



Our Self-Build Column

Ever wondered how you can future proof your self build home?

To mark National Self Build Week, Ron Beattie looks at how more and more self-builders are looking to the future when they build their home.

In 2017 a consumer survey of 500 self builders, who had either just completed or were about to complete their project, was conducted by Homebuilding & Renovating, which found that the average age of self builders had risen by 5 years over the past decade and now sat at 51, with the most common age group for self builders being between 55 and 64.

This is perhaps not a huge surprise given this age range usually has accumulated equity over time and would be in a good financial position to undertake a self build project with an expectation of spending around 20-30 years enjoying life in their dream home.

Considerations in design at this stage of life can centre around layout and aesthetics as well as using the latest technology and innovation to create bespoke energy efficient homes which are totally unique but it also begs the question of should a home at this stage of your life be future-proofed?

We have many clients who are looking to build their dream home, on the perfect plot with notions of staying there for as long as possible. So this inevitably leads to making conscious design decisions that will allow them to stay in the home, combining creative design with the necessary practicalities.

One such client has recently moved into her two storey Passivhaus and took future proofing very seriously as she has no intention of moving any time soon! The design stage was very thorough, working closely with her architect to incorporate stylish yet practical elements into the home, which would not look out of place in a striking new build. Key elements included the all important lift, as the house is primarily focused on upstairs living to



take advantage of the fantastic views, so being able to access both floors very easily was paramount. Also, the living / dining / kitchen area is open plan allowing for plenty of space between each area, with doors wide enough for a wheelchair, should one ever become necessary. Furthermore, the downstairs accommodation includes a guest bedroom and bathroom which is perfect for visiting family and friends, yet could easily become self-contained for a live-in carer in later years.

The design options for future proofing run into the hundreds so there are many to choose from depending on your own circumstances, but incorporating a few key elements from the start of the design process will of course eliminate any major restructuring in later years should accessibility become an issue. This is the joy of designing your own home, every possible outcome can be considered and incorporated if required, and all adds to the ease of living long term in your dream home.

To read the blog on the EDP property website [Click Here](#)