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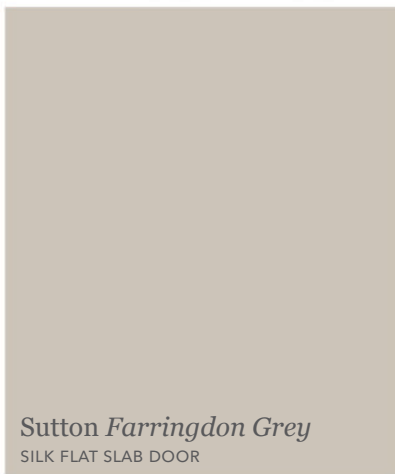
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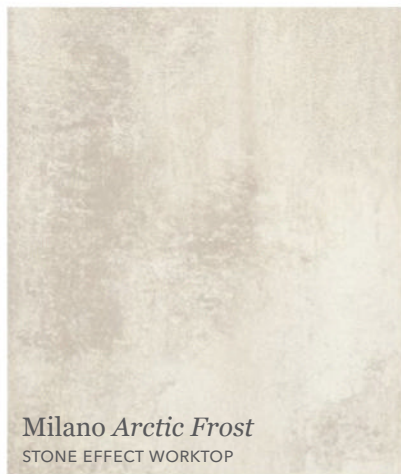
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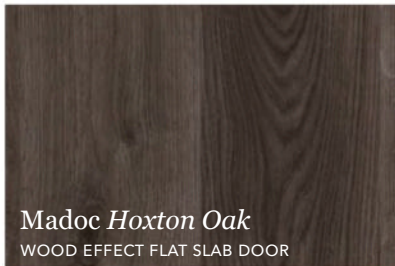
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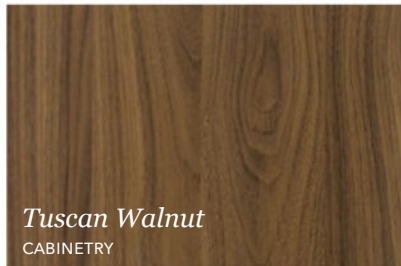
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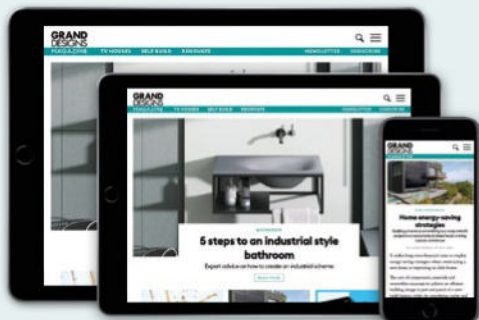
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EDITOR KAREN STYLIANIDES
ART DIRECTOR TONY PETERS
CHIEF SUB-EDITOR EMILY HAWKES
EDITOR-AT-LARGE KEVIN McCLOUD

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MEDIA 10
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Anounced without any great fanfare so you may have missed it, there's been a change to one of the eligibility criteria for the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS). The initiative, which runs until April 2028, is part of the government's strategy to reduce home-heating carbon emissions in England and Wales, offering homeowners a grant of £7,500 towards the cost of heat pump installation. It's a financial incentive aimed at encouraging the replacement of fossil fuel systems, such as oil, gas or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

Prior to the update, there was a requirement to install cavity wall or loft insulation to qualify – but that's no longer the case. In making the announcement, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero estimates that 'removing mandatory

cavity wall and loft insulation could reduce the costs associated with installing a heat pump on a semi-detached property by around £2,500', going on to advise that 'properties should still be appropriately insulated so families can heat their homes for less... Removing the mandatory requirement will mean households can spread changes out at a pace that works for them, so families aren't hit with one large bill.'

The new Welcome Home to Energy Efficiency website details the potential long-term money-saving benefits of measures such as insulation, heat pumps and solar panels (energy-efficient-home.campaign.gov.uk). I'm really interested to know whether you've already taken advantage of the grant or if you plan to do so given this latest change. You can reach me at info@granddesignsmagazine.com



COVER PHOTO
TARAN WILKHU COURTESY
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KAREN STYLIANIDES, EDITOR

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This four-bedroom home in Petersfield, Hampshire, was designed by its architect owner. Turn to P13 to see more

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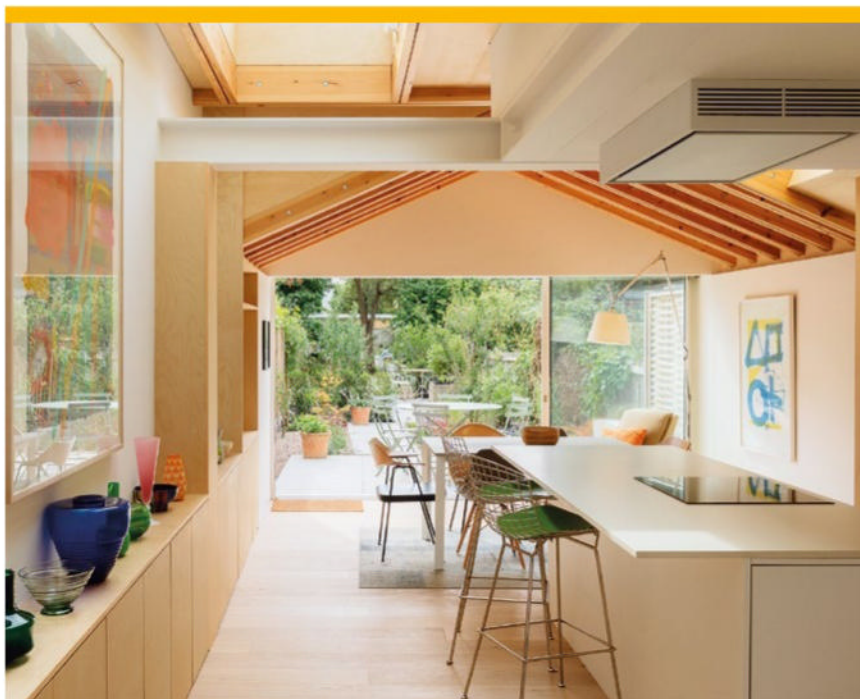
Architecture update

Original projects to inspire your own self-build or renovation



Following the form

At 128sqm, the mostly single-storey extension to a three-bedroom home in East Grinstead, West Sussex, virtually doubles the property's size. By practice Selencky Parsons, its triple-pitch roof echoes the shape of the single-storey house, which was once an apple store for a nearby Edwardian manor house. The roof structure is clad in standing-seam zinc, which contrasts with the brick-built walls. Inside, there's an open-plan kitchen with dining area and, in a two-storey section, a sunken living room with a bedroom above. The project cost £490,000. (selenckyparsons.com)



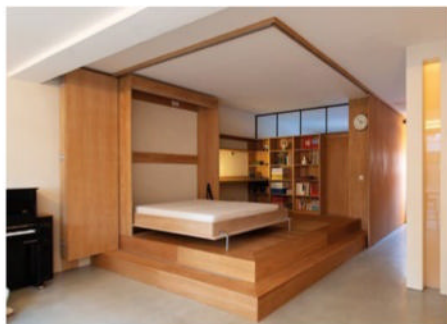
Eco-friendly adaptations

When extending and remodelling a two-bedroom Victorian mid-terrace home in Walthamstow, north-east London, practice Whittaker Parsons put climate-change mitigation at the top of the priority list. The single-storey kitchen extension's cavity walls are built with blocks that include recycled materials, with insulation made from old coffee sacks used between the ground-floor joists. Lime render covers the 92sqm project, which cost £163,000, while inside there are exposed fitch beams and FSC-certified plywood lining the walls. New sliding doors with double glazing open onto the drought-resilient, prairie-style garden. (whittakerparsons.com) »»

Architecture update

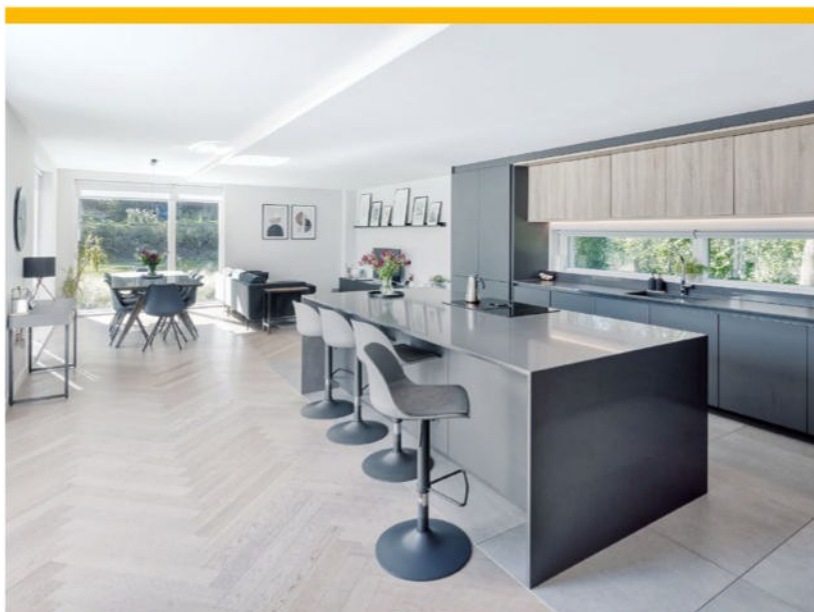
Space transformer

When Rosie Lowe and Jacob Hopewell upgraded their 80sqm, one-bedroom ground-floor apartment in Deptford, south-east London, architect Julius Taminiau devised an adaptable structure. In a corner of the living room is a raised platform with folding oak-veneer birch plywood partitions that concertina out to create a guest bedroom. With the partitions folded back and bed stowed, it becomes an office. Hinged panels in the floor turn the plinth into storage. The project cost around £1,500 per sqm. (juliustaminiau.com)



Secret structure

Brick and cast stone set with lime mortar make this 310sqm new home in Wimbledon, south-west London, blend with the surrounding Edwardian properties. But behind the traditional masonry is a timber structure consisting of 130 timber panels that were manufactured off-site and erected in just three weeks. By practice Erbar Mattes, the two-storey, four-bedroom house is highly airtight, has triple glazing and a ground-source heat pump supplying the heating and hot water. (erbar mattes.com)



All the skills

Acting as architect, project manager and client kept the costs down when Matt Swanton, a partner at practice Re-Format, built his family a four-bedroom home within the South Downs National Park in Petersfield, Hampshire. The two-storey house, which has a single-storey wing with a living room and snug, is clad in Siberian larch. Energy efficiency features include a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) system, air-source heat pump, 10kW solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and solar battery storage. The 261sqm project cost around £1,400 per sqm. (re-format.co.uk)



The coast is clear

A deep sense of calm pervades *Living by the Water: Summer Escapes and Peaceful Retreats* by Sally Hayden (Ryland Peters & Small, £25, out 14 May). Sally, who spent childhood summers by the sea in Australia, travels from Nantucket to Denmark visiting beach houses, lighthouses, island farmhouses and coastal cabins in search of designs to inspire you to recreate these laidback looks in your own home. (rylandpeters.com)

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Kevin McCloud

Reflecting on 25 years of *Grand Designs*, our editor-at-large extols the virtues of the architecture of modesty

What is it that pushes humans to the brink of creativity? Is it hope that leads us to the edge of a cliff and then cheerfully pushes us off? Is it overconfident self-belief and vanity that cloud our judgement? Or the hubris of needing to memorialise ourselves in something that might outlast us? It's all this and more. Humans succumb to every weakness when we build.

And one weird outcome of this seems perversely clear: buildings are often the better for it. Great buildings can even result from the most negative of human traits. Without failings – and failures – architecture will often be missing something. The element of risk and the process of construction go hand in hand because the tension in building something original and sometimes unproven is irresistible; it leads us to those unexplored areas of human endurance and brilliance that show themselves when we suffer hardship and extreme stress. In so doing, they show us what we are capable of.

This is why you and I continue to love the stories that *Grand Designs* tells; why, after 25 years, we can still be captivated by the narratives of human drama, overspend, risk and suspense that find a natural home on television. We can all enjoy, vicariously, this last great adventure that we might all embark on one day if we're brave enough: to build a home that reflects both who we are and who we might

also become. And these stories speak of something beyond ourselves. As the architect Daniel Libeskind wrote: 'Architecture is not based on concrete and steel and the elements of the soil. It's based on wonder' – a quote which re-articulates the words of architect Frank Gehry: 'Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness.'

The idea that buildings reflect not just the best of who we are but all of who we are, should not be confused with McMansion's Law, which dictates that any dodgy self-built home must creep as close as it possibly can to the plot's boundary – regardless of how many windows will face a neighbour's brick wall, and that moreover, the distance to the boundary is in inverse proportion to the taste and discretion of the owner. This law has, in contrast to anything proposed by



This 211sqm three-bedroom self-build in Sydenham, south-east London, is the perfect fit for its owner



Daniel Libeskind, nothing at all to do with architecture and just concerns itself with thoughtless building (so, the usual kind then) done without the consideration or care that the design process can lavish on a building. One of the key discoveries of design is that size doesn't equal space – that carefully wrought buildings can be small, full of clever storage and innovation and full, too, of wonder; a lesson that over the years we've been able to recount among the many small homes that make the longlist of House of the Year, homes which we also seriously seek out to film for *Grand Designs*.

There's an important distinction to be teased out here. The word 'Grand' in the TV title is not there to reflect the budget, the size of the kitchen appliances or the vast square metrage of a house; it's there to remind us of the vision and the gamble that people bring to projects – often on a tight budget or a limited plot size, with a difficult site or a particular need a household might have. Grand does not imply a McMansion, but the tension and narrative drama in a building that results from treading the precipice edge of that cliff, from dancing with risk and even hubris along the way. »



Maximising the potential of an east London plot measuring 10m by 4m, this two-bedroom home has one floor below ground level

In the dance and the careful treading, in the care and the hope, there is a sweet spot to be found – a more modest approach, one based less on ostentation and more on considered design, less on showy fabrics and more on the fine stitching of a building to a place. You can call it the architecture of Just Enough, the very opposite of McMansion's Law, which proscribes that we should all question how much stuff, space, storage and complication we need in our lives. It applies to

The word 'Grand' is there to remind us of the vision and risk people bring to projects

buildings, cars, spoons and cities. By its nature it demands that we work our resources to the most expedient and efficient point; that we respect what

the planet has to offer us, share as much as we can with others and then leave, not a memorial to ourselves, but a memorial to the value of place and the craft that can ennoble that place with the making of a building. It is, of course, the architecture of modesty but it can at the same time – and here's the rub – hold within it all the risk, vision, excitement and powerful energies that we all recognise as the universal truths of an inspiring building and a compelling story. **GD**

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All in good time

One couple proceed with caution when renovating
and extending a listed property

WORDS ALICE WESTGATE PHOTOGRAPHY INNA KOSTUKOVSKY



A section of exterior wall was removed to create an opening between the kitchen and the extension. A pillar remains as it forms part of the outrigger's original window arrangement

LEFT The house is in a Grade II listed terrace parallel to The Long Walk in Windsor Great Park

IN BRIEF

—
LOCATION Windsor, Berkshire
TYPE OF PROPERTY Late Georgian terraced house
BEDROOMS 3
PROJECT STARTED January 2022
PROJECT FINISHED October 2022
SIZE 145sqm
PROPERTY COST £750,000
BUILD COST £2,413 per sqm

It took five viewings over 18 months to convince Gemma and Adam Mursal to buy their home. Any alterations to the house, a former doctor's surgery, were limited by its Grade II listing and conservation area location. And Adam's initial reluctance related to his role as the director of a project management and development consultancy. 'I thought coming home to a renovation after working on a construction site would be a busman's holiday,' he says.

But Gemma and Adam, both 42, love the area, and the house has plenty of space for their children – Gus, nine, and Aurelia, four – to grow into. So after putting their concerns aside, they moved in during early 2018 and began pondering what to do. 'Adam's line of work meant he couldn't envisage renovating bit by bit, so we decided to save up and tackle everything at once,' says Gemma.

With the two ground-floor reception rooms used as bedrooms, the living room upstairs, and the only bathroom on the second floor, reorganising the layout became »



ABOVE On the ground floor at the centre of the house, the snug gets daylight from an internal window overlooking the dining area and courtyard beyond

RIGHT An office nook on the other side of the window at one end of the dining area has a built-in, live-edge oak desk by Forest to Home





Overhead glazing in the extension mirrors the angle of the outrigger, creating a butterfly-shaped roof. The kitchen, dining area and courtyard have the same large-format porcelain floor tiles



LEFT In the outrigger, the ceiling height was raised, exposing the oak roof trusses. A pocket door leads to the utility room

RIGHT The kitchen features bespoke cabinets and Calacatta marble worksurfaces from Cullifords



a priority. And the narrow kitchen in the rear outrigger, which is also listed, needed addressing.

After hiring architect Justyn Turnbull, who had successfully secured planning consent for several historical properties in the area, the couple made a pre-planning application for a two-storey extension and a single-storey extension covering the rear courtyard.

‘The conservation officer had concerns about completely filling in the courtyard,’ says Justyn. ‘And the design of the first-floor extension was considered too modern, dominating the rear of the building.’

With a supporting statement from heritage consultant Sara Davidson, Justyn submitted an amended scheme for full planning and listed building consent. Approval came for a small single-storey extension to the side return with a frameless glass design. ‘The glazing shows the evolution of the building, and contrasts with the solidity of the historical structure,’ Justyn explains.

Adam and Gemma, who is a retail account manager, were also given permission to knock through the two ground-floor reception rooms. But a rear window replaced by a back door in the 1970s had to be reinstated, »

RIGHT The front hallway leads past the living room and snug to the original staircase, which is painted in Inchyra Blue by Farrow & Ball. The sisal runner is from Nina Burgess



Any alterations to the house, a former doctor's surgery, were limited by its Grade II listing and conservation area location





ABOVE Gemma and Adam's bathroom has a freestanding bath from Lusso set at an angle to give views of a mature tree in the garden

LEFT In the couple's bedroom, new cupboards by DE Carpentry Services provide wardrobe storage and also conceal the vents for the air-conditioning system

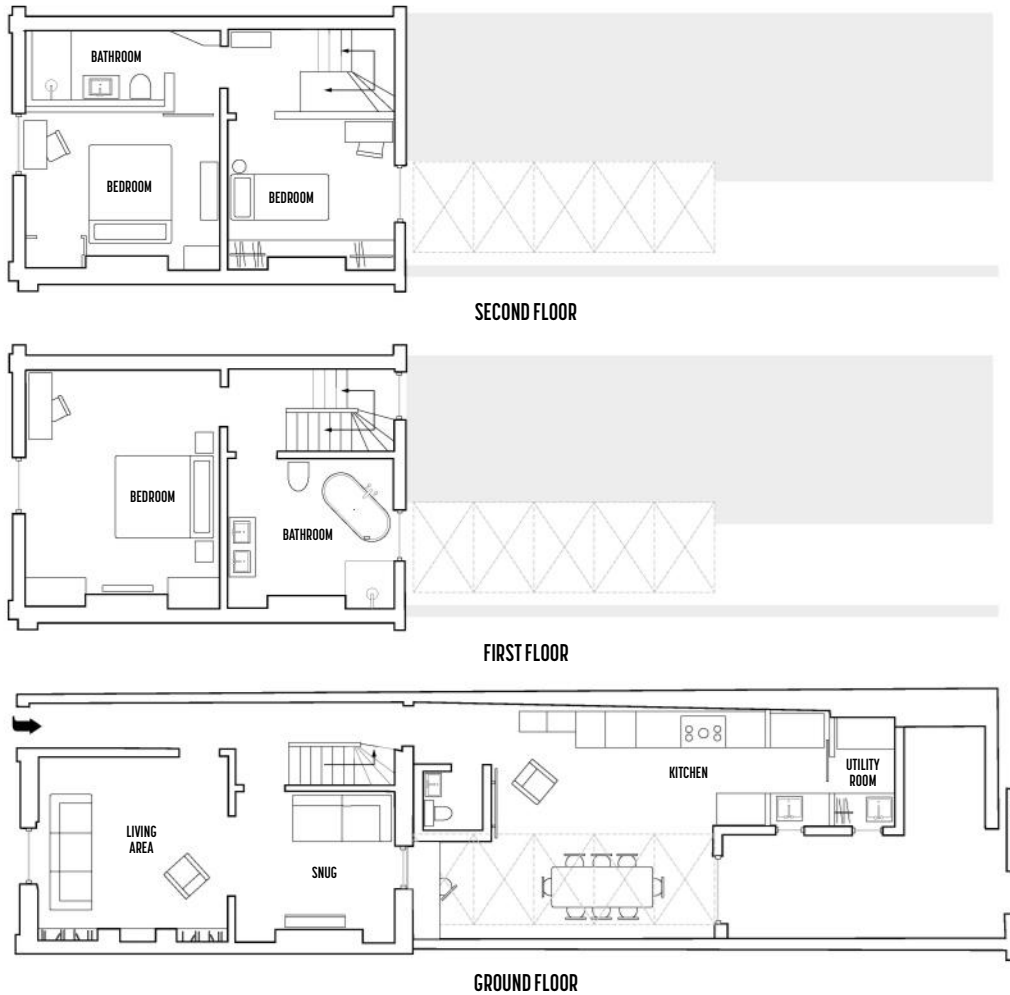
creating internal glazing looking into the extension. Upstairs, consent came to make a new bathroom next to the couple's bedroom and to rejig the second floor to create two bedrooms and a family bathroom.

But the local authority issued nine pre-conditions to be discharged before any other works. They ranged from the colour of the exterior pointing to the profile of the moulding on the reinstated window.

To oversee this work, Adam and Gemma appointed architects Daryl Fitzgerald and Pauline Dellemotte, a husband-and-wife team who run their own practice. 'We came on board after planning permission, but before the conditions were met,' says Daryl. 'Initially the requirements felt restrictive, but we came to value the process as it gave us time to refine every detail and work out accurate costs.'

Daryl completed the pre-conditions work, enabling the couple to negotiate a deal with their main contractor and to move into a nearby rented home. 'The build team were great and had worked on heritage properties before,' >>

FLOOR PLANS



says Adam. 'We set a budget with a healthy contingency because we were expecting hidden surprises below ground and behind walls due to the age of the house.' Sure enough, they had to find money to underpin the old outrigger and to remedy previous makeshift repairs. 'Living close by, I could be on site to make decisions quickly and keep the project moving,' says Gemma.

Revising plans for an expensive polished concrete floor in the kitchen, but investing in handmade cabinets, marble worksurfaces and a freestanding bath, the couple kept a close watch on the finances. 'This wasn't a house we were going to sell on, so we chose the fixtures and fittings for us,' says Adam. Helping the couple design the interior, Pauline teamed French style with Scandinavian elements that harmonise with the heritage features.

After taking more than four years to get through the planning stage, the build was finished in just eight months. Looking back, the couple are thankful they didn't walk away. 'The planning process was undeniably frustrating,' says Gemma. 'But I'm so glad we persevered.' **GD**

In Aurelia's bedroom on the second floor, a built-in plywood wardrobe designed by the architects was built by DE Carpentry Services



Gus's room is one of only two bedrooms to retain the original window shutters



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architects Atelier Ochre (atelierochre.com),

CSK Architects (cskarchitects.co.uk)

Heritage consultant HCUK Group
(hcukgroup.co.uk)

Main contractor Da Vinci Developments
(davinchidevelopments.co.uk)

Mechanical consultant PSH Consulting
(pshconsulting.co.uk)

Party wall surveyor Behan Partnership
(behanltd.co.uk)

Structural engineer Simpson TWS
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FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Bath Lusso (lussostone.com)

Bathroom marble Venice Marble
(venicemarble.co.uk)

Bathroom tiles Bert & May (bertandmay.com),
Claybrook (claybrookstudio.co.uk), Mandarin
Stone (mandarinstone.com)

Bedroom carpentry DE Carpentry Services
(07989 142989)

Brassware The Cast Iron Bath Company
(castironbath.co.uk)

Double basin The Water Monopoly
(thewatermonopoly.com)

Front door SB Joinery

**Ironmongery, electrical faceplates and
bathroom lighting** Corston Architectural
Detail (corston.com)

Kitchen floor tiles Concept Tiles
(concepttiles.co.uk)

Kitchen marble Cullifords
(geraldculliford.co.uk)

Lighting ETradition (andtradition.com),
DCW Editions (dcw-editions.fr),
Hector Finch (hectorfinch.com),
Pooky (pooky.com)

Paint Farrow & Ball (farrow-ball.com)

Shower enclosure Glass360
(glass360.co.uk)

Wooden flooring Flooring to Design
(flooringtodesign.com)

FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES

Artwork Scott Zaragoza (scottzaragoza.com)

Beds Rafa-kids (rafa-kids.com),
Ikea (ikea.com)

Dining chairs Carl Hansen & Son
(carlhansen.com)

Kitchen lighting brackets and oak desk
Forest to Home (foresttohome.co.uk)

Metal locker Mustard Made
(mustardmade.com)

Mirrors Loaf (loaf.com), The White Company
(thewhitecompany.com)

Outdoor lighting Astro Lighting
(astrolighting.com)

Outdoor table The Old Cinema
(theoldcinema.co.uk)

Sofa and outdoor chairs Hay (hay.dk)

Stair runner Nina Burgess
(ninaburgess.co.uk)



In the top-floor family bathroom an orange vanity unit designed by Pauline stands out against monochrome Split Shift tiles from Bert & May and white tiles from Claybrook



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Much of the open-plan living area is double height and benefits from the new overhead glazing in the roof

FROM HALL TO HOME

With the completion of this semi-detached house, a 1930s building transforms from commercial premises to side-by-side homes

WORDS **CAROLINE EDNIE** PHOTOGRAPHY **DAVID BARBOUR**



IN BRIEF

LOCATION Kelso,
Scottish Borders

TYPE OF PROPERTY
Semi-detached house

BEDROOMS 3

PROJECT STARTED June 2022
PROJECT FINISHED March 2024

SIZE 157sqm

PROPERTY COST £12,000
(in 1992)

BUILD COST £350,000

Having grown in confidence by completing her first project in 2019, Christine Stewart did it all again three years later. Back then, working with design director Thea and architect Ian McMillan, Christine converted the front of a family-owned former church hall into her three-bedroom home.

In 2021, she began thinking about working on the rest of the building. ‘To start with, my idea was simply to make the entire structure practical and sustainable,’ she explains. ‘But after meeting my husband Robert in 2021, and having our son Corran in March 2024, the project became about creating a home for the three of us.’

Financing the project through the sale of her family’s childcare business, Christine, 40, asked Thea and Ian to design the new scheme. They set to work on an area of storage and office space at the back of the building – an area measuring 112sqm. »

ABOVE A passage leads from the street down one side of the building to the house’s main entrance beneath the dormer at the back of the premises

RIGHT There’s wet underfloor heating beneath the polished concrete flooring on the ground floor. The kitchen cabinets are from Howdens





The walls in the living space are painted in Tailor Tack by Farrow & Ball, which changes as the lighting alters through the day

Investigating various possible configurations involved creating several different 3D models. The architects' final design, which met with the approval of the local planning authority, includes a new first floor, boosting the total area to 157sqm.

Christine and Robert, 52, a psychiatrist, positioned their en-suite bedroom on the ground floor, alongside an open-plan kitchen, the dining and living areas and a cloakroom. Upstairs there are two bedrooms, a family bathroom and a roof terrace, which shelters the front door.

After taking down the suspended ceiling, the construction of the new floor began with the installation of a steel frame, timber joists and wooden floorboards – followed by the timber frame and plasterboard walls.

Installing rooflights in the slate roof brightens the rooms below, and a new dormer at the rear of the building, clad with zinc panels and scorched larch, provides headroom in the family bathroom.

'Throughout the house, there is polyisocyanurate (PIR) insulation on the external walls, at a depth of 100mm, beneath the concrete floors at 150mm, and on the ceiling at 175mm,' says Thea. 'It limits heat loss, enabling the main living space to be open plan.' All the partition walls have a glass mineral wool roll filling.

Despite it costing more than a fossil-fuel powered heating and hot water system, Christine chose to fit renewable energy generation for its sustainability. So, most of the family's energy needs are met by an »



Tucked beneath and to one side of the staircase, the kitchen gains light through the glazing to the courtyard

GD HOMES SCOTLAND

air-source heat pump, 4.46kW solar photovoltaic panels (PV) on both the dormer and main slate roof, and a solar battery. The installation cost £26,000, which was offset by a £10,000 grant from Home Energy Scotland.

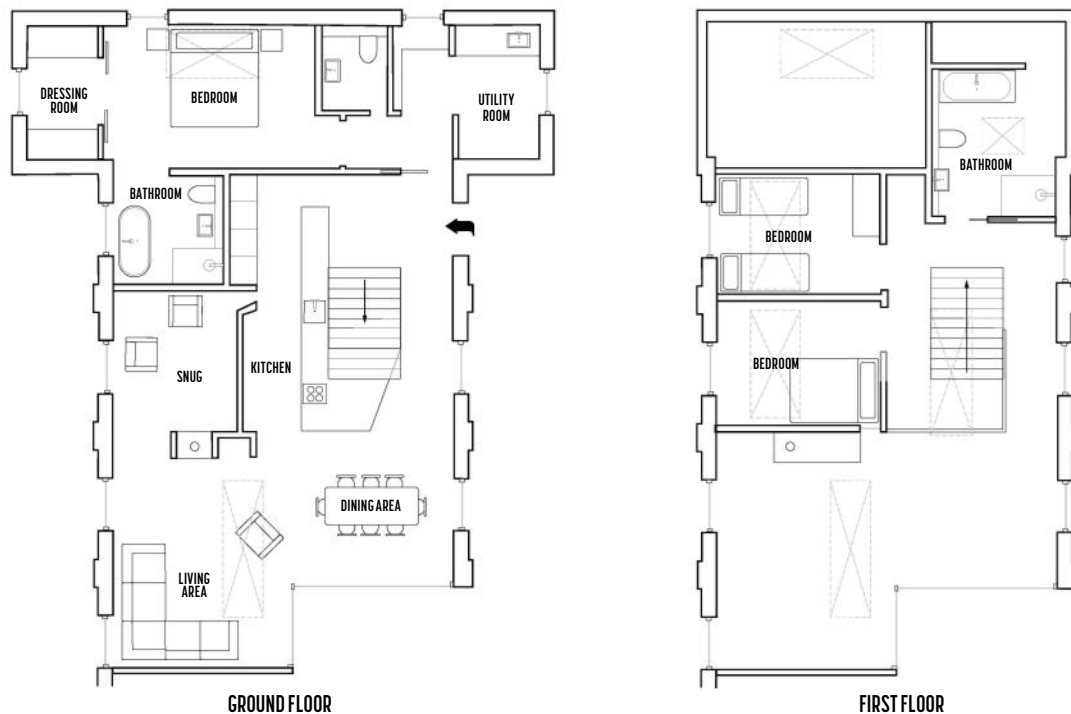
Christine was able to make savings by running the build herself. 'I knew it would cost a lot to hire a project manager and I didn't want to use a main contractor,' she says. 'Instead, I went with the same local trades from the first conversion. Plus, I scorched the larch cladding myself and did much of the decorating.'

Because everything had been planned before the couple met, Robert's input into the design of the conversion was minimal. But, as he is 6ft 3in tall, there were some late adjustments to allow for his height and he helped finalise some of the finishes and furnishings.

'After starting our family business in the building more than 30 years ago, there are special memories embedded in its fabric,' says Christine. 'And with our project sign-off happening just three days before Corran's birth, I'm looking forward to great memories being made in the house long into the future.' GD



FLOOR PLANS





ABOVE AND ABOVE LEFT

Designed by Christine, the American ash staircase was made in a workshop by a local fabricator and assembled on site by her joinery team

RIGHT A guest bedroom on the first floor has an internal window with toughened glass overlooking the living area below. When he's old enough, this will be Corran's room





On the ground floor at the back of the building, Christine and Robert's bedroom benefits from the height of the hipped roof. The rooflight is fitted with an automated smart blind they control with a remote



A dormer provides head height for the shower enclosure in the family bathroom on the first floor. The tongue-and-groove cladding is painted in Green Verditer by Little Greene

‘After starting our family business in the building more than 30 years ago, there are special memories embedded in its fabric’

The exterior walls above the wood-frame glazing are clad in scorched larch boards. The charring process makes the timber more water resistant



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Chambers McMillan Architects (cmcarchitects.com)

Joinery Logan Joinery (07920 092315)

Structural Engineer

Structural Design Consultants (structuraldesignconsultants.com)

Welder and Steel Engineer

Gordon Ferguson (01573 223159)

STRUCTURE

Cladding MH Southern (mhsouthern.co.uk)

Glazing Allan Brothers (allanbrothers.co.uk)

Insulation Kingspan (kingspan.com), Knauf (knauf.co.uk)

Roofing Murdoch Kerse Zinc & Copper Roofing (07514 273155), Slateright (slateright.co.uk)

Rooflights Glazing Vision (glazingvision.co.uk), Velux (velux.co.uk)

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Cork flooring Carpentryright (carpentryright.co.uk)

Kitchen Howdens (howdens.com)

Kitchen tap Quooker (quooker.co.uk)

Lighting Ikea (ikea.com),

John Lewis (johnlewis.com),

Lighting Direct (lighting-direct.co.uk)

Paint Farrow & Ball (farrow-ball.com), Lick (lick.com), Little Greene (littlegreene.com)

Renewable energy systems Energy Systems Scotland (energysystemsscotland.co.uk)

Sanitaryware Wholesale Domestic (wholesaledomestic.com)

Staircase Runciman & Redpath (01835 862964)

Tiling Topps Tiles (toppstiles.co.uk), White Rose Tiling (whiterosetiling.co.uk)

FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES

Artwork Anna King (anna-king.com)

Bedding La Redoute (laredoute.co.uk)

Dining chairs and table John Lewis

Rooflight blind Sona (sonashades.com)

Throws Catherine & Company

(catherineandcompany.uk), Threads

(theadsofkello.co.uk)

Upholstery Real Upholsterer (07570 003010)

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Two types of brick feature at the back of the house, one of which matches the reclaimed London stock bricks of the extension



Douglas fir fins beneath the rooflight in the extension help prevent the space overheating in sunny weather

Easy does it

Subtle changes bring out the best in this conservation area heritage home

WORDS ALICE WESTGATE PHOTOGRAPHY FRENCH + TYE

Shaker-style cabinets from Devo are painted in Invisible Green by Little Greene



IN BRIEF

LOCATION Hackney, east London
TYPE OF PROPERTY Three-storey Victorian townhouse
BEDROOMS 5
PROJECT STARTED March 2022
PROJECT FINISHED December 2022
BUILD COST Around £2,750 per sqm

Growing up in Hackney, east London, Celyn Evans always had a soft spot for a certain street of mid 19th-century properties in the neighbourhood. So, when he and Jenny Wilson began house-hunting in the summer of 2020 while expecting their first baby, they were delighted to find one of them up for sale. 'The area has a friendly feel and there is a great pub on the corner,' says Jenny.

An easy commute to the city, where Celyn, 40, and Jenny, 37, work as lawyers, the four-bedroom home is three storeys tall and has several half-storeys. So its rooms spread out over six levels, including a cellar used for storage. 'We absolutely love the original features, especially the big sash windows and stained glass,' Jenny explains.



‘We absolutely love the original features, especially the big sash windows and stained glass’

The only drawback was a 1980s galley kitchen extension built in the side return. Joining the old outrigger dining room by a narrow doorway, it was isolated from the rest of the house and a big expanse of glazing made it hot in summer and cold in winter.

Wanting an idea of their remodelling options before committing to buying the house, Celyn and Jenny joined an online open day of architectural practices. ‘We had a free consultation with architect George Bradley and immediately liked his ideas because they seemed sympathetic to the building’s history,’ says Jenny.

After the couple bought the house and moved in, George’s colleague, associate architect Jessica Williamson, started developing the plans. ‘Without interfering too »

ABOVE A new window in the extension creates symmetry with the sash in the outrigger on the other side of the room



Original decorative plasterwork and a cast-iron fireplace with tiled inset feature in the living room at the front of the house

LEFT A metal frame glass door by Bespoke Glazing Design opens from the split-level hallway into the kitchen

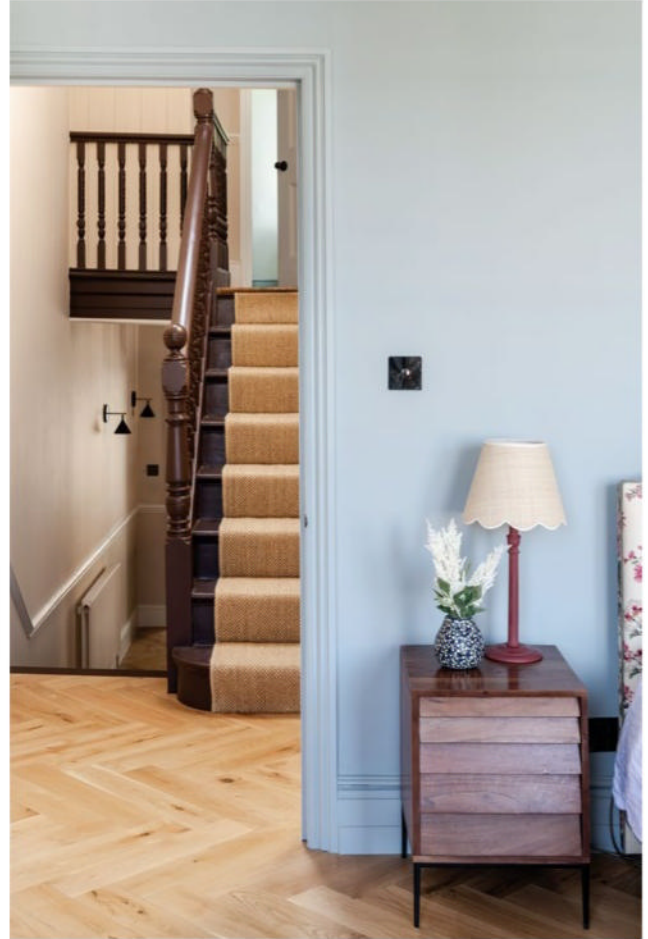
much with the beautiful architectural proportions, subtle changes were needed to bring the kitchen up to the same standard as the rest of the rooms and to make the spaces work better,' explains Jessica.

Her proposal was to build an extension on the footprint of the original, and to remove a wall between the new-build and the outrigger to create an open-plan kitchen with dining area. Built with cavity walls using reclaimed London stock bricks, the new structure has a picture window overlooking the garden and overhead glazing with timber fins beneath the rooflight. And in demolishing part of the house's original rear wall, Jessica enables the new space to lead into a cosy snug at the centre of the ground floor.

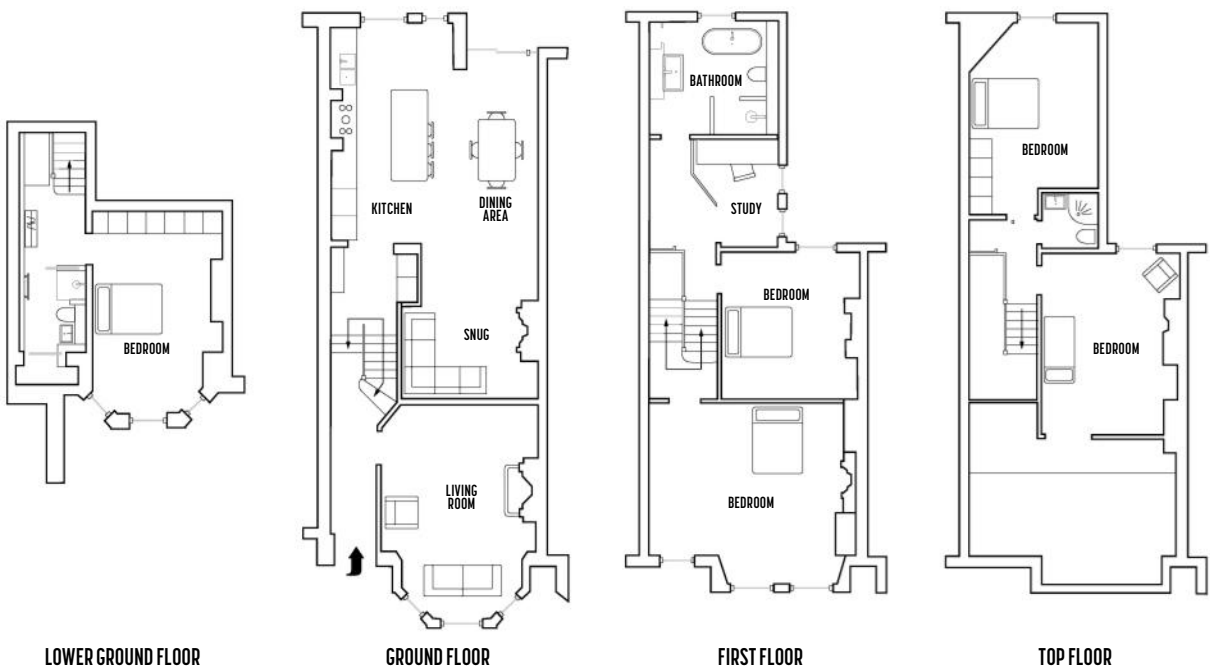
On the first floor, a study above the outrigger became the family bathroom with space for a freestanding bath. And to reinstate the study, two poky rooms – a toilet and a shower – have been knocked through. There's a new window and glazed door between the study and the landing, a clever way to enable the rooms' original stained-glass windows to brighten the stairwell. »



The colour of the front door and banisters is inspired by the hall floor tiles. The banister is painted in Copper Beech by Paint & Paper Library



FLOOR PLANS





THIS PICTURE AND ABOVE LEFT Few changes were made to Celyn and Jenny's first-floor bedroom. The Victorian fireplace is teamed with a bespoke bench by furniture maker Tektōn Interiors. The Kitami bedside table is from Swoon



Further changes include converting the cellar into a fifth bedroom, adding damp-proofing, and creating a lightwell by digging out part of the front garden. These excavations generated space for a secure bike store close to the front garden wall.

It took around 18 months to finalise the design and gain planning approval. ‘The scheme for the side return wasn’t too contentious, but the changes at the front were slightly more complicated because the house is in a conservation area,’ Jessica explains.

Celyn, Jenny and their son Nye, three, lived in a rented home for the duration of the build. ‘Moving out was the only option,’ says Jenny. ‘Having quite a lot going on in our lives at that time – a young baby, planning our wedding and busy jobs – we relied on Jessica to manage the project.’

Completion came around six months later, and the family were back in the house for Christmas 2022 – with daughter Effie, eight months, arriving the following summer. ‘We have an incredibly comfortable home,’ Jenny says. ‘None of the changes are terribly drastic, but together they bring the whole house to life. **GD**



THIS PICTURE AND ABOVE LEFT The family bathroom has a wall-mounted Charsley vanity unit from Lusso that’s topped with Carrara marble

‘A study above the outrigger became a family bathroom with space for a freestanding bath’



The walls are painted in Stone Blue by Farrow & Ball to match a blind made in Bloomsbury Stripes fabric in Denim Blue by Ottoline



Alterations to Nye's bedroom, on the first floor at the back of the house, include shallow book ledges built into the alcove

SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Bradley Van Der Straeten (b-vds.co.uk)

Building Control Sweco (sweco.co.uk)

Landscaping 2 Birds Gardening (07713 512510)

Main contractor Optimal Build (optimalbuild.co.uk)

Structural engineer Structural Design Studio (structuralds.com)

STRUCTURE

Internal doors and glazing Bespoke Glazing Design (bespokeglazingdesign.co.uk)

Picture window and rooflight Maxlight (maxlight.co.uk)

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Bathroom taps Crosswater (crosswater.co.uk), Hansgrohe (hansgrohe.com)

Flooring Havwoods (havwoods.com), Period Floors (periodfloors.co.uk), Sisal & Seagrass (sisalandseagrass.co.uk)

Garden pavers London Stone (londonstone.co.uk)

Kitchen island (devalkitchens.co.uk)

Kitchen island and bedroom storage Tektön Interiors (tektioninteriors.co.uk)

Stair carpet Robert Clements (robertclements.co.uk)

Tiles Bert & May (bertandmay.com), Claybrook Studio (claybrookstudio.co.uk), Zellige Tiles (zellige-tiles.com)

Vanity unit and bath

Lusso (lussostone.com)

Worksurface Cosentino (cosentino.com)

FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES

Bedside tables Swoon (swooneditions.com)

Curtains The Hackney Draper (thehackneydraper.co.uk), House of Stewart Interiors (houseofstewartinteriors.com)

Dining chairs Carl Hansen (carlhansen.com)

Dining table Ercol (ercol.com)

Fabric Fanny Shorter (fannyshorter.com), Jane Clayton (janeclayton.co.uk), Ottoline (ottoline.co.uk), Pierre Frey (pierrefrey.com), Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler (sibylcofax.com)

Lighting Corston Architectural Detail (corston.com), Haus (hauslondon.com),

Hay (hay.dk), Insidestore (insidestoreldn.com), Original BTC (originalbtc.com), Spark & Bell (sparkandbell.com)

Mirror Habitat (habitat.co.uk), Heal's (heals.com)

Outdoor furniture Hay

Paint Farrow & Ball (farrow-ball.com), Little Greene (littlegreene.com), Paint & Paper Library (paintandpaperlibrary.com)

Rug Nordic Nest (nordicnest.com)

Sofa Heal's, Love Your Home (love-your-home.co.uk)

Stove Stovax (stovax.com)

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ADVENTURES IN SPACE

It may be tiny, but this home has everything a young family needs

WORDS SARAH HARLEY PHOTOGRAPHY MARIKO REED

The exterior of the house is finished with a combination of white render and cement-fibre panels

IN BRIEF

—
LOCATION Santa Cruz,
California, USA

TYPE OF PROPERTY
Detached house

BEDROOMS 2

PROJECT STARTED
October 2016

PROJECT FINISHED
January 2020

SIZE 57sqm

BUILD COST Around £221,000

For Brian Friel, 41, and Melissa Virostko, 38, the desire to live close to family had a significant influence in their decision to build a small house in the grounds of Melissa's childhood home in the city of Santa Cruz, USA.

The type of property they built is known in the States as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), which has similarities to an annex in the UK. It cannot be sold separately from Melissa's mother's home, but this is fine with the couple because they have a plan.

When their two children, Aira, seven, and Augustine, four, reach high school age they will simply switch houses. Melissa's mother, Nancy Virostko, will move into the ADU and the family will move into the bigger, three-bedroom property. In this way, their multigenerational support network can continue into the future.

The type of property they built is known as an accessory dwelling unit

Built on the footprint of a detached garage, the house was designed and project managed by Brian, who is an architect. He began creating a home that maximises the amount of natural light, while taking care to preserve the plum and pomegranate trees in the garden and include a sense of bringing the outside in. 'It took around a year to get the design right,' he says. 'Living in Nancy's house gave me the luxury of spending time studying each perspective of the site. When the sun was beautiful, I would make the decision to add a window or door in the best place to capture the light.'

Brian also took on some of the labouring work, with local sub-contractors completing the bulk of the build. The house is timber frame with concrete slab foundation, which is 10cm thick and has a turned-down perimeter that's 30cm wide and 30cm deep. »

RIGHT In the living area the flooring is practical engineered oak. The green tiles above the kitchen cabinets are from Fireclay Tile









Building the walls 15cm higher than the usual 2.43m, vaulting the ceilings – which include five skylights – and placing many of the windows at a height of 2.3m means that there's rarely a need to turn the lights on during the day. The scheme also provides the family with privacy from the neighbours.

Inside, the ground-floor layout includes an open-plan kitchen, living and dining area, a utility space, the family bathroom and Brian and Melissa's bedroom. Aira and Augustine share a bedroom on the first floor.

Although Brian ran the build, the project is very much a family affair, with Melissa, who is a therapist, and Nancy both contributing their ideas. 'My mother-in-law and my wife have been my hardest clients to date,' says Brian. 'But their input turned out to be invaluable. Without Nancy's advice I wouldn't have included a bath. After the children were born, I understood her reasoning.'

To give the interiors a bespoke look, the couple commissioned maple plywood doors to team with

'When the sun was beautiful, I would make the decision to add a window or door'

off-the-shelf kitchen carcasses, along with other handmade pieces. 'Our dining table is by a local furniture maker, and the sofa is also custom made,' says Brian. 'In a sense, the house is crafted in the community, which is a really nice feeling.'

Of course, all the furnishings and fittings must fit in just 57sqm of space, which is why the layout is, by necessity, stripped back to the essentials. 'The house is so small, we don't have a plant room, just a gas hot water heater and a stove,' Brian explains. 'Keeping the utilities to a minimum provides more space for storage – although I realise that with children there's never really enough.'

Moving in during the first part of 2019, Brian and Melissa still had to complete the loft bedroom, some of the cabinets and much of the landscaping and planting – finally finishing everything in 2020.

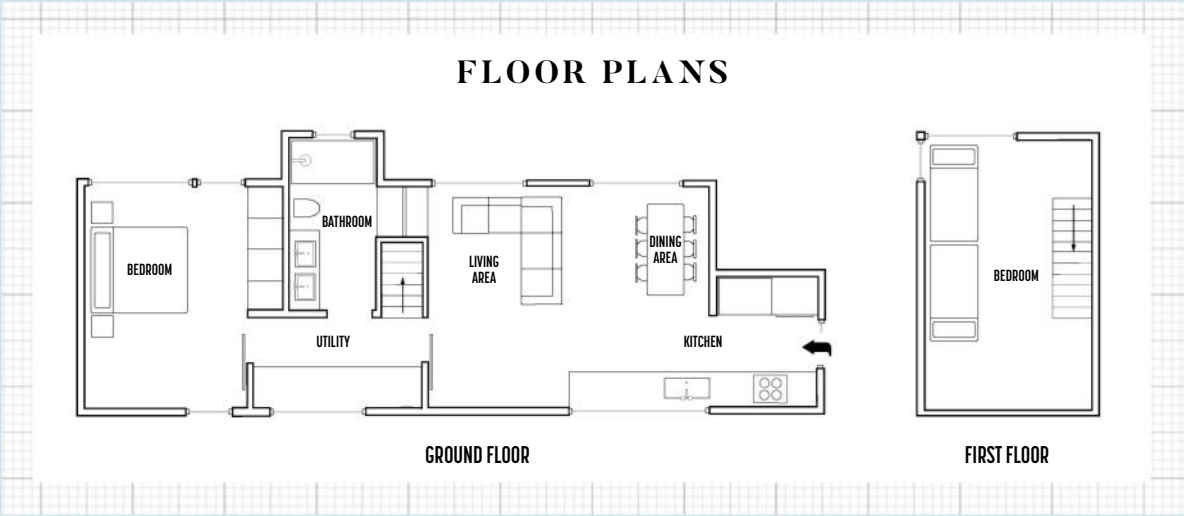
'Architecturally, our home feels more gracious than it is,' says Brian. 'We fully enjoy living in a tiny house.' **GD**

LEFT Aira stands in the doorway between the living and utility areas. The space-saving barn-style sliding door is from Barn Door Hardware



LEFT In the family bathroom a bespoke vanity unit is finished in black walnut, as is the shelving on the opposite wall

RIGHT A glazed door opens onto the deck walkway and courtyard garden from Brian and Melissa's bedroom. Wall-to-wall, built-in oiled birch plywood cabinets maximise their storage space





LEFT Laundry appliances line one wall of the utility area. In keeping with the pared-back interiors, the worksurface is oiled birch plywood and the white cabinets are from Ikea

ABOVE Aira and Augustine's bedroom makes up the entirety of the first floor. The bannisters and wall feature were built on site by Brian using Douglas fir



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Young America Creative
(thisisya.com)

Roofing ACS Roofing (egroofing.com)

Timber frame contractor
North Coast Construction
(northcoastconstruction.com)

STRUCTURE

Cladding James Hardie (jameshardie.com)

Exterior doors Simpson Door Company
(simpsondoor.com)

Insulation Tri-County Insulation
(tricityinsulation.com)

Timber San Lorenzo Lumber
(sanlorenzolumber.com)

Windows Tose Supply (tosesupply.com)

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Barn-style door Barn Door Hardware

(barndoorhardware.com)

Basins Kohler (kohler.com)

Countertop Caesarstone (caesarstone.co.uk)

Decking Jackel Enterprises
(jackelenterprises.com)

Kitchen carcasses Ikea (ikea.com)

Lighting Cedar & Moss (cedarandmoss.com)

Tiles Fireclay Tile (fireclaytile.com)

Timber flooring The Wholesale House
(santacruzfloorstore.com)

Stove Heathstone Stoves

(hearthstonestoves.com)

Worksurface Mission Tile (missiontileinc.com)

FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES

Beds, patio furniture and rugs

West Elm (westelm.com)

Dining table Julian Paul (julianpaul.com)

Sofa Natural Selection Furniture
(naturalselectionfurniture.com)

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This barn-style Hamilton home finished in Cotswold stone has four bedrooms and 360sqm of living space

BELOW The Atherton from the Baufritz Classic range is designed in Palladian style



SIGNATURE HOMES

Explore the new collection of house designs from Baufritz

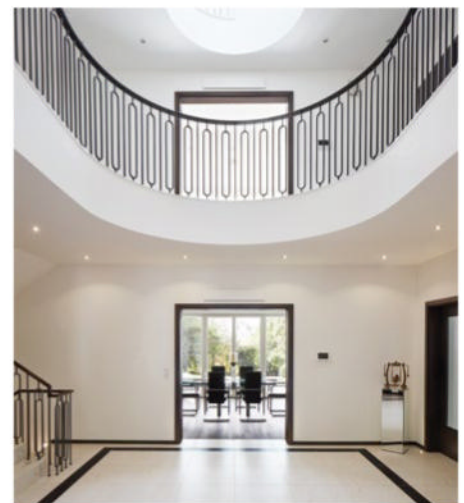
A leading manufacturer of timber-framed homes, Baufritz launched in the UK in 2006, and has since completed its 100th project. To mark this milestone, the company has launched a limited range of off-the-shelf, turnkey homes, which make a great addition to the Baufritz portfolio of bespoke houses, as well as speeding up the design and planning process.

‘The Signature Homes collection is our response to growing demand for an easier, faster route to a Baufritz home,’ says UK managing director Oliver Rehm. ‘We offer customers a turnkey build, including the foundations and basement, with the full service covering the entire process, which saves clients time and money. The houses are equipped with state-of-the-art technology, as well as meeting the highest energy efficiency requirements.’

‘Not every self-builder wishes to design their entire property,’ says Oliver. ‘Some would rather have an off-the-shelf package, which is why we developed Signature Homes. But customisation is still possible, such as by selecting the interior fittings.’

Taking the most successful features from its 100 homes to create the templates, Baufritz has included two designs in this turnkey range. The Barn has a rustic look, while the Classic is more urban in style. Each comes in three size options – medium, large and extra large – and a choice of configurations.

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How to manage your project

Knowing what's involved in running a build will help you decide whether to tackle it yourself or hire an expert



Building this experimental concrete house was driven forward by the homeowners' belief in the material and process. The single-storey, four-bedroom family home in Lewes, East Sussex, took two years to finish

Making sure that the people and materials needed to carry out each stage of a self-build, renovation or extension are in place at the right time, and at the right price, is fundamental to the smooth running of your project. It's also essential that all the legal conditions, such as planning permission and Building Regulations, are in place, along with the necessary contracts, insurance and warranties that will be required.

Do the prep work

Planning your project far in advance of the construction work will help everything run smoothly. This is the time to thoroughly research what's involved and make as many decisions as possible. Elements to consider and confirm include: finalising your budget; hiring a project team; approving the design and layout; submitting a planning application if required; and choosing the materials –

It's essential that all the legal conditions, such as planning permission and Building Regulations, are in place

even interior design elements such as the colour schemes. Take as much time as you need at this early stage to avoid making hasty and potentially costly decisions later on.

Otherwise, you will almost certainly have to extend the project completion date and overspend on your budget.

When to get help

There are several options available when it comes to the project management of your build. You may wish to take on this aspect yourself, particularly if you have previous experience and the project is straightforward. But be realistic about your »



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Running the construction of this two-bedroom Passivhaus home in east London required determination from a young couple, who faced several setbacks. But five years after starting the project, they moved into a unique, three-storey, 115sqm home



level of knowledge, resilience, and how much time you can devote to the work.

Project managing is time-consuming and can be stressful. So if you do decide to take on the task, it is still worth consulting with a professional at the beginning of the process for advice.

Your architect could take on all or part of the role. Or you could employ someone who specialises in construction project management. Although you will need to factor the cost into your budget, a professional with extensive experience could save their own fee by keeping everything on track, avoiding mistakes and negotiating the best deals.

All the skills

If you are going to manage your project, it's crucial you know how to run a construction site.

A professional with extensive experience could save their own fee by keeping everything on track, avoiding mistakes and negotiating the best deals

The National Self Build & Renovation Centre (nsbr.co.uk) offers courses on the subject. They include information on the skills you'll need such as scheduling, site control and organising budgets. You also need to know your limits and have a sensible grasp of what you can and can't do.

Cue the contract

You must have a construction contract in place before work gets underway. Avoid hiring a builder or contractor who is reluctant to use one. Make sure it covers everything you would like done, which might include the supply of materials and the removal and disposal of waste.

The document sets out the key responsibilities of client and contractor, which should mitigate disputes arising due to a lack of clear guidelines. It also details how any disputes that crop up should be managed, and clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Stay on schedule

Drawing up a document of the project costs and timeline has advantages. 'Compile a schedule of works to be completed so that your build team is 100 per cent clear about what is included in your contract sum,' says Jay Bhudia, a chartered quantity surveyor at Quantum Experts (quantumexperts.co.uk).

This can be put together by an architect or a quantity surveyor and will form part of your construction contract. It's referred to if questions arise over how works should be completed, by whom or for how much.

As the schedule contains cost details for each section of your project, it can be used to calculate the value of the completed build. This valuation will help you assess how much to pay your builder, ensuring that you only pay for each finished stage. It also signals when to order materials – you don't want supplies arriving too early or late.

Get adequate cover

Also called contract works insurance, a site insurance policy will protect you and your project against a range of risks including fire and »



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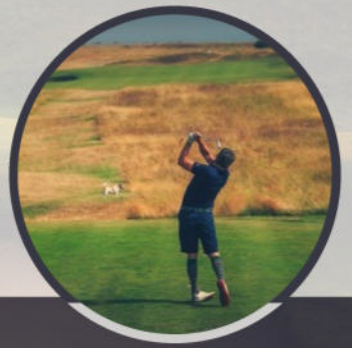
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This newly built Scandinavian styled five-bedroom, coastal retreat is a mere chip and putt from Prince's Golf Club and the world-famous Royal St George's links championship course, making it ideal for golfers and beachcombers alike. With vaulted ceilings, balcony views, floating atrium staircase and generous entertaining patio area, this property truly is the coastal dream.



0.3 ACRE PLOT c.4,000 SQ FT 5 BED 5BATH DOUBLE GARAGE IN AND OUT DRIVE LANDSCAPED GARDENS MASTER WING
UNDERFLOOR HEATING TWIN BALCONIES GAGGENAU APPLIANCES FEATURE STAIRCASE EV SOLAR CHARGING UTILITY BOOT ROOM

VANQUISHDEVELOPMENTS.CO.UK

Near the village of Veyan in Cornwall, this three-bedroom home is a converted stable with an extension. Taking a year to complete, the conversion was managed, and much of the construction work undertaken, by the homeowners



environmental issues such as storms and flooding. It also covers temporary buildings on the site, such as a site office or a caravan, as well as whatever you are constructing. Make sure the policy includes professional fees, plot clearance and debris removal in the event of a claim.

The cover should also protect you against theft – paying out if someone comes on site and steals tools or materials. In most cases this will include personal effects belonging to employees, though the limit is often low. Of course, it's up to you to keep the site locked when not in use, and most insurers will insist on a high level of security.

If you're building a home, as soon as the deeds for the plot are in your name you will be responsible for the site, so think

about how you are going to get protection from the start. Your tradespeople and contractors may have their own insurance, but the buck for any accidents may still stop with you. It's essential to have public liability cover in place from the start and for the duration of the build. If someone, even a trespasser, came on to the site and injured themselves, you might be held legally responsible and could end up with a big bill for compensation.

It is possible to obtain policies that last 12, 18 or 24 months, and if your project completes before the cover ends you should be able to convert the remaining time into regular buildings insurance.

Alternatively, if your scheme overruns, you should be able to extend shorter policies.

The level of indemnity varies, but will typically cover

- Building works
- Legal expenses
- Materials
- Personal accident
- Plant, tools and equipment
- Public and employers' liability
- Temporary homes, such as a caravan, plus employees' personal effects
- Your personal possessions

A secure future

A structural warranty is an insurance policy designed to protect you against defects in new buildings, normally for a period of ten years after completion. It is best to buy the policy before construction begins. Most mortgage lenders and banks require a structural warranty to be in place before

they will provide a mortgage on a self-build. You can also buy a policy to cover extensions and loft conversions. **GD**

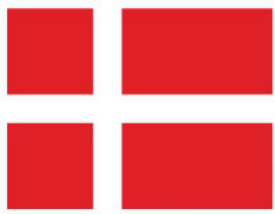
CONTACTS FOR CONTRACTS

● **Federation of Master Builders** can issue an insurance-backed warranty on the building work that its members carry out, from new homes to extensions. This provides protection in the event of a builder going out of business or being unable to complete the work. (fmb.org.uk)

● **The Joint Contracts Tribunal** produces contracts, guidance notes and other standard forms of documentation. (jctltd.co.uk)

● **The National House Building Council** provides warranty and insurance cover for builders, developers, self-builders and custom builders. (nhbc.co.uk)

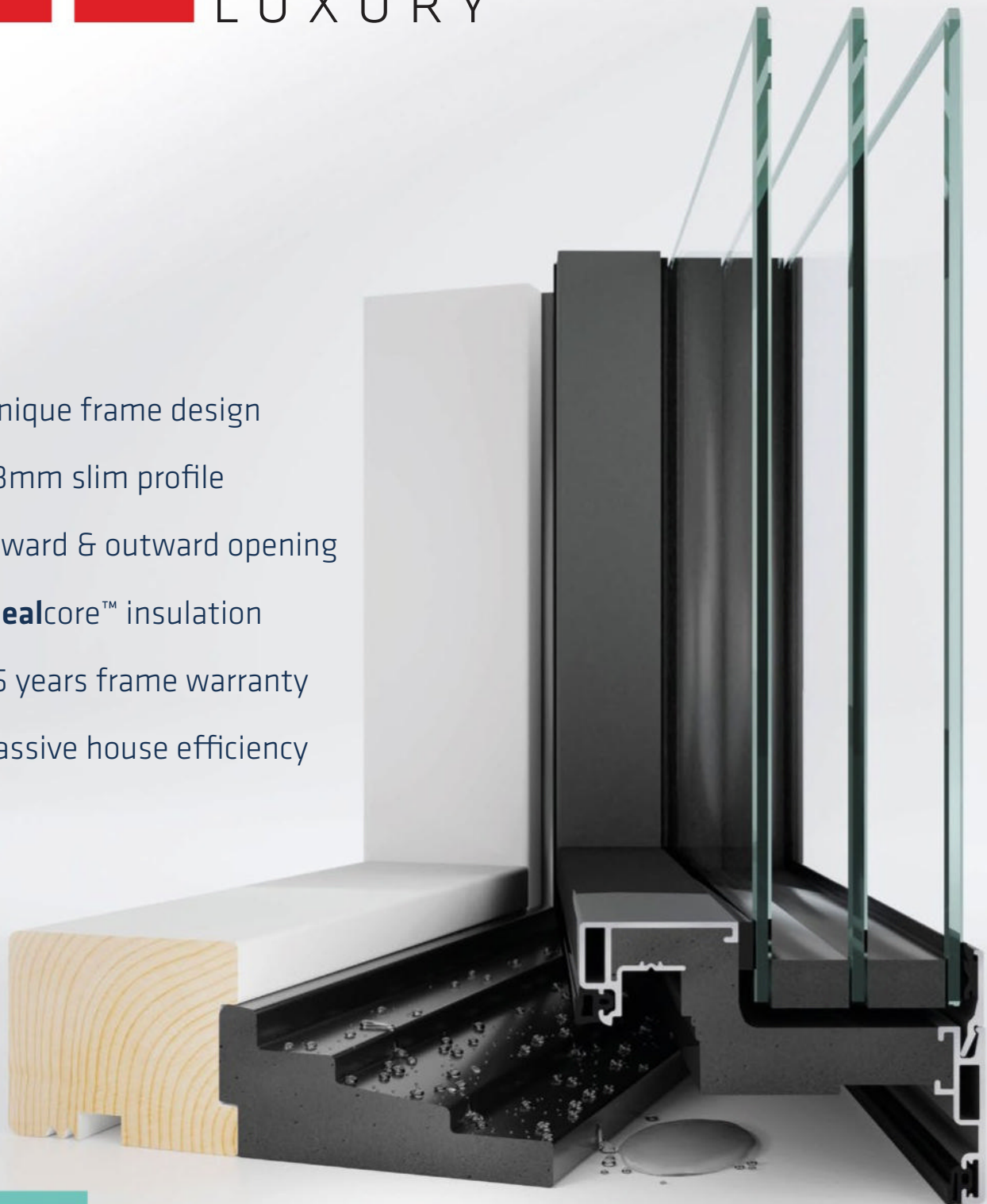
● **Self-Build Zone** offers site insurance, structural warranties and contract templates. (selfbuildzone.com)



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This 315sqm self-build in Westcott, Surrey, is by Watershedd. There are countryside views from every window. See more of the project overleaf. (watershedd.com)



Fit for purpose

Ways to ensure your home is optimised for good health

Whether building a house, renovating, or making small improvements, creating the best living conditions for mental and physical wellbeing is integral to the design and construction process. It's impacted by the choice of

build method, glazing, lighting, materials, temperature control and ventilation. Things to avoid include damp, poor-quality light, the absence of views, overheating, and the presence of certain chemicals. »



ABOVE Inside the four-bedroom Westcott house, all the walls are finished with lime plaster. The build cost £1.75 million

For a great atmosphere

Making sure that indoor air is free from potentially harmful chemicals and particles is a priority. The aim is to avoid pollutants from both indoor and outdoor sources, such as gaseous chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), allergens, mould and even microscopic particles produced by vehicles.

Finding building products that don't contribute pollutants is challenging because there is currently no comprehensive register of what to use or avoid in the UK. But a good rule of thumb is to select minimally processed materials. Options include sustainably sourced timber, stone, wool, straw and clay. If you need to use MDF and particleboard, choose products certified as free from formaldehyde. And check before buying reclaimed items that they have not been chemically treated at any point.

When choosing interior finishes, specify easy-clean surfaces that limit the need to use cleaning products containing noxious VOCs. Opt for low-VOC paint, wood stain and wax, and choose furnishings and fabrics that are free from chemical treatment.

'Finding upholstered furniture not treated with Chemical Flame Retardants (CFRs) needs careful research,' says Mathew Freeman at Freeman Studio (freemanstudio.co.uk). 'Not least to ensure an item meets safety regulations without their use. Ultimately, ask suppliers if they have fire-safe ranges without CFRs, such as Cottonsafe Natural Mattress, which makes beds and sofas (cottonsafenaturalmattress.co.uk).'

Clay plasters, which can be applied to gypsum plaster and plasterboard, concrete and brick, have low VOCs, no formaldehyde, polymers or additives. 'Since clay plaster doesn't set like other finishes, it absorbs and releases moisture, maintaining indoor air humidity at between 40 to 60 per cent,' says Adam Weismann, founder and director of Clayworks (clay-works.com). 'At this humidity level, bacteria, viruses, dust mites and mould spores, which are triggers for respiratory health issues, struggle to survive.' Clay plaster comes dried and pigmented, ready to mix with water and apply to the surface following the manufacturer's instructions.

Clear the air

To remove airborne pollutants, consider installing a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) system when self-building or undertaking a whole-house renovation. Working best in a well-insulated and highly airtight home, MVHR removes stale air from each room and replaces it with filtered fresh air. The air-handling unit is low maintenance, but the filters need changing regularly for best results. A simpler route is to plug in a mobile air purifier, which removes pollutants such as dust, pollen, dander, mould and VOCs.

Regulate humidity

Build the roof, floor and walls of a home or extension with breathable materials and avoid plastic membranes. Insulating materials such as wood fibre, wood wool and mineral wool enable humidity to self-regulate through the structure without trapping moisture behind a barrier. In this way, a building can be airtight, draught-proof and breathable, and won't have a build-up of moisture that leads to damp, condensation and mould. >>

RIGHT AND BELOW Delve Architects retrofitted and extended a 220sqm, four-bedroom house in Winchmore Hill, north London, improving the insulation and installing new glazing to bring in more light. The kitchen floor tiles are limestone. The project cost £650,000. (delvearchitects.com)



Light and outlook

Our body clocks are influenced by daylight and its absence at night, which aids good sleep and mental health. The colour and intensity of daylight changes throughout the day. These changes affect our hormones, helping us feel wakeful or sleepy and happy or sad. So ideally we are exposed to sufficient brightness during the day and a change in light levels when winding down in the evening.

When building a home or extension, your architect must consider the way sunlight moves across the site to plan the glazing, both to optimise the views and the quality of light inside. How much of the sun's warmth comes through the glass will also influence the glazing design, to avoid the risk of the interiors overheating. Overhead glazing is useful for brightening large, open-plan spaces and where installing a window is not possible.

Build the roof, floor and walls of a home or extension with breathable materials and avoid plastic membranes

Plan an artificial lighting scheme with as much care as the glazing, and at the early design stage so all the cables are in the right places for the first electrical fix.

Team different types of fitting in each space, for general background lighting and specific tasks such as cooking or reading – and so you can adapt the scheme during the day and evening. Simply lowering the level has a relaxing effect. At night, use blackout blinds to block out light pollution from traffic and lampposts.

To replicate the cycle of daylight more closely, invest in a biodynamic lighting scheme and the help of an experienced designer. The installation requires an electronic control system that slowly changes the colour temperature and intensity of the lighting to emulate what happens in nature. >>





THIS PICTURE AND LEFT On the edge of a conservation area in a Cotswolds village, this four-bedroom home replaces a 1960s bungalow. Architect Charlie Luxton's design for the new-build (charlieluxtondesign.com) includes locally sourced stone and timber cladding. Natural light and passive ventilation is provided by the triple-glazed windows and roof windows from Velux (velux.co.uk)



MAKE THE CONNECTION

Designer
Oliver Heath

(oliverheathdesign.com), co-curator of the Bio-Spaces exhibition at the Roca London Gallery (rocalondongallery.com), on biophilic design

What is biophilia?

Biophilia refers to the theory that humans have an innate desire to connect with nature, which supports our physical and mental wellbeing. There are three possible ways in which biophilic design enables this: through direct contact with sensory forms of nature such as daylight, fresh air, water, greenery or natural movement; by mimicking nature through materials, colours, textures, patterns or even technology; and by prompting a positive experience of space and place.

How does this work in practice?

The idea is to maximise the amount of daylight, provide views to greenery and nature, and arrange furniture to best capture the outlook. Think about how to use colour, texture and even artwork. Perhaps buy timber boards or tongue-and-groove panels to clad a wall, or head to a garden centre for plants and planters. Include energising spaces and somewhere to gather with friends and family. But also provide a way to pause, restore and recuperate – even a lock on the bathroom door allows for some quiet time in a busy home to enjoy a bath. Ask yourself: 'How could this space make me feel better?' Rather than, 'Does this space impress visitors?'

What about hi-tech materials?

Design and manufacturing developments are creating more naturalistic products. For instance, Beautiful by George (beautifulbygeorge.com) produces wallpaper, including a hedgerow design, by handpainting at 50 per cent scale. The artwork is magnified, scanned and printed onto PET plastic-free non-woven paper. Even artificial technology has a role to play. The AIRector air purifier by Ecologicstudio (ecologicstudio.com) removes carbon dioxide and pollutants, turning the resulting biowaste into a raw material used to 3D print furniture.

FOR MORE HELP

Organisations dedicated to better buildings

● **21°** offers a wide range of specialist products, including triple-glazed timber windows and doors, MVHR, airtightness and insulation products. (weare21degrees.co.uk)

● **The Alliance for Sustainable Building Products** campaigns to improve standards and materials to promote health in design and architecture. (asbp.org.uk)

● **The Association for Environment Conscious Building** is a network that brings together self-builders, architects, contractors and suppliers interested in healthy homes. (aecb.net)

● **The Building Biology Association** is an independent and non-profit organisation promoting the awareness, understanding, design, construction and use of healthy buildings. (buildingbiology.co.uk)

● **Ekkist** is a consultancy working to optimise the design and management of buildings that support health and wellbeing. (ekkist.co)

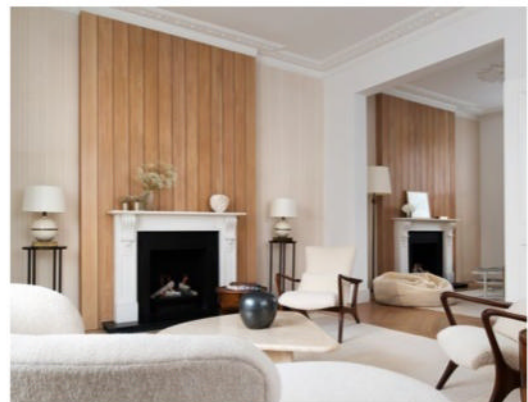
● **The UK Green Building Council** campaigns for more sustainable buildings. (ukgbc.org)



Quiet, please!

Anyone who has lived in a noisy flat or on a busy road will testify that excess noise is annoying and stressful. It can disturb sleep, impair work performance and prevent relaxation.

Installing high-quality double or triple glazing will help cut out a lot of noise, and secondary glazing can also be effective. Line walls, ceilings and floors with a soundproofing product, such as Phonestar sound insulation board from Ecomerchant (ecomerchant.co.uk), and for floors try Acoustilay from Floor Scan (floorscan.co.uk). Cork is also a good sound insulator. To find home appliances that operate at lower decibel levels, visit the Quiet Mark website (quietmark.com). The organisation's online Acoustics Academy has further information on soundproofing. **GD**



TOP AND ABOVE Hodgkinson Design reworked this 220sqm, three-bedroom house in Notting Hill, west London. Walnut furniture, pale oak flooring and oak wall cladding complement the neutral colour scheme. The project cost around £250,000. (hodgkinsondesign.co.uk)

CAPTIONS: JENNIFER GRIMBLE PHOTOGRAPHY: EVE JOHNSTONE, CHRIS SNOOK, ED RS AVES, RICHARD HANSON, HODGKINSON DESIGN



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10 Impressive timber TV houses

Projects demonstrating the advantages of building with wood

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1 BARN CONVERSION Micah and Elaine Jones's two-storey family home in Ballygowan, County Down, Northern Ireland, is part restored barn and part new-build. Above the stone-built ground-floor is a cross-laminated timber (CLT) structure that includes an open-plan living space with a kitchen, dining area and study. The exterior of the first floor is clad in Siberian larch. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms and a utility room make up the lower level of the striking

240sqm self-build, which was completed in 2017 for a build cost of £245,000.

Chosen for its affordability by architect Micah, the CLT forms the walls, roof structure, staircase and some built-in furniture. It was supplied and erected by G-frame (g-frame.co.uk). To help meet their tight budget, the couple used timber offcuts from the construction of the window and door openings for the staircase and breakfast bar. (micahtjones.com) »



2 TRICKY SITE SOLUTION It took six years of steely determination, compromise and design alterations to convince English Heritage and Hertfordshire council to give Chris and Kayo the go-ahead for their self-build. The reason for the planning permission delay was down to the sensitivity of the plot, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monuments site that covers the buried remains of a medieval monastery precinct. So the design of the 600sqm, five-bedroom house pays respect to the

surroundings and follows the contours of the sloping site. It's on one level to minimise the visual impact on a nearby cathedral and is built from lightweight timber cassettes, supplied and erected by New World Timber to prevent disturbing the precious artefacts beneath the ground. The project finally came to completion in 2017.

Inside, the walls, built-in joinery, furniture and fittings are maple veneer, creating a look that's simple and streamlined for a calming effect. (newworldtimber.com)

3 ON A CIRCULAR FOOTPRINT In 2010 Peter and Chard Berkin came up with a plan to replace a workshop at the bottom of their garden with an eco-friendly home, and asked architect Andrew Armes to create the design. But they were surprised to find that planning permission for the new house near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, came with 15 pre-conditions including archaeological and wildlife surveys. Having met the requirements, and with Peter project managing, the construction began in May 2013.

A timber-frame specialist supplied the wood and wood-fibre board, and built the horseshoe-shaped house on site. Along the way, Peter and Chard spent four weeks fitting the sheep's wool insulation. The single-storey, 320sqm building is clad in Siberian larch and some stone reclaimed from the workshop on the south-facing side, while inside, exposed timber beams contrast with polished concrete flooring. By the time the four-bedroom home reached completion in June 2014, the total build cost came to £400,000. (architectureaa.com)



EXPERIMENTAL CONSTRUCTION

Investing their life savings in an innovative build method paid off for Diana Woodward and Celia Brackenridge, as they gained a high-spec three-bedroom house for a modest construction cost. In a Hertfordshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the two-storey, 200sqm home with a single-storey wing replaces a red-brick bungalow they bought for £750,000.

Using digital design and manufacturing, Facit Homes employed a computer-controlled router to precision-cut sheet plywood into pieces ready for off-site assembly into the components of a timber frame. Once assembled, the bespoke modules were erected on site. By project managing the build and helping wherever possible, Celia and Diana made savings of around 12.5 per cent and contributed to the speedy build time of less than seven months.

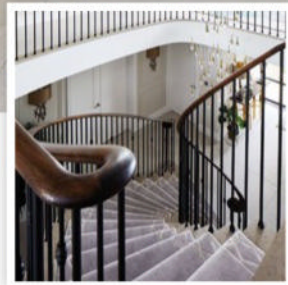
The substantial sum paid for the plot was offset by building the experimental new house for less than £200,000 in 2013, although Facit provided the manufacturing at cost price and waived the architectural and technical fees. (facit-homes.com) >>

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HIGH-RISE DESIGN A Passivhaus-certified tree house home was Jon Martin and Noreen Jaafar's creative and practical solution to building on a small, wooded plot. As the site is in the town centre conservation area of Dursley, Gloucestershire, all the trees on the site are listed and can't be cut down. 'We wanted to build something with good views and daylight, so it was a case of raising ourselves up to get that,' said Jon. Plus their architect Tomas Millar

realised the necessity of designing a home of outstanding architectural merit to get the project through planning.

The 212sqm, three-bedroom house is arranged as three offset cantilevered boxes, all clad in larch and with larch decks wrapping around the living spaces on the first and top floors. The cantilevered timber frame with glued laminated timber (glulam) beams is supported by steel piles and framework. With some elements still to complete, the build cost amounted to £270,000 in 2016. (mhworkshop.co.uk) »

A relaxing planted wonder in your home



Model shown biOrb AIR 30 in white.
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Perhaps you have heard of **Biophilia**. It's a theory that suggests that we all have an innate desire to connect with nature. It's deeply rooted in us to be attracted to all that is living.

In today's world, we are increasingly removed from the natural world. Think of our sprawling cities. The time spent inside cars and buildings. While technological advances can be wonderful, many of the benefits of connecting to nature are lost.

Imagine being able to re-create a tropical living world in your own home. Being able to experience the visual wonders of thriving plant life. A place where your mind can escape from the concrete jungle.

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The secrets to owning a captivating terrarium.

Quite frankly, old fashioned 'bottle' terrariums are a nuisance you can do without. They're not ideal for your plants. And they certainly don't bring anything to the room you put them in.

However, your **biOrb AIR's** 'functional beauty' uses technology to overcome all the problems associated with antiquated terrariums. It allows you to enjoy looking after and looking at your plants - not struggle to keep them.

How does it work?

The **biOrb AIR** uses sterilised coir compost as the growth media to cultivate your plants' roots. The coir compost is placed on top of a capillary mat which gently draws water up to it from a small water reservoir in the base. This capillary action prevents the possibility of your plant roots rotting.

Natural daylight is not necessary. The LED lighting is arranged in a circular pattern at the top of the sphere. They emit the perfect light output for encouraging natural growth and prevents plants bending towards a single light source. Plus, the light also works on an automatic 24 hour cycle, simulating sunrise, daylight, sunset and night time.

To discourage stagnation and condensation a constantly running fan recycles air through a replaceable carbon filter. A small

amount of fresh air is regularly introduced as part of this circulation process.

To maintain the humidity within the micro-climate, water is added using an ultrasonic mister mounted in the top water reservoir. This mister can be set to three different settings: automatic for tropical plant growth, low for a less humid environment and high for certain amphibian and invertebrate animal species.

Enjoy reconnecting to the natural world

It has been researched that a strong connection to nature can positively affect our mood. After all, hospitals have long believed that their gardens can help to speed up the healing process. Similarly, **biOrb AIR** owners report how they feel a greater sense of well-being when looking at their own slice of paradise.

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SCAN ME

6 PROTECTION ORDER

Toby and Libby Leeming built their six-bedroom home on a four-acre plot in West Suffolk that's bordered by fields and has a 250-year-old oak tree at its centre.

Toby took a hands-on approach from the start, researching local planning applications to ensure that the two-storey house gained permission without a hitch. He also enlisted a family friend, architect Edward McCann (edwardmccann.studio), to design the building, which is shaded by the oak.

To protect all the surrounding trees, the couple employed the Mbloc (mbloc.co.uk) build system of steel frame and timber panels as the concrete pad foundations cause minimal ground disturbance. This speedy construction was complete in less than a year, in which time Toby handmade all the kitchen cabinets from 18mm birch plywood with custom-built carcasses, and fitted much of the timber joinery. By August 2019 the 360sqm house was finished, at a cost of £540,000.



7 NATURAL GEOMETRY

In 2011, Stephen and Elizabeth Tetlow began to seek planning permission to build their five-bedroom, 247sqm home. Four years later, the project finally got underway after their plans were granted following a public hearing. In the Blackdown Hills AONB in Devon, the house's curving shape follows the golden ratio, a geometry that appears in nature, to reflect the beauty of its countryside setting.

Using larch grown in Devon and Cornwall and manufactured off-site to precise golden ratio measurements, the exposed glulam beams, supplied by Buckland Timber, create the backbone of the two-storey structure. The attention to detail continues with the locally made, bespoke oak windows and doors, and the roof structure that's clad in textured wooden panels, made from 4,600 separate slats comprising a mixture of redwood cedar, Siberian and English larch mounted on green oak runners. With Elizabeth project managing, the complex build took two-and-half years, finishing in November 2017 at a cost of £800,000. (bucklandtimber.co.uk) >>



8 CONTEMPORARY LONGHOUSE The open-plan living space of Harry and Briony Anscombe's detached, single-storey family home is lined with large plywood panels that give the airy space a sense of warmth and texture. At 350sqm, the house is generous in size and includes five bedrooms, three bathrooms, an office and pantry as well as the spacious kitchen with dining and living areas. The property, in Padstow, Cornwall, cost £510,000 to construct.

The couple built their home between April 2017 and August 2018, inspired by the mid-century Ben Rose house featured in the film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. The 350sqm steel and timber-frame structure is supported on steel columns, enabling the building to cantilever above the sloping site. But despite its size, vertical larch cladding boards help the structure nestle into the Cornish woodland setting. The timber framing was supplied by Five Oak Projects (fiveoakprojects.com).



9 HAND-BUILT HOME Great carpentry skills are evident in this timber-frame wedge of a house in Billingshurst, West Sussex. On a plot between a railway line and road, the structure's triangular shape avoids a mains sewer running beneath the site, which would have been prohibitively costly to move. Instead, self-builders Fritha and Olaf Mason had Olaf's three-sided design turned into detailed drawings, which were used for the planning application and Building Regulations.

Amazingly, Olaf ran the entire project and built the timber frame on site using hand tools. Millimetre precision was needed from the off, as even a tiny error in the angle of the building's incline at ground level would have resulted in gaining extra height at the roof ridge. Timber is in evidence throughout the 123sqm, three-bedroom house, both inside and out. The kitchen cabinets are painted plywood, most of the flooring is oak, the decking is lpe and a retaining wall is built with railway sleepers to block the noise of trains rumbling by. The construction cost £260,000 in 2021.

PHOTOGRAPHY BRADLEY QUINN, CHRIS TUBBS, FIONA WALKER-ARNOTT, FRASER MARR, JEFFERSON SMITH, MARK BOLTON, MATT CHISHALL

10 REBUILD PROJECT A cold and damp former forester's lodge in the Wye Valley, Monmouthshire, Wales, became a warm family home with a much-improved layout and better light. A year after buying the three-storey property in 2008, Nigel Hussey and Tamayo Kubota began planning to rebuild it. Their idea was for a timber-frame structure using Japanese larch with the exterior clad in the same material. The 200sqm layout is arranged as an open-

plan living area on the ground floor leading to four first-floor bedrooms and on up to a studio and roof terrace with hot tub on the top floor. After going through a lengthy process to gain planning permission and getting construction estimates way above their budget, the couple ended up managing the project themselves. Due to the cost of the Japanese larch, Nigel and Tamayo chose to team it with cheaper Norwegian spruce, with the timber supplied and the frame built by Fforest Timber Engineering. The build completed in 2013, 10 per cent over budget at £200,000. (fforest.co.uk) **GD**





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KITCHEN UPGRADE



Every piece unique

This solid European oak Salisbury dining table with trestle-style legs has an oil finish for a rustic look. The grain patterning ensures that no two tables are the same. From Barker and Stonehouse, it comes in four sizes with a matching bench in two sizes. Salisbury table, L2,000xW1000xH780, £1,345, bench, L2,000xD400xH450mm, £675. Semeru curved teak open back dining chairs, £189 each. (barkerandstonehouse.co.uk)



Timber decor

With a matt lacquer finish and bevel-free edges for a seamless surface, the Residence collection of engineered FSC-certified oak flooring has a contemporary look. From Ted Todd, the range comes in a choice of ten floors each with plank, herringbone and chevron formats in different sizes for a host of laying patterns. Residence range, from £79.95 per sqm for 70x490mm herringbone. (tedtodd.co.uk)

For fast delivery

Providing hot, cold, filtered cold and 98°C water, this tap comes in five finishes, including this copper. It has an insulated hot water storage tank that fits into the sink cabinet and holds 3.5 litres. The deck-mounted lever dispenses hot or cold water, and an electronic control delivers the filtered and boiling water. Fosso 4in1 Steaming Water Tap, £1,440, Caple. (caple.co.uk)



Quality and value

Handmade in the UK with FSC-certified tulipwood fronts, oak drawers and birch ply carcasses, these Shaker-style cabinets are from Olive & Barr. Featuring in-frame slab doors with hidden hinges, the cupboards team with the company's selection of worksurfaces and can be painted in any colour you want. Linear cabinets in Pitch Black by Farrow & Ball (farrow-ball.com) with quartz worksurfaces, from £10,000. (oliveandbarr.com) >>

KITCHEN UPGRADE

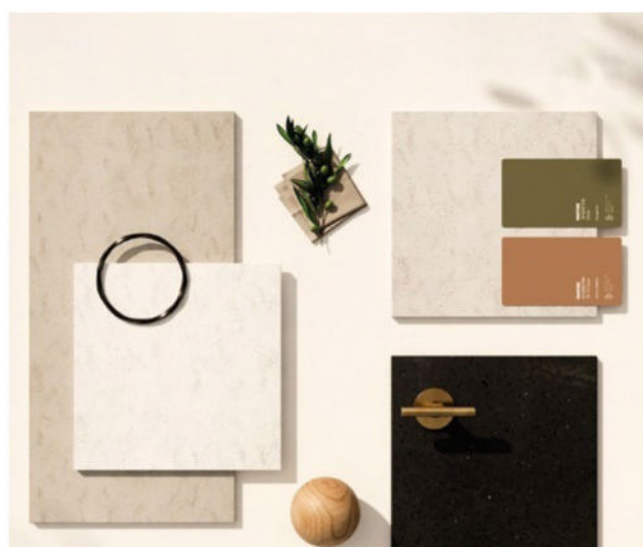
A home brew

If you want a barista-style coffee maker that won't take up lots of space, the Minipro Espresso machine by Smeg might be for you. Brewing at an optimal 90°C, the appliance has a 1.7-litre water tank, pressure gauge, a stainless-steel portafilter that holds the grounds, steam wand and cup warmer. Measuring W288x D555xH545mm, it comes in Matte White, Black or Emerald Green and costs £1,399.95. (shop.smeguk.com)



Variety by design

The timber kitchens from Neptune have several new features to choose from. They include fluted glass doors for the wall units, door fittings from Armac Martin (armacmartin.co.uk) and a wider selection of marble worksurfaces. Henley cabinets in Lead Light and Dove Grey with fluted glass, from £14,000, Arabescato Corchia marble worksurfaces, from £5,000 for island top. (neptune.com)



The finishing layer

Himacs solid surface is a blend of acrylic, minerals and pigments formed into non-porous, seamless worksurfaces, wall panels and flooring. The marble-effect Gravilla collection includes new colours Millstone and Charcoal. Clockwise from top left: Gravilla Cream, Millstone, Charcoal and Snow, from £300 per m. (himacs.eu)

Lasting craftsmanship

Relaunched in tribute to Danish designer Kaare Klint, who died in 1954, the beautifully proportioned Klint chair has a high back for comfort and a woven papercord seat. Made from FSC-certified oak, and measuring W480xD550xH850mm, it comes in a choice of black lacquer, oil or soap finish, with or without armrests. From £768 without armrests, Fredericia. (fredericia.com)



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Ways to save on a new scheme

Get a stunning kitchen for less with this cost-conscious design and buying advice

WORDS PAULA WOODS

Check the quality

When choosing self-assembly cabinets, look for 18-20mm melamine-faced chipboard (MFC) carcasses with a 20- to 25-year guarantee for durability. Order samples for inspection before buying online.

Metod/Maximera base cabinets with Fröjered natural bamboo fronts, from £140 for a 600mm two-drawer unit, Veddinge white units, from £51 for a 400mm wall unit, Ikea (ikea.com)



Time is money

Ordering supply-only cabinets and fittings from an online retailer can be cost effective. But do check whether units are ready made or flatpack. If they need assembling before fitting, you'll need to factor this into the cost of installation.

Löfte kitchen in Bark, from £2,530 for an eight-unit kitchen, Smile Kitchens (smilekitchens.com)



Invest in key details

A premium worksurface transforms the look of low-cost cabinets. Online suppliers, timber merchants and stonemasons tend to offer the best prices. Plus, materials that can be cut on site such as timber or laminate reduce fitting costs.

Bushboard Zenith compact laminate worksurface in Marmo Treviso, £470 for a 3,050x610mm length, Wood2U (wood2u.co.uk)



Select standard sizes

Where possible, opt for stock-size pre-assembled units, as custom-made dimensions come at a premium. In general, ready-made cabinets are quicker, and thereby cheaper, to fit than flatpack.

Finsbury cabinets in Olive Satin, from £2,296.28 for an eight-unit kitchen with end panels and handles, Homebase (homebase.co.uk)



Pool your resources

When tackling a bigger build, such as an extension, getting the project's joiner to fit the kitchen may be more economical than hiring a fitter as the joiner is already on site and familiar with the project. Marlow True Handleless kitchen in Sage Green, from £3,600 for an eight-unit kitchen, Benchmarx Kitchens (benchmarxkitchens.co.uk)



Upscale standard units

Get a custom look by teaming existing or new off-the-shelf carcasses with made-to-order doors, drawer fronts, panels and plinths. Brands include Custom Fronts (customfronts.co.uk) and Husk (madebyhusk.com).

Oak slab fronts with Invisi-pull handles and Formica Sol fronts with semi-recessed handles, from £3,000 for a small kitchen, Plykea (plykea.com). Kitchen design, Studio Fabbri (studiofabbri.co.uk)



Go direct to the source

UK-based brands with a limited selection of cabinet styles keep manufacturing and shipping costs lean, resulting in a relatively low starting price for the quality.

Handmade Shaker kitchen cabinets with oak drawer boxes and tulipwood doors painted in Night Cap with polished brass handles, from £10,000, Olive & Barr (oliveandbarr.com)



Save on the centrepiece

Fitting a sink or appliances in an island involves the cost of relaying services in the floor, whereas a peninsula design benefits from butting up to a wall into which pipes and cables are run, which is a cheaper option.

Goodhome Stevia handleless kitchen in Matt Midnight Blue, from £2,324 for an eight-unit kitchen, B&Q (diy.com)



When to spend

For long-term performance, invest in the best-quality appliances you can afford. Source from online discounters, such as Ship It Appliances (shipitappliances.com), or buy from a single source with a multi-buy discount.

Five-zone induction hob, £1,530.46. Smart app-enabled pyrolytic single oven, £1,201.85, in-column single-zone wine cooler, £1,159.38, Caple (caple.com)



Make a display

Low-cost open shelving is ideal for a rustic or industrial-chic scheme. Salvaged cheese boards are available from reclamation yards, or try scaffold boards from timber yards. Reclaimed cheeseboards, from £68 per 3,300mm, Woodstoneuk (woodstoneuk.com). Carrera units in standard or bespoke painted finish, from £1,706.40 for ten units, DIY kitchens (diy-kitchens.com). Amouage rug, Carpetright (carpetright.co.uk)



Keep it simple

Save money by designing a linear run of cabinets, avoiding complex layouts that can be pricier to install.

Nordic Nature in Nordic Oak veneer, from £7,592 for an eight-unit kitchen, Magnet (magnet.co.uk)

3 OF THE BEST FREESTANDING ISLANDS

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Whitewashed Hudson fully assembled island in recycled pine with limestone surface, castors and brakes, W985x D620xH88mm, £1,250, Graham and Green (grahamandgreen.co.uk)



Baudry Green self-assembly island in FSC-certified painted pine and MDF with turned legs, W1,200x D900xH900mm, £725, La Redoute (laredoute.co.uk)



Stow Warm White assembled island in painted oak with solid marble surface, W1,360xD610xH900mm, £1,099, Cotswold Company (cotswoldco.com)

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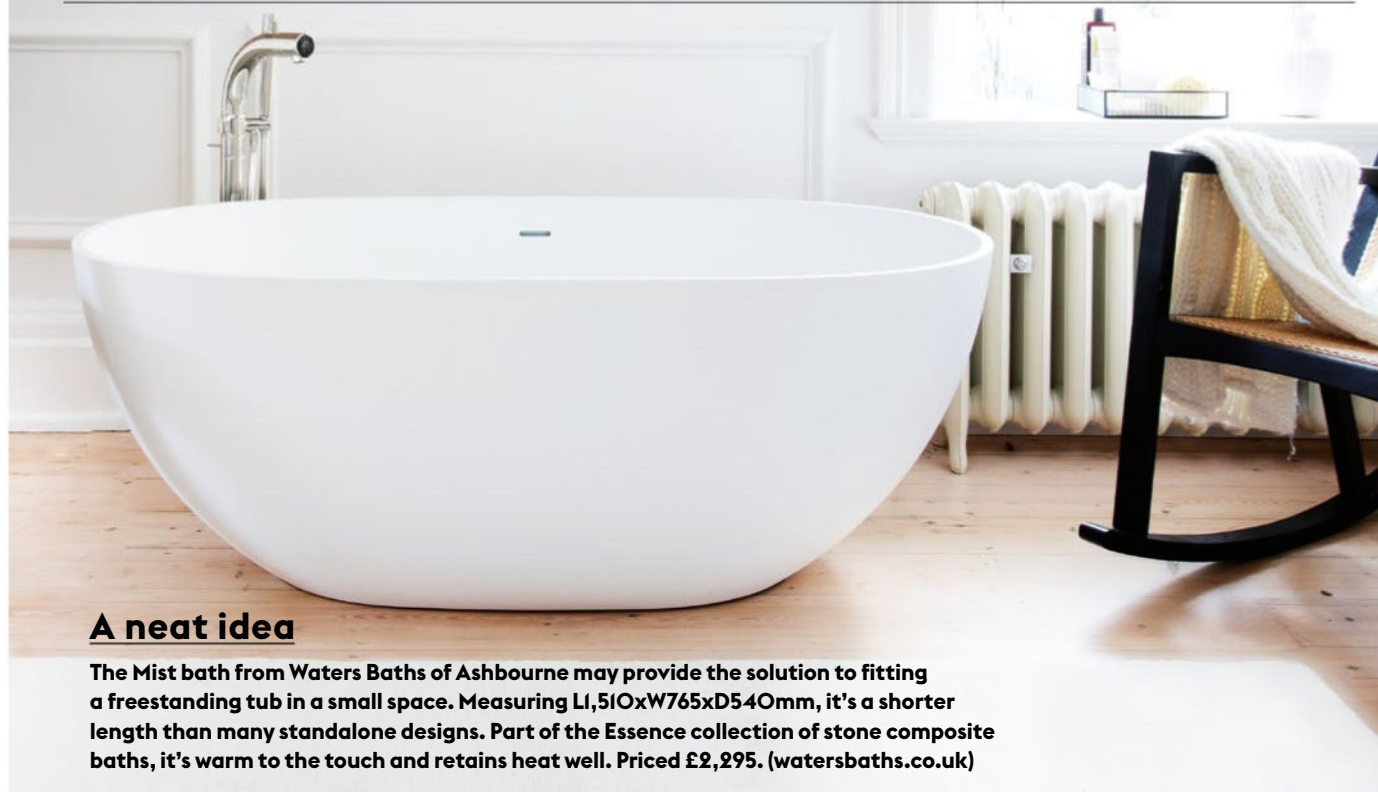


kinedo.co.uk/kinewall



Kinewall
by Kinedo

BATHROOM EDIT



A neat idea

The Mist bath from Waters Baths of Ashbourne may provide the solution to fitting a freestanding tub in a small space. Measuring L1,510xW765xD540mm, it's a shorter length than many standalone designs. Part of the Essence collection of stone composite baths, it's warm to the touch and retains heat well. Priced £2,295. (watersbaths.co.uk)

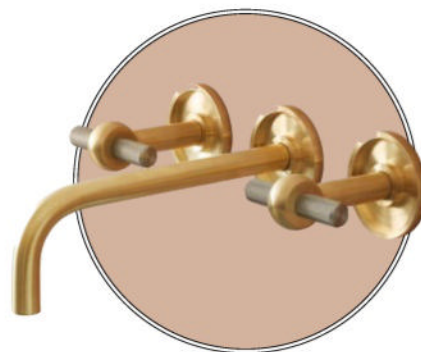


Clever imitation

Inspired by traditional baked-clay Mediterranean tiles, Olivia is terracotta-effect porcelain. From retailer Quorn Stone, each tile is subtly different in tone and markings so that every installation looks unique. Choose from brick, square and hexagon formats and, clockwise from top, Crema, Marron or Rojo, all of which are suitable for walls and floors. Olivia tiles, 150x173mm, £63.99 per sqm. (mystonefloor.com)

Bold as...

Brushed brass and nickel finishes plus knurled handles give this wall-mounted Reuben tap from the London Basin Company a distinctive look. Team it with the matching brushed brass waste and bottle trap. With a spout projection of 210mm, it costs £560. (londonbasincompany.com)



For a ripple effect

Include some texture in your scheme with the Cleo countertop washbasins from British bathroom supplier Hib, which have a fluted exterior. There are three shapes in the range: Round, Arched – which has a flat back – and this oval Pill, W490x D310xH130mm, £249. (hib.co.uk) >>

BATHROOM EDIT

Fit below the surface

Choose from the oval or the rectangular options in the Laceno range of undermount basins from Victoria + Albert. The composite stone designs are available in either gloss or matt white, and both shapes come in two sizes. Laceno 52 undermount basin, W518xD392x H170mm, £360. (vandabaths.com)



Adaptable enclosure

Whether for use in an alcove or teamed with a matching corner panel, the Liberty sliding shower door by Roman is compatible with a range of trays. It includes a roller system for quiet operation and is soft closing. Choose from 8mm or 10mm clear or fluted glass and five frame finishes. 1,200mm Liberty sliding door in brushed brass with fluted glass for alcove fitting, £2,200.49. (roman-showers.com)

Dual-purpose design

The Rift/Reverse aluminium radiator by Tubes has a bare surface to warm towels and an optional wooden tray for toiletries. It's powered by electricity and comes in four lengths and 260 colours. Rift/Reverse, from £1,008 for a W600xD240xH24mm model, towel rail, from £221 for a 500mm length, tray, 460x290mm, £274.80, Bathroom Design Studio London. (bathroomdesignstudiolondon.co.uk)



The luxury centrepiece

An antique table is the inspiration for this cabinet from Oficina Inglesa, by designer Rita König. Made from oak, cherry or mahogany, it measures W1,200xD600xH900mm and comes in a selection of wood and handpainted finishes. A choice of marble tops customise to any basin shape or tap configuration. Bamboo vanity unit in Washed White, £8,664. (oficinainglesa.com)



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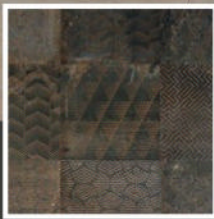
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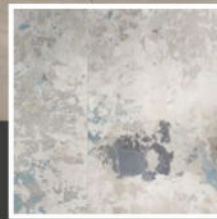
Stone Effect



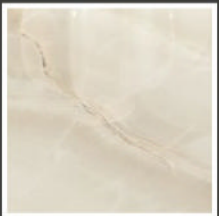
Metal Effect



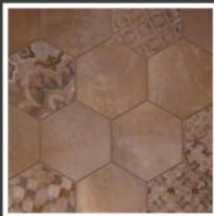
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Ideas for walls and floors

Practical and stylish surfaces, plus advice on microcement

WORDS PAULA WOODS



For wallcovering innovation

Waterproof wallpaper can be used in wet areas, even within a shower enclosure. It's suitable for most surfaces, but requires installation by an experienced decorator.

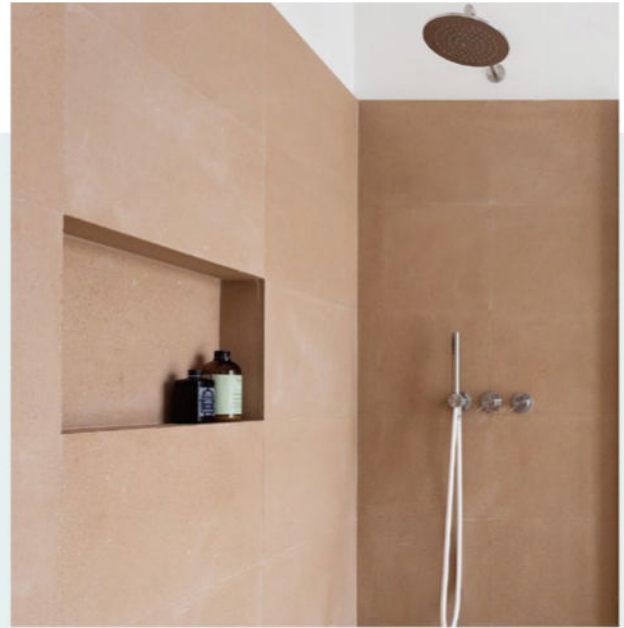
Inkiostro Bianco Puzzle 940mm-wide Fibr Di Vetro EQ Dekor fibreglass wallpaper, £298.80 per roll, Bathroom Design Studio London (bathroomdesignstudiolondon.co.uk)



Consider cladding

Widely available from DIY stores, tongue-and-groove panelling is easy to fit and can be painted in the perfect hue for your scheme.

Eco Chic Claypaint, £21 per 750ml, Eggshell No.17, from £31 per 750ml, Claypaint for walls, £57.50 per 2.5 litres, Earthborn (earthbornpaints.co.uk)



Go sustainable

These cold-pressed tiles are made from raw and natural recycled waste materials recovered from Italian stone quarries. They are left to dry and harden naturally without kiln firing. Available with a smooth or tumbled finish, they are suitable for use in all areas.

Cromie 15mm compact smooth wall and floors tiles in two sizes, from £192.32 per sqm for 505x333mm tiles, Domus (domusgroup.com)



Keep it sealed

Terracotta floor tiles are durable, low maintenance and resistant to mould, bacteria and staining – as long as they are protected with a suitable sealant, or linseed oil and wax.

Alicante terracotta floor tiles, 300x150mm, £59.73 per sqm, 300x70mm, £83.43 per sqm, Hoxton white gloss porcelain tiles, 240x60mm, £50 per sqm, Mandarin Stone (mandarinstone.com)



Get all-over coverage

Waterproof microcement can be hand-applied to all surfaces. For more on this material, see P115.

Walls and floor in Hydro Plaster Natural by Luna Plaster, from £150 per sqm supply and installation, minimum project spend £5,400, Microcement Aesthetics (microcement-aesthetics.co.uk)



Make it unique

If you want to invest in a completely one-off design, some suppliers of handmade tiles offer a bespoke design service.

Try Alhambra Tiles (alhambratiles.co.uk), Bert & May (bertandmay.com) or Mosaic Factory (mosaicfactory.com).

Manarola encaustic cement tiles from the Remade collection, 200x200mm, £157.25 per sqm, recoloured and bespoke tiles, from £20 each, Bert & May



Select an easy-care stone

Larvikite and anorthosite are hardwearing igneous stones responsibly quarried in Norway. Unlike granite, another igneous rock, non-porous larvikite and anorthosite don't need sealing.

Antique anorthosite for walls and floors, from £970 per sqm, Lundhs (lundhsrealstone.com/uk). AE7 vanity unit in bamboo with Lundhs stone, from £4,400, Ask og Eng (askogeng.no)



Speed up installation

Each of the porcelain tiles on this floor measures 280x280mm. But they are pre-scored to replicate the look of small geometric tiles, making the floor much faster to lay.

Victorian Style Finchley Forest Green tiles, 280x280mm, £98 per sqm,
Silk Screen Lantau Bamboo ceramic wall tiles in Smoke Green,
550x333mm, £107.52 per sqm, Ca' Pietra (capietra.com)



Seek purpose-made products

Caution is advisable if you want timber flooring in areas likely to be splashed with water, as it can stain and even buckle over time. So choose designs specifically manufactured for wet areas.

Cascada watertight hardwood in Lily White Oak extra matt,
£74.99 per sqm, Quick-Step (quick-step.co.uk)



Indulge in luxury

Marble comes in a wide number of hues and vein patterns, but as it's porous it will need sealing to prevent staining. Tiles weigh less and are easier to install than big slabs. Honed or matt finishes have better slip resistance than polished designs.

Seaspray green marble wall and floor tiles, 300x600mm, £128.77 per sqm, Malachite
water-based eggshell paint, from £29.50 per 750ml, Fired Earth (firedearth.com)



A SEAMLESS SOLUTION

Good advice from Tom

Mason of Microcement Aesthetics (microcement-aesthetics.co.uk)

- Microcement consists of a resin or polymer and cement blend that's mixed on site and hand-applied in layers to a total thickness of 2-3mm. Resistant to stains and scratches, it can be applied to surfaces including plaster, wood, cement board, tiles and even some shower trays.
- Resin-based formulas are waterproof, whereas polymer-based products require sealing. Both are finished with a protective topcoat. For an eco-friendly alternative to resin, take a look at Carrcrete (carrcrete.co.uk) or Rock Plaster by Luna Plaster (lunaplaster.co.uk).
- The surface microcement is applied to must be correctly prepared, smooth, stable and non-flexible. Most installations take around 5-7 days, and cost from £120-180 per sqm.
- For best results, it should be professionally applied. Ask to see examples of installers' previous work and client testimonials. One way to find an installer is through manufacturers such as Forcrete (forcrete.co.uk), which only sells its products to individuals who have completed its training programme.
- Choose from matt, textured or a sheen finish, which comes from polishing the topcoat. Pigments added to the mix create hues to suit your scheme's colour palette.
- Clean by wiping with water and a PH-neutral detergent.

Maximise texture

Including an element of texture, such as with a deeply fluted wall tile, brings extra interest to a white, monochrome or neutral colour scheme.

Avion Fog fluted porcelain wall tiles, £17.96 per 300x100mm tile, Avion Powder plain wall and floor tiles, 600x600mm, £48.35 per sqm, Boutique Stone (boutiquestone.co.uk)

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Peter is a partner at Moneywatch Finance with more than 30 years' experience in the mortgage/property market. He is able to advise and guide you through the various mortgage options available to you.*

He has appeared on BBC radio providing listeners with his financial knowledge and expertise.






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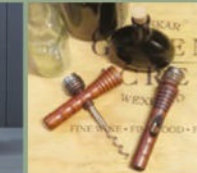
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MY GRAND IDEA

— Architect Ross Perkin and the Emil Eve practice upgrade a London townhouse with two terracotta-clad extensions

Whose home is this?

It belongs to Tess Bridgman and Mat Cuk, who have a one-year-old daughter, Leni. The couple bought the two-storey, three-bedroom Victorian terraced house in Newington Green, north-east London, in 2021.

— What was the brief?

Wanting more living space, Tess, who is from New Zealand, and Mat, from Slovenia, also needed an extra bedroom for when family and friends visit.

— Tell us about the design

On the ground floor, two reception rooms were knocked together and they lead to a new extension spanning the back of the building. Its shape echoes a bay window at the front of the house, and it has a combination of fixed and sliding

RIGHT The kitchen cabinets are custom made from European oak

BELOW RIGHT The roof extension and terrace are tucked behind a parapet created by the house's front wall

BELOW Completed in December 2022, the 170sqm project cost around £2,600 per sqm



glazing, plus a hinged glazed door that opens onto the garden.

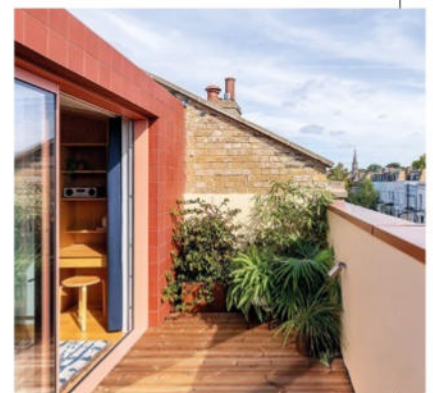
There's a new storey at the top of the house, where a mansard conversion of the butterfly roof gives Tess and Mat a new bedroom with an en-suite bathroom. Keeping the wall of the mansard away from the front of the building creates a generous yet secluded roof terrace leading off the couple's bedroom through sliding glass doors.

Breathable wood-fibre insulation keeps the loft extension warm in winter and cool in summer, while installing an air-source heat pump improves the property's overall energy efficiency.

The exteriors of both extensions are clad in 150x150mm terracotta quarry tiles, with parts of the interior – including the living room and first-floor bathroom – painted to match.

— Why use terracotta?

It complies with the project's planning requirements as it is similar to the existing roof tiles, and it became the most distinctive design element. The tiles bring colour and texture to the extensions,



and having grout, window frames and gutters in a matching shade gives the structures a monolithic look. Terracotta has many lovely qualities. It's lightweight, economical and recyclable, and can withstand temperature extremes, stains, weathering and corrosion. Plus, it's manufactured without the use of harmful chemicals.

— How has it turned out?

Tess and Mat love the way the patio, terrace and window boxes bring greenery into the house, and how the colour of the foliage stands out against the terracotta walls. **GD** *Emil Eve (emileve.co.uk)*



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