

# selfbuilder & homemaker

May/June 2014

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Heating & Renewable Energy  
Kitchens & Appliances  
Sustainable Home/Materials  
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DOORS, WINDOWS & CONSERVATORIES SUPPLEMENT

## Greystones – homes your mum would be proud of

Selfbuilder & Homemaker meet builder Barry McGrath, who created the iconic, award-winning Greystones houses on a 'building bombsite' in a Hertfordshire village.

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We live in interesting times. Both political parties appear to be falling over themselves to encourage the creation of thousands of new homes throughout the UK and this includes self and custom-built properties.

The government's Help to Buy initiative continues to stimulate the housing market, while both the Bank of England Governor Mark Carney, and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, have named the housing market as the biggest danger to economic recovery.

At the same time the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) have produced a Mortgage Market Review that has resulted in high street lenders focusing more on 'how much can you really afford?' when providing mortgages. Something self-builders have experienced, well, forever. It can be very confusing.

However, the one thing that is certain is that self-build is back on the menu. Perhaps it is the affect of George Clarke and Kevin McCloud's TV programme's or society's home owning psyche that has increased the number of people planning to live in a bespoke built property.

This in turn may have persuaded the planning minister to support Right to Build and encouraged the Town and Country Planning Association to state that garden cities have to include an element of custom-build.

As a result, self-build is no longer the housing sector's Cinderella and perhaps now is the time for the growing numbers of people who want to build their own home to finally go to the ball.

*David Mote*

## Planning Minister encourages self-builders to demand land from local authorities

Back in November 2013 the government released four former public sector sites to give aspiring self-builders the chance to realise their home building ambitions. The sites formed part of a wider government programme to support the growth of the custom build housing sector and give more people the opportunity to build their own homes.

Commenting on the initiative, Housing Minister Kris Hopkins said: "We are determined to help aspiring self-builders up and down the country who want to build the home of their dreams but can't find a plot to get started. That's why we've committed to lead the way by making our formerly-used public sector land available for self-builders, and why we're making four further sites available, taking the total to 12."

At the recent Grand Designs Live show in London, Planning Minister Nick Boles, as part of The Big Debate: The Self-Build Planning Wishlist was pressed by broadcaster Kevin McCloud about the

use of formerly-used public sector land for self-build.

In response the minister said that as part of the government's Right to Build initiative it would be the legal duty of local authorities to supply the land for self-build projects. He encouraged potential self-builders to demand the land they need from local authorities.

Currently the Right to Build initiative provides new powers to give communities the freedom to build new homes, shops, businesses or facilities where they want them, without going through the normal planning application process.

The minister's suggestion will, therefore, create some interesting conversations, especially as not many local authorities own land that they can allocate for self-build projects. Those who do operate in rural areas could request the compulsory purchase of agricultural land for development, but that is a whole new can of worms.

right to build



Cover image shows one of the houses from the Greystones development. See page 16 for more information.



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## National Self Build Association launches People's Housing Manifesto

Working with the National Self Build Association (NaSBA), Britain's leading housing experts have developed 10 radical actions that a future government should consider if it wants to double the number of new homes built in the UK.

With the next General Election now under a year away, the 10 actions have been collected into a *Peoples Housing Manifesto*. The manifesto was launched as part of the recent National Custom & Self Build Week and copies will be sent to the leaders of all the main political parties urging them to incorporate the actions into their own pre-election party manifestos.

The panel of experts who debated the manifesto's content included broadcasters Kevin McCloud, Charlie Luxton and George Clarke, the leaders of many housing and planning institutions, chief executives of leading homebuilders, and senior local politicians.

The manifesto ideas that attracted most support from the experts included:

- Not to simply build new Garden Cities, towns and villages. The experts encouraged smaller projects, as they are quicker to get off the starting blocks.
- Encourage diversity by promoting more self- and custom-build, and community led-housing. The government needs to think small and local rather than large and corporate.
- Local people should be encouraged to work together to commission and procure

their own properties. The aim would be to build tens of thousands of more cost effective homes a year.

- England's land market needs to be reformed so that it provides more land, at significantly lower prices. Councils have a key role to play here and can use a number of mechanisms to help to deliver reasonably priced land for all types of housebuilder.
- A future government should consider directly controlling the use of publically owned land for new housing – creating a special Housing Delivery Authority. Instead of simply selling land to big homebuilders, this new body could encourage faster build schedules, better design standards and a wider range of homes.

Welcoming the ideas set out in the *People's Housing Manifesto* Ted Stevens (pictured) the chair of the NaSBA said: "Over the next few months politicians from all the

parties will be debating what they can do to sort out Britain's housing crisis. We hope some of the suggestions in our manifesto will grab their attention. I'm particularly pleased that so many of the experts feel that there should be much more self, custom and community-led housing built in the UK."



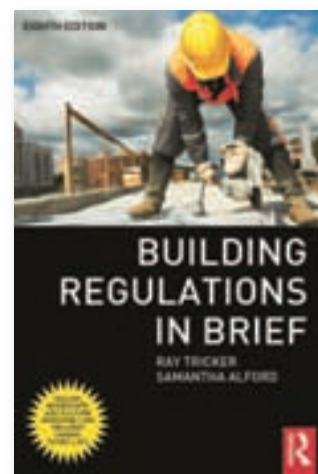
## New publication cuts through the confusion of revised Building Regulations

Building Regulations continue to guide, inform and confuse. They also have an annoying but essential habit of being updated. To help homebuilders of all sizes, *Building Regulations in Brief*, written by Ray Tricker and Samantha Alford, is now available in its eighth edition.

With the recent raft of regulation changes the publication has undergone its most comprehensive revision to date. This guide to the Building Regulations has been updated to reflect all the latest amendments to Building Regulations, Planning Permission and the Approved Documents A, B, C, H, K, P, as well as Regulation 7, while incorporating all amendments up to December 2013. This includes the changes to Leaflets L1A and L2A regarding the conservation of heat and energy in new buildings, which came into effect in April 2014.

The new edition also contains details of the new national planning guidance system and initiatives to speed up the planning process, including the new online planning application process. It also provides an updated list of fees for planning consents and guidance on the changes to permitted development rights in Agricultural, Business and Residential buildings, which came into force on 1 October 2013.

Giving practical information on how to work with, and within, the regulations, the new edition enables compliance in the simplest and most cost-effective manner possible. It cuts through the confusion and explains the meaning of the regulations.



## Local self-build register launched

Potential self-builders who want to buy land and build their own home will now have a much better opportunity to have their views heard by using the new online Local Self-Build Register.

Developed by Ecomotive, the register will act as a central hub for people across the UK that want to inform their local council that they are interested in creating their own self-build or custom built home.

Ecomotive Director, Jackson Moulding, explained: "The Local Self-Build Register will help councils to not only gather a list of people who want to build their own homes but also to seek their views on the kinds of projects needed in their area."

"The register keeps it really simple for users, by offering a single place where people can register to build in one or more areas of the country. They can then be contacted when suitable land or interesting projects become available."

According to the National Custom and Self Build Association, the main barrier faced by people wanting to build their own homes is access to land. As a response to this, the government has asked local councils in England to keep a register of people interested in self and custom build and also to assess the level and type of demand for these kinds of projects.

While self-build refers to the future resident taking control of the design and build process – even if they do not do the building work themselves – custom build describes a project where a developer coordinates the process on behalf of clients.

With councils starting to step up to the challenge of providing more self and custom build opportunities, now is the perfect time for anyone interested in self-build to visit [localselfbuildregister.co.uk](http://localselfbuildregister.co.uk) and get their name on the register.

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# Town and Country Planning Association encourages self-build

At Grand Design Live the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) welcomed the investment in housing announced as part of the March 2014 budget, which included self and custom build homes, estate regeneration and commitment to the garden city approach to development.

Speaking at the show, TCPA Head of Projects and Events, Julia Thrift, said: "We need to build around 240,000 new homes a year to keep up with demand. This can't be done by putting a few new houses here and there. We will need to build large new places. The garden city model of development, based on the garden city principles, has proved to be a very successful way of creating new large-scale developments."

Given that garden cities have a long tradition of welcoming self-build, and the

government is now talking about the need to create garden cities around the country, this has to be good news for those wanting to build their own home.

The TCPA believes that where communities agree to the creation of a new generation of garden cities, each should provide, as part of their masterplans, areas with serviced plots of land that self-builders can buy and build their own home.

An example of where this planned allocation of land to self-builders is already working is Almere, in the Netherlands (pictured). Here the houses are extremely varied, forming a very eccentric collection of styles, which are all built to high design and build standards.

Julia concluded by suggesting that "England has a long history of eccentricism



– so let's create space in garden cities for a wonderful mixture of eccentric new homes. But the government must put an emphasis on quality. In any rush to build new houses we must not allow poor build quality as we can't afford to create new communities and then knock them down in a couple of decades."

## giveaway

### Grab your chance to be on popular self-build course!

The National Self Build & Renovation Centre (NSBRC) is offering a free place on its next Self Build Course, to be held from Saturday 12 to Monday 14 July, worth £375!

This increasingly popular three-day intensive programme is aimed primarily at those considering their first project, but is also relevant to those who have already started and require additional information and inspiration. In fact, these courses have proved so popular this year that the NSBRC has had to lay on additional dates to meet the demand!

Taking the form of intimate, informal workshops that takes you from the first steps such as budgeting, finance and finding land to eco-considerations and completion, this intensive course is hosted by respected self-build and eco experts, who also make use of the practical exhibits within the Centre.

Due to the nature of the course being spread over the weekend, those who require overnight accommodation can benefit from reduced preferential booking rates at nearby hotels.

To be in with a chance of winning this free place, visit <http://blog.nsbrc.co.uk> Closing date for entries is 16 June 2014.

## Self-builders warned about implications of government funding cuts for contaminated land investigation

### survey

Envirep is warning self-builders about the possible implications of recent government cuts. These cuts will greatly reduce funding available to investigate and remediate contaminated land, and will place greater emphasis on all home builders through the planning regime.

The clean-up of contaminated sites has predominantly been managed through Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which encourages proactive identification and remediation of contaminated sites by Local Authorities, and the planning regime has also been used to a lesser extent.

To assist in this process, DEFRA has managed a Contaminated Land Capital Grants Scheme to fund land investigation and clean-up, and since 2009/10, over £38 million has been made available to local authorities. However, in recent years the scheme has undergone significant annual cuts and last year DEFRA announced that it has effectively ceased to support the scheme.

The closure of the scheme will inevitably reduce government funding and place greater emphasis on the planning process, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, creating a 'homebuilder pays' attitude to tackling contaminated sites.

Typically, local authorities request a Phase 1 Desk Study Report as the first

step in identifying any land quality hazards or risks. Envirep Senior Consultant, Lisa Davies explained: "For developers and self-builders entering the planning process for the first time the request for a Phase 1 Desk Study Report can carry the burden of extra worry and cost."

"However, a contaminated land desk study provides clarification about whether land has potential contamination issues, who and what it poses a risk to, and the various solutions available."

Envirep has seen an upturn in the number of contaminated land-related planning conditions requested by local authorities in recent months and have been producing homebuilder reports, which are now widely accepted by local authorities. For the more complex sites, a Phase 1 Desk Study can then be produced to provide more clarity on whether further investigation is required and how best to move forward with development plans.

It is currently estimated that around 100,000 sites across the UK are contaminated through previous use, and waste materials and residues can still be present in the land and groundwater. This will mean that many more homebuilders, which will include already hard pressed self-builders, will be expected to fund local authority requested land quality hazard reports.





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2

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# editor's focus

3

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**Enq. 106**

## diary

**NSBRC Ask an Architect**

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[www.nsbrc.co.uk/ask-an-architect-from-the-riba-nsbrc/](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk/ask-an-architect-from-the-riba-nsbrc/)

**BIG Home Improvement Show**

20 - 22 June, Swindon  
[www.nsbrc.co.uk/the-big-home-improvement-show/](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk/the-big-home-improvement-show/)

**Eco Technology Show**

26 - 27 June, Brighton  
[www.ecotechnologyshow.co.uk](http://www.ecotechnologyshow.co.uk)

**Southern Homebuilding & Renovating and Home Improvement Show**

28 - 29 June, Surrey  
[surrey.homebuildingshow.co.uk](http://surrey.homebuildingshow.co.uk)

**Northern Home Show**

4 - 6 July, Manchester  
[www.northernhomeshow.co.uk](http://www.northernhomeshow.co.uk)

**NSBRC Self Build Course**

12 - 14 July, Swindon  
[www.nsbrc.co.uk/self-build-courses](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk/self-build-courses)

**NSBRC Ask an Architect**

19 July, Swindon  
[www.nsbrc.co.uk/ask-an-architect-from-the-riba-nsbrc/](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk/ask-an-architect-from-the-riba-nsbrc/)

**Western Home Show**

12 - 14 September, Malvern  
[www.westernhomeshow.co.uk](http://www.westernhomeshow.co.uk)

## Survey shows increase in self-build intentions

survey

According to an Ipsos MORI poll, there has been a year-on-year increase in the British public's intention to get a custom designed home built for themselves.

The survey found that one in seven (14 per cent – around seven million people) Britons will research how to build a home for themselves within the next 12 months. This is an increase from 2013, where one in eight were undertaking the same research. The poll also suggested that around one in 50 expect to buy a building plot, obtain planning consent or start construction work on their own new home during the coming year or so.

To support this growth in self and custom build activity, the last couple of years has seen the arrival of a small army of specialist firms to help people build a bespoke home of their own. Also, the number of high profile custom build projects taking place around the country, which range from broadcaster Kevin McCloud's (pictured right) developments in the South West to the 40 serviced building plots for sale in Newcastle, are

placing self and custom build at the forefront of government thinking.

Supporting the recent National Custom and Self Build Week (NCSBW) Housing Minister Kris Hopkins MP said:

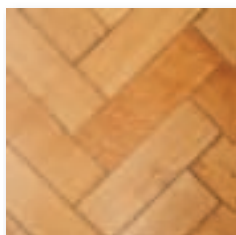
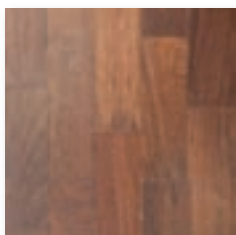
"The events that are organised during NCSBW showcase the many ways people have turned their dream of building their own home into a reality. All the evidence shows that there are millions of people who want to be involved in building a home for themselves in the UK."



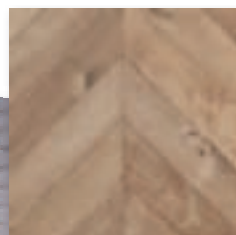
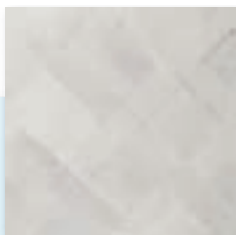
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[www.osmouk.com](http://www.osmouk.com)

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2



3

3. Moduleo® vinyl floor coverings come in both a traditional LVT construction and a simple-to-install Click system. The brand new Ocean Slate 36990 from Moduleo® has a dark intensity with a rugged surface effect to mimic natural slate. This versatile, dark, neutral product suits classic or contemporary spaces and looks particularly great in the kitchen.

[www.moduleo.co.uk](http://www.moduleo.co.uk)

Enq. 109



2. Ecora specialise in the supply of first quality natural wood flooring from around the world and are able to help create outstanding spaces. From top left: Reclaimed Panga Panga; Reclaimed Natural Oak Parquet; Reclaimed Oak; Parquet di Versailles in white; Oak Hampstead Brown Chevrons; and the main image shows Douglas Fir, a highly sought after product because of its beautiful grain pattern.

[www.ecora.co.uk](http://www.ecora.co.uk)

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*Interior inspiration:*

# Floor coverings showcase

This month, Selfbuilder & Homemaker showcase a selection of beautiful floor coverings and flooring products to inspire you when considering what to choose. From solid wood to parquet, vinyl and agglomerate, there is something to suit every project.





5. Reflecting today's fashion for wood-effect flooring, Trend provides agglomerate flooring planks for beautiful, eco-sustainable finishes. Rather than mimic the appearance of wood or use face printing technology, Trend has chosen timber-like quartz, granite and recycled glass finishes for its Trend Teak range, the 120cm x 14.7cm planks replicating the appeal of solid wood flooring when laid.  
[www.trend-group.com](http://www.trend-group.com)

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5



6. Flatweave runners are the perfect way to add a touch of warmth and individuality to any hall or stairway. Roger Oates' signature stripe flatweaves have a smooth woven texture and natural suppleness, and with the skills of an experienced fitter they can be fitted onto the majority of winders and the stripes will align. This Cluny Denim runner is 100 per cent wool, 60cm wide and costs £115 per linear metre.

[www.rogeroates.com](http://www.rogeroates.com)

Enq. 112

7. Granite Transformations' flooring surfaces have been used on the terrace of Sir Stirling Moss's London apartment. Quartz agglomerate flooring in larger sheets was extended to the outside living space, with a Sabbia D'Oro finish used for an adjoining window balcony and an upstairs roof terrace. Sir Stirling is shown out on his very distinctive racing car balcony.

[www.granitetransformations.co.uk](http://www.granitetransformations.co.uk)

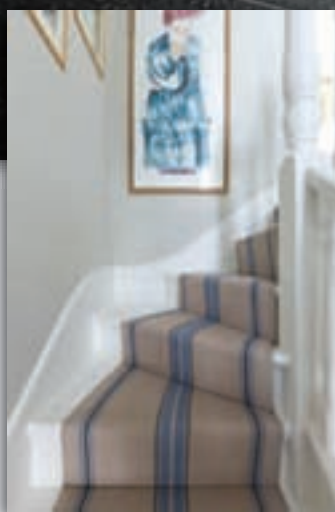
Enq. 113



4

4. TwinFLOOR is a range of 'floating' vinyl flooring from Grant Westfield's, combining a simple, glue-free installation with a surface specification equal to the best in vinyl flooring. The waterproof planks and tiles are quiet and warm underfoot, and provide excellent sound insulation. This innovative range comes in two variations; twinFLOORstick has an overlapping GlueStrip assembly, while twinFLOORclick interlocks like laminate flooring.  
[www.multipanel.co.uk](http://www.multipanel.co.uk)

Enq. 110



6

7





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and foot joints, while minimising the risk of possible injury from sharp or penetrating objects.

Tel: 01327 702104 [www.redbackskneepads.co.uk](http://www.redbackskneepads.co.uk)

Enq. 114

## Osmo



Osmo UK, the eco-friendly wood and finishes experts, has introduced Polyx®-Oil Clear Glossy which provides a gloss finish and adds a touch of class to any room. High gloss has proven to be a very popular finish and it is likely that this will continue. Polyx®-Oil Glossy is extremely easy to apply. Simply brush on to the wood surface to achieve deep, long-lasting penetration. After treatment the wood is strengthened from within and retains its elasticity. It becomes water repellent,

stain resistant and hard-wearing, because it meets the wood's natural demands and does not crack, flake, peel or blister. Osmo Polyx®-Oil is resistant to water and dirt, is very durable and smoothens wood surfaces.

Enq. 115

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Enq. 116

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Enq. 117

# Improve your home from the inside/out



In response to the numerous visitor requests attending its self-build and renovation shows, The **National Self Build & Renovation Centre** is hosting a new, dedicated show specifically focused on major home improvement projects.

The Big Home Improvement Show will be making its debut from Friday 20th – Sunday 22nd June with the aim of informing and inspiring those homeowners wishing to enhance their property, improve its energy efficiency and increase its value.

In addition to addressing all aspects of home improvement, from structural build projects to enhancing 'kerb' appeal and your lifestyle through cosmetic changes, The Big Home Improvement Show will also feature the latest techniques and products to improve the energy performance of your home.

Renown for the quality of its expert presentations and relaxed, open ambience, the NSBRC

will again be giving visitors the opportunity to obtain free, impartial consultations with a host of industry experts and consultants – from designers and project managers to RIBA architects and FMB advisors. Those wishing to chat with an expert are advised to bring along any sketches or plans and book their consultation time upon arrival at the Show.

So what can you expect to find at the show?

- **The Build Theatre** – a series of presentations addressing the more structural issues associated with major home improvement projects.
- **The Home Improvement Theatre** – find out what home improvements measures you can make, what are the pitfalls and what will enhance your property's value.
- **The Energy Efficiency Theatre** – learn how to save money on utility bills and increase the

energy performance of your home.

- **Live Demonstration Arena** – get to grips with the latest applications to enhance your home with these live, interactive demonstrations.
- **'Expert Alley'** – drop-in for free consultations with a host of respected experts.
- **The 'Adding Space' Tour** – join these popular walking tours scheduled at regular intervals throughout each day, around the permanent build exhibits.

Whatever stage of home improvement you find yourself, while at the show take full advantage of the Centre's permanent Trade Village. With over 250 manufacturers and suppliers on-hand to discuss your individual requirements, you can clearly identify and compare products and prices. And if you're still not sure, the Centre's Trade Village is open all year to allow you to return at your leisure.

## FREE tickets for Selfbuilder & Homemaker readers!

We've got 100 pairs of tickets to The Big Home Improvement Show to give away to our readers! For your tickets, simply visit [www.nsbrc.co.uk](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk) and enter code **BHISSBH14**

# Will banks put the brake on house price inflation?

survey

There is concern among some housing sector commentators that recent house price inflation will see the growing property price bubble burst and hurtle us into a new recession. However, what these experts may have missed is the FCA's recent Mortgage Market Review (MMR) and the affect the resulting tougher mortgage application questions could have on housing demand.

A simple supply and demand economic model drives property price inflation. Historically low new build numbers has limited housing supply and the massive demand for new homes has pushed property prices up. What people tend to forget is if the banks had not been so keen to supply bigger and bigger mortgage loans, property prices could have probably been subdued. After all, why push up the price of a property if the purchaser cannot get a mortgage to buy the building?

So could the banks' more focussed

mortgage application process, and the possibly lower loans offered, have an affect on the prices estate agents recommend and developers set?

The only sector the MMR will not impact is self-build, where local and specialist lenders have always applied more detailed lending affordability requirements.

Commenting on the impact of MMR on the self-build community BuildStore Mortgage Services, Director of Financial Services, Rachel Pyne, explained: "The complicated and more affordability focussed application forms conventional high street mortgage applicants will have to complete, along with possible reduced funding levels they will be offered, is something self-builders have experienced for years.

"The primary self-build lenders we work with have always had a far more robust and risk adverse attitude to mortgage affordability and the new – post MMR – mort-

gage application will have little affect on this specialist part of the housing sector."

As a result of the FCA's MMR, second hand and brand new home mortgage borrowers must have greater certainty about whether they can afford their repayments both now and – if interest rates rise – in the future.

Will this 'what can you really afford?' mortgage application process have a collateral impact on property prices? After all, why build a home no one can get a mortgage to buy?

So will the banks' more draconian mortgage allocation process put the brake on house price inflation? If it does, it will not happen immediately, but it could take the steam out of increasing property prices and avoid bursting the property price bubble. One thing is also for sure; it will certainly level the playing field between conventional and self-build mortgage applicants.





THE FRONT ENTRANCE FOYER HAS A FLOOR TO CEILING GLAZING SYSTEM AND SHOWS WESTERN RED CEDAR DETAIL, WHICH COMPLEMENTS THE WHITE RENDERED EXTERIOR AND WHITE PORCELAIN FLOOR INSIDE





# Greystones – homes your mum would be proud of

Selfbuilder & Homemaker meets builder Barry McGrath, who created the iconic, award-winning Greystones homes on a 'building bombsite' in the Hertfordshire village of Radlett

The second property was marketed towards the end of its construction phase and quickly sold for £2.5 million

Greystones is a gated development of two identical, detached, flat roofed and very contemporary properties, built by local builder Barry McGrath. However, the whole project started rather strangely when Barry got lost in the Hertfordshire village of Radlett and discovered what locals described as a 'building bombsite'. Another builder had bought the land, was granted planning permission, then demolished the site's original bungalow and started work on the new homes — but went bust.

Confronted by a huge site, unfinished earthworks and a partially built concrete structure Barry decided that McGrath Construction would finish the project. Buying the land for £2.1 million, and working with the original design produced by Nicolas Tye Architects, the plan was to build two properties and for Barry to move into one of them.

The second property was marketed towards the end of its construction phase and quickly sold for £2.5 million.

*Continued on page 19...*

## Polypipe Ventilation

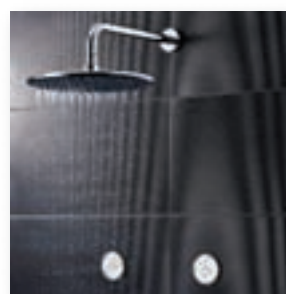


Polypipe Ventilation is pleased to announce the launch of its next generation of Domus Radial duct systems. Domus Radial was introduced by Polypipe Ventilation as an alternative to traditional branch based ducting systems. Instead, Domus Radial allows each room vent to be served by one duct which connects directly to a central distribution system splitting the air from the Air Handling Unit. As part of its ongoing extensive R&D programme, Polypipe Ventilation has re-engineered

Domus Radial to incorporate a new innovative 125mm deep manifold which is less than half the depth of the former version. This ultra slim-line size makes it ideal for installation between loft joists or in tight spaces.

Enq. 119

## Hudson Reed

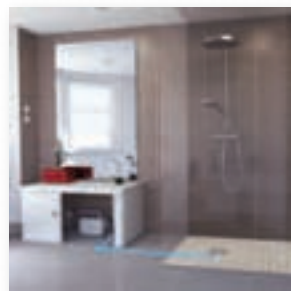


Look out for the stylish new Indus and Lennox shower valves from Hudson Reed, which feature an ultra slim profile combined with thermostatic technology for anti-scald protection. These sophisticated shower valves are available in two contemporary designs – rounded for those who prefer curved brassware or pure square for a truly minimalist feel. Hudson Reed shower valves are manufactured in Britain and are backed by its market leading 20 year guarantee. The valves also incorporate its patented thermostatic cartridge which is limescale resistant, offers accurate flow control and full thermal protection to prevent scalding.

Tel: 01282 418000 [www.hudsonreed.co.uk](http://www.hudsonreed.co.uk)

Enq. 120

## Saniflo



The new Sanifloor from Saniflo is a shower waste with a suction pump and sensor that enables the installation of level access showers and wetrooms in situations where gravity drainage is not an option. In today's modern bathroom of high output rainfall and power showers, the Sanifloor has been designed to cope with a large deluge of water at any time. The discharge pipework is 32mm wide and the flow rate of the suction pump of 25l/min at 3m is compatible with the latest water-

fall and rainshowers. There are three models available, each with an integrated non-return valve to ensure water never backs up in the pipes.

Tel: 020 8842 0033 [www.saniflo.co.uk](http://www.saniflo.co.uk)

Enq. 121

## Dickies



Painting can be a dirty job but Dickies offers painters' workwear designed to make your work day easier, including painters' trousers, overalls and t-shirts, in addition to the traditional decorators' dungarees or bib and brace overalls. The Dickies painters' bib and brace set is specifically designed for painting and decorating. With clip straps making it easy to get on and off, it features an angled chest pocket as well as a very large front pouch, which is perfect for storing your brushes and

other essentials. For more information on the range of painters' workwear available, please visit Dickies' website.

Tel: 01761 419419 [www.dickiesworkwear.com](http://www.dickiesworkwear.com)

Enq. 122

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Enq. 123



ACCESS TO THE BACK OF THE HOUSES IS ON UPPER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND SHOWS EXPANSES OF GLAZING AND SOLAR SHADING

THE CONTOURS OF THE SITE ALLOW THE ENTRANCE TO BE AT A LOWER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL, WITH THE LAND SLOPING UPWARD TOWARDS THE BACK OF THE PROPERTY

The unique and completely bespoke design of the homes meant that Barry had to work with specialist suppliers and solve new build challenges on a daily basis



## A constant learning curve

Picking up another builder's architectural plans did prove to be a little tougher than Barry had envisioned. The unique and completely bespoke design of the homes meant that he had to work with specialist suppliers and solve new build challenges on a daily basis. This extreme hands on approach meant Barry had to stay on-site throughout the entire 18 months of construction.

The constant learning curve created by the highly bespoke nature of the homes certainly kept Barry on his toes. He explained: "The original design incorporated loads of unique and really clever features. However, this meant that every day presented a new product installation challenge, which I had to understand and then implement so that they worked with all the other unique product installation challenges."

"There were times when I thought things would have been a lot simpler if we had just knocked down the structure we were stuck with and started again. But that would have meant going back to the drawing board and could have added years to the build schedule."

The first four months on-site were taken up simply clearing the vast area of abandoned land, moving tonnes of earth to create the required site levels and preparing the existing structure so the build work could actually start.

*Continued on page 21...*





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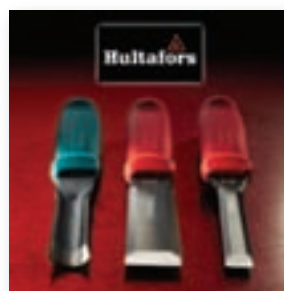
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Enq. 124

## Hultafors



Hultafors new heavy duty Butt Chisels are superbly crafted tools with high quality steel blades that have EPD rust protection (Electrophoretic Deposition). Sharp, tough and totally reliable, these chisels combine maximum sharpness with hard-wearing durability.

They are perfectly sharpened with high-quality Japanese steel blades and heavy-duty handles designed for hard hammer blows. The EDC Chisel is available in eight different blade widths, while the Gougers are available in two styles to suit whatever job you have in hand.

As you'd expect from all Hultafors Tools, these are top-quality, precision tools designed to last a lifetime.

Enq. 125

## Snickers



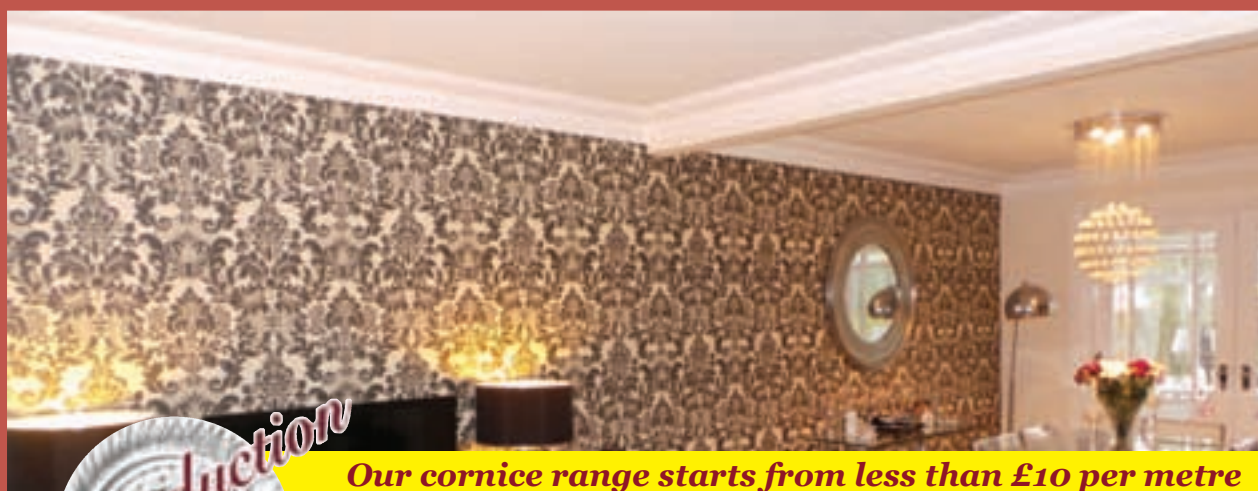
It's great working outside in the summer months, but being hot and sweaty is almost as uncomfortable as being cold. When the going gets hot on site, staying well ventilated is crucial. It helps you stay focused and alert, minimising the likelihood of making bad decisions and putting your health and safety at risk. Snickers' Warm Weather Workwear – in particular the A.V.S. garments – combines market-leading fabrics with advanced technology for top class working comfort and functionality. Its high-tech A.V.S. fabric is an innovative mix of polyester and bamboo carbon, which combine to produce a highly breathable material for moisture transportation, UV protection and anti-odour comfort.

Enq. 126

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Enq. 127



The properties' exteriors still reflect elements of the existing neighbourhood with conventional white render, but in simple modernist forms

## Contemporary homes

The hard work paid off. The finished homes are contemporary in their final appearance but were constructed using a traditional masonry build with all the rooms having solid partition walls and concrete floors. To support the sustainable nature of the homes all insulation was twice that specified by building regulations.

The properties' exteriors still reflect elements of the existing neighbourhood with conventional white render, but in simple modernist forms. The render is complemented with western red cedar, which also helps with external solar shading, and the complete glazing system shapes the homes' contemporary look. The red cedar and glazing also provides a practical combination of privacy and the opportunity to enjoy views of the local area.

Although the land had come with planning permission the McGrath Construction team still

had to contend with considerable concern from neighbours who felt the new homes' appearance would not fit into an address considered to be very exclusive.

As Barry confirmed: "All the hard work with the building design had already been completed by the architects and the previous builder had successfully seen the project through the planning process. However, the proposed properties were very different to the other established homes in the neighbourhood. I also knew that local people were worried that the buildings they had seen in the architectural drawings had been likened to something out of *War of the Worlds* landing in their back yard. However, they had also had to put up with an unsightly building site for some considerable time and were just pleased to see the proposed properties finally built."

*Continued overleaf...*

THE LIGHT WELL AROUND THE PROTRUDING KITCHEN ALLOWS NATURAL LIGHT TO ILLUMINATE THE GAMES ROOM BELOW THROUGH THE GLASS BALUSTRADE AND BRIDGE



First floor plan



The lower ground floor is linked to the upper levels of the house by a stunning atrium style staircase, with cantilevered, open walnut treads

Lower ground floor plan



Upper ground floor plan







THE GLASS BRIDGE CONNECTS THE KITCHEN AND GARDEN AND CROSSES THE EXTERIOR STAIRCASE TO THE GYM ON THE LOWER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL

## Flexible space

Each home has circa 5,220 sq ft of living space, covering three storeys. The space is cleverly designed to provide everything a modern family might need. The homes have a large entrance hall and open plan living come dining/kitchen area, two utility areas, two reception rooms, four bedrooms, five bathrooms and a flexible lower ground floor level.

The site's contours allowed for the creation of the lower ground floor living space, facing out to the front of the homes. Once cleared the site's extremely steep slope had allowed the buildings to avoid a conventional layout with the rear garden being level with the upper ground floor and accessed from the kitchen via a unique glass bridge.

The design of the highly flexible, lower ground floor living space both provides the access to the properties, through a specially designed hardwood door and large entrance

hall, and the opportunity to individualise the 1,740 sq ft area. The space incorporates a master suite 'wing' option, which could include his and hers bathrooms or even a dedicated cinema room or gymnasium. Or it could be reconfigured to provide a granny annex or even staff accommodation. Barry used the space to create a leisure complex with a games room, sauna, steam room and gym.

The lower ground floor is linked to the upper levels of the house by a stunning atrium style staircase, with cantilevered, open walnut treads. The staircase and interiors, at all levels, are illuminated by natural light, which is drawn through a three-storey, glazed exterior panel and large roof top lantern feature.

The properties have also used minimalist design to create attractive, uncluttered living spaces with high ceilings and full height doors to add to the feeling of light and space.



TOP OF THE RANGE GERMAN POGGENPOHL KITCHEN WITH GAGGENAU APPLIANCES AND CAESAR STONE WORKTOPS, IN CONTRASTING COLOURS



## Serious specification

When it comes to specification Barry made sure the properties incorporated all that a bespoke new home should boast.

To add a little kitchen-based 'Vorsprung Durch Technik' he employed Germany's oldest brand, Poggenpohl, to create the fitted kitchens with German Gaggenau stainless steel integrated appliances, including a coffee maker and a Hydrotap that dispenses filtered chilled and boiling water.

The kitchens' high quality Caesar stonework surfaces are complimented by soft-closing cabinetry and an integrated TV.

Barry's love of easy-to-use technology meant that both homes have Cat5 wiring throughout. This supports the user-friendly air conditioning, mood lighting, automated window blinds, and a multi-room music control system.

Other features include an internal vacuum system, underfloor heating, security cameras and alarm system. These are complemented by feature fireplaces in the main living areas and

master bedrooms, along with architecturally designed bespoke joinery, including wardrobes and general storage.

Porcelain tiles have been used in all the main living areas, including bathrooms, together with walnut wood flooring in other areas. The bathrooms also have high-grade sanitary ware with bespoke cabinetry and infrared sensors that flush the principle bathroom toilets. To add that extra luxury the master en suite bathrooms also have feature spoon baths, waterproof TVs and a steam room.

Barry has even planned for the washing with the first floor utility room linked to the lower ground floor utility room, with its Miele washing machine and dryer, by a laundry chute.

Low maintenance is the name of the game with the outside areas' paved patio and decking, and the landscaped front and rear gardens' carefully selected planting is watered by an automatic irrigation system. There is even space for a hot tub.

*Continued overleaf...*

...Carefully selected planting is watered by an automatic irrigation system. There is even a space for hot tub

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## Award-winning

Barry's confidence in McGrath Construction's ability to take on the stalled Radlett development and the imaginative design created by Nicolas Tye Architects was also recognised when in 2011 the Greystones homes were shortlisted for the Hertfordshire Building Futures Awards.

Commenting on the design, specification and successful location of the homes within the existing community the judges said:

"The Greystones houses are a perfect example of how sustainable design can be intertwined effectively with modern amenities in a domestic setting."

Even the sceptical neighbours have been won over. Although initially concerned about the new homes' contemporary look they are also relieved that the ugly building site blot on the landscape that they had to live with has been converted into two very attractive, award winning and locally iconic properties.

As Barry concluded: "My bank manager thought I was either brave or foolhardy, and probably a bit of both. But I knew McGrath Construction was up to the task and that the finished homes are something my mum would be proud of."

### Project summary

Overall cost of land:  
£2 million

Total construction cost:  
£2 million

Value of property now:  
£3 million per plot

### Contacts

Insulation: Celotex  
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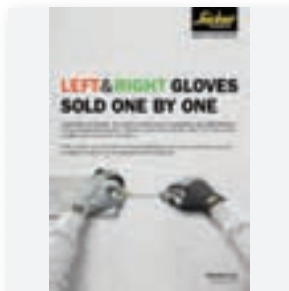


THE MASTER EN SUITE BATHROOMS FEATURE HIGH-GRADE SANITARY WARE, INCLUDING A SPOON BATH AND CONTRASTING PORCELAIN TILE FLOORS





## Snickers



Ask any professional tradesman or woman and they'll agree that hands are the most important tools you have on site. That's why Snickers Workwear decided to develop the most effective and practical range of work gloves available today. Check out Snickers' new full colour 2014 Catalogue and you'll see why these market-leading products satisfy almost every conceivable working need on site. There's Precision Gloves, which are light and flexible with a design priority on dexterity and fit, knuckle protection, cushioning and reinforcement to provide optimum protection, or Power Gloves, which are comfortable, hard-wearing and ideal for all kinds of heavy duty jobs on site.

Enq. 129

## Ultra Tile



Ultra Tile, the premium adhesives, grouts and ancillaries brand from the Instarmac Group, is delighted to announce the release of its new brochure. Showcasing a new look and reinforcing its premium image the brochure certainly makes an impact. It details Ultra Tile's comprehensive range and incorporates its popular installation guides, offering project guidance that includes tiling onto calcium sulphate screeds. The brochure's release comes alongside the imminent

launch of its new fibre-reinforced tile adhesive, FibreGrip FX, details of which are featured inside. Contact Ultra Tile to request a copy.

Tel: 01827 872 244 [www.ultratileadhesives.co.uk](http://www.ultratileadhesives.co.uk)

Enq. 131

## Marley Eternit



A property owner in Bognor Regis has successfully transformed the appearance of his home with the help of Marley Eternit's Cedral Weatherboard. Being as quick and easy to install as timber meant that the owner, with the help of his joiner son, was able to install the Cedral Weatherboard cladding in just a weekend, minimising labour costs in the process. Homeowner Mr Fish said: "I chose Cedral Weatherboard as it is a substantial material and looked extremely good in comparison to plastic-based boarding." The Cedral Weatherboard was fixed on all facades of the property in a 'ship lap' style above a height of two metres.

Enq. 130

## Grundfos



The SOLOLIFT2 range of macerators from Grundfos are a cut above the rest in terms of delivering leading edge technology. Not only does the family comprise of just five models but, through the flexibility of their design, their adaptability and performance, they provide the solution to handling wastewater for any combination of WC, bidet, sink, bath, shower and washing machine. Additionally, the modular design of the new Grundfos SOLOLIFT2 means that servicing can

normally be achieved in situ without the need to drain down the system. The range is also suitable for replacing any existing macerator unit.

Tel: 01525 850000 [www.grundfos.co.uk/sololift2](http://www.grundfos.co.uk/sololift2)

Enq. 132

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Enq. 134

## Connect with Selfbuilder & Homemaker online

Emailed on a monthly basis, the Selfbuilder & Homemaker newsletter is designed to provide you with the latest information on products and services of interest, direct to your inbox.

You can quickly gather a snapshot of information from up to 12 carefully selected companies and easily follow links through to further information, or go direct to the company's own website.

Brochures and videos are also regularly available.

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# Look no further to create a stunning new home

The Northern Home Show is on at Manchester Central from 4 - 6 July and it's the perfect place to find the right products and services to create your dream home. If you want to enhance, renovate, extend or even build your own home then look no further!

Recent research reveals that record low mortgage rates and the Help to Buy Scheme is making this a great time to buy or enhance a home in the North West. But one of the biggest barriers to creating an ideal home can be finding the right products or services. Not any more!

Whether you are considering an extension, a renovation, a new build or a home improvement project, the Northern Home Show offers the perfect one-stop shopping opportunity.

It covers all aspects of interior design, home improvement, self-build, finance, renovation, energy efficiency and gardens. Taking place over three days, the show plays host to free workshops and seminars, thousands of products and services and a wealth of free advice and information from the experts, all under one roof!

In the North West, this really is a great time to focus on the biggest and possibly most important investment you will ever make. House prices have risen by almost 3 per cent in the North West over the last twelve months with 24 per cent of new home purchases made using a Help to Buy Equity loan, which offers an interest-free loan for five years. With great deals now available on fixed rate mortgages, inflation

falling to 1.7 per cent in February and a far stronger economy its time to breathe new life into your property plans.

To help you create your perfect home, the Northern Home Show has teamed up with the professionals and created unique Advice Areas, giving you the chance to discuss your individual questions with the experts. Head along to the 'Ask the' stands and speak to architects, project managers, landscape architects, interior designers, building control managers and architectural technologists, all with in-depth expertise and knowledge relevant to the North West.

If you're keen to learn a new skill then the DIY Workshops should be your first port of call. These workshops are ideal for anyone wanting to learn how to tackle DIY projects around the home as well as learning preventative maintenance skills, which could save time and money.

The Northern Home Show is on from Friday 4 July to Sunday 6 July at Manchester Central, Manchester. Tickets are only £8 per person on the door and children under 16 go free! Your tickets are valid for all three days so you can visit as many times as you like.

For more information and advance tickets, visit [www.northernhomeshow.co.uk](http://www.northernhomeshow.co.uk)



## Exclusive to Selfbuilder & Homemaker Magazine readers

We have a 100 pairs of tickets to give away to Selfbuilder & Homemaker magazine readers – just use the **Promotional Code: SBH** to claim two free tickets worth £16!



## James Latham

Medite® Tricoya®, which is supplied by James Latham, has been tested by the BRE to EN350-2, and performs up to a durability class of 1, or 'very durable' – the equivalent to Teak and more durable than aged Oak. The BRE also tested the creep and duration performance as well as its resistance to weathering. The durability of Medite Tricoya underpins its sustainability – it is made to last and with a 50 year guarantee, manufacturers have reassurance in real longevity. The proprietary technology behind Medite Tricoya is based on wood acetylation, a process that has been studied by scientists around the world for more than 80 years. This method of improving wood has been proven to deliver such superior performance that it has long been used as the "gold standard" against which other methods are measured. James Latham's Pat Collins explained: "The unique properties which Medite Tricoya incorporates have already created a real buzz within the industry. It offers complete design freedom and the potential applications are far ranging. It inspires creativity and discovery, particularly in areas where wood would not traditionally have been considered, and especially in environments where humidity and weather are usually concerns."

Enq. 135

## Johnson & Starley

Eco Technology Show A47



Johnson & Starley is highlighting energy efficient heating solutions at the Eco Technology Show at The Brighton Centre on stand A47. The company's WarmCair range of condensing warm air heaters underlines the company's market leading position in this technology, while the QuanTec range of condensing boilers has set new performance standards. The range includes models with PFGHR technology, ideal for Green Deal projects and incentives. With District Heating systems increasing in popularity, Aquair Heating Interface Units are now widely accepted as the ideal customised complement for both renewable heat sources such as biomass and traditional gas boilers.

Enq. 136

## Eurostove



The Christon Inset range of woodburners from Eurostove offer clean lines for a contemporary home environment and are available in 600mm, 700mm or the flatline (letterbox shape) 900mm width – the latter accommodating a 70cm log length. Made from a sturdy steel constructed box, these convection inset models can either be framed on all four sides or on three sides for flush mounting with the floor. Part of the innovative design is additional air ducting so that up to 40 per cent of the heat can be re-directed to an additional room. No ash-tray is necessary, making cleaning a very simple matter indeed.

Tel: 01934 750 500 [www.eurostove.co.uk](http://www.eurostove.co.uk)

Enq. 137

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Enq. 138



# Meet the eco technology experts in self-building and renovation

The third Eco Technology Show returns to the Brighton Centre on 26 - 27 June with over 140 exhibitors and a powerful speaker line up that offers practical information on how to install and use energy saving technology; ideal for those involved in a self-build or major renovation project

An extensive seminar programme of over 60 keynotes and talks kicks off with a keynote speech from Minister of State for Energy and Climate Change, Greg Barker MP, who will reaffirm the government's commitment to reaping the economic benefits of shifting to a lower carbon economy; a subject at the heart of the show's agenda. On a practical level, members of his team at DECC will explain how the domestic RHI is going to roll out.

The free seminar programme sessions will cover legislation, funding and incentives and the major discussion points on energy management, build, water and waste, transport, technology and resource efficiency. Other highlights of the conference programme for housebuilders and developers include:

- A review of the government's Green Deal scheme by the Energy Saving Trust, which will help contractors get the most out of this unique incentive
- Eco celebrity Oliver Heath will present the benefits of eco refurbishment and energy assessment
- An update on the government consultation to achieve zero carbon building standards by Martin Russell-Croucher, director of sustainability and special projects, Royal

Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

- Cut through government red tape for new build and refurbishment projects with the South East Centre for the Built Environment (SECBE)
- A big debate on future technologies and material innovations in the building industry, chaired by Julie Hill, circular economy task force, Green Alliance
- Understand how to reap the monetary benefits of energy efficiency for new builds and retrofits from Sean Twohig, group environmental health and safety, risk manager, Jury's Inn
- A presentation on hybrid heating systems and how they can slash customers' running costs by 20 per cent by Keith Rule, sales director at Fond Nova UK
- Tom Lipinski, technical director at Ventive, sharing his firm's vision of the future of ventilation

The show's exhibitors will demonstrate how optimum building and running cost savings result from having a holistic view of a project, through investment in the right technology and low carbon solutions for buildings, smart choices of building materials and even through to furniture design.



The Eco Technology Show will be open from 9.30am - 5pm on Thursday 26 June and 9.30am - 4.30pm on Friday 27 June. Registration is free. Further information can be found on the website [www.ecotechnologyshow.co.uk](http://www.ecotechnologyshow.co.uk)

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Enq. 139

## Diligence International



Having a square cross-section in plan, which allows it to be fitted into the corner of a room, the Archifocus contemporary fire from Diligence International can also be placed against a flat wall, creating a diamond shape reaching into the room. This award winning design features a projecting hearth that is surrounded by glass, making the fire visible from all angles, while technically it promises excellent heat efficiency – a heat output of up to 13kW can be achieved, with an efficiency of 73.3 per cent. Free-standing, the Archifocus weighs 99kg and features a telescopic top, allowing it to be adjusted to the ceiling height.

Enq. 140

## Connect with Selfbuilder & Homemaker online

The digital issue of Selfbuilder & Homemaker provides all the same content as the print issue with the added advantage of being instantly available whenever and wherever you have access to the internet.

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Enq. 141

may/june 2014

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**301**





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**302**

**SCHÜCO**



Schueco's Contemporary Living Collection brings together the company's premium quality aluminium windows, doors and façades. Among the systems is a wide range of folding doors which will appeal to selfbuilders and homeowners looking for improvements that could add capital value, as well as comfort, to their homes.

The range includes the Schueco ASS 80 FD.HI, a folding door which combines exceptionally high thermal efficiency with narrow face-widths of only 112mm. Available with leaves up to 1.2m wide and 3m high, the door has elegant looks, slim sightlines and high-quality fittings, making it the ideal solution for quality homes.

Visit the website to find out more on Schueco's products.

Enq. 302



Owners of period buildings are willing to maintain the heritage of their property and take steps to protect the building structure for future generations. Old Manor Cottages provide an advisory and design service to guide owners through the change of glazing or the complete window. Many owners seem convinced that if the building is listed or within a conservation area then double glazing is not permitted – this is not true. With its engineering background, Old Manor have improved the way double glazing is assembled in its windows: it uses warm edge insulated spacers between both panes of glass. The resulting product is not only aesthetically pleasing but it also performs better, providing many times more insulation than the aluminium counterpart.

Enq. 303



New for 2014 and exclusive to JB Kind is the eye catching Mistral door design. It has been developed specifically with the self-builder in mind.

Without compromising on quality, JB Kind has sourced a new construction technique that gives the Oak Mistral an incredible price advantage.

Based on the fashion for flush groove designs, the Mistral's distinctive pattern gives a three panelled effect.

Available in Walnut, Oak and White primed, these exceptional doors represent incredible quality and value.

FD30 fire doors, glazed designs, metric sizes and bespoke options are all available.

Enq. 304



Selecta Systems has launched two new brochures to its Ready-2-Fit Range of composite doors, giving you the most comprehensive range available on the market. The Richmond Collection and the Metropolitan Collection have been introduced and will run alongside the current World of Choice Brochure. Both The Richmond and Metropolitan Collection of composite doors offer an unlimited palette of colours, modern slab and glass designs with quality hardware. Combine this with a Secure by Design door option and you really do have a fantastic looking door that provides excellent security. Contact the Selecta Systems Ready-2-Fit team or visit its website for a copy of the brochures and to find out more information on all of its products.

Enq. 324

## Old Manor Cottages

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Enq. 304





Essex based trade manufacturer **Duration Windows** is soon to offer three new aluminium bi-fold doors to its range.

The most revolutionary of the doors is the 'Concealed' bi-fold which has no visible hinges when closed and has near flush internal handles. These two features give the doors an extremely clean, unfussy finish and customer feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Other new bi-folds include a super slim line door with meeting stiles of just 108mm and a variation on the already popular Continental door – which now has an option of flush glazing – giving the look of a glass wall.

Visit the company's website for more information on all the products Duration offers.

Enq. 316



Devonshire House is a regeneration of the Sue Ryder Foundations charity headquarters in Suffolk. Semi-detached bungalows, plus a detached bungalow have been connected to the Old Rectory via a new hardwood conservatory, created and installed by **Quayside Conservatories** of Beccles. Quayside have been creating hardwood conservatories for the trade and general public for over 20 years. A team of craftsmen, working from premises on the banks of the river Waveney, ensure that the products they lovingly create and install are of the highest quality. Its latest news is that during this, its 20th year, it has decided to invest in a new window line, which will assist in the creation of a new top of the market, more thermally efficient window. Visit the website to find out more.

Enq. 315



**Kloeber's** Kustomslide Plus aluminium sliding door system offers up to six sliding doors with an effortless lift and slide mechanism. Large panel sizes give maximum light, there is a choice of any RAL colour and double or triple glazing achieve exceptional U values.

Made to order with frame sizes from 1.5m up to a massive 13m wide and 2.8m in height. Kustomslide Mono is a single track option with a fixed panel directly glazed into the frame giving exceptionally narrow sight lines and a more cost effective option on two, three and four panel doors.

For more information about the products Kloeber offers, contact the company directly or visit the website.

Enq. 308



When considering a home build, many of us are looking for ways to bring more light and space in to the home – folding, sliding patio doors are the ideal solution. With slim frames and large glass panels, **JELD-WEN's** extensive range provides more visibility with minimal take-up of space, perfect for bringing the outdoors in and for creating a bright and airy living space. JELD-WEN's stunning solid oak, folding sliding Canberra range is available in a golden or dark oak finish and is top hung so that it glides open at a touch of a finger. The Canberra can be made to measure to fit your project perfectly and is available in a range of sizes and opening options. Visit the JELD-WEN website for more information on all the products available in its range.

Enq. 309



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Enq. 305

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**307**



Urban Front design and make hardwood contemporary front, internal feature and garage doors with steel reinforced cores, high security locks, security keys, and pivot or 3D hinges.

All of its doors are made in the UK and exported all over the world. Urban Front's six timbers are European Oak, American Black Walnut, Iroko, Western Red Cedar, Fumed Oak and Wenge, but also available as a painted finish in any RAL color.

All of Urban Front's doors are finished with stainless steel fittings. It can achieve bespoke sizes up to 2.4m x 1.2m.

For more information about the products Urban Front offers, contact the company directly or visit the website.

Enq. 310



Tanums Fönster has been producing high performance wood windows and doors since 1949. It has also added triple glazing since the 1970s.

Tanums standard U-value is 1.0W/m<sup>2</sup>K, and also carries the stringent Swedish 'P' mark class C for severe exposure locations and buildings over eight storeys.

The extensive range from Tanums Fönster includes: top turn, fully reversible windows; side hung, outward opening windows and French doors; inward opening windows and French doors, and sliding doors.

For more information about Tanums Fönster and the windows and doors it offers, please contact the company directly or visit its website.

Enq. 311



Altitude Aluminium is an accredited partner for both Reynaers and Schuco Systems. If you have a project that involves curtain walling, aluminium windows and doors or would like further information on its products and services get in touch today or visit its website. Based in Cheshire, Altitude Aluminium offer a complete package for bespoke properties and grand design builds for anything from traditional to modern appearance. Altitude Aluminium has the experience to advise on design elements and is happy to work alongside architects, homeowners or project managers to ensure that your project is delivered on time and is right first time. Get in touch with the team to discuss your project today, or visit the website to find out more information.

Enq. 312



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Enq. 322



**Internorm**, a leading window brand in Europe, offers high quality low-energy and Passive House window and door systems. The company's innovative product range includes UPVC, UPVC/aluminium and timber/aluminium windows in addition to aluminium and timber/aluminium entrance doors, all with a choice of handles and glazing.

The offering also includes a number of accessories such as sun and insect protection including the I-Tec Shading – a PV powered blind.

Other innovations include the I-Tec Ventilation – a window system that has an integrated MVHR unit. The high quality leading range offers no limits and full individuality.

Enq. 323

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# Aluminium windows and doors experiencing a renaissance



without having to worry about a bulky frame to provide support.

"Not only are aluminium frames typically narrower than uPVC or timber alternatives, but the windows and doors can also be made much bigger too. This maximises the glass area and gives the best possible view. According to our latest architects' survey, 40 per cent of respondents said that big windows was the main architectural feature that can really make a home come to life and aluminium can help to make that happen much more easily than other materials."

Robert Palmer, the managing director of Palmer Market Research, said: "Aluminium is out-performing other materials for bi-fold doors by some margin – the sales of around 3,000 door sets in 2010 more than tripled to 10,000 in 2013 and is expected to triple again in the next five years – and these are conservative estimates."

Aluminium frame systems are experiencing a boom in sales as a result of high performance without compromising aesthetics.

Architects have long-recognised that aluminium is a very stable material that minimises expansion and contraction with changes in the ambient temperature.

Reynaers at Home Head Hugh Moss said: "This makes aluminium an ideal choice for sliding patio doors and bi-fold doors, where uPVC and timber tend to warp and twist, making the doors hard to open and close. Aluminium is inherently strong, which also means that architects can design really big windows and doors

For more information see the website [www.reynaersathome.co.uk](http://www.reynaersathome.co.uk), email [homeuk@reynaers.com](mailto:homeuk@reynaers.com) or call 0121 421 9707

Enq. 313

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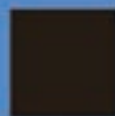
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Cathedral

Another first from Garador! It has just launched its top selling steel garage doors in a range of timber effect finishes.

Garador's ever popular Georgian, Beaumont and Cathedral steel garage doors are currently available as powder coated doors in 17 standard colours. Now the full range of standard and special size ranges will also be available in the two pre coated steel finishes of Golden Oak and Rosewood. These timber effect doors are constructed from steel offering years of reliable, trouble free service, and excellent value for money.

Tel: 01935 443709 [www.garador.com](http://www.garador.com)

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## George Woods UK



George Woods UK manufactures a large range of door canopies, all hand made in timber from sustainable forestry. It always holds a large stock of its standard size canopies, which enables it to offer a next day delivery service. A bespoke design service is provided for both timber door canopies and barge boards, which can be crafted from your own design. Beautifully crafted porch canopies are available in soft wood and include an extensive range of barge boards (fascia boards), all of which are manufactured on-site by hand. Having a canopy prolongs the life of your front door, extends time between maintenance and adds value and appeal.

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## Apeer

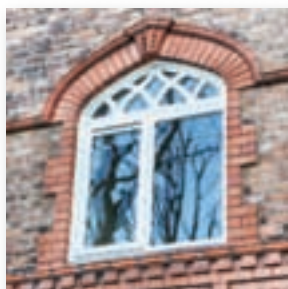


rebating and is energy 'A' rated. It has a 70mm thick sturdy door leaf with a lifelike genuine timber grain, giving it a traditional cottage appeal.

Tel: 02825 632200 [www.appeer.co.uk](http://www.appeer.co.uk)

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## The VEKA UK Group

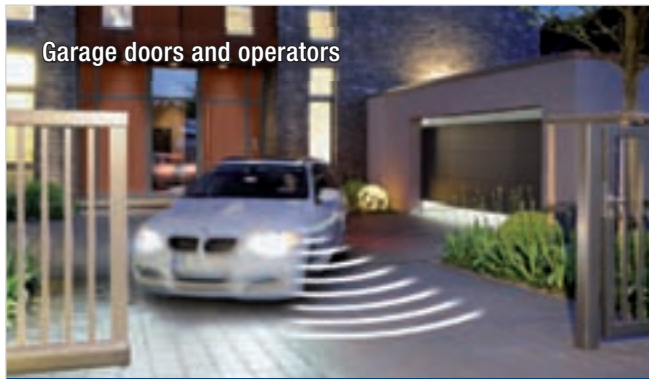


The VEKA UK Group's Mark Barsby looks at PVC-U as an alternative to traditional timber, and what brought about this change: "For many years, PVC-U barely got a look in when it came to heritage projects, and this could largely be forgiven: first generation windows didn't quite look the part compared to timber. The industry acted quickly and products evolved at an astounding rate. Advanced systems were designed that were virtually indistinguishable from the real thing. It seems that decision makers in this sector are beginning to accept the advantages of this valuable, non-rotting, energy-efficient material."

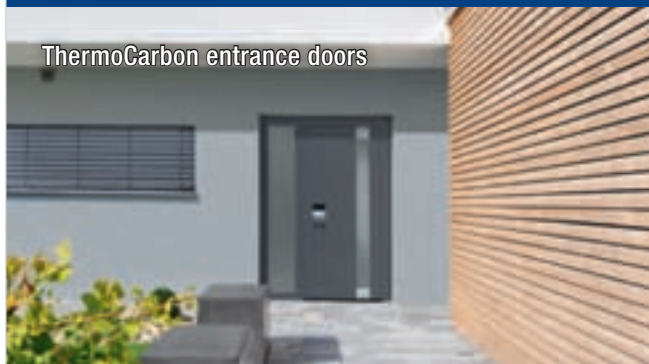
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# Let the experts take care of your domestic waste water problems

Glyn Cann, business development manager for We Build It Ltd, explains how to achieve peace of mind and confidence when choosing a suitable domestic sewage treatment plant

The consumer's focus should be on high quality, affordable, simple products and should be based on known and proven methods

When it comes to off mains sewage many people can be blown away by all the information and differing products available on the internet; Google "domestic sewage treatment plant" and the consumer is bombarded by plants of all shapes and sizes. Dealing with a specialist manufacturer, installer and servicer of treatment plants can give the consumer peace of mind and confidence that they are getting the right information, solution and system.

How does it work? What does it cost? Does it use electric? And how much? Do I have to maintain it? How do I install it? How big is it? Do I need to empty it? What can go into the plant? What happens to the waste? Do I need planning permission? Do I need to inform the Environment agency? How long will it last? Does it smell?

All of these questions can only be answered by experts who know their products inside out. If you ask a middle man with limited knowledge of the industry, product or process these questions, the customer is often baffled by terms such as BOD, COD, NH<sub>4</sub>, which they don't really need to know. All the homeowner, builder or architect wants to know is that the product will work with the minimum effort from them during the life of the plant.

Any reputable company would answer all of the aforementioned questions, sort out permits, and advise on planning, discharge options, maintenance and installation, and offer advice and help during the life of the plant.

The consumer's focus should be on high quality, affordable, simple products and should be based on known and proven methods of waste water treatment such as extended aeration or rotating biological processes.

For the self-builder the right treatment plant is simple to install providing they have taken the manufacturer's advice; be aware that some plants need complete concrete backfill, which can add to install costs. A well-constructed plant can be backfilled with pea gravel.

Consider whole life costs, not just the cost of the treatment plant. Factor in install costs, power consumption, servicing, consumable spare parts, product life cycle (guarantee) and emptying charges.

Sizing the plant for a single house is simple: it is the number of bedrooms plus two, so a three-bedroom house is a five-person treatment plant. For multiple dwellings using the same treatment plant speak to the manufacturer for the correct size unit; most manufacturers' ranges are in increments 1-5, 1-7, 5-13 etc. up to 50 people. Any plant for use by up to 50 people (pe 50) should



*Continued on page 47...*

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be manufactured and tested to EN12566-3. This gives the consumer confidence that they are getting the right treatment plant for their application, but always ask to see the certificate and test results as these can be manipulated and not show the true outcome of the test.

The treatment plant you choose should be around 95 per cent efficient thus allowing long intervals before de-sludge is required. The waste water must be cleaned to a standard meeting the usual discharge level requirement; you must apply for either an exemption certificate or permit, before making a discharge. Reputable manufacturers may be able to assist with this and advise on the method of discharge, be it a ditch, stream, watercourse or soakaway.

As the system breaks down and aerates the solids, the introduction of non-degradable items such as wipes and sanitary products, should be avoided at all times, as this will clog up the system and increase the need to empty the unit. Follow this instruction and typical emptying will be around three to five years. It is also recommended that no medicines or harsh chemicals enter the unit; try to stick to eco brands and stagger washing throughout the week.

The consumer needs easy to follow advice for their sewage treatment requirements especially when servicing their plant. Maintaining any sewage treatment plant is a very important part of ensuring the efficiency of the system and this



includes adhering to the operating and maintenance manual and annual servicing.

We strongly advise servicing the system on an annual basis and this will take on average less than an hour to complete. It will also help you to meet the legal requirements of the Environment Agency.

In summary, the advice is to deal directly with a manufacturer who has product knowledge and a proven track record of good customer service and aftersales care.



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- Frameless Glazing



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## IBD Distribution



IBD Distribution has welcomed the latest Renewable Heat Initiative (RHI) announcement as offering excellent opportunities for heating and plumbing contractors to capitalise on the scheme. IBD is certificated under the MCS scheme by Benchmark and has expert knowledge that allows the company to support those installers who do not have MCS certification. IBD can provide technical support and commissioning services for an RHI installation as well as a range of high quality, market leading approved renewables product solutions. IBD is a Daikin UK partner for renewable heating and air conditioning products including the Daikin Altherma air source heat pump and Daikin solar systems.

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## Mitsubishi Electric



Mitsubishi Electric has launched a dedicated Ecodan selection tool to coincide with the government's announcement that heat pumps are now included in the non-domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). The new Ecodan selection tool allows anyone to examine the viability of heat pumps for their building and shows both running cost comparisons against other technologies and payback periods, which take the RHI payments into account.


Tel: 01707 282880 <http://heating.mitsubishielectric.co.uk/ecodanselectiontool/Pages/default.aspx>

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## Mitsubishi Electric



Mitsubishi Electric has launched two new pre-plumbed and pre-wired hot water cylinders for the Ecodan monobloc range to offer a renewable heating solution with one of the smallest footprints on the market. The 150 litre and 180 litre stainless steel cylinders are ideal for new-build properties where space is at a premium, as well as retro-fit situations where they can offer the installer more flexibility in location and design. Delivering space heating and domestic hot water in the

smallest space possible, the units still offer optimum performance and an advanced, yet simple to use graphical interface controller.

**Tel: 01707 282880** [www.heating.mitsubishielectric.co.uk](http://www.heating.mitsubishielectric.co.uk)

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## Windhager



New from Windhager is its latest development BioWin 2. The BioWin 2 has been designed to be a 'space conscious' appliance and can be installed within an alcove as it requires no servicing clearances either to the left, right or the rear and minimal clearance to the front. No other wood pellet boiler achieves these minimum clearances, making it a real innovation and ideal for many different properties. BioWin 2 is available in 4 outputs from 10 to 26kW all with a 30 per cent modulation range for maximum efficiency. The new boiler is available as a hand feed version from its integrated pellet hopper or as an auto feed boiler from a bulk pellet store.

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## Specflue

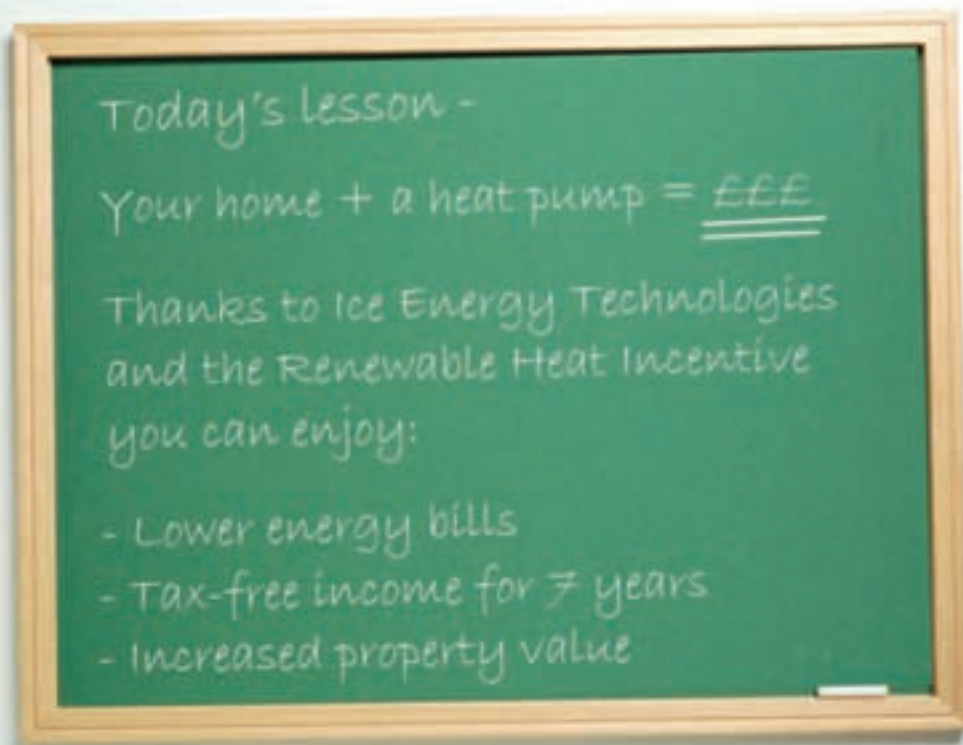
Specflue is a leading supplier of flue systems, wood burning stoves and renewable heat products and is fast gaining a reputation as a one-stop shop for all things to do with sustainable heating.

As well as supplying a comprehensive range of products including thermal stores, solar panels and biomass boilers, Specflue's dedicated training centre delivers qualifications at QCF standard, to ensure the heating engineer can become MCS registered; a pre-requisite for those self builders looking for a renewable heating installer they can trust. Specflue's training courses arms installers and heating engineers with the skills they need to take full advantage of the increasing business opportunities in domestic renewable installation work arising from the recent launch of the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme.

In addition, Specflue also stock and supply Termatech wood burning and air pellet stoves; the latter being a genuine alternative to the former, due to their reduced level of intervention and fuel reloading. The air pellet stoves also give higher levels of efficiency (90 per cent) compared to a good quality wood burner (80 per cent); therefore converting more fuel to heat. Contact Specflue for more information.

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## Vectaire



Vectaire's Elix 1003 is a quiet, three speed centrifugal fan with an energy saving EC motor for wall or ceiling installation in all domestic wet rooms. It runs continuously at a choice of two trickle speeds, with user control for the boost speed. The Elegance 1003 is an axial fan with all the features of the Elix plus the option of window installation.

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## Grundfos



As a global pump manufacturer, Grundfos know that although pumps may be hidden away in plant rooms, they are big energy consumers as they currently account for 10 per cent of global electricity. The good news is that it also knows that most pumps are incorrectly sized for their current application which means that changing pumps for more energy efficient models can be a quick win for you. Speak to a company that can deliver a wide range of high efficiency pumps and

advanced motor technology that can reduce the average pump's energy consumption by up to 60 per cent – a company like Grundfos Pumps.

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# Renewable Heat Incentive: The case for heat pumps just got even stronger

Ice Energy Technologies explores the benefits of installing air or ground source heat pumps and how the launch of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is magnifying this even further

Heat pumps have long been considered a viable alternative to fossil fuel heating systems thanks to their efficient, reliable and cost-effective nature. The launch of a new government scheme is set to make adopting heat pumps an even more attractive proposition and if you're building your own home, you could be one of the people lucky enough to benefit.

## What are heat pumps?

There are two main types of heat pump; ground source heat pumps and air source heat pumps. Ground source heat pumps access stored solar energy from beneath the ground via a series of pipes known as a ground loop. The ground loop is buried within horizontal trenches approximately 1 metre deep and 50 metres in length where the ground temperature remains at a constant 10°C to 12°C throughout the year.

If space is at a premium a series of vertical boreholes can be drilled to access the heat instead of using trenches. In either scenario, heat is passed through the heat pump where it is essentially compressed to a high enough temperature for distribution via radiators or an underfloor heating system. Air source heat pumps use very similar technology but unlike ground source heat pumps, which are housed indoors, the units are placed outside of a property where they extract heat from the air rather than the ground.

## How can heat pumps benefit me?

Firstly, let's consider the installation. While heat pumps can be easily retrofitted into existing properties, installing them at the build stage where they can be seamlessly combined with underfloor heating to make the most use of available space is clearly a benefit. Additionally, if you have equipment on-site which can be used to dig the ground loop trenches, you could save

With fossil fuels diminishing and their price therefore increasing, by installing a heat pump you are future-proofing your supply

yourself several thousand of pounds and avoid digging again at a later date.

Now, let's look at the cost savings. Heat pumps can have a significant effect on running costs thanks to their use of renewable energy rather than fossil fuels. If you've been heating your home with an oil boiler for example, you could reasonably expect to save yourself in the region of £1,500 a year by installing a heat pump. Because your home will be built to a much higher specification and will therefore be better insulated than the vast majority of existing properties, it will retain the heat more effectively, which will only increase the efficiency of your heat pump and mean you can heat your home for less.

Then there are the environmental benefits. Heat pumps emit no noxious gases and contain no dangerous or explosive substances making them a safe, environmentally-friendly option. With fossil fuels diminishing and their price therefore increasing, by installing a heat pump you are future-proofing your supply, shielding yourself from continued energy price increases and protecting the environment for future generations.



*Continued overleaf...*

## The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)

The RHI is a similar scheme to Feed-in-Tariff for Solar PV and is a government initiative designed to drive the adoption of renewable energy systems in the UK. The RHI will provide owners of heat pumps with quarterly, tax free, index linked payments made over seven years which are designed to help recoup the cost of installation.

The rate and therefore cumulative value of payments will vary depending on the amount of renewable heat generated and the type of heat pump installed. Air source heat pumps will benefit from a rate of 7.3p per unit of renewable heat generated while owners of ground source heat pumps will benefit from rates of 18.8p per unit to reflect the larger installation costs. What this means in real terms is that a property producing approximately 23,000 hours of renewable heat from a ground source heat pump could receive almost £20,000 over the seven-year lifetime of the scheme.

This means you have the opportunity to invest in a sustainable heating system which has the potential to be more cost-effective to run, can protect you from future energy price rises, requires less maintenance and will last longer than a traditional boiler system and which could effectively be paid for by the RHI payments, all of which makes heat pumps an extremely interesting proposition.

## Things to consider

If this information has convinced you to look at the feasibility of heat pumps for your project, there are a few things you ought to bear in mind:

- **Qualification** – To claim RHI payments you must be planning to live in the property you are building. If you're building a property for someone else then you won't qualify.
- **Product** – To qualify for RHI payments, the heat pump equipment installed and the company commissioning it must be registered under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS). No MCS, no RHI.
- **Application** – Full details of the application process are yet to be released but what has been confirmed is the requirement to submit a Green Deal Assessment as part of your application.

Of course when you are considering heat pumps for your project, you need to be careful. While the RHI is a fantastic opportunity for more people to access and benefit from heat pumps, there is likely to be a raft of new players in the market, all of whom claim to be experts in the field. The likelihood is though that most will be small plumbers and heating companies who are expanding their product range with little knowledge of designing or installing heat pumps correctly.

To get the most from your heat pump your system must be sized and designed correctly or you run the risk of installing a system which simply won't meet your requirements. It's therefore important to ensure that the company you choose to design, supply, install and commission your system has the requisite knowledge and experience, not to mention certification, to meet your requirements.

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## Abode



An Abode mixer tap is one of the most architecturally designed kitchen items to sit on or close to a kitchen sink, and combines precision perfect engineering with stunning design.

The creatively inspired dual lever, slender style Abode Sloane kitchen mixer tap provides a classic take on contemporary styling with its curvaceous body and distinctive handle design. For consumers looking for a classic tap that will stand the test of

time and perfectly complement both modern and traditional decors, Sloane is the perfect choice.

Tel: 01226 28 34 34 [www.abode.eu](http://www.abode.eu)

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modern kitchen. They eliminate the need for an unhygienic waste bin and at the same time save space in the kitchen.

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# The advantages of laminate in the kitchen

Rebecca Jones, marketing manager – UK, Ireland & Central Europe at Formica Group, explains the advantages of laminate in the kitchen environment

With our changing lifestyles, we have seen the kitchen area evolve. It is the heart of the home, a space where people socialise and entertain. The kitchen is merging with other rooms in the house, and what has previously been a single purpose room has become the main social hub, with things traditionally found in the living area, like TVs and bookshelves, finding their way into this space.

Kitchen worktops, which have traditionally played just a practical role, are now looked at not only from the functional point of view, but also for their aesthetics, adding interest and character to the kitchen environment.

Laminate worktops, splashbacks and upstands fit the bill on all accounts. They are not only easy to clean and maintain, they are also cost-effective and offer an incredible variety of decors, allowing homemakers to create the kitchen of their dreams.

When choosing your kitchen worktop or accessories, aim for the 'top end' of the material selection that fits your budget – it guarantees quality and longevity. It is also worth considering factors such as:



## Cost and durability

Laminate worktops offer a cost effective solution. They are hard-wearing, scratch resistant as well as heat and moisture resistant, providing you with a worktop that lasts.

## Installation

Laminate worktops and accessories provide many advantages against heavy wood and stone worktops in terms of lifting, cutting and on-site installation.



## Colour/texture/pattern

This is an obvious factor as the design needs to fit with the look and feel of the overall space. In an open living space, colours can visually unite the kitchen together with the dining and living area, or be used to create 'zones'. Texture can be used to add depth to enhance a simple, monochrome colour palette. Laminate worktops have come a long way in terms of design development. Using innovative print technologies, some laminates can now replicate natural materials such as stone or wood at a fraction of the price of such materials.



## Maintenance

Worktops generally come with care and maintenance information and should be followed carefully by the consumer. Wood for example is more high maintenance than laminate as it needs regular oil treatment. Laminate worktops and accessories are inherently hygienic and require minimal maintenance: they can simply be wiped clean with a damp cloth and a mild detergent. It's important to keep these qualities in mind as other materials such as wood or stone are porous and can require special attention to keep up their appearance and ensure a high standard of hygiene.

## Finishing touches

Upstands can be used to create clean, uncluttered lines between your wall and worktop for the perfect finish. Splashbacks are a stylish alternative to tiles in the kitchen and provide elegance and practicality for a coordinated look. Easy to install, laminate splashbacks can also be used in a creative way; while they are usually used above a worktop, they can be also used to clad the area underneath a breakfast bar, demonstrating the flexibility and versatility of laminate worktop's design and application potential.

Besides their practicality and durability, laminate worktops and splashbacks allow homeowners to create a bespoke look by using contrasting



and complementary designs on the breakfast bar to the worktop or by using feature splashbacks, and mixing and matching colours and textures. Surface textures are a stylish way to create depth and dimension when designing your dream kitchen. Current trends favour low-gloss textures for a subtle but dramatic statement. Distressed and rustic textures have also become more popular.

Eva Hoernisch, design manager – Europe, Formica Group, comments: "After many years of

all-white and neutral schemes, colour has returned to interior design. It is all about colour blocking. Today, in the kitchen sector, colour is more than just an accent; it is now mixed in with other materials like wood and metal for dramatic effect. Colour schemes combine warm neutrals with highlights in brighter tones. These are especially used for accessory products such as splashbacks. Minimal was yesterday – today everything is possible, it's a happy mix-and-match of patterns, colour, materials, styles, shapes and proportions."

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# rainwater showcase



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Freefoam Building Product's website is designed to answer homeowners' questions on all aspects of roofline, rainwater and guttering. To understand the terminology, highlight the different products, and give sound practical advice tackling everything consumers would need to know about getting roofline and rainwater system replaced. Armed with expert knowledge homeowners can then use the site to get a quote from a Freefoam Registered Installer – reliable tradesmen who are familiar with the Freefoam range and regularly fit roofline products.  
[www.myrooflinematters.co.uk](http://www.myrooflinematters.co.uk)

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**2** **RAINWATER HARVESTING LTD**  
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**3** **KINGSPAN WATER**  
Kingspan Water's portfolio of products and services offers self-builders a one-stop-shop for industry-leading rainwater harvesting systems, stormwater attenuation, and Klargestar sewage treatment solutions. In effect, Kingspan can provide self-builders and project leaders with complete oversight of the property's water management cycle. What's more, following a free site visit, its design and engineering team will build a bespoke water management system, tailored to meet each individual project requirements.  
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In this issue of Selfbuilder & Homemaker we look at the latest rainwater and greywater products.

#### 4 RAINCLEAR SYSTEMS

Rainclear System's favoured steel rainwater system made by Zambelli has to be seen and felt to really appreciate why it is one of the most popular choices for home owners, builders and specifiers working on quality new build, renovation and refurbishment projects. Rainclear Systems, one of the UK's largest stockists of metal guttering and downpipe systems, has been working in association with Zambelli to distribute this system and is offering to send a smart, free sample box to readers who might be interested in seeing it or showing it to clients.

[www.rainclear.co.uk](http://www.rainclear.co.uk)

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#### 5 ALUMINIUM ROOFLINE PRODUCTS

ARP's technical team work with specifiers, contractors and installers to ensure its bespoke 'Trueline' systems are fabricated to suit individual project requirements. The 'Trueline' pressed range covers an enormous selection of both standard and bespoke profiles of suit fascias, soffits, cill or wall copings produced within its excellent lead time. ARP can supply a full building envelope system via its on-site measuring, take off and Radan CAD service to suit any project – from small domestic extensions to large new build commercial projects.

[www.arp-ltd.com](http://www.arp-ltd.com)

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#### 6 TUSCAN FOUNDRY PRODUCTS

Tuscan Foundry Products is one of the UK's largest manufacturers and suppliers of traditional cast iron drainage, heating and glazing products. Products in the Tuscan Foundry Products range include cast iron guttering, cast iron radiators and the Lumen range of conservation and contemporary rooflights.

You can view all of the products available on the company's website and purchase them using its secure server.

[www.tuscanfoundry.co.uk](http://www.tuscanfoundry.co.uk)

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When it comes to choosing Aluminium Gutters & Pipes, it's as simple as 

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## Yeoman Rainguard



Quality, function and appearance were major factors when choosing rainwater goods to renovate Wayout Lodge, a listed property which has undergone a major transformation by owner and interior designer James Gostelow. Existing plastic drainpipes were replaced with Rainguard XL Aluminium pipes and gutters.

"In my eyes aluminium guttering was the most cost effective way of achieving a solid material and a great look,"

said James. "I wanted a design to fit in with the era of the lodge and give that dramatic effect. The Yeoman Rainguard Victoria GRP Hopper was able to fit the bill exactly."

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## Todd Doors



Many Todd Doors' fire doors now feature hidden intumescent seals which sit behind a slimmer timber lip on the door. The look of the door remains intact, with no need to retrofit any intumescent in either the door or the frame, which ensures an altogether more stylish finish. Currently, this feature is offered on the new Estates Range of classically styled doors, as well as the extensive range of bespoke contemporary doors, which are available in a multitude of finishes. Speak to one of its door experts for more details. Todd Doors is one of the UK's largest independent timber door and ironmongery retailer, with extensive showrooms in Northolt West London, St Albans and Bournemouth.

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## Metrotile



Choosing a new roof for your property, conservatory or extension can be a daunting experience, especially if you are new to the world of roofing. Fortunately, Metrotile provides excellent customer service backed by decades of technical experience. So whether you're taking on an installation yourself, or you require advice about using a contractor, Metrotile is here to help. Metrotile offers stone-coated roofing systems that offer far greater benefits than traditional roofing products.

Each Metrotile roof also comes with a 40 year guarantee. For further information about Metrotile, visit its brand new website.

Tel: 01249 658514 [www.metrotile.co.uk](http://www.metrotile.co.uk)

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## Ancon



Construction fixings specialist Ancon has extended its existing balcony connector range to include three new thermally insulated systems designed to minimise the effects of cold bridging at concrete to concrete, concrete to steel and steel to steel interfaces. The Ancon systems – Isotec, STC and STS – are designed to provide an effective thermal break while maintaining full structural integrity by transferring moment, shear, tension and compression forces at the joint. Details of the full Ancon

range of balcony connectors are included in the new 32-page technical brochure, available from the Ancon website.

Tel: 0114 2755224 [www.ancon.co.uk](http://www.ancon.co.uk)

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# Fire safety – getting it right

Association for Specialist Fire Protection CEO Wilf Butcher explains why passive fire protection within buildings is important and looks at common shortcuts that may impact the safety of your home

Passive fire protection makes buildings safe when fire occurs by ensuring the building does not collapse and by subdividing it to prevent the spread of smoke and fire. It comprises those elements such as fire doors, walls, protection to the structural frame and protection to services passing through walls/floors which are specifically engineered to fulfil this function.

Passive fire protection works by keeping fire and smoke in a single compartment, ensuring there are no gaps through which the flames and smoke can escape. Put simply, passive fire protection is all about keeping fire in a sealed box, giving people elsewhere within a building the opportunity to escape and preventing fire from spreading to neighbouring properties.

The Building Regulations set minimum standards for fire safety in the design and construction of domestic, commercial, residential and industrial buildings, with these provisions expanded in Statutory Guidance Documents (e.g. Approved Document B in England and Wales) which give detailed guidance on how to meet the Building Regulations. It is vital that all passive fire protection measures are correctly designed, specified and installed if the building is to behave as expected should a fire break out.

While it is not unreasonable to assume that installed fire protection will perform as expected in a fire, the reality is that often this is not the case. Unlike the installation of a boiler system or wiring of a building where proof of competence is a legal requirement, the installation of many types of fire protection can be undertaken by absolutely anyone. There is no requirement for any form of qualification or training, which often leads to inappropriately specified and incorrectly installed fire protection that offers little or no benefit to the fire performance of a building.

## Common mistakes

Fire stopping is one of the least understood but most commonly installed elements of all passive fire protection systems. It affects just about every aspect of any building from fire doors to the protection of penetrations passing through a fire wall.

In the case of a pipe collar, for instance, the documentation may state that it has been tested to achieve a fire rating of one hour. But, unless you are aware of the make-up of the pipe with



which it was fire tested and their combined performance during the test, how can you be sure that the collar you have installed is appropriate to the pipe you wish to protect?

The frequent misuse of 'fire rated' polyurethane (PU) foams is another typical example of inappropriately specified fire protection. PU foams are invariably used in linear gap or service penetration applications. Their fire performance is determined by testing to the appropriate national or European fire resistance test standards.

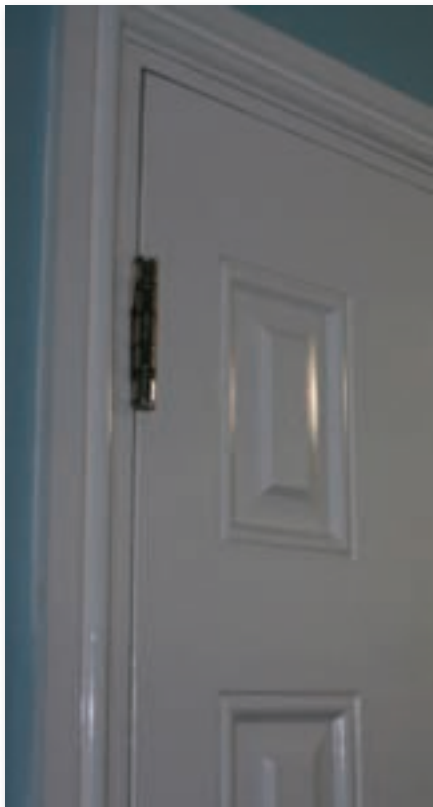
Once tested to the required standards, it is important that the scope of application of the test results is assessed by a competent person as such products must not be used outside of the scope of such guidance.

For example, PU foams tested as linear gap seals cannot be used to seal pipe or cable penetrations unless they have been tested in that end-use application; and since PU foams are combustible they should not be used in the presence of penetrating metallic pipes or cables, for fire-stopping openings for small plastic pipes, or to seal an opening around an intumescent wrap system. PU foam used to fill a

PU FOAMS TESTED AS LINEAR GAP SEALS CANNOT BE USED TO SEAL PIPE OR CABLE PENETRATIONS UNLESS THEY HAVE BEEN TESTED IN THAT END-USE APPLICATION.

Fire stopping is one of the least understood but most commonly installed elements of all passive fire protection systems

*Continued overleaf...*



THE MAJORITY OF ORDINARY TIMBER DOORS CAN'T BE CONVERTED INTO FIRE DOORS BY APPLYING AN INTUMESCENT COATING TO THE SURFACE

10mm x 10mm gap may offer the four hours of protection described on the tin, but use it in a 50mm x 50mm gap and the protection offered may fall to just 10 or 11 minutes.

## Fire doors

Another common misconception is that ordinary timber doors can be converted into fire doors by applying an intumescent coating to the surface. Unfortunately, without very clear and substantive test evidence, such an approach simply will not work for the vast majority of doors.

A specifically designed fire doorset is tested in a standardised manner by a recognised fire test laboratory. The fire test report will limit the result to the tested construction with only minor variations. It's critical to recognise that the test applies to the entire door system (referred to as a doorset), which includes the essential door ironmongery, the door frame, the abutments and that the result is limited to the physical dimensions of the doorset tested. Change any of these and the test evidence is no longer valid, as it is not applicable.

So, if you're considering 'upgrading' an existing ordinary door using a proprietary system, seek the essential supporting test data and check its limitations of use. Remember an ad-hoc test carried out for the manufacturer's own benefit is inadequate. Such test results should be subject to a full report in accordance with the required standard, undertaken by a UKAS-accredited test body.

## Look for the logo



By specifying third party certificated products and contractors you can be assured that works undertaken will use appropriate materials which will be installed correctly.

The Association for Specialist Fire

Protection (ASFP) comprises manufacturers and installers of passive fire protection products and systems. ASFP contractor members are required to hold third party certification for installation of products. So remember, always look for the logo.

Reading the installation instructions is only part of the story. Unless you understand why you are installing the system and what the implications might be should you do so incorrectly, there can be no certainty of the completed installation fulfilling its intended function.

For further information on passive fire protection and to access a wealth of advice, technical guidance, videos and publications; all free to download, visit [www.asfp.org.uk](http://www.asfp.org.uk)

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## John Brash



The external refurbishment of The Bothy at Gorthleck was required due to the failure of the existing heather roof. After the most recent roof refurbishment, six years ago, the roof was still leaking. Heather roofing requires a specialist skill set which is no longer easy to find. The roof was re-specified using Canadian Cedar Shingles to achieve a natural roofing finish for this woodland retreat, which was watertight and aesthetically pleasing. Ian Sharp of contractor Wyvis roofing commented:

"Every individual shingle was cut to fit the flow and shape of the roof giving an incredible overall effect. It was a fantastic project to work on."

Tel: 01427 613858. [www.johnbrash.co.uk](http://www.johnbrash.co.uk)

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## Elta Fans



Elta Fans has reported an excellent response to the launch of its new residential product range. Elta chose Ecobuild as the platform to launch the new range. The interest from visitors was exceptional, with many taking the opportunity to consider products for actual live projects, as well as sourcing information and discussing the range with a view to future projects.

Particularly popular was the industry leading MORI dMEV unit on show on the stand which has achieved exceptional performance results under independent, third party testing by the BRE.

Tel: 01384 275800 [www.eltafans.com](http://www.eltafans.com)

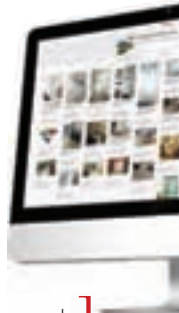
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## Connect with Selfbuilder & Homemaker online

Newly launched is the Selfbuilder & Homemaker Pinterest account; a one stop source of inspiration for adding all the elements to your build that make it your home, from essential fixtures to the final decorative touches.

One of the latest social media sensations, Pinterest allows you to browse pinboards, discover new things and get inspiration from people who share your interests, as well as create your own boards so you may organise and share all the beautiful things you find on the web.

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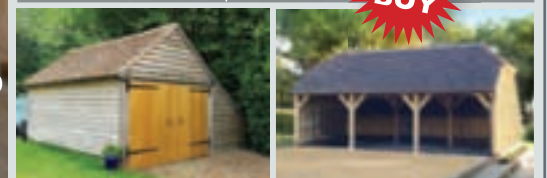
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# How to meet the demands of sustainable design with timber

Christian Jebesen, CEO of Kebony, explores how advances in technology have meant that sustainably-treated timber is an ideal choice for the shrewd self-builder due to its resilience, strength and aesthetic appeal

The task of building a home from scratch is a rewarding and fulfilling experience but it can also be a daunting one, even for those with experience in construction. The sheer quantity of factors to consider; decisions to be made and costs controlled, mean that sustainability – frequently an important motivator for the self-builder – can be side-lined. While environmental technology has advanced rapidly in recent years under increasing pressure from consumers and NGOs (non-governmental organisations), the cost of such technologies on the scale that is required for the construction of a home can sometimes mean that sustainability features lower down on the overall design agenda.

However, this need not be the case as deploying the right techniques and a know-how to material selection means it is possible to construct homes which are as environmentally sound as they are aesthetically pleasing, without being completely unaffordable.

Wood has historically been a popular choice as a construction material for its strength and its beauty, although the rise of environmental and regulatory pressure means it has been used less frequently of late. Indeed, the EU Timber Legislation came into effect in March 2013, which bans illegal wood from entering the EU Market in an effort to curb the alarming rate of deforestation. While tropical hardwood

possesses unique properties, which render it invaluable to building and construction, there are many innovations and technological developments that are allowing us to use sustainable wood in its place, thus protecting the valuable rainforests which are vital to preserving the earth's atmosphere.

In recent years particularly we have observed rapid advances in timber-treatment technologies that have given rise to new possibilities for the future of wood as a construction material, without incurring devastation to the environment. One of these processes involves the treatment of sustainably sourced softwoods with furfuryl alcohol, bio-waste produced from crop farming. The



wood is treated with the liquid alcohol under pressure so that the cell walls are permanently strengthened, making the wood more stable and resilient. This complex process gives the wood equal and often superior structural qualities to tropical hardwoods, making it the ideal material for robust construction.

The process increases the wood's durability and resistance to wear and weathering, thereby circumventing the need for expensive and environmentally-damaging chemical treatments and prolongs the wood's lifespan. With improved durability and dimensional stability, the wood maintains its strength and will not decay. Rather than deteriorating in extreme weather conditions or exposure to heat, light and wear, treated timbers will, over time, acquire an attractive silver-grey patina. Furthermore, treated timbers are protected against fungi, insects and other microorganisms, meaning that they are ideal for use in hot tropical climates as well as in wet, windswept locations.

The selection of sustainable materials is of paramount importance to the ensuing sustainability of the building

The organic aestheticism of woods should also not be understated – whether coupled with metal and glass for a modern, minimalist appearance or used for the decking or cladding of a warm, contemporary build, the aesthetic value of the material is indisputable. It is important to bear the appearance of different types of treated-timber in mind when buying for this very reason. Copper can sometimes be used to fortify wood, for example, but this frequently leaks out over time causing stains and a need to be replaced. One should select a timber that will perform without relinquishing the attractive, organic appearance that makes the selection of wood such a popular route for specifiers and architects.

The selection of sustainable materials is of paramount importance to the ensuing sustainability of the building. Treated timber has the ability to bypass the need for maintenance, painting or varnishing, meaning that it is as ergonomically sound as it is environmentally and it is therefore unsurprising that it is fast becoming the choice of people across the construction industry. What we can learn from the proliferation of these new technologies and methods is that the future of timber construction is filled with the potential to incorporate innovative and imaginative ways to meet demands for sustainability in building. Technologies like those outlined above champion new possibilities for wood as a construction material and a prudent selection for the well-informed self-builder.

Enq. 195



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