



Property focus: Going green

David is creating his own green and pleasant land

This week's Government announcement that loans will be on offer to pay for energy-saving home improvements may encourage more of us down this route, but we still have excuses to explain why we can't follow it. However, David Hall and family are on the way to eco-perfection.

Karen Antcliff finds out more.



DAVID and his partner, Adeline, are knocking down the bungalow they bought at auction and replacing it with an eco home.

If you are going to start from scratch why not build with the latest innovations in insulation and heating. You might even save a bob or two in the long run?

But like many of us, especially if we have a family – David and Adeline have Alex, three, and Isabelle, 19 months – there has to be a balance between savings and practicality.

David said: "We wanted a house that looked normal."



STARTING FROM SCRATCH: David Hall, right, with architect Julian Owen and, inset, how his new home – an individual property with environmental innovations – will look.

For the past nine years David and Adeline have been looking for the right plot. The couple found a bungalow in Breaston on a good size plot for sale via auction.

"We have been in our 'stop gap' house for eight years and we almost gave up looking to build our own but

the price of this one made it right."

David commissioned local architectural practice Julian Owen Associates to design the property and manage the project.

"I knew the name Julian Owen through Plot Finder, a website aimed at those looking to buy individual plots of land. Then we went to the National Home Building and Renovation Show. I saw Julian's name again – he was there at a book signing and was giving a talk at the show – it all went from there.

"Julian is managing the whole project – I'm very hands off – I'll leave it to the experts," said Dave.

A ground air heat exchanger is being installed. Put simply, the system allows ventilated air to be drawn into the building through an underground pipe which pre-warms the air in the winter and cools the air in summer.

Dave said: "We are going to build the house on Foamglas – a layer of a new kind of heat-insulating mainly made from glass added to foaming agents and heated to create an insulating material on which the property will be built – and it costs an extra £800 to put under the entire structure.

development. Each of the five homes has been built to meet a different level of the code by incorporating new technologies to reduce water consumption, energy use, CO2 emissions and waste.

"The properties will be monitored to obtain a picture of the impact a zero carbon home has on homeowners, as well as being able to see attitudes to features."



Joy Goodman, pictured, sales director at Miller Homes East Midlands, said:

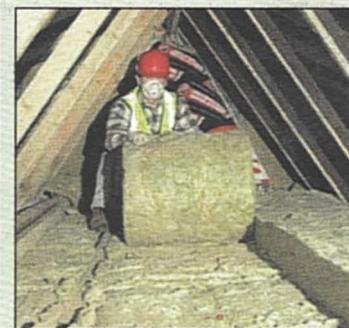
"The house-building industry has a responsibility to reduce the carbon footprint and by 2016, everyone in the sector needs to make sure all new-build properties comply with level six of the Government's Code for Sustainable Homes. "We see the 2016 compliance standards as an opportunity to get a head start on understanding the cost implications, alongside being at the forefront of designing the homes of the future.

"The result is Miller Zero, the first range of eco-friendly properties to be built by a volume house builder on a live

IT'S no surprise that more than 40% of the UK's CO2 emissions result from the choices we make as individuals. But can we do something about this figure?

We asked the organisers of The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show, at the NEC from March 18 to 21, for their tips. **Get Educated!**

Find out how sustainable you and your home are by checking out your own carbon footprint. Use the Energy Savings Trust's carbon calculator (www.energysavingstrust.org.uk/calculator/start) and get a personalised action plan.



Start with the basics

Turn down your thermostat by one degree (which could save 10% on your heating bills), use the economy setting on the dishwasher, don't leave appliances and equipment on standby, use your washing machine at 30 degrees, use low-energy light bulbs, and only fill the kettle for the amount of water you need. Ring the Act on CO2 helpline on 0800 512512.

Insulate, insulate, insulate

Installing or topping up your loft insulation to 270mm thickness can save you £60 a year and



reduce your carbon footprint by 299kg.

Consider alternative energy technologies

Producing your own power may be expensive but can significantly reduce your carbon footprint. Ground source heat pumps work like a fridge, or consider wind or hydro turbines and solar panels.

Doing your bit for the environment