

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

Deciding whether to kit-out a self-build yourself, or whether to get the professionals in to logistically plan all the details for you is a tricky decision. We asked Stommel Haus for some advice...



Kitting out a Brand New House

When going down the self-build route to build your dream house, you have the option to build it all by yourself from scratch, to order a shell and kit it out yourself, or order the fully fitted house from either a house builder or off-site manufacturer. Whatever your personal choice, at some stage the new house needs to be kitted out and this needs careful consideration, expert knowledge, the right suppliers of materials and fittings as well as good craftsmanship for their installation.

So how do you go about kitting out an entire house? You will need to think about absolutely everything from the heating to plumbing and the drainage, the electrical cables and sockets as well as outlets for your

lighting. How many sockets, where do they go, where do you find a reliable electrician, plumber and heating engineer and which systems are the right ones?

You might want to use the opportunity to lay PC and loudspeaker wires. And what about TV cables, antenna, satellite dish, CCTV or other security items?

You need to fit bathrooms with tubs and showers, shower cabins, shower heads, WC and basin, taps, mirrors, paper role and towel holders and more. You need to look at flooring and tiles. Is the chosen timber floor good with under-floor heating? Can you find fitters who install your bathrooms, tile the floors and walls? You might want to think about a flue for your log burner and proper

ventilation for it. Where do you get the stair case, what about interior doors, window and door handles, what about ... Well, the list seems endless.

And what about cost control? Besides knowing what to buy and where to buy it, it also needs to be shipped at the right time, installed and tested. What if something does not fit, what if it goes wrong, what if you have incorrectly installed it?

DIY to Save Money?

Have you really got the knowledge and the time to manage the kitting out yourself? If you're not sure, then you will find that some premium off-site manufacturers will guide you throughout this process. At first glance

it may look as if the price for a fully fitted house is high compared to purchasing and installing all the items yourself. But you have the great advantage with a premium contractor such as Stommel Haus of having immediate access to the knowledge and vast experience of what is required for fitting out in terms of the craftsmanship, the technology and the Building Regulations involved.

The supplier of a fully fitted house will not only advise you during your fitting meeting, but purchase the items you choose, in the right quantities and sizes, transport them on site, install them for you and also ensure that they work and continue to work as covered by the contractor's and manufacturer's guarantee.

Go the Full Monty

A Premium manufacturer such as Stommel Haus turns the kitting out into a fantastic and exciting experience. A typical fitting meeting at Stommel Haus takes 3 days during which the company will put up their clients in a local hotel and provide an entire team covering the different aspects of the kitting out and the process.

The meeting starts with a review of the layout of the house. Within the framework of the granted planning permission, changes to room sizes, shifting doors and changing windows are still possible. During the discussion the structural calculations are an important guideline to ensure that changes do not jeopardize the soundness of the structure.

The next step is the choice of roof tiles, front and side entrance door, the choice of windows and their opening mechanism as well as door and window handles and the colours. When discussing the opening of windows, a lot of aspects need to be reviewed, such as the furnishing of the house, the traffic in the rooms, the views and landscaping outside. A security system might be advisable in the area where you are living; often the house insurance premium reflects the fact that doors and windows are fitted with a special security system.

The electrical fitting looks at all aspects of the number and position of sockets and switches, how the lights are switched (for instance there might be three switches in a



hall to switch the hall lights), the position of outside sockets and lights, possibly movement detectors, the number and positions of outlets of Cat-7 computer cables, the position of telephone and TV outlets of possible antenna or satellite dishes, the cabling for photo voltaic systems, alarm and surveillance systems etc. The kitchen plan is reviewed to plan the correct cabling for high power appliances such as hobs and stoves. Again, both knowledge of the technologies and building regulations involved, as well as the experience of fitting hundreds of houses, are required to successfully complete the fitting out process.

A very exciting moment is the choice of bathroom fittings. Stommel Haus' standard quotation is based on high quality brands such as Villeroy & Boch, Keramag, Duravit, Grohe, Kaldewei and others. Bathroom by bathroom is reviewed and apart from choosing the beautiful items, the allegedly mundane subjects such as the drainage need to be considered to avoid drainage pipes of an upstairs bathroom going down the middle of the room below! An expert team surrounds the clients advising on their choices both in terms of the cost (in, below

or above budget) as well as the functionality. At the end of the bathroom fitting stage, plans of each and every bathroom are provided which is typically the moment when clients get very excited as they begin to see themselves using them.

Choosing flooring materials and tiles is next on the agenda. The knowledge of an experienced tiler and floorer is required to know that wet room showers, for instance, need small tiles to work properly; that a small bathroom requires big tiles and possibly a big mirror, or that not all kinds of timber floors work with under-floor heating.

Stair case, banisters around open galleries and interior doors are selected at the very end. The stair case will be made to measure and the high quality interior doors will be delivered and installed by qualified joiners as soon as the flooring is finished. Such good craftsmanship ensures that stairs don't creak and doors shut properly and quietly.

A Stommel Haus client can count on the experience, excellent craftsmanship and project management to be sure that all items selected will be safely transported on site exactly when required, installed, tested and handed over for acceptance in top quality.

How to Stay In Budget

It is easy to get carried away when looking at all the beautiful options for fitting out a house. The great advantage of commissioning a high quality, Premium supplier such as Stommel Haus is that all items selected outside of the standard budget will be summarised in a list for the client to check later. It is possible that the client chose a bathtub which is more expensive than the standard, the tap is less expensive, i.e. the list will show all the surcharges and discounts and give a balance of the overall cost change. After a final selection by the client, the balance of the summary will determine the fixed price – a great advantage and comfort for the client who can be sure he will receive a beautiful home, fitted out by qualified craftsmen with all the items chosen, on-time and in-budget.

Kitting out a brand new house can be a really fantastic, exciting and satisfying experience if you choose a reliable, premium supplier such as Stommel Haus.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
www.stommel-haus.co.uk

