



Home Suite Home...

When buying or selling a substantial property it is generally recognised that the days are long gone when a single bathroom will satisfy the prospective purchaser. William Wells, Residential Director of Mullucks Wells, has worked in the region for twenty five years and seen customer expectations develop over the period.

"Twenty years ago a family bathroom serving a four or five bedroom house would be quite acceptable" says William.

"However, today's purchaser expects more creature comforts and two en-suites to augment the family bathroom are no longer considered a luxury." This is a fact that commercial developers have not ignored and private vendors should bear it in mind before going to market to ensure that the value of their own home is maximised.

Captions

Planning

If your bedroom is big enough you can accommodate an en-suite by dividing the room with a stud wall, redundant airing cupboards or excess landing space can be incorporated to minimise loss of bedroom space. Try to separate the area from the bedroom thoughtfully and avoid creating a "box" in the corner of the room, which will probably detract from the overall appearance. In a long or large room a simple solution is to build a cross wall that is softly illuminated to act as a backdrop to the bedhead. A walk around the back of the new

wall will reveal a modestly sized fully tiled en-suite. Visit your local bathroom specialist who can advise upon space saving features such as "in-fold" shower doors and wall hung WC pans & wash hand basins. Tile small rooms with light colours and to give an illusion of space incorporate a large mirror and a frameless shower enclosure. If you cannot bear the thought of being without a bath in your en-suite it is now possible buy a compact bath from just 1200mm long. The fitting of a glass bath screen will allow the bath to double up as a shower enclosure.

Wetrooms.

The current vogue of minimalist design has determined that the continental practice of tiling shower floors is now finding favour in the UK. Floor tiles are laid to a slight gradient in the shower enclosure to allow the water to drain to a small outlet gully thus eliminating the need for a shower tray, which will further enhance the sense of space in a small room. Specialist undertile shower trays with preformed gradients are available to simplify the operation. Waterproof tanking systems need to be applied to achieve a watertight system. It's not as complicated as it sounds but be sure to take technical advice from your local tile or bathroom specialist if you intend to undertake the work yourself. The shower can be left open to the rest of the room or separated with a simple glass "shower wall" screen.

Shower enclosures.

The choice of shower screens is enormous, curved enclosures known as "quadrants" allow plenty of room inside and the curved corner saves space outside the enclosure. Square, rectangular, hexagonal enclosures are also available and minimalism is the current byword with the "frameless" styling being the neatest option by far. Large "walk in" showers are increasingly being used to replace baths and with their strategically positioned





panels, mean that the need for a door is completely eliminated. Prices along with quality can vary quite dramatically. Always take the time to visit a local specialist who can explain the features so you can decide which ones are worth spending your money on. Newly introduced slimline shower trays at just 40mm deep accentuate the style and are a simpler option to the wetroom floor and once again should be seen to appreciate their elegance.

Brassware

Brassware is the generic term for taps, shower valves, shower heads etc and is known as such because, although they are generally coated with bright chrome, the body is made of solid brass. The choice of styles & prices is truly astonishing and once again a little technical awareness is very useful. Low and high pressure fittings are widely available and it is important to know which type is suitable for your installation before you make a purchase. Focus your budget on items that will give the "wow factor," perhaps a spectacular shower valve with a rainhead shower fitting, but importantly do not compromise on poor quality cheap brassware – it is a false economy. The latest luxury shower feature is an electronically controlled mixer valve where only the shower head is visible and all operations

worked from a unit similar to a TV remote. Grohe's illuminated digital unit is available from £654.00, it allows you to preset different temperatures for the family and to start the shower from your bedside so its up to temperature by the time you immerse yourself! A preset cut off can be programmed for those with a forgetful nature!

Bathrooms

Whether you have a large bathroom and a budget to match, or your room is of a more compact nature, there are a whole host of ways in which you can create a sanctuary and give your bathroom a luxurious feel. Choose a beautiful bath, an amazing basin or an eye-catching finish on one wall to really give your bathroom the wow factor. A bathroom needs to be well planned from the outset, maximising every inch and acknowledging the human interaction with the space. Your local bathroom specialist will provide assistance with planning and design. Strategic storage is a key consideration to avoid clutter; a tranquil environment is sometimes as much about what you can't see as what you can. A combination of open and closed storage ensures that luxury items are on display whilst less lovely items are out of sight. Carefully chosen surfaces can transform a room from bland to blissful; consider using larger tiles, which exude luxury, and can be used on both walls and floors for a polished finish. Alternatively natural stone is an eternal favourite for creating a timeless and indulgent ambiance, however with an appearance to rival natural stone and a vitreous surface that does not need to be sealed, ceramic or porcelain tiles are the perfect low maintenance solution to satisfy both aesthetic and practical considerations. To create a feature in your bathroom use any of the innovative finishes now available such as leather, metallic, glass and contemporary mosaic, which can create a sumptuous look in any setting. Do remember that it is not necessary to cover every surface, and by combining tiles with selected paint palettes, you can dramatically alter the mood of your room with minimum effort.

Captions

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