub-base to be SuDS compliant. The resin would have to be laid extremely thick to go straight over the sub-base and be strong enough to cope with vehicle traffic, so as it's a more expensive option, the structural or bedding layer beneath the resin should be porous macadam or a gravel stabiliser grid filled flush with a standard gravel. These materials placed below the resin will provide the strength to cope with heavy loads whilst allowing the water to flow through freely, allowing the resin to be laid at a shallower depth. Macadam is a good choice when access is easy as there is lots of heavy machinery required. Gravel stabiliser is a much easier install and provides enough support for domestic driveway traffic. It's perfect for pathways and patios as it's so much easier to install and requires only light compaction equipment to lay.

Gravel stabilisers

Gravel stabilisers are a great choice if you want a good usable surface without the traditional problems associated with gravel. They will keep your gravel in its place creating a firm surface underfoot allowing pedestrian and vehicle traffic without the gravel shifting around.

Loose gravel

Loose gravel is a traditional choice, but has many disadvantages and will require ongoing maintenance, so over the long term has very little cost advantages over a gravel stabiliser.

This system provides the least initial outlay, but when weighed up against the ongoing maintenance and lack of performance, it's probably best avoided.

Grass reinforcement

If you're looking for a subtle appearance, grass reinforcement driveways or parking spaces are a great choice, they build upon the same sub-base as all of the previous options but give the appearance of a lawn and, if constructed properly, will provide years of use.

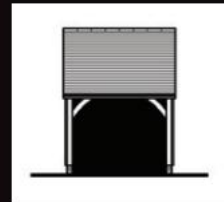
So, to conclude, SuDS isn't such a pain after all! As well as saving yourself the hassle of obtaining planning permission for your driveways or hardstandings, you will also be helping the planet and maintaining the natural ecosystem. ■

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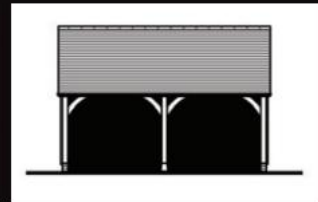
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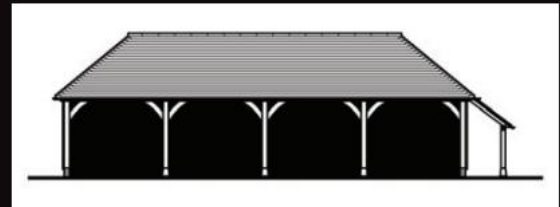
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How to save money on period renovations

Renovating a period property is a labour of love. Amongst the nice decisions, such as which Farrow & Ball paint to choose or whether to use William Morris wallpaper to make a feature wall in the dining room, there are also some much more prosaic decisions that you will have to make which could hugely affect the cost of your build.

Working with traditional materials will inevitably cost more than working with modern materials and the cost of employing builders with the right skills could send your budget skywards. Add to that hidden extras and unforeseen challenges, and you may soon be questioning why you started the build in the first place. There's no doubt that a renovation can be a pricey task.

So how do you create the home of your dreams without breaking the bank? Here Peter Little, CEO of the Property Conservation Company, gives his top tips.

Have a contingency plan

When budgeting for a renovation or extension to a period property, bear in mind that most builds will go over by 30 to 50%. This is because working with older houses poses lots of unknowns, which could increase the time needed for the build, as well as the purchasing of additional materials.



Don't go for price over experience

Working on period properties requires specialist skills and expertise. Don't be tempted to go with the cheapest quote if the builders don't have the necessary experience – expertise can save you money in the long run.

Don't make changes

When you're in the planning process, it can be difficult to imagine how things are going to turn out and sometimes it is necessary to make changes as things develop. However, every change you make adds to the cost of the build so judge wisely.

Source items yourself

If you want to retain the natural character of your period property, you may require specialist materials. These can add quite a lot to the cost of your build, not to mention the time it takes to source and collect materials. If you're using old stone, ask around to see if anyone has any left over from previous builds or talk to your local quarry. If you want oak lintels and door frames, there are many websites offering quick and easy delivery on timber so measure up and get the best price.

Consider alternatives

You've got your heart set on salvaged roof tiles but the reality can often be hard to swallow – availability, cost and difficulty with roof pitches can all get in the way of your grand plans. Scout around for alternative materials – there are companies making 'old-style' roof tiles; take a look at zinc for extensions rather than using reclaimed stone; check out the new range of wood-effect porcelain where real wood might be too expensive.

Salvage materials

If you're demolishing part of the old house to add an extension, think about repurposing some elements. Old beams or floorboards could be turned into shelves or lintels, old tiles could be cleaned and reused. Check websites such as eBay or Gumtree for reclaimed items such as radiators and keep an eye out on house clearances in your area.

Put in the hours

You can cut costs by doing some of the work yourself. Painting, tiling, waxing and oiling woodwork, putting up curtain poles, clearing rooms in preparation, even collecting materials from the builders' merchants – if you can put in a few hours, you'll save both time and money.



Have peace of mind

Hopefully you'll have chosen a reliable, reputable builder to work on your property but if the worst happens and they go out of business, a suitable warranty gives you peace of mind that you'll be covered for any works. ■

www.propertyconservationco.co.uk



Everything you need to know about security and Secured by Design

Security is one of the top questions that most of us are concerned with when it comes to purchasing or specifying a new door. So what are the questions that you need to ask or the information you need to know before making that door choice?

Here are a few questions Elizabeth Assaf, Author of 'Door Couture: A Unique Perspective of Contemporary Door Design,' suggests you ask yourself about your home and entrance, first, before deciding on that most important element – the security.

How much security do you need?

If you have gates for instance, the security of your front door may not be so essential. Does your area have a good track record when it comes to break-ins? Do you need a front door that has multiple locking options? A motorised locking system that locks the minute you enter your home may make you feel more secure in an area which may be near a river or by a busy road. On the other hand, a single lock may be sufficient if you live in secure development or area.

Do you have a large house?

Will you need to be able to open your front door remotely from another floor or even when you are not home? In this case, you may need an electric latch on your lock which allows you to buzz people in when you are at home. You could have an electric latch or a motorised lock, the latter being much more secure.

Do you need your front door to be controllable using a phone app?

It is now a much easier option to have your lock or entry system attached to your phone and controllable at the touch of a button. Not only can you open your blinds and turn on your heating remotely, but you can also open your door too if someone is waiting for you.

Are you worried about your children losing their keys? Or do you have family or staff visiting who may need constant access? Would a fingerprint entry system be the best option for you and your family? Fingerprint entry allows you to enter or remove up to 100 fingerprints at any one time. This is a great system when you have teenagers who are constantly forgetting or losing their keys – it is much harder to lose your finger!

Will you actually use your front door often?

Quite a few people have secondary doors that really act as the main door to the home. Perhaps that door and its function is more important to you.

Do you need to be able to see your visitors through a door viewer or an entry system?

Urban Front has been asked in the past for bulletproof door viewers as some of its customers take all of these aspects of their security into consideration. An entry system with a screen could also be a way for you to see who is waiting outside.

Would it be better to have obscured glass in your entrance so that when you are away – it is not obvious to a caller or intruder?

Letting your post sit on your internal doormat may seem to be a good idea until someone can see it from outside and then it is very obvious that you are not there.

Do you need a letterbox in your door?

Have you considered where it will go and how it affects the security of your door? A letterbox in the middle of your door may make it easier for an intruder to access your lock (although with difficulty – it's best to give them no way in if you can).

Have you thought about the security of the glass in your door or in the sidelite?

High security glass is sometimes misunderstood and confused with laminated and toughened standard double glazing. Security glass is much more than laminated and toughened glass and, when used correctly, can be tougher to get through than a wall but can be very costly.

So now you've answered these questions, how do you know if the lock on the door you are buying is good enough?

A lock's strength is not in how it looks or how many bolts there are coming out of it. It's in how it's made and how well it withstands attack. There are various testing centres where manufacturers test their doors to certain regulations specifically to PAS 24, LPS1175 or equivalent. Secured by Design and New Homes 2014 is a police initiative to guide and encourage those engaged within the specification, design and build of new homes to adopt crime prevention measures. The principles have been proven to achieve a reduction of crime risk by up to 75%, by combining minimum standards of physical security and well-tested principles of natural surveillance and defensible space.



So, if a door has passed the above testing and meets Secured by Design then you should feel a bit more confident about the security on that door, however, not every bespoke manufacturer is able to test every door they make, so here are a few things to look out for too:

1. A multi-point deadlocking system with three to five deadbolts
2. Security escutcheon (an escutcheon is a protective surround for the cylinder lock and can prevent access to the lock) anti-drill and anti-saw protection
3. Security hinges that are not accessible easily from the outside of the door and security keys which are not easily copied

4. Frame strength – burglars are known to use crowbars to attack the frame of the door. So ensuring the frame of the door is hefty and strong is essential.

5. Construction of the door and how well it would withstand attack from a hammer or chisel. Having steel reinforcement, or good insulation really helps.

One of the main issues is to make sure you can delay the time it takes for a burglar to enter your home – as the longer it takes the more likely they are to give up or get caught.

Combining all this information should help you make the right decision about the security you need for your home.

www.urbanfront.com



The benefits of installing a timber stable door

If you are looking to replace your back door, one option you may wish to consider is to install a stable door.

Stable doors, sometimes also referred to as a barn door, allow for greater freedom on how you open them.

They are split into two sections horizontally so that the two sections of the door can open independently from each other, as well as opening together as a single door. This means that the lower half of the door can remain shut while the top half is open. As a result, these doors are often viewed as a mix between a door and a window.

The top section of a stable door is often partly glazed, whereas the lower section does not have any glazing. There are multiple benefits of stable doors, some of which include:

Keeping young children and pets safe

If you have young children or pets, stable doors can be a simple way to keep them safe inside whilst opening the top section of the door, as you can keep the lower section locked shut.

Ventilation

Stable doors allow you to open the top section of the door in a similar way to how you would open a casement window. This means that you can ventilate your home by just opening the top half of the door.

Having the lower section of the door closed, when opening the top section for ventilation, also helps prevent the wind from blowing dirt and leaves into your property.

Traditional and authentic

Stable doors are commonly associated with barns, but also look at home in traditional farmhouses and cottages. Their traditional style makes them a perfect fit for period properties and newer builds looking to replicate the charm and character of older homes.

Installing a stable door

Like other windows and doors, there are a range of different timber, glass, ironmongery and finish options that you can choose from when looking to install a new stable door.

Accoya is a popular timber choice as it is both very durable and stable. It is a sustainably-sourced manufactured wood and comes with a 50-year anti-rot guarantee, allowing you to be confident in its longevity.

Different types of glass can offer different benefits, such as increased security and acoustic benefits, so don't be misled into thinking there is only one option. Like the type of finish, glass can also be used to provide aesthetic benefits. Consider whether you want clear glass, frosted glass or even coloured glass in the glazing part of your stable door.

Ironmongery plays a large part in the security of the door, so check the quality of the ironmongery and speak to a specialist to check that the ironmongery you would like will work in a stable door. Stable doors can be just as secure as casement windows and other back doors. The doors operate by having separate secure locks in each section of the door, with an additional lock to hold both the sections together when you wish to fully open the door.

If you are replacing an existing stable door, you may wish to replicate your current door. A specialist bespoke timber door company should be able to help you achieve this. ■

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Choosing your concrete block supplier

Concrete Block Association members are part of British Precast. This means that all members comply with the Health and Safety and Sustainability Charters. These charter schemes are part of the 'Raising the Bar' initiative, which demonstrates our members commitment to zero harm and improving environmental performance in the industry.

The highest levels of fabric energy efficiency can be achieved with concrete block construction. Such a form of construction ensures long-term airtightness, minimal thermal bridging and gives different options for locating insulation.

BETTER BUILT IN BLOCKWORK

Website: cba-blocks.org.uk

CONCRETE BLOCK ASSOCIATION

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Thakeham Tiles	Thomas Armstrong
WDL Concrete	William Rainford Holdings Ltd

Block Producers – Scotland

Breedon Northern	CEMEX UK
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How original sash windows can be energy-efficient

Sash windows have timeless appeal and can be found on historical and period properties across the UK. Unfortunately, they are not known for their energy efficiency despite being renowned for their visual appeal.

Most sash windows are single glazed, with many having poor-quality sealing around their frames and glazing.

Nonetheless, there are steps that you can take to improve energy efficiency if you are an owner of sash windows. Let's explore how.

Draught reduction and elimination

Small repairs to fix cracks and full gaps can eliminate or at least reduce draughts considerably. By adding draught proofing to your sash windows, you can reduce draughts by more than 85%. You can also enhance energy efficiency by taking steps such as closing roller blinds and thick curtains. There are other steps you can take to minimise heat loss, including using closed shutters to reduce

U-values. Of course, these are only cosmetic solutions. If you want to make a substantial long-term difference, then secondary glazing is the best option.

How can secondary glazing help?

When you opt for secondary glazing for sash windows, you can add a discrete extra window facing the inside of your building which is not visible from the outside. The secondary glazing solutions on offer can increase thermal efficiency, eliminate draughts and reduce noise.

Don't replace, upgrade

The UK is home to an abundance of historical buildings with sash windows, many of which have, or are due to, undergo refurbishment and



retrofitting to enhance their energy efficiency and help the country meet its environmental targets. Owners of sash windows are constantly encouraged to upgrade rather than replace them. A 2009 study by English Heritage showed that even modest repairs could vastly reduce the energy performance of old sash windows and led to many period property owners deciding to have them restored. English Heritage emphasised that it was perfectly possible to restore sash windows to modern energy performance standards without character or aesthetic appeal being compromised. Sash windows can be found on all sorts of buildings, including not only homes but libraries, schools, town halls, museums and more.

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Zinc cladding and roofing

Over the centuries, zinc has proven to be a reliable, durable, corrosion-resistant and attractive metal for use in roofing and cladding. In this article, Marta Danylenko, Marketing Manager at materials search engine Matmatch, explains the history, applications and benefits of using zinc for roofing and cladding.

The mineral zinc occurs naturally in soil, ore, air and water. In addition to being an abundant and important non-ferrous mineral, it is also essential to daily life and promotes organ and immune system development. Asia, Australia and America are the continents from which most of the world's zinc supply is mined.

30% of the total international zinc supply is recycled. The remaining 70% is the result of extractive metallurgy. Zinc is typically extracted as a by-product of copper, lead and/or iron, most often from deposits of sulfidic ore.

After grinding ore into a fine powder, it is subjected to froth flotation and the resulting concentrate of zinc sulphide ore is roasted. Pyrometallurgy or electrowinning follows the roasting process. The amount of energy required to produce zinc from ore is around 50% of that required for copper and steel, and around 25% of the energy required to produce aluminium.

In the mid-19th century, zinc was used to coat other metals and continues to be used primarily in galvanisation today. Zinc is used in architectural applications for rainwater systems, cladding and roofing, often as an alloy of zinc, copper and titanium. This combination of metals maximises tensile strength, malleability and load-bearing capacity.

While other metals, such as iron, suffer from exposure to water and salt, zinc forms a protective layer of zinc-hydroxyl-carbonate naturally, ensuring corrosion-resistance, UV-resistance, weatherproofing as well as earthquake-resistance.

Zinc sheeting is lightweight and formed into practical sizes for quick and easy installation. It reflects midday heat and, when used efficiently, saves on heating and cooling costs within the building. At the same time, rain or snow is shed easily from a zinc roof thanks to its hard and slippery surface when exposed to moisture.

Environmental and economic benefits

The recyclability of zinc without any negative effect on its physical or chemical properties offers significant environmental and economic benefits – of all the architectural grade zinc in production, 90 to 95% of it is recycled. Zinc's low toxicity means that water can collect and run off roofing without contaminating soil and groundwater supply.

Zinc is attractive in its own right but can also be processed with a pre-patinated finish in a wide range of designs. Zinc roofing is effective at almost any roof pitch, and custom-shaped roofing will adhere to all manner of curvature and angling work. On the walls, zinc cladding is soft and malleable, easily formed into custom shapes. It can be manufactured smooth, weathered or patterned. Even over long periods of time, zinc roofing and cladding requires almost no maintenance.

Architects and construction experts preferred cheaper, 'disposable' alternatives for roofing and cladding in the 1960s and '70s to zinc, such as asphalt shingles, which often require replacement every 10 years. Today, the trend is gradually shifting back to zinc, which is now seen as a valuable roofing and cladding material on residential and commercial architecture and construction projects and admired for its long-term durability and environmental sustainability. ■



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Innovative use of structural glass

Don't restrict your use of glass to windows. Innovative design will allow you to replace other building materials with structural glass with some truly exciting results.

“The beauty of using structural glass as a building material is its sheer scope and versatility,” says Peter Hazeldean, MD of structural glass specialist Ion Glass.

“It's possible to really push out the boundaries when you use glass as a building material.”

There are so many different opportunities to introduce glass into your self-build, both internally and externally. Glass can be used for contemporary porches and entranceways, internal or external stairways, balustrades on mezzanine floors or to design complete standalone structures, using innovative techniques to allow the glass itself to provide the structural integrity of beams, fins and supports. Glass structures create real ‘wow’ factor, whether they are an integral part of a new build or an element of a renovation project.

Achieving the results and ensuring the glass is both functional and fully compliant involves detailed structural calculations and precise and accurate measurements – it's an area of the building industry where expert advice can make all the difference.

Using structural glass for linkways

Glass provides the optimum solution when creating a link between two disparate buildings; especially useful when adding a modern extension to an older building. A glass interface accommodates the differences between old and new construction and can provide a visual break between two architectural styles. If the original building is a heritage property, the relevant conservation bodies often stipulate that the connection should be built from glass.

Peter continues: “The interface between the glass and the infrastructure of the building is critical – the concealed channels, bespoke steel frames, the size and finish of the bolts or brackets all impact on the structural integrity. The glass itself involves many variables depending on how and where you will be using it – for instance, the addition of a handrail will impact on the thickness of the glass specified for a balustrade.

“There is so much more to glass specification than simply choosing between low-iron or clear glass – just for the record, ‘clear’ glass has a greenish tint – if you want your glass completely clear, you'll need to opt for the slightly more expensive low-iron.

“With glass there is no option to ‘shave a bit off’ or ‘pad it out’, the fit has to be flawless and inaccuracies result in costly remanufacture and delays. But whilst glass is not the easiest material to work with, if you get it right, the results can be spectacular.

“My advice would be that unless you're looking for something very standard, it really is worth engaging a structural glass specialist”

www.ionglass.co.uk



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Miss filing deadline	Penalty
Miss filing deadline	£100
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Three months late	Daily penalty £10 per day for up to 90 days (max £900)
Six months late	5% of tax due or £300, if greater
12 months late	5% or £300 if greater

Top mistakes tax payers make when completing their tax returns

Making mistakes on self-assessment tax returns, however innocent, can lead to enquiries, investigations and additional tax, interest and penalties.

Below are some of the top mistakes many people make:

- Forgetting to include income from a previous employment that ended part way through a tax year
- Forgetting to include benefits from a previous employment that ended part way through a tax year
- Forgetting to include student loans when your earnings exceed the threshold
- Forgetting child benefit clawback for earners who are receiving child benefit and who earn more than £50,000
- Ignoring tax codes and forgetting tax underpayments from previous years collected through their tax code
- Claiming for expenses that cannot be claimed for.

Act now

Begin the process early to give you all the time you need and avoid starting 2019 rushing to file your tax return or worst of all with a £100 fine! The best way to ensure that your tax return is completed correctly is to speak to a tax expert who can ensure everything is accurate and submitted in a timely manner.

www.whitingandpartners.co.uk
01284 752313

Self-assessment deadline looms

With the festive season on the horizon, it's easy to push the tax return deadline to the back of your mind, however, don't wait.

There aren't many days left until the self-assessment tax return deadline of 31st January 2019. If your return is not filed by this date, you will receive an automatic penalty of £100 from HMRC. Almost half of all tax returns were filed in January last year and over 750,000 were filed on the deadline day.

Should I complete a self-assessment tax return?

The self-assessment tax return is an annual requirement for people who do not pay their tax automatically through PAYE. If you are self-employed, you'll need to let HMRC know about your annual earnings, so that you pay the appropriate amount of tax.

Self-assessment applies to:

- Self-employed people including business partners
- Company directors
- Individuals with more complicated tax affairs, including those who pay higher rate tax
- Pensioners with more complex tax affairs
- People who receive rent or other income from land and property in the UK
- Trustees and personal representatives
- Trustees of approved self-administered pension schemes
- Non-resident company landlords.

HMRC fines

HMRC will issue an immediate £100 fine if you submit your tax return late. Further charges apply depending on how long the return is filed after the deadline.

There are also fines in place for sending an incorrect tax return or if it contains mistakes and penalties are high for those who attempt to conceal their income in order to pay less tax.



Contemporary home commands attention

This superb private residence utilises products from leading aluminium systems company, Reynaers at home (RAH).

The RAH products have been installed across the expansive four-storey design of stacked modular structures to enhance the striking facade and offer the homeowner infinite views.

Located in the small village of Roughton off the north Norfolk coast, the home includes spacious living areas, an open-plan kitchen and a state-of-the-art cinema room.

Rebecca Cope, Marketing Manager at Reynaers, said: "This spectacular residential property is an awe-inspiring project which truly stands out from the crowd. The minimal sightlines embrace every inch of the Norfolk countryside, and offer fantastic space for fluid family living."

Reynaers Hi-Finity sliding doors have been used to blur the boundaries between interior and exterior, the glazed panels which are made possible by the system's ability to carry up to

500kg of glass. It allows for the build to extend seamlessly beyond its 'four walls' and into the surrounding landscape. The Hi-Finity system enhances the contemporary design whilst providing an energy-efficient home that is comfortable and cost-effective.

To further enhance the functionality of the property, the Reynaers CS 86-HI system has been installed in areas of the home where a hinged opening is required. It offers a highly insulated and robust flush system, which meets the highest requirements of safety, including burglar resistance level two as well as providing thermal insulation and stability.

The products were installed by nearby Suffolk-based Livingwood Windows, which has over 50 years' combined experience in the building industry. Its expertise in installing the highest of quality windows and doors ensure that each product performs to the best of its ability.



The clean, minimalist interior is furnished with unique items such as neon lighting, taxidermy and artisan-style furniture. The lower ground floor is undetectable from the front of the house and creates a private sanctuary away from the hustle and bustle of the world, however, still allowing light to flood in.

Rebecca continues: "The interior design within this residence adds a really playful element to the use of windows. Glass panel floors expose neon signage below and allow the eyes to delve into the lower levels of the home. It is a truly unique project that we are proud to have been a part of."

www.reynaersathome.co.uk
homeuk@reynaers.com
 0121 421 9707



DRU Metro designer gas fires are centrepiece of luxury north London townhouses

O1A International is an internationally-renowned architectural practice with offices in London, Melbourne and Abu Dhabi. Its Chairman, Omiros Emmanouilides, believes passionately that the fireplace should be at the heart of most residential developments and has specified DRU contemporary gas fires for several recent projects.

The latest of these is the conversion of a former Gordon Ramsay restaurant in Islington, north London, into two luxury townhouses, complete with roof gardens and many unique architectural features.

Benefits of balanced flue system

Omiros chose DRU Metro 100XT/2 corner gas fires for the main living areas in the properties. As well as their visual appeal, the fires utilise the balanced flue system, enabling them to be flexibly located anywhere in the building without the need for a conventional chimney.

A heat-resistant false chimneybreast has been created in each property to house the impressive log-effect fireplaces. This also serves to accommodate the flat screen TVs for the perfect focal point in each room.

The false chimneybreasts also conceal the concentric flues, which exit the building through the roof. Air is drawn from outside for combustion, with waste gases expelled outside, resulting in safe, comfortable and efficient heating performance.

The exterior of the houses is transformed by timber and glass cladding and each property has a roof garden.

The former commercial facade of the properties was transformed by the skilful use of timber and glass, which softens the external appearance whilst allowing light to flood into the interiors at the same time, creating a distinctive landmark in this popular residential location.

As Omiros explains: "DRU has a very good name worldwide and we were impressed with the quality and energy efficiency of the fires as well as the expertise of their area sales manager, who did the survey and oversaw the installation."



"We will not hesitate to specify DRU fires for future developments when we make fireplaces an integral part of the design."

www.drufire.com
info@drufire.co.uk
 0161 793 8700

Urban Front's steel doors are on the way

Many of Urban Front's clients have been asking for larger oversized doors made out of steel, so the company is introducing new steel doors to its portfolio later in the year. Commenting on the launch, a spokesperson for Urban Front explains: "We really hope clients like them as much as we do". There will be some exciting new textures and finishes including a rust finish, black steel finish, bronze and leather – and sizes will include doors up to 2m wide. Contact the company if you'd like to specify any of these new offerings for future projects with delivery from 2019. For further information, please get in touch via the email address below.

www.urbanfront.co.uk

01494 778787 info@urbanfront.co.uk



Create the Scandinavian style with the GL5100 from Keller Kitchens

Keller Kitchens' latest model, GL5100, embraces the Scandinavian style. The simplicity of the style provides a blank palette for homeowners to add the colour scheme of their choice, whether that's cool pastels or bold hues, on the walls or the cabinets. The sleek GL5100 handleless units come in both a silk gloss lacquer and a structured lacquer. Each cabinet is available in muted tones such as Ice, White, Blossom, Magnolia, Loam, Shell, Clay, Mocha and Basalt from the Master collection; bold colours from the Trend collection, including Yellow Gold, Powder Pink, Ruby Blush, Botanic Green and Midnight Blue; and 1950 NCS colours from the Comfort collection.

www.kellerkitchens.com

+31 01642 85106 info@kellerkitchens.com



Barlo Radiators launches augmented reality app in heating industry-first

Installers have been given a ground-breaking new way to specify designer radiators thanks to the launch of an industry-first augmented reality app by Barlo Radiators. The app gives consumers the opportunity to virtually 'try before they buy' – using advanced augmented reality (AR) technology to help them visualise how different designer radiators would appear, in-situ, in their home. The app has been created specifically with installers in mind, presenting them with a brand-new sales tool to help them add value when communicating with customers. Available for download on both Android and iOS devices, the Barlo Designer Radiator app gives installers easy access to the Barlo Design portfolio.

www.barlo.co.uk

01633 657 000 enquiries@barlo.co.uk



Create a Nordic haven with Kährs

Create a Nordic haven with Kährs' two latest Scandinavian-inspired and sustainable oak engineered wood flooring designs – plank-style Nouveau Lace and Harmony Shell. Full of lively character with scatterings of natural knots, cracks and sapwood throughout, the designs embrace a rustic feel – which combined with a white stain – makes for two wood floor designs with plenty of Scandi charm. Both designs emphasise the natural beauty of wood and all of its unique and natural features. Pair with a bold geometric rug, soft furnishings or chevron wallpaper to embrace a 'Geo-Scandi' interior.

www.kahrs.com

02392 453045 sales@kahrs.com



National Ventilation's IntelliSystem MVHR provides smart ventilation

National Ventilation, a leading UK-based ventilation manufacturer and supplier, has launched the Monsoon Energysaver IntelliSystem heat recovery unit. Offering a smarter way to whole house ventilation, the IntelliSystem is a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) unit that is near-silent, has market-leading efficiency and offers easy control via its touchscreen or Wi-Fi-linked app. Designed to offer the ultimate MVHR solution in one unit, the IntelliSystem is ideal for self-builders and small developers. Offering state-of-the-art controls, the IntelliSystem boasts both an easy-to-use app or touchscreen controls. Homeowners can simply download the free app onto their smartphones which enables sophisticated but simple control over their indoor air quality (IAQ).

www.nationalventilation.co.uk

info@nvagroup.co.uk

01823 690290



Enjoy the finer things in life

Saint-Gobain Weber has introduced weberpral MF to join its widely established and popular range of high-quality, monocouche renders. This fine texture, through-coloured render achieves a smoother, finer and more contemporary, modern aesthetic while providing an excellent weather- and algae-resistant decorative finish. weberpral MF is a one-coat, ready-mixed cementitious render suitable for most types of brick or blockwork. Its through-colour, one-coat characteristics allow fast and efficient application with shorter programme periods, contributing widely to site efficiencies and earlier completion of groundworks. weberpral MF requires little maintenance and decoration is not required.

www.uk.weber

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