

INTRODUCTION

YOU MAY WELL HAVE PLANS....

Whether it's a complete refit or just a lick of paint, you probably have plans for your new home. Perhaps you plan to change the kitchen or bathroom or add an en-suite bathroom. Perhaps the electrics need work, or the roof needs fixing, the stair carpet renewing, a couple of windows need replacing. Perhaps fitted cabinets need to come out – or go in. Maybe you are even thinking of an extension.

Gradually – or perhaps by getting the builders in at the start – you will shape this into a home that suits your tastes and needs.

THIS IS YOUR GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

It's now, when you are carrying out work on your home, that you have a golden opportunity to include energy and insulation measures. Before the new cupboards go in! Before the new plumbing is completed! Before the attic is full of stuff! Before the new flooring goes down!

It's a great chance, right from the start, to create a comfortable home which is protected against high energy prices and is easier on the planet. That's good for all of us, especially for the next generation.

... HOW ABOUT CREATING A 21ST CENTURY HOME?

Much of Highgate's housing is now well over 100 years old. At various stages of their lifetimes, the buildings we live in have been transformed by the addition of electric lighting, running hot water, indoor WCs and bathrooms, central heating, and so on. Why? Because we've always wanted to be more comfortable in our homes – and that means a pleasant temperature, good lighting, good plumbing, and no draughts. The level of creature comforts we expect from our homes now is dramatically different from what we were used to a few decades ago.

So far, we've achieved that comfort largely through the use of much more gas and electricity – but often even gas and electricity bills don't ensure a cosy home, and nor do many of the improvements we love. It's perfectly possible to sit in a fabulous new top-of-the-range kitchen and still freeze!

A 21st Century Home means comfortable indoor temperatures, fresh air rather than draughts, good natural and artificial light, plenty of hot water, and low bills. It can even generate electricity through solar electric panels. It could have even more – such as the use



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of natural materials for paints and floorcoverings, and could collect rainwater not just for the garden but even to flush the loo.

INTERESTED YET?

Why not take a look now at the **leaflets in this pack** from the Energy Saving Trust – on refurbishing living spaces, planning a new kitchen, or planning a new bathroom. And see what some of your neighbours have done in our **CASE STUDIES** section.

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GET INSPIRED, SEE FOR YOURSELF – ONLINE RESOURCES + EVENTS

There are lots of online resources to inspire and inform. Here are a few....

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk Plenty of information on improvements, including water management. And there's an interactive **home energy check** you can do online

www.yougen.co.uk/energy-saving This is an independent website for householders, with contributions from a wide range of professionals. The section on energy saving has links to good material on doors/windows, heating/hot water, insulation, lighting, ventilation/draughts, and more.

www.oliverheath.com Environmental designer Oliver Heath's website shows some inspiring construction and interiors design projects.

www.bristolgreendoors.org/next-steps This section of the Bristol Green Doors website has an excellent summary of improvement measures. (If you are ever in Bristol, then look out for their open house weekends with over 40 refurbished homes open for visits)

www.highgatesociety.com (follow links to 'sustainable homes'. Our group, and other associated local groups, arrange occasional **high-profile local 21st Century Homes events** with speakers and exhibitors, plus house visits, so you can find out more and speak to householders and potential suppliers. Look out for information on our website, (you'll find the lists of exhibitors there, too). We also have a range of ongoing talks and small events.

www.superhomes.org.uk The **Superhomes network** consists of extra energy-efficient homes – there are regular open days when homes are open to visitors. The website has videos, information, and links to advisors/builders.

www.ecobuild.co.uk Each March the **Ecobuild** event takes place in London – designed for professionals and the public as well. A real eye-opener! It covers new construction and refurbishment.



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