

Jewson home win



Former Wimbledon football captain and respected sports journalist Robbie Earle had always been interested in property. When injury forced him to retire from the game, he quickly realised that it was the ideal opportunity to make his dream of building his own house come true. He enlisted Jewson's help as he embarked on his first self build project.

Robbie says: "My family and I have always lived in Surrey and we were keen to stay in the same area, so I was immediately interested when a plot of land came up for sale in a quiet cul-de-sac in Oxshott. The plot had a small 1960s pre-fab building on it, surrounded by an acre of level land, which seemed perfect for our needs."

Architect Barrett Haskins helped to design the property. Robbie says: "We worked together to design a traditional three storey home, which would fit in with the local surroundings. To achieve the desired look, it was important to use the right materials to give the building a Semi-Victorian look."

Visiting the Homebuilding & Renovating Show at the Birmingham NEC, Robbie was introduced to Ian McIvor from Jewson who came across as very knowledgeable.

"Within a few minutes of chatting with Ian I knew that I wanted to work with him on my build."

Robbie found the planning permission process fairly straight forward. Having liaised with the local council since purchasing the land, he used their comments to help steer his final planning submission.

Once the planning permission had been granted, Ian visited the site. Robbie comments: "Ian sat down with me to look at the specific breakdown of the build and gave me guidance from the start. One thing I really appreciated was his objective advice that I think many merchants might not have provided. For example, he helped me to make decisions about under-floor heating, which saved me money, but were of no benefit to him.

Robbie also worked with his local Jewson branch in Weybridge who helped source materials for the

build. Robbie explains: "I employed a project manager who was on site everyday to take care of the deliveries and the labourers. We also had a dedicated contact at the Weybridge branch who was on hand whenever we needed him." He continues:

"Jewson is the perfect choice for a self-builder, as it provides a single port of call for all your needs."

"Even though it didn't stock some of the more niche products that I wanted, such as bespoke windows, the team helped me approach other suppliers and then negotiated trade discounts for me on my behalf. Jewson put us in touch with a specialist window maker in Yorkshire who was able to provide us with the custom-made, traditional oak framed windows I wanted."

The relationship continued even after materials were supplied. Robbie comments: "Ian came down to visit me every six weeks or so and I was probably on the phone to him at least twice a week. He helped me to outsource most of the trade jobs, including finding roofers and joiners who did a sterling job. Ian was also on hand to help with all the little things that, as someone new to self-building, I didn't pre-empt; like skip and port-a-loo hire, – all of which got buried in the design process."

The project took fourteen months to complete, with Jewson providing everything from blocks to insulation, plasterboard and hardware materials to give Robbie, his wife and two children a light, spacious, family home that's cosy and inviting.