

# Update

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## Award for Efficient Building



VBS Construction of Rossendale in Lancashire won the Master Builder North West Regional award for the construction of what the judges described as “a flagship project designed to improve the quality of life for a disabled person while incorporating energy efficiency measures.”

The project was constructed using Beco WALLFORM for the stone clad three storey building which incorporates a hydrotherapy pool and treatment facilities as well as a lift to allow access to different floor levels and the garden. In addition to excellent energy performance, the building design also harvests rain water which has also helped towards cutting the utility bills by half.

Steve Warburton, Director of VBS Construction, commented: “We were really pleased to receive the award. I assume the judges have been influenced in their decision by high specification and facilities provided in the purpose-built home.”

## ENERGY COSTS MORE

The recent announcement by British Gas that they are increasing the price of their gas and electricity supplies by 22% was yet another harsh reminder that as we keep consuming more and more of our finite energy resources it will inevitably become more expensive to heat (or cool) our homes until we reach the point where we have no energy left or few of us will be able to afford it.

The ongoing focus on the identification of practical means of providing energy from renewable resources is commendable but only a partial response and likely to create further environmental dilemmas and social friction at all levels of our global society. It remains to be seen how long it will take those involved in the quest for energy to start examining why we actually need to consume so much of this valuable resource anyway.

Transport, which is the biggest consumer of energy, seems to expand relentlessly without any significant effort being made to organise a more efficient transport system. With air travel we are almost encouraged to boost

global warming by travelling further, wider and more often on the back of tax-free fuel. Is it really logical to consume our energy stocks this way?

Similarly with buildings, the second largest consumer of energy, not much is being done to reduce the amount of energy used in this sector. In the UK, much is talked about improving energy efficiency but precious little happens. New Building Standards are proposed and then virtually abandoned as vested interests cite increased building costs as the rationale for not changing anything. So the end user is left to face increasing energy bills except, perhaps, for SelfBuilders who recognise the benefits and build their homes to a much better standard.

The time is long overdue to give some incentive to those who are prepared to reduce the energy footprint of their homes. Not just encouragement to install more efficient appliances but encouragement to build homes whose overall performance consumes less energy than the current norm. Surely we should be promoting those who take practical steps to reduce the demand on our energy resources?

**LOW ENERGY CONSTRUCTION MAY COST A LITTLE MORE NOW...**

**...BUT IT WILL SAVE A WHOLE LOT MORE LATER!**

Visit our website at

[www.becowallform.co.uk](http://www.becowallform.co.uk)



# Modern Basement Construction

**They say that “What goes around, comes around” and this is certainly the case with the construction of domestic basements. Up until the time of the Great War it was the norm to have a basement or cellar in most houses, whether to store coal or wine, use as a wash house or perhaps servants’ quarters. After the War basements fell out of favour as the emphasis moved to the provision of low cost housing for all those troops returning to look for work in civvy street.**

Today, basements are very much back in fashion as the pressure grows relentlessly on building more and more homes on increasingly scarce land. By incorporating a basement into the home design it is possible to add significantly more floor area without increasing the building footprint. In the expensive south-east it is not uncommon to build basements economically underneath existing buildings, so expensive is the cost of land purchase for new construction. A more practical and economic alternative to putting a basement under an existing building is to dig up the garden, build a basement and put the garden back on top of the new basement with a connection back to the existing house.

This is the course of action adopted by architect Chris Bicknell to extend his listed building home in Eckington, Sheffield. Rather than being fully underground this project was partly earth sheltered, providing

garaging for four cars, utility, bath and garden rooms with a glazed link block to the main building.

Beco WALLFORM was chosen as the preferred building specification because it offered speed of construction, maximum usable space and high levels of energy efficiency in the completed accommodation. B-A-G Building Contractors were selected for the project and were able to complete the work from excavation to topping out the roof slab in just three weeks, including waterproofing of the new building.

Waterproofing or tanking of a basement is the key measure of success in basement construction and in this case it was achieved by a combination of products which not only made the waterproofing more reliable but reduced the programmed building time. Xypex waterproofing crystals were used to seal both the basement and roof slabs and Axter’s hot melt system waterproofed the walls.

More information on this project is to be found on B-A-G’s website: [www.info@bagbuilding.co.uk](http://www.info@bagbuilding.co.uk)



**Marmorit UK** produce a wide range of renders available in over 270 classic colours. A name synonymous with quality and resilience and a reputation extending back for 130 years.



**BECO project** at Keighley built by and rendered by B-A-G Building Contractors Huddersfield.

**System Used**

5mm SM700 Fibrous Reinforcing Mortar  
Fabric Reinforcing Mesh – to prevent cracking  
Conni 1.5mm Silicone Resin Render in 2 colours

**MARMORIT RENDERS ARE**

Water Repellent  
Breathable  
Maintenance Free  
UV Light Resistant  
Durable  
Guaranteed

Prevents Water Ingress into the Building  
Allows for Vapour Diffusion Within the Building  
Crack-Free and Requires No Future Painting  
Does Not Fade in Sunlight  
Tested to Last In excess of 20 Years  
Carries a Manufacturers Warranty



# Property

One of the many offerings on television recently has been a programme following the paths of aspiring property developers seeking to prove their worth in the property market – whilst being monitored by a television crew to record the ups and downs of their efforts and investments. The Channel 5 series provided good entertainment as viewers followed the progress of the two teams, one male and one female, as they decided what properties to purchase, what improvements or alterations to make and how to sell the completed projects and maximise their profits.

The projects selected were a very mixed bag in terms of type, size, location and cost, but were chosen with a common purpose – to achieve the best possible return. As with the purchase of almost any existing property, there were inevitably hidden pitfalls and extra costs.

The purchase of a timber frame bungalow in Cornwall by the team of Jem Smale and Dave Venables looked to be a good bet. In need of substantial renovation in a buoyant market area, the purchase price of £160,000 didn't look too bad until work started and revealed the

# Developer

presence of asbestos which, as a hazardous material, should have been notified in the sale particulars. Work having stopped while the team negotiated a reduction in the purchase price to compensate for having to deal with the problem, progress was resumed until – potential disaster – further cladding was removed to reveal rotten timber in the structural framework. At this stage, demolition and a new build appeared to be the only practical way out, except that there just wasn't time to design, apply and obtain planning permission to build a replacement dwelling. Quick thinking by the intrepid team established that if the roof of the bungalow could be propped up on temporary supports, the failed frame could be removed and replaced with a new structure – but what?

A visit to a London Self Build exhibition provided the right solution in the shape of Beco WALLFORM. Not only could it be delivered and built quickly but it would provide a strong durable construction with all the thermal insulation already installed. So, just a week after placing the order, the WALLFORM materials were delivered to the site and, just five days later, the existing roof was being lowered into position on the new structure. **As was said on the programme "Beco WALLFORM was such a quick and economic solution to a difficult problem, why isn't everything built like this?" (That's what we at Beco keep asking ourselves!)**

Name: .....

Self-Builder

Trade Enquiry



Address: .....

Profession: .....

Project: .....

**BECO**

Postcode: .....

To build in: 1 year  2 years  3 years

Phone No: .....

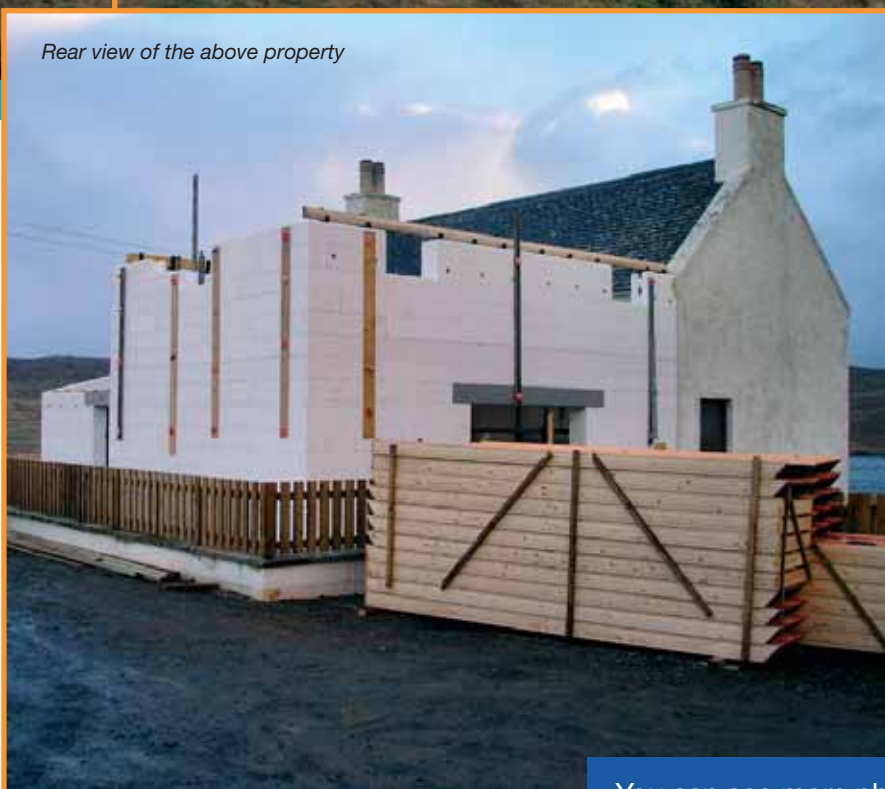
# WALLFORM Weathers the Storm

## (Shame about the trailer!)

One of the more frequent questions about the performance of Beco WALLFORM relates to its performance in windy conditions – “Won’t it all blow away?” – being a typical remark. Those more familiar with the building system appreciate that, not only is it practical to continue building in wet or freezing weather, but it is also possible to maintain progress in windy conditions as well.



Rear view of the above property



A useful demonstration of the resilience of the WALLFORM system occurred on Shetland recently, when the New Year brought some severe weather to the Islands. Storm force winds caused shipping delays and power cuts as winds reached hurricane force, with recorded gusts of up to 111mph.

One effect of the storms was to blow over the 40ft trailer as shown in the photograph and yet, at the house on the hill behind the trailer, Beco WALLFORM distributor John M Tulloch continued building a 1½ storey WALLFORM extension without problem. The Wallblocks had been built up to the eaves level of the existing property, but only filled with concrete halfway up when the winds came. On returning to site the day after the gales (there are limits to safe working conditions!), John-M found that the WALLFORM system still standing proud.

“Propping and supporting the WALLFORM system in proportion to the prevailing site conditions is obviously the key to success, especially in this part of the world” says John-M. “But the fact that we can build WALLFORM up here should put a lot of people’s minds at rest when using the system elsewhere.”

You can see more photos at [www.johnmtulloch.co.uk/projects](http://www.johnmtulloch.co.uk/projects)

# Energy Savings

Beco **WALLFORM** insulation is a **passive energy system** - once installed it reduces energy loss consistently and permanently with **no maintenance** required and **no bills to pay**, even as the cost of energy increases!



Wall Insulation U-value (W/m²K)

Reference

0.30

**WALLFORM 250**

0.19

**WALLFORM 313**

0.14

**WALLFORM 375**

} passive energy

0.11

**WALLFORM 438**

} buildings

