

NATURALLY MODERN

David and Elizabeth Rodgers' new contemporary home succeeds in translating traditional materials into a contemporary design

Words: **Natasha Brinsmead** Photography: **Jeremy Phillips**

A Simple Palette

The crisp exterior of the house features reclaimed stone and natural slate – traditional materials given a contemporary twist. The front of the house has minimal glazing to avoid overlooking David and Elizabeth's existing house (which remains), while the rear elevation is mainly given over to large areas of glazing. ➤

Project Notes

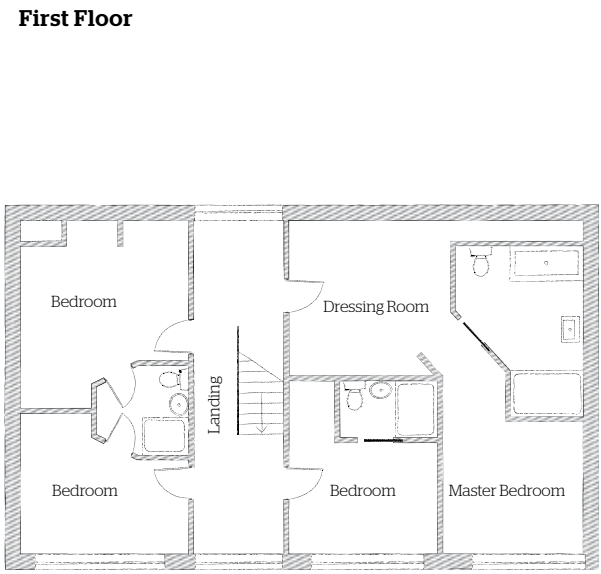
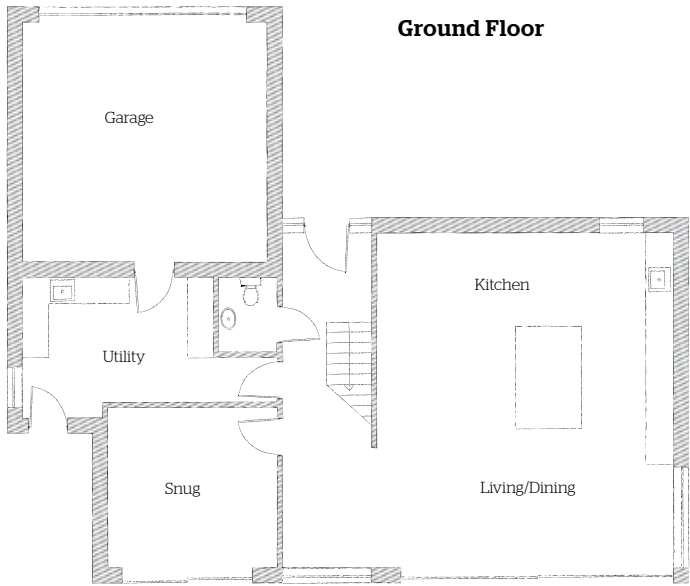
Homeowners
David and Elizabeth Rodgers
Project
Contemporary eco build
Build time Dec 2014 - Jan 2016
Size 200m²
Plot cost £400,000
(including existing house)
Build cost £300,000
Value of new house £750,000

Solar Gain
The house has been designed to make the most of the south-facing rear elevation. Here, huge amounts of glazing draw in natural light to the main living spaces.



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Bathrooms
Morlands Bathrooms:
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Paving Prices Paving (Bedale):
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Kitchen Company (Green
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Site-Specific Design
The rear of the house has been designed as a two-storey space, while the front is one-and-a-half storeys, to minimise overlooking issues with the existing dwelling that David and Elizabeth still own.





Open Spaces

Oversized expanses of glazing in the form of sliding doors and double-height openings mean that the main open plan kitchen, dining and living space is bright and airy, and has a strong connection to the garden.

With its crisp lines and prominent asymmetry, expanses of glazing and striking monochrome palette of cladding materials, it would be easy to think that David and Elizabeth Rodger's new home was something of a 'please don't touch' show home inside, yet as David explains: "This is designed to be a house that you can use." And upon entering, it is clear that this is a home that reflects its owners' lifestyle and is more than capable of fulfilling its role as a liveable, busy family home, despite its high-spec finishes and eco-friendly features.

Having always wanted to build their own home, David and Elizabeth came across a half-acre plot in south Yorkshire. "The plot came with a house already on it, which we lived in while waiting for planning permission and saving up for this project," explains David. Keen that the materials used were traditional to the area, despite the contemporary design, David and Elizabeth worked with architect Martin Bell to create 'layers' of materials in order to give depth and contrast to the exteriors. Delph sandstone has been paired with natural slate on the roof and at first floor level. Meanwhile, the roofline defines the design — the more steeply sloping pitch to the front façade evolving into a gentler pitch at the rear.

The couple were keen to make the most of the south-facing elevation. As such, a combination of enormous floor-to-ceiling windows at both ground and first floor level, along with a double-height glazed panel and run of sliding doors, have been designed in.

In keeping with David and Elizabeth's wishes that the house should perform well in terms of energy efficiency, masonry construction was chosen with very high levels of insulation. The ground floor concrete slab also acts as a heat store. The house is now so well insulated that there is no heating upstairs and the Rodgers barely need to use the underfloor heating that runs throughout the ground floor.

Internally, the abundance of glazing means the whole house is bursting with natural light. "We were worried it may overheat due to all the south-facing glazing," says David. "But the mechanical ventilation system and the fact that we have set the windows back in deep

reveals mean that problems associated with overheating are completely avoided."

In addition to introducing light and facilitating solar gain, the large expanse of glazing to the rear was key to creating a connection between garden and house.

"I am a really outdoorsy type," says David. "I wanted the house to feel like part of the garden and to be able to see the outside from all the principal spaces."

"Everything in the house is oversized and fresh... for us, it is perfect"

"Internally we wanted a large kitchen, dining and living space," he adds, explaining that the 9m x 7m open plan space now forms the heart of the house. This space is overseen by the eye-catching kitchen which, as with the exterior of the house, combines both traditional and contemporary elements. Mirrored black porcelain tiles have been used on the walls, while the units are a classic painted Shaker design. Elsewhere on the ground floor, a smaller living room that David dubs the 'coffee lounge' provides an intimate seating space.

The cantilevered staircase, combining a glass balustrade with oak treads, stained to match the colour of the walnut-clad oversized internal doors, adds drama to the entrance hall. "We liked the idea of a stairwell that got light from every angle," says David.

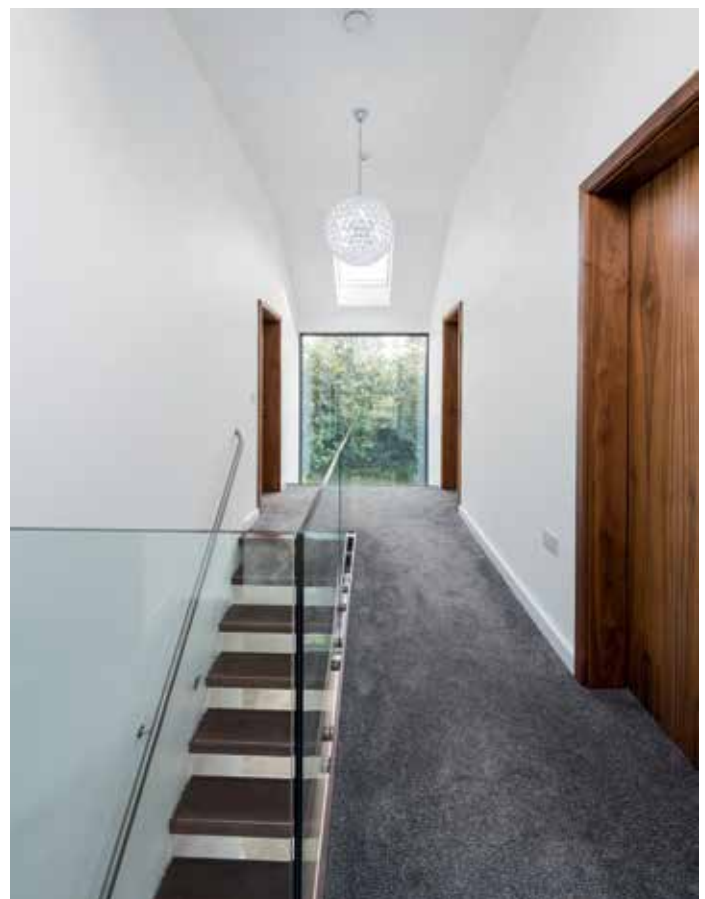
On the first floor, all four bedrooms have en suite bathrooms, one of which is shared by two bedrooms. These spaces benefit from huge levels of natural light, thanks to a total of nine rooflights, three of which lie on the south side of the roof with a further six on the north. The ceilings upstairs are a whopping 3.3m high, increasing the sense of space and light that was so important to David and Elizabeth.

"Everything in the house is oversized and fresh," says David, who project managed the build while working full-time. "I was fastidious as a project manager. But I found the whole process enjoyable and would love to do it again. The house is very engineered, but it is lived in, too — for us, it is perfect."

Kitchen Diner

The distinctive kitchen diner features black porcelain tiles on the walls that sit in contrast to the more classic design of the painted Shaker units and natural stone floor tiles. The 'wine glass' chandelier provides a talking point. "It is made up of 28 wine glasses which we use all the time – it was completely empty at Christmas!" says David.





Contemporary Staircase

The cantilevered staircase combines oak treads with a glass balustrade, meaning light from the double-height glazing can flow seamlessly from one floor to the other.

Ground and First Floors

The bedrooms and bathrooms upstairs benefit from a range of rooflights and large picture windows. The bathrooms are luxurious and feature large floor tiles, frameless enclosures and rainshowers. Meanwhile, the smaller living room (TOP RIGHT), with woodburning stove, provides a cosy space for relaxing. ➤



Architect's View



**Martin Bell,
Transform Architects:**

“Our brief was to design a family home that would be both contemporary and environmentally friendly, within the garden of an existing detached dwelling.

“The building design was focused around maximising solar gain, views, and privacy for this backyard development, with a traditional palette of materials used in a contemporary fashion.

“The building has a minimal front elevation (facing the existing house) and large expanses of glazing on the south-facing elevation from which most habitable rooms face onto.

“David and Elizabeth did not want the existing house to be overshadowed by the new addition so we designed the form of the building as a two-storey dwelling on the rear and a one-and-a-half storey building on the front (facing the existing dwelling) to minimise its physical impact, while maximising the potential solar gain and natural light.

“The materials used were random coursed stone and natural slate tiles. We clad the top half of the building and roof in the same facing tiles to visually minimise the building’s physical appearance and offset this with a natural stone finish to the ground floor and garage gable walls. The gutters were simple seamless aluminium sections with no fascia or soffit to create a simple shadow line at the eaves.

“Internally, clean lines and flowing spaces are complemented by an eclectic internal design, which was undertaken by the clients. The staircase appears to float from the ground to the first floor, with seamless glass guardrails that allow uninterrupted views from one end of the house to the other on both the ground and first floor.

“Sharp detailing on a simple palette of materials was the key to the architectural approach, along with a beautiful landscaped setting.” **H**

Natural Materials

David, who loves the outdoors, was keen that the house provided clear links to the garden, and that natural materials, such as reclaimed stone and slate, were used.

Front Elevation

David and Elizabeth were keen that the new design should not overshadow the existing house on the plot, so the front façade features almost no windows. The multiple rooflights ensure that the rooms on this side of the house are still full of natural light.

