PLANNING | FINANCE | DESIGN | CONSTRUCTION | PRODUCTS | INTERIORS

selfbuilder + homemaker

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It's what's underneath that counts



PUBLISHER

Anthony Parker

MANAGING EDITOR

James Parker

EDITORIAL COORDINATOR

Tom Boddy

CONTRIBUTORS

Anna Reynolds Heather Dixon Jess Unwin

STUDIO MANAGER

Mikey Pooley

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Georgia Musson Kimberley Musson

ACCOUNT MANAGERS

Sheehan Edmonds Paul Field

SALES EXECUTIVES

Nathan Hunt Steve Smith

PR EXECUTIVES

Suzanne Easter Kim Friend

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Jane Spice

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Simon Reed

PUBLISHED BY



Cointronic House, Station Road, Heathfield East Sussex, TN21 8DF

ADVERTISING & ADMINISTRATION

01435 863500 info@netmagmedia.co.uk www.sbhonline.co.uk

EDITORIAL FEATURES

jparker@netmagmedia.co.uk

PRESS RELEASES

editorial@netmagmedia.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION & CIRCULATION ENQUIRIES

info@netmagmedia.co.uk





FROM THE EDITOR...

It's a very worrying time for everyone, with new cases of COVID-19 cropping up every day, and the risks now well established for older people and those with specific health conditions.

We don't currently know just how serious the spread will be here, although containment measures are now seeing sport, leisure and business events being postponed or cancelled. In the meantime, many are self-isolating and hoping that they can get the resources they need, despite others' panic-buying.

We'd like to just focus on the inspiring and informative content in Selfbuilder + Homemaker, but it's impossible to ignore the gravity of the situation. It affects everything, and there's a shock factor when what was a distant, albeit worrying news story suddenly crashes into every aspect of your own life, making people adapt or curtail all aspects of their lives massively.

Should we 'keep calm and carry on,' or put ourselves on a war footing, rationing key daily items, and preparing for possibly severe financial hits? Businesses are taking hits left, right and centre, so it's important for that reason alone, not to mention our mental health, that where we can, a semblance of normal life is maintained. However just meeting a friend for a coffee - even with DIY hand sanitiser at the ready - is now a no-no, so social media may actually prove its worth.

We are thankful in these circumstances to be able to bring you colourful stories of self-builders triumphing over their own obstacles. Coronavirus may be of a different magnitude, but I hope this magazine at least offers a welcome distraction.

JAMES PARKER

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

(DETAILS CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS)

IDEAL HOME SHOW

27 MARCH - 13 APRIL, LONDON www.idealhomeshow.co.uk

PASSIVHAUS WORKSHOP

3 - 4 APRIL, ST NEOTS

www.nsbrc.co.uk/passiv-workshops

ASK AN ARCHITECT

18 APRIL, SWINDON www.nsbrc.co.uk/ask-an-architect

THE SELF BUILD COURSE

9 - 11 MAY, SWINDON

www.nsbrc.co.uk/the-self-build-course

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ON THE COVER... © HOWARD FAMILY (PAGE 14)

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Make windows a safe bet

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Right as rain

Sally Moores of Yeoman Rainguard outlines the choices of metal rainwater system available to self-builders, and how to decide which is best for your project

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The climate challenge

Paddy Leighton of Icynene UK explains how new high performance insulation systems can contribute towards combatting climate change

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Contemporary kitchens

With new kitchen trends continuously emerging, Wren Kitchens' Darren Watts reveals his top 10 trends for 2020

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Bound to be a success

James Newton of Sureset explains why a resin-bound driveway could be the perfect choice for your build, whether your priority is something with kerb appeal or practical features

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Home Styling: Storage solutions for awkward spaces

Megan Baker, head of design at My Fitted Bedroom, discusses how to make the most of awkward bedroom spaces, for maximum storage

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Interior Inspiration: Living rooms

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Ask the Expert: Making the most of MMC

Oliver Rehm of Baufritz looks at the recent rise of offsite 'modern methods of construction' and answers self-builders' questions around their various benefits

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A family affair

Many parents would feel sceptical about letting their offspring design their future home. But for one couple in Liverpool, handing over the reins to their architect daughter turned out to be the best decision they made

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Recycled retreat

Almost everything was recycled or reinvented in Sally and John Medforth's rustic rural retreat, which included a transformed pig shed

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Daring to be different

Ex-headteacher Joan Morters opted for a timber-built passive house system and a roof shaped like butterfly wings for her retirement home

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Reclaiming control

Rob Lea had always wanted to design and build his own home, and convert an old barn, so when the opportunity came to do both - using reclaimed materials - he jumped at the chance



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STORAGE SOLUTIONS FOR AWKWARD SPACES

Megan Baker, head of design at My Fitted Bedroom, discusses how to make the most of awkward bedroom spaces, for maximum storage

edrooms come in all different shapes and sizes, and awkward spaces are a common problem for many homeowners.

Although designing a bedroom that has a non-conventional layout is always a challenge, a well-designed space can revolutionise a room, making it tidy, clutter-free and all together more relaxing.

Also, with space at a premium in many homes, transforming nooks and crannies, eaves and alcoves from a frustrating 'waste of space' into an organised wardrobe or cupboard can prove to be a great investment for homeowners.

Whether investing in a loft conversion, building a property with high ceilings and sloping walls, exploiting the benefits of a bay window, careful consideration needs to be given to the space available in any room, in order to make the most of every inch.

The importance of precise planning and meticulous design should never be underestimated to create the perfect bedroom – especially when it's a complex shape or has structural recesses (that can be problematic). Rather than ignore or try to cover up the quirkier attributes of a



room, you can easily make them work in your favour.

COMPLEMENTING PERIOD FEATURES

When renovating an older house, it's often difficult to fit freestanding furniture around the sought-after original features of period properties, and the result can feel cluttered and mismatched. Built-in furniture, on the other hand, can be designed to work around any shape and size of alcove – meaning original fireplaces and features can stay put.

Fitted furniture works perfectly in traditional bay windows, providing a stunning seating area with ample storage underneath – ideal for housing those duvets, pillows and bedding that otherwise take up valuable cupboard space.



Fitted furniture is not only bespoke in terms of structural design but also in style and colour – another reason the tailor-made approach is ideal for period properties. Unlike many off-the-shelf freestanding ranges, there are hundreds of shades and finishes available, meaning bespoke furniture can be designed to complement existing features and colour schemes.

LOFTY IDEAS

When it comes to awkward spaces in the home, angles don't get much more complicated than attic areas.

When considering how to make the most of space in loft conversions, angled





sliding wardrobe doors are the perfect solution. There are some stunning ranges of sliding wardrobe door systems available that can be tailored to fit almost any shape or size, custom built to a room's exact specifications and installed to ensure they fit each slope and angle perfectly. This means that every inch of space can be utilised.

CORNERSTONES OF STYLE

Corner wardrobes are some of our bestselling products. These designs create continuous storage space across multiple walls, and when fitted floor to ceiling, don't waste an inch of floorspace.

Clever door opening solutions, such as a corner 'stable door', are incorporated to best suit the space available and well thought out internals will further maximise the space.

Dressing tables can be incorporated

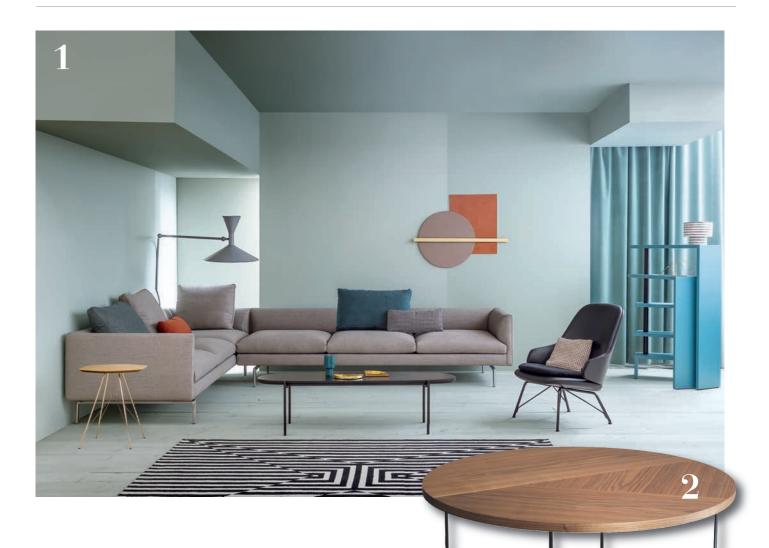
into corner units to further provide more seamless furniture solutions – ideal for those who like a designated area for getting ready in the morning.

SMALL BUT PERFECTLY FORMED

Small rooms need big ideas when it comes to storage. The key considerations here are to utilise underbed and overhead storage to turn vertical space into useful square footage and squeeze open shelving into almost anywhere to eke out every inch of space.

As smaller rooms are often used by children and teens, televisions and game consoles can be integrated into the side panels of wardrobes.

february/march 2020 www.sbhonline.co.uk



INTERIOR INSPIRATION:

LIVING ROOMS

When it comes to getting interior decorright, the living room is one of the most important areas in the house, because it tends to be where people spend a large proportion of their time. Here we round up some on-trend items for relaxing as well as providing great function, to help inspire your living room's design







1. Made in Italy by Go Modern Furniture, the Flamingo Corner Sofa is part of a modular system, consisting of several modules that allow you to adapt the sofa to your needs. The feet are aluminium alloy, and are available in the following finishes: polished aluminium, black lacquered, natural nickelsatin or black nickel-satin. The sofa is priced at £9700.

www.gomodern.co.uk

2. Designed by Habitat's in-house team, the Coralie walnut coffee table combines three pieces of figured veneer in a design that makes a feature of the wood's grain. Finished with a matt lacquer for durability, the table has a slim black powder coated metal base to contrast to the thick wooden top. This table is priced at £195.

www.habitat.co.uk

3. The Rita Accent Velvet Armchair by Homescape Online features a high back with lower back cushioning and armrests and measures 101 cm tall, supported by solid wood legs. The chair is available in a choice of colours including grey, dark green and navy. It is priced at £349.99.

www.homescapesonline.com

- 4. Providing a storage solution for living rooms, dining areas and open-plan spaces, the Berkeley Media Unit by Atkin and Thyme has plenty of room for the TV, music systems, games consoles and all the paraphernalia that comes with them. It is made from acacia wood and MDF with iron legs and an Indian Black Stone top, and priced at £499. www.atkinandthyme.co.uk
- 5. A stylish piece for both storing and displaying your personal items, the Three Tier Glass Coffee Table by Rockett St George can sit in any room of the house. Made from glass, hammered steel and a colourful concrete base, this multi-functional low coffee table is priced at £1150.

www.rockettstgeorge.co.uk

6. MY Furniture's Ravello Shelf Unit features a handcrafted frame made from steel with a brass electro plated finish and distinctive shelves finished with diamond pattern walnut veneer. The unit is inspired by mid-century Italian design and is part of the complete Ravello living and dining room collection. It is priced at £419.99.

www.my-furniture.com

ASK THE EXPERT

Making the most of MMC

Oliver Rehm of kit house provider Baufritz discusses the increasing move towards offsite 'modern methods of construction' (MMC), why self-builders

10

should consider it, and what offsite manufacturers can do to help them on their journey

WHY IS THE UK EMBRACING OFFSITE HOUSEBUILDING METHODS AGAIN?

The UK has woken up to the benefits of using prefabrication to deliver modern houses. As building standards become stricter in relationship to energy efficiency and sustainability, manufacturers are in a good position to meet the demand. At Baufritz we feel the legislation changes needed in the development of new building standards strongly play into modern manufacturing methods.

WHAT MAJOR TRENDS HAVE YOU NOTICED RECENTLY AMONG CONSUMERS?

Traditionally single building firms would construct housing estates containing a large number of almost identical buildings, but consumers are beginning to change their view of what a house should look like. They believe that rather than accepting a generic build, which doesn't meet their requirements, they should be able to define what they want and get their build delivered on time

and on budget. There's been a lot of negative press relating to quality issues associated with traditional building methods – consumers are waking up to the fact that prefabricated 'kit' houses are adhering to industry defined quality standards.

WHAT SERVICES DO KIT HOUSE SUPPLIERS PROVIDE?

In most cases, they are able to deliver all aspects of a client's building project. They start by taking the conceptual ideas and developing these into architectural designs. They then support the client through the planning process. Once planning is approved, they are able to manufacture and erect the building, either as a fully 'turnkey' solution managing all aspects of construction, or just the shell made up of the walls and roof.

WHAT ARE THE KEY DIFFERENTIATORS BETWEEN BRICK AND MORTAR BUILDS AND OFFSITE CONSTRUCTION?

People assume that all offsite construction is the same, but it's quite the opposite. No two houses are the same. For example, Baufritz has developed a six-step process which allows customers to control their housebuilding journey, including a visit to our design centre as part of the building process.

Reputable kit house suppliers should be using tried and tested construction methods and materials which guarantee a quality finish. A lot of manufacturers are starting to shift to more sustainable building practices and healthier houses. We like to think of ourselves as an eco-builder, for example. Look for a supplier who uses natural materials, where the production of sustainable

A lot of manufacturers are starting to shift to more sustainable building practices and healthier houses



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ASK THE EXPERT

houses is fundamental to their ethos and they minimise waste products from the manufacturing process.

Today's new build homes should also be free from harmful chemicals, but these have unfortunately become standard in many traditional building methods. All of the materials used in the construction should be tested to ensure no harmful chemicals are present.

Finally, a good kit house supplier should also be looking to offset the carbon needed in the construction and transportation process.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES CURRENTLY FACING KIT HOUSE SUPPLIERS?

After a couple of uncertain years surrounding the nature of the future relationship between the UK and the EU, looking forward we're hopeful people will continue to recognise that timber construction really is the future. It is encouraging that the interest in eco-friendly methods of homebuilding seemingly remains unbroken.



Although MMC are often pitched to the wider housebuilding industry, where there generally seems to be a decline in the number of detached houses being built – what with building plots becoming scarce, rapid urbanisation and an ageing population – there's no reason why self-builders shouldn't consider timber construction as their first choice when building their dream home. You'll be hard pushed to find a better building system type on the market that can offer striking architecture, a high build quality, and environmental excellence.



Beyond that, a turnkey building service is often one stop from design to completion of the building, and often comes with a tailor-made annual maintenance and service contract. Moreover, it comes at a fair and fixed transparent price.

Lastly, the whole process of designing and building should be fun for everyone involved, as well as creating a responsible and sustainable environment.

Oliver Rehm is CEO of Baufritz



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Homeowners urged to find the energy to switch to renewables

Renewable energy is becoming the norm and with climate change now a very real problem more people are thinking about investing in a renewable energy source.

One question people ask when making the switch to renewable energy is how they can generate their own heat and use it efficiently. This is where underfloor heating experts **Wunda Group plc** and their rapid response, 'no need to dig up floors' Wundatherm system comes in.

With climate change targets causing uncertainty for current heating methods, choosing a solution that works with any heat source will give customers peace of mind knowing that they only have to buy once.

Wet underfloor heating is a good first step to reducing a household's carbon footprint, and while the country is still deciding on the most cost-effective way to update millions of homes it is reassuring to know that products like Wundatherm will work with both current and future resources.

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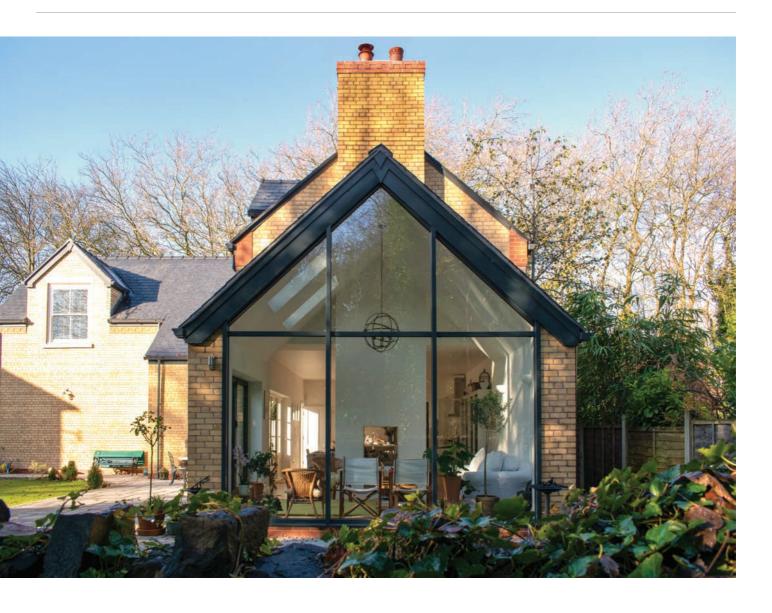
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CASE STUDY

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Many parents would feel sceptical about letting their child design their future home. But for one couple in Liverpool, handing over the reins to their daughter turned out to be the best decision they made

TEXT ANNA REYNOLDS IMAGES FAMILY'S OWN

ddie and Colette Howard had lived in a 1930s semi in Mossley Hill, a leafy suburb of Liverpool, for almost 30 years. The couple wanted to downsize, and when daughter Jess, an architect in London, suggested they do a self-build, they jumped at the chance.

"With us both being in our sixties, the idea of building a cheaper, eco-friendly house where everything would be new, really appealed," says Colette, who runs a hair salon in the city. Location was important to the couple – they didn't want to move too far away from Mossley Hill, and wanted somewhere with plenty of green space.

One morning in November 2014, when Eddie was driving past Liverpool's historic, Grade I listed Sefton Park, he noticed a 'For Sale' sign in the back garden of one of the Victorian mansion houses. "It was a small piece of land just on the periphery of the park, which is absolutely

OPPOSITE

The owners had to test a variety of brick types until the planners were happy

ABOVE

The home combines traditional features such as a slate roof with modern design elements





of brick that the house was built with. This involved testing several different options until they found the best match. In the end the couple used Austrian company Wienerberger.

"If you're going to be fortunate enough to build a house in a conservation area you've got to understand where they are coming from," says Colette. "We didn't put up a fight with the planners, we all got on well, with a bit of give and take."

After a few more submissions and a further 18 months, the planners finally agreed to the design. However the planning process had taken a lot longer than the family had anticipated. On top of the setbacks in the planning approval, Jess's busy schedule meant that the project was becoming increasingly delayed. Jess took a step back from the project, and her parents hired a locally based architect, Denovo Design, to help speed things up and put together the tender packages.

The family put the build out to tender to locally based contractors themselves. Jess admits they were slightly naïve when it came to budgeting for the project. As well as topographical and geographical surveys, the two sycamores had to be removed before any work could begin. This was an extra cost and added on time: "In hindsight we should have hired a quantity surveyor from the start to cost it all up for us."

The couple chose a local builder, Absolute

"When you are heavily involved and friendly with the builders, like I was, it can be really difficult to tell them they're doing something wrong"

Developments, that had been recommended by a friend: "They were young and really forwardthinking – we took a slight gamble, but it paid off," says Colette.

At this point Jess came back to projectmanage the construction phase. As the build got underway, the family decided to bring in a quantity surveyor to oversee the contract. "He was worth his weight in gold," says Jess. "When you are heavily involved and friendly with the builders, like I was, it can be really difficult to tell them they're doing something wrong."

Once the builders started work, things ran relatively smoothly. However, the project hit a

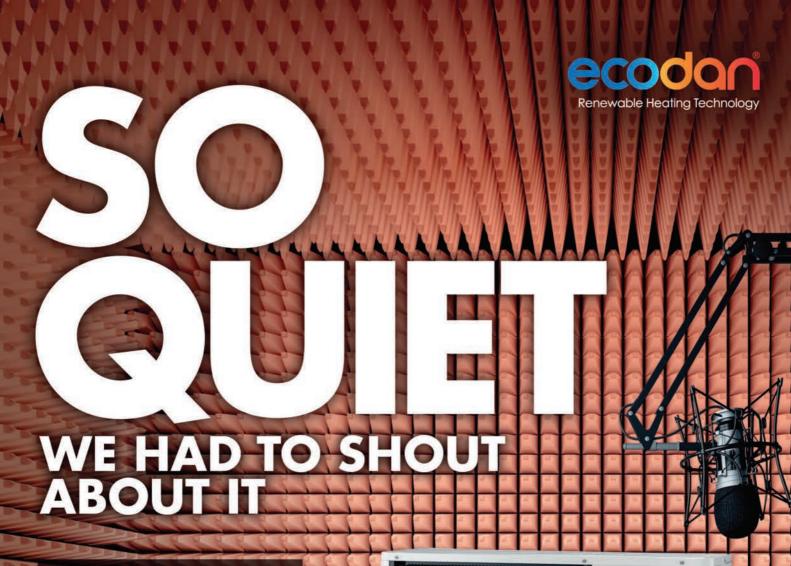
ABOVE

The pitched ceilings to bedrooms gives a pleasant feeling of height

HIGH POINT

"I am most proud of the fact that our daughter designed the house, not many people can say that."

– Colette Howard



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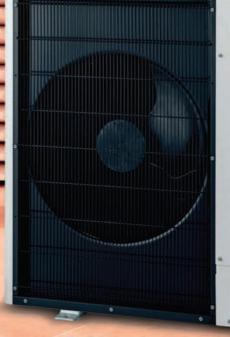
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CONTACTS/ SUPPLIERS

ARCHITEC

Jessica Donnelly, Foundation Studios www.foundationstudio.co.uk

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PAVING

Kevin Cross 07779 679909

along the top have to be aged in order to abide with conservation rules.

Colette and Eddie finally moved into their new home at the end of June 2019 – one week before Jess' wedding. On the morning of the big day Eddie and Jess' father-in-law were still laying the lawn while painters and decorators were making final touches inside. "It was chaos getting it done in time, but it was worth it to get the wedding photos!" says Jess.

The finished result is a "dream come true" for the couple, who have noticed the positive

impact the house has had on their lifestyle:
"Everything flows – there is so much light and
warmth." This has been created by a frameless
glass feature by local company GlassRooms at
the back of the house, which turns across the
eaves. As you enter the hallway from the front
door you see straight through into the garden:
"It's definitely got the wow factor," says Colette.
"It's quite dramatic."

The house boasts four bedrooms, four bathrooms including an ensuite, a pantry, open plan kitchen and diner, an orangery and a snug,



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as well as a large utility room with WC.

Jess has incorporated Victorian architecture into the smaller features of the house, including detailing on the eaves, brick arched door heads to the front entrance and garage doors, fourpane sash windows with stone lintels and a recessed tile entrance porch with level access for modern living. The arrangement of the bricks on the outside of the house is English bond, reflecting the design of the adjacent Victorian house. "I'm lucky that mum and dad had faith in me and took a step back," she says.

As you walk inside, the open, vaulted ceiling creates a real sense of height in the hallway and on the first floor, with pitched ceilings in the bedrooms and bathrooms. Each bedroom has its own walk in wardrobe and storage.

The 'L' shaped plot of land lends itself to the configuration of the house; all of the living space is at the back to maximise the light coming in from the south-facing garden. At the front of the house is the living room and snug.

The downstairs layout is open-plan and includes an orangery with a large, double-sided fireplace leading on to the kitchen/diner at the back of the house.

Eddie and Colette wanted to use local materials and trade wherever they could. The flooring in the kitchen and bathrooms was from a local company called Select. Three separate window manufacturers worked on The finished result is a "dream come true" for the couple, who have noticed the positive impact the house has had on their lifestyle

project, creating aluminium, wood and frameless windows.

With no money left at the end of the build, the couple reused most of their old furniture rather than buy new.

The house has proved a great conversation starter with the neighbours too, who walk past and compliment the house. "It's made us feel part of the community," says Colette.

Despite the ups and downs the house has proved a success all round: "It's fair to say we had our moments. It was a huge ask, but Jess came through with an amazing house."

ABOVE

The 'L' shaped plot of land lends itself to the configuration of the house

JESS' ADVICE

"If I were to do it again, I would make sure I was working part time."

COLETTE & EDDIE'S ADVICE

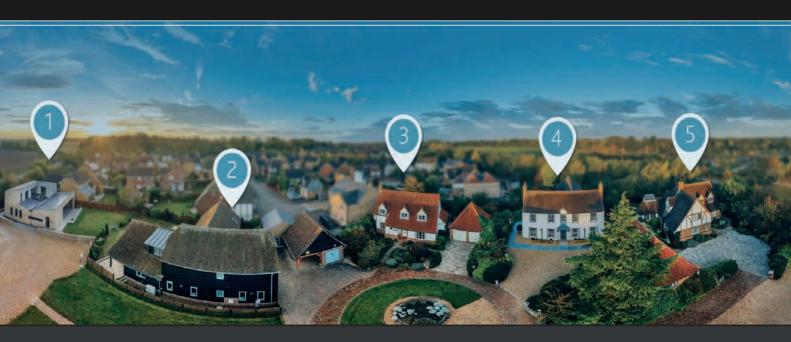
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Get wise on insurance options

Self-Build Zone discusses the different types of insurance available for self-build and renovation projects, from builders and site insurance to warranties, and explains why knowledge is so crucial

oing a self-build doesn't actually mean you have to be building your project yourself – you could have a builder, contractor, be doing it yourself, or a combination of the above. Whether it's you or a builder building your home, you need to make sure certain aspects are covered during your build.

It's important to note that you need cover even if you haven't started work. If you've purchased a plot you need public liability cover – if someone were to go onto your building plot and get injured then it means you could be liable if they wished to pursue legal action. If you have an unoccupied property you need unoccupied buildings cover, especially in the case of barn conversions or renovation projects.

When extending or renovating you home your normal home insurance will most likely not cover you, as altering the structure of your home is usually an exclusion on home insurance policies. Therefore any extension project, or renovation that includes structural changes your home, will require additional insurance.

BUILDER'S INSURANCE

While your builder or contractor may say they are 'fully insured' – and probably believe it themselves – the chances are they actually only have some form of public liability. This covers them in the event they cause damage or injury to a third party following a negligent act (something you would have to prove). What public liability doesn't cover is issues like storm damage, theft of



materials, theft of plant, arson, or 'foreseen liability' – essentially all the things you really do need covered.

Do not expect a builder or tradesman's policy to cover loss or damage to the existing structure or new works. Nor will it cover your liabilities as the owner of the property and site.

Make sure you see evidence of any policies that they do have and keep a copy if possible. Do not trust what they say – only what you see.

It's also worth remembering that in order to succeed in an action against your builder, tradesman, supplier or professional you will need to prove breach of contract or negligence against them, which can be a lengthy and very expensive process.

SITE INSURANCE

Site insurance is the insurance you need during the actual construction phase of your project. It covers you from the moment you start the build, including all your liability cover, and the existing structures onsite.

Site insurance from the right provider can cover new builds, extensions, renovations and conversions but not all providers will be able to cover for all construction methods. For this reason it's important to go direct to the providers and not rely on comparison sites.

Ask yourself, if something were to go wrong could you afford to cover the costs? Site insurance is the cover that will protect you in this instance.

STRUCTURAL WARRANTIES

A structural warranty is a not only a requirement by lenders in the UK, but also a type of protection anyone doing a self-build should consider in any case.

Even if you aren't using a lender to fund your build, if you were to attempt to sell the property in the next 10 years, the buyers would require you to have one if they are using a mortgage or



Do not expect a builder or tradesman's policy to cover loss or damage to the existing structure or new works

lender to purchase your property. It's best to arrange your warranty provision before you start, as it can cost a lot more if work has already started or even completed.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN INSURANCE PROVIDERS

If you are using an insurance provider for site insurance, and/or a warranty, you need to make sure they are backed by an A-rated insurer. When shopping for insurance and warranties you need to consider that you get what you pay for. Don't be focused on the cheapest price – what's important is what's included in the product, such as who's doing your surveys, and what their integrity is like.

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CASE STUDY

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RECYCLED RETREAT

Almost everything was recycled or reinvented in Sally and John Medforth's rustic rural retreat, which included a transformed pig shed

TEXT HEATHER DIXON **IMAGES** DAVE BURTON

hen Sally and John Medforth bought a hillside farm in Yorkshire, it came with a series of dilapidated 18th century outbuildings.

The whole lot needed renovating, but first they wanted to update the farmhouse so the family could move in before renovating the rest of the buildings at their leisure.

"We had renovated before so we knew what to expect," says Sally, who runs a holiday letting and property development business. "It was always going to be a challenge, but you accept "Our builder was brilliant at finding things most people would throw away; and creating something new"





had loads of natural character.

Before they could do anything, however, they had to get planning permission to change the use of the building from agricultural to domestic.

"There were a lot of restrictions all based around the fact that we had to keep the character of the original building intact," says Sally. "We also wanted to do most of the work ourselves. We had a fairly tight budget and we knew we

The stone walls were all sandblasted by a contractor using specialist machinery to get them clean, both inside and out, and then Sally spent weeks climbing up and down ladders, wire brushing the walls and oiling them to prevent any dust from shedding into the rooms.

By the time everything was cleared inside they were left with three stone walls defining the internal space, which they wanted to turn into a three bedroom home. The long









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building lent itself to a simple linear room layout, with bedrooms at either end and the main open plan living space in the middle.

To achieve the three bedrooms and two bathrooms they wanted, Sally and John agreed to create an upper floor at one end of the building to house a master ensuite bedroom.

They brought in builder Graham Smith to build the extra internal stud walls, and then lower the floor at one end of the building to create space for a two-storey section.

At the same time the roof height was raised in this part of the building to create enough head room for a utility and staircase on the ground floor, leading to a third bedroom and ensuite above.

The building was also re-roofed to replace rotting timbers and cracked tiles, and then fully insulated.

"We took guidance from a number of Building Regs officers during the renovation," says Sally. "We particularly needed their advice on the roof joists and insulation, because they wanted us to have four inches of Kingspan. If we were to keep the necessary gap we could only fit three inches of insulation, supplemented by a very thin additional thermal layer, to meet Regulations."

They also discovered, after skimming all the internal walls, that they would have to knock out some of the newly skimmed plaster to accommodate lights over every door – a requirement if they were to eventually let the property as a holiday destination.

They also had to compensate for a window that was positioned too high off the ground for a fire escape by fitting an escape ladder – which they turned into a feature using disused fencing.

When it came to this kind of detail, Sally was

KITCHEN

A circular dining table found in a Barker and Stonehouse sale, plus chairs found in a French market and reupholstered by Sally, sit in the open plan living-kitchen area. Tongue and groove walls define the area, with units built out of reclaimed bricks and wood painted in Annie Sloan chalk paint, and open shelves made from scaffolding boards









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"We had to buy new floorboards for the ground floor; I spent hours hammering them and gouging bits out"

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determined to keep the budget in check by using reclaimed timbers, furniture and finishes to create a natural, rustic look, including old scaffolding boards for cupboards, fence posts for window headers and banister rails, and tiles discovered on the farm for the fireplace.

"Our builder was brilliant at finding things most people would throw away and creating something new from them," says Sally. Even the bathroom fittings were ex showroom display and a basin found on an old workbench was scrubbed up to look like new.

"We had to buy new wide floorboards for the ground floor so I spent hours hammering them, gouging bits out with a screwdriver and using a small kitchen blow torch to make them look old and worn," says Sally. "Then I waxed them three times, by hand. It was a tedious job but well worth it – it looks fantastic."

Stone flags taken from another outbuilding that was demolished were re-used to add to the lived in, industrial/agricultural style of the interior

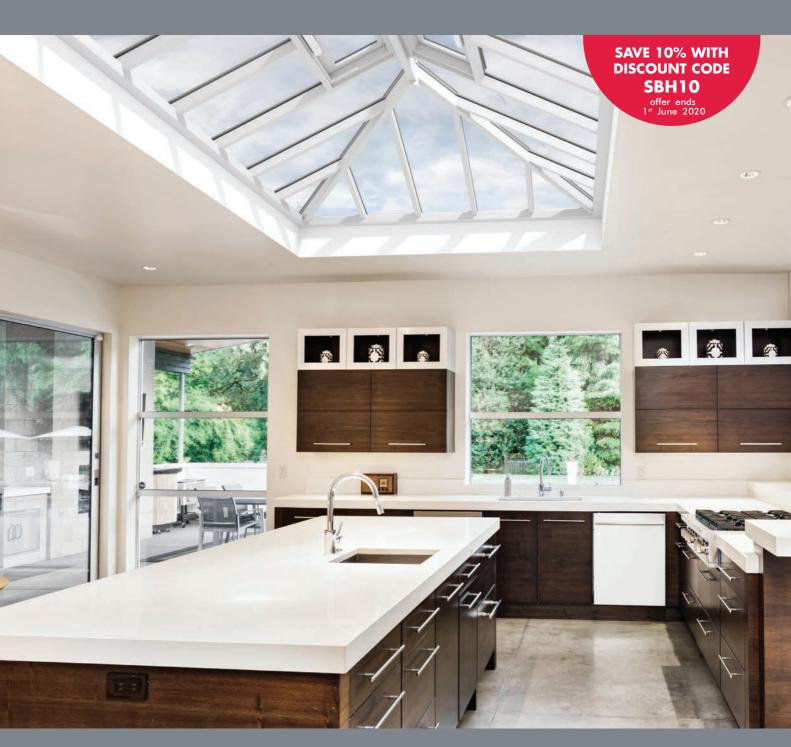
SITTING ROOM

Sally found comfortable sofas in DFS and added colourful cushions from We Love Cushions to bring a modern touch to the sitting area. She asked the joiner to make a coffee table from old scaffolding boards



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Sally spent hours hunting around to find things that other people were throwing away, and scoured the internet for bargains to create a luxurious bathroom – which became her favourite room in the property.

Throughout the converted pig shed, Sally and John have created feature walls to reflect the history of the building by leaving original stone exposed. "The natural stone is much more attractive than plaster, but it would have looked too much if we had left it everywhere," says Sally.

The remaining walls and ceiling were skimmed with fresh plaster and then joiner Jason High fitted doors and skirting boards.

"I wanted to keep the character of the building, with its deep set windows and lovely beams, but I also wanted it to look quite modern," Sally says. "There's not a lot of natural light in here so I wanted to keep the decor as light as possible and to complement the warm tones of the exposed stone."

Sally spent hours on the internet looking for bargains. She wanted the floors to be practical,

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hard wearing and easy to clean, so she used up left over tiles given to her by family, which she pressure washed to make them look like new. She also salvaged anything she could from the farm – building materials which were just lying around waiting to be reinvented.

"I didn't buy anything that wasn't a bargain," she says. "I kept an open mind and bought things in sales, through eBay, and by asking around to see if anyone was throwing anything out that could come in useful. It's amazing what people throw away."

Sally asked the joiner to fit scaffold boards on the walls in one of the bathrooms to define the bath area and also create the sink stand – which is a reclaimed table that was found in one of the farm outbuildings. A wooden 'splashback' door was screwed securely to the stone wall and the copper taps, bought on eBay, were fixed to pipes fed through the door.

"You have to think outside the box to save yourself lots of money,' says Sally. Sometimes it's a case of finding something and wondering how you can use it. It's amazing what people throw

BATHROOM

An old reclaimed door has been turned into a novel splashback; the panels have been fitted with pieces of mirror, carefully measured and bought from a local glazier, and glued into place

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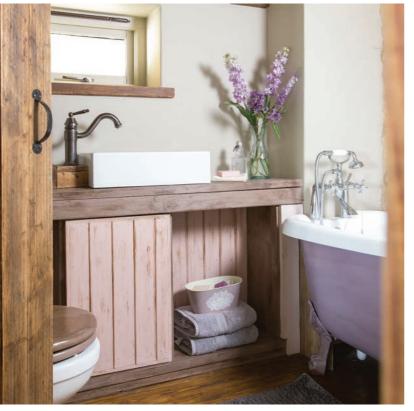


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Before they could do anything, they had to get planning permission to change the use from agricultural

away. We also relied on help from friends and family to keep costs to a minimum," says Sally. "I wanted to make is as homely as possible but keep it practical at the same time," she adds. "Carpets are not much use when you live in the country, especially when, like us, you have family in and out all the time and dogs roaming around with muddy paws. The stone floors are perfect for that, and the whole house can withstand a lot of wear and tear. That's the great thing about using reclaimed materials – they continue to look better with age."

Sally has added the finishing touches gradually, layering up with soft furnishings and adding items of vintage kitchenware on the open shelves which are practical and stylish.

"It's a really cosy place," says Sally. "It stands on a hilltop so when the autumn winds are blowing across the hills and whipping round the house, we just close the door, batten down the hatches, and we are as warm as toast."

BEDROOMS

A Parisian bed from Angilou makes a bold statement in the main bedroom, where old beams and tongue and groove panelling bring proportion and perspective into the high, open space

ENSUITE

A rustic door from Earthwood, fitted with traditional latches from a local blacksmith – and a sink stand made from scaffold boards – add to the character of the colourful ensuite bathroom

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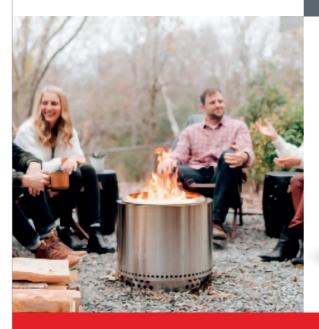
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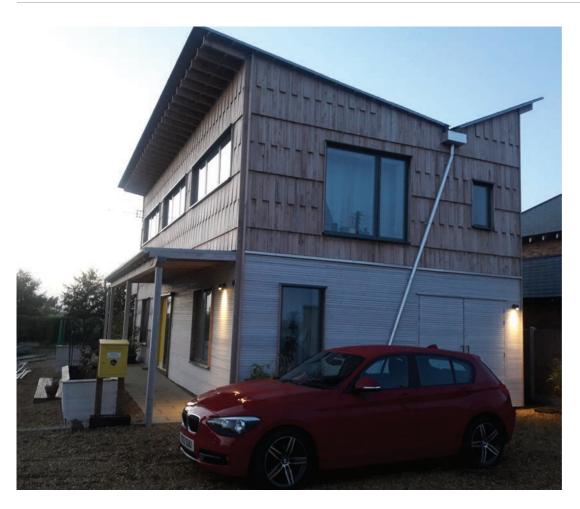
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by many years watching TV shows like Channel 4's Grand Designs, a programme which also contributed to Joan's growing awareness of the environment and living in a more ecologically friendly way. "I saw how new technology and design innovation could reduce the need for fossil fuels, while allowing for modern design and creativity, and this interested me hugely."

In June 2016, Joan worked out how she might apply such technology to plans for her own new home. "I attended an event at the National Self Build & Renovation Centre in Swindon and discovered a British company called Beattie Passive. They convinced me of the ecological benefits of a passive house system."

Just a few months later, in January 2017, Joan's search for an appropriate plot of land finally brought success: "I wanted a sense of open space but somewhere that was still just a two-hour drive from London. When the land in Ramsey Heights came up, with its fantastic views of the fens, I did my research to make sure the area had the facilities I wanted, visited in person a few days later and bought it for £105,000 soon after."

The next challenge was to find an architect who could not only help make Joan's ideas a reality but who was also familiar with the demands of working on a passive house. "Beattie Passive recommended Cambridgebased Mole Architects because they'd worked with them before. I checked out their website and just loved their designs."

Ian Bramwell, director of Mole Architects,

picks up the story: "Joan has been an amazing client, she is very determined and was decisive and right from the start, a key design instruction from her was making the most of the flat fenland landscape, which means you can see for miles. To get those stunning views, she suggested an upside-down house with most of the living space upstairs."

The result is a first floor that comprises an open-plan kitchen, dining and lounge area, an ensuite master bedroom with countryside views looking east to catch sunrises, and a west-facing balcony that's reached through patio doors and supplies a wonderful vantage point to watch sunsets. Downstairs is an integral garage, study, utility room and a small guest bedroom.

However, another of Joan's important stipulations for design was that she wanted her new home to be her 'forever' house, somewhere she could live for the rest of her life, and climbing stairs becomes more difficult for all of us as we grow older.

lan says: "We've done quite a lot of self-build houses for people in retirement and we understand that this involves thinking about their mobility in the future. Joan's in good health now but she wanted to think ahead. So, a wheelchair lift was incorporated into her plans early on, as was ensuring the rest of the house is wheelchair-friendly through having wide enough doors. There were also little touches like power sockets placed at waist height for less bending when Joan's older. In addition, the groundfloor questroom can be converted into a carer's

JOAN'S TOP TIPS

- * Do your homework all through the process, from start to finish.
- * When searching for a plot, be clear what you want and what you will compromise on, or you'll be looking forever.
- * Planning issues take time to sort out, so don't expect anything to happen quickly, but keep on the case!
- * Be on site daily during construction if possible to pick up issues and keep on top of costs don't be afraid to ask questions. I tried to keep up a positive relationship with all the guys as they were doing the job. Biscuits and chat helps!"



ROOF

The design of the roof allows for a "lightness of touch" and means the facade facing south can have taller and higher accommodation, if needed.

"A low-energy passive house with its superinsulated design should also provide some reassurance around heating bills, keeping them to a minimum. That's important to a retiree like Joan who is living on a budget. And it goes hand in hand with her very strong desire to cut her carbon footprint."

The striking roof design, which could also be described as being upside-down, was not something on Joan's original wishlist. She reveals: "I knew what I wanted in a lot of areas but on this I wasn't dogmatic, I had an open mind – it sort of happened along the way, working in partnership with the architect. I liked the sketches I was shown and, again, because I'm a fan of Grand Designs I'm conditioned to considering new ideas and was already persuaded that different can work."

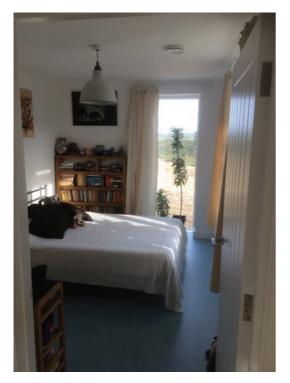
lan explains: "Working with Joan we looked at a number of different roof options. The thinking behind the final shape was to achieve a lightness of touch and its arrangement means the facade facing south can have taller and higher windows. A normal pitched roof would have meant lower windows, which would have presented planning issues around overlooking the neighbouring bungalows. So, the windows on the south side

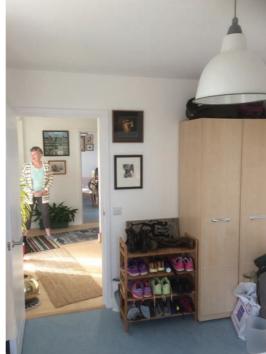
"I've spent hours and hours looking into these ecological and sustainability issues – both to do it properly and to stay within my budget – but I enjoyed doing it."

first floor are quite high, almost above eye line, which means you can't look down into the neighbours' properties.

"We drew inspiration from award-winning Australian architect Glenn Murcutt – he often designs buildings in big landscapes that touch the earth lightly and have very expressive roofs. We've admired his work for many years." He

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adds: "Joan's roof certainly stands out. Let's put it this way: she doesn't have to give detailed instructions when giving directions to where to find her in the village, she just tells people to look for the house with the butterfly roof!"

The look of the exterior walls and materials used outside were also decisions worked out between Joan and Ian, and project architect at Mole, Susie Newman. Overlapping rough-sawn larch cladding boards will eventually weather down to a soft grey colour, while at ground level, where one can touch the cladding, there is a finer timber that's stained white. The cladding was partly inspired by fenland agriculture barns, and also the huge stacks of pallets that you often see in this part of the world come harvest time.

Central to creating a home with 'green' credentials is the passive house timber system installed by Beattie Passive, which is completed using closed panels, insulated with micro beads. Combined with Velfac triple glazing, the result is Joan has no need for gas-fired central heating, although there are two small electric panel radiators she can use. A mechanical ventilation system ensures that fresh air is brought into the house, but it is also capable of cooling internal temperatures when needed and recovering heat from expelled air to raise the temperature.

On the roof, which was craned into position by Beattie Passive, are six solar panels that are capable of producing up to 10 kw of electricity a day. This provides most of her power, although she's also hooked up to the grid: "My target was to cut the power I use, not to be self-sufficient. I may put up a wind turbine at some later date but that does need further planning permission," she says.

Joan's main living space is filled with plants, and she has tried to reduce the use of petrochemical materials through choices like

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using Marmoleum flooring, which is made of sawdust and cork. Just one other example of an ecologically driven interior design decision is using hemp and silk for her curtains - hemp is said to be more sustainable than cotton as its production uses less water. Says Joan: "I've spent hours and hours looking into these ecological and sustainability issues - both to do it properly and to stay within my budget but I enjoyed doing it." She also persuaded a carpenter working on her home to make a TV table and shelf out of the kitchen work surface off-cuts.

A garden wrapped around two sides of the house meets the design stipulation for outside space at Joan's self-build creation. When completed it will include a wildflower meadow, walk-in vegetable cage (that means netted to keep out butterflies and birds for you nongardeners), a domestic polytunnel, a Japanese zen garden area and half a dozen fruit-bearing trees. Here too, Joan has tried to be green with a shed made of recycled plastic and builders' 'waste' like pallets, cladding off-cuts and left-

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BALCONY

The house features a westfacing balcony that's reached through patio doors and supplies a vantage point to watch sunsets over plastic sheeting and membrane incorporated into garden structures like a bin store and raised beds.

During construction, which began in the summer of 2018, Joan lived in nearby rented accommodation so she could be on site most days for at least 30 minutes to an hour: "You've got to be there to make sure things are happening and costs don't get away from you. I always had a finite budget," she says.

While the majority of the project managing was dealt with by her contractors, plus lan and Susie at Mole, Joan did "do a bit" herself, including buying the windows and kitchen, organising the electricity and telephone/internet connections and arranging the scaffolding and welfare unit for the timber frame installation.

She explains: "As a primary head I'd had some big projects to deal with at schools – replacement windows and heating – so I'm used to dealing with build projects to some extent. As a head I was also used to managing people, whether it be teachers, cleaners or catering staff, and you learn how to get the best out of them."

Not content with a house that looks so different, she's also decided to give it an unusual name – Wuduhus: "It's wooden house in Anglo Saxon. A friend's son is at Cambridge University and his friend is doing a PhD in ancient languages – he gave me the word."

But being prepared to be different doesn't mean Joan's kept apart from the community where she's made her new home. Far from it, she's immersed herself in that community straight away, becoming a governor of a local "I saw how new technology and design innovation could reduce the need for fossil fuels, while allowing for modern design and creativity; and this interested me hugely:"

primary school and getting involved in nature conservation projects. She's also a regular visitor at a nearby gym.

On top of the price she paid for the land, the final cost of construction for Joan, including professional fees, was about £400,000. Funded by the sale of her former home in Reading and some savings, she's now mortgage-free. She's delighted with what she's achieved: "I feel really content and happy that everything's working well, and I'm now looking forward to putting the finishing touches to my garden."

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Scott Allan from Tannhauser commented: "The intention was always to use timber to provide a focal point and avoid uPVC. The quality of the products and attention to detail including after care service have far exceeded our previous supplier. We have had consistently good feedback from the point of installation from everyone visiting site and from the local residents on the look of the building and specifically the windows."

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BUILDING ENVELOPE SPONSORED FEATURE

Transform your home with composite windows.

Composite glazing helps transform a 1960s house into a modern family home

ason Orme, editorial director at Homebuilding & Renovating (HB&R), is an experienced selfbuilder who recently finished his second major renovation project, transforming an eclectic 1960s house into a stylish open plan family home. Jason chose VELFAC composite aluminium / timber glazing for his new home, specifying the system for a range of reasons but also 'because many of the architects I interview say VELFAC is their first choice. They particularly like the system's slim frame and uniform sightlines which mean that every window looks the same whether triple or double glazed, opening or fixed,' he says. 'It's the type of detail selfbuilders rarely think of, but which can make a real difference to the overall appearance and performance of your home.'

WORRY-FREE WINDOWS

Having fitted timber-framed windows in a previous project, Jason was keen to specify composite this time around: 'Composite frames are worry-free,' he says. 'We plan to stay in this house for a long time and don't want to have to repaint or repair wooden window frames, as we did in our previous



home.' Jason installed triple glazed windows in the north and east facades, with double glazing on south and west facing walls to benefit from passive solar gain. 'Triple glazing is not yet a 'mainstream' product for many window manufacturers,' he notes, 'but VELFAC has its own manufacturing facility which makes triple glazing relatively easy to specify.' And although noise control wasn't an issue, given the home's semirural location, 'the glazing's acoustic protection is an unexpected benefit,' says Jason, 'and the house is certainly very peaceful'.

PLAN AHEAD

As part of the renovation Jason was keen to increase the amount of glass installed in every facade: 'At HB&R, we've noticed a definite change in the ratio of glass to wall in self-build projects, and this was the same for us. To achieve exactly what we wanted we thought about windows right from the start of the planning process, which gave us the freedom to specify the different sizes, styles and functions to suit our relatively unusual floor plan,' he explains. New architectural features include a striking window 'tower' which brings light into the stairwell, and differently shaped windows and patio doors installed throughout the home. 'We obviously thought about the look of each window in every room, but we also considered the view beyond,' he says, 'making sure, for example, that the windows in the tower also provided good views of the countryside.' Jason recommends this proactive approach to all self-builders: 'Involve yourself in window choice rather than leaving it to your builder, as your windows are just as important as your kitchen or flooring,' he says.

FINISHING TOUCHES

'As window are such a vital part of the facade, frame finishes should be chosen with care and to last a lifetime,' says Jason. 'We opted for Arts & Craftsinspired dark grey external aluminium frames, which also provide a contrast with the handmade York brick and timber cladding on the facade, and with the slate roof. Internally, we chose



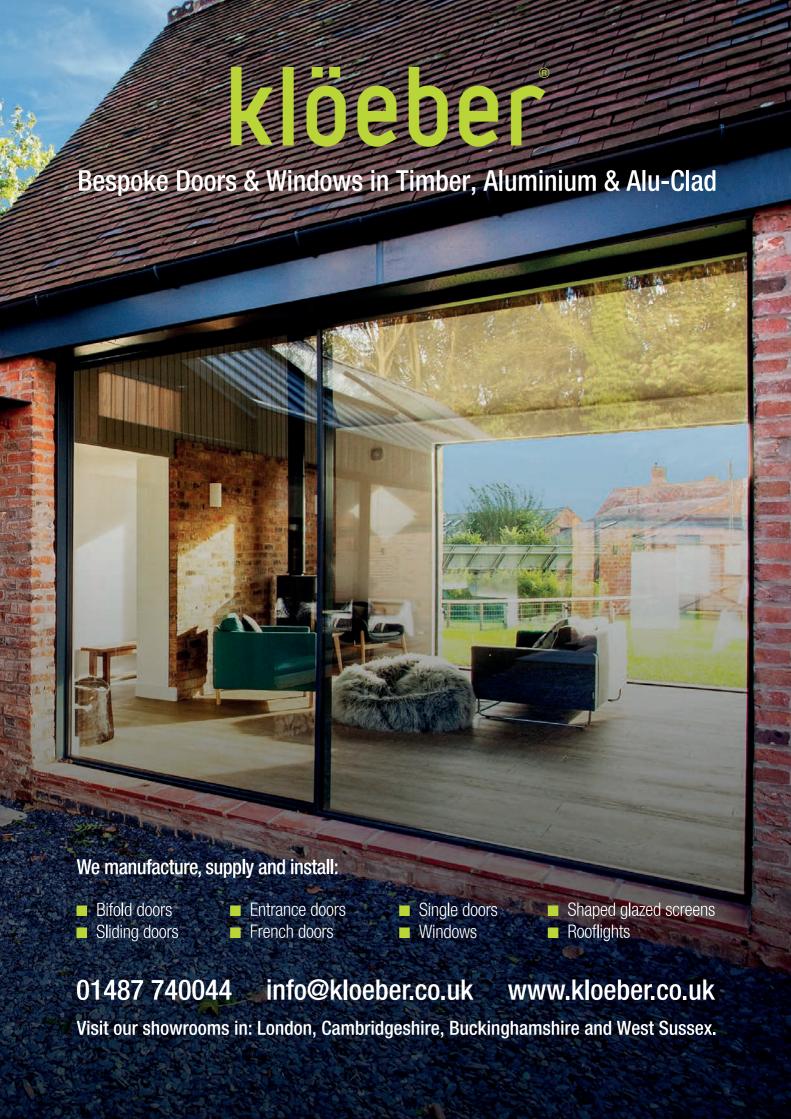


white painted timber frames to complement our neutral colour scheme.' The quality of VELFAC accessories was another benefit, he adds, 'with details such as handles and trickle vents all designed to look good'. The windows were installed by a VELFAC Approved Joiner, with ongoing technical support provided by the VELFAC team: 'The Approved Installer was very helpful and provided lots of advice,' says Jason. 'We struggled with dimensions and opening sizes when it came to ordering, so we did need help - self-builders should seek advice about window installation as it can be a fraught process without professional help.'

So would he recommend VELFAC to others: 'I would,' he says, 'and I already have!'

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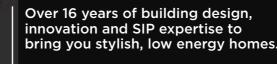
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Make windows a safe bet

Amy Blount of Reynaers at Home looks at the key considerations when specifying windows for your build – including security as well as material choices and installation issues

t their core, windows provide one of any property's most vital functions – but that doesn't mean they can't be stylish. In fact, windows are one of the key aesthetic features of any new build project. However, with so many different options available, it can be difficult to decide which ones would best suit your requirements. To help you get started, we've put together a guide outlining some of the most important aspects to consider when selecting the right windows for your build.

MATERIALS

When it comes to materials, there are an array of different options to choose from. The right one(s) for your project will depend very much on your personal preferences and needs.

Unplasticised polyvinylchloride (PVCu) is a popular low-cost choice which is widely used in the replacement windows market across the UK.

For those seeking a weather-resistant material that delivers good thermal results, a composite solution, made using two or more different base materials such as timber and aluminium, is a good choice. Timber also remains a popular option however, as sustainability is increasingly being seen as a key consideration for consumers, it may not be the best solution on a long-term basis, especially considering the cost of maintaining natural wood.

Another option is aluminium. This strong and lightweight material boasts strong eco credentials, being 100 per cent recyclable with no loss of quality. Its inherent strength means aluminium frames can be relatively narrow, especially compared to their PVCu counterparts. This means they can be used with larger glass panels that let in more light – perfect for getting your daily dose of vitamin D!

THERMAL PERFORMANCE

Energy efficient windows help to reduce a building's carbon footprint and energy bills, so it is important to understand how their thermal performance is measured.

A U-value is a measure of heat loss within a building element such as a window or door. The lower the number, the better it is at conserving heat on a cold day – a particular bonus in the UK! The Energy Ratings system measures thermal performance on a scale from A+to G and is illustrated using a similar graphic to the one that measures the performance of white goods. The higher the grade of a window, the more energy efficient it will be.

INSTALLATION

Window installation is probably one of the most difficult and important phases during house construction. For optimum installation, you need to make sure to allow a gap of approximately 10 mm between the frame and the brickwork surrounding the window. It is then recommended that this gap is properly filled and sealed to avoid any draughts.

Another factor to consider is the windows' weight; windows (as well as doors) are supported by hinges when they move and, if not installed properly, in a way that takes their weight into account, they may drop over time. If this occurs, they inevitably become far more difficult to open, close and/ or lock, which can have serious security implications.

SECURITY ACCREDITATIONS

Any window is only as secure as its weakest point. If a window is not installed correctly, it may be possible for an intruder to remove it, so it is vital that your installer uses the correct tools.

To help you select the safest windows, look out for the various recognised



Any window is only as secure as its weakest point – if not installed correctly, it may be possible for an intruder to remove it

security accreditations including PAS 24:2016, a British Standard qualification that requires a window or door to achieve a minimum standard of performance. The qualification process includes a test designed to replicate an opportunistic burglar, simulating attempts to break in using specified tools.

Windows and doors are a key feature of your new build project, so it is important to choose the right materials for your requirements, and to ensure they are fitted correctly. Seeking the advice of a specialist dealer can help ensure that all the finer details are taken care of, so that you can focus your efforts on the bigger picture.

Amy Blount is marketing executive at Reynaers at Home



CASE STUDY

RECLAIMING CONTROL

Rob Lea had always wanted to design and build his own home, and convert an old barn, so when the opportunity came to do both – using reclaimed materials – he jumped at the chance

TEXT ROSEANNE FIELD **IMAGES** ROB LEA

elf-confessed "serial refurbisher" Rob Lea had dreamed of becoming an architect and designing and building his own home since he was a young child. It's therefore no surprise that he's undertaken several refurbishment projects over the years, alongside his previous job in an architectural office. Most recently, he converted an old pub to a house, having made a deal with the owners who were struggling to sell it after a few bad years in business. "It was a huge project for me, doing everything on my own, but the finished home was great," he says. "Plus we had a good few parties before I converted the pub area, and I retained a games room complete with bar, pool table, juke box and fruit machine!"

Despite having undertaken some hefty projects, Rob, who now designs car dealerships, still had an itch to scratch – he had always wanted to convert an old barn. So when an 1826 farmhouse complete with barns and surrounding land came up for sale, he couldn't resist. "It had never been on the market before," he explains. "It had been in the family since it was built, I bought it from the last descendant."

The farm was well-known in the village of Nether Heage, just north of Derby – "it was

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the dream home for a lot of locals," Rob admits. He'd bought it with his partner, and their plan was to live in the house while they converted the three barns to holiday lets "before living the good life with alpacas, pigs and sheep!" Unfortunately it wasn't to be, as the relationship came to an end, and Rob therefore decided to sell the house and attached barn, keeping two barns and the field for himself.

With the sale having gone through, Rob was ready to obtain planning permission for his planned works – to convert the larger barn into a three bedroom holiday let and demolish the smaller one so he could build his ideal home. He had previously obtained prior approval for the work he and his partner had intended to do on the three barns (conversion to

Rob reused materials from the original barn wherever possible

REPLICA

The house was built to effectively be a larger replica of the demolished barn it replaced

LOW POINT

"When I realised how much it had cost me to excavate the field for the ground source heat pump. Then the supplier went bust and I lost more money!"

– Rob Lea











supply worked in his favour: "The mains feed for the street runs underground alongside my property, but at one point it actually kinks into my garden area – nobody knows why," he says. "So it was a simple tee off the feed without the need for a road closure." He decided against connecting to mains gas, and therefore the only other supply to sort out was water, which required temporary traffic lights while it was extended from the road.

Although connecting to utilities can be notoriously difficult, Rob says he was "pleasantly surprised" by how good the suppliers were to deal with.

Work started onsite in January 2019, right before what Rob says was "the wettest February for years. He adds: "We were breaking the ice and pumping out the excavations every morning." Despite this, he says that once the groundworks were finished, everything went smoothly.

The build itself was "pretty much" finished in August, and Rob has great praise for his builders. "They were fantastic. Every guy involved was professional and great to work with."

However, things slowed up slightly when it came to getting the interior ready. "It went well until it got to drylining and plastering," he explains. "We lost time at that stage, which had a knock-on effect on the other trades." The work being behind meant he lost allocated time slots with plumbers and electricians, and

Rob admits those aspects took longer than they should have. "But I was perfectly happy living in the middle of my field in the mobile home," he says. "I might have been in more of a hurry if I was paying rent somewhere."

The house was built to effectively be a larger replica of the demolished barn it replaced, and Rob therefore reused as much of the materials as possible. "The stone was from the old demolished barn, but quoins, heads and sills were sourced from a local quarry," he says. The Staffordshire clay roof tiles were reclaimed from the barn, while any additional tiles required were bought as and when needed, and were also reclaimed (with the exception of ridge and tile-and-a-halfs).

In order to remain in keeping with the traditional stone building, Rob installed mid-grey aluminium windows. "I thought the typical anthracite would be too sharp and stark," he explains. "The mid-grey is softer and goes well with the warm stone tones."

Any materials that were required were ordered through the contractor, who Rob had hired on a 'labour only' basis. "I was reassured that I could check the cost of all materials and didn't pay any mark-up or VAT upfront," he explains. However, he almost always found the price the contractor could get couldn't be beaten, adding that "even materials I needed for my own use, not installed by him, he let me put on his trade account, and invoiced me."

ROB'S TOP TIPS

- * Don't do 'boring'.

 Look at Pinterest and magazines to get ideas, and rip out pictures of anything you like. Everything is possible, you just need a bit of imagination and confidence if cost is an issue there's always a way of achieving a similar effect on a budget
- * Even if you aren't too handy, incorporate something you've built or done yourself – something you'll see everyday and be proud of
- * If you can, live onsite during the work. I bought a mobile home, which I love and will keep. It means if there are queries you can sort them straight away I knew how I wanted things to look and it would annoy me if something wasn't right







ABOVE RIGHT

Rob wanted to leave the atrium as open as possible to allow views right up to the ridge when entering the property

BELOW RIGHT

A 'sunken' hot tub area was included by excavating part of the hillside and shoring it with a dry stone wall

HIGH POINT

"Switching on the Christmas tree lights and seeing how homely the whole place looked inside and out."

– Rob Lea

THE RIGHT LOOK

When designing the home, Rob wanted to create the perfect balance between making it "look like it had always been here – as modest as possible from the road, but a bit more imaginative on the unseen elevations."

The old barn was single storey with an open front; Rob's new house is two storeys, but he kept the height as low as possible so it didn't impose on its surroundings too much. The front is glazed to replicate the barn's original open frontage, but has three openings instead of the former two. He's proud of the final product, and the fact that "it never really changed from what I drew on day one."

The gable end, which isn't visible from the road, is fully glazed top to bottom. Rob installed bi-fold doors here which lead off from the kitchen/dining area, while the master bedroom above has a Juliet balcony. He wanted the house to be "light, bright and simple," with the exception of the two bathrooms which he describes as "unexpectedly dark and opulent – I like them being so different to the rest of the house."

Designing the 200 m² house himself meant Rob could focus on the finer details. He knew he wanted to include a sunken hot tub area, which he achieved by excavating a part of the hillside and building in a dry stone wall. Another priority was making sure the Christmas tree would have a good spot! "It sits under the open staircase and is visible from everywhere," he explains.

The house has an open entrance atrium, with the rest of the downstairs space leading off it. "The spaces are nicely proportioned, without feeling too open," Rob explains, adding "I wanted defined spaces." He plans to install two large sliding doors so the lounge, with its log



burner, can be closed off during the colder winter months.

The master bedroom is accessed via a glass bridge, another of Rob's more specific design inclusions. "Firstly, I wanted a talking point, which it certainly is!" He also wanted to leave the atrium as open as possible to allow views right up to the ridge when entering the property.

Internally, Rob wanted a "rustic and industrial look but without being twee," he says, adding: "I wanted to give the internals the feel of an old barn." Achieving this included cladding two walls with stone, using neutral paint colours such as white and a golden sandstone, and cutting flagstones to use as windowsills. He also installed bespoke kitchen units, and a bespoke steel staircase with chunky oak treads, made by a local steel fabricator. The fireplace features a cast insitu concrete surround which the installer built for him.

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As the house isn't connected to mains gas, Rob installed a ground source heat pump, which he says "it seemed the obvious solution when you have a field." What he hadn't realised is that under the soil it's solid rock, and it took a lot more work – and money – than he had anticipated. Nonetheless, he says it's "great" now it's installed and working, and he loves the thought that the underfloor heating and hot water "come out of the field." Rob's also installed an MVHR system, confessing he's "a bit of a fresh air freak!"

While he wasn't overly focused on installing sustainable features – "I'm not an eco warrior,"

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- he says he was "happy to invest in anything that will become economic in the long run." The house is therefore insulated to a much greater extent than Building Regs require, and he reused materials from the original barn wherever possible. He has "a good few years" supply of logs for the log burner from the trees that had to be cut down for the build, and any spoil from excavations was spread over the field and recovered with soil.

Although Rob had intended to work on both the house and barn at the same time, the barn naturally dropped down the priorities list. "I needed to concentrate on finishing the

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OPPOSITE

Rob says he's particularly pleased with the internal stone

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house first," he says. "It's been re-roofed, gutted inside, and I've nearly finishing pointing it up." With the house now pretty much finished he plans to pick up work on the barn again, which he says won't take as long as it will be done to a lower spec.

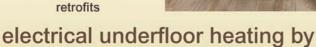
Now the house is complete, Rob says he's particularly pleased with the internal stone walls. "The two-storey one in the hallway is a real feature, but it took on average two hours per course to lay, with a total of 32 courses," he explains. "That doesn't include finding the stone, splitting it, sorting it, moving it down to the house or pointing it. I won't be giving up my day job any time soon!"

Rob says he couldn't be happier with the finished result, although admits he "always has projects on the go" and hasn't "sat down long enough to appreciate what I've got". Nonetheless, he asserts that the finished house is a "beautiful building that sits will with the existing farm buildings, and is incredibly bright and spacious." Now he's installed the hot tub, he can "wind down and appreciate the beautiful rural location I live in, just surrounded by fields and sky. And my alpacas!"

So is another project on the horizon any time soon? "Maybe," he confesses. He already has ideas to build another house into the hillside at the top of the field, with a sedum roof and a full glass front to take in the "stunning" views. "But that's after I've finished the barn, and had a bit of a rest. And a couple of holidays!"

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Right as rain

Sally Moores of Yeoman Rainguard outlines the choices of metal rainwater system available to self-builders, and how to decide which is best for your project

Ith an abundant choice of rainwater systems on the market there is certainly no lack of options in finding the right, aesthetically pleasing, products for your self-build project. With an array of materials, profiles, sizes and colours there will certainly be a style to match the design of your property.

Aesthetics, though important, should not be the only thing considered when selecting gutters and downpipes. The environment the system is going to be fitted in (e.g. conservation or heritage area), plus water flow from the roof, rainwater harvesting, snow load and lifecycles, are examples of some of the considerations which should be taken seriously to ensure you have a rainwater system which will work efficiently and last for many years to come.

It is unwise to cut corners when it comes to installing a rainwater system; it will protect your property from the ingress of water, guarding the structure against damp and water damage. Procuring a durable rainwater system that will withstand the weather fluctuations that come with living in the British Isles, yet which adds to the design of the exterior of the premises, is paramount. You'll need a system that will not crack or discolour when the temperature rises, and one that can withstand a heavy snow load if required, without becoming misshapen, while also being the right size to take the water flow from your roof. A metal rainwater system offers a durable option which can overcome the issues mentioned above.

With an assortment of materials to pick from, metal gutters and downpipes allow style and function to co-exist – as the quick overview below shows.

ALUMINIUM

Available in an attractive paint or mill (raw) finish, aluminium rainwater systems complement both the traditional or modern house. The range of gutter profiles, pipe shapes and sizes along with a choice of colours and ornate accessories such as ear bands, will help tailor this product to the character of your dwelling. A deep flow gutter can cope with high

volumes of water flow from the roof, avoiding overflow and splashing. Online guides can be found to calculate flow rates from roofs, or a reputable supplier will be able to advise you.

The gutters will also be strong enough to accommodate heavy snow loads – though the addition of extra fixing brackets in areas of concern is recommended.

Look for an aluminium product which offers a joint clip fixing method on the gutters, which doesn't require mechanical fixings or welding joints, making it both quicker and easier to install. It can also offer 30 years maintenance free service, UV stability and 100 per cent recyclability.

CAST IRON

This classic rainwater system which has been popular since the 1700s is acceptable for use on listed and heritage buildings. Cast iron offers durability with a 40 year or more life expectancy, however a small amount of maintenance such as repainting can further extend this.

A range of traditional gutter profiles and decorative ear bands along with the addition of stylish rainwater hoppers can ensure that the feel of old and historical buildings are reflected in the use of a cast iron rainwater system.

It is 100 per cent recyclable, and when oxidising cast iron produces iron ashes which being carbon based aid the growth of green and planktonic life, helping to counteract the effects of global warming.

COPPER, ZINC & STAINLESS STEEL

These materials are chameleon like, changing patina over time and adding depth and colour to the rainwater system. They are a great choice for structures that are timber clad, oak framed or indeed garden houses whose exteriors also change colour as the wood ages, adding to their beauty.

The attractive patina caused by oxidisation also functions as an exceptional natural defence against the elements, making them a good choice of material to be used on coastal properties where





erosion by the salt in the atmosphere can be a concern.

Copper gutters and downpipes have proven durability, having been used successfully for many generations offering an almost unlimited life service.

A natural, truly sustainable and 100 per cent recyclable material, copper also acts as an algaecide and fungicide, helping to keep moss and lichen growth to a minimum, proving to be a maintenance free system. It's also a great choice for those wanting to harvest rainwater.

A zinc or stainless steel rainwater system will bring a contemporary feel to self-build projects, again having outstanding durability and requiring minimal maintenance.

These rainwater systems are made from lightweight materials and do require a little more care to be taken when delivering and installing, with the use of gloves at all stages a necessity.

Sometimes there is more to selecting a rainwater system than meets the eye, so to ensure that your gutters and downpipes don't let you down, take time to do a bit of investigation into what's available.

As well as trade shows and online blogs, a reputable manufacturer/supplier will have an experienced team on hand who will be able to discuss options with you and let you have samples of products, materials and colours, free site surveys, and itemised, clear quotations.

Sally Moores is marketing manager at Yeoman Rainguard

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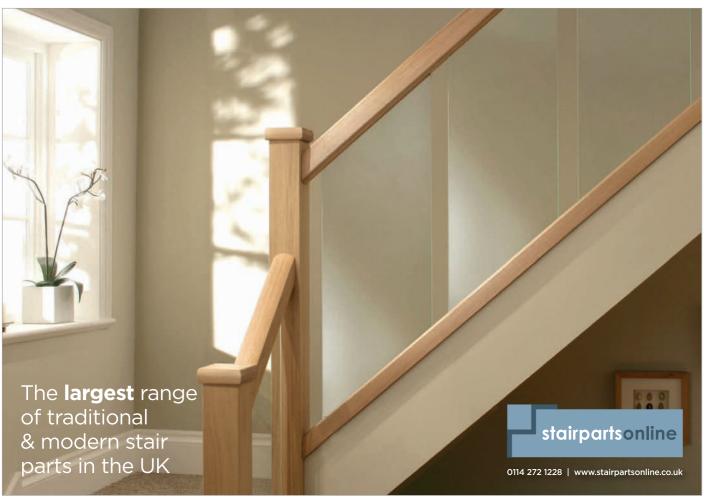
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The climate challenge

Paddy Leighton of Icynene UK explains how new high performance insulation systems can contribute towards combatting climate change

he Committee for Climate Change Report 'UK Housing: Fit for the Future,' states that better standards of insulation in new build and existing housing stock is vital if we are to address the problem of reducing carbon emissions in any meaningful way.

According to the report, 14 per cent of total UK CO_2 emissions results from energy usage in homes. Also, it says that in 2017, emissions from buildings actually rose by 1 per cent on the previous year.

Retrofitting of traditional insulation materials is a complex, time-consuming and expensive affair, and one which rarely addresses the important issue of air leakage. As up to 40 per cent of a building's heat loss can be attributed to this (draughts), it is vital that it's included in any programme of measures designed to improve thermal performance.

Modern spray applied insulation systems do a much better job than rigid board and mineral fibre materials as they are designed to expand rapidly when applied, sealing small gaps, service holes and hard to reach spaces where air leakage generally occurs.

If we go back to basic principles, heat loss occurs through a combination of conduction, convection, radiation and mass transfer. In the UK, the construction industry focuses primarily on U-values as a measure of conductive heat loss.

Open cell, spray applied insulation systems don't perform as well as some other types of insulation by this U-value measure. However, if you spend any time in mountain environments you know it is the wind that strips the heat from your body, and it is the same in buildings – it doesn't matter what your U-value is if there are draughts.

Breathable, open cell foams not only insulate from conductive heat loss but also from convective heat loss by controlling that air movement. Furthermore, as spray applied foam insulation is extremely

flexible, it moves with the structure, maintaining insulative integrity indefinitely.

Mass transfer is a more complex issue and relates to how much moisture is in the air (humidity). The more moisture there is, the more energy it takes to heat it, so to feel warm, damp buildings need more energy than dryer ones.

Studies have shown that moist, humid air can support up to 4,000 times more heat energy than dry air and, as air leaks out of a building, it carries this moisture vapour and with it, heat.

To control humidity, you need to be able to control the air movement in a building – and this can only be done if the building is relatively airtight. Spray foam insulation does this effectively by helping to create a 'sealed box' environment which allows controlled ventilation and mechanical heat recovery systems to perform efficiently.

HIGH PERFORMANCE, BREATHABLE INSULATION

There's now a new breed of spray-applied insulation system – a flexible open cell material with a soft, yielding texture. This not only provides outstanding insulation properties, but also allows the building to breathe naturally, resisting internal condensation – particularly important when insulating heritage-type buildings. Developed in Canada to cope with their extreme winter temperatures, Icynene FoamLite is one such example.

Systems such as this are installed using a pressurised gun. Foams are applied as a two-component mixture which expands 100-fold within seconds of application, closing off all gaps, service holes and hard to get to spaces that conventional insulation materials fail to reach.

When selecting which spray applied insulation to use, it is important to understand a number of factors: unlike the urethane foams of 20 years ago, modern spray foams use water as the blowing agent. This means that the reaction





between the two components produces CO₂, causing the foam to expand.

As these expand, the cells of the foam burst and the CO_2 is replaced by air. Systems such as Icynene's have a Global Warming Potential [GWP] of 1 and an Ozone Depletion Potential [ODP] of 0 [Zero]. Neither do they emit and harmful gases or support combustion or add fuel to a fire – a hugely important factor in today's building industry.

Furthermore, spray-applied insulation saves time on site with the re-occupancy of a building taking as little as two hours. It also boasts acoustic benefits, reducing the transfer of noise through walls and floors.

With over 60 per cent of our current housing stock originating from the pre-1960s when little thought was given to heat-loss prevention, the challenge facing the UK in its efforts to reduce carbon emissions are considerable.

Better understanding of the causes of heat loss in buildings and the wider use of new, high performance insulation systems will go a way to addressing the problem. The challenge is to get these systems adopted quickly and made to work effectively in both the private and public housing sectors.

Paddy Leighton is director at Icynene UK

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Unique Carrara[™] from COMPAC



Unique Carrara™ is part of **COMPAC's**Unique Collection – a distinctive and elegant range of quartz worksurfaces whose designs have been inspired by the textures, beauty and durability of nature's rivers, forests, mountains and landscapes.

Unique Carrara™ combines style and originality with a subtle meandering vein design that will light up any kitchen or bathroom

Available in a polished finish that intensifies surface colours or a glacé finish that provides a smooth soft sensation to the touch. Unique Carrara™ from COMPAC.

compac.es

Why destroy perfect cabinets?



If homeowners are looking for a kitchen upgrade but don't need to change the layout, they can simply change the doors and worktops with **Granite & TREND Transformations**. Granite & TREND Transformations' website is an information hub that tells homeowners all they need to know about how to get the look without the hassle, time, cost and environmental impact of a complete refit. The website means that all the browsing work, before a showroom visit, is easy. The website has reviews,

photos of before- and after-kitchens, colours and styles, along with a host of complementary worktops, appliances, tiles, sinks and brassware; a veritable feast of options.

granitetransformations.co.uk

Bushboard Nuance Collection: Casablanca Classic

Bushboard's Nuance collection of luxury wall panels offer high design, excellent performance and easy maintenance; perfect for making a statement in any bathroom.

With wall panels becoming the go-to favourite over tiles in recent years, Nuance brings fresh new designs in Designer and Acrylic collections including weathered timbers and luxury stones, all designed to create a high-end look with less mess and less cost than tiling.

Moroccan in style, Bushboard's Casablanca Classic panel adds colour and character effortlessly to any shower area. Inspired by on trend Moroccan motifs, bathroom owners can achieve a warm, individualistic space with geometric prints and rich colour palettes. Pair with warm lighting and patterned towels to create a complete Moroccan escape which is sophisticated and ornate.

Also available in Vintage Grey for a subtle look and Casablanca Grey for a darker tone.

Pictured is the Nuance Casablanca Classic, 1220 x 2440 x 4mm, RRP £523.84.

www.Bushboard.co.uk



Wall hung WCs made easy with striking glass casing Vitrus

VitrA has pioneered easy, fuss free installation for wall hung sanitaryware with its extensive range of in wall frames and has now taken another step forward with the introduction of Vitrus, an elegant glass casing-control panel combination that means wall hung, or back to wall WC's can be retro fitted and new installations can be made without the need for a false wall.

Available in all VitrA collections, Vitrus comprises an in-wall-frame and cistern within a slimline glass case that seamlessly combines a modern dual-flush plate. The pan is attached to the casing which can be fixed to most types of wall. Available in either opaque white or opaque black, shatterproof glass, Vitrus has been designed with a large cover opening so that the cistern is easily accessible for maintenance.

"Vitrus solves a lot of installation problems, not just for those who want to upgrade to a wall hung WC or shower WC but also in new installations," says Marketing Manager Margaret Talbot. "Either black or white glass makes a striking stand-out addition to all bathroom settings; it works well with white or black sanitaryware and the fitting can be used with a selection of our wall-hung pans."

www.VitrA.co.uk

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New website showcases stunning Imperial Brick Tile range

Imperial Bricks' stunning feature-wall Brick Tiles can now be seen in their full glory on www.imperialbricktiles.co.uk. The unique range – launched in November last year - allows housebuilders and developers to create feature walls quickly and easily, for a high-end, on-trend look that adds character, and value. A handy coverage calculator, installation instructions, and an FAQ section make it easy to measure up, cost and fit the tiles and panels, while project case studies help inspire visitors to the site. A brochure and samples – crucial for any design decision – can be ordered online. The range includes slips cut from full-sized bricks made in the traditional way; custom-made Glazed Brick Tiles in on-trend sea blues, greens, reds and greys; and Feature Wall Wood Panels. "Our main series of seven different brick tiles are cut from full, imperial-sized bricks including yellow handmade Victorian London Stock, burnt-orange Victorian Pressed, and metallic blue Designer Linear," explains Mark Heaton, Sales Manager for Imperial Brick Tiles. "Each tile has a unique and authentic character. Our Glazed Tiles, meanwhile, aren't cut from bricks, but rather individually made and covered with a specialist coating before being fired in the kilns. And our Wood Panels have a weathered, rustic finish (from natural to antique black) that brings out the natural beauty of the material." Custom tiles can also be requested from Imperial Bricks' range.

01952 750816 www.imperialbricktiles.co.uk



Contemporary kitchens

With new kitchen trends emerging continuously, inspired by a variety of influences, Wren Kitchens' Darren Watts reveals his top 10 kitchen trends for self-builders to consider in 2020

he kitchen plays a vital role in the home – for many it's the main focal point. New kitchen trends emerge all the time, often greatly influenced by advances in technology and evolving fashions.

RAW MATERIALS

In kitchen design, the use of raw materials which are rich in tones and textures will continue to rise in popularity, especially natural inspired colours and patinas such as marble, copper, concrete, slate and rust which offer a unique aesthetic. It's proving exceptionally popular for that on trend industrial look, particularly for focal islands, towers and splashbacks.

STATEMENT TAPS & HANDLES

The popularity of feature taps continues to grow. There are a vast array of finishes and styles now available that make it easy to make your tap a statement piece.

Brass, industrial-looking taps with unusual handles and interesting features are a great way to draw the eye and complement the space, especially when paired with similar finishes for cupboard and draw grips to keep a consistent style.

CLEVER, CONCEALED STORAGE

Sliding doors and hidden drawers are not just versatile in allowing you to discreetly tuck away a huge variety of appliances, but they also maximise every available bit of space. For those without unlimited kitchen space, storage is absolutely

Choose
sustainably
sourced products
and alternatives
for solid timber
made kitchens
such as MFC

essential for creating an uncluttered feeling in the space and a nice environment to live and entertain in.

ECO-FRIENDLY MATERIALS

Sustainability and the environment are hot topics, especially in the retail world. Rightly, people are becoming more conscious of how and where their products are sourced.

Choose sustainably sourced products and alternatives for solid timber made kitchens such as MFC, which is one of the most eco-friendly wood-based products available. If you do choose timber, make sure it's FSC certified. To replace real-wood worktops, luxury laminate is a great, practical solution.

EARTHY COLOUR PALETTES

Choosing the colour of your kitchen walls can become overwhelming with the abundance of choice on offer. Blush pinks, nude peaches and soft stone greys are always versatile, timeless options especially when toning down deep, dark cabinetry. These neutral tones create a soft, warm and atmospheric feel.

PENDANT LIGHTING

Lighting is a key element of any living space, as not only does it create ambience and atmosphere, but it impacts on the design too.

Pendant lighting is proving to be a popular choice, but it's essential to choose the right style and size to complement your kitchen design. From singular hanging glass, to geometric clusters and stylish exposed wire designs, there is something to suit everyone's taste.

Choosing where to hang pendants is another important decision. As well as hanging in the centre of the room, they can also act as a focal point above a kitchen island, offering the perfect finishing touch to any style of kitchen.

OPEN SHELVING

Something as simple as rustic, open shelving can make a great feature in your kitchen. Shelving is key in enabling





you to show off your favourite crockery, trailing plants and quirky items, and it's a handy solution to quickly reach your pasta and rice jars. However, if the idea of complete open shelving scares you a little, you can also choose glass-fronted feature units to display your prized possessions.

Darren Watts is design director at Wren Kitchens

Urban Industrial internal doors



Be wowed by **JB Kind** Doors new uber-cool Urban Industrial door range.

Celebrating the appeal of 'industrial style' interiors these contemporary doors are available in two design styles, the 'City' and 'Metro'.

Supplied pre-finished in either black or white, you have the choice of stunning glazed and solid door options.

With a higher specification than similar alternatives on the market, these doors are structurally more robust and have the added benefit that they can be fitted with regular door ironmongery.

01283 554197 www.jbkind.com

Longfloor launch game-changer for industry



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At this year's Concrete Show on 25th March, **Longfloor** will launch a game-changing development for the construction industry, a revolutionary approach in the way liquid cement screeds are applied, a global first which will fundamentally enhance the way liquid cement screeds are used.

Darren Williams, Longfloor General Manager said: "We are very excited to announce an industry first at this year's Concrete Show. The future is grey!"

Please come along and see us on stand 60 to find out more about this game-changer for the industry.

01629 540 284 www.longfloor.co.uk

Lighten up the kitchen with Königstone



For homeowners looking for a natural-looking engineered stone, then Königstone's KönigQuartz worktop is the ideal material; the new neutral colour, Concrete Sand, perfectly complements all schemes. The shade takes its name from the light colourings of sand combined with the strength of concrete; mixing natural aesthetics with engineered resilience and durability. The beautiful worktop features subtle lines to give the appearance of a textured material while maintaining a

smooth finish. Like other colours in the KönigQuartz portfolio, Concrete Sand is scratch-, heat-, stain- and impact-resistant, so it is perfect for all the homeowner's needs.

info@konigstone.co.uk

Revive interior joinery with Osmo UK

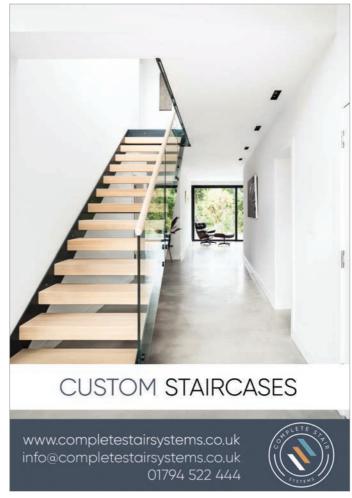


Osmo UK has introduced a new finish to its Door-Oil range – 3033 Raw Matt – which is designed to protect and enhance light coloured wood, without leaving behind a wet-look appearance. Developed from natural oils and waxes, Osmo Door-Oil Raw has been specially formulated to protect interior wooden doors and joinery. The finish works by penetrating the wooden surface – which remains microporous – to leave a high-quality, durable finish that does not crack, flake, peel or blister.

The long-lasting finish also works to prevent shrinkage and swelling, by stopping the wood's fibres from becoming dry and brittle. The dirt and water-resistant formula delivers professional results every time.

www.osmouk.com





Outdoor entertaining raised to new levels



Inspired by both heat and beauty, Vulcanus flame grills allow an exceptional cooking experience over the hottest flames, whilst providing the most elegant and beautiful alternative to the conventional garden barbeque for discerning homeowners. The simple, sleek lines combine form and function in perfect alignment; looking equally at home on a penthouse roof garden or a rustic terrace. The COR-TEN material and ceramic slow heat release core provide superb thermal stability, meaning

that this stand-alone outdoor kitchen can be used all year round. The steel cooktop is perfect for cooking meat, fish, vegetables and dough, and for heating pots and pans. Contact Specflue for more information.

0333 999 7974 sales@specflue.com

4 x 2 but not as you know it



The huge growth in composite decking has stimulated the need for premium quality support framing of similar longevity.

Enter SmartFRAME, multi-application pre-treated incised structural Scandinavian pine available in long lengths of section 45 x 95 and 45 x 145mm.

SmartFRAME is for designers and constructors of high performance timber structures at risk of fungal decay where a

30-year service life requirement is desirable.

For more information, visit Hoppings Softwood Products PLC website. 01992 578877 www.hoppings.co.uk

Earthborn doubles silicate colours

Exterior masonry is probably the toughest test of all for a paint. It needs to be durable and weatherproof, as well as good looking and not all masonry paints were born equal. Ecopro Silicate Masonry Paint is a highly durable, breathable and weather resistant mineral paint, which is also is virtually VOC and toxin free.

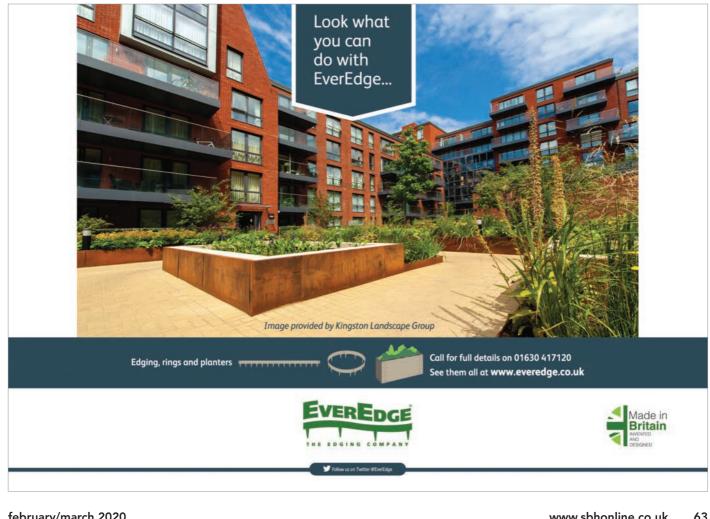
Earthborn believes its Ecopro Silicate Masonry System is the most advanced masonry paint available and in response to a growing demand, it is increasing the colours available from 24 to 48.

The system comprises a primer and paint, which together form a chemical bond with the underlying mineral substrate. The result is a very hard wearing, water and weather resistant barrier, yet it is highly breathable, which prevents moisture damage within walls.

Now, both the primer and all of the 48 paint colours are available in 100ml tester pots, so the whole system can be tested on site. The new colour card and tester pots can be ordered from the Earthborn website.

01928 734 171 www.earthbornpaints.co.uk





Permitted Paving

Ithough a requirement for most new developments, other – often forgotten – planning measures encouraging sustainable drainage (or SuDS) also apply to new or replacement paving around existing properties. They are explained in brand new editions of Interpave's 'Permitted Paving' and other guidelines, which are now available to download via www.paving.org.uk

Originating from the government-backed Pitt Review, various requirements for SuDS affecting retrofitted new and replacement paving were put in place through changes to planning rules in England, Scotland and Wales some time ago. But the growing awareness of the importance of SuDS and permeable paving in the fight against flooding means increasingly robust enforcement by local authorities today.

Before these changes, paving anywhere in a garden related to a 'dwellinghouse' or within various

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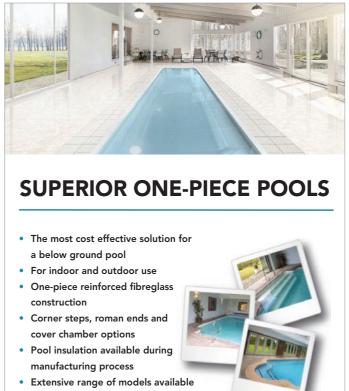


non-residential properties, using any materials, was considered to be 'permitted development' – effectively, an automatic planning permission without needing a planning application. But these rights no longer apply to new or replacement drives or other paving between a house and the street, or within industrial, warehouse, office and shop premises – unless it is permeable paving or drains water onto a permeable area within the property.

Otherwise planning permission will be needed but – with the latest national and local planning policies encouraging or requiring SuDS – unlikely to be granted. For example, the Greater London Authority includes a strong presumption against impermeable paving in its proposed planning policies.

0116 232 5170 www.paving.org.uk





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Bound to be a success

James Newton of Sureset explains why a resin-bound driveway could be the perfect choice for your build, whether your priority is achieving kerb appeal, or more practical features for everyday life

o you want to be the envy of all your neighbours? Perhaps you're looking to make a good impression from the front of your property. We'd all like to improve our kerb appeal and ensure the exterior of our home looks welcoming and attractive. You might fancy a change and want to alter the garden landscaping at the front of your house and create a driveway if you don't already have one.

With an ever-increasing range of landscaping materials to select from, builders, paving contractors and home owners have the ability to create an enormous variety of styles and designs – from the ultra-modern to the very traditional, and it's that time of year when many self-builders will be planning their build and most certainly looking for ways to spruce up their outdoor space. One quick and simple answer is to opt for a resin-bound driveway, where there are both self-install options as well as full professional installations which are guaranteed.

PLANNING

Resin bound paving is known for its ability to allow water to pass through the material, making it SuDS-friendly and puddle-free, and also therefore compliant with Part H of the Building Regulations as it significantly reduces the problem of standing water. In residential applications, this is a key consideration as since 2008, legislation requires that planning permission must be obtained

for any new or re-paving project that is non-permeable.



Planning where it can be installed is easy, with established companies showing a history of a wide range of residential projects laid since the mid 90s for drives, paths, forecourts, entrances, patios and pool surrounds.

DESIGNING YOUR PAVING CONVERSION

Any space can be transformed into a talking point, all you need is to indulge your inner designer and let your imagination run wild. If there is a huge range of colours and textures to complement or contrast the style of your home or garden, it makes the planning all the more interesting.

Resin-bound materials are a modern, long-lasting alternative to traditional materials. Options range from natural gravel and crushed stone to marble and recycled glass, providing an almost limitless choice. From the mellow tone of natural buff to rich shades of terracotta and vibrant primary colours, the palette offers enormous scope to create striking hard landscaped areas.

WHY CHOOSING THE RIGHT AGGREGATE IS IMPORTANT

The aggregate you choose will have an impact on your final look, and the final price. While the aggregates work the same, the choice of colour and texture will impact how your surface looks, feels and fits in with the surrounding environment. The aggregate you choose will also affect the price too – different colours and textures come in with different price points, natural aggregates being most cost effective.

There are plenty of choices to suit any driveway installation. Aggregate sizes range from 3 mm to 10 mm, although most homeowners opt for a mid-size 6 mm aggregate.

RESEARCH THE BENEFITS

Check your paving choice meets all your requirements and ensure it will survive the test of time. If you plan to make 'eco changes' for the future, consider the following: the installation processes from machinery used to waste



Resin-bound paving is known for its ability to allow water to pass through the material, making it SuDS-friendly and puddle-free

saved, the environmental benefits such as permeability, and the material source and its reusability.

Resin-bound driveways are quick to install, with the low energy material mixed cold onsite and often hand floated, which delivers a smooth finish. The resin can be dispensed and controlled by a mechanical pump, known as an EcoBatcher, that saves thousands of plastic buckets going to landfill.

A resin-bound paving surface will provide many years of high quality performance and offer a guarantee that assures durability, UV stability which is resistant to frost, oil and stains – ensuring that its appearance won't fade or be compromised over time.

James Newton is marketing and sales director at Sureset



www.sbhonline.co.uk

The Selfbuilder & Homemaker website is an online provider of past and present products and news items for the selfbuilder. Regularly updated with hundreds of press releases sbhonline.co.uk is a one-stop source for all the latest press releases providing you with access to information about products and services you require for your project as well as self-build relevant news and case studies



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ADVICE & INFORMATION

National Self Build & Renovation Centre (NSBRC) 0845 2234455 www.nsbrc.co.uk

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EnviroVent 01423 810810 www.envirovent.com

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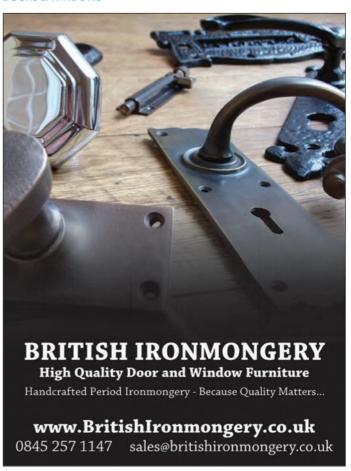


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