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A gable end can be transformed with a bespoke Burley shutter

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Bespoke shutters

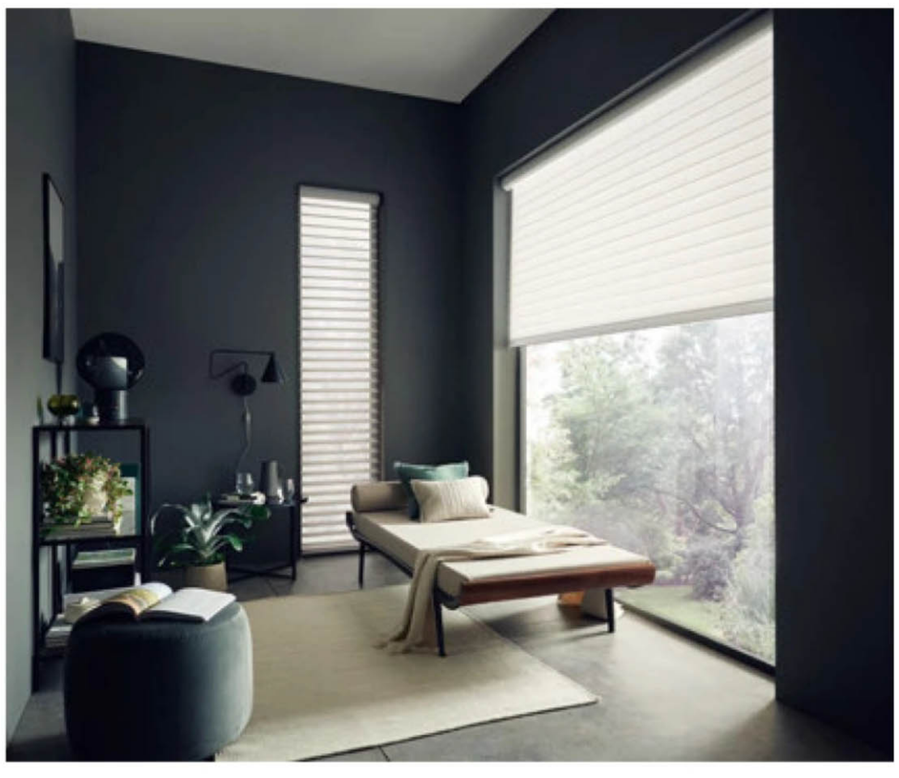
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The Met Office has reported that 2019 was a year of UK weather extremes, including record-breaking high temperatures and significant rainfall (metoffice.gov.uk). The warmest winter temperature measured 21.2°C at Kew Gardens in London on 26 February, while the hottest on record, a roasting 38.7°C, occurred at the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens on 25 July. Across the UK, rainfall was above average in March and for most months from June onwards, with several incidences of flooding in the second half of the year. Autumn rainfall records were broken for Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire – Sheffield had its second-wettest year since records began in 1883.

Latest assessment by UK Climate Projections*, the Met Office's climate-analysis tool, points to a greater chance of ongoing warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers along with a rise in the frequency and intensity of weather extremes.

With rainfall levels set to increase, what can be done to protect the one in six homes in England currently at serious risk of flooding? The National Flood Forum (nationalfloodforum.org.uk) provides practical advice and a directory of retrofit products and services designed to reduce the chance of water getting into a property. While the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) (architecture.com) has recently published *Retrofitting for Flood Resilience: A Guide to Building & Community Design* by Edward Barsley, £40. Aimed primarily at architects, engineers and urban planners, the book highlights ways in which the built and natural environment can be adapted to reduce the severity of the negative consequences of flooding.

Self-builders considering buying a plot can check the Environment Agency flood maps (flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk) to check the site's risk level. But building a home that can adapt to rising water is possible, as demonstrated by Grand Designers Andy and Nicki Bruce's amphibious house, a UK-first designed by Baca Architects (baca.uk.com). As the UK becomes wetter, there seems little doubt that there needs to be investment poured into design and construction solutions for our changing climate.



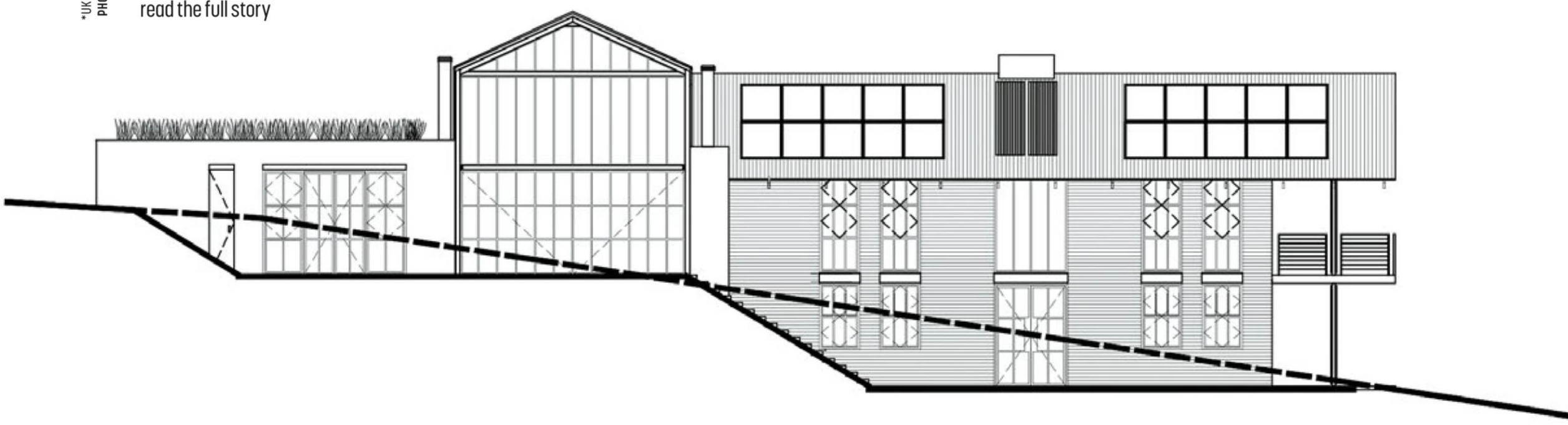
KAREN STYLIANIDES, EDITOR
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EGGERSMANN. SEE MORE KITCHEN CABINETS ON PAGE 117

*UK CLIMATE PROJECTIONS: HEADLINE FINDINGS, SEPTEMBER 2019
PHOTOGRAPHY DANIEL SPENCER **ILLUSTRATION** NADINE ENGELBRECHT ARCHITECT

When designing a home for her parents on a sloping site in South Africa, architect Nadine Engelbrecht included a vast central conservatory. Turn to page 58 to read the full story



GREGORY PHILLIPS

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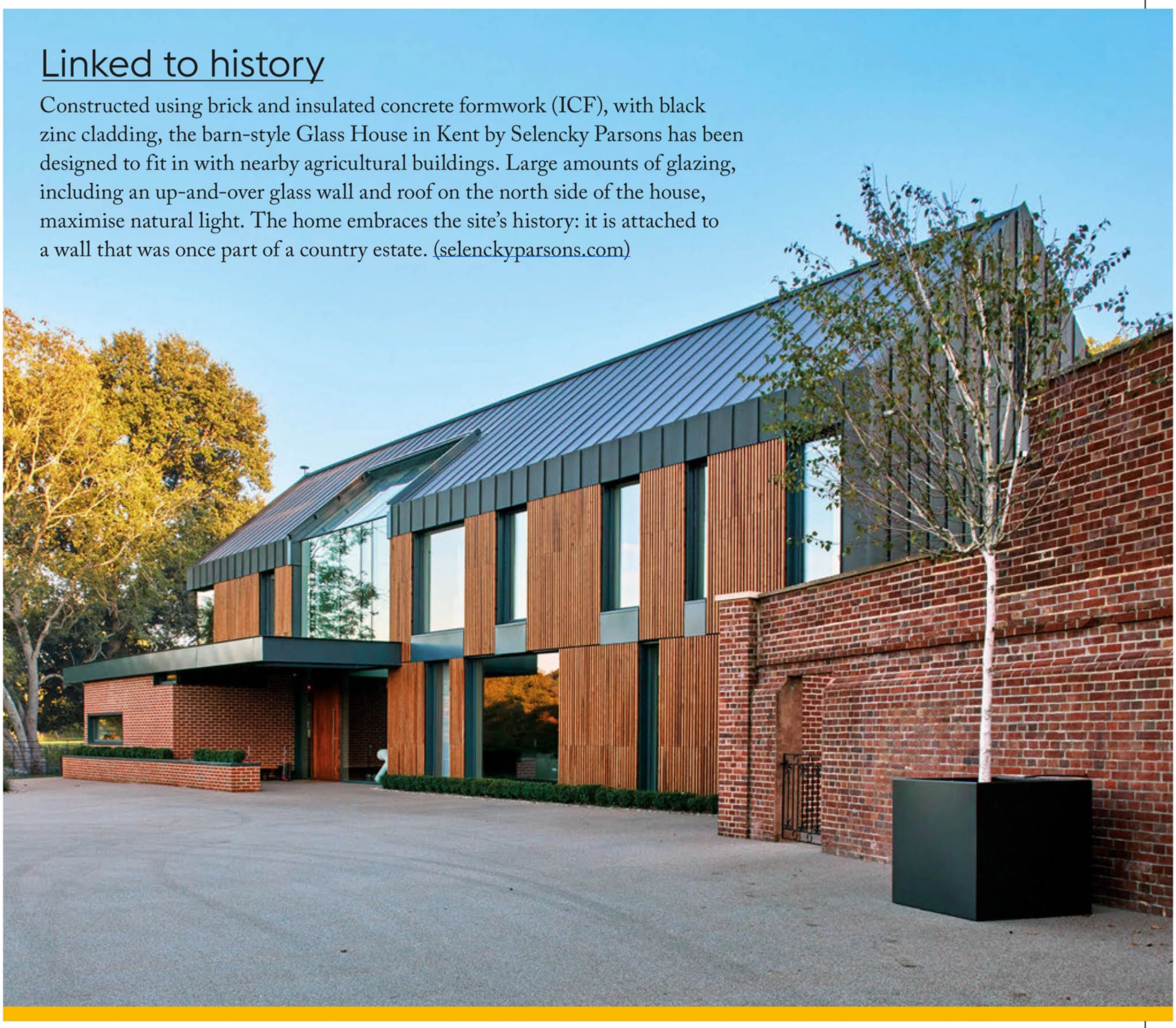
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Architecture update

Original projects to inspire your own self-build or renovation

Linked to history

Constructed using brick and insulated concrete formwork (ICF), with black zinc cladding, the barn-style Glass House in Kent by Selencky Parsons has been designed to fit in with nearby agricultural buildings. Large amounts of glazing, including an up-and-over glass wall and roof on the north side of the house, maximise natural light. The home embraces the site's history: it is attached to a wall that was once part of a country estate. (selenckyparsons.com)





Shipping forecast

First released in 2010, *Container Atlas* (Gestalten, £45), edited by Han Slawik, Julia Bergmann, Matthias Buchmeier and Sonja Tinney, has been updated and includes 28 new examples of structures made from old freight boxes. Ideas run wild. Cumulus Studio cladded containers for a Tasmanian winemaker, but it's the starburst Joshua Tree Residence by Whitaker Studio in California that steals the show, transforming the humble container to the level of artwork. (gestalten.com)

Architecture update

Glam dunk

The Georgian D2 Townhouse in Dublin is a spectacular five-storey conversion that, prior to renovation, was derelict offices with a weed-strewn patch of land to the rear. Architecture practice Jake Moulson was briefed with restoring the building to a family home, and as part of its transformation, original features are juxtaposed with a techno future. The exterior includes cast-iron cladding, viewing platforms and frameless glazing. Inside, rooms have been strikingly styled: there is a pop-art-painted ceiling by Morag Myerscough in the library, while a dressing room, with bath, resembles a set from sci-fi masterpiece *2001: A Space Odyssey*. It's possibly the most flamboyant interior since Louis XIV last had the decorators in. (jakemoulson.co.uk)





Future perfect

If 1960s space-age cartoon *The Jetsons* were ever to be made into a live-action film, Castle Cove House in Sydney, Australia, by architect practice Terroir could feature as the family's base. It's a concrete shell of irregular geometry shapes with a roof that is a continuous zinc membrane. The design is said to deliberately resemble an object that has been unearthed during an excavation, while also referencing the work of mid-century California architecture by John Lautner. 'We were definitely looking to give the client something that was unique to them and their site,' says Chris Rogers, principal at Terroir. (terroir.com.au)



Concrete deal

House in the Trees on the Argentinian Atlantic coast by Buenos Aires architect Luciano Kruk has been designed to have minimal impact on its woodland location. Constructed around a tight central core, the three-storey, 185sqm concrete home is set on a plinth and appears to float among pine trees. The living area on the first floor is surrounded by glass, with dark bronze anodised aluminium frames giving definition against the concrete. Three bedrooms and two bathrooms are arranged on the upper level looking out over the forest below. (lucianokruk.com)



Branching out

As its name suggests, Orchard House by Beasley Dickson Architects sits in what was previously a field of fruit trees. The timber-framed, iroko wood-clad home was designed for a retired couple who wanted a comfortable living space but with enough room for visiting relatives. The ground-floor living area is open-plan, with rooms positioned to make the most of views towards the Weald of Kent. (beasleydickson.com)





Terrace all gold

Corner House in south London by 31/44 Architects is a contemporary take on a Victorian townhouse. The studio began by renovating an end-of-terrace property, turning it into a two-storey maisonette and a garden flat, before tacking on a three-bedroom new-build. Only the observant will question Corner House's genes. For example, what looks like a doorway is in fact a window, with the actual entrance on the lower ground, while an angled porch canopy mimics the staircase entry next door. The exterior's curved wall is another borrowed feature, inspired by the design of a pub across the street. (3144architects.com)

WORDS LEE GALE **PHOTOGRAPHY** BRETT BOARDMAN, *CONTAINER ATLAS* GESTALTEN 2020, TIM CROCKER, SIOBHAN DORAN, RORY GARDINER, DANIELA MAC ADDEN, AGNESE SANVITO



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Design matters

A selection of new products and ideas to complete your project

Dare to pair

Danish designer Maria Berntsen has created a utilitarian table for Copenhagen furniture manufacturer Broste to fit in with the company's pared-back contemporary aesthetic. Choose an oak or dark laminate MDF top and opt for either a static frame or the portability of trestle legs, both in black steel. The table top measures 80x190cm. Natural oak top, £1,267, and trestle base, £217.50. (brostecopenhagen.com)





Bright jewel

Whether you opt for the single globe in a box, a trio wall light, or a pendant combination of the two, there's no denying the glamour that J Adams & Co's Pearl light will bring to your home. Each spherical LED is made from matt opal blown glass and housed in a case framed in solid brass with smoked acrylic sides. The frames are available in a satin brass or bronze finish. Single table lamp, £749. (jadamsandco.com)

Just gorge-ous

Keys, rings and other small-scale clutter can be tidied into these sleek bowls by British-Canadian designer Philippe Malouin for Iittala. Called Kuru, which means gorge or valley in Iittala's native Finnish, the collection comes in beautiful colours, and includes ceramic bowls in beige, £88, and light grey, £115; Seville orange glass, £40, and a frosted green glass vase, £115. (iittala.com)



A soft spot

Generous proportions make Sofa.com's Madison sofa the ideal seat to curl up on. Its boxy shape and oak or mahogany legs keep things elegant without compromising the comfort of the feather-wrapped foam cushions. It's available in sizes ranging from a cosy 121cm loveseat to a family-sized three-seater (W211cm), and a range of upholstery fabrics and colours. Two-and-a-half seat sofa (W191cm) in Shadow brushed-linen cotton with mahogany legs, £1,540. (sofa.com) »



Design matters

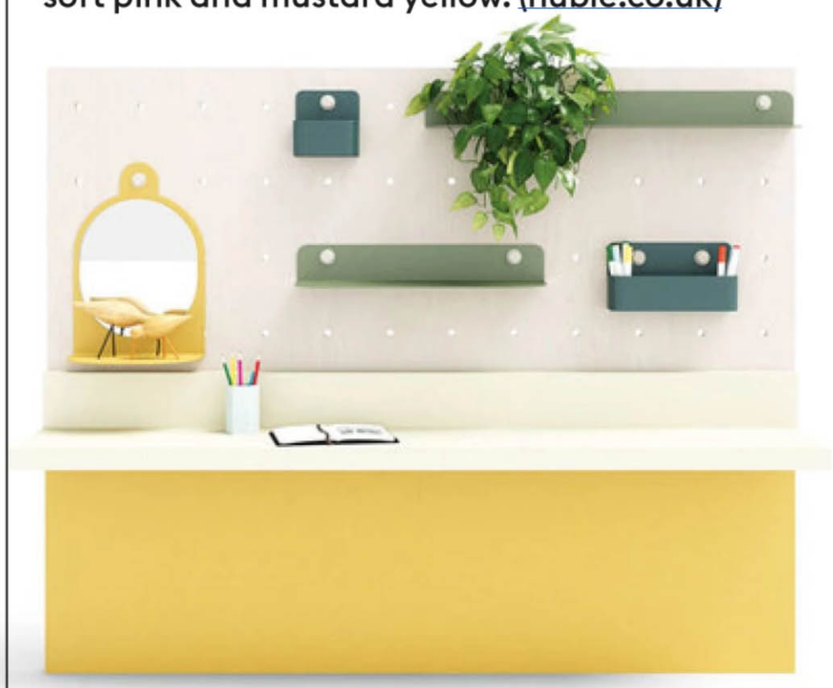
Applied arts

Online retailer Photowall has collaborated with Italian wallpaper manufacturer Texturae to create a striking new architecturally inspired collection. Senso del Colore, which is available exclusively from the Photowall website, uses bold blocks of colour across motifs including pared-down landscapes and representations of Miami's Art Deco South Beach. £31 per sqm. (photowall.co.uk)



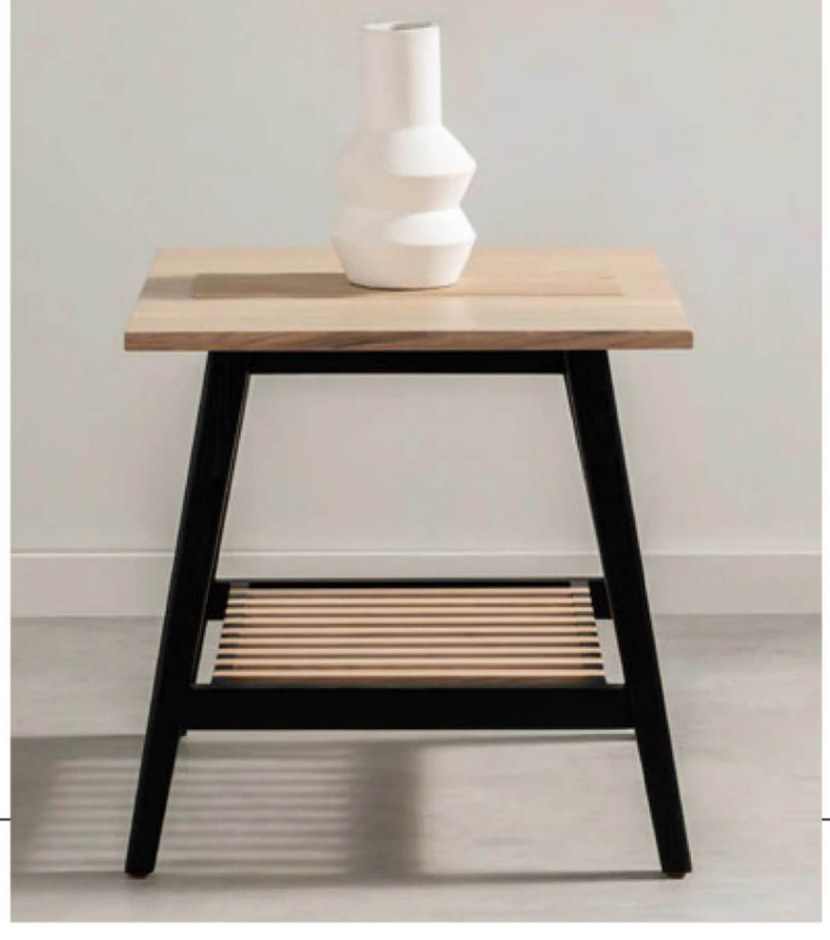
Storage solution

Versatile and fun, the Dots range from Nidi Design, sold via children's furniture specialist Nubie, is a stylish bedroom collection. The Nidi Dots wall system, from £180, with pegboard and built-in desk surface, is made of marine ply and comes in widths of 45cm or 90cm. It can be customised with hanging containers, from £2, shelves, from £8, and a mirror, £10. Mix and match colours from the range, including deep indigo, sage green, soft pink and mustard yellow. (nubie.co.uk)



Get into the groove

Content by Terence Conran has added a new collection to its stable of contemporary furniture designs. Made from solid-oak frames with oak veneers, and contrasting charcoal-stained legs, Groove uses areas of ridged detailing to add texture to the doors and surfaces of its cupboards and occasional pieces, such as this 50cm square side table, £295. (contentbyterenceconran.com)





Mama mia!

Bringing its soft light into dark corners, the two-in-one Madre light from Foscarini can be interpreted either as a sculptural lamp or a vase. The vessel is designed by Andrea Anastasio and made from handblown etched glass and frosted borosilicate glass that shines like moonlight. Madre contains an LED light and should not be filled with water. It's priced at £948. (foscarini.com)

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Kevin McCloud

An architectural competition at Goodwood to design homes for dogs has our editor-at-large's tail wagging



It's always struck me that when a dog is completely engaged in something and wagging its tail, what it's saying is: 'This is My Favourite Thing.'

Owner: 'So, walk?'

Dog: 'My Favourite Thing!'

'Biscuit?'

'Oh, yeah! My Favourite Thing!'

'Our frisbee game is now over but do you want a scratch on your belly?'

'That was My Favourite Thing, but this is my new Favourite Thing! Bit to the left, please... Ahh, yeah.'

As Alice Roberts wrote in her 2017 book *Tamed: Ten Species that Changed our World*, recent archaeology has shown that the association between humans and dogs (as domesticated animals physically and behaviourally different from wolves) goes back much further than we previously thought, to 30–35,000 years ago. We seem to have weathered the Ice Age with them.



Charles, third Duke of Richmond, with his beloved spaniels in 1755, painted by Pompeo Batoni

Such a long relationship suggests a closer tie, perhaps a deeper mutual understanding or at least a recognition of behaviour across the species barrier that operates at a subconscious level. For a very long time, dogs have been trained to look after us, find food, protect us, keep us company, guide us and sometimes compensate for our lack of smell, sight or hearing.

> 'The Duke put the welfare of his hounds well above that of his guests'

All these roles place human welfare at the centre of the relationship between us and dogs, but of course canine welfare and psychological health is just as important if we're to avoid exploitation and unhappiness. We all want to see a tail wag.

Which is why this May, I think you should indulge yourself, your loved ones, and your four-legged loved ones in a real treat: the great extravaganza of 2020 taking place on the Goodwood Estate in West Sussex – Goodwoof.

Why Goodwood and why dogs? The current Duke of Richmond – owner of Goodwood – is a renowned car expert and enthusiast, racer, impresario and the genius behind the Festival of Speed and the Goodwood Revival. Both are automotive spectaculars held on the estate's famous racing circuit. He's also, as you might have guessed, a lover of dogs. And of architecture.

These passions run in the family and were fully synthesised in the third Duke, who commissioned a magnificent set of kennels from architect James Wyatt in 1787. The result, altered but still, at its core, Wyatt's building, is a magnificent Palladian hymn to dogs, slightly rusticised in tune to its purposes of animal husbandry, hunting and retrieving.

It was a famous canine home, technically advanced, with underfloor heating that reportedly placed the welfare of the Duke's hounds well above that of his guests. It was known as 'the most luxurious doghouse in the world'.

The Kennels has now been sensitively adapted into a club for use by people, but the building continues to hum the same tune. On 24-25 May, Goodwoof will take over and amid, let's be honest, the craziness of thousands of visitors and their dogs, the event will take a moment to remember and re-dedicate the Kennels' original purpose – as the »



The regency-style Kennels at Goodwood was once home to pampered hounds

third Duke would have liked – to dogs and their wellbeing.

I can't wait. Partly because I love the company of dogs, and partly because I'm now a bit involved in the whole captivating celebration. The current Duke had the idea of asking the country's greatest architects to follow in Wyatt's footsteps and the result has been a design competition that will result in a grand Barkitecture display of the finalists' work at the event. Even more can't wait. Woof!

Visitors will be able to inspect around 20 built examples of contemporary doghouses designed by some of the finest architectural minds of our time, some of them household names. All of them – and it won't come as a huge surprise – are dog owners, meaning they took the brief very seriously and found they had the perfect client sitting obediently at home.

> 'The Kennels were renowned as the most luxurious doghouse in the world'

The dog-home designs are in, construction is about to begin, and the Goodwoof panel of eminent judges (which includes me) is being assembled to present Barkitecture awards. There's a prize (I think it's a dog bowl) and an enormous rosette for the best kennel, another for the best multiple-occupancy kennel (for large doggie families or fashionable ménages à multiple) and one for the best student project. When I describe the judges as 'eminent', some will be eminently wet-nosed and waggy-tailed. As my brother's Labrador would say, 'I can't wait any longer and want to be there now.'

Goodwoof won't save the world or solve the housing crisis, but it fits a different kind of human activity that is just as important: celebration. On a serious note, it supports animal charities and there's a chance it will contribute to human/dog relations by re-examining canine welfare. So, a little peace and joy in our time. And probably some mayhem on the day too.

Dedicated to doggie delight and human happiness, Goodwoof promises to be glorious, like the estate's famous racing event, and bonkers. Everyone's tails will be wagging, including mine. It'll be my Favourite Thing. GD



Colin MacKinnon and Marta Briongos' aluminium-clad home is on an airfield

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PHOTOGRAPHY GOODWOOD

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STUC White Nature and STUC White Texture from URBATEK by PORCELANOSA.

IN BRIEF

LOCATION Warwickshire
TYPE OF PROPERTY
Detached barn-style house
BEDROOMS 4
PROJECT STARTED June 2018
PROJECT FINISHED April 2019
SIZE 290sqm
BUILD COST £617,000

Steel cladding and low-maintenance Accoya timber give the house a smart contemporary look. The overhang of the first-floor balcony creates a sheltered all-weather terrace below

‘There’s no reason why things can’t be pleasing to look at and practical’

Modern materials and thoughtful design have created a home that’s accessible to all

WORDS **JAYNE DOWLE**
PHOTOGRAPHY **DAVID GILES**

Paralympic medallist and wheelchair-user Mark Butler, 50, was tired of living in a house that just wasn't suitable for him. Restricted mainly to the ground floor of the home he shared with his wife and three children, Mark decided it was time to build an accessible house designed for his physical needs.

Mark broke his back in a motocross accident in 1984 leaving him paralysed from the waist down. Since then he's competed as an international swimmer, winning medals at the Seoul 1988 and Barcelona 1992 Olympics.

As a design engineer specialising in sports cars and racing bikes, Mark feels strongly that many products designed for accessibility are standardised and unimaginative. 'There's no reason why things can't be pleasing to look at and practical,' he says. 'A bit of thought could help so many people. I didn't want my home to look like a house where a person with a wheelchair lives.'

When the idea came in 2017 to design a self-build home, Mark was living with his wife Penny and their children in a barn conversion. It had steps, a dog-leg staircase and a kitchen that Mark found difficult to use because of its tight corners, high worksurfaces and badly located appliances. 'I couldn't chase the kids upstairs and I couldn't read them a bedtime story,' says Mark.

The couple bought a redundant barn a few yards away from their house. Planning permission for a new-build on the site came with the proviso that it would not exceed the existing footprint or building height. They started by dismantling the structure, which they sold to a farmer. »



ABOVE Mark and two of his children relax on a comfy Chesterfield sofa in the spacious living room. The smooth surface of the polished concrete floor is practical and in keeping with the contemporary scheme

The sliding doors, supplied by Midland Aluminium, have slim frames, offering minimal interruption of the countryside views

‘I didn’t want my home to look like a house where a person with a wheelchair lives’



Mark's needs were taken into account with every aspect of the layout; the widths, height and distances have been carefully calibrated and all the floor surfaces are flush. An internal lift provides easy access from the ground to the first floor and the height of the windows in the main bedroom gives Mark a view of the surrounding fields at eye level from his wheelchair.

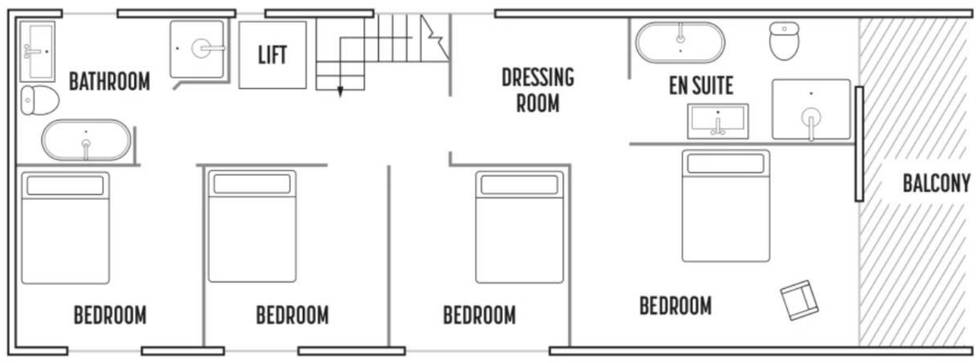
The house is very much a place where everyone can feel at home. At its heart is a contemporary kitchen with a central island, opening out onto a generous entrance hall/dining room, and living room. There's also a family room/cinema, study and a ground-floor shower room. Upstairs are four bedrooms, a dressing room and a balcony.

LEFT The extra-wide opening from the kitchen to the hallway can be closed off with space-saving sliding pocket doors

RIGHT In the kitchen, worksurfaces have been fitted at a comfortable height for Mark to use and the ovens are at seated eye level. The bespoke copper-topped table contrasts with the dark-grey cabinets



FLOOR PLANS



FIRST FLOOR

GROUND FLOOR

Penny took on project managing the build and even when the couple separated during the construction, she continued in the role to see it through to completion. Delays, cost increases and compromises along the way, including a change of contractor, meant the designs and specifications continually needed to be revised.

Detailed structural drawings calculated that rather than the £500,000 originally expected, the build would in fact cost half as much again – an unforeseen £750,000. As Mark and Penny's house still hadn't sold at that time, releasing money needed to part-finance their new home, some of the more ambitious features of the project had to be reconsidered. A planned basement-level garage and integral car lift was the first to go. Further down the line, an expensive aeronautical-inspired steel statement staircase, designed by Mark, was replaced by a standard wood one.

A timber and steel frame and structural insulating panels (SIPs) were chosen for cost-effectiveness and speed of construction, with the added benefit of making the house extremely energy efficient. A ground source heat pump and solar panels power the heating and hot water, and there's underfloor heating throughout.

More recently, the completed property has been put up for sale as part of Mark and Penny's divorce proceedings. But Mark still hopes the project will inspire home builders to design more accessible houses. GD





RIGHT The lift is tucked into one corner of the kitchen and rises to the upstairs landing



A monochrome colour scheme is highlighted by chrome brassware and fittings. The wet room-style shower has a built-in seat



French doors in the main bedroom open onto a private balcony. The bespoke glazing is angled to match the pitched roofline

SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM
Original design and planning approval
ArchiWildish (archiwildish.co.uk)
Main contractor
G&N Loveridge Builders (07710 987 657)

STRUCTURE
Building and plumbing supplies
BPS (bpsbuildit.co.uk)
Builders' merchant Jewson (jewson.co.uk)
Electrical contractor
KG Brooks Electrical (07976 677 997)
Plumbing Bloomfield Plumbing (07721 328 742)
Plastering Christopher McFarlane (07540 597 133)
Ground source heat pump
Alto Energy (altoenergy.co.uk)
Lift Aritco UK (aritco.com)
Scaffolding AC Scaffolding (acscaffolding.com)
Structural insulated panels (SIPs)
Innovaré Systems (innovaresystems.co.uk)
Steel fabricator Talos Steel (talossteel.com)
Steel roof Steel Roof Installers UK (steelroofinstallersuk.com)
Solar power Alderminster Group (alderminstergroup.co.uk)
Landscaping Michael Twite Design & Landscapes (michaeltwitelandscapes.co.uk)
Trees and foliage Ascott (ascottgardens.co.uk)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS
Windows and doors Midland Aluminium (midlandaluminium.co.uk)
Kitchen Wren (wrenkitchens.com)
Polished concrete floors MPA Liquid Screed (mpaliquidscreed.co.uk)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
Garden furniture Bramblecrest (bramblecrest.com)
Copper kitchen table/worksurface
Talos Group (as before)

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Making a connection

The intriguing design of this family home and garden arose from the simplest starting point

WORDS **NIK HUNTER**
PHOTOGRAPHY **DOUGLAS GIBB**

The ground floor is defined by white rendered walls, while the first floor is clad in chevron-pattern larch boards

IN BRIEF

LOCATION St Andrews, Fife
TYPE OF PROPERTY
Detached family house
BEDROOMS 4
SIZE 380sqm
TOTAL BUILD COST £850,000
CURRENT VALUE £1.5 million

There are some for whom it is their life's ambition to build their own house. This wasn't the case for Helen and Ben Gray, but when an opportunity presented itself, they fully embraced it. Having sold their previous home, a large Victorian manor house in the Fife countryside, Helen, 53, who manages the family's holiday cottage business, and Ben, 52, who is a publisher, wanted to move to St Andrews to give their son Zac, 13, the independence of living in a town.

'We had three criteria,' says Helen. 'The house had to be within walking distance of the town centre, it had to have tall ceilings and doorways – because Ben is six foot six – and I wanted a garden. This height requirement narrowed the search down to buildings from the 1860s to 1910, which left just 20 possible houses and a narrow plot of land.' Although the site was going to be challenging as it measured 150 metres long but only 25 metres wide and was surrounded by houses, Helen and Ben could see that it had potential.

'When it became clear that building our own home was the best way for us to get everything we wanted, I felt strongly that we shouldn't build a pastiche,' Helen explains. 'I didn't want a house that was embarrassed about being contemporary. It had to be of the time in which it was built.' »

A pond was a must-have for Helen. To draw attention to the movement and ripples of the water, she often uses a wildlife-friendly black dye to create a mirrored surface

THIS IMAGE AND RIGHT
The simple, sleek design of the Leicht kitchen hides ample storage space where everything has its place. Bar-stools are from Wayfair and the kitchen table and chairs are all Ikea

A house they'd seen a few years previously near Ladybank, Fife, sprang to mind. It was designed by award-winning architect Gareth Hoskins and at the time they'd thought it one of the most beautiful homes they'd ever seen. As the focus of the practice's work had since shifted to the public sector, they never expected Gareth to take on their project, but decided to give him a call on the off-chance. After a successful meeting, Gareth said yes, assigning Clare Kemsley and Rory McCoy as project architects. Sadly, Gareth died in 2016.

'We don't design many private houses, but Helen and Ben's ambition and outlook felt like a good fit for us,' Rory explains. 'It was an interesting plot – a long »

'The kitchen/dining room is at the heart of the home, a space where everyone congregates'





ABOVE The slate floor tiles follow the central line around which the house was designed. Engineered oak flooring runs throughout the living room. The panel etchings are by local artist Kirstie Behrens

narrow gap between houses. There are no views from the site. It's very flat and it had a strong mature beech hedge boundary. One of Helen's key demands was that the house and garden were designed as one.'

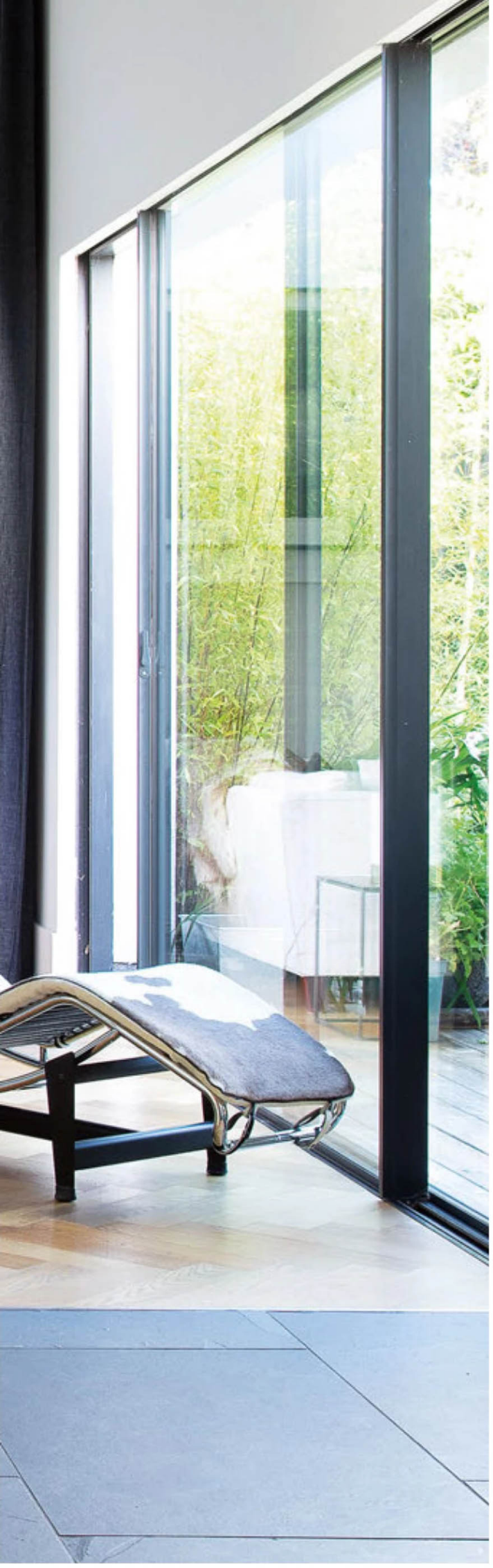
The couple wanted connections between the main living spaces but with defined areas. 'The way the architects responded to that was phenomenal,' says Helen. 'Neither Ben or I had lived in an open-plan house before. We knew we were only going to build once and we were so worried about getting it wrong,'

'Many people think of modern design as vast open spaces, but I find that type of design isn't often that successful, especially for families,' adds Rory. 'There had to be consistency through the living spaces and distinctive areas with their own character.'

The solution to this was something rather simple: the architects struck a straight line through the site and designed the house and garden as a series of spaces of varying sizes off this central axis. Each garden area was assigned a separate function – wild, growing and entertaining – while the house was conceived as two large white-rendered boxes and two smaller contrasting timber-clad boxes.

Inside, pocket doors enable individual rooms to be closed off or the whole house opened up, while a range of ceiling heights subtly define the different spaces.

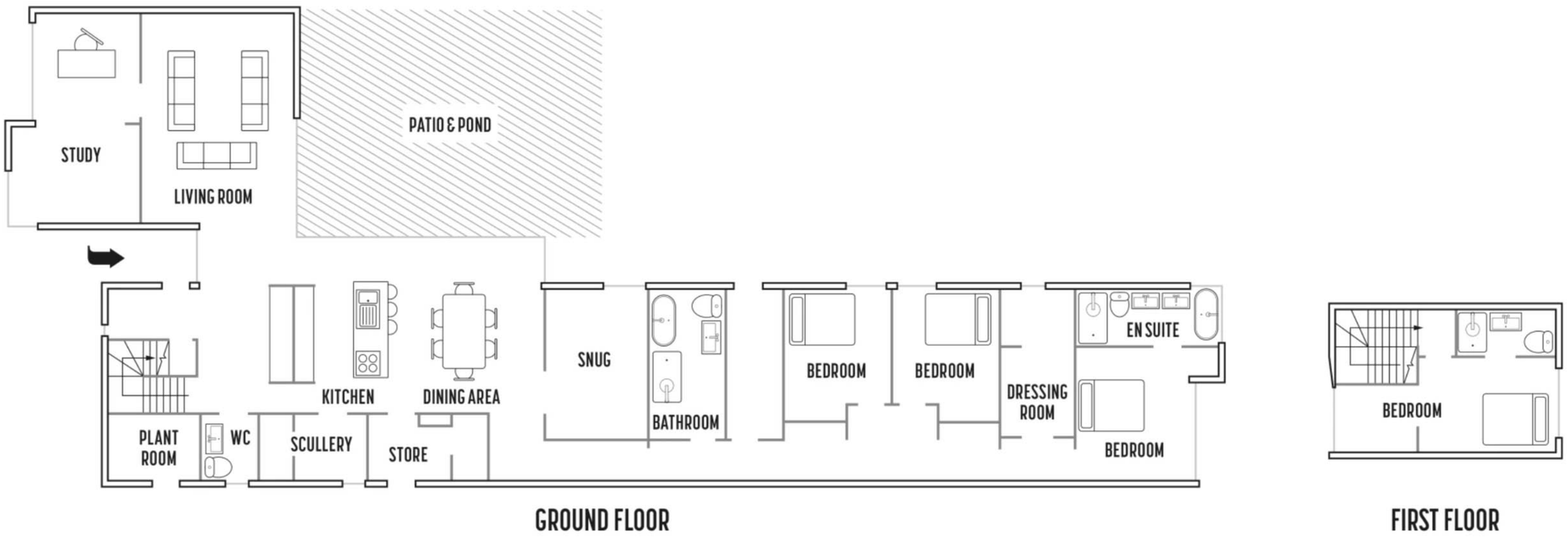
The kitchen/dining room is at the heart of the home, a central space where everyone congregates. This and the adjacent living room are both focused, through sliding doors, on a sheltered decked area with meditative pond. »





LEFT It was Helen's idea that the house and garden would be designed as a continuous whole

FLOOR PLANS



GD HOMES SCOTLAND

The geometric lines of the house are softened by the surrounding planting

Each garden area was assigned a separate function – wild, growing and entertaining

'We wanted this house to help us live better,' says Helen. 'In our last house, despite our best intentions, we ate in front of the television, but now family meals just naturally happen at the table. The only area that I don't walk through every day is the guest bedroom and bathroom upstairs.'

It isn't only the layout that works for the family; the atmosphere in the house has also taken them by surprise. 'We learnt so much about buildings, spaces and psychology on this project; the ceiling height down the side of the kitchen is a consistent 2.4 metres to ensure it didn't feel busy and to keep it a calm space, and the wall of cabinets housing the built-in ovens is also 2.4 metres tall,' says Helen.

What started as an awkward linear plot has become a harmonious flow of indoor and outdoor rooms where the family can move easily between spaces.

'The layout of this house has made it so easy to live the way we want to,' says Helen. 'When design helps you to live your best life, it's massive.' **GD**

ABOVE Sliding doors between the study/TV room and the living room makes the spaces intimate or open, as needed. The desk is by contemporary Dutch furniture designer Frank Van Hooft

So as not to overlook the neighbouring property, there are no windows along the corridor. Instead, it is lit from above via a single skylight

‘The layout of this house has made it so easy to live the way we want to’

The neutral colour scheme in Helen and Ben's bedroom draws attention to the work of local artist, Robert Macmillan

All three bedrooms on the ground floor benefit from direct access to the beautiful garden

SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM
Architect Hoskins Architects (hoskinsarchitects.com)
Structural engineer David Narro Associates (davidnarro.co.uk)
Quantity surveyor BCC (bccqs.co.uk)
Contractor Pert Bruce Construction (pertbruce.co.uk)

STRUCTURE
Foundations Dundee Plant Company (dundeeplant.co.uk)
Cladding Russwood (russwood.co.uk)
Heating Pitkerro Plumbing & Heating (01382 738 888)
Solar panels Glendevon Energy (glendevonenergy.co.uk)

Superstructure and frame Deeside Timberframe (deesidetimberframe.com); Pert Bruce Construction (as before)
Windows Velfac (velfac.co.uk)
Engineered flooring Strathearn (stoneandtimber.co.uk)
Internal oak joinery Pert Bruce Construction (as before)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS
Bathrooms The Bathroom Company (thebathroomcompany.co.uk)

Wood-burning stove Stovax (stovax.com)
Leicht kitchen Kitchens International (kitchensinternational.co.uk)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
Kitchen lights Tom Raffield (tomraffield.com)
Kitchen table and chairs Ikea (ikea.com)
Bedside tables Wayfair (wayfair.co.uk)
Cushions and bedspread Made (made.com)
Art Kirstie Behrens (kirstiebehrens.co.uk); Robert Macmillan (robertmacmillan.co.uk)

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Street smart

Built on a side garden plot, this neat family home blends the best of the past with the present

WORDS **EMILY BROOKS**
PHOTOGRAPHY **BRUCE HEMMING**



RIGHT With similar brickwork as its Victorian neighbour, the house blends with the period street. The projecting window is a modern version of a bay shape

FAR RIGHT The living space is behind the bay window and leads straight through to the back garden

IN BRIEF

LOCATION South-east London
TYPE OF PROPERTY
End-of-terrace home
BEDROOMS 2
PROJECT STARTED June 2016
PROJECT FINISHED November 2017
SIZE 80sqm
LAND COST Already owned
BUILD COST £265,000

Back in 2012, Andrew Robinson, now 36, who works in digital innovation, and his partner Alicia Scurr, 37, who is in HR, bought a Victorian three-bedroom end-of-terrace that needed renovating and modernising. For the next few years, the couple concentrated on updating it from top to bottom.

The house came with a big side garden and a string of failed planning applications by previous owners to build something on it. In 2015, Andrew and Alicia decided to investigate whether it might be possible to build a new house on the plot, partly to exploit its value, partly because of their interest in contemporary architecture and also to have a home built to their exact requirements. 'I looked at the plans that had been submitted in the past and I felt they just weren't suitable for the site. This gave us hope that a better scheme, which was more in keeping with its surroundings, would be granted permission.'

They began searching for a local architect with experience of tricky sites and found Mark Dyson of Enclosure Architects. He had just finished building »



The 110cm-long Brunel desk from Heal's is compact and contemporary





The top section of the storage wall is accessible from the living room while the lower section opens to the hall to store shoes

‘We wanted really good use made of the interior space because we knew it wasn’t going to be the biggest of houses’



‘We were told that if we worked with the council on altering some elements of the design, they might change their minds’



Inexpensive Ikea carcasses are teamed with handle-free doors that have been cut to fit

his own house on an infill plot around the corner from Andrew and Alicia's home. 'Our idea for the exterior was a modern take on the Victorian terrace,' explains Andrew. 'We also wanted really good use made of the interior space because we knew it wasn't going to be the biggest of houses. It had to feel spacious and bright.'

The plans were initially rejected by the local authority, but the couple received a telephone call while waiting for formal feedback on the decision. 'We were told that if we worked with the council on altering some elements of the design, they might change their minds,' says Andrew. After a few adjustments, which included matching the ridge height with the house next door and lessening the width of the house so that it didn't sit right on the perimeter of the plot, the plans were passed. Andrew and Alicia then secured a self-build mortgage to finance the project, which was supplemented by their savings. »



RIGHT A steel-framed glass balustrade is a focal feature of the hallway and allows daylight to filter through the house



Vintage G Plan furniture and geometric cushions bring colour and warmth to Andrew and Alicia's bedroom

Mark worked hard to make the most of the almost triangular plot: the three-storey house has a rectangular footprint with one corner snipped off. Inside, a lot of thought went into the staircase because the interior layout is effectively built around it. 'There was a lot of playing around to get the smallest possible staircase that would meet building regulations and still allow us to have a generous bedroom and bathroom,' says Andrew.

It may be compact and costly, but the staircase is one of the house's standout features, with its cantilevered oak treads and a steel-framed glazed balustrade. The glass corner doors leading out to the garden were another relative extravagance on the couple's tight budget. They meet at an obtuse angle, rather than the manufacturers' 90° standard and were custom-made.

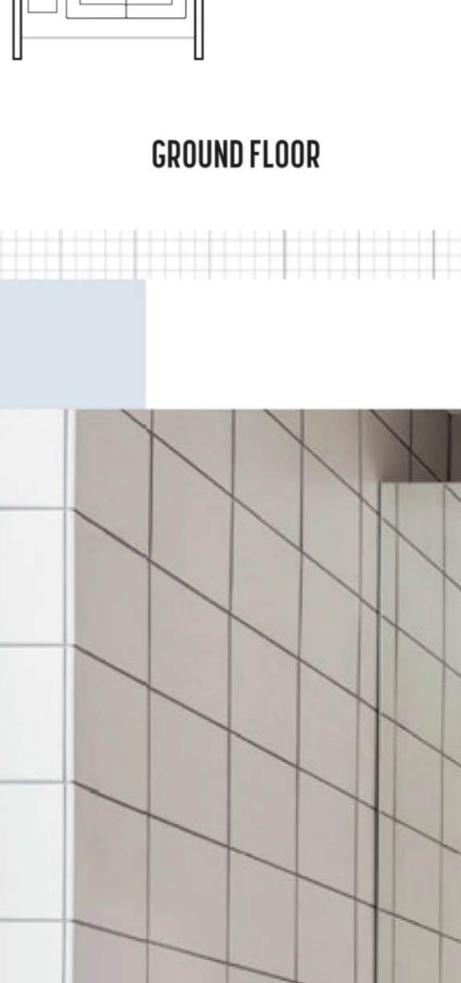
'As the garden is small, we wanted a design that would provide as much connection as possible between the inside and outside,' Andrew explains.

There is concealed storage in every room, from the top-floor eaves to an invisible larder that looks like a section of solid wall. The boiler fits in to a little space next to the bath that was originally going to be shut away as a void: a tile-clad door slides back to reveal it.

The couple hired the builders that had renovated their Victorian house, and Mark oversaw the project on a day-to-day basis. His care and knowledge was crucial to its success. As the builders were used to standard renovation and extension projects, they needed guidance to get to grips with refined details, such as shadow gaps and frameless glazing. »



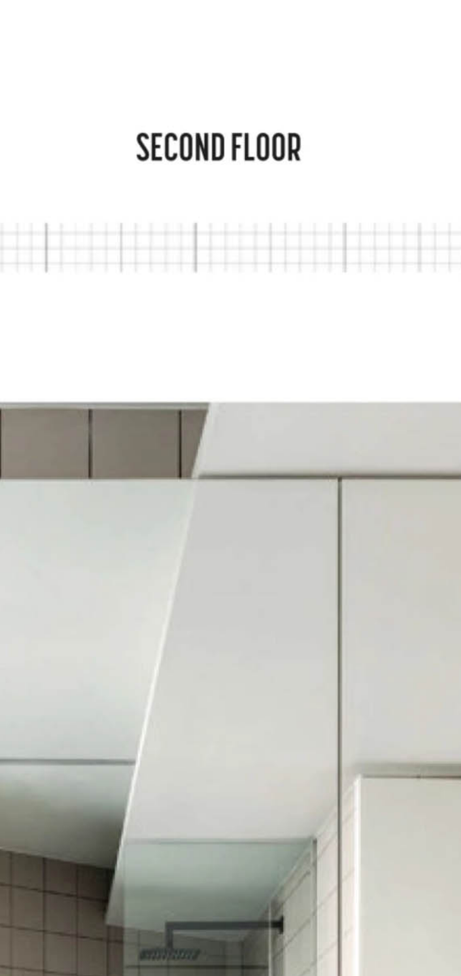
FLOOR PLANS



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



RIGHT The main floor space is used for a freestanding bath, while the shower is tucked into the awkward angled section of the house

The build progressed smoothly apart from an early problem with the groundworks, which had been subcontracted. Required to remove earth from the site and build a concrete retaining wall, the firm excavated everything in one go – rather than piecemeal, as the structural engineers had instructed – leaving the road to the side vulnerable to collapse.

'A building regulations officer just happened to be walking by and issued us with a stop notice,' says Andrew. 'It was the subcontractor's error. Our main contractor rectified the issue and covered the cost.' Detailed plans had to be re-submitted to the council, causing a 12-week delay.

The implications of this were felt later on, as Alicia was pregnant with their daughter Edith, who is now two. 'We were hoping to finish before Edith arrived but ended up moving in two months after,' explains Andrew. The couple found the last few weeks exhausting, caring for a new baby while having to make the hundreds of tiny decisions to drive the house forwards to completion.

After moving in, the couple found it fascinating to compare the new home with their Victorian property. 'It's so much lighter and warmer,' says Andrew. The house is clearly modern, yet it blends well with the rest of the street and stands out for all the right reasons. GD



RIGHT The oak staircase is cantilevered from the external wall giving it a sculpted quality



ABOVE At the top of the house, Edith's colourful bedroom is bright thanks to a large window and roof light



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM
Architect Enclosure Architecture (enclosure.org.uk)
Structural engineer EngineersHRW (ehrw.co.uk)
Main contractor Prestige Build (prestigebuild.net)
Building control Assent (assentbc.co.uk)

STRUCTURE
Windows Velfac (velfac.co.uk)
Roof lights Fakro (fakro.co.uk)
Sliding doors Greenmark Joinery (greenmarkjoinery.co.uk)
Bricks Ibstock Brick (ibstockbrick.co.uk)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS
Kitchen carcasses Ikea (ikea.com)
Kitchen doors EasySpray (easyspray.co.uk)
Kitchen tap B&Q (diy.com)
Oak flooring Direct Wood Flooring (directwoodflooring.co.uk)
Powder coating (kitchen plug, waste traps, bathroom shelf) Purpose Powder Coatings (purposepowdercoatings.com)
Kitchen worksurface DFMK (dfmk.co.uk)
Tiles Walls and Floors (wallsandfloors.co.uk)
Bath Victoria Plum (victoriaplum.com)
Toilets CP Hart (cphart.co.uk)
Connected home Vesternet (vesternet.com)
Radiators The Radiator Centre (theradiatorcentre.com)
Thermostats Tado (tado.com)
Bathroom brassware Lusso Stone (lussostone.com)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
Sofas Habitat (habitat.co.uk)
Desk and chairs Heal's (heals.com)
Dining table and bed Made (made.com)
Floor lamp Lampe Mesteren (lampemesteren.com)
Bedside lights John Lewis (johnlewis.com)

IN BRIEF

LOCATION Pretoria, South Africa
TYPE OF PROPERTY
Detached rural house on farmland
BEDROOMS 3
PROJECT STARTED January 2017
PROJECT FINISHED April 2018
SIZE 600sqm
LAND COST £260,000
BUILD COST £260,000

A humble glasshouse

For one architect, designing the perfect home for her parents was a matter of stripping things back to the basics – with impressive results

WORDS **GRAHAM WOOD**
PHOTOGRAPHY **ELSA YOUNG/BUREAUX/LIVING INSIDE**



ABOVE AND LEFT
The conservatory stands taller than the rest of the house, which is partly submerged.

When architect Nadine Engelbrecht, 35, began sketching designs for a new home for her parents Charmaine and Andre Freyer, both quantity surveyors in their sixties, she wasn't lacking in ideas.

Nadine's initial design suggestions included perforated screens along with other architectural ideas, but her parents weren't keen. So she asked her mother, who also runs a boutique hotel in Pretoria, to find a picture of something she liked, which turned out to be a farmhouse in the Karoo – the semi desert scrubland of the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape provinces.

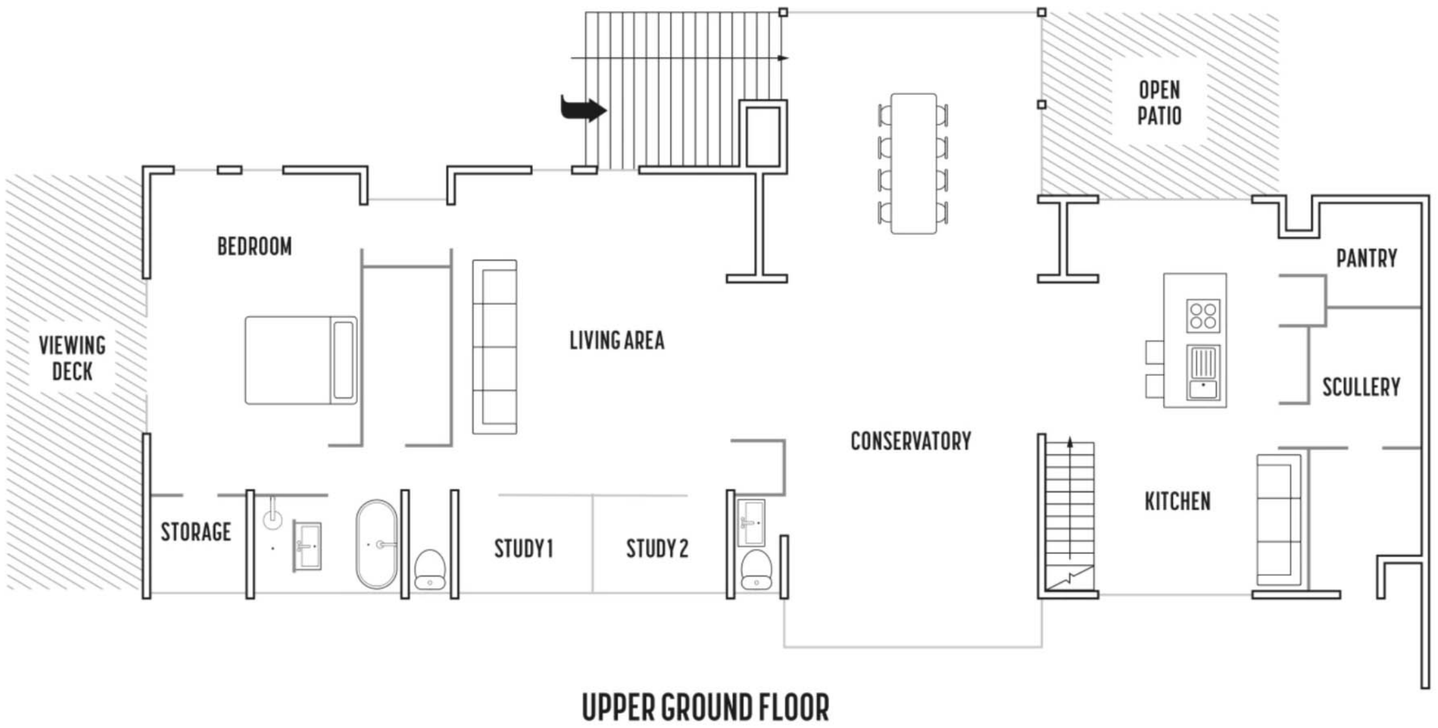
'It looked like nothing,' says Nadine. 'A stone cottage with a corrugated-iron roof. I asked her what she liked about it, and she said she didn't know.' Charmaine also showed Nadine pictures of a tearoom in a conservatory. Eventually the penny dropped. 'I realised my mum wanted simplicity,' she says. 'Nothing trying to look like "architecture", just beautiful space and light.'

Nadine went back to the drawing board and started the design process again with the most basic form she could think of, with humble materials. The house she created has a steel and glass facade, exposed concrete »

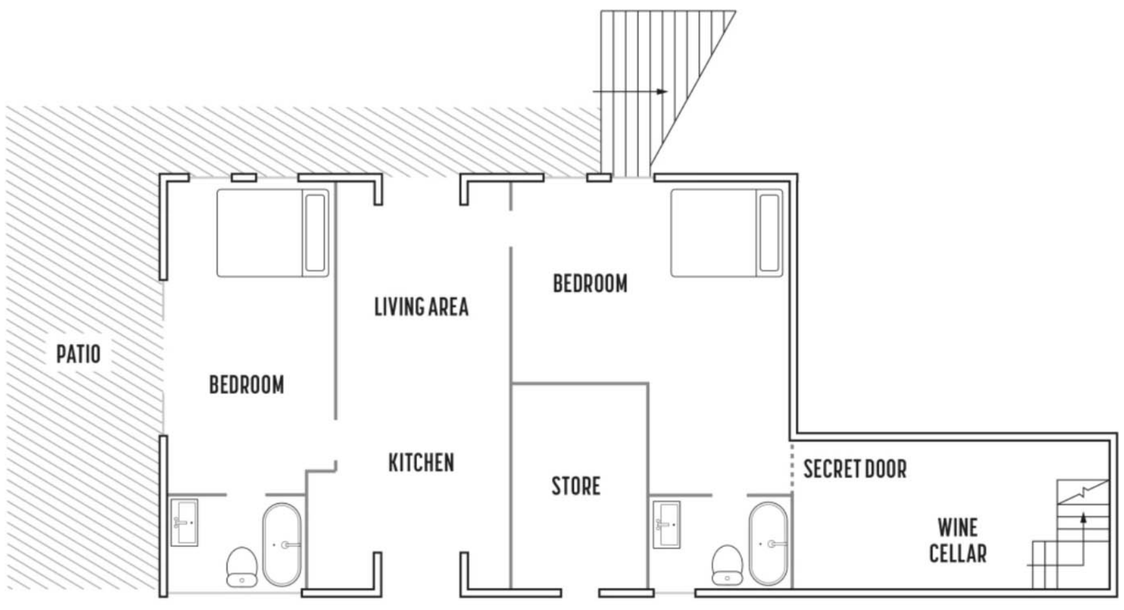
While wild *veld* grass surrounds the house, an apron of lawn has been created for visiting grandchildren to play on. A grassy staircase has been carved into the incline

An entire glazed wall on the north side of the house can be opened up to cool the interior. The glass floor panel reveals the wine cellar below

FLOOR PLANS



UPPER GROUND FLOOR



LOWER GROUND FLOOR





slabs and cement-washed bricks. Practical metal sheeting covers the roof and is interspersed with polycarbonate to let in daylight. Timber joinery softens the industrial materials.

The new-build house sits on 35 acres of rocky farmland, bought by the couple after years of looking for somewhere they could escape from city life in nearby Pretoria. Although there was already a farmhouse on the site, it was in a valley. But what had attracted them to the location were the views across to the Bronberg mountain range, which meant building further up the hill.

Because her father enjoys bird-watching, the house is orientated to capture views to the north and south, and overlooks a grove of trees to the west. 'My parents' bedroom looks right into the treetops,' Nadine explains.

A vast central conservatory is Charmaine's domain, where she grows plants, such as orchids, cymbidiums and aerophytes. This space is Nadine's version of a covered front patio or *stoep* found in many South African homes



‘I realised my mum wanted simplicity. Nothing trying to look like “architecture”, just beautiful space and light’

– like the Karoo farmhouse her mother had shown her. ‘Mum wanted an enclosed *stoep* with somewhere comfy to sit and also for it to be inside the house, not adjacent to it,’ explains Nadine.

Warm summers and mild winters make indoors-outdoors living a natural part of life in South Africa, so one end of the glazed atrium can be raised to open the conservatory out to the landscape. To one side is a kitchen and an informal seating area-cum-TV room; to the other, a living room, two office spaces and a bedroom. On the lower-ground floor, tucked into the hillside, is a self-contained suite for when family and friends visit. Andre, a keen amateur carpenter, helped build the structural joinery, such as the kitchen island and conservatory cabinets, and made the dining table.

Close to Nadine’s heart is the notion of passive design, sustainability and homes being energy efficient. ‘In South Africa, because of the good climate, if you design a »

ABOVE AND LEFT
The central conservatory opens onto a kitchen and TV room. Nadine designed the metal kitchen island and cabinets. Oak introduces warmth and texture while the concrete ceiling has been left exposed

to a high standard, you don't need to include alternative heating and cooling,' she says.

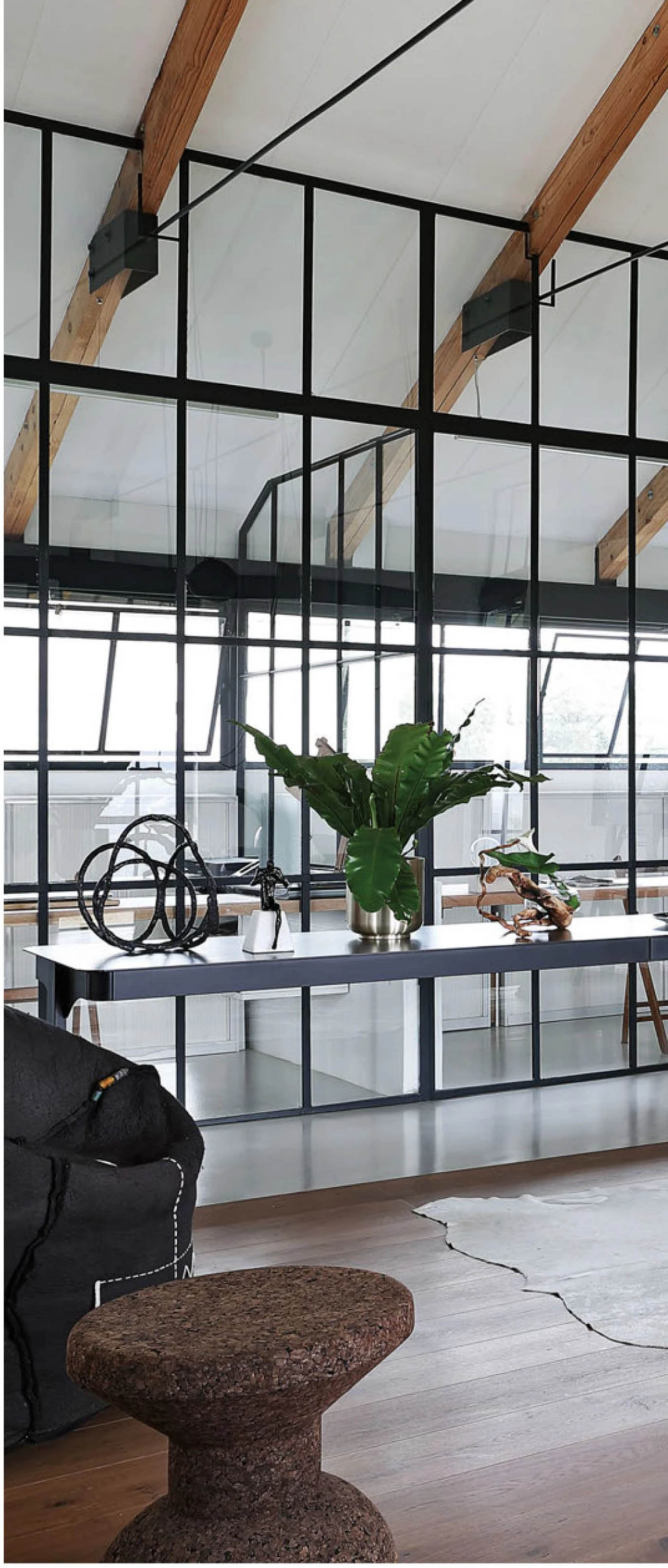
The land has three dams, which take care of the house's water supply, and Nadine incorporated 16 photovoltaic panels on the roof to cover most of the power requirements. Carefully positioned roof overhangs give shade in summer and allow sun in during the winter. With the doors closed the house retains heat but when everything is open, it cools.

As well as being a plant lover, Charmaine is a champion of local art and design. She visits student exhibitions, buying the work of upcoming artists. Likewise, most of the furnishings are by local designers. It's a mix offset by a simple palette of white walls, timber, concrete and steel.

The landscaping was largely a matter of rehabilitating the natural grassland around the house, introducing water-wise plant varieties on the inclines where heavy rain would have washed out the grass. 'We've also got an area of lawn for the dogs and the grandchildren to play on,' says Nadine. 'Otherwise, everything was chosen to be as natural as possible.'

With the light-filled conservatory filled with plants, the landscape seems to fill the house's green heart, too. GD





ABOVE The living area is defined by an oak floor set into the surrounding screed. The cork stools are by Laurie Wiid and the painting is by Marié Vermeulen-Breedt

LEFT Nadine sits in one of the study spaces where Andre and Charmaine can work from home

‘In South Africa, because of the climate, if you design a house well, you don’t need alternative heating and cooling’



ABOVE AND RIGHT
Industrial materials such as concrete are softened by plants that thrive in the humid bathroom. The steel shelf and towel hooks were designed by Nadine and manufactured by Tsipe Engineering

FAR RIGHT
The bedroom is west-facing and opens onto a balcony. A folding timber screen helps control harsh sunlight



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM
Architect Nadine Engelbrecht Architect (nadineengelbrecht.co.za)
Main contractor Hans Boersema Boukontrakteurs (hbcon.co.za)
Structural engineer Petra van Eck, DMV Engineering (dmw.com)
Landscaping Nandi Koster (nandi@dfrost.co.za)

STRUCTURE
Steel frame Sienna Steel Studio (steelstudio.co.za)
Glazing SV Glass (+27 12 653 2762); Yebo Windows & Doors (yebowindows.co.za)
Roof Roofing Solutions (+27 12 335 1308)
Concrete floor CT Industries (ctindustries.co.za)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS
Kitchen and island Designed by Nadine Engelbrecht Architect (as before)
Timber Andre Freyer
Oak floor Forest Flooring (forestflooring.co.za)
Steel fittings Tsipe Engineering (tsipe.co.za)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
Timber chandelier David Krynauw (davidkrynauw.com)
Bench and African cork stools Laurie Wiid van Heerden (wiiddesign.co.za)
Table and side table Gregor Jenkin Studio (gregorjenkin.com)
Soft felt chair Ronel Jordaan (roneljordaan.com)
Bar-stools Dark Horse (dark-horse.co.za)
Outdoor chairs SHF (shf.co.za)
Side table, coffee table and chairs Weylandts (weylandts.co.za)
Wall light, bedside light and pendants Flos (flos.com)
Cushions Ronel Jordaan (as before); MRP Home (mrphome.com)
Bathroom shelf and towel hooks Tsipe Engineering (as before)
Copper bowl Copper Bath (copperbath.co.za)
Art Marié Vermeulen-Breedt (southafricanartists.com)



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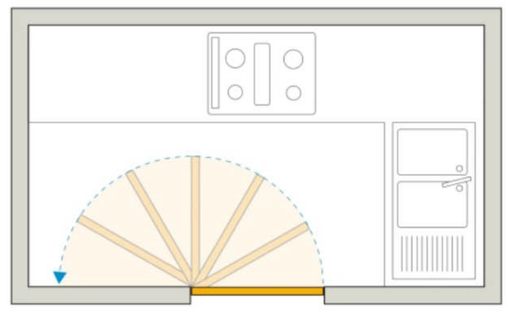
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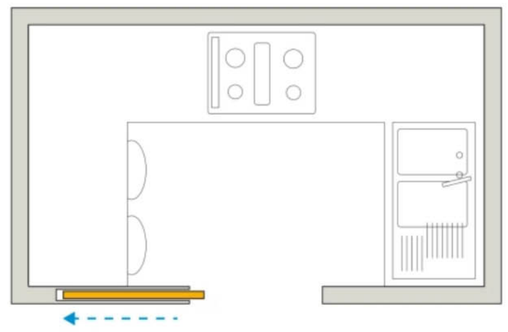
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GRAND DESIGNS PROJECTS



The Edge garden room, from £14,245 by Green Retreats, has a sheltered deck area. Turn to page 94 for more outdoor buildings

Renovation diary: part eight **73**

Guide to planning permission **77**

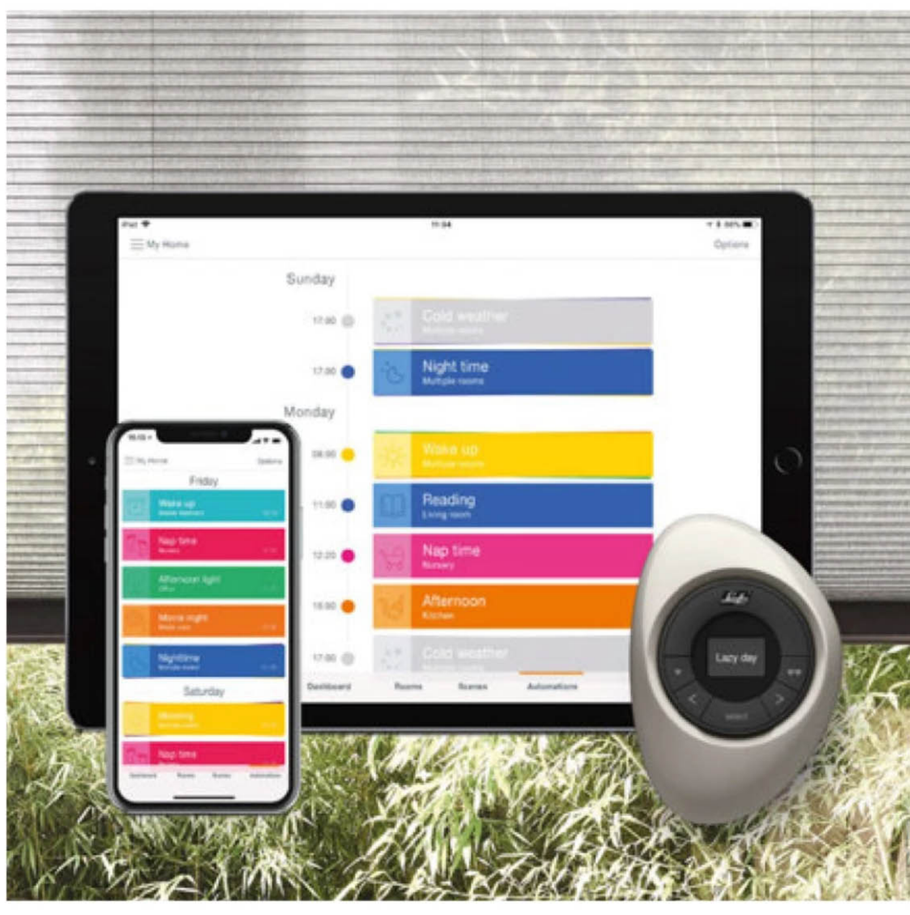
Ten clever conversions **85**

Unique garden rooms **94**

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The Art of Window Styling



Large amounts of glazing at the rear will frame views of the garden from both floors



Reena Simon, 36, interior stylist and blogger (hyggeforhome.com), lives in Cardiff with her husband, Matt, 40, and their three young daughters. Follow the family's progress each month as they convert a 1960s bungalow into a two-storey home

Last chance to change our plans

With the house nearly watertight, but still a shell, it's time to make last-minute adjustments

We're seven months into the build and things are moving at what feels like a snail's pace; if we could turn back time and do things a little differently we would, but Matt and I aren't ones to dwell on negatives – the show (or build) must go on!

In last month's diary entry, I mentioned that we struggled to find a roofer with the skills to install the corrugated steel we wanted, which lead us to hire a local farmer.

I'm happy to report we can end this saga on a high – the ground floor roofs are nearly done, bringing us one step closer to a watertight building. Because of the shallow pitch and shape »

of the corrugated sheeting, fitting the flashings around the roof lights is going to be tricky, but it's hopefully the last of the construction headaches we'll experience.

Choosing a somewhat unusual material for the roof has caused us delays and extra costs, but we think it's worth it. It looks great and we'd still advocate considering materials that are a bit different from the norm.

In fact, we're using the same steel to clad some of the external walls. The original bungalow was built in the back garden of the house in front. This means that one side of the building is very close to the neighbour's boundary, and consequently rarely seen.

'Why not just leave this wall as it is?' you may ask. Well, because we are insulating our house in rigid 80 millimetre insulation from the outside, we need to clad over the top. But we don't want to waste the more expensive burnt larch that we're using on most of the exterior, which is where the corrugated steel comes in. Also, from a design point of view, breaking up the materials works well and adds more interest. This leads me to a tip on materials: buy them direct if you can. Although our main contractor doesn't mark up the prices of metals, wood and so on, we've found other tradespeople do. As we're working with a limited budget, project-managing this side of the construction and saving money has been worth the extra time and effort.

Moving on to more progress on site – the windows have been ordered. We went for aluminium/wood frames with a slim profile and contemporary Scandinavian design. For the larger panes at the rear of the house, we wanted metal-framed windows. The mullions will break up the large expanses of glass and

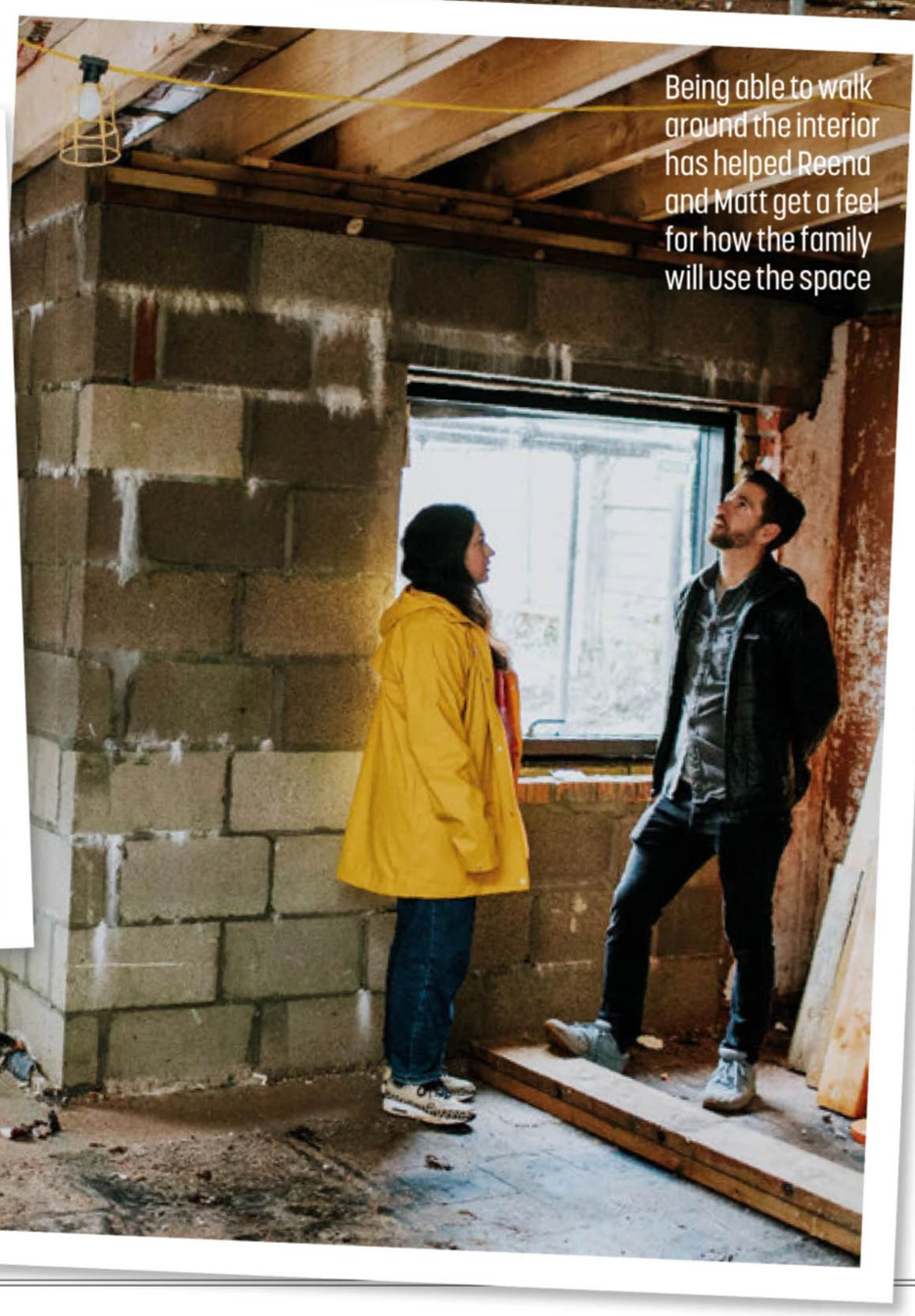
'We advocate considering materials that are a bit different from the norm'



The windows are in and the external walls are ready to be insulated and clad in burnt larch, with corrugated steel covering the unseen side of the house



Fitting the flashings around the roof lights is one of the last tricky tasks on the couple's project list


Being able to walk around the interior has helped Reena and Matt get a feel for how the family will use the space

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Downs Merrifield Architects (downsmerrifield.com) **Planning consultant** LRM Planning (lrmplanning.com) **Interior architecture** Alex Nikjoo (nikjoo.co.uk) **Landscape architect** Victoria Wade Landscape Architecture (victoriawade.co.uk) **Lighting** Nicholas Merchent, Home Lighting Design (hldstudio.com) **Builder** REG Construction (07791 143 017)

ARTWORK DOWNS MERRIFIELD ARCHITECTS **PHOTOGRAPHY** MARIE PALBOM



frame the view of the garden in smaller sections. They're also a nod to the industrial style of the corrugated-steel roof and cladding. They're due to arrive on site shortly.

Once we are fully watertight, which should be any day now, we'll be able to start work on the interior, and I'll share more progress of that.

Meanwhile, we've had lots of time to walk around the space without the stud partition walls. We'd spent so many hours staring at the plans on paper that it was really important to do this: imagining how we might move from one room to another; thinking about the practical issues. As a result, we've changed the layout of the split-level part of the house. One of our biggest challenges with a family of five is finding a place to sort, dry and hang washing without it encroaching on the living space or the bedrooms.

When we worked up the original layout, we just couldn't find a way to integrate a laundry room, and so squeezed the washing machine and dryer into a tiny area with nowhere to hang anything. After walking around and assessing the space with fresh eyes, we've made a downstairs bedroom smaller to accommodate a larger laundry room. GD

● ***Next month: Attention turns to the inside of the house***

REENA'S RENOVATION TIP

Walk around the empty spaces before putting up any stud walls. It's a good opportunity to review whether your plans will work in reality. Don't be afraid to make changes - it will save costs in the long run.

RENOVATION PROJECT PLANNING GUIDE

1 FINDING A PLOT OR RUN-DOWN PROPERTY
Search via land and property websites, contact local estate agents and get on the mailing lists for upcoming property auctions.

2 SEEK PLANNING PERMISSION
It's required before you start any work, apart from changes completed under permitted-development rules.

3 SET A BUDGET AND HIRE YOUR TEAM
Work out a budget and then secure funds as a priority. Seek recommendations for architects and builders. Visit their completed projects.

4 MANAGE THE PROJECT
Give your team a clear brief for the build. Set a schedule of works and make sure that the legally binding construction contract is ready.

5 MAKE REGULAR INSPECTIONS
Visit the site to ensure that everything is in order and the work is progressing as planned. Address any issues as they arise.

6 SIGN OFF THE PROJECT
Take a tour of the finished work with your build team and note down any snags that need to be corrected before signing off on the renovation project.

For more on planning permission, see page 77

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Buiding this four-bedroom home and artist's studio in the Cotswolds involved a 14-year planning battle; it was won by minimising the house's impact on its green-belt site

Guide to planning permission

Find out if you need it, how to apply and your best route to successfully securing consent

If you have a plot of land or a property that you want to knock down and replace, planning permission will be required before you can begin any work. The planning system is a discretionary one – there is no fixed set of rules that determines whether consent will be granted or refused.

Pre-application checklist

Before a planning application is submitted some crucial work must take place. This involves assessing the site, local policies, the plot history and any constraints, and obtaining technical reports, if needed, before embarking on a design.

Your local council's website is a good starting point for some of this prep work. Use it to research the history of the site and to find out whether there are current or lapsed applications. It should also show local maps and policy documents, which will detail whether the site is in a settlement, green belt or conservation area. Some councils' websites are better than others, and information such as tree-preservation orders may have to be sought in writing or by phone conversation.

Designing a house isn't just about how many rooms you want; you also need to think about the context of the plot,

Planning legislation affects the size, shape and even the materials you use to construct your home

as a design that is sympathetic to the surrounding area is more likely to gain permission. Consider the street setting and whether the property will be visible from the road. It's also important to make sure the house fits in with the scale of its neighbours.

Planning legislation affects the possible size, orientation, shape and even the materials you use to construct your home. Restrictions are greater if you're in a conservation area, or close to a listed building; this is where the local council's »



THIS IMAGE AND BELOW
Leigh Osborne and Graham Voce converted this ten-storey Victorian water tower into a stunning home

neighbourhood plan will give an idea of what will be allowed.

It is a good idea to arrange a meeting with the local planning office to discuss your ideas. They will let you know if there are any concerns about whether the project conforms to the legislation. It could save time in the long run, as you won't end up wasting valuable hours working on what could eventually be deemed an inappropriate scheme.

Pre-application can flag up problems and reduce the risk of your application being rejected, potentially saving you time and money

Another way to help things run smoothly is to liaise with neighbours. Local support could boost your application.



An initial assessment

Pre-application is paperwork submitted to the local council that provides a limited amount of information – compared to that required for a full planning application. This is a good way to obtain an initial view as to what you may or may not be allowed to build. It can flag up problems and reduce the risk of your application being rejected, potentially saving you time and money.

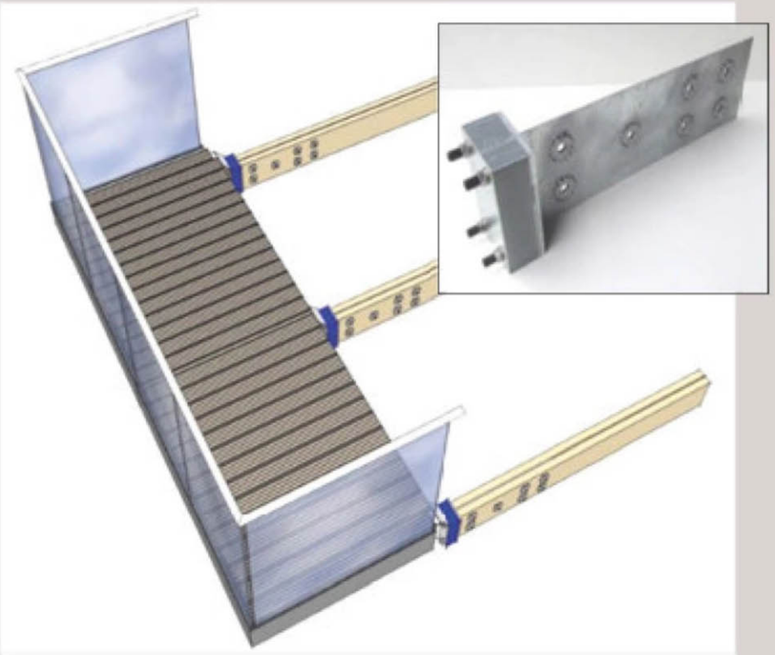
Precision is crucial

The planning process, from the point at which an application is submitted, is broadly similar wherever you live in the UK, with details first checked against national and local requirements to make sure they contain the necessary information. Simple errors, including not having a scale or north point on the plan, may invalidate an application.

Not preparing detailed reports, such as ecology surveys, cuts costs but could cause delays as such information is usually required, especially with rural or undeveloped sites. Councils should have a list of validation requirements. Use it to check what you need to submit when making your formal application.

Awaiting a decision

It can take up to eight weeks after an application is validated to make a decision. Where it takes longer than the statutory period to decide, and an extended period has not been agreed with the applicant, »





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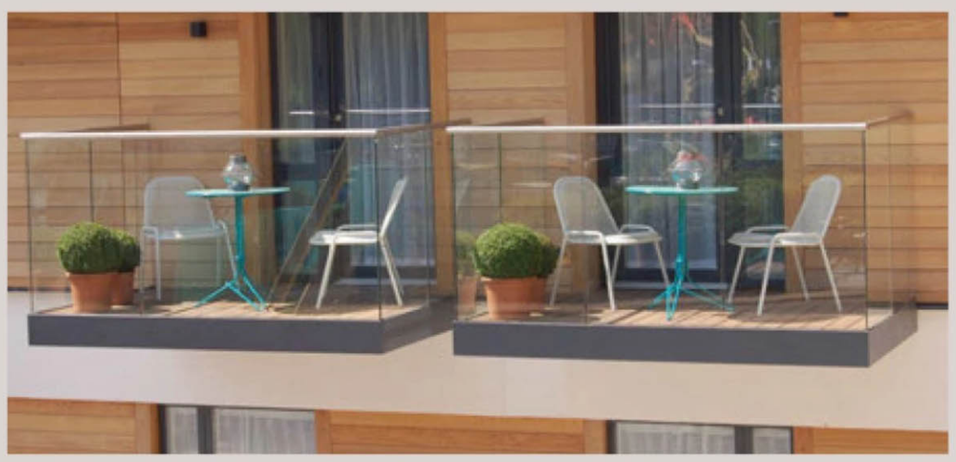
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the decision should be made within 26 weeks at most.

In some instances, an application may be called before a planning committee, which will be held in public. A presentation will be made and any objections heard, before the members vote on whether or not to grant permission. If refused, an appeal can be made, within a certain timeframe, to the planning inspectorate.

Existing approval

Facing the rigours of the application process may seem daunting, in which case, one of the most straightforward ways to self-build is to buy a site with planning consent already in place. If the approval is still current, permission should be achievable within the context of the original. And you won't necessarily need to submit a brand new application if you want to make minor changes to an approved plan, but any large changes will require reapplication.

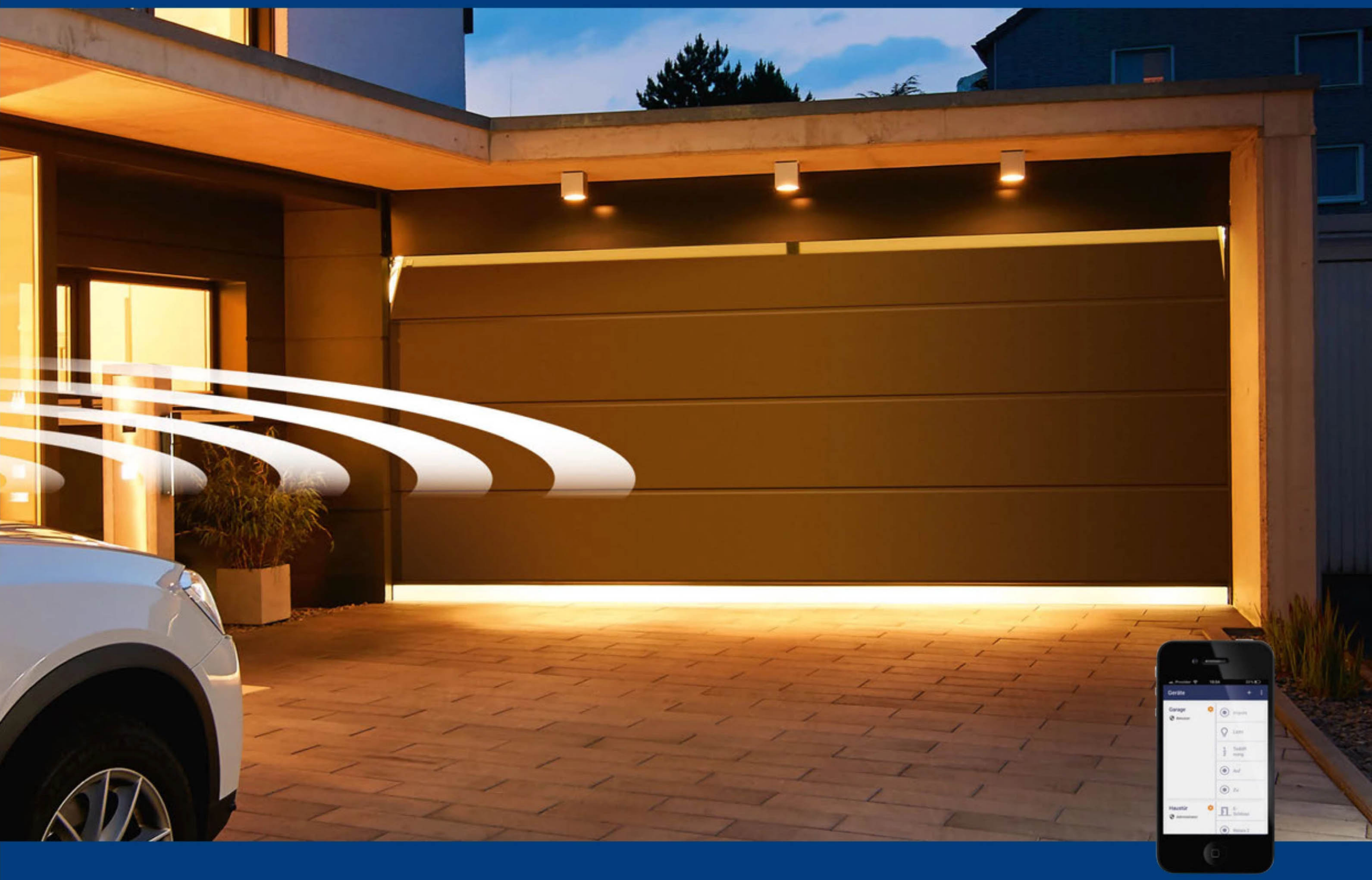
Should you be aiming to create a distinctive home, however, or if the application has lapsed, this may not be straightforward after all. GD



TOP AND ABOVE Despite some objections from neighbours, the Hertfordshire planning officer was supportive of Liz and Jimmi Bradbury's project to demolish a Victorian cottage and replace it with an energy-efficient new-build, designed by architect Níall McLaughlin (niallmclaughlin.com)

PHOTOGRAPHY JAKE CURTIS, JEFFERSON SMITH

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10 clever conversions

These thoughtful transformations have brought bygone buildings bang up to date

WORDS **JAYNE DOWLE**

Turning a dilapidated historic building into a characterful family home not only helps protect heritage assets but uses less energy than a new-build. With a little architectural know-how, and careful navigation of conservation area rules or a listed status, a former factory, workshop, mill, or mission hall can be given a new purpose. And for grand designers looking to create a rural retreat, converting a redundant agricultural building could be the answer to tricky paragraph 79 countryside planning regulations.



1 BRICK WAREHOUSE Ryan Curnick and Kao Castle's home in East Redfern in Sydney, Australia, was once a Vegemite factory, but by the 1990s, the two-storey brick building had been converted into an art gallery and architectural practice, and later became an advertising agency. The brief was to turn it into a four-bedroom family house with self-contained guest accommodation, incorporating a garage for Ryan's classic sports cars and a lab for Kao's work as an equine geneticist. 'By locating all the living spaces on the upper level, we've effectively created a single-storey house,' says architect Ian Moore. Large landscaped outdoor spaces flow off the main living area, providing natural light and ventilation, as well as views to the sky. Internal roof trusses have been retained and there is an uncompromising industrial feel to the project, which had construction costs of £2.2 million. (ianmoorearchitects.com) »

RURAL ENGINE HOUSE

Sarah Stanley took on previously converted, four-storey 19th-century engine house The Stack in Trelion, Cornwall, as a holiday retreat for herself, her husband and their three children, aged ten to 21. To create a practical and welcoming home, £100,000 of internal work was undertaken. This included reconfiguring the second-floor bedroom suite to allow for a bigger living room, and adding an extra WC. The challenge was to marry the industrial edge that you can still see in the exterior with a modern interior.

'The original stone floor in the kitchen, the broad pine floorboards upstairs and the exposed stonework remain, and are teamed with lots of texture; velvets, linen and deep colours,' says the project's designer Jess Clarke. A feature wall in the stairwell has been roughly stripped of wallpaper to reveal previous layers of decor on mottled blush-pink plaster walls. 'It is much more interesting than any modern paint effect could be,' says Jess. (uniquehomestays.com)



3 ECO COWSHED

What began as a 'scruffy old agricultural shed', according to architect Mike Derry, has provided room for two semi-detached, eco-friendly four-bedroom homes in rural Devon. While Mike and his family live in one, he sold the other to finance the £738,000 project. Built under Class Q planning regulations, which support the re-use of former agricultural buildings for residential purposes, the houses use a range of recycled materials; the surround of the log burner in the living area is made with bricks salvaged from an old hotel in nearby Salcombe. 'I also re-used the external timber cladding for internal walls and left the galvanised-steel portal frame structure exposed,' Mike says. 'This allowed the properties to retain the character of the original cowshed.' Both homes are highly energy-efficient, with super-insulation, strategically orientated glazing, ground source heat pumps for underfloor heating and roof-mounted photovoltaic panels. (derryowenarchitects.co.uk)



4 CITY WORKSHOP

When architect David Benito Cortázar of FFWD Arquitectes first saw this carpenter's workshop, the brick and stone walls were hidden under thick gypsum and mortar, and the ceiling beams had been damaged by termites. Nevertheless, he set about creating a living and working space with a budget of £150,000 for his client, a coach and mentor. 'Within the main apartment, the owner wanted a self-contained guest suite for the frequent visitors he has during the year; he plans to use this as his studio when there are no guests,' explains David.

Although the two-bedroom ground-floor flat is surrounded by bustling city life in Barcelona's Poble Sec neighbourhood, there's a sense of seclusion. An inner patio brings in light while translucent glass in the street windows keeps the home private. (ffwd.es) »



5

BAKERY DEVELOPMENT Steel-framed glazed partitioning divides the living spaces in this ground-floor apartment, part of a £2.5 million redevelopment of a former bakery, stables and coach house in Battersea, south London. 'They help provide a light and airy feel, especially as the flat extends deep into the floorplan,' says Chris Wilkinson, managing director at Jo Cowen Architects. Much of the building's fabric was kept, such as vaulted ceilings, cast-iron columns and glazed brickwork, which meant cabling had to be surface mounted, with discrete channels uplighting the vaults, and galvanised power sockets and wall lighting. 'The design blends old and new by using carefully selected materials to draw attention to original details,' says Chris. (jocowenarchitects.com) »

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6 VICTORIAN MILL

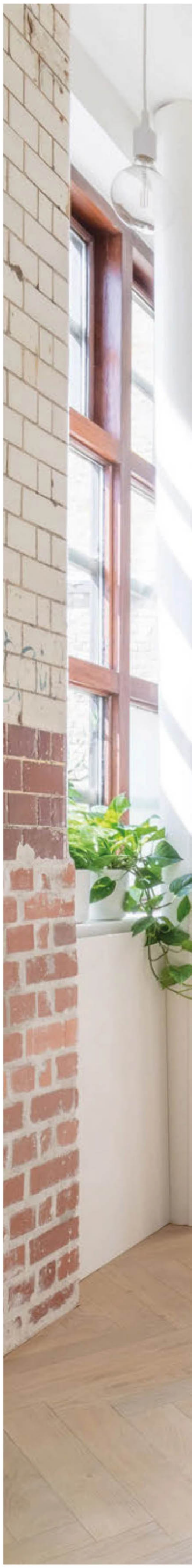
To create a strikingly modern two-bedroom flat in a former Manchester cotton mill, architect Scott Donald had to meet stringent Grade-II listing conditions. 'The cast-iron columns, timber floor and red-brick walls are all exposed,' he says. 'The building, built in 1869, embodies the structure and industrial materials common of its time.' Scott bought the apartment, part of developer Urban Splash's Albert Mill in the city's Castlefield area, as a shell and did much of the work himself. To avoid eating into the square floor plan, Scott designed the bathroom as a long narrow space: 'At 6x1.5 metres, it's unconventional in its proportions. I designed it with a large walk-through shower to get to the bath. You don't perceive it until you enter the room.' He estimates a similar conversion project would cost between £80,000 and £100,000. (scottdonaldarchitecture.co.uk)



7 SHEPHERD'S HUT

A ruined shepherd's hut has been turned into a valuable asset for a farm near Whitechurch in Dorset, that could be rented out or used for farm workers. 'It's great to breathe new life into this historic building, and it's allowed the farm to diversify in order to bring in extra income,' says architect Phil Easton. 'We retained as much of the original fabric as we could, while bringing it up to current building-regulations standards.' This involved replacing the corrugated asbestos sheet roof with clay plain tiles, repointing the traditional brick and flint walls and creating new door and window openings.

To take advantage of the surrounding views, the floorplan was inverted, putting the three bedrooms and bathroom on the ground floor and living areas on the first floor, where they can also enjoy the exposed original trusses and purlins. (westerndesignarchitects.com)





8 **BISCUIT FACTORY** Multifunctional storage walls allowed architects Sara L'Espérance and Michael Putman to separate the rooms in their live/work apartment, once the baking room of a biscuit factory in east London's Bethnal Green, to reveal more of the original space. A previous 1980s conversion was dark and dated so the new pods have been set back slightly from the three large windows to free up the lines of the walls and let in more light. 'The lovely glazed bricks were covered in plasterboard, but when we exposed them they became the catalyst for everything here,' says Sara. The project includes two bedrooms, a kitchen and living area, and a mezzanine work studio. It was achieved on a very modest budget of £85,000 by opting for affordable materials such as birch plywood, which has been used to create the pods. (suprblk.com) »

9 STONE MILL

There were two choices for bringing this Victorian threshing mill in the Scottish Borders back to life: restore the existing structure or drop a new four-bedroom house into its characteristic stone walls. 'The agricultural building was probably extended from a single storey dating from the mid-18th century,' says Susie Turley, senior associate at WT Architecture. 'So, it was not desirable to demolish or obscure all of the history of the building in its conversion to a house.'

Owner and writer Malika Brown opted for a highly insulated plywood structure that sits inside the existing shell, costing £375,000. To maximise natural light, the roof height was raised and clerestory windows inserted. The original walls were repaired using stone from other parts of the building and re-pointed with lime mortar, while the new structure was clad in black-stained wood designed to recede behind them. (wtarchitecture.com)





10 DETACHED CHAPEL

Floor plans for Utopia House, a repurposed Edwardian mission hall in Deptford, south London, follow the original chapel layout. The nave is the living space and the vestry has been reconfigured to provide three bedrooms. Constructing a cantilevered timber mezzanine has made space for a kitchen, office, library and plant room. On the top floor, a glazed wall leads out from the office/studio onto a secluded roof terrace at the rear of the building and helps bring light into the home. 'This area captures sunlight throughout the day to create an ever-changing experience within the main space,' says architect Alex Nikjoo.

Client artist Anastasya Martynova added her own personal touches to the interior, such as the *verre églomisé* decorative mirrored splashback in the kitchen. The project cost £450,000. (nikjoo.co.uk) **GD**

PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID BUTLER, EHOUSE, FFWD ARQUITECTES/DAVID BENITO CORTAZOR, RORY GARDINER, ANDY HASLAM, ANDREW LEE, JULIET MURPHY, UNIQUE HOME STAYS, WESTERN DESIGN ARCHITECTS, NICHOLAS WORLEY

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Extra room outside

Building a self-contained living space in your garden can be a worthwhile investment

WORDS **CAROLINE RODRIGUES**







When extra space is called for, an outdoor building could be the solution, creating a place to work from home, practise your hobbies or put up overnight guests. If done well it could even add value to your home. The options range from the simplest off-the-peg structures to a bespoke architect-designed creation. A modestly sized garden needn't be an issue as there are plenty of designs for smaller spaces, such as the Mini Office from Garden Affairs (gardenaffairs.co.uk), which measures just 1.8x2.4 metres and has space for a desk, chair and bookshelves.

Choose a design

At the planning stage, consider how the looks and proportions of the structure will work with your home and garden. Aim to place it in the shade unless you intend to create a suntrap, and position it so that its best facade is visible from the house.

As long as the building is carefully sited and reasonably small, you're unlikely to need planning permission, but there are exceptions – check online at planningportal.gov.uk. 'Even if you're working within permitted development, there's a huge potential for what can be achieved with the volume and form,' says Sean Ronnie Hill, director of Rise Design Studio (risedesignstudio.co.uk). 'It could include an asymmetric roof or a curved wall.' »

LEFT AND ABOVE
This 48sqm timber-frame house is at the end of a garden in Surrey. Designed by architect Tate Harmer, the cedar-clad structure includes living space and a huge lake-view window, plus a kitchenette and WC. A decked platform has steps to the water (tateharmer.com)



This bespoke studio by Mustard Architects is in the corner of a north London garden and was designed to wrap around a silver birch. It is clad in western red cedar and the top has a feathered edge to avoid a hard line. It cost £75,000 (mustardarchitects.com)



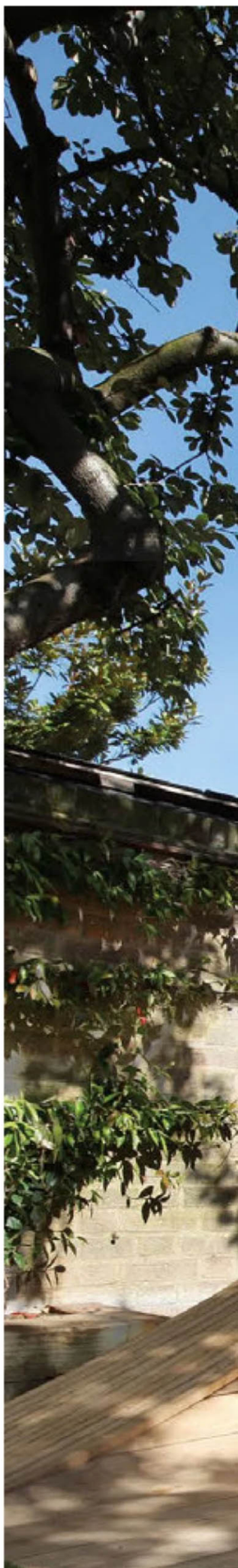
A modern take on traditional Norwegian barn-building methods, this glulam post and beam outbuilding in Lillehammer, Norway, by architect Jon Danielsen Aarhus, was designed to replace an old outbuilding for a retired couple. The lower storey includes a garage and workspace, and above is a studio space. Internally, walls are clad with spruce. Build cost was around £210,000 (jdaa.no)

Construction choices

One of the simplest and most cost-effective ways to construct a new garden building is to buy a kit and set it out on a concrete slab on clear, level ground; something a competent DIY-er can do. For ease, many companies offer modular designs from around £2,000 – the cost rises rapidly with the size of the building – and will install the concrete foundations and erect the structure for you.

On a site visit, the company will first check that the ground is suitable. 'Often if there are trees nearby, the new structure can be built on mini concrete piles,' says David Nossiter of David Nossiter Architects (davidnossiter.com). 'It does mean, though, that the ground level is slightly raised, like a deck.'

When choosing a construction method, think about practical issues such as carrying the materials to the site, especially if they have to be brought through the house, and the project timescale. Timber frame, whether constructed on site or prefabricated, is quick and the building will be lightweight but well-insulated. You could also build in brick or concrete blockwork. »





A sculptural design by Platform 5 Architects shows just how far the limits of garden buildings can be stretched. Shoffice, a 7sqm garden office, is formed with two steel ring beams, timber ribs and a stressed plywood skin. It cost £67,845, including the swimming pool and outdoor kitchen (platform5architects.com)

Adam Knibb Architects created an award-winning pool-house in Winchester. The highly insulated timber-clad building includes an air source heat pump and a sedum roof. It cost £250,000 (adamknibb architects.com)

The outward appearance

There are sound reasons for opting for wood to clad the building; it's environmentally friendly, sustainable and will weather to a beautiful silvery tone as it ages, unless you protect the original colour with a stain.

Western red cedar, larch and slow-grown spruce are popular choices. Fibre-cement weatherboarding from Cedral (cedral.world) is a practical maintenance-free lookalike for wood. Metal finishes such as zinc and steel are particularly striking, acquiring a patina over time; go for Corten steel for a rusted effect. For a smooth, contemporary look consider solid surfacing materials such as Hi-Macs from LG Hausys (lghausys.com) or Corian (corian.uk). Render and brick slips are options more traditional for those who want an exterior that blends with a period home.



RIGHT Architect Richard John Andrews set himself a brief to design a cost-effective 16sqm garden studio for his practice in east London, self-building it with his assistant in 21 days using a timber-frame modular system with sheets of plywood. It's clad in lightweight corrugated fibreglass panels and topped by a polycarbonate roof. The project cost £12,500. (richardjohnandrews.co.uk)

PHOTOGRAPHY JOAKIM BOREN, KNUT BRY, TIM CROCKER, KILIAN O'SULLIVAN, BEN SAVAGE, CHRIS SNOOK, ALAN WILLIAMS

Comfort and security

If you want to use the space all year round, good insulation and double-glazed windows are a must. Insulation may come as standard within the prefabricated panels from garden building companies.

Taking the bespoke route, you can up the insulation levels and add extras such as acoustic insulation; include underfloor heating for comfort underfoot and do your bit for the environment with a green roof or solar lighting. Your supplier can provide water and power or you can arrange this yourself. Don't forget to factor in blinds or curtains, multi-locking doors, external lights and a burglar alarm.

● ***Turn to p100 to read the case study on a unique garden room*** »



RIGHT This space in north London by Mulroy Architects is used as a home office and piano room, and even has a bathroom. Planning permission was required to increase the height of the building from 2.5m to 3m. The build cost was £35,000 (mulroyarchitects.com)



The Edge garden room from Green Retreats comes in multiple sizes, with optional upgrades such as underfloor heating. Prices from £14,245 for a building with an internal floor area of 2.5x2.5m, and includes the base and installation. (greenretreats.co.uk)



CHECK THE RULES

Advice on complying with the regulations, from **David Nossiter** of **David Nossiter Architects** (davidnossiter.com)

- If your home is on designated land such as a national park, listed or within a conservation area and has an Article 4 Direction, you will need planning permission. Check with the planners at your local council.
- For peace of mind, apply to the council for a certificate of lawfulness.
- Permitted-development allowances are for single houses, not flats or maisonettes.
- The new building can't be self-contained accommodation or used as primary living space. In essence, you can add a bathroom or kitchen providing it is only for incidental use and you might have to demonstrate this if you apply for a certificate of lawfulness to the council.
- The structure has to be separate from the main building and behind the principal elevation of the property.
- Not more than 50 per cent of the land of the main house can be covered with outbuildings.
- You can build beside a boundary but you might have to consider the Party Wall Act and inform neighbours of the work.
- Within 2m of the boundary, the maximum height is 2.5m. Further than 2m away from the boundary the maximum height is 4m for a dual-pitched roof, with 2.5m at the eaves and 3m in any other case.
- Raised platforms and decking can be up to 30cm high. Otherwise you will need to apply for planning permission.
- If the floor area is less than 15sqm and contains no sleeping accommodation, building regulations won't apply. Up to 30sqm, you won't normally need approval provided the building has no sleeping accommodation and is either at least 1m from any boundary or it is constructed substantially of non-combustible materials.

One of a kind

This unique garden room with its jaunty roof is a whole new take on home working

WORDS **CAROLINE RODRIGUES** PHOTOGRAPHY **EDWARD SUMNER**

PROJECT PROFILE

LOCATION North-west London
DURATION 43 weeks, including house alterations
SIZE 15sqm
BUILD COST £144,000 for house and garden room, not including architect fees

A new garden studio was top of the wish list for Steph Keelan and Olly Wiggins, both 48, and their children Minnie, 22, and Maisie, 16. After 15 years in their Victorian terraced house, the couple decided to replace their former ramshackle outdoor building with a workspace. 'We sometimes want to be away from the day-to-day running of our busy TV production and facilities office,' says Steph.

It was the couple's artist neighbour, Charlie Warde, who sparked an idea for the new room, coming up with initial suggestions and introducing them to architect Sean Ronnie Hill, director of Rise Design Studio (risedesignstudio.co.uk). The remit was to create an illusion of space while not building higher than next door's shed. 'Sean's solution maxed out the space, as well as creating a quirky structure,' says Steph. Since Charlie was in favour of the new design, Sean positioned the roof to lean more towards his back garden, avoiding imposing on the neighbour on the other side. 'Sinking the building 1,200 millimetres into the ground ensured it would not appear huge when viewed from the house or by the neighbours,' says Sean. Because there is no direct access to the garden, all excavated material had to be taken through the house by Capital Building Contractors (London) (07500 864 880).

The back of the family's home was tweaked at the same time by adding a glazed envelope to the side of the rear extension, so that there was more of a relationship between the house and the new studio.

The structure has concrete retaining walls, steel beams, timber rafters and joists supporting



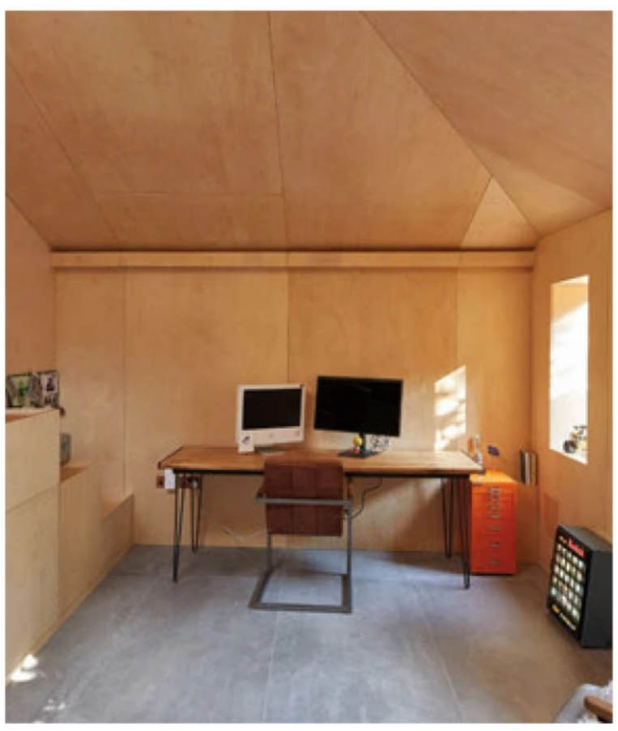
The interior was chosen to provide a sense of warmth and enclosure; birch ply contrasts with the exterior and LED strips with diffusers provide subtle yet effective lighting.

LEFT The industrial look is in keeping with the railway behind and the wilder vegetation that surrounds it. This is architect Natsuka Muto from Rise Design Studio beneath the roof light

the roof. Separate layers of thermal and acoustic rigid insulation line the walls and roof and it is clad in untreated black mild steel. 'We were reticent about the steel but in retrospect, it's been amazing to watch the building change colour with the seasons,' says Steph.

According to Sean, the roof weathers faster than the walls and window frames, and the contrast between dry and wet is considerably more than with Corten steel. The sheets of steel were pre-folded prior to being delivered as the machinery was too large to take to the site. 'The metalworker had to be incredibly precise with his measurements,' says Sean.

Inside, walls rise dramatically to a skylight, enhancing the feeling of space. Birch-ply cladding was chosen for its cost-effectiveness, as well as for the beautiful grain and pale finish that lend a sense of calm. 'We love the way the roof design provides optimum height inside; it feels like a miniature chapel,' says Steph. Steps leading up to a platform include built-in cupboards. 'The storage is great, especially as I'm prone to clutter,' she says.



ABOVE The design maximises flexibility, with plenty of different spots to sit, read or work. A mezzanine level may be added in the future

Various options for reading and working have been included. The oriel window serves as a desk and a chill-out sitting area.

'Having a quiet creative space has given us all the chance to spread out and to keep our work and home spaces separate,' says Steph. 'It's the perfect writing and edit space. I love to brainstorm, sitting on the cupboard and watching the clouds drift by.' GD

● ***Look out for next month's feature on bespoke staircases***

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Enjoy a fantastic day out at this inspiring interiors event

With a wealth of ideas and shopping opportunities to transform your home, The Ideal Home Show, supported by ITV, is unmissable. Running from 27 March to 13 April 2020, it showcases the latest interior design and decorating trends. Experts will be on hand to answer questions, and there's the chance to hear from the presenters behind popular TV shows such as *Love Your Garden*, and watch demonstrations by food, drink, fashion and lifestyle gurus.

There will be more than 600 exhibitors at the Olympia London show, offering everything from living-room accessories, space-enhancing home office designs, the latest kitchen and bathroom must-haves, garden innovations and much more. The event is clearly signposted and organised into six main areas, making browsing easy and enjoyable.

A highlight is the *Good Homes* magazine room set stage, featuring three inspirational interior trends: Sustainability, Hybrid-living and Best of British. The Show Gardens, meanwhile, designed by horticulturists, demonstrate how to turn an outdoor space into somewhere to enjoy all year round.

If you're planning an eco-friendly project, there's plenty of advice, including talks on sustainability and upcycling demonstrations, while The Future Living Home explores how the way we live is evolving.

And don't forget to factor in some me-time too: immerse yourself in live experiences at the ITV Hub, relax and unwind at the Ideal Champagne Bar, or enjoy a free treatment in the Pamper Lounge.







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FOCUS ON

Connected home technology

From voice-controlled curtains to advanced security, hi-tech integration has never been easier

WORDS **CHRIS HASLAM**

Amazon's voice-control system Alexa (amazon.com) is five years old, but in that time the company has sold more than 100 million units. This device has transformed the idea of a smart home. For as little as £50 you can take advantage of advanced technology and ask Alexa, or its rivals, to do all sorts of things previously only possible with a bespoke system.

Over a short space of time, plug-in smart control has evolved at an incredible rate, with tech brands such as Nest (nest.com), Hive (hivehome.com), Ring (ring.com) and Philips Hue (meethue.com) now household names. What started out as gadgets for early adopters has become mainstream.

Just as off-the-shelf systems have evolved, the art of custom installation has advanced, too. Integrated systems are able to automate almost every area of the home seamlessly. The question is, which is right for your project? »

ABOVE This versatile Ruark Audio all-in-one streaming Bluetooth and wi-fi speaker features CD, DAB radio and TV connectivity. It can be wirelessly linked with other Ruark speakers for multi-room sound. Ruark R5, £999 (ruarkaudio.com)

SOUND AND VISION

All you need for plug-in automated control is decent broadband and a smartphone, and you open yourself to wireless convenience.

All modern TVs offer smart functionality. They can connect to the internet and stream from services such as Netflix, Apple TV and BBC iPlayer. You can also upgrade an older set with a plug-in media streamer such as Roku (roku.com) or Now TV (nowtv.com) that uses a spare HDMI port.

With music it gets a little more complicated. There are dozens of brands such as Sonos (sonos.com), Denon (denon.com) and Naim (naimaudio.com) offering wireless speakers and hi-fi systems that can play throughout your home, either using Bluetooth – with a limited range – or over wi-fi for better sound quality and reliability.

Playing music through your phone – streaming Spotify, Tidal, Apple Music, etc – you get total control and by uing several compatible speakers you can play different songs or radio stations in separate rooms.

This beautifully crafted 550W soundbar is designed to transform your TV's sound, while doubling as a streaming sound system. Beosound Stage, from £1,250, Bang & Olufsen (bangandolufsen.com)



WARMING UP

With around ten per cent to be saved on bills, and zoned systems that offer advanced heating control throughout the house, it should be a case of when, not if, you upgrade your thermostat.

Brands such as Nest, Hive and Netatmo (netatmo.com) have security and lighting add-ons, while individual smart radiator valves from Honeywell (honeywelluk.com) and Tado (tado.com) allow you to adjust the temperature in different rooms.

For those not using gas central heating, Intelli Heat (intelligent heat.co.uk) has developed app control for electric radiators.

By retrofitting these wireless thermostatic valves to each of your radiators, you can enjoy total control over each room or zone using the Netatmo app. It works with the Netatmo Smart Thermostat, £149.99. Each valve costs £69.99 (netatmo.com)

LIGHTING SCHEMES

App-controlled lighting can make a huge difference to the look and feel of rooms. LIFX (lifx.com), Ikea (ikea.com) and Philips Hue have all made automation easier, cheaper and more stylish than ever.

Wi-fi-connected bulbs, many with voice control, allow you to adjust individual lights or group them, so you can transition from bright and functional settings to a soft and atmospheric scheme, whenever you wish.

You can also wake up to a light that brightens gradually, turn everything off when you know the house is empty or use the set-up for security – Nest, Netatmo and Hive offer fittings that are compatible with cameras and alarms.



RIGHT A fun way to bring 16 million colours into your home, this LED wall-mounted lighting system - the pink zigzag - changes the ambience of the room and can be controlled via app or voice. Nanoleaf Canvas, from £89.99 (nanoleaf.me)



SAFE AND SECURE

There are many app-controlled security products available. Try Yale (yale.co.uk) for whole-house CCTV, Nest, Netatmo and Swann (swann.com) for individual cameras and motion sensors, and Ring for door locks and video doorbells. All are designed to work easily together.

Most systems are modular, so you can expand from a single camera to a whole alarm system using the same app, and even competing brands can work together.

New smart locks allow you to grant other people remote entry by sending a virtual key to their phone – which is great if you use a dog walker or cleaner: try Ultion (ultion-lock.co.uk). Nuki's Smart Lock (nuki.io) fits over existing locks, so there is no need for a locksmith, and has a night mode that double locks the door in the evening for added reassurance. »

LEFT Simply mount the Nuki Smart Lock 2.0 over an existing cylinder and key - no screws or drilling needed - and enjoy keyless entry using your smartphone. You can then assign virtual keys using the app to grant access. Nuki Smart Lock 2.0, from £199 (nuki.io)



GOING BESPOKE

Smart-home specialist **Alex Josling**, director at **Seven Integration** (seven integration.co.uk), gives his tips on getting started

- Do your research. Finding a good home-technology business to work with is essential. Look for a CEDIA member (cedia.co.uk) and you will know that you have a company that is up-to-date with current best practice and has committed to on-going training for its staff.
- Budget. Do not be afraid to tell your integrator what your limit is. There is no point them specifying a 16-seat cinema if you were only thinking of spending £5,000. If you have found someone who you trust, then do exactly that - trust them to create a solution that is balanced and hits your budget. If you don't trust them, go back to my first tip.
- Plan for the future. If you think your nursery may one day become a snug, then get the infrastructure (cables, etc) in now - it'll make it so much easier to change how you use the room further down the line.
- Get a demonstration. Most integrators will have either their own demonstration facilities or showroom they have access to. Make sure you understand how the technology works and how it interacts with other systems in the house before you invest.
- Expect to pay for a service plan of some kind. Ask yourself how important your wi-fi is to you and your family. If it went down, would you be willing to wait two days for someone to come and fix it or would you want it fixed within 24 hours? What are you willing to pay for that?



RISE AND FALL

Motorised blinds are perfect for large and hard-to-reach windows, as well as preventing overheating in sunny spaces. They also increase security: programmed blinds make it look like somebody is at home.

Upgrade an existing blind with Soma (somasmarthome.com), a simple motor that hooks onto your blind's chord. Luxaflex's PowerView system (luxaflex.co.uk) combines battery-powered blinds and shades with full automated control, while Just Shutters (justshutters.co.uk) offers remote shutter control.

LEFT An energy regulating Duette blind and smartphone-controlled motor helps prevent areas in sunlight getting uncomfortably hot. Blind from £189; Dream Motor from £237. Both Apollo Blinds (apollo-blinds.co.uk)



This sleek audio/TV custom installation keeps everything hidden behind doors. Audio/visual installation by Cornflake, £POA (cornflake.co.uk)

CUSTOM INSTALLATION

While plug-and-play solutions are quick and affordable, when it comes to seamless technology, a professional installation makes all the difference.

'Custom installation brings lighting, heating, security and entertainment together,' explains Alan Matthews, director of Automated Spaces (automatedspaces.co.uk). 'Instead of manual control or using a host of different smartphone apps, a built-in system will manage everything and reduce clutter. If you dream of pressing one button and watching your curtains close, lights dim and projector switch on instantly, you need to talk to a custom installer.'

Planning ahead is vital as a custom installer will either first fix cables and back boxes themselves or provide detailed information to your electrician. Budget control systems such as Crestron (crestron.com) and Control 4 (control4.com) cost from £2,500 per room, but a whole-house system can easily cost upwards of £100,000. GD

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KITCHENS & BATHROOMS



The owner of this birch plywood design by Sustainable Kitchens runs Vietnamese cookery classes from her home. The island on castors is clad on three sides with stainless steel (sustainablekitchens.co.uk)

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Faux finish

Spanish tile specialist Pamesa Ceramica (pamesa.com) has responded to the demand for a cost-effective, low-maintenance alternative to natural stone by adding four marble-effect tiles to its Cromat collection. Cr Bracciano is a polished porcelain tile for walls and floors, and is offered in various sizes, including this 90x180cm format. Available in Pearl (shown), Umber, Taupe and Natural, the new additions are stocked by Rees Tiles and Flooring (reestiles.com) and cost £59.99 per sqm.



Tools of the trade

Craft is a sustainable and award-winning kitchen series from Flying Tiger Copenhagen. The work of Danish designer Lovorika Banovic, these FSC-certified beechwood utensils are hand-polished and treated with soya-bean oil. Priced £2 each, they are great value examples of Scandinavian simplicity. (flyingtiger.com)

Take a seat

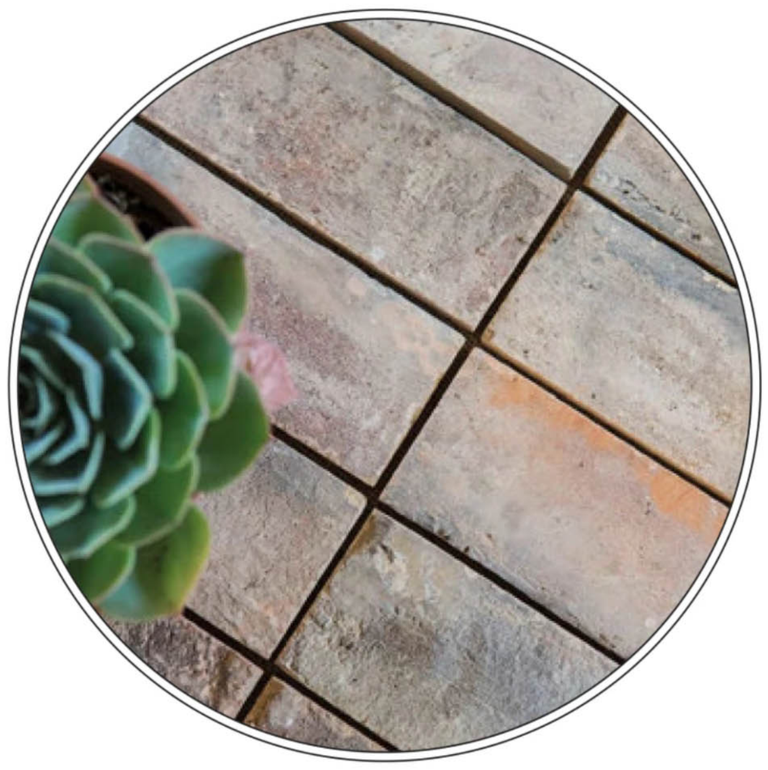
The Farmhouse Table Company's Camborne bar-stool takes inspiration from the classic spindle back chair. Handcrafted in Devon, the curvature of the 780mm high seat is designed to echo the spindle back, which forms an ark of solid beechwood twisting into two supportive arm rests. The stool, which costs £250, is available in any Farrow & Ball colour in the Modern Eggshell finish. (farmhousetablecompany.co.uk)





Big hitter

Caple's new Leesti 760 sink has been designed with size in mind, as not only does this single bowl, under-mounted model measure in at a roomy 760x434mm, but it is the first of its kind to fit perfectly within a standard 800mm base unit. Crafted from durable, 80 per cent natural Geotech granite, it is available in three matt finishes – Chalk White, Desert Sand or Pebble Grey, plus metallic Anthracite. Price from £275. (caple.co.uk) »



History underfoot

Maitland & Poate has extended its offering of reclaimed tiles by launching a range of antique terracotta flooring. The reclaimed collection showcases the best finds from ancient properties throughout Spain and Europe, and includes Fino – a slim and delicate terracotta parquet piece. Each tile measures 30x7.5x2cm. A consistent thickness makes them easy to work with in period and modern properties. £135 per sqm. (maitlandandpoate.com)

Custom cabinets

The idea of Dave Young and Ross Norgate, founders of furniture company Young & Norgate, Husk offers customisable fronts, worksurfaces and hardware for Ikea cabinets. 'Our aim is to provide a premium product for less – a high-end finish without the price tag that customers can design and plan themselves with the aid of online tools, or in conjunction with our design service,' says Dave. From £1,500. (madebyhusk.com)





Chef's special

A super-sleek fusion of function and form, the innovative C|3000 kitchen by Italian kitchen brand Marrone + Mesubim offers all the hi-tech components of a large-scale professional kitchen, neatly wrapped up in a 3m-long unit. Developed in consultation with Michelin chefs, this unique design ensures every element required to conjure up even the most complex of dishes remains effortlessly within arm's length, thanks to integrated washing zones, and preparation and cooking systems. From £62,000. (marronemesubim.com)

Shelf assured

Eclectic interiors store Rockett St George has introduced this vintage-inspired countertop cabinet to its varied collection of storage solutions. This glazed firwood unit has six graduated shelves, complete with burnished brass label holders, and measures 72x52x27cm. The Wooden Antique-style Library Cabinet costs £225. (rockettstgeorge.co.uk)



WORDS PAULA WOODS

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Cabinets of wonder

Open the doors and take a closer look before buying new units to make sure you get the best value for your money

WORDS **PAULA WOODS**

Whether remodelling your kitchen or building a new one from scratch, the cabinets you buy will be one of the biggest investments you'll make as part of the project. If you want them to last ten years or more, look for timeless designs made with quality materials and robust carcasses that will stand up to the rigours of everyday use. »

This in-frame design is made from solid timber, built using traditional joinery techniques and hand-painted to order. Suffolk kitchen in walnut, from £12,000, Neptune (neptune.com)

Door styles

The doors and drawers of in-frame cabinets are set into a surround, which gives the unit sturdiness and a traditional appearance. The doors are mounted from the frame on butt hinges that can be seen on the front of the cupboard. This type of cabinet is often handmade to ensure that the fit of the door or drawer in the frame is perfect.

Units where the door is mounted onto the front of the carcass are sometimes known as European style. The doors are usually attached by adjustable hinges to ensure a neat alignment of fronts along a run of several cabinets. Design-wise, European-style units are versatile and can have completely flat (known as slab) Shaker panelled or tongue-and-groove (beadboard) fronts.

Because they have fewer nooks or crannies, slab fronts are the easiest to clean and a good way to increase the sense of space in a small kitchen. 'Simple designs that are not heavily detailed are timeless,' says Helen Flanagan, kitchen designer at Harvey Jones (harveyjones.com).

Cupboards with glazed doors can help open up darker or confined spaces, and offer a more practical solution for displaying your favourite china than open shelving that can gather dust. The latest glazing options include wired and reeded textured glass, and opaque panes. »



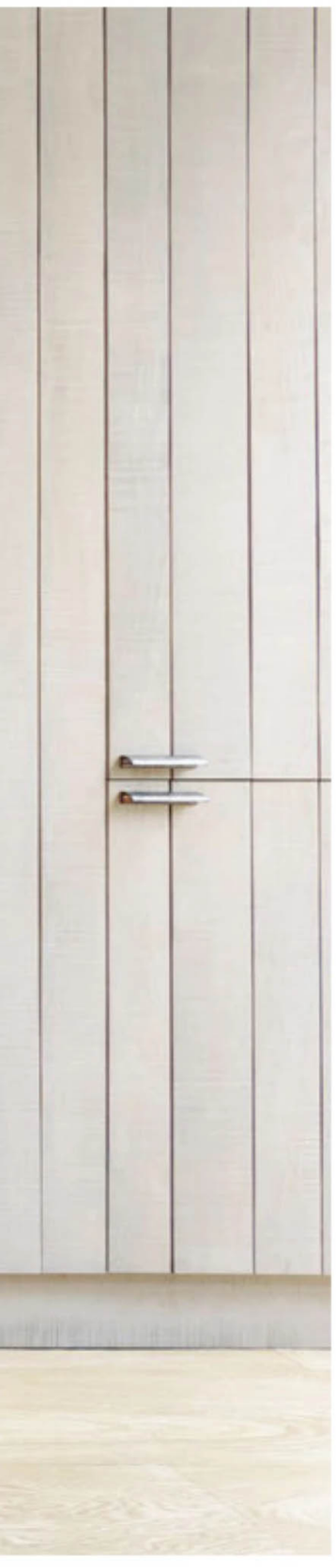
ABOVE Slab doors are ideal if you want to create impact with a single block of colour. The handleless Ladbroke kitchen, here in Samphire, is complemented with a Carrara marble worksurface, hand-aged brass splashback and an American black-walnut breakfast bar. Similar kitchen designs from £8,000, Naked Kitchens (nakedkitchens.com)



This Sebastian Cox kitchen is handmade using birch plywood carcasses and sustainable beech fronts. A dyed finish allows the texture of the timber to show through. From £15,000, DeVol (devolkitchens.co.uk)

'Simple designs that are not heavily detailed are more timeless'







Teaming differing styles of in-frame cabinets gives interest and texture to a pared-back palette in this London townhouse. Spitalfields cupboards with Wilkes and Boarded doors, from £35,000, Plain English Cupboardmakers (plainenglishdesign.co.uk)

Durable and hygienic, Eggersmann's hot-rolled steel cabinets feature 3mm steel door and drawer fronts and 5mm steel worksurfaces. The matt SilverTouch finish is scratch-resistant. From £40,000 (eggersmann.com)

Material benefits

Budget carcasses are made of low-density chipboard. This material is formed from woodchips and resin, which is lightweight but will swell if it becomes wet. Slightly more upmarket melamine-faced chipboard (MFC) has a plastic coating, making it more water and scratch-resistant. Look for eco-friendly products made with chipboard waste.

For a stronger, denser and smoother surface suitable for finishes such as paint and timber veneer, opt for medium-density fibreboard (MDF), which can be used to make both carcasses and fronts.

High-density fibreboard (HDF), used particularly for painted units, is even stronger, more uniform in appearance and more expensive, but it may contain may contain formaldehyde-based resin. Formaldehyde is a volatile organic compound (VOC) but emission levels from fibreboard made in the UK and EU are low.

Equally robust, and ideal for carcasses, EcoBoard (ecoboardinternational.com) is



RIGHT Raw, reclaimed, rough-cut pinewood slab fronts are contrasted by charcoal painted glazed units and a crisp white quartz worksurface in this design by The Main Company. Kitchens from £25,000 (maincompany.com)



made from compressed agricultural by-products, such as reeds or straw, and is free from formaldehyde.

Birch plywood is used for carcasses and fronts and is formed by sandwiching thin sheets of timber together. It is strong, made with minimal waste, and is a good eco-friendly option when FSC-certified.

Birch plywood is used for carcasses and fronts and is formed by sandwiching thin sheets of timber together. It is strong and a good eco-friendly option

Solid timber cabinets tend to be the most expensive option due to the cost of the material and because they are handcrafted. Always check that the wood used is FSC-certified. Alternatively, reclaimed timber is another eco-friendly choice, but you can expect to pay up to 30 per cent more for units made with reclaimed materials than cabinets manufactured from new timber. »



With a solid hardwood frame and birch-ply carcass, this handmade kitchen has pippy oak veneers on its doors and drawers. Modern kitchen, from £25,000, Middleton (middleton-bespoke.co.uk)



Crafted from eco-friendly BioBoard, Rotpunkt's Umbra Marble kitchen has both extra-tall and high base units for additional storage space and a more ergonomic working height. Prices from £20,000 (rotpunktuk.com)

Looking for something new?

Stone door and drawer fronts are relative newcomers to cabinet design, bringing a sense of grandeur and luxury to contemporary schemes. As with all natural-stone surfaces, it is necessary to seal the face to prevent it becoming stained from splashes and spills. Porcelain fronts, by contrast, are non-porous, stain-resistant and a more affordable way to replicate the opulent appearance of stone, or the industrial-chic texture of concrete.

Contemporary hi-tech materials, such as solid surface Fenix, come with many benefits. Fenix is easy to clean and has antibacterial properties; in addition, its colour will never fade and it is water resistant. 'It's even possible to repair the material by applying heat, so any small scratches can be removed, leaving the surface like new,' says Fabiana Scavolini, CEO of Scavolini (scavolini.com).

For a more modern, rustic appeal, metal veneers are durable, easy to clean and develop an attractive patina over time.



ABOVE Fenix, devised by Italian company Arpa Industriale in 2013, is a hi-tech, opaque material with low-light reflectivity. It is also soft to the touch, easy to clean, anti-fingerprint and highly durable. Dust and water simply slide off the surface. LiberaMente kitchen in Jaipur Red Fenix, from £10,000, Scavolini (scavolini.com)



The stone fronts of this Gandhara kitchen by Italian supremo Alberto Minotti feature a precise 45° edge that is mirrored on the matching worksurface, creating a seamless, monolithic look. From £60,000, Minotti Cucine (minotti cucinelondon.com)

Form and function

Space-saving pocket doors, which slide away neatly into recesses in the sides of a cabinet, have been around for a few years but are still the best way to provide full access to a cupboard interior. They are particularly useful when you want to create a hot drinks or breakfast station that includes several countertop appliances, crockery, glassware, cereals, tea and coffee, etc. With pocket doors, everything can be hidden away in an instant.

Stone door and drawer fronts are relative newcomers to cabinet design, bringing a sense of grandeur to schemes

It is a good idea to illuminate the insides of these units so you can find what you need. The latest in-cabinet lighting is motion-controlled and energy efficient. Streamlined LED fittings will turn on or off automatically when a door or drawer is opened and closed, wasting little energy. LEDs use up to 85 per cent less electricity than incandescent bulbs and last longer.

Turn to p124 to read a case study on customised cabinet fronts »





Blum's new award-winning Expando T universal fixing mechanism makes attaching fittings to thin fronts easy. Suitable for 8mm thick panels including MDF, HDF and veneered chipboard (blum.com)



INSIDE STORY

Prioritise the internal fittings of your cabinets, says **Amanda Hughes**, customer experience manager at **Blum UK** (blum.com)

- Consider your new kitchen from the inside out. Starting with the look of your scheme and working backwards towards the internal fittings may have a negative effect on its long-term ease of use. A kitchen can last 15 to 20 years and although a look may date, its accessibility and functionality will not - if you follow these principles...
- Some of the most frequently accessed areas are below worksurface level. By including drawers on fully extendable runners, you will make it much easier to find what you need quickly. Always check that you have an adequate load capacity.
- Similarly, U-shaped pull-out shelves make full use of the space under the sink and provide easy access to cleaning products.
- Awkward corner cupboards can be transformed from dark spaces, where it's difficult to find anything, into handy, well-organised areas with clever designs. Blum's Space Corner is a fully extendable drawer with a double front set at 90° and an angled tray going right back into the corner.
- Get more from drawer interiors by fitting internal dividing systems. Look for products that can be adapted for your collection of utensils, crockery, pots and pans.
- Soft-close hinges and drawer runners are a worthwhile investment to avoid the noise of slamming doors and drawers.

A clever combo

Customised doors and drawers are teamed with off-the-shelf carcasses for cost-effective cabinets with a bespoke finish

WORDS **PAULA WOODS** PHOTOGRAPHY **MATT KEAL**

PROJECT PROFILE

LOCATION Norfolk
STYLE OF PROPERTY 1930s detached house
DURATION 10 months (full project)
SIZE 50sqm
COST £10,000 (full project £35,000)

Having lived in their home for two years, Lorna Herring, 47, and husband James, 42, were keen to replace a fragmented downstairs layout with a more family friendly space where they could spend time with their daughter, Poppy. 'We needed one bright, multifunctional, open-plan room where we could cook, eat, relax and enjoy the south-facing garden,' says Lorna.

James, who is a builder and carpenter, was able to draw up and submit their proposed plans for approval himself. The work involved removing both the internal and external walls of the kitchen and separate dining room, and extending out onto the footprint of a large but redundant conservatory. Lorna and James were prepared to take on the bulk of the build, including the kitchen design and fit-out.

Lorna, an assistant manager at an estate agent, felt that a simple scheme would be in keeping with the extension and approached Naked Kitchens (nakedkitchens.com) for ideas. 'We both liked the company's cabinets, but our funds wouldn't stretch to commissioning a fully fitted kitchen, so we turned to its sister company Naked Doors for a more affordable solution.'





ABOVE The doors and drawer fronts are made from robust high-density fibreboard (HDF) spray-painted for a flawless finish

LEFT Bright white Caesarstone quartz in Snow has been used to top the island and run of units that houses the sink (caesarstone.co.uk)

RIGHT Eye-catching orange detailing on the handle inlays stands out well against the dark blue of the fronts

The couple chose the contemporary Ladbroke range of replacement door and drawers fronts and were guided by a recommendation to team them with flat-packed Metod carcasses from Ikea. The custom-made fronts gave the couple freedom to design the kitchen as they wished. They were even able to incorporate a walk-in pantry that Lorna was keen to keep, and is now hidden behind a full-height door front.

A simple L-shaped configuration, complete with a storage wall, made the best use of the layout and provided enough cupboard space without the need for units above the sink.

'We needed one bright, multifunctional, open-plan room where we could cook, eat, relax and enjoy the south-facing garden'

A central island includes a hob inset into the worksurface, which overhangs at one end of the unit to create a breakfast bar.

The couple also chose a striking deep-blue paint for the doors and an eye-catching orange for the inlay handles, a contrasting combination that stands out well against the off-white walls.

Lorna couldn't be happier with how the new room has turned out. 'It looks unique, and the cabinets function perfectly,' she says.

● ***Look out for next month's feature on the latest worksurfaces***

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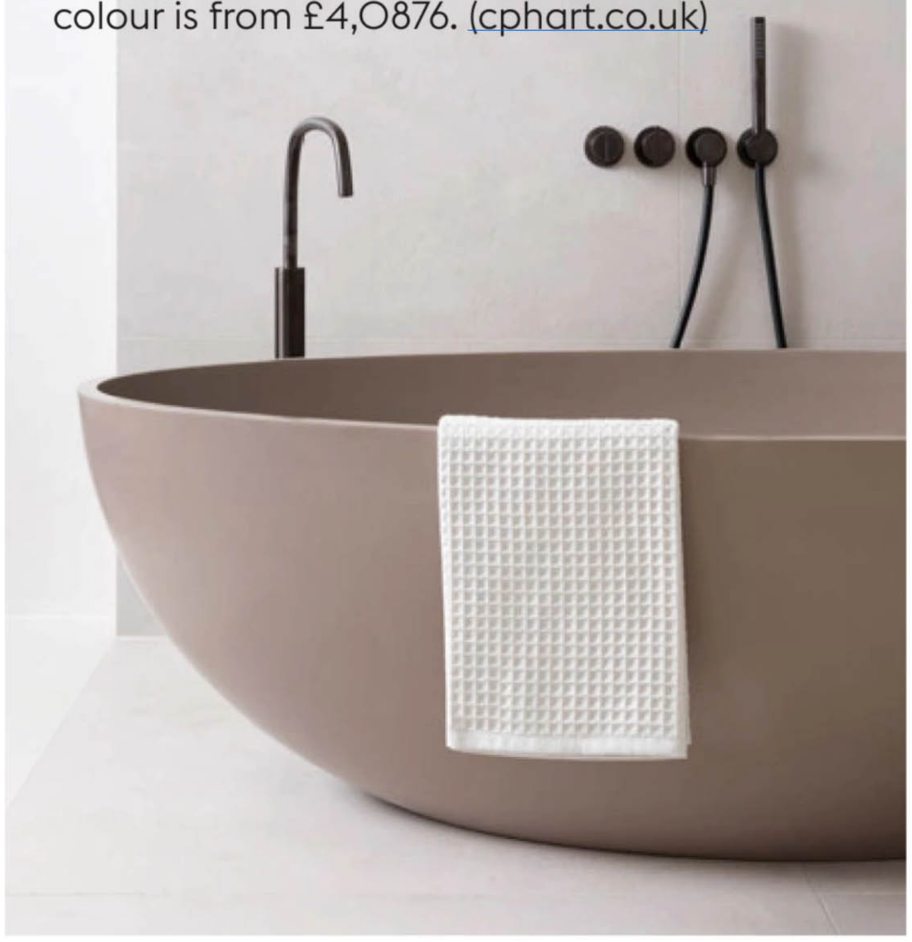
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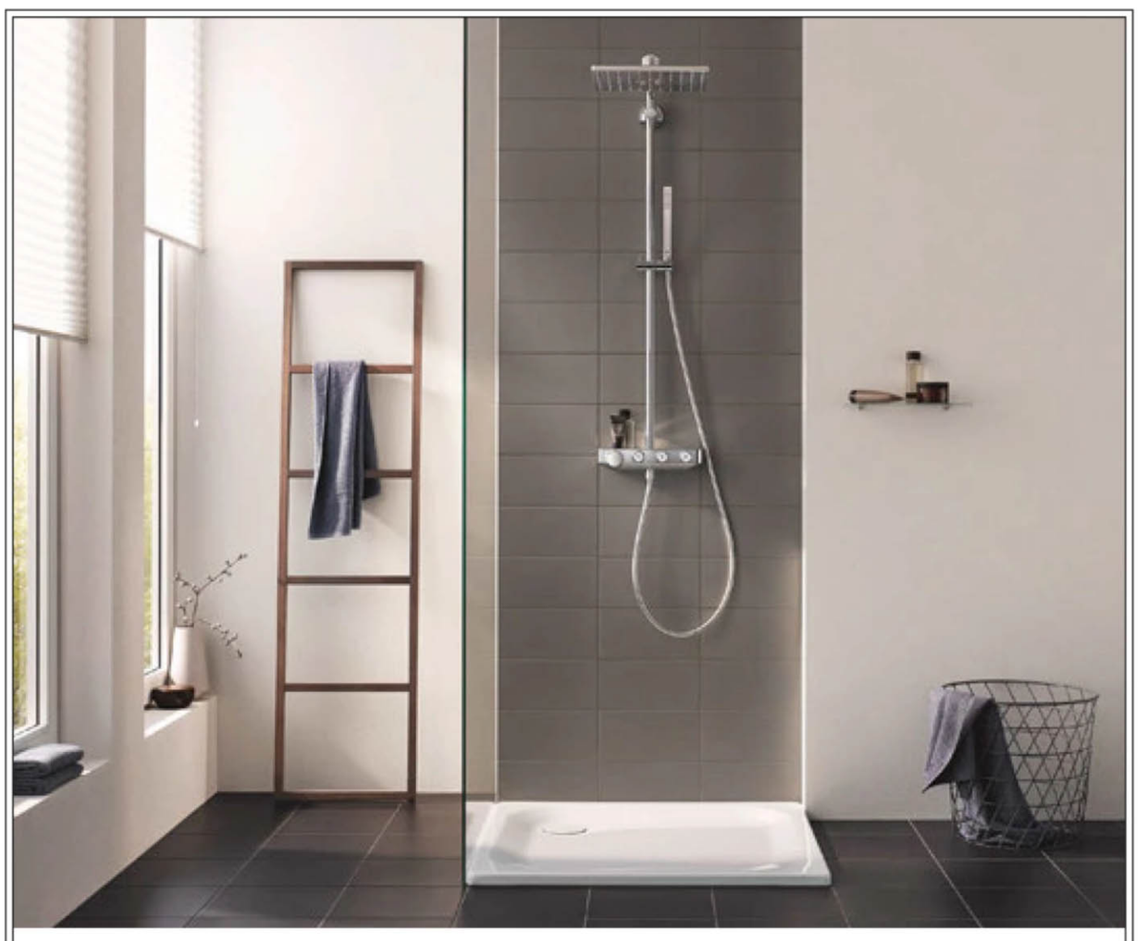
Parallel lines

Created by Spanish architect and designer Patricia Urquiola, the award-winning Rigo by Agape is an innovative furniture system consisting of two wall-mounted linear beams on which washbasins and accessories can be fitted. Crafted from marble, wood and anodised aluminium, a detailed set of trays and containers allows this minimalist design to be configured in several different ways. Available from West One Bathrooms, RIgo measures 120–300cm in length. £POA. (westonebathrooms.com)

A fine art

Dutch designer Piet Boon's made-to-measure collection of basins and baths for manufacturer Cocoon is now available in the UK exclusively at CP Hart. Inspired by simple geometry, Piet uses sustainable solid surface materials shaped into pieces of art. This 1,700x850mm Cocoon Atlantis bath in solid surface resin with through body colour is from £4,0876. (cphart.co.uk)





Smart and intuitive

The Euphoria SmartControl 310 Cube System by Grohe offers user-friendly showering at the push of a button thanks to an innovative slimline control unit. Press one of the three EasyLogic pictograms to select spray types and turn to regulate water pressure. Flowrates are then saved for future use and fast-acting temperature regulation reduces the risk of scalding. Grohe's QuickFix system can also be easily retrofitted. £1,254. (grohe.co.uk) »

Bellisima!

Vitra has added new designs to Plural, its exciting modern range of furniture and ceramics, by Milan-based designer Terri Pecora. This collection, inspired by mid-century modern design, re-imagines the bathroom as a living space using smooth, rounded edges and solid timbers to emulate furniture usually found in other rooms of the home. No longer is the bathroom just a plain white box; it's a place to relax in. The Plural 50cm freestanding washbasin unit costs £499, and small table, from £1,045. (vitra.co.uk)



The ageing process

Astonian Original is the latest brassware from Aston Matthews. Featuring traditional crosshead or lever controls and ceramic detailing, taps and showers are available in an extensive range of finishes. Astonian Original deck-mounted bath/shower mixer in Aged Brass, £1,434. (astonmatthews.co.uk)





Across the range

LG Hausys, the maker of hygienic, easy-clean Hi-Macs acrylic stone, has introduced a range of baths and shower trays, so now it can offer a fully integrated bathroom solution, alongside its washbasins. Available in Alpine White, the three bath designs (160x65cm, 160x70cm and 170x70cm) are flush-mounted within a panel for a seamless finish with no visible joins and can be teamed with matching shower trays. £POA. (himacs.eu)

WORDS PAULA WOODS

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A room of your own

A well-planned, practical en-suite bathroom adds value and gives you a chance to create your very own relaxing retreat

WORDS **PAULA WOODS**

It's recommended by estate agents that a home should ideally have two bathrooms for every three bedrooms, so an additional en suite could prove a valuable asset. And, as this space is not usually shared by the rest of the family, you can go to town and indulge your personal style preferences.

Planning particulars

Building an en-suite bathroom rarely requires planning permission, but any structural work including electrics, windows, ventilation and drainage must adhere to building regulations.

Structural changes will affect the length and cost of the project, and plumbing work is a key consideration in this respect, as having to move or add pipework adds to the expense. 'You need to know where the soil stack is located, the potential impact on hot and cold water supplies, and how the room is structured, including the orientation of the floor joists,' says Sally Cutchie, marketing manager at BC Designs (bcdesigns.co.uk).

New studwork walls can be used to conceal the plumbing, cistern and any supporting framework of sanitaryware

Adding a new room with a shower and/or bath and basin may call for extra hot water and heating, which your existing system may or may not already have capacity for – your plumber will make this a priority and check this for you.

New studwork walls can be used to conceal the plumbing, cistern and supporting framework of any wall-mounted sanitaryware and furniture. Alternatively, the pipes can be relayed under the floor or surface-mounted and boxed in.

To minimise disruption and lower costs, keep the shower, basin and WC on one wall, or build the en suite adjacent to an existing bathroom so that the plumbing supplies can be shared.

Installing a low-decibel extractor fan is vital for ventilation, and if you don't have any windows in your space, it may be possible to fit a sunpipe to channel light. Velux (velux.co.uk) sun tunnels offer solutions for flat and pitched roofs. »

LEFT If a new en suite is to be installed inside a bedroom, broken-plan layouts provide privacy while retaining a semi-open feel. Palermo Grande ClearStone bath in Gloss White, 1,790x750x570mm, £2,499, Clearwater (clearwaterbaths.com)

BELOW Being able to see the floor beneath wall-mounted furniture maximises the sense of space. This scheme by interior architecture and design company Day True includes a generous vanity unit and integrated mirror. Bathrooms from £8,000 (daytrue.com)



Spacial awareness

Awkwardly shaped rooms and compact footprints call for space-saving designs. Look out for quadrant shower enclosures, ceiling-mounted showerheads, corner basins and WCs, and short-projection sanitaryware. You could also try a corner vanity unit, such as the Svelte by Crosswater (crosswater.co.uk). Where space is tight, choosing curved designs can help fool the eye into thinking that the room is bigger than it really is.

When it comes to shower enclosures, avoid anything less spacious than an 800-millimetre quadrant, as this could leave you feeling too closed in as you shower. Sliding and infold doors are more economical with space than outward-opening designs, while concealed shower fittings free up room inside the enclosure.

Remember, too, that simple techniques, such as widening the doorway and using a pale colour scheme, can prevent compact rooms feeling cramped. 'Glass partitions with etched vanity sections or sandblasted opaque panels provide privacy while keeping an open feel,' says Yousef Mansuri, head of design at CP Hart. »



LEFT A curved stud wall hides all the pipework. Oblique porcelain tiles, from £40.59 per sqm; Casablanca Mono Decor 10/12 Hexagon porcelain tiles, from £48 per sqm. Both Mandarin Stone (mandarinstone.com)

BELOW A trapezium-shaped tub frees up floor space. Bette's steel collection is available in three sizes, including a luxurious two-seater that tapers from a generous 130cm to 75cm, saving almost half a square metre of room. BetteSpace, £2,110 (bette.co.uk)

RIGHT If the floor area is limited, a wet room is more streamlined than a shower enclosure. The built-in shelf keeps the look clean and uncluttered. Evolution Matt Natural Grey porcelain tiles, £30.99 per sqm, Tile Mountain (tilemountain.co.uk)







ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Ideas for windowless spaces by **Luke Thomas**, design director at **John Cullen Lighting** (johncullenlighting.com)

- Lighting vertical surfaces can help give a sense of brightness and space. For example, a concealed linear LED placed along a tiled wall is a discreet solution that gives the illusion of daylight streaming in. Alternatively, recessed low-glare downlights set close to the wall create dramatic arcs.

- Task lighting is critical for shaving and applying make-up. Having a wall light on either side of a mirror is effective, or choose a design with integrated lighting. A more inventive solution could be to install a backlight. Set the mirror away from the wall to create space for an LED behind to reflect soft light back towards the face.

- Having multiple circuits in the room allows the lighting scenes to be changed from bright to gentle and relaxing, and so on. For this reason, dimmer switches are really useful, as is accent lighting. Miniature spots or water-resistant LED strips in shower recesses can provide this effect. Uplights are also a great way to create impact.

- A low-level lighting circuit is useful for providing a nightlight. A passive infrared sensor (PIR) adds further convenience by activating the low-level circuit when it detects movement to provide just enough light for late-night use. Low-level lighting could be a wall-recessed fitting or a linear LED under a vanity unit. If opting for linear, it is important to consider the floor finish. If it is reflective, you need to use a profile with a frosted perspex diffuser to prevent the 'dotting' effect phenomenon that is common with LED lights.

The right location

When planning where to place an en-suite bathroom, there are two possibilities. You could section off an area from an adjoining corridor or room, or simply use wasted space: alcoves, built-in cupboards and redundant corners are good starting points. Gaining access to the new room requires careful deliberation to avoid adversely affecting the bedroom's layout.

If this is an issue, an open-plan design may be preferable; freestanding stud walls or screens can provide privacy, although you may wish to enclose the WC. Also, bear in mind that the removal of sections of structural walls may require support.

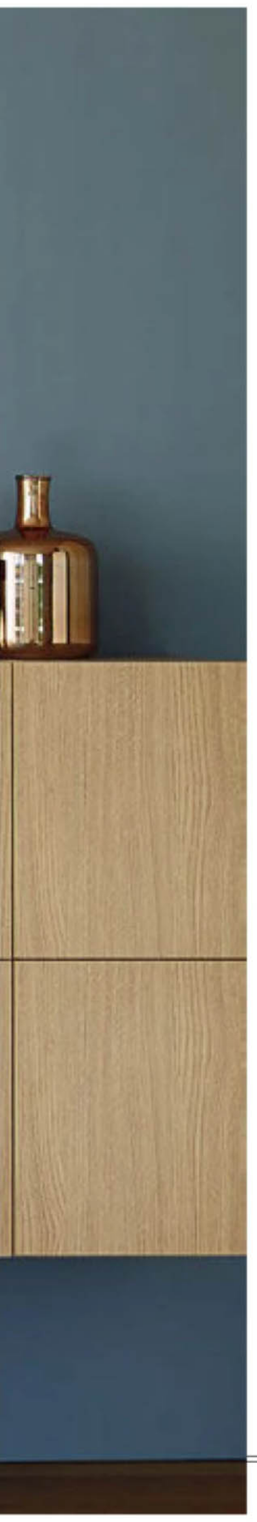
A new room can measure as little as 1.5x1.3 metres: this is the minimum amount of space you will need to fit in a shower enclosure, basin and WC. But bigger is definitely better, especially when the en suite is going to be used by two people. With more floor area you can add a bath and double up on the basins, vanity units and even the shower, to ensure a more efficient and smooth-running scheme.

Converting an adjoining room ensures a generously sized space and shouldn't devalue a property if a good ratio of bedrooms to bathrooms is preserved.









LEFT Adapt structural features such as an alcove. Svelte 1,400mm hinged door screen for recess, £1,295; 800mm unit with basin, £1,245; illuminated mirror, £349. All Crosswater (crosswater.co.uk)

BELOW Squeeze two into one with a double-basin vanity unit providing ample storage and surface space. L-Cube vanity in Apricot Pearl High Gloss, £1,468.80; console, £879; Starck 1 basins, £399 each; mirror, £1,940. All Duravit (duravit.co.uk)

RIGHT Be as bold or understated as you like with the decor of an en suite that's all your own. Vernice Springs tiles, £39.95 per sqm, Walls and Floors (wallsandfloors.co.uk)



Using similar tones to an adjoining bedroom gives an en suite a point of difference, while maintaining a sense of connection

Design ideas

Choosing a colour palette, textures and materials provides the opportunity to make a statement, whether that be with a dramatic or more pared-back scheme. It doesn't have to be exactly the same as the adjoining bedroom either – using similar tones gives a point of difference, while maintaining a sense of connection.

● ***Turn over for an en-suite bathroom case study*** »

A narrow perspective

The stylish simplicity of this scheme takes advantage of the room's unusual proportions

WORDS **PAULA WOODS**

PROJECT PROFILE

LOCATION Central London
STYLE OF PROPERTY Georgian terrace
DURATION OF BUILD 3-4 months
SIZE 7.2sqm
COST £27,600



A linear arrangement of WC, bath and shower enclosure ensures the narrow room feels as open as possible. The Shower Lab glass screen and Rexa Design Corian tray were sourced and supplied by Day True (daytrue.com)

RIGHT The wall-mounted vanity unit by Rexa Design (rexadesign.it) is teamed with brassware by another Italian brand, Cea (ceadesign.it)

When Pauline and Geoffrey Claybourne, 43 and 45, decided to renovate their five-bedroom Georgian home, the scale of the project, and their wish to remain living in the house during the refurbishment, dictated that the alterations were carried out in stages. 'The first phase involved redesigning the four bathrooms,' says Pauline. 'Then we tackled our bedroom, en-suite bathroom and walk-in wardrobe.'

Having enlisted the help of London-based interior architecture and design company Day True (daytrue.com) for the initial phase of renovations, the couple were keen to continue the working relationship and discussed their ideas for phase two with the company's designer, Brooke Collins.

'The combined footprint of Pauline and Geoffrey's en suite and walk-in wardrobe was almost double the size of their bedroom. So they asked me to create a better-proportioned layout,' says Brooke. The solution was to reduce the size of both the en suite and the wardrobe, which had the knock-on effect of providing enough space for a new bedroom.

Existing architectural features played a part in the arrangement of the reconfigured rooms. 'The windows »

'The existing en suite and walk-in wardrobe were almost double the size of the bedroom: we needed a better-proportioned layout'





Stainless-steel shower fittings contrast with marble-effect tiles. The recessed shelf holds shampoo and soap without spoiling the sleek lines of the scheme. Cea Giotto brassware, Rexa Design Corian unit and Domus Porcelain Marble tiles, all supplied by Day True

acted as a guide to help us decide where to place the divide between the bathroom and the new bedroom,' says Brooke.

Reduced to a long and narrow 3.8xl.9 metres, the en suite is still light and bright, thanks to the generous sash window at the end of the space. To avoid having to relocate the soil pipe, the WC, bath and walk-in shower are lined up along one wall.

The minimalist style of the furniture, sanitaryware and fittings were chosen with a view to maintaining a sense of spaciousness and a contemporary look in the more compact room. The white bath and the shower tray are made from seamless, solid surface Corian, while large-format marble and concrete-effect tiles further contribute to the space-enhancing qualities of the materials and colour palette. A double vanity unit with countertop-mounted bowl-shaped basins sits by the window to benefit from the natural light, with two large mirrors adding to the brightening effect.

Although the scheme is quite pared-back, the bathroom's atmosphere changes from day to night. 'The pendant lamp casts a beautiful soft light that helps create a tranquil ambiance, perfect for getting into a relaxed mood after a hard day,' says Pauline. GD

Look out for next month's feature on family friendly designs



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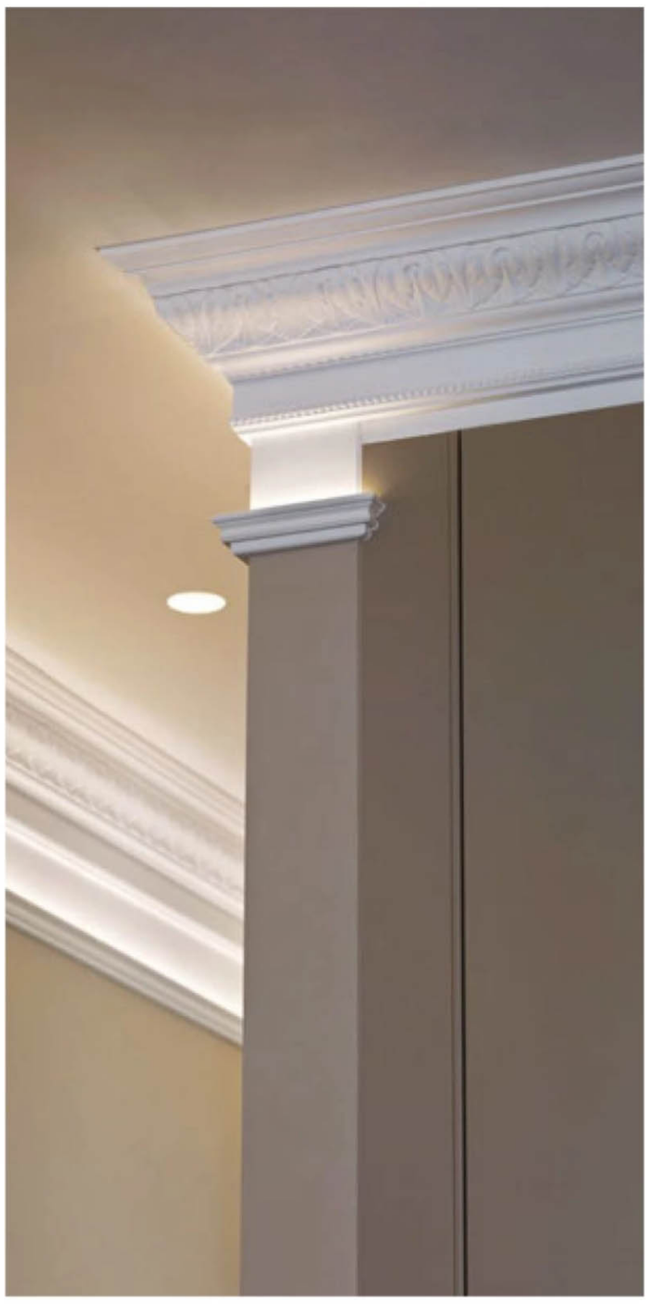
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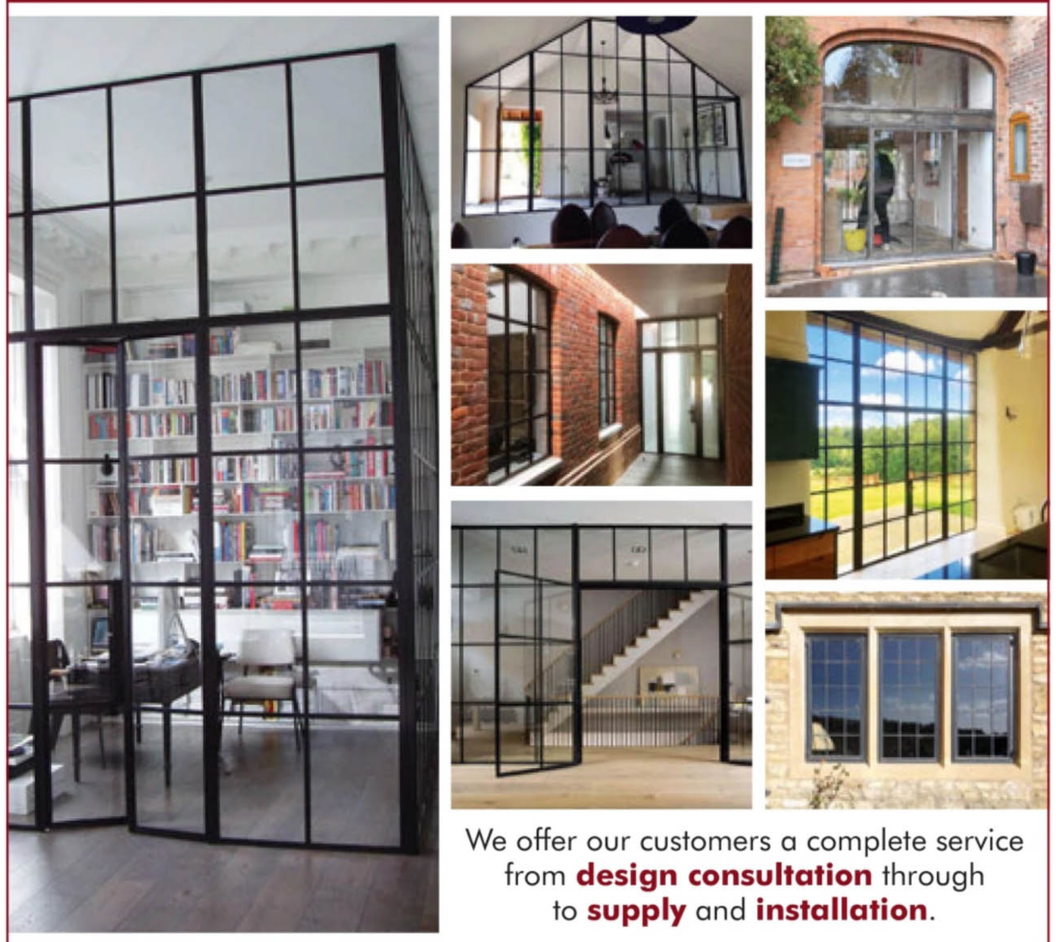
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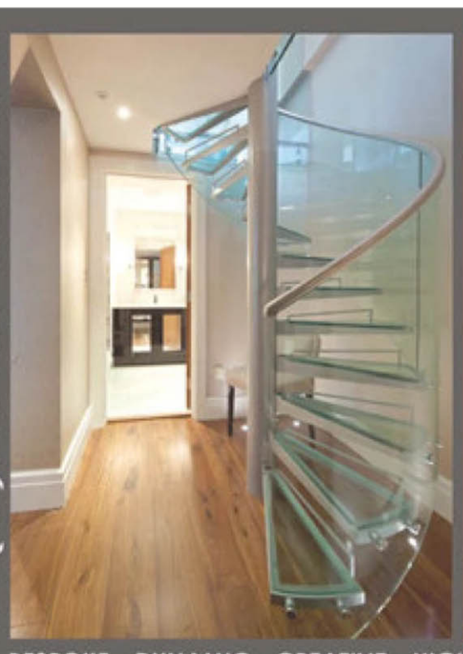
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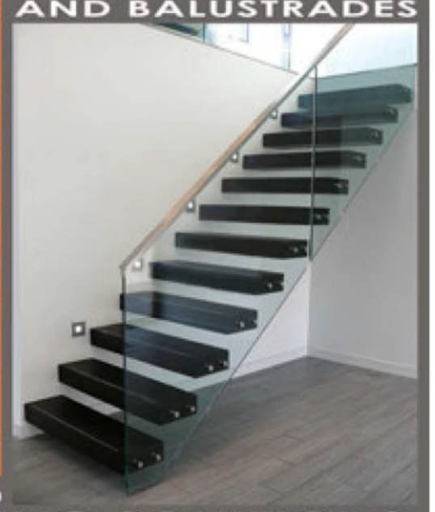
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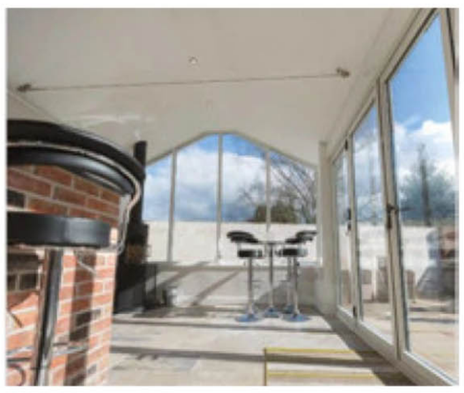
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MY GRAND IDEA

Prompted by his client's appreciation of salvage, architect Anton Ambrose has designed an extension with a difference

In a nutshell, what were you asked to do?

'The main ambition was to get as much space as I could within the restrictions of the South Downs National Park and to a very constrained budget. The original cottage had three bedrooms, but with five children in the family, the kids were sharing. You're only really allowed to extend a house by 45 per cent of the existing footprint in a national park, but by working with the local authority's planner I've actually been able to double it.'

— How did you manage this?

'When you approach from the road, you see a modest extension set slightly back; it's only as you go to the back you realise it wraps in an L-shape behind the cottage and is massive.'

— What made this different from any other extension job?

'John, the client, is an antiques dealer who finds lots of unusual things through his work. The extension doesn't just house his collection of architectural salvage, it is also a collection in itself.'

— Tell us more...

'The posts that support the deck are from a pavilion that John's company was refurbishing; the balustrades are galvanised railings from a retail park; old doors have been mounted on sliding rails between rooms; there's a Victorian bath on the balcony outside the main bedroom that John likes to sit in with a glass of wine in the evening. The hearth is the slate from an old pool table set on some groins from The Witterings in West Sussex – they'd been in the sea a long time so have a lovely texture to them.'

— Does using so many upcycled elements create building-regulations issues?

'In order to be compliant, we put in enhanced fire protection throughout the house. I worked very closely with the building inspector, so they understood the project and used their knowledge and experience to help us come up with solutions.'

— How did you minimise costs?

'John did a lot of the work himself – though he'll admit that he probably took on too much on top of his day job. He also used tradespeople who weren't VAT registered, and a lot of people he met at the village pub who just wanted to get involved. For the structure, John and I used an insulated timber-panel system, manufactured off site and craned into place. We clad the interior in plywood, which is cost effective and also avoids wet trades such as plasterers that might hold up the project. We only had carpenters, plumbers and electricians, so John was able to manage them himself. In the end it worked out at £1,200 per square metre and only took nine months. If we hadn't gone down the prefabricated route, it would have been at least a year.'





ABOVE Through a pre-application process, Anton worked closely with the local planning inspector, minimising the impact of the extension on the cottage

LEFT The entire extension is built out of wood: the cladding is larch and the structure is insulated timber panels. Storage under the house is used for bikes and hides an old well

— Does the new building relate to, or contrast with, the original cottage?

'The cottage has very small windows and although it's set among trees, you never got to experience them. Glazing the entire end of the extension has created an incredible connection with the outside; on the top floor, you feel as if you're in the tree canopy.' GD

Anton Ambrose is director of Dust Architecture (dustarchitecture.com)

INTERVIEW JESSICA CARGILL THOMPSON **PHOTOGRAPHY** GEORGE SHARMAN

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