

If you have designs on making your home bigger, or perhaps re-thinking a living room, kitchen or bedroom here are a few guidelines.

From the world famous actor Bob Hoskins to the artist Thomas Gainsborough, Suffolk residents have always recognized the importance of creativity. It is therefore no surprise that homeowners are increasingly turning to the design skills of architects to help them create the homes they dream of.

Hugo Tugman, founder of architectyourhome, the UK's largest supplier of home design services explains "the demand for expert design advice is pouring in from Suffolk homeowners and it appears that whether you have just purchased a property or whether you have decided to stay put, the cry for help is consistent. Residents are looking for expert and affordable design advice on how to maximise the space potential of their homes."

This is supported by a recent survey from architectyourhome, who questioned 500 enquirers as to their reason for considering renovating their homes. 41% requested the need for more 'space', or to 'extend their property'. The second most popular request was to 'improve the layout' of their homes (34%). The survey also found that a staggering 98% of those questioned believed that any renovation work they carried out would add value to their property.

With the introduction and possible saturation of home design shows the newly informed breed of homeowners are not only looking at how to maximise their space, but are also demanding better design and are turning to the experts for affordable solutions when it comes to advice on planning/building, design inspiration, drawings, builders etc.



Architectyourhome provides some useful tips for local residents looking to add an extension

Before deciding to extend your property there are a number of factors you need to consider.

- Plan your space – Before you start knocking down walls consider the feasibility, practicality and cost of the project. Consider how you want to use and live within the space and the demands of the rest of your family – small children may dictate open plan living areas, older families might like a separate space dedicated to reading and studying etc

- Consider the whole – is the design you favour in keeping with the existing style of your property? An unsightly or highly contrasting extension will devalue your home
- Balance it out - creating too big a ground floor extension or adding too many bedrooms on top can result in a house which appears awkward and uncomfortable.
- Light it up – consider how to maximise the natural light – extend your home at the south-facing side of your property for the highest solar gain benefits, install bi-fold glass doors to bring the outside in and / or consider sky lights and sky tunnels to channel sunlight into dim areas.
- Make it Flow - Although every room has its own personality and function look towards creating a sense of flow throughout the house with colour and texture, flooring,
- Be kind to your neighbours? It is important to make sure that your extension does not unacceptably affect the amenities of your neighbours. This includes privacy, sunlight and daylight and outlook. Showing your neighbours your proposals from an early stage can help to keep them 'onside' and help prevent objections later on.
- Follow the law - Investigate whether you need planning or not? This normally depends on the size of the house, whether it has had any previous extensions, how big they were, whether your property is listed or in a conservation area and the size of the proposed extension. There are lots of quite complex criteria and if you know how to play them to your best advantage you could be amazed by what can be achieved.
- Get in the Experts – make sure the design is right upfront as this will affect the ultimate success of your project. Bring in an architect to provide the initial

inspiration and to work within your budget, living requirements and style will ensure you will receive a return on your investment both in terms of lifestyle improvement and property value.

Hugo Tugman champions the importance of good design and understands the significance of offering functional, practical and stylish solutions which can adapt with our complex and ever changing living requirements.

“We live, work, socialise and relax in our homes, they are our enjoyment, our interest and our pride and for most of us, they are our single biggest investment. Little wonder then that design is the focus of so much of our attention”

Useful contacts

Britain's favourite architects
architectyourhome
www.architect-yourhome.com
tel: 0800 849 8505

Bi-fold / retractable folding glass doors for extensions
www.sunparadise.co.uk
Ph: 0870 240 7604

Specialist glass products for architectural, commercial, DIY and residential applications in the UK including double glazed windows, patio and french doors suitable for extensions
<http://www.thebbgroup.co.uk/>

Planning:
General information on planning applications and building regulations – including downloadable explanatory booklet
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/>

Suffolk coastal district council
<http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/process/default.htm>

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Barbergh district council

<http://www.babergh.gov.uk/Babergh/Home/Planning+and+Building+Control/Planning+Information/Planning+Information+Summary.htm>

Eastern area;

01473 825865 / 825867

Western area

01473 825859 / 825861

Main Planning reception

01473 825858

Forest Heath

<http://www.forest-heath.gov.uk/Planning/>

Ipswich borough council

<http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/Services/Planning+and+Development/>

Mid Suffolk district

<http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/control>

St. Edmundsbury borough council

<http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/live/Planning.cfm>

e.mail planning.helpdesk@stedsbc.gov.uk or call the Planning Helpdesk on 01284 757675