

# selfbuilder + homemaker

NOV/DEC 2017

## *Clearly an eco solution*

How the Goldmans built their transparent  
'green' dream home in rural north Devon

## 6 GREAT PRODUCTS FOR KITCHENS

Food for thought on furnishing options for  
the heart of your home, from complete  
kitchens to individual fittings

## Letting the 'pros' take the strain

A Kent self-builder on the  
joys of letting go of  
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# EDITOR'S LETTER



A recent report by a PVC windows manufacturer, the Epwin Group, asked architects what they thought will be the biggest factors affecting house design over the next decade. The second most significant factor cited by those surveyed (at 60 per cent) was the UK's ageing population.

While it might be a daunting prospect for our public services, it's actually a symptom of a healthier and better cared-for population that a fifth of the population are forecast to be 65 or over by 2025. The really startling stat is that this is likely to rise to represent a quarter of the population by 2045.

This means that the focus of many self- and custom-builds will increasingly be on the ongoing needs of older homeowners in future. This is especially true given that the generation currently nearing retirement are the ones most likely to have the resources to invest in such projects.

As the subjects of our case study in this issue demonstrate, creating a home with the flexibility to adapt as you get older, for example with a downstairs accessible bathroom, is going to be commonplace, if it isn't already.

In this context, The Self Build on a Shoestring competition being focused around innovative and supportive design for 'granny annexes' was timely. The winner, which you can read about on the facing page, was an interesting low-cost design for a communal custom-build. If you pardon the pun, such 'gran designs' – combining individual, characterful homes which are far from traditional retirement units – are where we need to be placing a lot of effort in coming decades. This sort of thinking is what's needed make good quality long-term homes for the UK a reality.

James Parker

# DIARY

## ASK AN ARCHITECT

2 DECEMBER, SWINDON

NSBRC's Ask an Architect offers self-builders the chance to attend a session with RIBA chartered architects to discuss matters such as the design of your project and adding value to your home. Speakers on 2 December are Mark Kingsley from Mark Kingsley Architects, Super Green Architecture's James Bretel and Rumbold-Ayres Landscaper Designers' Sven Rumbold.

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

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT COURSE

2 DECEMBER, SWINDON

The NSBRC's project management course covers everything first-time self-builders need to know about taking charge on their project – from budgeting and insurance to health and safety and snagging. The one day course costs £150 per person and can be booked via the NSBRC website.

[www.nsbrc.co.uk/project-management-course](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk/project-management-course)

## TOP DRAWER S/S

14 - 16 JANUARY, LONDON

Top Drawer is one of the UK's leading design-led events. The show features a Home section, divided into Interior Accessories, Kitchen & Dining, Furniture & Lighting and Outdoor Living, presenting products from internationally known brands to small start-up companies and "everything in between".

[www.topdrawer.co.uk](http://www.topdrawer.co.uk)
THE NATIONAL SELF BUILD &  
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26 - 28 JANUARY, SWINDON

The National Self Build & Renovation Show features over 67,000 ft² of exhibition space, over 200 exhibitors, live demonstrations, seminars and the chance to meet with self-build experts, architects, designers and other self-builders.

[www.nsbrc.co.uk/the-national-self-build-and-renovation-show](http://www.nsbrc.co.uk/the-national-self-build-and-renovation-show)

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# Great design for granny annexes wins Self Build on a Shoestring award

Architecture firm Inglis Badrashi Loddó has won the 2017 Self Build on a Shoestring competition, which this year focused on devising compact, low-cost homes for older people.

The firm was awarded the £5,000 prize by *Grand Designs* presenter Kevin McCloud at Grand Designs Live in October.

The competition challenged architects and designers to come up with innovative ways of building a simple, customisable 'granny annexe'. Entrants also had to show how 30 of the homes could be arranged to create a low-cost mutually-supportive retirement community. The maximum cost of constructing each annexe was £40,000, with the overall 30-home community built for no more than £1.5m.

Inglis Badrashi Loddó's winning entry The Apple Yard arranged the homes around the perimeter with communal facilities, allotments, greenhouses and an orchard in the centre. Each open-plan home has a pyramid shaped roof with one wall fully glazed and overlooking a small private garden.

The 42 m<sup>2</sup> annexe would cost £39,942 to build, with the entire community – including all shared communal facilities – costing £1,493,000.

The competition's judging panel was made up of a variety of self-build and architectural experts, including TV's George Clarke, Charlie Luxton and Piers Taylor, RIBA self-build champion Luke Tozer and architectural writer Hugh Pearman. Maria Brenton, the driving force behind Older Women's CoHousing (OWCH) – a community-led retirement scheme in Barnet and the inspiration for this year's competition – completed the panel.

Commenting on their chosen winner, the judges said: "The individual homes are logically planned as one-bedroom flats and the private gardens are a nice touch allowing the option of privacy or communality. The design proved an incredibly cost-effective structure and the open-plan layout makes excellent use of the space."

NaCSBA chair Michael Holmes said: "The ingenious construction system proposed by the winning submission offers incredible value for money and the range of layout and specification options means the residents can really have a big say in the finish of their homes."



## GRENCORE LIFTS LID ON "THE TRUE COST OF BUILDING A HOUSE"

A new guide on the cost of a self-build project has been published by housebuilder Grencore Construction.

Aimed at helping aspiring self-builders who have already secured a plot of land, the guide sets out the five most important aspects of costing a project, provides a detailed breakdown of costs for a range of house sizes, and gives advice on how to achieve the 'holy grail' of cost certainty through good design.

It also provides advice on procurement routes and project management, and on how to prioritise the most important elements of a building within the budgeting process.

A chart then provides typical build costs for a high performance, comfortable and sustainable home built to what Grencore says is 'premium quality' in the Oxfordshire area.

Ian Pritchett, managing director of Grencore Construction commented: "We often get asked about how much it really costs to build a house. Unfortunately, it's common practice for many builders to underbid to win a project, but then make their money on costly alterations to the design later in the process."

He continued: "That's why we are publishing the real costs for everyone to see. Once the design is done we can quote an accurate fixed price, and we strongly believe that having the right design from the beginning is the key to a successful self-build. Cost certainty is what all self-build customers want and deserve."

'The true cost of building a house' can be downloaded from [www.grencoreconstruction.co.uk](http://www.grencoreconstruction.co.uk)





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## AN ARBOREAL HOME IN THE COTSWOLDS

Cotswold architecture firm coombes:everitt has secured planning permission for a 4,500 ft<sup>2</sup> contemporary home in Cowley, Gloucestershire.

The new home will replace a 1960s bungalow and has been inspired by the weeping willow within its grounds. Aptly-named Willow House, it will have an 80 ft curved wall which wraps the house around the tree and its surroundings.

The house will blend contemporary design with traditional materials and will benefit from open-plan living spaces, large expanses of glass to take in the views and will be faced in locally-sourced Cotswold stone.

John Everitt, coombes:everitt director commented: "A lot of people often want to remove trees in order to improve the position of their new home or view, but this house takes its inspiration from the willow tree which will become a centrepiece for the five-bedroom dwelling."

The house has also been designed to have extremely good eco credentials. Everitt explained: "Not only is the house considerate of its environment but it is very energy efficient and it will be one of the most sustainable houses within the area. The house will have a green roof, solar heated hot water and mechanical heat recovery. It will also be super insulated and be constructed using insulated concrete."



## SELF- AND CUSTOM-BUILD CELEBRATED AT BUILD IT AWARDS

The 2017 Build It Awards were held in September, celebrating the best projects and products in the self- and custom-build and renovation market.

The annual awards ceremony brings together architects, manufacturers and key industry figures to recognise innovation and development within the sector. The 2017 edition was held at London Bankside on 22 September and was hosted by comedian Marcus Brigstocke.

A total of 26 prizes were awarded on the night to a variety of projects and products. Some of the biggest winners on the night included:

- Best Self Build or Renovation Project – Richard and Zoe Berry's Edinburgh church conversion
- Best Self Build Architect or Designer – Tomas Millar of Millar + Howard Workshop for Dursley Treehouse
- Best Renovation/Extension Architect or Designer – LA Hally Architect for House 288
- Best Self Build for under £250k – Potton for the Sawyers' bespoke build
- Best Collective or Group Self Build Project – Older Women's CoHousing (OWCH) for New Ground Cohousing
- Best Custom Build Project or Model – Graven Hill Village Development Company
- Outstanding Contribution to Self Build 2017 – The National Self Build & Renovation Centre (NSBRC)

A full list of winners can be found at [www.builditawards.co.uk/2017-winners](http://www.builditawards.co.uk/2017-winners)

## RURAL PROPERTY INDUSTRY BENEFITS FROM SELF-BUILDERS

A survey conducted by *Homebuilding & Renovating* has revealed that rural areas are home to over twice the proportion of self-build projects than more urban areas.

While rural housing accounts for only 21 per cent of the overall number of households in England, 43 per cent of self-build projects are built within rural local authorities.

Conversely, households within urban local authorities make up 39 per cent of the total number of households, while only 16 per cent of self-builders build in these same areas.

The results from the survey of 500 self-builders – which were compiled to form The Self & Custom Build Market Report – also revealed that the south west of England and Scotland are the two most likely places a self-builder will choose to start a project. London was revealed to be the least likely location.

Jason Orme, editorial director of Future Media's Homes Division and contributor to The Self & Custom Build Market Report, commented on the findings: "Rural locations are providing a natural, tranquil environment and more space than urban areas, which is what most young professional, growing families or retirees pursue. With the continuous development of commuting options, creating a dream home in the countryside is a more achievable goal, especially now with products, services and how-to guides readily available."



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# Investing in the right people

When City types Rachel and Lee Oliver decided to build their rural home, putting faith in their architect and builder to make the right decisions proved to be the making of their project.

Roseanne Field reports

Pulling into the driveway of Rachel and Lee Oliver's house on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells in Kent, you'd be forgiven for thinking there wasn't a house here at all. However nestling behind the substantial wall of a former estate kitchen garden, is an unusual green-roofed architectural gem. This is a project which shows the benefits of letting a meticulous design and build firm do what they're good at.

It's the outside of one of the old walls that greets you as you arrive, running the length of the left hand side of the driveway. The low-rise home in which Rachel and Lee live along with children Katie, 21 and Tom, 20, is hidden behind a huge square gate, made from a piece of corten steel. This electrically slides open to dramatic effect, revealing an attractive building which has been neatly integrated into the wall, making a virtue of it as a feature.

Rachel first started to get 'itchy feet' about 10 years ago. The couple were living in a Victorian house in Tunbridge Wells but she dreamed of moving to the country and building her own house. Lee, who writes for a financial news service, commuted to London every day, and was initially resistant to moving further away from the town.

However self-confessed "serial Right-mover" Rachel – who like Lee worked in the City but is now an office manager for an interior design firm – was quick off the mark when a plot containing a dilapidated bungalow came up. After running the idea past a friend who renovates properties, she then brought

Lee to see it. Realising it was the right location and wouldn't add to his commute, they put in their sealed bid, and after a nervous wait found that they had won.

## PLANNING

But it wasn't time to sit on their laurels yet. "We took the risk when we bought it that we knew it was on green belt land and within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)," explains Rachel, "so we couldn't guarantee we'd get planning permission."

They had originally planned to site the new home where the existing bungalow was, in the middle of the plot, but architect Nicole Lafone from CO3 advised building on the boundary instead. "Lee in particular wasn't sure it felt right," Rachel recalls. Nevertheless they trusted her, and as Rachel says: "It's unusual, but actually it's completely right."

The house was designed to incorporate the historic wall as well as to emulate the buildings that were once here. Within the boundary of the wall the steel and glass structure that forms the majority of the house stands where greenhouses once stood. The wall bisects the house, creating an architectural feature, and on the external side is a smaller pitched roof section, reminiscent of the outbuildings that were once there.

The design's historical context is in part why it succeeded in gaining planning permission first time, along with some insider knowledge and help. Planning consultant Simon McKay, who

used to work for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, advised Rachel and Lee on the steps to take to give them the best chance of achieving planning. Following several surveys, and much research by the couple, they identified how much more energy efficient a new home would be in comparison to the bungalow. McKay then compiled the results of their efforts into a report to give to the planning officers.

## DESIGN & BUILD

Once CO3's design had gained planning, Rachel and Lee commissioned architectural, construction and project management firm Architectural to take the scheme forward. They were renovating and extending a house near their plot that Rachel walked past every day, and she noticed how neat and tidy the site looked. The owners told her their experience of the firm had been good, so Rachel and Lee set up a meeting with the directors, architect Simon Skeffington and project manager Julian Cotet. "You've got to have trust, and as soon as we met Simon and Julian something just clicked," explains Rachel. "As soon as they left, I said to Lee, 'I want them to do our house.'"

***"They'd not done polished concrete before and ended up doing it three times to get it right. They wanted to do everything perfectly"***  
– Rachel Oliver

Confident that their chosen contractor's ideas aligned with theirs, Rachel and Lee more or less handed the entire project over. Many of the major decisions along the way were made by either Simon or Julian, which Rachel says helped create a stress-free build for this busy couple. With Lee being made redundant near the start of the project, they had other concerns: "The build was probably the least stressful thing going on for us at the time and in fact we used to find it quite refreshing coming here and seeing what was going on."

Rachel in fact says the only pressure was that which Architectural put on themselves trying to get things right. "If





they find something's not quite as they expected they don't bring that back to you or ask for more money."

The couple told the company at the start of the project roughly how much they wanted to spend, who from the plans then estimated a cost breakdown. The budget was fixed and stuck to, but Rachel believes that working within constraints has helped the designers to be creative. "We don't feel as if we've compromised," she says.

When it came to the house's design, Lee and Rachel only had a couple of key requirements – they knew they wanted an open-plan layout and Rachel was adamant that she didn't want big pillars interrupting the glazing. The construction was largely designed around that principle, with the majority of the glass being supported by the steel frame and internal concrete supporting walls. The longest glass wall has just two slim, solid pillars for added support. "Simon totally listened," Rachel says.

The house is larger than they had anticipated – they gained planning permission for a 4,000 ft<sup>2</sup> house but at the time didn't realise that any space below ground doesn't count towards the square footage, so long as there's

## RACHEL'S TOP TIPS

### \* Make sure you get on with your architect/builder

*"Go with your instincts to a certain extent, as to who you get on with, because getting on with that person is key, as is maintaining a good relationship."*

### \* Get your finances in check and ensure everyone's on the same page

*"I'm very financially focused and if we'd worked with somebody that we'd constantly been having to nail down on costs it would have put a lot of pressure on us and on our relationship with the builder."*

### \* Have faith in them

*"Trust their expertise!"*

no access. Taking into account the basement space, which includes storage rooms, a gym, and an office/music room for Lee, the house totals 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>.

The basement also houses the incredibly neat yet complex pipework for the underfloor heating. "A lot of people admire the pipework!" Rachel says. "It's a reflection of the quality and the way they wanted to the job. Everything had to be as immaculate as it could be."

One large central feature wall, running next to the stairs from the ground floor to the basement, has a polished concrete finish – an idea suggested by Architectural. "They'd not done polished concrete before and

actually ended up doing it three times to get it right," says Rachel. "They wanted to do everything perfectly."

The section of original wall that runs through the house was knocked down and rebuilt with reclaimed bricks which were also used to help build the pitched roof part of the house. This meant builders chipping the old mortar off brick by brick before rebuilding it with new mortar – which the contractors precisely matched to the original.

### FINISHING TOUCHES

Even when it came to the finishes and finer details, Rachel and Lee left much of the decision-making to Simon and



All images © Nick Isden Photography

Julian. She says they were “ideal customers,” being amenable to all of their design ideas.

This extended to specifying the bathrooms, partly because they had seen, and liked, previous examples of Architectural's work. “We’d seen a few of the houses they’d designed and finished,” Rachel says. “They’d done similar things before, and clearly knew how to do it.”

All cupboards throughout the house – including built-in wardrobes and bathroom cabinets – are in the same bookmatched oak, designed and finished by the contractors. “I didn’t want just white walls and shiny floors with nothing else, so I asked for textures and different materials. Bringing the wood in makes it more interesting.”

In another example of the contractor’s thoughtful approach, Simon asked Lee and Rachel where they planned to put

furniture before the electrical plan was done so that all power points would be in sensible places. “He had us thinking about things we would not have thought about,” she says.

With her knowledge of interior design, Rachel knew specifying lighting and fittings can be an overwhelming task, so she was grateful this task was taken off her hands. “They thought of neat little things like automatic lights in some rooms,” she explains. Architectural also built the kitchen from scratch.

The couple’s trust in the firm’s discerning taste went to perhaps unusual extremes – far from just choosing paint colours, they even let Simon choose the sofas. “We went to see one of his houses and he was a bit sniffy about the sofas they’d chosen not working with his design, so I said ‘you can choose my sofas if you want!’” Rachel explains.

Simon’s painstaking approach meant

he was anxious that they had picked the wrong window frame colour, says Rachel. “We decided it was fine. They had all the anxieties.”

In total the project took 11 months, from demolishing the bungalow to completion. Rachel credits much of the success to having a combined architect and project manager. “They weren’t going to make mistakes, but if they did, they just sucked it up – it was never anyone else’s fault,” she says. She also believes it helps keep the architect on track, commenting: “Architects can be idealistic, and having the partnership with the project manager helped on the practical side of things.”

Rachel and Lee couldn’t be more pleased with the end result. “We still say we can’t believe we live in a house like this!” Rachel says. “Because the process was so enjoyable and stress-free we wouldn’t think twice about doing it again.”



## BLANCO's new online dealer portal

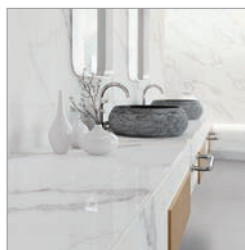


Allowing quick and easy access to pricing, a new dealer portal has been launched by **BLANCO** on its website. The portal also provides retailers with online product ordering, the latest details of product availability and order status, together with downloadable marketing materials on BLANCO's extensive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

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[www.compac.es](http://www.compac.es)

## Howarth at home puts kitchens on display

Howarth At Home, a specialist division of **Howarth Timber and Building Supplies**, has showcased its beautiful kitchen designs to homeowners at the Homebuilding and Renovating Show in Harrogate. At the Harrogate Convention Centre 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> November, the Homebuilding and Renovating Show brought together self-build specialists, renovation experts and leading brands under one roof, making it the ideal venue for Howarth At Home's beautiful kitchen collection. Visitors to the show saw an example of one of Howarth At Home's stunning kitchen designs on stand M128, giving them a first-hand view of the quality and choice on offer. What's more, Howarth At Home offered visitors to the stand a £1,000 voucher to put towards their new kitchen, a Caple 300mm wine cooler WI3121 and vouchers for cookery lessons at the Peter Sidwell Cookery School. The stand featured a fully-fitted kitchen, complete with floor and wall units, built-in appliances and a dining area, so visitors could get a tangible sense of how the kitchen would enhance their own home. What's more, a dedicated kitchen designer was available throughout the show to discuss specific projects and offer advice. As well as showcasing the Howarth At Home collection, visitors to Howarth Timber's stand could find inspiration for their home, inside and out.

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



## Ultra Matt Anthracite for cool kitchen space



Ready to embrace 2018's hot new trend for super matt surfaces? **Keller's** Ultra Matt finish is the ultimate incarnation that will ensure this subtly sophisticated look is no fleeting fad. Always ahead of the curve, Keller's Ultra Matt doors use the latest nanotechnology-based coatings to ensure they are as easy to clean as their glossy counterparts. Promising fingerprint resistance, alongside the flattest zero-sheen surface possible, Keller's Ultra Matt doors come

in six design-led colours. From purest Snow, to jet black Carbon, with two shades of grey between; there's an Ultra Matt shade for all. White and Loam have just been added to the collection for 2018.

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

## Build Aviator launched



**Build Aviator**, a new solutions provider to the building industry, has been launched to help simplify the build process for new build, extension, conversion and change of use projects. Build Aviator has developed unique tools that simplify each stage of construction and decrease desktop hours; so you can spend more time on-site and less time worrying about meeting building regulations. Build Aviator can assist at each stage of your project, from support

at design stage through to on-site testing. For example, Build Aviator can link SAP assessments with its estimating service and support with material procurement through its merchant partners.

[info@buildaviator.co.uk](mailto:info@buildaviator.co.uk)

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# INTERIOR INSPIRATION: KITCHENS & APPLIANCES

Seen increasingly as the 'heart of the home,' the kitchen is now the focus of many projects, with self-builders designing big, open spaces which are areas for living as well as cooking and eating in. Here *Selfbuilder & Homemaker* rounds up some of the latest on-trend offerings for kitchens



1



2



3



1. The **Moda bar stool** from **Cult Furniture** takes inspiration from Charles and Ray Eames and Scandinavian design. Available in a variety of colours and finishes, you can create your perfect chair by picking your favourite shape, colour and choice of legs. The Moda bar stool costs £109.

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

2. These porcelain **Quilt** tiles from **Stone & Ceramic Warehouse** consist of a unique collection of designs that can be combined in to create a statement surface. Available in both cool and warm grey, the tiles measure 12 cm x 12 cm and are priced at £96 per m<sup>2</sup>.

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

3. The **Cucina Colore** collection from **Mereway Kitchens** comprises a range of contemporary kitchen fixtures and fittings. The white gloss, handleless Lastra kitchen (pictured) features clean lines, colour accents and contrasting concrete worktops – a popular trend. Prices range from around £10,000 to £25,000 for a complete kitchen.

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

4. If you're looking for a real stand-out kitchen, **Multiform A/S' Form 2** kitchen in antique brass and grey Fenix NTM offers the perfect solution. The revolutionary surface uses nanotechnology, making it feel soft to the touch. The matte surface also repels greasy finger-prints, making it easy to keep clean.

[www.multi-form.co.uk](http://www.multi-form.co.uk)

5. Orchid is a recent colour addition to **Rational's** kitchen ranges, pictured here in the **Onda** range. The colour combined with the Fleetwood polar repro worktop creates a striking look and is available in both soft and high gloss lacquer. The Onda range's curved doors is also right on trend.

[www.rational.de/en](http://www.rational.de/en)

6. **Team 7's Filligno** kitchen, available to buy from, features refined wood and ceramic finishes. The differing heights are an interesting twist on classic kitchen design, with the raised surface offering a functional cooking area. A range of wood options are available, including oak, cherry, maple, walnut, alder and beech.

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



4



5



6

# Reducing risks

The Protek Group's Simon Middleton takes a look at some of the risks that can extend beyond people's contingency, explaining how you can identify and manage your exposure more-effectively and why site insurance is so important

A self-build project can be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences you undertake in life, not only in terms of the personal achievement but also in the value you realise through your own efforts. At the project outset, careful consideration has to be given to the project's feasibility. It is quite likely you have allowed an element of contingency in the budget for unexpected costs, but how do you protect yourself financially if those unexpected costs exceed the contingency?

Self-building involves more than just the project management aspect. You often have to take on the role of a risk manager as well. It's a role that can seem a little daunting at first, but it can make a massive difference to your self-build experience. What would happen if an accident occurred on your site that caused damage to the property, or even a serious injury to a worker on site – would it be your responsibility?

## THEFT & VANDALISM

A suggested starting point is to consider the impact that theft, vandalism or a fire could have on your project. Identifying your exposure starts with risk assessment, which helps you identify the issues and enables you to take steps to manage them.

Self-build insurance plays a big part in this process. However, you should ensure you talk to an experienced specialist provider who will be able to guide you, because the types of risk you face may not be apparent from the outset.

Take theft for example. Thieves can be incredibly innovative and very destructive, so as well as the inconvenience of replacing the stolen items, the cost of repairing the damage and destruction caused to the property that has been broken into needs to be



considered as well. Replacing items can make a big dent in budgets, too – for example, hired plant, tools and equipment will remain hired to you even if they have been stolen, so replacing them will be your responsibility. A telehandler, for example, could cost upwards of £18,000 – and you need to factor in that the continuing hire charges will be billed at around £125 per week until it's been replaced!

Identifying where you are most at risk of a break-in will help you identify how good your security measures are. Temporarily boarding up openings in the structure helps and can provide a good deterrent against an arson attack, but ultimately you need to stop unauthorised access to your site using security measures as appropriate.

## MOTHER NATURE

As well as the damage that could be caused intentionally by someone, weather can have disastrous affects on a site. For example, a gable end collapsing in a storm can bring tons of

*The types of risk you face may not be apparent from the outset*

masonry down on the floor structures below causing damage.

The damage often affects the supporting wall structure that is stressed as a result of the sudden impact, which will lead to extensive rebuilding works.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

If you are exercising control on site, you will invariably have some responsibility for health and safety. Many injuries occur due to a lack of forethought regarding who is at risk and when. Think about work areas, keep them



## Site insurance is designed to help protect you

free of hazards and consider what is going on above and below to ensure workers are not at risk from works going on elsewhere in the building. This is a common cause of serious accidents causing injury. Organising the works methodically and understanding who is at risk and when is crucial in managing your exposure to risk.

Accidental damage to a third party or their property can occur at any time and can range from a relatively minor incident to something far more serious. A single brick falling from a scaffold could easily cause several hundred pounds worth of damage to a car below – but imagine the consequences of a failed scaffold board and an entire stack of bricks falling on a worker below. In addition to a likely investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the prospect of a prosecution to defend,



the self-builder will invariably be responsible for damages. If the victim of the accident is seriously injured, those damages can run into millions as the self-builder will be expected to pay for the injured party's care costs for the rest of their lives.

It's unlikely that any individual will be able to put that level of contingency

aside, which is why using a good self-build site insurance policy is so important. Site insurance is designed to help protect you against the financial risk that a serious loss can bring and is a proven risk management tool.

*Simon Middleton is the founder of the Protek Group*

## STRUCTURAL WARRANTY SITE INSURANCE SITE SURVEYS

Self-Build Zone provides Site Insurance and liability cover for anyone starting new building works, as well as covering any existing structures on site.

Our Approved Inspectors can facilitate all survey services you may need during the build or for the warranty provision. On completion, Build-Zone can provide you with a 10 Year Structural Warranty.



For more information or to obtain a quotation go online at

**WWW.SELFBUILDZONE.COM**

or Call the Self-Build Zone Team on

**0345 230 9874**

## CASE STUDY

# CLEARLY SUSTAINABLE

After having their design for a dream home rejected on two sites, a retired couple succeeded in creating a modern, sustainable and visually 'transparent' self-build on a rural site in north Devon. James Parker reports

**M**ark and Melanie Goldman's self-build story is a real example of how persevering with a plan can reap rewards, and refine your design. Although they had previously extended a house in Surrey before moving to Devon and converting a stone barn into holiday cottages, this was their first experience of a total new build, and it wasn't exactly a small project.

Despite the substantial nature of the task, project managing their imposing, modern four-bedroom home near Torrington, north Devon, was a challenge that Mark and Melanie relished. They had refined their design through two failed attempts to get planning permission on other sites, and by the time they secured this plot in 2015, then occupied by an old bungalow, they knew exactly what they wanted to do.

As Mark explains, "Over time you actually evolve a much better design. I think the result wouldn't be so nice if we'd started on this with no experience of doing it before." He says that they "spent a lot of time designing and refining it, because we knew what it was like with builders – if you have to change things mid-flight it can be very time-consuming and very expensive."

They had decided to move after living in the area for 12 years and he says "had always wanted to build own our home". As well as creating a 'forever home' for themselves, Mark and Melanie's big ambition was to create a highly sustainable, as well as low-maintenance, building. So, in addition to a well-insulated fabric, they decided to invest in the very 'eco' solution of ground source heating. From an early stage they engaged renewables specialist RES (Devon) to advise them on the right products and installation to help them realise their green dream.

However this wasn't just an ethical way to save on bills, it also helped the scheme get through planning. Says Mark: "Ground source ticks all the boxes, and the planners were very



The house is completely see-through, thanks to an eaves-height, fully-glazed hallway

### OPPOSITE

The Goldmans' new home has a steel frame to front and back to support the glazing

### LOW POINT

The delay caused by the struggle to get the house's big glass 'walls' installed correctly

***"Ground source heating ticks all the boxes – and the planners were very good; they pretty much gave us a free hand to do what we wanted" – Mark Goldman***

good. They gave us pretty much a free hand to do what we wanted." This was also in part because the plot, surrounded by trees, is largely not visible to others.

Melanie says that their key design intention was to create "open-plan type living", but also "have the ability to cosy down if we wanted to." Now retired, this couple who met working in the IT industry therefore wanted a layout with a mix of spacious open plan areas and cosy spaces, to suit their lifestyle.

Melanie: "There's just the two of us, but we like entertaining, so we wanted a house that would open up and lend itself to that." So as









well as practical, accessible things for a 'forever home' like a ramp to the front door and downstairs bedroom with an en-suite, there is a kitchen/diner with parliament-hinged doors onto the living room that can open flat against the wall – and thereby open up the whole space. Also, if it's a summer occasion, the 3 metre bifold doors from the living and dining areas lead onto a full-length covered terrace along the back of the house.

### A SEE-THROUGH HOUSE

To take the open-plan theory one stage further, they decided to open up the middle of the house completely, and have two windows front and back, letting light flood in. Melanie comments: "As well as the back-to-front view and added light coming in it gave us the added wow factor to the overall feeling of the house." And in fact if the trees surrounding the plot were not there, the house would be a glowing beacon when lit up at night.

A 'floating mezzanine' floor is the only thing that breaks up the 9 metre double-height hallway that splits the house in half, providing a large landing which also serves as a study and sitting area.

The chalet-style house is built with a straightforward double skin of blocks plus render construction. Additional steel frames support the front and rear glazing as well as roof overhangs and the two balconies to bedrooms on the front of the house.

Mark notes that due to the open core, they had to design and install additional steel supports/frames to prevent lateral movement of the big windows to front and rear, the front

one being floor-to-apex. "Normally this would be incorporated into the first floor structure but because we have a mezzanine there was nowhere to anchor." He adds: "This caused a bit of a headache as the window installers did not advise this at the project start and despite being repeatedly asked, said the windows were self-supporting. When they came to do final measurements, they then asked 'What about the support frames?'"

As a result, Mark and Melanie had to get the frames designed, manufactured and installed in a hurry to avoid what he says would have been major delays. In the end, the design they came up with is almost invisible, fitting the modern, minimal look of the house, with no bolts or plates.

They engaged local architect Deborah Somerville, who took the scheme through planning, and also proposed the one major change to Mark and Melanie's scheme. That was to include a second void at the back of the property so that the mezzanine would fully 'float' across the hall space.

Because the bathroom that would have been included to first floor in this space was no longer there, it meant that valuable roof storage space above it was removed. Therefore they decided to extend the lounge by 50 per cent to an 8 metre length, with a pitched roof above it. This area provides convenient storage, accessed off the dressing room in the centre of the master suite.

### LAYOUT

The house consists of regularly-sized, spacious rooms, with a layout designed by the couple

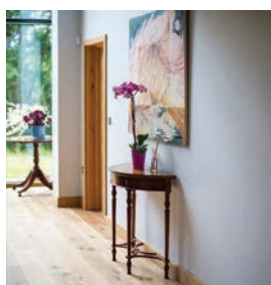
The 'mezzanine' bridging the hallway is a pleasant place to sit

## HIGH POINT

"Seeing the layout of the building as it came out of the ground to DPC level, it all became very real"

**Mark Goldman**





to provide a free flow from one space to the next. Says Melanie: "Everything has basically been designed around 4 metre blocks. It flows very well – you don't suddenly end up in a tiny room, and no-one is 'shoved in a box room'."

An oversized red-painted aluminium front door is located at a 45 degree angle to the front facade – Mark explains: "The majority of the facade is glass, and we originally had a door in the middle of the glass, but we decided that was a stupid thing to do."

This then lets onto a spacious main hall and oak and glass staircase, and off it a snug study, understairs bathroom and downstairs accessible bathroom. Under the mezzanine are double doors leading to the dining room, next to the large rear window to the apex, and bifolds onto the patio with its retaining wall at the back. This is separated from the large kitchen by a wide breakfast bar, whereas to the left is the double-sized sitting room area.

Upstairs, their master bedroom suite runs along the entirety of one side, with a balcony at the front, a dressing room in the middle and an en-suite at the rear. The main guest bedroom also has a balcony, en-suite, and walk-in wardrobe, and there is another bedroom with separate bathroom. This was part of the design's future flexibility – the mezzanine level study could be converted to a bedroom and its occupant could access a bathroom without going through another bedroom first!

The flooring is engineered oak throughout, with granite slabs outside. With low maintenance as well as sustainability being Mark and Melanie's watchwords, they opted

***"We like entertaining, so we wanted a house that would open up and lend itself to that" – Melanie Goldman***

for no gloss paint, and simply stained wooden frames and floors (they did all the hard work themselves here). The colour scheme is generally pale for walls, and accents of purple here and there, picked up in the stair carpet.

The Mackintosh kitchen is high-spec with modern glossy pale grey lacquered cupboard doors, two sinks, and granite worksurfaces. This leads onto the large utility room, which continues the finishes found in the kitchen, and contains the sustainable beating heart of the house, the ground-source heat pump.

#### **GROUND SOURCE**

Hidden discreetly in a cupboard in the utility room is a NIBE 12 kW heat pump, about the size of a normal fridge freezer. "You walk in and you'd never know anything was there," says Mark. He says the "thing that gives it away is the pipework, which is quite impressive. When you first put it in, you think blimey, that's a lot of pipes."

A total of 650 metres of pipe needed to be buried a metre underground across the site, collecting heat from the earth for the house.



The spacious living area features a woodburner

## CONTACTS/ SUPPLIERS

### HEATING & VENTILATION

**NIBE**  
www.nibe.co.uk  
**Zehnder**  
www.zehnder.co.uk

### SEWAGE TREATMENT

**Klargester**  
www.kingspanklargest.com

### KITCHEN SINKS/TAPS

**Franke**  
www.franke.com/gb/en

### OVENS/HOBS/FRIDGE

**Neff**  
www.neff-home.com/uk

### GRANITE WORKTOPS

**Winkleigh Timber**  
www.winkleightimber.co.uk

### STAIRS & BALUSTRADES

**WD Joinery**  
wdjoinery.co.uk

### BATHROOMS

**Prado (sourced through Tamar Trading)**  
www.tamartrading.com

### TILING (WALLS & FLOORS)

**Topps Tiles**  
www.toppstiles.co.uk

### WOOD FLOORING

**Wood and Beyond**  
www.woodandbeyond.com

### WINDOWS

**Woodstock Windows**  
woodstockwindows.co.uk

### INTERNAL DOORS

**Howdens Joinery**  
www.howdens.com

### WALL CONSTRUCTION

**H+H Celcon**  
www.hhcelcon.co.uk

### WALL & ROOF INSULATION

**Celotex**  
www.celotex.co.uk

Because the site is wet clay, the pipes maintain their heat much better than if it was a drier soil. The pipes provide heat at a consistent temperature of 55 degrees through the year and which isn't prone to weather changes. This temperature means keeping the system running is more efficient than switching it on from cold.

The house is heated using a wet underfloor heating system downstairs only, which is kept on continuously at around 22 degrees by nine thermostats, following what Mark says was "a lot of experimentation". The MVHR fresh air ventilation system is necessitated by the efficient air-tight construction, and this provides enough heating for the upstairs. The only service supplied to the house externally is electricity; they have a private water supply plus a Klargester packaged sewage treatment plant, and solar PVs on the roof topping up their electricity.

In addition to the ground source heating, a NIBE solar cylinder was installed, storing hot water heated by a combination of the ground source heat pump and a solar thermal array on the roof. Except in emergency breakdown situations, renewables will provide all of their heating, and the couple's income from feed-in-tariffs is greater than their energy bill. Although it's a healthy return on the ground source heating, the downside is the tariff only lasts seven years, theoretically enough to pay back the £14,000 cost of installation however.

### ENERGY-EFFICIENT DESIGN

The living room includes a woodburner, however Mark notes that thanks to the house's highly airtight construction, they haven't had to use it since they moved in October 2016.

In fact, the house performed well in terms of the air-tightness of its fabric during the post-completion air-test, despite the fact that "a couple of things were left open," says Mark. He says that they decided against triple-glazing despite the sustainability benefits, due to poorer sight lines, and they "wanted to have trickle vents, which you can't with triple glazing."

In addition, the weight of the glazing units that would have been required if triple-glazing had been used made it non-viable, says Mark: "It was tough enough getting those front glazed units in with double-glazing". Glazing alone, including standard aluminium window frames, came to around £45,000 for the project.

The only downside to the high levels of foil-backed board insulation included in the walls is that the couple's mobile phone reception is "zero" inside the house, but a booster has solved this problem.

### THE BUILD

When it came to ensuring that everyone was on the same page for the construction phase, it was a combination of a good architect, a coordinated approach from Mark as project manager, and an experienced and trustworthy builder. "The architect was very good," says





Both master bedroom suite and guest bedroom have balconies

## PROJECT STATS

- \* Current annual electricity spend £1,500 (expected to fall as house dries out)
- \* Feed in tariff income pa £4,000 (first seven years, dropping to about £600 for 25 years)
- \* Internal floor area: 332 m<sup>2</sup>
- \* Build cost: c. £450,000
- \* Total cost: c. £800,000

Mark. "She made sure the builders and everyone else were working in concert regarding the plans. It helped that I made sure we had a big site kick-off meeting here in the freezing cold in December 2015."

He says that as a result of this joined-up approach, "everyone knew all aspects of the plan, down to where power sockets were going. They all took them away, thought about their requirements, and made sure they were dovetailed together." He admits it helped that most of the sub-contractors knew each other – "they coped very well." The level of co-operation was essential to a smooth construction process. Once building started on the main house in December (after the three-car garage – used by the grateful builders as a site hut), Mark says: "It rained for three months!"

Mark and Melanie are full of praise for the standards of work and efficient organisation shown by builder Graham Brend, who was on his last major job before retiring. Melanie: "He's well known and respected in the area, that was key." Mark says: "If a supplier was a bit slow in getting something here, he'd be on the phone and they'd be here in a couple of hours."

Mark put his own organisational skills to good use in project managing the scheme. He jokingly says, "The contractors really loved my critical path document," explaining further: "Because we were project managing a number of disparate contractors and we were project

## *The level of co-operation was essential to a smooth construction process*

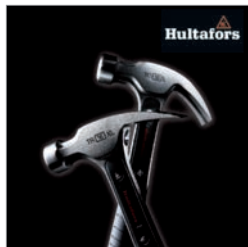
managing, I needed some sort of mechanism to keep them all in sync."

Because the builder didn't have plumbers or electricians, they decided to go with a single company to oversee the renewables installation. "There were a lot of pieces that needed integrating to a reasonably high degree," says Mark. "I had heard horror stories about company A blaming company B, so I wanted one person to point at."

This house's smooth passage to completion wasn't only because of the planning department taking a favourable view due to its eco-credentials. It was also because the builder commanded a lot of respect for his 50 years of work. Mark concludes: "The Building Regs guys took one look at the spec and said 'that's fine'."

Last but not least, they have one tip for anyone installing large sealed glass units for a project – to make sure you take all the labels off the glass first. As Mark says: "Trying to reach the labels on the inside on very high scaffold towers, once they were installed, took sheer guts and determination." ■

## Tap, Knock, Whack, Bang, Pound, Smash

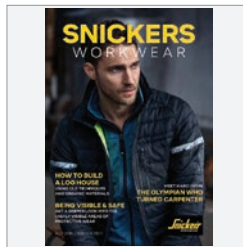


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## The right choice, the bright choice



Check out the newest and brightest working clothes from **Snickers** for the Autumn and Winter months in the new User Catalogue. There's superb new Snickers products coming your way to make working in the worst of weather so much easier and comfortable – all of them incorporating the very latest in market-leading designs and fabric technology. There's brand new 37.5 high-tech Undergarments, plus Jackets, Trousers and Accessories added to the

RUFFWork, FLEXIWork and ALLROUND clothing families. Plus a brand new range of Hi-Vis garment collection for maximum safety and wellbeing on site.

[info@snickersworkwear.co.uk](mailto:info@snickersworkwear.co.uk)

## Safety Shoes – Ideal For Winter



**Solid Gear** and Toe Guard safety shoes and boots are fast becoming among the most popular brands choice among discerning tradesmen and women. There's over 30 products to choose from that integrate modern designs and sporty looks with best in class materials for comfort, protection and durability. Light, safe fibre-glass toecaps won't conduct the cold while our new composite plates are made of technical fibres that are lighter and thinner but still

stronger than their predecessors. While Goretex forms part of the uppers to make them highly breathable, they're also water repellent and waterproof to keep your feet dry.

[info@hultaforsgroup.com](mailto:info@hultaforsgroup.com)

## Plastering simplified with Knauf ProRoll



With its brand new roller-applied range of finishing and surface-levelling ready-mixed plasters, **Knauf** has introduced ProRoll, a new quick, clean and efficient way of plastering residential homes and smaller projects. Suited to both smooth and textured backgrounds, Knauf ProRoll is applied to surfaces using a 9-inch medium pile roller and extension pole as required, ensuring a quick and easy installation while reducing the physical effort required of plastering. Pre-mixed,

Knauf ProRoll can be applied directly from the tub, producing only a fraction of the mess of a traditional plaster product. In addition, any excess material can simply be removed from a surface and recycled.

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## SAE joist hanger – four million and counting

This Autumn, construction connector manufacturer **Simpson Strong-Tie** is celebrating the pressing of its four millionth 'SAE' joist hanger.

The UK's most versatile, heavy duty timber connector is going from (load bearing) strength to strength, increasing in popularity as builders opt for a connector solution to suit a wider variety of applications, is easy to install and comfortably capable of supporting higher loads.

UK Marketing Manager, Chris Sanders explains: "The SAE is something of a fan favourite; it can either be nailed to solid and engineered joists, or bolted directly onto masonry, comes with an impressive load bearing capacity and can support joist widths from 38mm right up to 200mm while offering up to 20.9kN of safe working load – making the SAE an easy fit for most situations. The rate we're making them, we could be celebrating the five million mile stone before long".

**01827 255600 [www.strongtie.co.uk](http://www.strongtie.co.uk)**



Bathing is an integral part of life. Ensuring cleanliness and good health is fundamental to people's lifestyles. Sometimes however, especially for those in our families who are less able, bathing can become a barrier to independence. So how can the use of inclusive design help you create a bathroom environment in your self-build project which can be accessed and used by people, regardless of age, gender and ability, without compromising on style?

For those of you who haven't come across the term 'inclusive design', The British Standards Institute defines it as: "The design of mainstream products and/or services that are accessible to, and usable by, as many people as reasonably possible". Inclusive design ensures high quality products and fixtures maintain stunning design elements, providing you with a refreshing and relaxing bathing experience as well as ensuring products work for all ages and abilities.

Bathroom manufacturers have been considering inclusive design in the development of their products for some time. These days, bathroom products encompass every conceivable design element to meet the needs of all bathrooms – from the smallest to the most opulent. With one in 10 people in the UK registered as having a disability, though, bathroom manufacturers have been investing in the design of sanitary and bathing arrangements for ease of access and use for everyone.

At the planning and design stage of your project, remember to take into account the needs of other family members and visitors. Also be mindful of your bathroom's physical structure – elements such as doors, windows and radiators can be changed, but aligning your products with the soil pipe and drainage might be more problematic. Pay attention to the details, like not

*Bathroom manufacturers have been considering inclusive design for some time*

# A bathroom that works for everyone

Yvonne Orgill of the Bathroom Manufacturer's Association offers some advice on designing a bathroom to meet the needs of all ages and abilities, without compromising on style



placing WCs too close to a radiator. Factors such as accessibility, space and budget will have strong influences on the solution adopted for your particular installation.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

With careful planning and the right product there is no reason why your new bathroom design cannot meet your every aspiration as well as the needs of your family. Choosing the right products for your bathroom is not about sacrificing design style; it's about considering factors like ability and requirements of a range of users as well as where you locate the bathroom. Do you have small children – who may be at risk of scalding? Or are your needs

geared more towards the elderly or even a disabled member of your family?

If, for example, you have to consider the needs of wheelchair users, you may want to look at installing a wet room. Not only does a wet room create a luxurious bathing space, it has practical benefits too for the elderly or disabled. At design stage, ensure your wet room doors are wide enough to take a wheelchair and check the door motion will not impede the movement of a wheelchair. In extreme cases of disability, the installation of equipment like hoists will need to be carefully thought through.

Assistance with movement in your bathroom or wet room can be achieved using grab rails. For the visually impaired, rails can be installed with high

contrast colours to make them stand out from the surrounding wall finishes and furniture. Grab rails need to be firmly fixed and load bearing.

The breadth of style choice for baths to luxuriate in is endless. However, if access to a bath is a problem for anyone in your family, consider installing one with low sides. Walk-in baths, with doors, allow for much easier access for those less confident climbing over the bath rim. For flooring and shower tray surfaces, use slip-resistant surfaces to minimise the risk of slips and trips. When it comes to taps and shower controls, consider replacing conventional products with lever-operated controls for easy operation. Installing a thermostatic control decreases the risk of scalding and for the visually impaired, shower controls operated by touch buttons with tactile coding or illuminated controls can be fitted.

When it comes to sanitaryware, a wall-hung WC improves access and manoeuvrability and makes cleaning easier. Bear in mind some people with disabilities often use products in a bathroom to lean against or to hold themselves upright. These should therefore be very firmly fixed against load-bearing walls. Speak to your



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installer and product manufacturer for more advice. And ensure your design specifies products which carry the CE Mark to ensure they are fit for purpose.

As a self-builder, you need to be aware that Approved Document M Section 5 of the Building Regulations applies for inclusive design in your project, whether it's a one-off or a larger project. Make sure your architect is aware of the code of practice for inclusive design as part of 'BS 8300-2. Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. Part 2. Buildings'.

As part of the Royal Institute of British Architects' commitment to inclusive

design, Stephen Hodder, past president of the Institute said, "The RIBA is proud to be part of the Government and construction industries' drive to create inclusive and accessible environments for everyone. Architects, construction professionals and their clients need collectively to have the skills to deliver on this shared pledge. RIBA is committed to ensuring that inclusive design is part of an architect's education portfolio and professional development."

*Yvonne Orgill is CEO at the Bathroom Manufacturer's Association*

## Trueline Fascia and Soffit complements extension

The property based in Chelsfield, Orpington was having a kitchen-diner refurbishment and extension in a modern contemporary design. Dickens Developments – the contractor on site contacted ARP's Area Sales Manager – David Capel, as they had met at a previous site. David was invited to a site meeting, where the extension was surveyed and the various Trueline fascia and soffit options were discussed. Having completed the site survey, David provided a full quotation and Dickens Developments were then able to use their local Jewson's at Orpington to fulfil the order. The bespoke Trueline Fascias and Soffits were made to measure in our in-house production facility, with CAD/CAM drawings produced and signed off by the client prior to going into production. The fascia profiles were polyester powder coated in matt black RAL 9005 with an over trim covering the fixings on the fascia. The finish was completed with prefabricated corners. These products were chosen as they suited the modern contemporary style of the extension, but also ties in with the windows and complements the overall design. Aluminium was the perfect choice for the fascia and soffits on this property as it is strong, durable and non-corrosive. With the ability to match the coating to the other elements of the building, ensures that the system blends with the rest of the property.

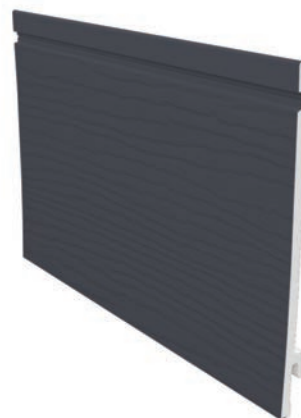
0116 289 4400 [www.arp-ltd.com](http://www.arp-ltd.com)



## Grey is here to stay

**Freefoam**, a leading manufacturer of a wide range of innovative products for the building industry is, following feedback from customers, delighted to announce an addition to its popular Weatherboard cladding range with the introduction of a new colour option Slate Grey. Slightly darker in tone when compared to the very popular Storm grey it will appeal to those looking for a more defined appearance to their project. The Weatherboard cladding is a 170mm wide board featuring a subtle embossed wood effect finish and an attractive overlapping appearance to create a 'New England' look. Already available in a range of traditional and contemporary shades, from subtle Pale Gold and Cappuccino through to more dramatic Argyl Brown and Colonial Blue the addition of Slate Grey will make a welcome addition to customers. Fortex® is an innovative cladding range that features an attractive subtle embossed 'wood effect' finish coupled with the benefits of low maintenance PVC. PVC-U cladding requires minimal maintenance once installed, a major benefit for property owners and a compelling feature for any property developer or housing provider. With significant environmental credentials, being awarded an A+ rating from the Building Research Establishment's (BRE) 'Green Guide To Specification' when installed with standard components, the range makes a real alternative to timber and fibre cement products.

01604 591110 [www.freefoam.com](http://www.freefoam.com)





# Don't slip up with cladding

The construction industry has long recognised the benefits of brick cladding systems – Eurobrick's Richard Haines outlines how they can benefit self-builds in particular

**B**rick slip cladding can be a cost effective, quick and versatile solution for many self-build or home renovation projects. Creating a 'real' brick finish may be easier than you think and can suit both contemporary or traditional style projects with the wide variety of brick finishes now available.

Whether it's a new build or renovation project, aside from the speed of installation compared to traditional build, there are a number of benefits with brick slip cladding. It's a versatile solution that can offer insulation benefits if required, while providing a genuine brick finish that looks like traditional masonry and is durable too.

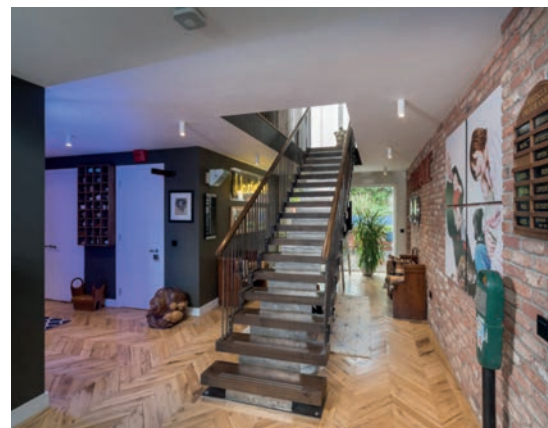
Brick slip cladding systems are generally lightweight and do not require the foundations associated with traditional masonry, which helps to simplify the design of foundations and reduce costs when compared to traditional brickwork. This can be of particular benefit if you're looking to extend a property upwards. Cladding can also be fitted to many different substrates, including timber, steel frame and SIPs.

Most brick cladding systems are easy enough to install with semi-skilled labour so it is possible for experienced DIY

people to handle installation themselves. Some manufacturers also provide a number of installation guides, training courses and support materials plus accessories to help with installation. If you feel you need the help of an experienced installer, you can ask your brick cladding supplier for details of approved installers in your area. For exterior works, installation can be carried out while you remain in your property too, meaning little disruption to daily life.

You can add layers of insulation to brick cladding systems for better thermal performance too. Pre-1930s brick built houses in the UK have only single skin walls so they don't allow for cavity wall insulation, but brick cladding offers a solution to this. The insulation benefits of some systems have been shown to reduce energy bills by up to 30 per cent and can help to improve interior living conditions of older houses. Regulations for new build properties now stipulate such low U-value requirements that it's difficult to achieve it with traditional building methods.

Aesthetics are a key consideration for many homeowners. A brick finish remains popular, particularly in British architecture and design, and in many areas it may be the vernacular building material. Brick cladding can help new buildings fit in with the surrounding area, and it may be part of planning requirements that the new housing development uses brick or a particular colour or type of brick or stone to fit in with the surrounding area. Brick or stone cladding can provide a seamless finish through overcladding or matching to existing brick or stone work. It can also simply be used to rejuvenate the exterior of dilapidated buildings, which

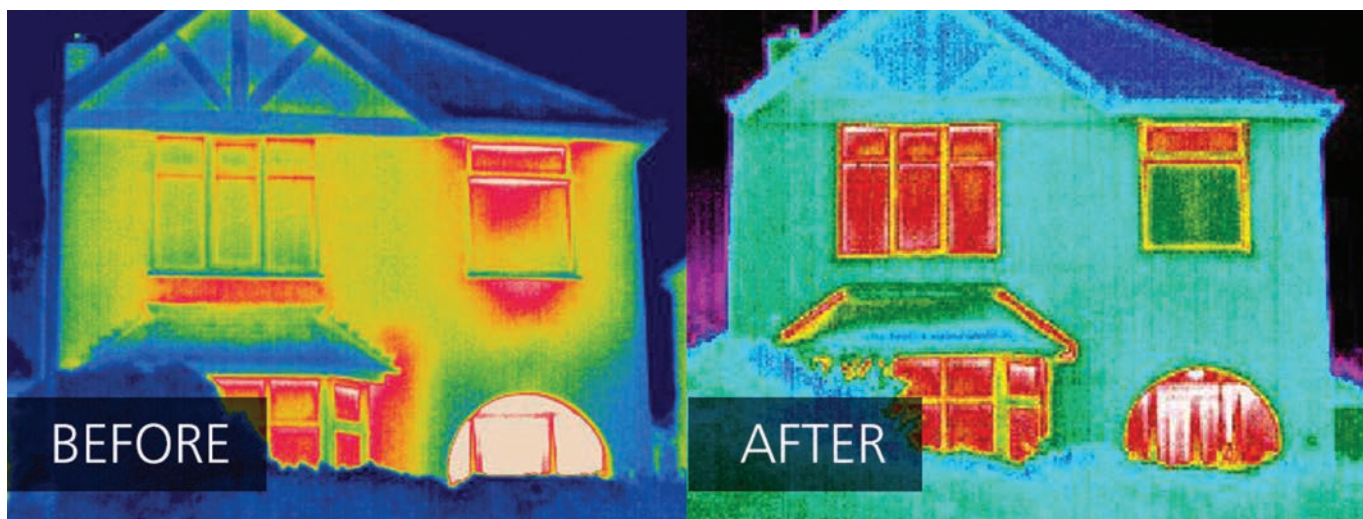


can be a big help for increasing kerb appeal on older properties.

Brick slip cladding can be used for interior projects too. Due to the slimmer profile of the systems it takes up less space, which can be a benefit to both interior and exterior projects. The overall thickness of the wall will be reduced compared to traditional building methods which is often of particular importance in conserving floor space for interior projects that require a brick finish.

The extent of brick colours and textures available means that most aesthetic designs are possible. Brick slip cladding systems are flexible and may be used in conjunction with other cladding systems such as timber, render

*A brick slip exterior will require little to no maintenance*



etc. This means that a mixed palette of finishes, popular for creating a contemporary look is achievable.

Brick slip cladding is durable too. Kiln fired clay brick slips weather and age in the same way as conventional brickwork and a brick slip exterior will require little to no maintenance. It is important to note that the life span and guarantees of different cladding systems may vary and should be checked with the supplier.

The brick slip market itself has grown significantly in recent years and there is

now a wide selection of manufactured brick slips and corners available. Manufactured (extruded) brick slips are competitively priced and generally enjoy a reliable supply chain. In addition to extruded slips, it is also possible to have brick slips cut from whole bricks if a specific brick has to be sourced, although this is a more costly option.

Brick slip cladding can also be assembled on or off site and, largely due to the speed of delivery benefits, is popular within the modular building

sector. A brick finish is still very desirable and brick cladding allows you to achieve this within an energy efficient modular design. The modular approach to building takes advantage of many of the benefits of brick slip cladding, so it's not surprising that these modern methods of construction and offsite assembly are becoming more popular on smaller scale self-build projects too.

*Richard Haines is director at Eurobrick*

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# Four reasons to install a ventilated facade

When thinking about efficiency, the first strategy to apply should be saving energy. It's important to understand that improving thermal insulation is a great way to reduce energy waste by preventing heat gain or loss through the building envelope.

Rainscreen cladding systems are considered to be the most effective solution for thermal insulation. So, if trying to improve your home efficiency, there is no better option than CUPACLAD®, a full series of natural slate ventilated facades allowing you to save energy and money while boosting a contemporary style for your home.

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CUPACLAD® is the perfect solution for external wall insulation both for renovation and for new projects. The outer layer of CUPA PIZARRAS slate

acts as a natural barrier, ensuring total protection against weather and moisture. In addition, the combination of external wall insulation and a ventilated cavity generates significant energy savings while increasing thermal comfort.

## 2. HIGH DURABILITY WITH NO MAINTENANCE

Slate is naturally resistant and long-lasting, involving practically no maintenance costs at all.

Besides this high durability of natural slate, CUPA PIZARRAS products exceed all international quality standards.

## 3. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

CUPACLAD® rainscreen cladding systems are composed of 100 per cent natural slate and enable the construction of efficient and sustainable facades. Unlike prefabricated materials,



slate doesn't require any additional treatments during manufacture, installation or upon project completion, substantially reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere. CUPACLAD® is a truly ecological building solution.

## 4. NATURAL BEAUTY

Slate is a completely natural and beautiful material that gives any building a stylish and contemporary design. In order to get that exclusive and quality look, all CUPACLAD® slates are selected one by one for their remarkable texture and handcrafted to be used for cladding.

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## Free design service from National Ventilation



Visitors to the Homebuilding & Renovating Shows this autumn were able to seek advice on their selfbuild and refurbishment projects from **National Ventilation**, a leading UK-based ventilation manufacturer. With one of the largest ranges of ventilation products in the UK, the company specialises in innovative, energy saving solutions and provides a free ventilation design service, as well as engineer site visits. National Ventilation exhibited at the Edinburgh,

Northern Harrogate and Somerset shows. For further information on all products and services offered by National Ventilation, please call or visit the company's website.

01823 690 290 [www.nationalventilation.co.uk/page](http://www.nationalventilation.co.uk/page)

## Warm up this winter with underfloor heating



**Amber Underfloor Heating** is the new name in underfloor heating; offering excellent, high quality solutions with exceptional customer service. Distributed exclusively through wholesalers, retailers and retail showrooms, Amber offers the full electric underfloor heating solution. The easy-to-use products include 100W/m<sup>2</sup> and 150W/m<sup>2</sup> AmberMat heating mats, 140W/m<sup>2</sup> AmberDry thin heating foils for installation directly below timber-based flooring, removing

the requirement for latex, and two ranges of electronic, stylish thermostats. With the running costs priced typically at 0.5-0.75p per sqm per hour, every homeowner will be completely satisfied.

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# Heating & Renewable Energy Showcase



## Schiedel Chimney Systems

When the ease of construction and maximum insulation matter then the Schiedel Isokern Double Module System comes into its own. The lightweight blocks are easy to handle. The outer and inner blocks are laid at the same time but with staggered joints for safety and stability. The double layer of pumice separated by an air gap maximises the chimney insulation. The Pumice chimney systems are suitable for wood logs, solid fuel, oil and gas. There are three systems covering a range of different internal diameters to meet the requirements of different appliances and uses and a number of features. Visit the website to see a brief video.

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

## Capital Fireplaces

Nothing says 'traditional home' quite like a fireplace. From cottage bedrooms to elegant drawing rooms, farmhouses to flats, Capital Fireplaces has a fireplace and stove to complement every home. Capital Fireplaces was established more than 25 years ago, since then has expanded and developed to become one of the leading UK suppliers of high quality fireplaces, fires and stoves. All of its products are available to purchase from your local Capital Dealer, they are able to give you advice on all aspects of your fireplace requirements from pricing to surveys and fittings. To locate your nearest Capital Dealer, simply visit the website.

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



## Stovax

The Stovax Vision Midi T offers portrait aesthetics and an expansive picture of high-reaching flames. Ecodesign Ready, this is an eco-friendly solid fuel stove that complies with future Ecodesign limits ahead of schedule. With high efficiency, this stove is an attractive heating solution for those that are looking for 5kW of heat to suit most standard room sizes, but with additional visual presence. Complemented by a stunning black glass finish, the Midi T makes a statement in any contemporary interior. Available with an optional Glass Top and Glass Plinth for added vertical style, this is an ideal choice for the eco-conscious.

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## New full eight year guarantee



Johnson & Starley's established range of QuanTec condensing boilers has now been given a free eight year guarantee. This covers all parts and labour for every QuanTec model, adding a further three years of peace of mind for installers and users of this proven domestic boiler range. QuanTec condensing boilers were recognised in 2016 by a leading consumer magazine as the most reliable boilers on the UK market. Their build quality and energy efficiency applies to a

wide choice of combi, system and regular models including the top of the range QuanTec HR 28C (PFGHR). QuanTec models also benefit from stainless steel heat exchangers with Cool-Door technology.

01604 762881 [www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk](http://www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk)

## Viessmann – "Best Buy" boiler brand



Viessmann has today been named as a Best Buy gas boiler brand by Which? As one of only two gas boiler manufacturers to be recommended in this way, Viessmann is praised as "the most reliable". This glowing assessment is the result of a survey conducted earlier this year which questioned 9,610 boiler owners and 219 Which? Trusted Traders heating engineers throughout the UK. The survey sought the views and experiences of consumers who actually

own the boilers and obtained from engineers an in-depth picture of build-quality, availability of parts and spares, ease of repairing and servicing.

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# Heating & Renewable Energy Showcase



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

## ESSE Stoves

ESSE stoves have been at the warm heart of the home for more than 160 years. The technology may have changed since the company produced the first ESSE stove, but as the cold winter nights draw in, ESSE believes the comforting warmth of natural flame is still the cosiest kind of heating. Hand-made in Britain since 1854, ESSE stoves are available in a wide range of sizes and outputs, providing a clean, natural and wonderfully dependable source of heat.

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



## Dunsley Heat

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

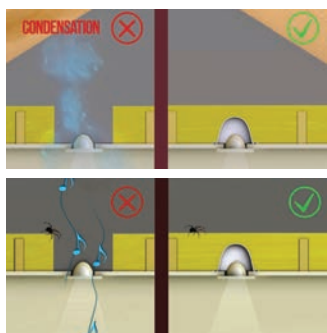


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# Wise up to personalised room temperature control

Leading British controls manufacturer Drayton, part of Schneider Electric, has launched its revolutionary new smart radiator thermostats, which allow self-builders to create heating zones with minimal fuss.

The devices form part of Drayton's new WISER smart heating system. The buildable system centres around the Heat Hub, with three pre-bundled thermostat kits as well as two multi-zone kits available.

The radiator thermostats can also be purchased individually giving homeowners the option to expand their system over time as well as being portable allowing them to be installed in a new property should the user move. The radiator thermostats build on the iconic

design of Drayton's popular TRV4, but with a raft of additional state-of-the-art features.

With a direct connection to both the boiler and the intuitive WISER app, the radiator thermostats make it easy to create up to 16 specific heating zones within the home. This allows homeowners to control their heating on an individual room-by-room basis using their smartphone.

The thermostats are also compatible with the Amazon Alexa voice control system, letting customers adjust the temperature without having to access the app. Alternatively, the radiator thermostat features a twist top design allowing users to manually increase or decrease the temperature by simply twisting the device.



The radiator thermostats also feature multiple sensors to allow for enhanced temperature accuracy, while open window detection automatically adjusts the temperature when a window is opened to maximise on energy savings.

0333 6000 622

[www.wiser.draytoncontrols.co.uk](http://www.wiser.draytoncontrols.co.uk)

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# Timber windows – see the light

Jonathan Hey of Westbury Windows and Joinery offers some tips on getting your windows right and explains the benefits of choosing timber

**W**hen building your own home, even with a big budget, every pound counts. Deciding where to spend your money can be a headache. Paying for premium quality windows and doors may not be something you had planned to do. However, it is important to remember that they are one of the most important features of any building – not just in terms of aesthetics but also considering the long-term performance of your new home. Getting them wrong can be an expensive mistake.

## CLEAR VISION

It's important to have a clear vision of how you want your house to look when it's finished and don't rush to specify your windows without consideration. Contrary to popular belief, a window is never just a window – it has the power to make or break the architectural integrity of your new home.

Well-designed windows will suit the building's style and proportions. If your aim is to create clean lines within contemporary architecture, sliding sash windows or leaded lights probably aren't right for you. However, if you're trying to achieve Georgian grandeur, heritage design should be top of your list.

Timber window manufacturers offer flexibility in the detail that cannot always be achieved using other materials. Products can be created with sharp edges and detailed mouldings that can be difficult (and expensive) to replicate with plastic or aluminium.

In all cases, you should consider the sightlines of your windows and doors, co-ordinating window sill, glazing bar and door panel levels to create cohesion and maximise kerb appeal.

## LUXURY OF LIGHT

Window fenestration is not only about

how your property looks from the outside. It also has a direct impact on the lifestyle you will lead within those walls.

Most people naturally gravitate toward lighter, brighter spaces within a home, so areas that haven't been fully considered, and are dark as a result, may become redundant in time.

Consider how you wish to use each space and how much light will be required for you to enjoy that space to the full. Investing in getting this right to begin with will mean you won't want to make expensive alterations further down the line.

## MINIMAL MAINTENANCE

Your main concern is probably maintenance and, with that in mind, you should look for a material that requires minimum effort yet continues to look good and perform well for decades to come.

The timber window industry still suffers the repercussions of a poor reputation acquired in the 1970s. At that time everyone wanted white PVCu, regardless of their property's architectural style, because post-war wooden windows had been poorly manufactured with cheap softwoods and had fallen victim to rot over the decades.

Nowadays, however, a better understanding of timber and timber technologies means long-lasting, low-maintenance, wooden windows are accessible to all. In particular, modified high-performance timbers have proved revolutionary.

Accoya is a modified wood that is water resistant thus giving it extreme dimensional stability, and Class 1 durability that exceeds traditional hardwoods. It doesn't warp, twist or swell so your windows and doors will continue to open and close smoothly for years to come. It also means that



*Windows have the power to make or break the architectural integrity of your home*

the paint coating lasts for approximately 10 years before it is likely to require a new coat.

#### SEEKING SUSTAINABILITY

Accoya is also environmentally friendly. More and more self-builders are taking sustainability into consideration when building their homes so specifying the project ensures you are being eco-friendly without compromising on quality and longevity. It has achieved gold standard 'Cradle to Cradle' accreditation meaning it has no impact on the environment throughout its lifecycle.

#### HIGH PERFORMANCE

Energy efficiency is also an important factor for the more environmentally conscious self-builder, with whole product U-values as low as 1.0 W/m<sup>2</sup>K achievable using timber.

You should also ensure that your products are weather tested, provide good sound insulation and are secure. Any good timber window manufacturer will share with you their certification as proof of independent product performance testing. For example all Westbury products are tested by a third party UKAS-

accredited laboratory, PAS24 security tested and Part Q compliant (a necessity in any new build home), ensuring peace of mind for customers.

#### BRITISH-MADE

Using a reputable company based in the UK means you are paying for the product and its craftsmanship rather than import charges. It's also more likely that they will offer an installation service. Should there be any issues with your order, they can be resolved quickly and effectively, with replacement items delivered to site far sooner than they would be if sourced from abroad. It's always a good idea to visit the manufacturer showroom (and workshop facility if possible) to see where you're investing your money.

#### A SOUND INVESTMENT

While this is not an exhaustive list of considerations, it is a good starting point to ensure that you are choosing the right product for your home, and to make sure you're well informed when dealing with potential suppliers.

While ticking all of these boxes may cost you a little more money upfront it will certainly save money and time in



the future as using a high-quality, low-maintenance guaranteed product will continue to add value to your property and convenience to your lifestyle.

*Jonathan Hey is founder and chairman of Westbury Windows and Joinery*

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as 2°. Nine standard sizes are available to facilitate replacement of existing skylight profiles with non-standard sizes available to special order.

01283 554755 [www.fakro.com](http://www.fakro.com)

## Steel windows create connected space



Two large sets of steel windows and doors have created a feeling of space in a kitchen extension to a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Victorian terrace house in a Conservation Area close to Tufnell Park in North London. The screens, from **Steel Window Association** member, Steel Window Service and Supplies, also allowed the new work to blend with the existing interior design and the many original features of the house while ensuring a high level of security.

Steel Window Services and Supplies created full working drawings before being commissioned to manufacture the near identical screens, each measuring over 4m wide by some 2.4m high.

[www.steel-window-association.co.uk](http://www.steel-window-association.co.uk)

## Xtralite throws light on home refurbishment



A detached dwelling located on a Finchley Road within an exclusive area of the city of London had been recently acquired by new owners and a full modernisation and refurbishment project was designed. One such feature was the use of rooflights to allow more natural light to penetrate a ground floor bedroom whilst also being sturdy enough to walk on from the balcony area above. **Xtralite** was chosen for its ability to provide high quality rooflights and

robust solutions to rooflight issues. Xtralite was able to provide the perfect solution to this with its X Glaze traversable rooflight, which also delivered thermal qualities and strength.

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

## Cor-Vision Plus takes centre stage



**Alumen's** recently launched sliding aluminium door set, Cor-Vision Plus, has taken centre stage in their brand-new showroom, following their recent expansion to a new 15,000 ft<sup>2</sup> facility in Kettering. "The Cor-Vision Plus offers 94 per cent glass area with only 25 mm sightlines. It is a real game changer and why we have chosen it to be centrepiece of our new showroom," comments Alan Robinson, Alumen's MD. "The Cor-Vision Plus is the first system we are fabricating

from the Spanish aluminium giants Cortizo, and we're one of the first fabricators to launch to the UK market. It has been designed to offer uninterrupted, expansive glass areas thanks to its slim sightlines."

[info@alumen.co.uk](mailto:info@alumen.co.uk)

## Hands-free operation



**Schueco** BlueCon is an access control module that uses Bluetooth wireless technology to enable a Smartphone to communicate directly with the door, causing the latter to open at the approach of an authorised user. The Smartphone app will activate the door lock as soon as the user comes within four metres of the door. The convenience of this in everyday life – for example when a person is laden down with shopping – means

Schueco UK expects BlueCon to prove very popular with end-users. If the Smartphone is lost, unauthorised access can be prevented. For more information please contact Schueco.

[mkinfobox@schueco.com](mailto:mkinfobox@schueco.com)

## Clever living from the screen experts



**Phantom Screens** are gaining in popularity due to the trend for larger openings and bi-fold doors. Its retractable power screens cover openings up to seven metres wide, the perfect solution for new build projects and contemporary extensions. Get more from the evenings with Phantom Screens; enjoy thermal comfort gains made by retaining heat in the evenings and deflecting energy during the day. Make savings on HVAC costs, and benefit from insect free ventilation. A range of technical fabrics is available including insect meshes, solar shading, blackout, and privacy screens. To find out more, please contact Phantom Screens.

[info@phantom-screens.co.uk](mailto:info@phantom-screens.co.uk)

## Let the daylight flood in...

Don't you feel just so good when it's a sunny day outside. The days are longer, brighter... you feel full of life – those darker, winter days long forgotten. Evidence suggests it's important you get that feel good factor inside your home too. "Let the sun's rays stream in to your home – they're good for you," says Stuart Judge, managing director of **Crittall Windows**, makers of steel window frames and doors for almost 170 years. "Our homes play a big part in our sense of well-being from the healthy pattern of light, dark and shade. Their design, how they are lit internally, and openings to natural outside light through windows and doors really do impact; to positively balance inside too little, or too much, light, shade, glare and privacy." Crittall brings a further dimension to interiors through its minimalist style windows and its InnerVision glazed steel partitioning screens. Designed with modern living in mind, they provide a sense of space, light, understated beauty, with clean lines, subtle detailing, excellent technical properties. Elegantly slender, the slim steel framing, with single or double opening doors, is unobtrusive. Combining style with functionality, a distinguished-looking installation makes a wonderful talking point. For the kitchen, en-suite or home office they visually enhance living space and functionality. Chilly draughts are prevented, warmth kept-in for year-round comfort.

01376 530800 [www.crittall-windows.co.uk](http://www.crittall-windows.co.uk)





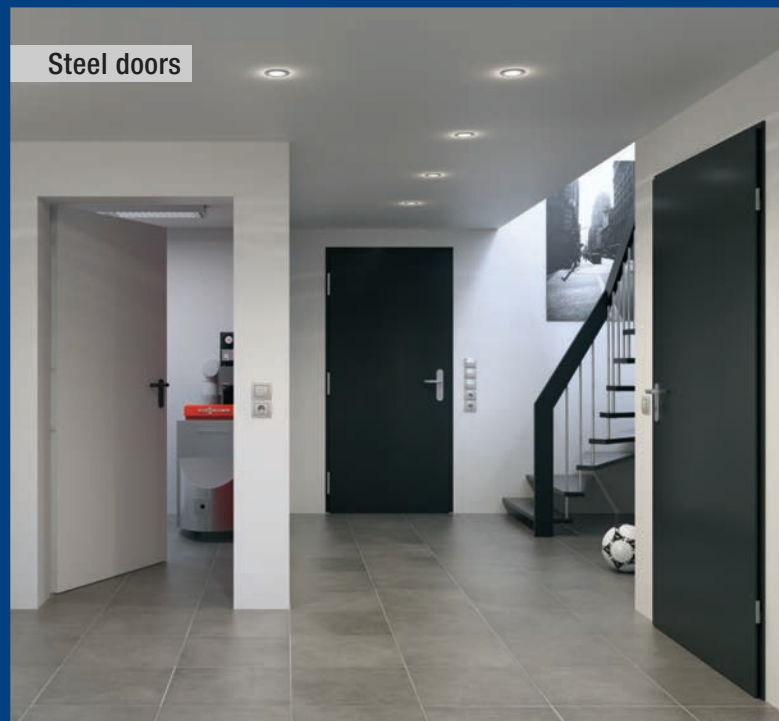
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# Composite contenders

Charles Taylor of wood plastic specialists Composite Prime discusses the rise of the composite decking trend and how it is helping to drive the timber industry forward

Timber has long been considered one of the most environmentally friendly building materials on the market, due to its naturally renewable properties. With its lightweight, high load-bearing properties and excellent thermal qualities, hardwood is a staple component in architecture that can withstand the test of time. Today, we are seeing composites enter the market, which enhance timber's natural characteristics to create a new product in its own right.

Without a doubt, quality composite materials start with a high grade of timber. Everything that composite has become over the past 10 years is down to the benefits that hardwoods bring to the table. Their versatility when mixed with other durable and strengthening materials create something entirely unique.

The composite arena is a massively growing market that has taken off across the world, and most recently in the UK, we've seen a significant amount of interest in composite decking products due to its ability to copy with mixed weather types. This is down to a series of benefits the product brings to the end user and the architect or specifier when recommending materials. Most importantly, wood plastic composites are low maintenance. Although like any materials they require cleaning to maintain a pristine look, they do not need specific treatments to ensure they weather well.

The ability to wear well over time is a key consideration, particularly in the UK where we tend to experience rainfall throughout the year. When bad weather hits, most well-engineered composites are anti-fungal. This makes it difficult for moss to grow into the boards, again helping to ensure the deck looks good all year round. If we're lucky enough to experience a few weeks of sunshine, quality composite products are also UV fade resistant, helping the material to cope in direct sunlight. The protective



properties found on the surface of composite boards is largely down to the plastic used within these materials, rendering them perfect for outdoor spaces, as most boarded areas are home to numerous amounts of furniture and serve as a space for entertaining.

It is a huge benefit for customers to know that the decking boards they purchase on day one will maintain their appearance, even after months of living outside. Although composite materials will weather naturally, they have the ability to retain their colour for the product's life span. This is a relatively unique attribute to composites, as weathering usually has a big effect on materials that are kept outside in the natural environment if they are not preserved or treated.

Composite decking also works well for families with young children or pet owners. Boards produced by reputable manufacturers should be slip-resistant and 'barefoot safe', which is a necessity when children are playing outdoors. Due to the material's composition, it is unlikely that the deck will become overly

*Choosing FSC wood guarantees that the trees harvested are replaced*

slippery when wet. The fact that the boards can maintain a grip under foot is very comforting for parents when letting their children play outdoors on dewy mornings or showery days. In addition to this, the boards will not splinter, another huge plus point that helps to avoid accidents for little ones, whether they're on two or four legs.

## FSC TIMBER

When it comes to sustainability, reputable manufacturers should ensure



## Composite materials have the ability to retain their colour for the lifespan of the product

that their composite materials use FSC 100 per cent certified timber from well managed sources. This is an incredibly important element to our products' make up, and my 20 years' experience as a timber merchant has helped to enforce the importance of that across our ranges.

Most end users – including businesses, governments and local authorities – are committed to using responsibly sourced timber, creating a resultant demand for manufacturers to provide it. That said, the primary reason for using FSC 100 per cent certified



timber comes down to environmental and social responsibility, which anyone operating in the timber trade should see as an obligation to uphold.

Choosing FSC wood guarantees that the trees harvested are replaced and allowed to regenerate naturally. FSC also upholds rigorous ethical standards such as making sacred areas of forests exempt from felling, as well as creating protected areas to ensure rare animals and plants are not disturbed. Similarly, it also supports local communities by encouraging forest owners to use local

workers for tree felling. We agree that these standards should be encouraged across the board at manufacturer and consumer level.

In keeping with our personal commitment to sustainability, some of our products use the equivalent of more than 280 two-pint recycled plastic milk bottles per square metre of decking, making the product an eco-friendly and sustainable decking solution.

The birth of composite materials is an exciting development for the industry, opening a lot of possibilities for outdoor applications. In years gone by, plastic was seen as the enemy of the timber trade, but I welcome the changes that the introduction of plastic can bring to enhance the abundant natural properties of hardwoods.

The amount of opportunities composite materials can bring to the building sector is extraordinary and we're looking forward to seeing how the market grows in the future, along with how the timber trade continues to diversify to make room for innovation and product development.

*Charles Taylor is the sales director of Composite Prime*

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## Sleek and chic, perfect fit for modern homes



As winter fast approaches, now is the time to consider all your home's heating needs. To help you create a warm, welcoming home this winter, the contemporary-style Christon multi-fuel stove from **Mendip** is available as a freestanding design, inset fire or logstore stove to suit every setting. The freestanding model looks especially striking set atop a chunky plinth platform while the logstore version is a great little space-saver with plenty of open-fronted

storage beneath for seasoned logs. For a flush finish to create a seamless look, the inset design offers the beauty of built-in. What's more, the UK designed Christon is also Ecodesign Ready.

01934 750500 [www.mendipstoves.co.uk](http://www.mendipstoves.co.uk)

## Osmo transforms a garden shed

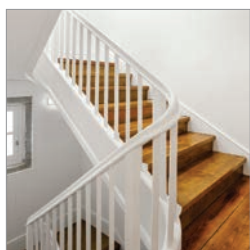


As many are aware, new build properties often come equipped with a garden that is purely a blank canvas, perfectly suited for the new homeowner to make their own. One such homeowner wanted to do just that. Edward Cole commented, "After doing some research, the **Osmo** range seemed to be the perfect fit for our revamp project, as this product boast a chemical free content. Not only this, but we spotted the Country Colour range, which excited us, as it meant that

we could add a splash of colour to our garden shed." Country Colour offers an opaque, satin wood finish for exterior wood. The range promises premium durability and a rich colour.

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

## Choose a paint that lasts with TeknosPro



The answer for maintaining windows, doors, conservatories and other joinery, **Teknos Futura Aqua 40** is a waterborne urethane alkyd based paint with a highly durable semi-gloss finish. Suitable for interior and exterior use, the product is designed for professionals and joinery manufacturers requiring a spray, brush or roller applied finish that flows easily on wood, metal and building board surfaces. Teknos Futura Aqua 40 does not drip, is easily tinted to all Teknos

colour shades, can be thinned with water and used in conjunction with the versatile Futura Aqua 3 primer. Quick drying times mean the surface is dry after one hour and through-dry after two to three days.

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

## Purevision slimline models



**Charlton & Jenrick** is pleased to announce the launch of the slimline versions of its popular Purevision stoves. New models are available in the new slimline format are the PV5W, BPV5W (Black – pictured) and the Classic CPV5W. The new versions keep the same look, design and feel but benefit from being shallower and in the case of the Classic stove also shorter. This was after feedback from their customers who love the look

and performance of the Purevision stoves but were looking for a more universal fitting stove that would fit into more situations. Charlton & Jenrick have recently announced a significant price decrease across the Purevision range.

[sales@charltonandjenrick.co.uk](mailto:sales@charltonandjenrick.co.uk)

## Select the best with Sika PRO select

The sealants and adhesive range from **Everbuild** – A Sika Company is growing with the launch of Sika PRO Select, a fantastic new range bringing the renowned Sika technical expertise to the trade user.

This extensive new range consists of ten products including Sika MaxTack Super Charged, an extremely fast setting adhesive with a fixing time of just 20 minutes and the ability to bond to a variety of surfaces, both indoors and outdoors and even underwater. The PRO Select range also includes Sika MaxTack Ultra Clear, a 100 per cent transparent, high strength sealant and adhesive, Sika MaxTack Ultimate, an extra strong hybrid sealant and adhesive for use on almost every application imaginable, SikaSeal Multi Purpose Silicone and Sika MaxTack Instant Grab SF. So whatever the application, there is sure to be a suitable product in the Sika PRO Select range.

For more information on the PRO Select range or any other product within the Everbuild and Sika ranges, contact your local sales representative, call the sales office or visit the website.

0113 240 3456 [www.everbuild.co.uk](http://www.everbuild.co.uk)

## Red Grandis™ lands at Latham's

One of the UK's biggest independent timber and panel products distributors, **James Latham**, is now offering Red Grandis™ directly from stock through all eight of its nationwide timber depots. Ethically sourced and plantation grown in Uruguay by forestry and logging giant Urufor, Red Grandis is one hundred percent FSC® certified and fully compliant with EUTR legislation. Offering exceptional durability and stability, this high-performing, versatile hardwood timber – which comes from the Eucalyptus family – is also easy to machine and stain, plus, because it is plantation grown, it offers continuity of supply. James Latham's Technical Timber Sales Development Manager, Justin Hayward explained, "We are really excited to be able to offer this product and I am confident that it will quickly become a popular choice with our customers". Typical uses for Red Grandis include all types of joinery such as windows, doors, conservatories, mouldings and cladding. It is particularly well suited to large projects such as door frames as it is supplied in long engineered lengths so it is less likely to bow and warp, this in turn reduces the need to overlap and finger joint frames. Red Grandis is available in the following thicknesses as sawn timber; 25mm, 32mm, 38mm and 50mm and in widths of 150mm and wider as well as long lengths (mainly 3.7m to 4.9m).

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







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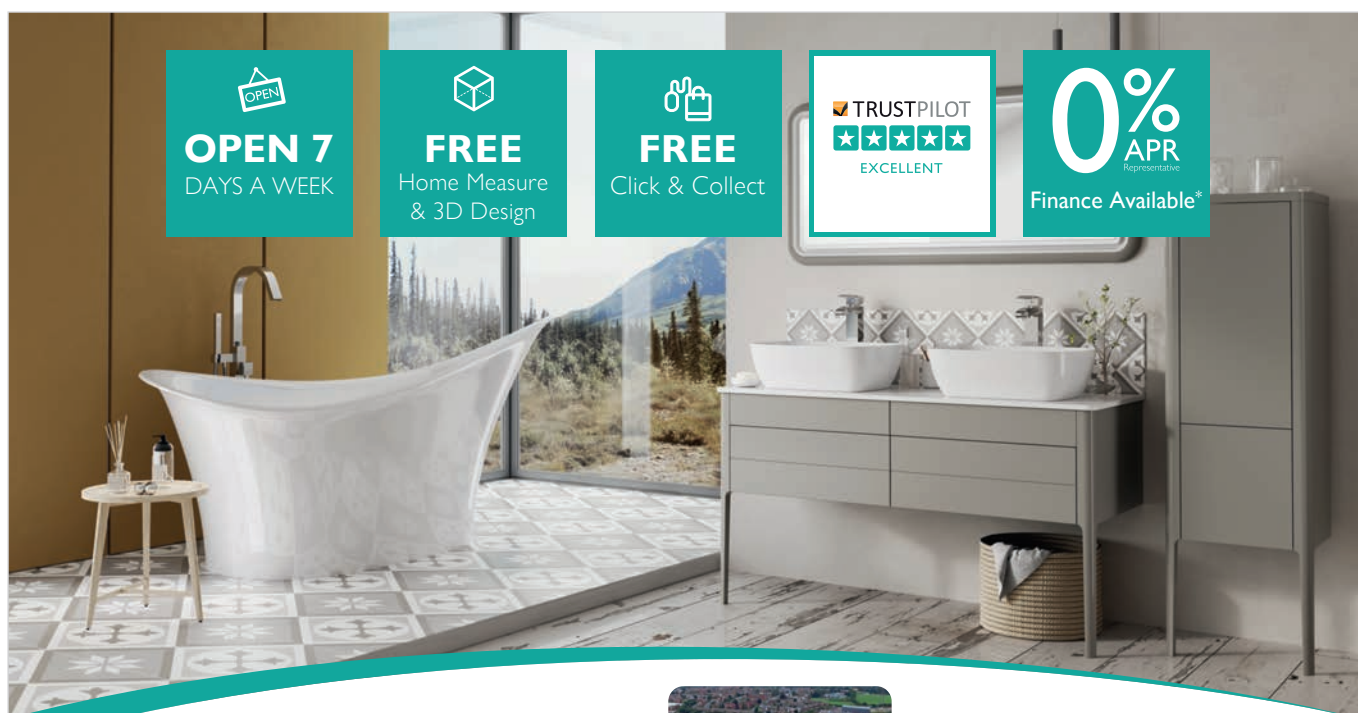


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# A TIMELESS STATEMENT

Tile and bathroom retailer Easy Bathrooms teams up with interior designer Gina Everett of Create Perfect to explain how to achieve a timelessly retro finish in the bathroom

**W**hile the bathroom is often a place for speedily getting ready for the day ahead, it's also a space that most people consider a 'haven', away from the stresses of the outside world.

So with everyday life becoming increasingly demanding, it perhaps comes as no surprise that we are spending more time in our bathrooms than we ever have before. According to a study by Houzz, the average person now enjoys up to an hour a day in this one room.

It's therefore one of the most crucial areas to consider when building or renovating a property.

## A MODERN TAKE ON RETRO

When creating a stand-out master bathroom, we love to look beyond the typical white suite and inject some personality into the space.

Recent projects have been inspired by the 'retro' trend, which takes products and tiles from a bygone era and reinvents them for the 21st century.

But before anyone starts installing Artex ceilings or avocado bathroom suites, we stress that this is a style that must be well executed.

In order to create an eclectic feel for example, we like to mix patterned tiles with elegant, simplistic fittings. A retro handleless vanity unit with a matching cabinet can form the basis for creating this look, allowing the floor and walls to take centre stage. The tiles — which are a must for this trend — should be bold in colour or pattern, with two styles often being paired together.

For a fresh, modern take, we would paint the top half of walls either pale pink

or mint green, and install white metro tiles on the lower part. The slight 'pop' of colour can then be used in other fittings and accessories such as the mirror and sink to tie the scheme together.

This allows you to go bold with the flooring, with intricately-patterned tiles often working well. A hexagonal shape — which is bang on-trend for 2018 —



would give another dimension to the room and add interest to the space.

## MONOCHROME STYLING

Alternatively, for a look that packs a punch, we would go for a 1930s monochrome design scheme. Although very current, it's a timeless combination — perfect for a bathroom, which is only updated every 10-15 years.

Black and white floor tiles create clean lines and strong angles, which work well in a functional space. Use white grout to give it a consistent finish.

The walls could then extend this monochrome feel — again, tiling the



bottom half in white and painting the top part in a soft colour. We would also add a trim of black tiles to act as a skirting board.

In one scheme, for example, we opted to reverse the white suite and coloured walls — placing the french-grey units against warm, neutral walls, which creates a light and bright space whilst helping the room to feel larger.

This would work well with chrome fittings and plants to soften the stark contrast between white and black. Choose greenery that doesn't require much light and can withstand high levels of moisture — Aloe Vera and bamboo are both good options.





*Hexagonal  
shapes are  
bang on-trend*

#### CREATING A LUXURIOUS FINISH

For a 'wow' factor, we have helped clients to create the 'Great Gatsby' look, with touches of gold across lighting, taps and accessories. This offers a luxurious style, and looks great paired with a dark grey or navy wall, which makes a real statement.

Sconces placed on opposite walls to the suite would also fit in well with this somewhat 'palatial' take on the retro trend. And if we were trying to achieve a truly opulent bathroom, we would fit a glass chandelier in the centre of the space and add a mirror with integrated lighting — creating a layered yet balanced scheme.

Wiring these lights on different switches — or even being set on a dimmer — will also help to set a soft, 'moody' atmosphere for when relaxing in the bath. If the space allows, a freestanding unit will add to the luxurious environment, and you could even complete the look with ornate, gold feet.

Retro styling provides a timeless statement, that if well executed, will still be beautiful in years to come. It oozes a quality feel that we love in a bathroom, which creates more than just a place you bath or wash, but a space that you can also relax in and enjoy.

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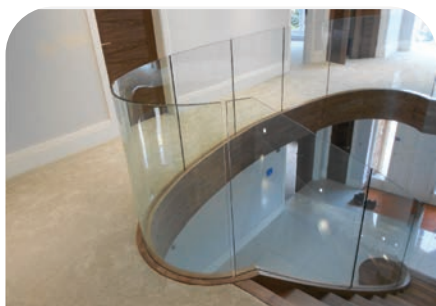
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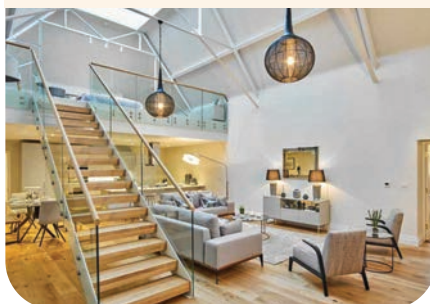
## Complete Stair Systems

This modern staircase was one of several stairs supplied to a large nationwide developer engaged in refurbishing and transforming a historic building in Midhurst.

The straight flight staircase here is the Model 500 system which fitted perfectly with Complete Stair Systems' client requirements of a light and open stair. Made with solid oak treads and powder-coated white, it was accessing a bed deck in a two-bedroom apartment.

The glass landing balustrade was supplied all along the mezzanine level at first floor for protection.

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



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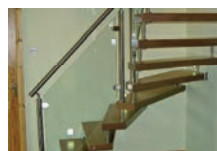
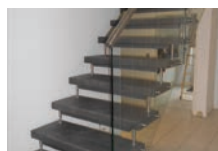
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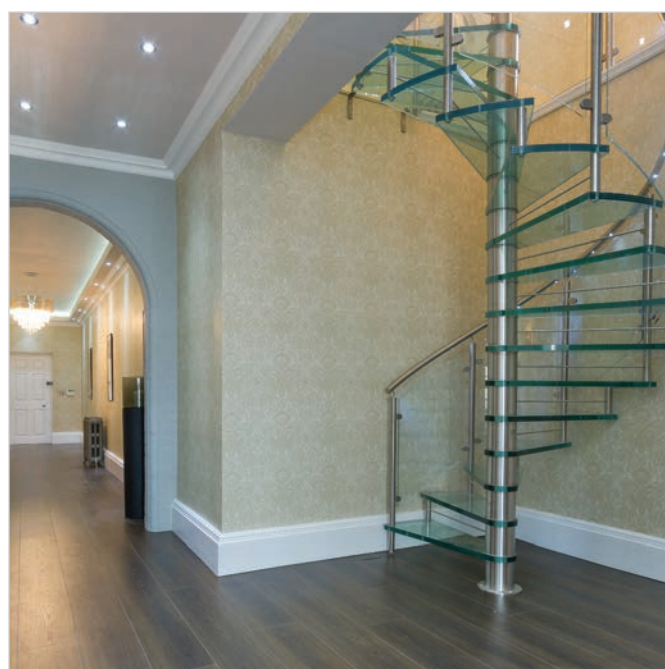


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CaberFix Joint&Joist (a PU adhesive and sealant) and CaberFix tape (a polyethylene-coated cloth tape for sealing CaberDek perimeters to walls).

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**Polyflor's** Secura PUR collection of luxury vinyl sheet flooring is designed to create inspiring home interiors for modern living. Made in the UK, the Secura PUR range features 22 designs which authentically replicate the natural character of wood, stone and abstract materials in a practical and durable sheet format. With 12 wood effects, nine stone effects and one abstract design in the collection, on-trend new additions include white and grey oaks alongside

contemporary concrete and slate effects. Polyflor is a UK residential and commercial vinyl flooring specialist. For more information please contact Polyflor.

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# Finding the fibre for you

Carpet manufacturer Lano's Gary Alp talks through the different carpet fibres available today, from old favourites to the latest innovations, to help you make the perfect selection for your build

There's more to think about when choosing a carpet than colour or texture: today's carpets come in a bewildering wide range of fibres that offer myriad benefits, from stain-resistant man-made yarns that can be bleach cleaned, to plant-based choices with great 'green' or even antibacterial credentials. Is bamboo right for you? Would traditional wool be best? Or are you better off with SmartStrand?

The choice can seem overwhelming, but the carpet that's ultimately right for your build will depend on your priorities, and whether you consider colour fastness, comfort or durability – or another factor altogether – to be key.

Here we take a closer look at five of the most popular carpet fibres and their main advantages.

## SMARTSTRAND

An established favourite in the US, SmartStrand is now making its mark in the UK, bringing a unique blend of resilience, eco credentials (it's partly made from corn!) and lifetime stain protection that no other fibre can match. Its top performance in stain tests is down to the fact that, unlike other materials, SmartStrand yarns present a closed cellular structure, making it impossible for any kind of fluid or liquid to get absorbed by the fibres.

Unsurprisingly it's increasingly being seen as a rival to nylon and is becoming a more popular choice for households with small children and pets, and for those looking for a 'greener' flooring choice. However its advantages don't stop there; SmartStrand fibres are soft to the touch and feel silky underfoot, and offer a high level of UV resistance. So even if you choose a bold colour, it shouldn't become washed-out over time.



## WOOL

Few fibres can compete with the unique look and feel of wool, and there's good reason why this material has been championed in the craft of carpet making for centuries on end. Wool carpets are 100 per cent natural, dependable and excellent for thermal and acoustic insulation. They are also mothproof, fire-retardant and biodegradable, achieving all of this without sacrificing on style.

A major advantage of wool is its natural 'springiness', which makes it incredibly resilient, while the fact that it takes dye well means wool carpets are

available in an incredible array of colours.

On the flipside, pure wool carpets tend to be more expensive than their man-made counterparts, and can need regular maintenance to look their best – hence they're probably not the first choice for households with small children or pets prone to accidents. However, properly looked after, a wool carpet should look fabulous for years to come.

## NYLON

Nylon has a reputation as the most durable and resilient of all carpet fibres



## *The general rule of thumb when it comes to carpets is that you get what you pay for*

and offers the luxurious feel and subtle sheen of a silk carpet without the exorbitant price tag.

### **POLYPROPYLENE**

Polypropylene carpets are affordable, practical and soft to the touch, which makes them great all-rounders for any home. Easy to clean and maintain, polypropylene carpets resist staining effectively, are durable and offer excellent value for money. As they can be cleaned with diluted bleach they're often the preferred choice for families or anyone looking for a low-maintenance carpet, and are a sensible choice for those on a budget or those that may be considering renting out their self-build. Polypropylene is less easy to dye than wool, which means it tends to come in earthy or subtle tones rather than vibrant shades. However, be aware that poor-quality options are prone to crushing, so pay close attention to manufacturers' wear-performance ratings.

It's important to remember that there is no such thing – yet – as the "perfect" carpet fibre, and manufacturers will often blend different fibres together to enhance carpet performance or to meet a certain price point. As with all purchases, the general rule of thumb when it comes to carpets is that you get what you pay for, and your budget may well be influenced by whether you're developing your property for immediate sale, planning to rent it out or intend to live in yourself. Thankfully most manufacturers are generous in their supply of samples, so you can experiment with different looks and textures until you're confident you've found the carpet that best suits your needs.

*Gary Alp is residential sales manager (UK & Eire) at Lano*

(where durability is defined as "having the ability to return to its original form or position after being bent, compressed or stretched"), which makes it an ideal choice for areas of heavy traffic such as hallways and living rooms.

As well as offering superb stain resistance, nylon fibre is known for its fabulous feel, having a silken, velvet-like texture and a subtle shimmer that adds to its stylistic possibilities. Unlike other man-made carpets of old, nylon is crush- and fade-resistant, so if you opt for a vibrant hue (like wool, nylon holds dye well and comes in a wealth of colours) the appeal will be maintained for a long time to come. Unsurprisingly, given its many plus points, nylon

carpet tends to be second in price only to wool.

### **BAMBOO**

Another relative newcomer to the carpet world, bamboo is considered one of the world's most sustainable resources thanks to its fast growth, 100 per cent biodegradability and the fact that no pesticides are needed in its production. As a carpet fibre it therefore makes a fantastic eco-friendly choice, but it also possesses antibacterial and humidity-regulating properties for a healthier home, and is toxin free.

Although as a raw material bamboo is incredibly strong, when its pulp is turned into carpet form it's astonishingly soft,



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