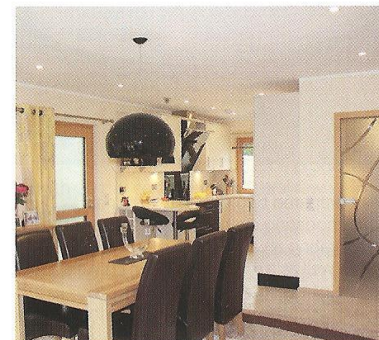


CASE STUDY 2



Alan and Doreen Longworth



No fuss approach to building new home

Alan and Doreen Longworth used a German company to supply their energy efficient new home in Reading, despite Alan being a builder by profession.

Last year was a big one for Alan and Doreen Longworth. Having returned from a three-year trip travelling around Australia and New Zealand in late 2009, they bought their plot in January 2010, got married in May, signed their contract with Hanse Haus in June, watched their house being built in September/October

and moved in in November. It's not like they didn't know anything about self build though, as Alan used to be a builder himself before working as a project manager.

When retiring in 2006, Alan and Doreen knew they wanted to sell up, release some capital from their existing house and take the opportunity to travel. Originally, they planned to buy another, smaller property but couldn't

find what they wanted and were put off by paying stamp duty. When they returned from their travels, they saw a plot of land for sale – which had existing planning consent for a house – and quickly decided they'd buy it and self build.

"We knew that we wanted to go down the timber frame, pre-manufactured route and having built many houses myself, I knew what I liked and what sort of standard I wanted," explains Alan. "I had planned to project manage the build myself but when we read about Hanse Haus we decided to go for the stress-free option. Two weeks later, we were on a plane to Germany to visit their show homes and factory. That was less than a year ago – and we haven't looked back since.

"We took our own design with us, which was subject to planning consent although we then ended up leaving it with the architect at Hanse Haus for improvement," Alan continues.



"This house has absolutely met our expectations," says Doreen. "And, even though the winter room wasn't part of our original plan, it's become our favourite area in the house. It's the focal point for the open-plan kitchen and dining room and seems to be where we end up sitting and relaxing after every meal!"

The house, which was built to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, means that it is also cheaper to heat than their previous home, costing an average £4 a day all year round.



"They prepared two possible schemes, accommodating everything we had wanted but incorporating an additional living area in the roof, as well as a winter room, which we'd seen in some of the show homes."

On their second visit to Germany the couple signed a refundable planning permission contract with Hanse Haus. Days later, the company's planning advisor phoned to say planning consent had been given for their chosen revised design.

Hanse Haus then worked on the engineered drawings and calculations for the construction, and recommended UK groundworkers were contracted to start on site in mid-August. The concrete slab was signed off on September 27 and the house arrived the next day.

"The quality and speed of the build was amazing," enthuses Alan. "By the end of the third day, the roof was on. I met with the project manager on site every morning for a brief review of the build although everything went like clockwork and my role was merely to observe the house going up."

The house was completed on November 22, a day ahead of schedule, and the couple moved in a week later after the finishing touches to the kitchen and bedrooms were applied.



SPECIFICATIONS

- The house has 180m² of living space on both floors.
- The exterior is clad in a light yellow render under a pitched, grey tiled roof.
- The exterior walls are 30cm thick, with 12cm internal walls.
- The windows are triple-glazed.
- Access is via the front door, a side door, and both the winter room and the sitting room, to the rear of the house.
- The ground floor has underfloor heating.
- The house also boasts the Hanse Haus solid wall system, which combines timber SIPs and solid wall construction, with the loadbearing walls having a stud every 300mm which are glued on both sides with OSB boards.
- The house has an air to water heat pump. There is no boiler.
- An air ventilation system controls humidity and air temperature.
- The house is insulated with a GLASSWOOL product, which is produced with 90 per cent natural mineral raw materials harmless to health.
- Two solar panels on the south-facing pitched roof supplement water heating.
- Only the roof rafters and battens were impregnated with BOR salt to protect the wood against humidity, otherwise no wood preservation was used.

