

# selfbuilder + homemaker

SEP/OCT 2018

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Mark Stevenson answers self-builders' questions on offsite structural timber

## In full swing

Andy and Sarah Ball give an update on the rapid progress at No. 41

## Show Preview

What to expect at Grand Designs Live

## *A fab four storeys*

The Youngs' Beatles-inspired kit home was far from a Long and Winding Road – at least in terms of the build!







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# EDITOR'S LETTER



Unlike our cover star this issue, which is a fantastic four-storey home inspired by the Fab Four, not all self-builds are created as 'forever homes.' Sometimes you may want to be in control of your home's design and build, and live in it post-completion, but you still have an eye on resale in the future.

This is why in the case of Greater London at least, the fall in house prices will not be welcome news to many self-builders looking to the future. In fact it is one reason why the capital has seen a big increase in owners improving and extending existing homes, rather than fruitlessly attempting to sell up.

The other main reason is that the Government has recently relaxed permitted development rules, including changes to national planning policy to enable up to two stories to be added to a home.

A piece of recent research by Oakmore Builders sampled five Boroughs, and found that home renovation and extensions had increased by 250 per cent over the past five years. For example, Bromley saw no development certificates issued in 2013, but 485 issued in 2017.

While the Government may have freed things up in terms of planning somewhat, this is not likely to completely offset what is likely to be a persistent downward trend in the south east at least, with Brexit looming. This could mean that renovation will be the focus for many, going forward – people looking to capitalise on their asset and provide a futureproof home for their family.

JAMES PARKER

## DIARY

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## Over a third of people believe self-build is an effective route to owning a home

According to the National Self Build and Renovation Centre (NSBRC), 39 per cent of people surveyed at its Self Build & Renovation Show would consider building a house because they believe self-build is an effective route to owning their own home.

Of those surveyed, 41 per cent said they were “very likely” to build their own home, while an additional 30 per cent said it was likely. 76 per cent said they would consider self-build in order to ensure they have a home tailored to specific requirements and future needs, while 45 per cent would build so they can “have creative control over the design process”.

The survey also found that over 50 per cent of people would “want a home with environmentally sustainable benefits”, such as using solar panels, heat pumps and building to Passivhaus standards.

When asked what issues they believe are holding them back from building, 33 per cent stated finding land was a major barrier, 19 per cent cited not having the right skills, 23 per cent said a lack of self-build knowledge and 19 per cent mentioned “not having the time and flexibility to make it happen”. Perhaps most surprisingly, only 6 per cent saw money as a barrier.

Commenting on the findings, NSBRC managing director Harvey Fremlin said: “The common assumption associated with self-build is that it’s for the wealthy, but that’s not the case. The survey proves this, as so few ordinary self-builders – with realistic ambitions – believe money is holding them back. There can be a saving of up to 15 per cent on the cost of traditionally purchasing a home, and there are additional Governmental initiatives available including the Home Building Fund and Right to Build.”

Currently, self- and custom-build only accounts for seven to 10 per cent of new housing across the UK per year – a significantly lower rate than other European countries. However, the Government’s target of 300,000 new homes a year by the middle of the next decade could change this, said the NSBRC.

Fremlin continued: “There are strong motivations for self-build in the UK. Not only does it allow greater consumer choice and flexibility, it gives creative control back to the homebuyer. But self-build isn’t just about the building element, it also allows for greater environmentally sustainable housing, builds strong communities and it cost-effectively achieves a home that meets the needs and aspirations of individual households.”

## Work starts on a £2.5m ‘walled garden house’ in Northumberland

Plans for a £2.5m 6,000 ft<sup>2</sup> ‘walled garden house’ located between Alnwick and Morpeth are a step closer to completion as the first phase of construction work gets underway.

The move is the latest phase of an ambitious project by Newcastle architects Pod to create a five-bedroom property which will revitalise and safeguard the Grade II listed walled garden in Newton-on-the-Moor, under plans approved by Northumberland County Council.

The 1771-built garden originally supplied fresh produce for Newton Hall but had fallen into decline following years of neglect. Proposals will see a sympathetic restoration of the site, which will include a modern sunken living space “folded under the garden landscape”. This will enhance the structure’s original features and “add a new dimension” without impacting on the external appearance, said the architects.

Construction of some of the outbuildings and garages is underway and will be followed by the building of a modern entertainment wing and conversion of the disused potting sheds and greenhouses into luxury living accommodation.

Featuring a sauna, bar, gym and spiral staircase leading to the walled garden – via a retractable glass roof that wraps over the new build element, the scheme has been designed to be sensitive and reflect the garden’s original purpose.

Pod project architect and director Martin Clay, having worked closely with the council and its conservation officers, commented: “As architects, you always want to work on challenging projects and for clients with ambition.”



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## DEVON COUNCIL SHARES SELF-BUILD KNOWLEDGE

Teignbridge District Council, hailed a “trailblazer” in self- and custom-build homes, is to share its experience with Mid Devon District Council in order to help more people build their own homes.

Charles Acland, self build officer at Teignbridge will offer expert advice and support. This is being funded through the Government’s “new burdens” payment for self- and custom-build, and will be provided by the Right to Build Task Force.

Acland is an experienced self-builder and Right to Build Task Force expert. He will be working with Mid Devon District Council two days a week for six months. He commented: “This work will help Mid Devon District Council increase the number of planning consents for serviced custom- and self-build plots, using lessons learned from Teignbridge’s experience over the last six years.”

## JOHANNA KONTA HAS SELF-BUILD APPLICATION REFUSED



Carine06 from UK/Creative Commons

British number one tennis star Johanna Konta has had a self-build planning application refused under conditions set out in the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Konta put in an application for a four-bedroom timber-framed house to replace an existing bungalow she owns on a 8,830 m<sup>2</sup> site in ancient woodland in East Sussex.

Ancient woodland is given the highest level of protection under the new NPPF, which states that councils must refuse developments that aren’t “wholly exceptional” if they will be causing the loss of “irreplaceable habitats”.

Konta has now submitted a second application for a slightly lower building and argues in her design and access statement that her proposed replacement design is not only “sympathetic” but also “highly efficient.”

The NPPF only allows isolated country homes if the design is deemed to be of “exceptional quality”.

## Pair of “courtyard houses” completed, reusing a small south London site

Architects FORMStudio have announced the completion of two new homes in Southwark created in response to the Mayor of London’s policy to optimise the reuse of small sites across the city.

The courtyard houses are located on a tight, irregular brownfield plot, previously occupied by a metal workshop. The site had narrow access, outlook and daylight issues, and these constraints “directly determined” the form and fenestration of the two storey, three bedroom family homes, said the architects.

The houses have a barrel-vaulted profile and are semi-submerged in order to mitigate visual impact. On the east side, where the boundary is closest to the existing terraced houses, the first floor is set back, creating a sedum roof. The windows are orientated to the south, taking advantage of unrestricted views, maximising natural light and avoiding overlooking. The living spaces on the ground floor open onto private courtyards.

The ground floors are clad in a contemporary pale brick, while the upper storeys are finished in zinc standing-seam cladding. The materials were chosen to reference the industrial heritage of the site.

Malcolm Crayton, director at FORMStudio commented: “The GLA’s draft New London Plan calls for an increased focus on small sites, which need to play a much greater role in housing delivery. Boroughs are encouraged to proactively support well-designed new homes on small sites through both planning decisions and plan making in order to significantly increase the way in which challenging sites can meet London’s housing needs.”



© Bruce Hemming

## Extension builders more in demand than ever

Homeowners thinking of extending their homes are being advised to plan ahead as builders report being busier than ever before.

New research from MyBuilder.com has shown that extension builders are enjoying “record levels of work”, with waiting times to hire firms extending for several months or even more than a year in some cases.

The website, which helps homeowners find tradespeople, reported that 82 per cent of tradespeople surveyed said they experienced “no let up” in their busy workloads through 2018, with 43 per cent reporting that they were taking on even more work than last year. When asked if they were busier now than at any other point in their career, a majority said they were, with more than 43 per cent saying they had more customers than ever before. Only 12 per cent reported a downturn.

The average waiting time for prospective customers looking to hire builders to extend their homes is currently between two and four months, though some in-demand firms reported that they were booked up over a year in advance.

Trends in extension building are also changing, with builders highlighting some of the most common features they are being asked to include in new projects. Popular additions include bi-fold doors, vaulted ceilings and skylights, and open-plan spaces, particularly when kitchens are involved.



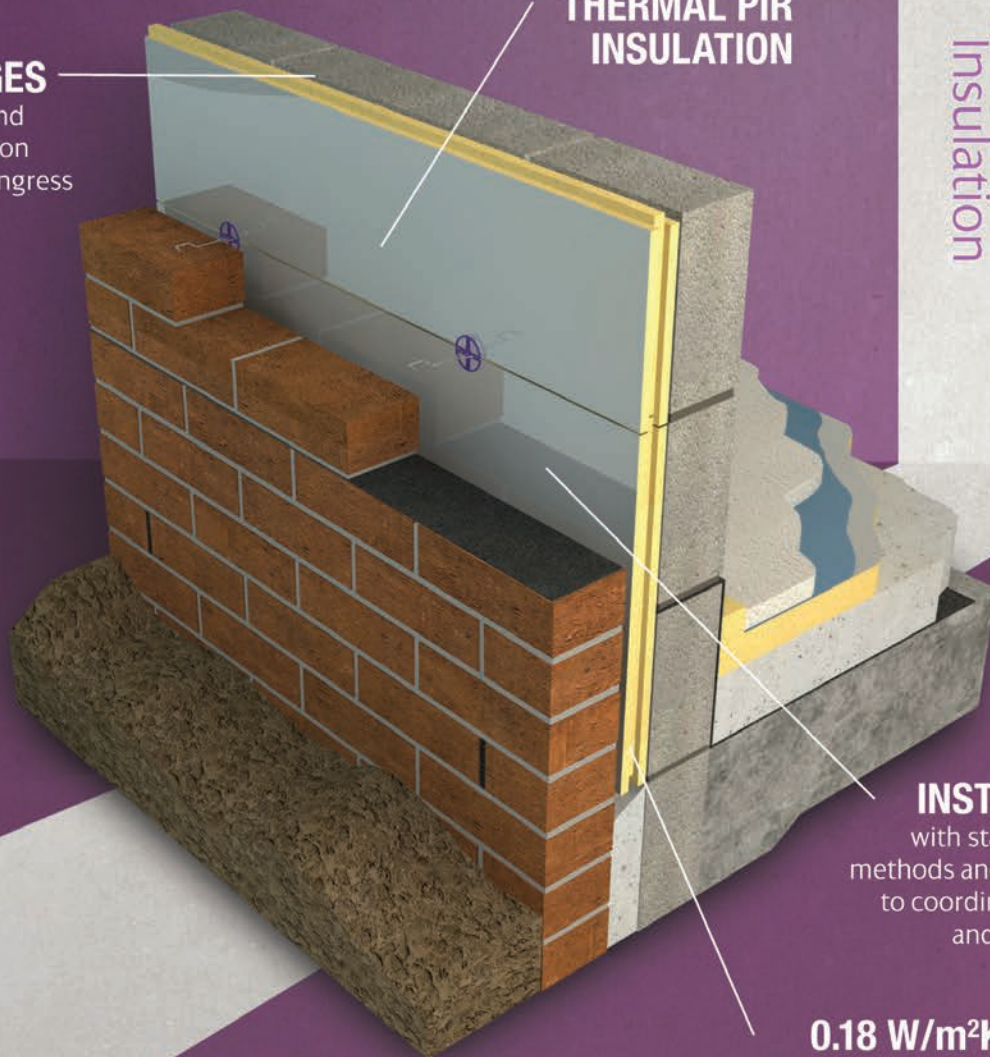
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# When to knock down and start again

Mark Stevenson, managing director of Potton and Kingspan Timber Solutions and self-build and renovation expert for The London Homebuilding & Renovating Show, on why self-builders should demolish rather than wait for empty land



Over 53 per cent of UK adults would like to self-build or commission an individually designed custom-build home at some stage in their lives, but there are not enough plots of land to satisfy demand. To make the most of their opportunities, approximately half of British self-builders decided to progress with their projects by demolishing an existing home. However many still hesitate to go down the 'wrecking ball' route.

Aside from having more plot options, and an established residential status, plus essential services and established access arrangements already in place, a rebuild done correctly can also offer more space, increased value and fewer taxes.

## ASSESSING VIABILITY & GETTING PLANNING

In order to tell if a plot has potential for redevelopment, you need to make sure it's worthy of your time and money. 'Thinking like a developer' helps, as it implies doing your research to understand the financial implications. My advice is to work backwards from what the plot could support, approximating its end value, and then removing the cost of purchasing and developing it.

Striking a balance between good architectural design and an approved planning permission will help you create a viable project. Due to having established residential status when replacing an old home, you don't need to worry too much

about details such as scale, sitting and access. Most local authorities are also likely to allow a new home to be 30 per cent larger than the previous one.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

When developing design ideas, assess the features of the surrounding buildings and think about how your proposal will blend in. Planning policy favours innovative design, but it is likely to reject designs that are overbearing, taller than nearby properties and which result in loss of amenities to neighbours. A planning consultant can shed light on all queries.

## REDEVELOPMENT COSTS, PROJECT MANAGEMENT & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Demolition needs to take place only after securing permission for the replacement. This is a straightforward process and costs around £8,000 - £12,000 for a single property. The only complications to bear in mind are the disposal of asbestos and other hazardous materials and disconnection of services, which can trigger a lengthy dismantling process.

A word of advice, some builders will wish to retain parts of the existing structure to incorporate them into the new build, but this will increase your costs by approximately 20 per cent. To qualify for zero-rated VAT you have to ensure the entire building, including its foundations, is replaced.

The overall budget is impacted by how many people work on the project. If you don't have the time or confidence to be hands-on, it's best to manage a team of tradespeople or employ subcontractors. Alternatively, using a project manager or a turnkey builder might increase your spend, but will reduce stress.

Other considerations include whether a building is listed; if so, it can't be replaced. Also locations such as conservation areas, national parks or areas of outstanding natural beauty will have tighter planning policy control and additional protection.

Breaching a restricted covenant can be an expensive error, so it's advisable to take out indemnity insurance. Some contracts might limit the area of redevelopment or claim a percentage of value increase, so when possible try to renegotiate.

If you require a mortgage, this is secured against the value of the building you want to demolish – high street banks might not approve such applications. Also, you can expect to pay upwards of £1,300 per square metre for the rebuild. This means low value areas aren't likely to offer viable prospects.

Lastly, run-down properties are obvious targets and high demand is likely to increase their selling value above their worth. Look for houses where you can add value by increasing the quality and scale of the building.





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# INTERIOR INSPIRATION: BEDROOMS



In recent years homeowners have been looking to enhance their bedrooms as not only a comforting place of rest and refuge, but also as a showcase for a variety of design inspiration. Here are some of the best new products to finish off an eclectic look, or provide the perfect co-ordinating centrepiece





3



4



5



6

**1. Living It Up's Roma** bed has a bold design, with its curves making it the perfect contemporary bed to be the centrepiece of any modern bedroom. The bed incorporates sprung-slats to ensure maximum comfort, and nightstands and other complementary items are also available. The bed is priced at £749.  
[www.livingitup.co.uk](http://www.livingitup.co.uk)

**2. The stylish Athens Table Lamp** by Dutch designers It's about RoMi is inspired by urban city life and features a marble look with an oversized exposed bulb. It takes its name from the Greek city famous for its marble architecture. The lamp is available to buy for £114 from **Lime Lace**.  
[www.limelace.co.uk](http://www.limelace.co.uk)

**3. The Pino Console Table** features a glamorous design inspired by mid-century Italian architecture and interiors, and will make a perfect dressing table. It's constructed with steel and has a brass effect finish with a toughened glass top and bevelled edge. The Pino Console Table is available to buy at £239.99 from **MY Furniture**.  
[www.my-furniture.co.uk](http://www.my-furniture.co.uk)

**4. This Mushroom Suede Side Table** is a bedside table with a difference. The suede leather traps feature edge stitching and a dark tan backing, while the suede shelf has a minimalist Scandinavian aesthetic. The table measures 300 x 400 mm and is available to buy for £105 from **H and G Designs**.  
[www.handgdesigns.com](http://www.handgdesigns.com)

**5. The distinctive curved headboard** of the **Ancona** winged ottoman bed creates a sense of grandeur, upholstered in a contemporary wool look fabric to give the classic design a modern twist. The bed also features a large practical storage space and is available in both double (£469) and king size (£499) from **Time4Sleep**.  
[www.time4sleep.co.uk](http://www.time4sleep.co.uk)

**6. The Jinya Tallboy** from **Vênor Living** combines sustainable mango wood with contrasting black hairpin legs and metal handles for an industrial look. It comes with five drawers, offering plenty of practical storage space while being on trend. The tallboy is priced at £559.  
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TIMBER SYSTEMS DIVISION



# Number 41 in full swing

*Selfbuilder + Homemaker* is following Andy and Sarah Ball as they build their modern, eco-friendly home in a popular Derby suburb. Sarah brings us up to date with its swift recent progress, including how they helped educate local children on site safety

**A**fter four years of failure to start, the house is going up super-fast. When we last left you, we had a clear site. Initially the heavy rain and cold weather held up proceedings, but the warm summer has played into our hands for getting on with the job.

The cost of the foundations is one of the aspects where you can really go over budget. We had tree root issues as well. The house is next to a large car park and we have several large trees on a three metre wide strip that creates the boundary. We looked at several 'insulated raft' systems and, in the end, we decided to use a traditional concrete raft. There would be far less impact on the site, and it meant that rather than digging trenches, we would clear a level space so that considerably less earth had to be removed.

With the tree roots, we would have had to dig down to 1.8 metres. We're on wet clay, which would have been hard work. From the test dig we knew that the water table was at a depth of one metre. The builders were reminded of this when we were digging the trenches for the services on the plot, as water poured in!

If we had gone down the route of traditional strip foundations, we wouldn't have been able to get onsite when we did. The weather was still very wet when we started removing the earth and levelling the plot ready for the raft. It was very quick – within two weeks it was completed. The strengthened concrete raft foundation was poured on one day, and as well as the savings we made in time, it also came in under budget. It was only a couple of hundred quid, but it all counts in a self-build.

Having looked at and costed various non-traditional wall constructions from timber frame and insulating concrete formwork, to single skin with external wall

*We've found it really interesting creating a highly insulated house using methods for a traditional build – but adding 21st century tweaks*

insulation, for our project we found that a traditional cavity wall was the cheapest and quickest option. Our challenge was to make this traditional approach as energy efficient as possible. Wall thickness wasn't an issue, so we chose a blockwork construction with 150 mm of mineral wool cavity insulation and a 63 mm PIR insulated plaster board. With the rising cost of PIR insulation this year, it was a cost-effective system to use for Number 41.

Andy knew that there was a potential issue of cold bridging between the

concrete raft and internal wall. He spoke to Dave, the architectural technician at Matthew Montague Architects, who told us about an ingenious structural insulation block to fix under the first course of the internal walls – Marmox Thermoblock. We've found it really interesting creating a highly insulated house using mainly the methods and materials for a traditional build, but adding in some twists to bring it into the 21st century.

Seeing the brickwork for the first time between the front entrance and the garage door was amazing. The reason I get so excited about things like this is because we have to make so many decisions to get to this point. When we decided that the relief detailing against the light render was going to be black brick, I thought that was the choice made. But no, what type of bricks do you want? And you'd be surprised how different they are – we decided on the black lbstock brick.

Then there's another decision – to choose the colour of the mortar. That was easy – definitely black. After that, I saw some brickwork on the internet that I really liked, it was very straight, without any overlap in the bricks. We asked Paul, our project manager, if we could have that design. Because it's only in the relief work, this was possible, but as there's no overlap it had to be strengthened from the back. The final decision was made on the morning the wall was being built, when we were also asked what design of mortar we wanted – I didn't even know there were different styles! Fortunately, we found diagrams and pictures on the internet, and we opted for flush. That's why, when we see it for ourselves, there's a massive relief that the options we've gone for look good.

We visit the site most days, and already have hundreds of photos. We have also had lots of conversations with our close



## SECRETS OF SUCCESS

neighbours. It's a big contrast to when we lived in the house on the site, when it was a rarity to see people, now we regularly chat in the street! Most people are really interested in what we are building and how it's going.

The site is very visible as it's on the main road into Allestree, and we wanted to make sure that it was safe. The plot backs onto the rec, which attracts hundreds of people every day. Football teams, children in the play park, the Allestree cricket club and dog walkers all share the space, and we have made it easy for them to get information about the site.

One thing that we did was visit the local primary school to talk to them about what was being built on the site. Along with construction safety expert (Suzanne from Kedleston Safety), we instilled in them the importance of staying safe, and even ran a competition for site safety posters. Suzanne wrote the site safety manual for the build. We went back to deliver prizes and visitors to the site get both the official safety posters as well as the winning designs from three of the pupils.

We also showed the school children video footage of the house being demol-



ished, so we had their full attention. It was a really good opportunity to talk positively to children about jobs in construction.

The build is in full swing now. By far the most exciting part of the build was watching a tonne of steel being craned into place. Ominously – on Friday 13 July – possibly the largest crane Allestree Rec had ever seen hoisted the eight metre reinforcement over the top of the trees and into position on the upright steels already in situ. This creates the opening for the wide span glass doors and maintains the stability of the back of



the house. Talking of glazing – that's the bit we are working on at the moment. There's a lot of it, and it's integral to the overall design of the house.

We have been given a date to complete the build of the end of February 2019, at the moment we are a couple of weeks behind schedule, but we are looking to recoup that over the next few weeks.

*Sarah and Andy will be sharing the next steps of the Number 41 build in the November/December issue of Selfbuilder + Homemaker.*

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### Winner of Dulux academy challenge



Barrie Thompson, a professional decorator based in North London won the 2017 Dulux Academy Design and Decorating Challenge. Run in partnership with Graham and Brown, wallpaper supplier partner to **Dulux Academy**, entrants were asked to submit their own wallpaper design and take part in an installation challenge. Barrie explained "This competition has been a valuable experience and I have since taken advantage of the courses available at the Dulux Academy, including Mural Effects

and Feature Walls, which has given me the opportunity to develop my industry knowledge and really enhance the technical expertise I can offer my clients."

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

### Remmers showcase at Exhibition



Environmentally-friendly and sustainable aren't just buzzwords for **Remmers (UK) Ltd**, who will showcase their new LW-722 [eco] stain finish at the W18/Elements Exhibition which starts on 30th September. Replacing fossil fuels with biomass process technology, they have used cutting edge technology to create a coating that protects both wooden windows and the environment. Remmers (UK) offers options for factory and site application, including state-of-the-art, environmentally and user-friendly,

water-based systems. Remmers' customer-focused approach is backed by a team with decades of experience in the British wood protection industry. For more information please contact Remmers or visit their website.

01293 594010 [www.remmers.co.uk](http://www.remmers.co.uk)

### New board member appointed



A civil and structural engineering consultancy has announced details of a key new senior management appointment. Manchester-based **Rhodes & Partners** has appointed Dr Jennifer Capp PhD MEng as a director of the company, in a move which is part of a wider restructuring programme that has been implemented to accommodate the consultancy's continuing growth. Established over 25 years ago, Rhodes & Partners has earned an enviable reputation as a leading structural and civil

engineering specialist. The business offers a full range of professional services and operates across a wide range of both large-scale commercial and smaller domestic projects.

0161 427 8388 [www.rhodesandpartners.co.uk](http://www.rhodesandpartners.co.uk)



# Exhibitors and experts set to inspire



Grand Designs Live will be back at Birmingham's NEC from 10 -14 October as part of UK Construction Week, providing everything self-builders need for their project, all under one roof

**G**rand Designs Live, sponsored by Anglian Home Improvements, will return to the NEC from 10 – 14 October. This inspiring event promises to “break through the conventional limitations in homebuilding” to offer visitors the chance to discover the very latest innovations in home design and decor, explore current trends, preview new products and find brands not yet seen on the high street. Based around the concept of the Channel 4 TV series, and presented by design maestro Kevin McCloud, the event will be packed with over 400 exhibitors, spanning five different sectors: Build, Kitchens, Bathrooms, Gardens and Interiors.

The Grand Build Hall will showcase “products to advance any and every project,” say the organisers, from renovating a period property or adding an extension to an existing home. Self-builders will find ground-breaking ideas for builds ranging from construction to finishing touches, as well as the latest developments in sustainable and eco-technology along with inspiring designs from an array of architects; coming together to help them create a home that is truly exceptional.

A selection of build suppliers including Polypipe, Velfac/Velux, Internorm, Airflow, Maxlight, IDSsystems, Silva Timber and Pinar will offer an array of top quality essential materials and services necessary for homebuilders. Discover oak-framed houses from design and construction company Oakwrights, while new exhibitor Inotherm will be showing high-end security doors alongside their range of entrance doors. Pinar's award-winning entry doors – which include hidden fingerprint readers and automatic night



illumination – will also be on show for the first time as the brand launches in the UK.

Grand Interiors and The Design Arcade will offer stylish ways to finish a home; here, visitors can discover unique products from individual designers and browse hundreds of brands not readily available on the high street, including Sir William Bentley Billiards, JamJar Lights and SAM Leisure. Another highlight, Restoration Tree produces furniture using responsibly sourced timber from around the world.

Those with an interest in the Grand Technology area can explore the innovation of the smart thermostat from Hive, or peruse offers on phone, TV and connectivity packages from Virgin Media.

Grand Bathrooms will include exhibitors such as Avanti, who produce fitted bathrooms to transform your current bathroom into a sanctuary, plus other brands including Junction 2 Interiors and

Bluewater Bathrooms. Easy Bathrooms will also showcase their range.

Grand Kitchens will offer some of the most pioneering kitchens and appliances on the market from the likes of Northgate Kitchens, Kutschenhaus and Hyco. Bora will be presenting their premium cooktop extractors, while stone worktops from Planet Granite and digitally printed full colour splash backs from Cherry Glass Design are not to be missed. From bespoke fitted to free standing, and from strategic design to storage, visitors will find solutions to all their culinary needs; along with the cutting-edge finishing touches that are essential to any kitchen.

Those with a particular interest in the Grand Gardens section can discover brands spanning a variety of areas of interest including outdoor cooking, swimming pools, garden buildings, hot

# MAKING SPACE

WITH POCKET DOORS



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tubs, landscaping and much more. Sponsored by Hydropool, visitors will be able to explore an abundance of new and exciting ideas. Hand-crafted garden rooms from Cre8a will inspire garden lovers while independent pool designer Swimming Pool Design Company will offer luxury pools, and Breeze House will showcase their garden gazebos and thatched garden buildings.

Alongside these brands and products, the show offers an array of other great attractions, including:

- **Ask An Expert** – This ever popular service returns with experts offering free advice in every field – from financing projects to architecture, interiors and much more.
- **The Grand Theatre** (sponsored by Airflow) – Kevin McCloud, joined by a whole host of industry experts and some Grand Designers from the new series, will provide a wide-reaching range of informative seminars on everything from architecture to building and beyond.
- **Kevin's Green Heroes Live** – Each year Kevin showcases the most innovative and useful eco-friendly gadgets and products on the market. His hand-picked selection reveals the latest trends in green technology and shines a light on new directions in product design. This show, visitors can get first-hand

experience through live demonstrations of these Green Heroes.

- **Grand Room Sets** – The theme 'Design By You' will be brought to life by five pioneering interior designers in this inspirational installation. These innovative rooms will showcase products which are accessible to visitors and are from British retailers, manufacturers and designers.

#### UK CONSTRUCTION WEEK

Grand Designs Live is part of the wider UK Construction Week taking place at the NEC from 9 – 11 October. The event is made up of nine shows, which alongside Grand Designs Live includes Timber Expo, Build Show, Energy 2018, Building Tech

Live, Surface & Materials Show, HVAC 2018, Civils Expo, and Plant & Machinery Live. Timber Expo, supported by TRADA, will be of particular interest to self-builders, with the timber self-build market thriving as more homemakers opt to utilise the sustainable material.

Highlights of the other UK Construction Week shows include the Innovation Trail, which will highlight the most cutting-edge products shaping the future of construction, the Timber Focus Theatre, Structural Timber Awards, UKCW Stage, Regeneration Hub, Confederation of Timber Industries workshops, and of course the Beer Festival. Tickets provide unlimited access to all shows.

## WHEN & WHERE

**Grand Designs Live** takes place at the **NEC, Birmingham** from **10 - 14 October**. For more details and to buy your tickets visit **[www.granddesignslive.com](http://www.granddesignslive.com)**

**UK Construction Week** takes place from **9 - 11 October**. For more details and to buy your tickets visit **[www.ukconstructionweek.com](http://www.ukconstructionweek.com)**



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# Setting the standards for structural timber



Structural Timber Association board member and managing director for Kingspan Timber Solutions and Potton, Mark Stevenson answers self-builders' queries on how to use structural timber, and why solutions are increasingly likely to be factory-built

**T**he Structural Timber Association (STA) has an objective to enhance quality through research and guidance, underpinned by the independently audited STA Assure Membership and Quality Standards Scheme. Having worked across all areas of construction for decades, we understand that for self-builders, property development is not a chosen career, it is much more than that – it is a personal mission which, more often than not, represents the investment of a lifetime. It's therefore vital you make the right decisions, so why should you consider offsite manufactured structural timber?

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN BENEFITS OF BUILDING WITH STRUCTURAL TIMBER?

With impressive green credentials, combined with cost and time efficiencies, structural timber systems are rapidly becoming the building material of choice – currently accounting for around 75 per cent of the self-build market. Advanced prefabricated systems such as closed panel timber frame, structural insulated panels (SIPs) and volumetric modular options are driving innovation in the timber industry – offering customers more choice than ever before.

## WHY IS THERE A MOVE TO BUILD HOMES OFFSITE?

Offsite-manufactured structural timber systems have advanced greatly in recent years, offering self-builders cost, programme and performance assurances. The solutions are increasingly likely to be 'factory-built,'

with greater levels of prefabrication as part of controlled manufacturing processes. If required, complete houses can be finished in the factory ready for onsite installation. Commonly in the self-build sector, the focus is towards panelisation, with doors and windows fitted as part of the manufacturing process. This and shorter construction timescales, better build quality and enhanced energy efficiency – vastly reducing on-going running costs for the life of the building – are compelling reasons to specify these solutions.

## WHY IS FACTORY MANUFACTURING OF SYSTEMS THE IDEAL SOLUTION FOR TIMBER HOMES?

With standards for efficiency constantly ramping up, the construction industry as a whole has faced a real challenge in creating homes that achieve the actual predicted energy performance. What was an industry wide issue – achieving the actual energy performance as specified in the design brief, has been difficult to attain using traditional site-based methods. This issue has been overcome

using a range of timber-based offsite technologies within a quality-controlled factory environment to create high performance low energy build systems. Manufacturing in factory-controlled conditions with stringent controls minimises waste, optimises quality and assures the performance of the building for its intended lifespan.

## DOES OFFSITE MANUFACTURING MEAN I HAVE TO HAVE AN OFF-THE-PEG DESIGN, OR CAN IT BE MADE FULLY BESPOKE?

Absolutely not – from traditional cottages, to contemporary designer led architecture, structural timber solutions enhance design ambitions and deliver beyond expectations. The timber industry is no longer defined simply by the supply of timber frame kits – it is driven by intelligent and integrated construction solutions. The breadth of the product portfolio means that any cost, performance and design expectation can be achieved.

## I HAVE A DIFFICULT SITE, HOW CAN OFFSITE TIMBER HELP MAKE THINGS EASIER?

The range of technologies available for offsite manufacturing enable innovative hybrid solutions to be created which overcome almost all the problems that self-builders can face on challenging sites. Often, timber structures are thought as not being suitable for sloping sites, but the reverse is actually true. Prefabrication enables most of the work to be removed from site, and by employing advanced lifting equipment, we can overcome the challenging terrain





and build much quicker than with traditional techniques.

## **WHEN IS OFFSITE NOT SUITABLE FOR A SELF-BUILD?**

When the customer wants a poorly performing, low value building – which in my experience is never!

## **IS IT A LOT MORE EXPENSIVE THAN TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION?**

Measuring cost is a complicated equation and when all factors are taken in to consideration, structural timber solutions represent far greater value for self-builders. Here are a few points to consider:

- The speed of construction achieved through the high degree of factory prefabrication enables a rapid build process, which is not adversely influenced by inclement weather. Should the self-builder be renting a property during the build, then the rental costs are vastly reduced.
- Structural timber construction offers cost and programme certainty, making programming and budgeting more predictable than traditional site-based methods. Engineered timber systems means the entire superstructure is designed, supplied and constructed with a single point of responsibility – eliminating the risk of dealing with multiple suppliers.
- Stringent factory quality controls enhance the manufacture of offsite buildings, delivering a high-performance building envelope, reducing the energy consumption across the lifetime of the home – saving substantial annual costs on utility bills.
- Mortgage providers are given assurances through guaranteed build quality backed by warranties and accreditations and now consider structural timber as a mainstream construction method.

## **HOW CAN FIRE SAFETY BE ASSURED IN TIMBER SYSTEMS?**

Fire safety is an essential Building Regulation design requirement for any building. In a completed building, the structure is protected from the effects of fire by internal plasterboard linings and external claddings. As structural timber systems are manufactured offsite, we have the opportunity to independently test the fire performance of the



completed wall and floor elements. This testing enables finite assurances to be given to the self-builder of the structural integrity of the system in the event of a fire and reassures warranty providers that the system used meets, or in most cases exceeds the requirements of the Building Regulations in terms of means of escape and external cladding. Fire safety involves more than providing means of escape in the event of a fire – it also involves the impact your building project may have on neighbouring properties.

With the Fire and Rescue Service, Association of British Insurers (ABI), The Fire Protection Association (FPA), Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Fire Engineers, the STA has developed a Site Safe Policy. A mandatory requirement of STA membership, the Site Safe Policy addresses the approach needed to mitigate fire risks.

Developed over many years to support STA members and provide the service that self-builder clients would expect of a professional building system provider – the policy is mandatory for members because it ensures they fulfil their CDM (Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015) duties in relation to fire safety.

## **ARE REGULAR BUILDERS READY TO BUILD TIMBER HOMES USING OFFSITE METHODS?**

Each year, the proportion of homes that are built using timber systems increases. In Scotland, structural timber is now the de facto build method and we see no reason that it won't be the same throughout the rest of the UK as customers understand the benefits

structural timber offers. I expect the number of builders who adopt the technology will also increase due to the chronic shortage of onsite trades.

## **IS THERE ANY LEGISLATION I NEED TO BE AWARE OF AS A CLIENT?**

Yes, any build has to conform to building and health and safety regulations. This is an area where timber system manufacturers who are accredited under the STA Assure scheme excel. As the UK's leading organisation representing the sector, one of the Structural Timber Association's main objectives is to ensure our members meet current legislation and regulatory requirements.

Offering confidence to self-builders by promoting the differing levels of accreditation held by individual member companies, the STA Assure Membership and Quality Standards Scheme is recognised by six of the industry's leading structural warranty and building control bodies – LABC Warranty, Premier Guarantee, Protek Warranty, Build-Zone, Selfbuild Zone and CRL.

This assessment has been developed to benefit both our members and construction clients, offering reassurances to the construction community that our members meet or even exceed current legislation and regulatory requirements. In addition, we enforce the industry leading initiative, Site Safe and provide all our members with access to the very latest health and safety training.

*Mark Stevenson is STA board member and managing director for Kingspan Timber Solutions and Potton*

## CASE STUDY

# STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER HOME

When a couple decided to build their Beatles-inspired 'forever' home in a north London suburb, the speed at which their kit home took shape left them suitably impressed. Roseanne Field reports



The home, by Baufritz, is deceptive, being a modest two stories at the front, and four at the back

### FACING PAGE

The house has a sunken terrace which allows light into the basement level

## LOW POINT

Mrs Young: "The only low point was how long it took us to get the planning through"

From the street, Mr and Mrs Young's house, while far from unimpressive, doesn't stand out as being dramatically different from the other fairly modest detached houses it sits alongside. But view it from the bottom of its rear garden, and it reveals what an architectural achievement it really is.

The house – built by German kit home specialist firm Baufritz – sits within a conservation area, and so its somewhat understated appearance at the front was largely dictated by the brick and tile houses of the suburban locale. When the couple bought the site, the house sitting on it was in "an incredibly poor condition".

The Youngs both work in construction so were not daunted by building, and they had always talked about building their own home. With the incumbent house in such a run-down state, it seemed the perfect opportunity for them to fulfil

their dream; there was just the small matter of purchasing the site and demolishing the house before they could get on with their own construction.

Although the 'kit home' method would turn out to be the perfect solution, they almost didn't go down that route. "We spoke to architects about doing a traditional build," explains Mrs Young. "But," she continues, "we decided there was just no contest." They looked at various kit home providers but found in some cases it could be a struggle to achieve what they wanted. "It was much more regimented, for example the floor to ceiling height was fixed or the front of the house was a regimented style," she says. "Because our house is in the middle of a normal suburban street, we needed the front to be subtle."

It was in fact an episode of *Grand Designs* that introduced them to Baufritz and led them to





investigate what the company had to offer, which then saw them taking a trip to the company's headquarters in Bavaria.

Having decided on a build method, chosen a manufacturer and got the design right, the next hurdle was of course getting planning permission. The fact they were within a conservation area meant the local council was able to make gaining permission a frustrating and drawn-out experience. "It took a long time," Mrs Young says, which isn't overstating it – it took about 15 months to get the plans approved.

The couple took it upon themselves to speak to the conservation officer at the council about what they wanted to do, but

despite this, the council "just weren't madly keen," she explains. "It was an annoying start to the project."

Project architect Nick Blunt worked closely with them throughout the process and after "numerous meetings" with the council, their plans were finally agreed without too much compromise being required, although the council had some stringent demands. "They were very specific about the materials we had to use at the front of the house, and how the front had to look," says Mrs Young.

#### **A FLYING START**

Having finally secured planning permission, the couple got to work and the existing house



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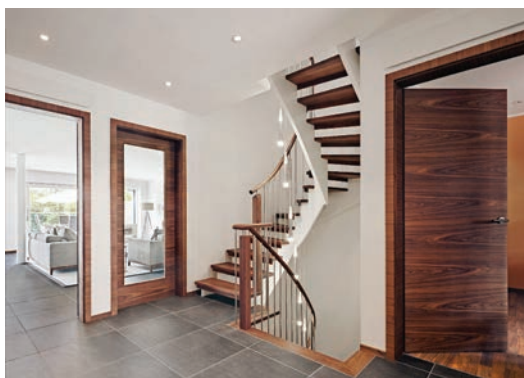




Space and light were key drivers for the design

## HIGH POINT

Mrs Young: "Moving in a day early – that was pretty cool! And the first three days, when they were putting the pieces [of the building] together was so brilliant"



*Their houses just have a real sense of calm, which I think comes from the materials*

was demolished. They made various final decisions on materials at a visit to Baufritz's head office later on that summer, and by October, they were ready for the build to begin. It was at this point that the pace picked up and the kit building method really began to show what it was capable of.

The house arrived in the form of timber panels on the back of lorries, ready to be assembled by the team. Just three days later, the four-storey house (it includes a basement and attic space) was up and watertight. "Getting the timber frame onsite and put up was amazing," recalls Mrs Young. "There were no problems at all."

The external walls were installed one at a time, floor by floor, starting with the partial basement. Each side of the house was dropped in to place, then the back and front walls are slotted in. "It's like a jigsaw," Mrs Young says. "It's all tongue and groove and the panels all just slot into each other. When you watch it and it all comes together, it's just so clever."

Once the external walls were in place, the internal walls for that floor were installed, before the ceiling/floor was laid down and the process began again on the next floor. Each external wall comes with any doors and windows already installed – which Mrs Young remembers being fascinated to discover. "When they dropped down the piece with the front door in, the door already had the key in," she explains. "So when they had to start putting in the internal walls, they just turned the key and walked into the house!"

The project was managed by a third party recommended by Baufritz, but the couple



naturally made sure they stayed heavily involved throughout. Almost all of the internal fixtures and fittings were dealt with Baufritz – the only elements the Youngs had to take care of were the kitchen and fitted wardrobes. However, the couple's construction experience stood them in good stead, and they arranged meetings with various UK kitchen companies to look at layouts and designs. "Understanding plans was definitely an advantage," says Mrs Young.

This was one area where the difference between the accuracy of kit home construction and traditional builds reared its head. They were repeatedly told by manufacturers that they would have to take their own final measurements once the house was built, to allow for any slight changes to what was on plan. "We explained it was going to be cut and built in a factory so it would be accurate," Mrs Young says. "When they came out they were so impressed! They'd never seen dimensions where what was drawn on the plan was what had been delivered."

The couple says that along with its impressive

eco credentials, the pinpoint accuracy of the build was the key reason their decision to use a kit house provider proved a good one.

### GOING GREEN

Sustainable living is important to the Youngs, and their house isn't short of eco-friendly features in addition to its timber construction being inherently green. PV panels on the roof generate all of their electricity, with any unused energy sold back into the grid. A solar thermal array also provides their hot water, and a large tank underneath the property's driveway holds rainwater used to flush toilets and for watering the garden.

The house is heated throughout with underfloor heating, although it's not something they find themselves needing very often. "It's on a very low setting," explains Mrs Young. This is largely down to the 100 per cent natural wood shaving insulation installed throughout the house. The house has an AA energy efficiency rating – the UK average is D. In fact, the house is so efficient that it was scored a 0.7 in its







The Youngs had a firm idea of the layout they wanted

## CONTACTS/ SUPPLIERS

### BAUFRITZ

[www.baufritz.com/uk](http://www.baufritz.com/uk)

### ROOF TILES

#### CREATON

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

### INTERNAL DOORS

#### HERBA room doors

[www.zimmertueren.de](http://www.zimmertueren.de)

### ENTRANCE DOOR

#### Boneberger Schreinerei

[www.treppe-haustuer.de](http://www.treppe-haustuer.de)

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### FLOORING

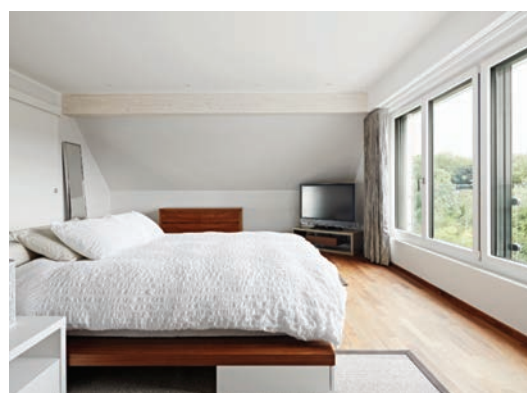
#### Bauwerk

[www.bauwerk-parkett.com](http://www.bauwerk-parkett.com)

### INTERNAL PAINT

#### Baufritz

[www.baufritz.com/uk](http://www.baufritz.com/uk)



airtightness test, which “means we’re just shy of Passivhaus,” explains Mrs Young.

### DESIGN & LAYOUT

Anyone building their own home wants to ensure they can hone the layout and design to meet all their needs. Although the Youngs were working with a kit housebuilder, they still tried to have as much input on the design and layout of the house as possible. “I wanted to ensure that when you open the front door you could see straight through to the garden, to have that crucial link,” says Mrs Young.

Space and light were key drivers for the overall design. The white-rendered front of the house features contrasting zinc-clad bay windows on the ground and first floors, the zinc connecting the two. Due to the site’s sloping nature, from the front the house appears to be

two storeys, but at the back – which features vast amounts of glass – the house presents a far more substantial facade.

The garden sits slightly lower than the ground floor, with steps leading down to it from this level. The top of the basement/lower ground floor is therefore also just visible from the garden and features its own sunken terrace area. Beneath the hipped roof, the attic level is home to the master suite (complete with bedroom, ensuite and dressing room), which has its own private terrace.

Being keen fans of The Beatles, the couple couldn’t resist introducing a theme. The house is named ‘Imagine’ (which could also perhaps refer to how the build has realised their vision, with a little perseverance). When standing at the large wooden front door, visitors are greeted by a replica of the John Lennon Strawberry Fields



memorial on the wall with 'Imagine' printed at its centre, functioning as the house's nameplate.

As per the couple's request, upon entering, it is possible to see right through to the garden. To the left is a bicycle storage area and toilet, on the right is a small study. At the rear is a large open plan kitchen/living/dining area. Downstairs is the semi-basement, home to a utility room, playroom and home cinema, complete with a pool table and, continuing the theme, a huge Beatles mural. The sunken terrace provides the space with natural light.

The first floor houses five bedrooms, including their two children's rooms which are almost identically sized – another of the Youngs' requests. "They're within about a centimetre of each other!" Mrs Young says. Each of these has its own bathroom, with a third serving the other two guest bedrooms. They also ensured that plenty of built-in storage was provided throughout.

The couple had a clear idea of they wanted when it came to the overall layout. They praise Baufritz's flexibility, down to offering three different ceiling heights as standard. They also report that they found more than enough choice within their range of designs, displayed in the various show houses and room mock-ups at firm's German offices – including a bathroom with moveable walls. This made making decisions relatively stress-free, says Mrs Young: "You can pick within the ranges quite happily."

In total the build and internal fit out took just five months and the house was ready to move in

## *Three days later, the four-storey house including a basement and attic space was up and watertight*

to. "Right at the beginning of the build you get a schedule telling you all the different dates," explains Mrs Young. "You get a date when you're going to get the key, and actually we got it a day early!" The project went so smoothly that the house was built and the family moved in before one of their neighbours had finished a kitchen extension started around the same time.

Since moving in the couple have had no issues with the home, and love living there. A couple of small cracks appeared after a few months – as is normal with a new build – but as part of Baufritz's offering staff were returned to touch up and repaint. "We're totally happy," Mrs Young says. She credits part of this feel-good factor to the timber and other materials used: "Their houses just have a real sense of calm, which I think comes from the materials," she explains.

They have discussed the possibility of doing another build one day, but for now they're very much settled. "We've toyed with the idea of doing it again," Mrs Young says. "But I can't see us ever moving from here, it's got everything that we've ever wanted." ■

### CONTACTS/ SUPPLIERS

#### WINDOWS

Fensterbau Böck  
[www.fensterbau-boeck.de](http://www.fensterbau-boeck.de)

#### TILES

Böhme & Mehnert  
+49 174 5289073

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[www.geberit.co.uk/en](http://www.geberit.co.uk/en)

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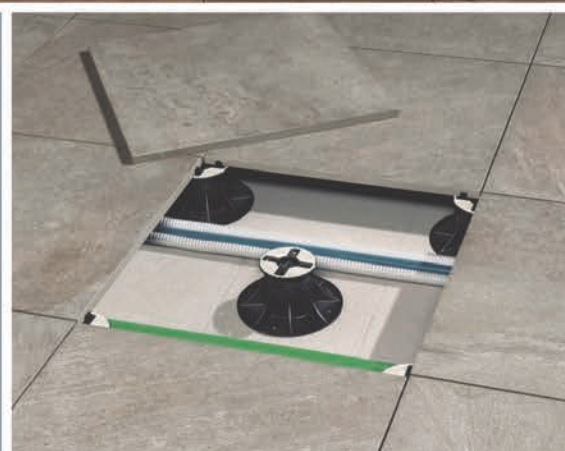




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## Spot repair with Osmo UK



**Osmo UK** provides the perfect solution for spot repairs with the easy-to-use Polyx®-Oil Care and Repair Paste. This hard-wearing paste – that is available in a toothpaste style tube – has been specifically designed to help maintain, repair and restore internal wood. Developed from natural oils and waxes, the eco-friendly gel-like-paste is made of the Osmo UK Polyx®-Oil. Creating an extremely durable and hardwearing layer, this spot repair paste is suitable for use on wood in indoor areas, including furniture surfaces, worktops made of solid wood or laminated wood, and all wooden floors, OSB and cork flooring. The paste is ready to use straight from the tube and should be applied with a lint-free cloth once the surface is clean.

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

## Ecco Concertina Loft Ladder



**Premier Loft Ladders** are celebrating their 15<sup>th</sup> year of supplying the highest quality loft ladders. 2018 marks an exciting year of continued innovation and new products, including the new Ecco concertina loft ladder. The Ecco combines an aluminium ladder with the latest multi-point loft hatch technology. The result is a durable, airtight and highly insulated space saving loft ladder. It also features a counter-balance spring system, therefore making the Ecco very easy to operate.

For more information about the Ecco and our other new products for 2018, please visit the Premier Loft Ladders website.

0845 9000 195 [www.premierloftladders.co.uk/15](http://www.premierloftladders.co.uk/15)

## Maximum mobility in new stretch clothing

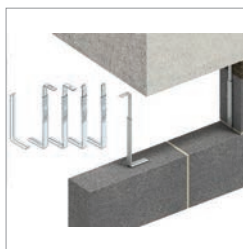


**Snickers Workwear** is well known for its uncompromising approach to quality and functionality, comfort and durability. Hi-tech fabrics and body-mapping designs ensure maximum working mobility wherever you are. With a range of new Trousers, Jackets, Rainwear and Accessories on their way, there's plenty of scope for every professional craftsman and woman to stretch their performance on site comfortably. The brand new comfort fabrics woven into Snickers' latest designs deliver

enhanced freedom of movement as well as improved ventilation and close quarter mobility. They also mean that the clothes have a slimmer tailored fit for better all-round looks and protection against snagging.

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

## Ancon launches IHR Head Restraint



**ANCON** has re-engineered its IHR internal head restraint to accommodate gaps at the wall head of up to 75mm, extending the previous maximum of 50mm. Head Restraints provide a simple support at the top of masonry panels. They are typically installed in the inner leaf of blockwork on a framed structure, where the masonry is non load-bearing. Design resistances are available for this new improved IHR range, based on independent product testing. This information is available

in the Ancon Wall Ties and Restraint Fixings technical literature available to download. Recording, analysing and fulfilling unmet customer demands, are a key driver to Ancon's on-going success.

0114 238 1219 [www.ancon.co.uk](http://www.ancon.co.uk)

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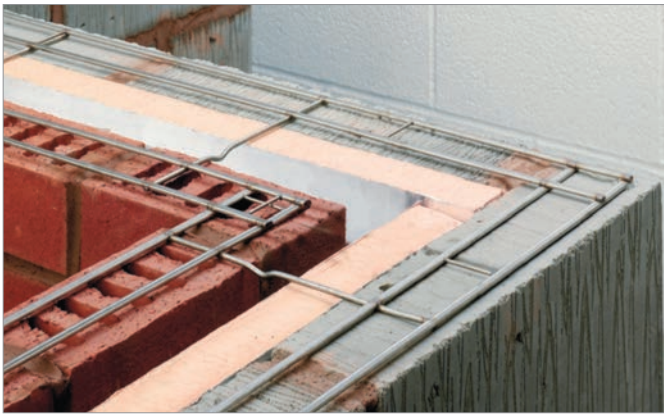
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## Simpson expands range


Introducing the latest product offering by a leading construction connector manufacturer **Simpson Strong-Tie**; masonry reinforcement and render mesh solutions for timber and masonry construction: Bricktor® for crack control reinforcement; Brickforce® for structural reinforced masonry applications; Bricktie® - developed to overcome the problems associated with lifting heavy blocks in the construction of 215 mm and greater thickness walls; STUCANET HGBM and EBM - purpose designed steel welded wire mesh plaster and render carriers.

Sales Director Jon Head comments "The introduction of a complete suite of masonry reinforcement products means that, along with our wall ties, frame ties and joist hangers, we can now offer the widest range of masonry connectors to the UK construction sector."

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The **Genesis Collection** is a suite of traditional timber-alternative PVC-U windows and doors, designed and manufactured in the UK.

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of Manorwood's sliding and slide fold door systems, as well as all its other windows and doors that it manufactures are extensively tested to guarantee quality & compliance, all units are pre-hung to ensure effective performance once installed.

01252 471060 [www.manorwoodjoinery.com](http://www.manorwoodjoinery.com)

## Specialising in architectural glass systems



**Finepoint** is an experienced glass manufacturer and aluminium fabricator. We specialise in bespoke-designed architectural glass systems, which are used to build our stunning range of doors, windows, wine cellars for residential and commercial customers throughout London and the UK. If you've been looking for high-specification architectural glass systems, you'll want to explore our stunning product portfolio in more detail. The aesthetic and practical application of our architectural glass

systems become clearer when you look at our slim frame and minimal frame sliding doors. The extensive glazed areas in each design maximise light penetration and create fluid threshold access.

[www.finepoint.glass](http://www.finepoint.glass)



## P C Henderson's barn door specified

Sliding and folding door hardware manufacturer, **P C Henderson**, has witnessed an ever increasing trend for its Rustic 80 barn door hardware over the past few years. The hardware has recently been specified for a home renovation project by first time buyers Reece Hall and Zoe Wood due to its unique features and space saving properties. Reece and Zoe purchased the property in June 2017. Built in the early 1900s, the two bedroom, semi-detached cottage was full of character but required a much needed renovation to help restore the property to its former glory. The 11 month renovation included a complete rewire, full house re-plaster, a full damp-proof course, new heating and plumbing system and a new kitchen and bathroom. The couple also required some sliding door hardware for the properties bedroom and bathroom doors. P C Henderson's Rustic sliding barn door hardware was identified as the best solution for the project. With its beautifully crated barn style hangers, Rustic 80 complemented the original pine plank doors perfectly. By installing a sliding door system over a traditional swing door system, Reece and Zoe were able to save valuable space in both the bedroom and bathroom as well as adding a unique feature to the property.

[sales@pchenderson.com](mailto:sales@pchenderson.com)





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\* For fitted doors without glazing sized  $5000 \times 2125 \text{ mm}$

# The key to improving kerb appeal

Hörmann UK's David O'Mara discusses the importance of entrance and garage doors when it comes to enhancing the kerb appeal of your home

Whether you're building a new home, are renovating and want to smarten up the look of your house, or are planning to put your property on the market, when it comes to improving the appearance of your home it is important to consider how just a few key changes to the exterior could instantly improve the kerb appeal and increase the value of your home by a considerable amount.

Sometimes you only get one chance to make a good first impression. However, despite this fact, people are much more likely to focus their time, money and attention on making sure the interior of their homes look the part, before even considering the exterior. Entrance and garage doors are such an integral part of any home, yet they are often overlooked during the design process.

Clean windows, tidy lawns, and freshly painted walls are all quick fixes, but to ensure longevity there are several more permanent changes that can be made, and the installation of a new entrance or garage door is one. This may seem like a big investment, but upgrading your current set of external doors, whether it's just your entrance door or garage door, can have a hugely positive impact on the value and kerb appeal of your home.

No matter whether your property has a large, medium or minimal approach, making your entrance door a focal point and your garage door a key feature, will always improve your property's kerb appeal, as well as providing added security and performance to meet the demands of modern life.

Many people deem entrance and garage doors as more of an essential part of the home, rather than a stylistic choice. However, by simply taking the time to consider which doors would best suit the style of a property, you can create a more coordinated look and subsequently boost the kerb appeal and value of your home. It may seem obvious, but an old



fashioned door or a garage with peeling paint makes any property look tired and will ultimately affect a buyer's overall opinion. Compare that with a sophisticated entrance or garage door and people visiting will have a positive, lasting memory of your home, especially if the doors are matching.

With so many styles and designs to choose from, it can be hard to pick a door that is right for you. One of the main

things to consider is the overall style that you are trying to achieve. For example, a traditional, suburban home will suit a different type of entrance or garage door to a country farmhouse, or a coastal getaway.

Steel front doors are an ideal option for those looking to create a chic, contemporary feel. They not only provide high levels of thermal efficiency, but also exceptional security features as





*One of the main things to consider is the overall style that you are trying to achieve*

garage. However, if headroom is limited, side-sliding sectional garage doors are available as a good alternative to the traditional upwards opening sectional style.

With so many doors to choose from, it is important to be able to differentiate between the various options before deciding which door is right for you. Throughout the decision process remember that a high-quality product, carefully selected, will add to a property's appeal for years to come.

*David O'Mara is marketing manager at Hörmann UK*

well. Steel front doors such as Hörmann's are available in an extensive range of colours and finishes. They can also come with additional options such as including glass panelling in the profile to create a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor spaces, making them a great choice for a modern home.

If you're looking for a garage door, sectional garage doors are an

eye-catching alternative to the traditional up and over garage door. Designed to have the best levels of thermal insulation on the market, sectional garage doors are recommended when the garage and the home are directly connected to save heat from being lost.

Opening vertically upwards and suspended under the ceiling, they are ideal if you are looking to save space both inside and in front of the

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## Red Dot recognises Ultra Quiet heat pump



Mitsubishi Electric's Ultra Quiet Ecodan PUHZ-AA air source heat pump range has been presented the Red Dot Award for Product Design. The Ecodan units are designed to provide homes with reliable, trouble free renewable heating and hot water. The design of the new Ultra Quiet unit is highly compact, and the colour combination of white and anthracite exudes a simple yet elegant appeal, with the dark colour of the fan section underlining its unobtrusive design. The Red Dot Award is

judged by an international jury of experts, who said that, "the design of this air-to-water outdoor unit has been thought out to the last detail. Its unobtrusive appearance easily blends into different types of buildings."

01707 278666 [www.red-dot.org](http://www.red-dot.org)

## Mitsubishi Electric creates social communities



With the government forecasting that heat pumps will overtake gas heating over the next decade and to coincide with the launch of Mitsubishi's Ultra Quiet Ecodan air source heat pump, two social communities, on Facebook and Instagram have been set up to provide consumers and heating installers with regular updates and tips on the company's latest efficient, renewable heating systems. The Facebook page offers a selection of videos and images that provide information on the Ultra Quiet Ecodan, detailing its uses, specifications and unique characteristics that

set it apart from alternative heating solutions. On the Instagram page, followers will be treated to a range of graphics that highlight the benefits of choosing to install the Ultra Quiet Ecodan.

01707 278666 [www.heating.mitsubishielectric.co.uk](http://www.heating.mitsubishielectric.co.uk)

## W20 screen and doorsets complete kitchen



The inherent strength and slim sightlines characteristic of W20 steel sections have enabled a member of the **Steel Window Association** to create a large screen with two sets of double doors: elegantly linking an expanded kitchen dining area with the rear garden. Steel Window Service & Supplies carried out the design, manufacture and installation of the multilight screen, which measures 4,484mm x 3,427mm high. The frames are hot dip galvanised prior to being finished in a polyester powder paint system. W20 and W40 steel windows and doors meet the requirements of the Building Regulations in new-build as well as refurbishment situations.

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

## A sliding door kit you can install yourself



**Scigno** have produced a pocket door kit that's intuitive and easy-to-assemble while being great value for money. A stand-out feature of the kit is that a single unit can be adjusted to fit a variety of standard UK door widths. Installation is simple and accurate thanks to the 'snap-together' positioning system and pre-marked size guides. A double sliding door system can also be achieved by uniting two single door kits. All the necessary accessories are included in each kit. The kits are designed for wooden

doors that are 35-44 mm thick and up to 100 kg in weight. The kits aren't limited to just wooden doors, a glass conversion kit is available that allows you to fit a stylish glass door that's between 8-10 mm thick.

[www.excel-ah.com](http://www.excel-ah.com)



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## Garador offers full range of door sizes

There are lots of reasons why people today are requiring larger garages. Vehicles can be bigger; and garages are often used to keep fitness or equipment. Larger garages can be built without problem thanks to the range of extra wide garage doors available from **Garador**.

British garage door manufacturer Garador offers a selection of its popular Up & Over garage doors in especially large sizes all the way up to 5000mm wide and Sectional garage doors up to 5500mm wide.

"Larger garages are becoming especially popular in new builds and in conversions," said Neil Discombe, Managing Director of Garador. "We offer a range of large door sizes all produced within our own manufacturing group to maintain product quality."

Garador's larger doors can easily be fitted with a GaraMatic electric door operator for a quiet, smooth and fast automatic opening.

For more information contact Garador by calling or visit their website.

01935 443795 [www.garador.co.uk](http://www.garador.co.uk)



# Attractive options for energy-efficient house design

Vanessa Howard of Roof Maker explores how taking a rigorously ecological approach to design can improve energy efficiency without compromising on aesthetics and individuality, focusing on rooflights

In 2017 the average UK household spent £102 per month on electricity and gas, accounting for nearly 5 per cent of the UK's average household budget.

As energy costs continue to increase across the UK, many self-builders and renovators are using the process of building their own home as an opportunity to create the most sustainable and thermally efficient property possible.

Influenced by the increasing popularity of designing to the Passivhaus standard, many housebuilders are being inspired to adopt an ecological approach to their home's design in order to dramatically reduce energy use and carbon emissions, simultaneously supporting and improving the property's ongoing health. This method of building also provides high standards of living comfort by producing excellent indoor air quality.

## SO, WHAT IS PASSIVHAUS?

Passivhaus is a global standard that was first developed in the early 1990s in Germany. It supports the construction of truly energy efficient buildings that minimise 'heating demand' by using energy sources from inside the property, such as the body heat from residents or solar heat that enters through windows. This means traditional heating equipment is no longer considered essential, as thermal comfort can be achieved solely by 'post-heating' or 'post-cooling' the natural air found within the home.

Buildings that meet the Passivhaus standard have low heating demands of less than 15 kWh per square metre per year, helping to reduce annual fuel costs and offer a more sustainable approach to heating. This makes an attractive proposition for many self-builders as their



energy usage can be significantly reduced. However, some individuals may not want to commit to the demanding process of creating an accredited Passivhaus home, but its sustainable principles provide an ideal blueprint with which to reduce energy costs and improve overall air quality.

One specific area self-builders should focus on when trying to improve the thermal efficiency of their new home is their choice and application of glazing.

The current trend for bringing the outdoors in, or maximising on the amount of natural light that can enter the property, has seen an abundance of self-build properties featuring bi-fold doors and rooflights in main living areas such as kitchens, dining areas and living rooms.

However, glazing is often where high proportions of heat transfer can occur, making it potentially detrimental to the

*Self-builders shouldn't feel they're having to compromise on aesthetics for greater thermal efficiency*

energy efficiency of a home. For rooflights in particular, it's vital that individuals choose products that have been specifically designed to maximise thermal performance as horizontal glass



placed in a ceiling is a common area for heat transfer.

To successfully combat this, it's useful for self-builders to follow the Passivhaus Institute's guidance that the rooflight must restrict the thermal losses of the window frame and glass edge. Essentially, individuals should choose a rooflight that offers the lowest U-value available by exploring its type of glazing and insulation within the frame.

Current UK Building Regulations state a window must have a U-value of 1.6 or lower in order to comply with relevant legislations. Some manufacturers may offer quadruple-glazed rooflights in order to comply with these regulations,

however, self-builders should tread carefully before choosing these rooflights as the four panes of glass will be significantly heavier than a normal window and may require a crane for installation, dependent on the project and its available access.

Rooflights that offer a U-value of 1.6 or below with triple glazing can be cheaper and easier to install, so individuals should research this thoroughly before selecting their chosen product.

They should also investigate the rooflight's frame as latest innovations have led to the creation of sleek aluminium frames that feature in built insulation for maximum thermal efficiency,

without compromising on aesthetics.

The overall visual appeal of the rooflight is just as important as its performance, so self-builders shouldn't feel they're having to compromise on aesthetics for greater thermal efficiency.

There are a range of innovative flat, pitched and circular rooflights and pyramid roof lanterns available with low U-values, while also offering attractive and effective designs. Streamlined aluminium frames can maximise the natural light that can enter the property as traditional timber frames may often be quite bulky and take up more space within the ceiling.

Some aluminium frames enable up to 49 per cent more natural light to enter a room due to flush fitting against the ceiling's plaster, providing one of the most contemporary and stylish solutions available.

By selecting innovative building products that place high performance, lower energy output and quality aesthetics at the forefront of their design, self-builders can create a property that embraces style and substance in equal measures.

*Vanessa Howard is chief marketing officer at Roof Maker*

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



# Recent launches from BLM British Lead

**B**LM British Lead are the leading UK manufacturer of British Standard Rolled Lead Sheet and supplier of a wide range of Lead ancillary products.

Being part of ECOBAT Technologies Group, the world's largest producer and recycler of Lead, ensures BLM's Rolled Lead Sheet is manufactured using 100 per cent recycled raw material, making it one of the most sustainable building materials.

The combination of internal delivery vehicle fleet and external logistic partners, supported by the company's collection and distribution depot in Glasgow gives complete nationwide coverage and enhanced lead times.

BLM British Lead supply a full range of ancillary products to provide their clients with everything required to complete a vast range of applications from basic flashings to the most complex Leadwork detail.

A new brand launched to the market in 2018 is BLM Roofing Tools, a unique collaboration between BLM British Lead and Monument Tools, specialising in high quality leadwork & roofing tools.

BLM Roofing Tools offer a comprehensive range including lead dressers, shaping sticks, bossing mallets, chase wedges and many more. The range of tools is ideal for all applications from basic flashings through to the most complex Leadwork detail.

All BLM Roofing Tools products are made in Britain and come with a lifetime material defects warranty.



Russ Taylor, Sales Development Manager at BLM, said: "With continued product development a priority, the range will become more diverse and specialised in its nature allowing us to meet the uncompromising requirements of leadwork and roofing contractors."

To find out more about the range and to order online please visit the BLM website.

BLM strengthened support to users and installers of its products in 2017 with the launch of their Get Lead! App, which provides an extensive reference guide for users at all levels of skill and experience, with features including a stockist locator, calculators and step by step video guides covering the installation of common Leadwork applications as well as the installation of BLM's key ancillary products.

The stockist locator enables users to search for their nearest BLM British Lead outlet by current location or postcode. Search results are listed by closest proximity, with additional contact information and the ability to call or email the stockist directly from the app.

The GetLead! app provides detailed information on the wide range of Rolled Lead Sheet and Lead ancillary products offered by BLM; their features and appropriate applications. It also covers

the technical aspects of Rolled Lead Sheet, such as quality, weight, sizing and correct use.

Basic Fitting Guides designed to assist with the installation of Lead Sheet in a range of applications including flashings, valleys, gutters and flat roofing are available to view, download and share from the app.

In addition, some really handy tools are included; a piece weight calculator to assist with costs and estimating and a roof pitch calculator allowing users to find the minimum lap required for certain applications.

The app is available to download free of charge for both Apple and Android devices.

BLM are fully committed to the safety of its customers and recently launched a safety awareness campaign, Stay Safe with Lead.

The campaign aims to encourage users of Lead Sheet to take the right precautions to protect themselves and others when working with Lead. To support Stay Safe with Lead campaign, they have developed health & safety tips to ensure end customers are fully aware of the recommended safe work practices when working with Lead.

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Building Products



## Slates complement selfbuild design



Good quality and modern aesthetics are perfectly combined in the fibre cement slate roof of a selfbuild residential property, thanks to the installation of **Cembrit** Jutland fibre cement slates. The property has been constructed to feature a modern style and character that blends into the surrounding environment. Local builders merchant, James Burrell supplied roofing contractor, Wilkinson Roofing with Cembrit Jutland fibre cement slates. Jutland slates feature a smooth surface and are pre-holed, square edged and lightweight. They do not need to be graded and sorted like natural slates. These qualities combine to make them easy to handle and install and an ideal solution for a fast-track construction environment.

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

## Radnor Oak create beautiful oak buildings



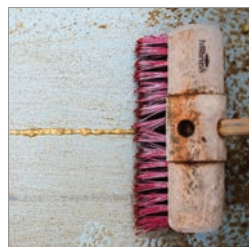
**Radnor Oak** is a specialist in the design and manufacture of free standing oak framed buildings, including oak framed Garages & Outbuildings, Annexes & Garden Lodges, Gazebos, Pavilions and Home Offices. The finest green oak is selected on quality and grade, creating incredibly strong and beautiful buildings.

"The whole process was perfect, from initially seeing your site on the web, to using your drawings and illustrations in our

application to obtain planning permission. The quality of the wood and the way it all went together was impressive. The finished project is 101 per cent."

01544 260727 [www.radnoroak.co.uk](http://www.radnoroak.co.uk)

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safe working platform. The underside is protected with the smooth coating that not only protects against damage but also makes the board easy to slide into position.

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## MgO SIP for all your building needs



**Superior SIPs** are a new, exciting evolved MgO SIP build system. Tried and tested in the UK to offer a faster, more affordable improved solution to anyone wishing to undertake a build project from self builders to homeowners and the solution offers a cost effective avenue for property developers.

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# The simplicity of SIPs

Paul Newman of Kingspan Timber Solutions explains the simple and compelling concept behind SIPs (Structural Insulated Panels), and why you should consider them in the construction of your new home

**M**asonry, SIPs, timber frame, ICF, straw bale, oak frame – the list of build systems available to those building a new home is long and making the choice can be daunting, even before one starts to consider the variants and hybrids that different manufacturers can offer.

In addition to the important considerations of aesthetics, construction cost and energy efficiency, design flexibility, speed of build and space efficiency should all be considered when selecting the build system for your new home as they all have a potentially lasting impact on its performance and desirability.

SIPs offer a simple and highly adaptable construction solution which can be used to create energy efficient homes with flexible open plan living spaces. They can also be used to build homes where the customer wishes to exceed the requirements of the Building Regulations or even to meet the highest levels of energy performance, including the demanding AECB Building Standard and Passivhaus.

## WHAT ARE SIPs?

SIPs are a genuinely modern method of construction, manufactured offsite in a quality controlled factory environment. SIPs consist of two sheets of oriented strand board (OSB) sandwiched around a rigid insulation core. The thickness and thermal performance of the core can be varied to achieve different panel performance levels. Thicker panels naturally achieve better U-values.

The overall thermal performance of the basic panel is easy to improve by the addition of extra insulation to either the internal or external face, and normally this is the best route to take when seeking lower U-values as it brings with it the additional benefit of reduced thermal bridging (the amount of solid timber or steel that crosses from outside to inside of the structure).

Thermal bridging is a significant component of heat loss in modern buildings, and systems that offer improved



Images: Kingspan SIPs show home built to Passivhaus standard in Cambridgeshire

performance are preferable. As Building Regulations continue to improve in the future, thermal bridging will only ever become a more important component when it comes to heat loss.

## THE BENEFITS

Despite the obvious energy efficiency benefits of reduced thermal bridging I often think that the major performance benefit of SIPs is the ease with which excellent levels of air-tightness can be achieved ( $<3 \text{ m}^3/\text{m}^2/\text{hr @Pa}$ ). For example, the Kingspan TEK Building System is manufactured with 15 mm OSB and a rigid urethane core of either 110 mm or 140 mm. The 15 mm OSB helps improve reduce air leakage and the high performance urethane insulation provides enhanced thermal performance. As a business we have constructed over 500 dwellings that achieve better than  $1.5 \text{ m}^3/\text{m}^2/\text{hr @Pa}$ .

Aside from low U-values, reduced thermal bridging and excellent air-tightness, one of the less obvious benefits of an energy-efficient building envelope constructed using high performance insulation products is the

larger floor area that results from thinner construction elements. On small sites, this can provide a significant increase in value of the completed build and arguably more importantly improve "livability".

SIP structures are nearly always designed using 3D CAD systems. These help greatly when creating geometrically complex structures and invariably reduce the number of design errors in all buildings by enabling easier identification of potential 'clashes' in the construction. Once the design has been completed the panels for your home will be factory cut to its unique requirements and then delivered to site. If access to site is good then individual panels can be pre-fabricated in the factory into larger wall and roof elements to further reduce construction time – we do this with most of the SIP buildings we construct; only on the most difficult to access sites do we find it necessary to deliver individual panels direct to site.

The highly airtight nature of buildings constructed with a SIPs envelope makes mechanical ventilation essential in order to maintain a constant flow of fresh air within the property. MVHR (mechanical





ventilation with heat recovery) units use the heat from the outgoing stale air to warm incoming fresh air, further reducing the property's heating demand and creating a fresh and comfortable indoor environment. It is important that duct routes for MVHR systems are taken into account when the structure is designed.

Once the panels arrive onsite, the SIPs structure can usually be erected with no adjustment to individual panel elements, providing a highly predictable,

dry build program which can be completed within a matter of weeks; typically structures will be handed over to customers in three to six weeks. Once the shell of the building has been erected, and windows fitted and tape-sealed, the property is weathertight and internal fit out work can begin at the same time as external works, reducing both the length and cost of the building process.

Self-building can be a daunting

process, with so many important decisions to make at every stage. SIPs offer a tried and tested solution for creating homes which are not only meet your design requirements, but are also simple to construct and particularly energy efficient, giving you peace of mind both for the short and long-term.

*Paul Newman is self build director at Kingspan Timber Solutions*



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# UPCYCLED & UNIQUE

Natalie Lockwood, interior designer and owner of studio and blog Little Mill House, discusses the current upcycling trend, and how you can embrace it to bring a distinctive look and a greener interior

Upcycling has become as mainstream in recent years as a trip to IKEA for homeowners hunting down affordable ways to stylishly decorate their rooms. It became a huge trend off the back of the vintage movement a couple of years ago, when buying a second hand bargain chair and painting (or even 'decoupage') – it was the thing to do!

The trend to rework something old, to make it fit into your own personal style is a great development in the interior design world as it makes homes much more creative, unique and sustainable.

Second-hand stores, charity shops and

online auction sites are great place to find the perfect piece of furniture to upcycle. Focus on hunting down a piece that is the perfect shape and size for your space – and once you've found it, creating the perfect finish with paint and wax.

For an on-trend rustic look, there is a huge choice of paint waxes and oils to maintain and protect natural character. If the industrial vibe is more appealing, a metallic effect will be ideal. For a more contemporary or luxurious interior design scheme, you're not limited to buying new – upcycling can still work as an affordable option. You can give an old piece of furniture a luxe look on a budget with marble or granite effect spray paint.

## NO LIMITS

Upcycling isn't limited to second-hand or vintage pieces of wooden furniture.

Giving a new lease of life to larger items in the home is a much more sustainable and affordable option than buying new.

A wardrobe is a huge part of the bedroom's design and a big investment. To give an old wardrobe an update, look at wallpapering it in a coordinating design to the rest of the room.

The kitchen is another space that can easily be revamped by upcycling – paint the cupboards a different shade or create an eclectic look by switching out top cupboards for open, reclaimed wood shelves.

Tile paint is also seeing a bit of a movement in the upcycling world, and can be a lifesaver when you can't bear the sight of an old bathroom but don't have the budget for a full refit. Adding some reclaimed wood pieces can also create a modern rustic look (as pictured).



Pallet wood is the most versatile option as it is lightweight, short in length and paints up well.

## ACCESSORISING

Home accessories are an important element of any space as they complete the look, bringing together the colour scheme and adding personality to the space.

Often overlooked as an option when funds are running low towards the end of a large project, accessories can be upcycled in a matter of minutes, giving maximum impact for a very small amount of outlay and time. Spray-painting second-hand ornaments, vases or a candlestick is a simple way to update the items and bring them into your colour scheme.

The presumption that upcycling can only be done on 'preloved' items is a







## *Second-hand stores, charity shops and auction sites are great places to find the perfect piece to upcycle*

distant memory in 2018. Love the shape and style of a piece in a shop but can't find it in the right colour? Bring it home and spray it up, there's bound to be the ideal colour at any local DIY store.

You can also apply the same thinking to practical items that can come in a selection of quite mundane colours and finishes. I recently created a climbing wall in a child's bedroom design, but instead of leaving the climbing holds in the usual clashing primary colours I painted them with neon tester pots to make the wall a stylish and fun feature in the room.

### **HARDWARE**

Changing the handles or hinges on a dated piece of furniture is a simple trick to upcycle an item without the need to pick up a paintbrush. You can be creative with what you use to replace the old handles

too – while new and stylish hardware is easily available online, a champagne cork would make a kitchen cupboard a conversation piece with minimal effort! Switching up the hardware on a piece is also a great way to make a mass produced, flat pack piece of furniture look more expensive.

Upcycling old or bargain homeware into the perfect piece for your home, whatever your interior design style is, has become something most of us are open to trying, in an age where the sustainability of everything we do/use is becoming more important and our budgets are becoming increasingly stretched.

Upcycling is going to play a huge factor in how the next generation of homeowners decorate, so let's embrace this new movement and create an era of homes filled with personality!

# Old Pump House Retains Industrial Heritage

**Y**eoman Rainguard rainwater systems were used to help reintroduce an industrial heritage style to The Old Pump House in Warton.

Originally erected in 1923 as a water pumping station for Atherstone and surrounding villages and decommissioned in the late 1980s, the pump house was then bought in the early 90s and after a scheme for a hotel development fell through was converted into a home. The property was then sold in 2015 to current owners Ian and Karen Callender.

"Though the pump house had undergone a complete transformation into a residential property the previous owners, whilst carrying out the renovation to their own preferences, in our opinion designed out some of the industrial heritage. When we purchased the property, it was our intention to

restore some of these features," Ian explained.

Wanting to replace the white plastic gutters and downpipes at the front of the house with a rainwater system that would reflect such qualities, various avenues were searched. The result of which was Yeoman Rainguard whose XL Aluminium range ticked all the boxes when it came to style, ease of installation and durability whilst also being cost effective.

"It was great to have an expert on hand, in the form of Yeoman Rainguard's Area Sales Manager, to discuss options and fitting requirements as well as them carrying out a site survey in order to provide a no risk supply of all the components," said Ian.

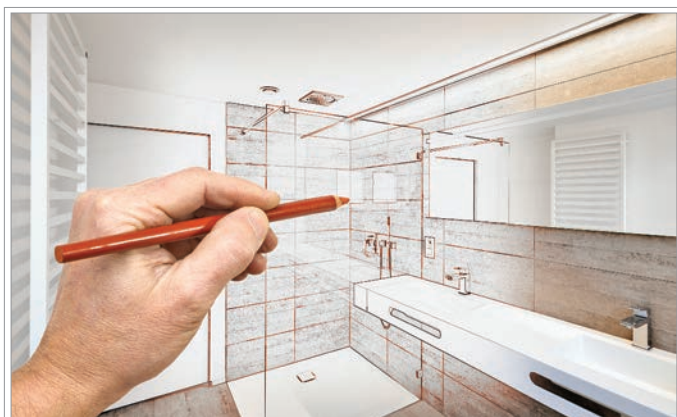
Yeoman Rainguard 130 x 100mm deep flow half round XL Aluminium gutters were installed giving real impact to the house frontage. 100mm dia.



downpipes were added below Cast Aluminium Motif Hoppers helping to further emphasise the desired effect.

Finished in a durable yet stylish black polyester coating the aluminium rainwater system will provide the house with 30 + years of maintenance free service.

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**[www.rainguard.co.uk](http://www.rainguard.co.uk)**



## Get creative with colour PVC panelling

**Freefoam** announce the launch of a brand new colour visualiser – an online tool to help choose colour options for the Geopanel internal panelling range. Being able to visualise how the colour and pattern of an internal panel appears full size is a critical part of the decision making process. Freefoam's Geopanel visualiser does just that. An image of a bathroom enables users to simply select from any panel size and colour option and superimpose into the room setting to give an instant representation of the finished look. With a wide range of over thirty different colours in the Geopanel range the visualiser gives users the ability to experiment with any number of different colour options and bring colour to life in a bathroom environment. Geopanel customers can now really push the boundaries of design and creativity and make an informed decision without any of the risk. Geopanel decorative panels offer significant benefits to the home improvement and building industry. Time is money and Geopanel saves both with its quick and easy fit - no drying time and grouting necessary – so work can often be completed in just one day. The perfect alternative to tiles in bathrooms and kitchens.

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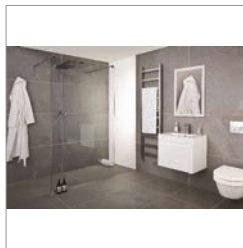
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## Sleek with no leaks



"A few manufacturers have attempted to create something similar but, in our opinion, Abacus Elements has really nailed it with this clever design making it one of the best wetroom trays we have seen." Roger Bisby, Skill Builder. Designed to create sleek, stylish wetrooms, the Infinity single-fall wetroom tray by **Abacus Elements** is the only product of its kind on the market today where the slopes of the tray former and drain are fully integrated and sealed. This ensures straightforward design installation of a leak-free, secure wetroom which oozes class. The Infinity single-fall wetroom tray helps achieve a subtle style statement and a minimalist look as the tiles fall seamlessly into the wall.

[www.abacus-bathrooms.co.uk](http://www.abacus-bathrooms.co.uk)

## Clean paint solutions from Crown Trade



As well as providing colour, paint should also provide protection which is why paint brand **Crown Trade** has extended its Clean Extreme range to offer specifiers a trio of high performance products to help combat the common problems of dirt, mould and bacteria. The water-based range offers three quick drying and low odour solutions to creating clean and hygienic surfaces and features Clean Extreme Anti-Bacterial Scrubbable Matt, Clean Extreme Stain Resistant Scrubbable

Matt and Clean Extreme Mould Inhibiting Scrubbable Matt. The full Clean Extreme range is also available in a high performance, stain-resistant, durable and washable Acrylic Eggshell mid sheen finish.

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



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# Fires & Fireplaces Showcase



## Capital Fireplaces

By the year 2022, all newly designed wood burning stove appliances that are verified by HETAS must meet the new requirements to be cleaner and more efficient to help tackle the major sources of air pollution in the UK. Solid fuel burning in homes is the largest contributor at 38 per cent of the total PM 2.5 emissions. Capital Fireplaces is committed to meeting the future stringent efficiency and emission limits sooner than is required. Therefore the company is proud to launch its new range of A+ ERP 2022 compliant stoves. Homeowners with a Capital ECO stove will reduce emissions by at least 85 per cent when compared to open fires and non-defra exempt stoves.

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

## Chilli Penguin Stoves

Pictured is the 5kW Short Penguin.

This little penguin can fit into a standard builders opening but is equally happy free standing.

It has clean contemporary lines, stainless steel handles and is available in six colours.

It is suitable for burning in a smoke control area. It has a clean burn system to maximise the view of the fire. Small, simple, sensational... what more could you ask for?

For more information please contact Chilli Penguin by calling or visit their website.

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



## Gazco

With Nordic style and sleek black glass, this tall and stylish stove from Gazco makes the ultimate in contemporary gas stoves. With soaring flames mirrored on all sides of the firebox and the option for modular installations, including a wall mounted version, the Loft creates an impressive focal point – and can even be controlled from the comfort of your sofa.

For those opting for Plinth and Logstore bases, there is also the choice of two other elegant finishes – either the smart Castillo grey sandstone or warm Woodgrain sandstone. For more information, please visit the website.

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



## Welcome to the Dream Team Latexplan NA!

Mapei introduce Latexplan NA, a two-part, fast setting, smoothing and levelling compound to the ever popular 'Dream Team' range of levelling compounds. Latexplan NA is a two-part, fast-setting, moisture tolerant, cement based levelling compound, suitable for levelling differences in thickness between 3mm to 10mm in one application on new and existing substrates. The versatility of Latexplan NA means it can be applied over numerous substrates, including over most existing adhesive residues including bitumen, is suitable for use onto plywood substrates and Mapeproof ESM and Mapeproof One Coat surface DPM's usually without priming. Once applied, Latexplan NA can receive light foot traffic after approximately 60 minutes and is ready to receive floor coverings after four hours, depending on the ambient temperature. Latexplan NA can also be used in conjunction with under floor heating and can be applied below surface applied damp proof membranes when pre-smoothing of uneven surfaces is required. Latexplan NA joins Latexplan Trade and Latexplan Trade Fast in the ultimate 'dream team' of levelling compounds, offering complete peace of mind for your flooring project in both residential and commercial installations.

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# Fires & Fireplaces Showcase



## Gazco

The mesmerising Skope electric fire from Gazco is now offered in two additional new portrait sizes, with tall flames and mood-enhancing lighting effects. Featuring the ChromaLight Immersive LED system, each model combines both vibrant flame effect systems and multi-colour up lighting systems to create an extraordinary visual display. The new sizes expand the Skope range to suit even more requirements, ensuring they can be fitted in any home thanks to their easy to install design.

For more information please visit the company's website.

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

## Stovax

The new woodburning and multi-fuel Vogue Midi T highline from Stovax offers a tall aesthetic with an elevated view of stunning flames. With a useful log store base, the stylish lower section matches the stove's straight edges and refined curves, and the side opening makes it easy to get access to your wood supply.

SIA Ecodesign Ready, this stove also burns so cleanly that it lowers emissions to an absolute minimum and meets future environmental regulations ahead of time.

For more information please visit the company's website.

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



## Dunsley

Design is the cornerstone of the development process at Dunsley. Design alone is not enough to give you confidence to buy. You need the knowledge that the product has quality to match it; which is why each stove leaving Dunsley's factory is quality checked at each stage of production, ensuring that the product you purchase is a total delight for you. The Highlander has been developed using the best burning technology to give you a stove with cleaner burn and high efficiencies of up to 84 per cent. The Air Wash System has been designed to keep the glass clean to give a full view of the superb flame pattern.

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



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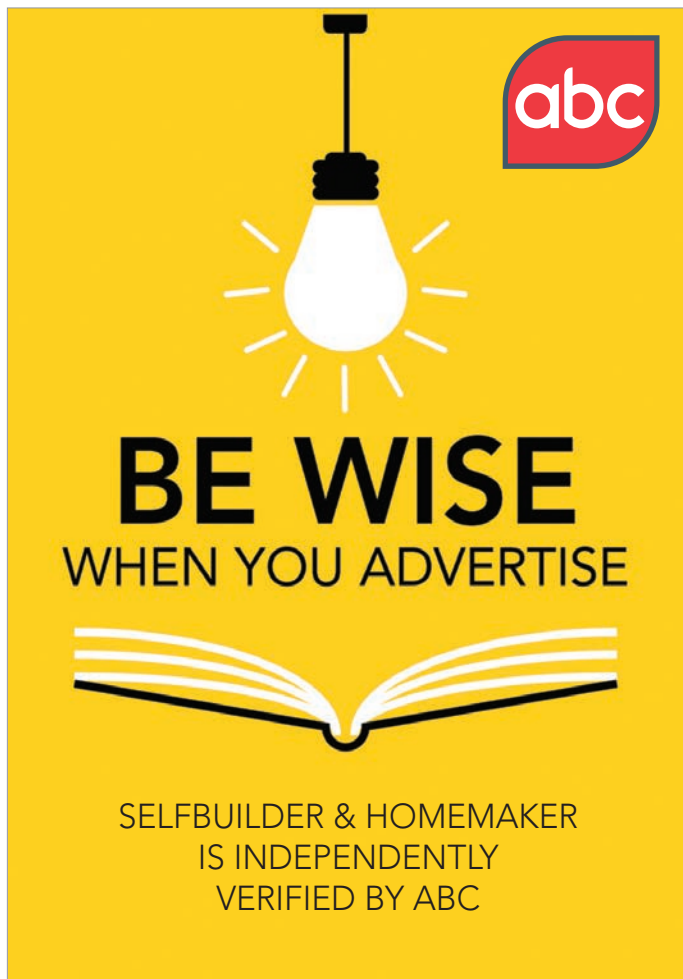


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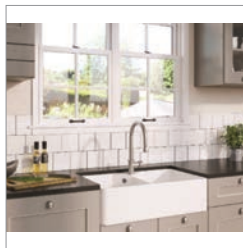


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## BLANCO introduces new ceramic sink



Traditional farmhouse style with a modern twist; **BLANCO** VILLAE ceramic sinks and VICUS® taps are the latest additions to the BLANCO family. Designed for both traditional and modern design schemes, the sinks come in three bowl formats. The large 795 single and 795 double bowl require standard apron installation, while the one-and-a-half bowl, VILLAE 340/180-U, can be both inset and undermount. The sinks are stain and acid resistant, colour-safe and fully heat resistant. Designed to

complement the new ceramic sinks is the VICUS® range of taps. The family consists of the VICUS® twin lever, the VICUS® bridge twin lever, and the VICUS® single lever spray.

01923 635 200 [www.blanco.co.uk](http://www.blanco.co.uk)

## Keller Kitchens' new design



The latest model from **Keller** is the Sturdy Classical kitchen which has been launched to offer customers a simple palette from which they can craft a trendy industrial-styled scheme; at an attractive price.

The melamine-fronted kitchen units and carcasses come in a rustic, timber effect. Designers and homeowners can create a dream kitchen by choosing a statement brass tap or a stunning copper light fixture

(as pictured). Also pictured, as examples, are striking bar stools and a matching black oven; design possibilities are endless. For more information, please visit Keller's website.

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



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# The joys of going bespoke

Jon Sillitoe of Burlanes Interiors discusses why self-builders should consider investing in a bespoke kitchen, explaining how it worked out for a family in Chelmsford

Your kitchen is the heart of your home, where the family congregates to eat, cook and socialise. Your kitchen tells a story of how you live and your habits and tastes. When undertaking a kitchen renovation, you should never underestimate the importance of good design and practicality, and you should work with a kitchen designer who understands you, your family and your home and lifestyle. Quite often, this service is not available when buying a modular kitchen, and is one of the many benefits of choosing a bespoke kitchen, that is designed and handmade to order.

As well as limitless design options, a bespoke kitchen is fully flexible to your home, and the space you have available. A bespoke kitchen is designed to fit your room and your lifestyle perfectly, and is usually of a premium quality, and tend to be built to last. By working with a bespoke kitchen designer, you will have a made-to-measure kitchen that is timeless, and totally unique to you and your home.

As part of an entire home renovation of their 1920s town house in Chelmsford, Essex, Sophie and Chris Hoxton created their dream kitchen by adding a side return extension to the family home. Not only did this create more space, it also opened up the back of the house, allowing natural light to flood the room. Having relocated to Chelmsford from London, the couple wanted to bring a touch of their London lifestyle to their new kitchen.

Despite working collaboratively on the design and style of the rest of the home, the couple were unsure as to what style of kitchen to purchase. They had a number of creative ideas and visions, but struggled to tie them all together. The couple had difficulty in finding an off-the-shelf kitchen that would tick all of their boxes in terms of style, layout, colour, quality and of course the proportions and dimensions of the room.



© Sarah London Photography

After lots of shopping around, Sophie and Chris decided to look into a bespoke kitchen, and commissioned Burlanes to design and build a handmade solution. "We were so unsure as to where to start with the kitchen design, and after weeks of shopping around, we popped into a local kitchen showroom that had recently opened on Springfield Road in Chelmsford, and instantly knew that they would be able to help!" says Sophie. "A home visit was arranged for the same week, and before we knew it, designs were underway!"

The initial design process was a very smooth ride, with designers able to present a galley-style kitchen, complete with bespoke storage solutions, a classic larder unit and even a quaint handmade table and bench seating area, all of which were exactly to the couple's taste. Opting for a shaker cabinet, with handpainted Tulipwood doors and antique silver handles and drawer pulls, the kitchen's

*A bespoke kitchen is fully flexible to your home*

style is classic and timeless.

Totally bespoke and made-to-measure, each cabinet is handmade to order, meaning all available space is maximised. Sophie was so pleased with the initial designs that with just a few minor tweaks to the positioning of the sink, delivery was scheduled for six weeks time. "They understood what we wanted completely, and were able to design the kitchen we had always dreamed of from a few rambling ideas of ours!" she says. Burlanes' own installation team were able

to complete the entire renovation of the kitchen, including the initial fitting, painting and decorating, plumbing and electrical works.

The couple worked closely with Burlanes to select the perfect colour palette for the room, tying in the classic kitchen style with the contemporary feel of the rest of the home. The final chosen colour for the kitchen cabinetry is ‘Bond Street’ by Mylands – London’s oldest paint manufacturer. Combined with the Silestone Quartz worksurface in ‘Lagoon’ and the rustic, authentic brick slips on the walls, the couple’s new kitchen suits their style and needs perfectly.

Despite the initial design process running so smoothly, there was a major stumble in the road when the site survey was arranged with the installation team, prior to manufacture of the furniture. The new cooktop that Sophie and Chris had chosen would sit higher than the original cooker that was installed, meaning the new design layout of having the cooktop within the chimney breast would not work, as it would sit far too close to the original wooden lintel; a huge fire risk.

Both Sophie and Chris loved the new layout, and it made perfect sense for the cooktop to sit within the chimney breast. Not only would it frame the cooktop



perfectly, it also meant the extraction could be directed straight out of the kitchen, so a solution had to be found. Working closely with the installation team, the designs of the cooker surround were tweaked slightly, and the solution was found: move the original lintel further up the chimney breast to allow for a better air flow, eliminating any heat issues. Although this would involve further building works prior to

the installation of the kitchen, it was a fairly straightforward procedure. Once the lintel had been moved, and all associated works within the kitchen were complete, the installation of the cabinetry and appliances was underway, with all works completed in just three weeks.

*Jon Sillitoe is a design consultant at Burlanes Interiors*

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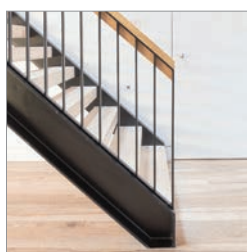


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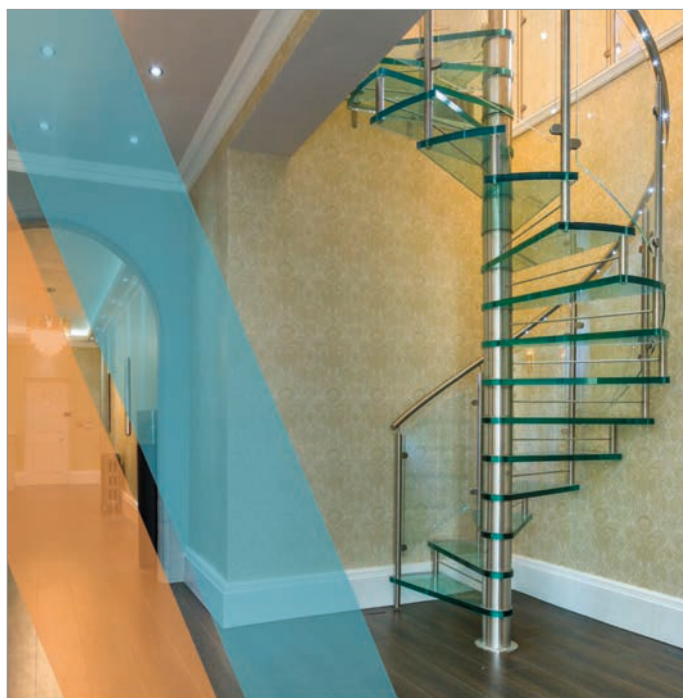
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