



Mark's 3D WORLD

Andrew Smith meets an architectural consultant who can bring buildings to life before construction starts

Computer aided design may not be particularly new technology but when it comes to architects, they are still keen to keep it to themselves.

That is the premise Mark Wright is working on after launching 3D design and construction management business.

He explained: "The traditional way of working is that an architect will brief a client with ideas based on their own experience but the actual process is hidden.

"My idea is to bring the process actually into the homes of the clients."

As a result, Mr Wright will arrive with his computer, on which he has software to create intricate 3D models of houses similar to those seen on television property programmes such as *Grand Designs*.

Then he uses a projector to bring the design to life allowing clients to see exactly how their alteration, extension or even a whole new home can look. Any changes can be made on the spot.

For example, the layout of furniture can be altered or kitchen appliances moved around until the optimum location is found.

And actual representations of furniture items are used, rather than just blocks to make the whole design seem more realistic while colour schemes can also be included.

Mr Wright said: "It means plans do not have to be re-drawn, which means it is quicker and cheaper."

From his experience working on site for a number of years, Mr Wright knows how difficult it can be for clients to picture an actual building from a two-dimensional drawing.

"People are sometimes not very good at reading drawings and they want to make alterations which are often not possible.

"But in 3D these changes can be made at the beginning and that can save thousands of pounds down the line.

"Ultimately I want to create a design where there are no nasty surprises at the other end. People's homes are a key part of their lives and when it goes wrong it can be heartbreaking.

"I want to provide people with a good surprise and have a great "reveal moment".

Mr Wright, 34, from Abingdon, originally went into the building trade as an apprentice putting up ceilings and partition walls in office developments.

Then he worked at the Cowley BMW plant for a year on the production line, but always harboured ambitions of being involved in creating buildings.

"I was very lucky to be allowed a place at Oxford Brookes University studying construction management and I graduated with a first-class honours degree."

That took four years including a placement with Oakwood Builders, during which he built an £800,000 eco-home in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire.

After graduating in 2009 he has been working on a freelance basis for various builders before taking the plunge and setting up his own business, Mark Wright Design.

"What I enjoy is making models, which I discovered when I was at university. I would spend hours in my spare time using the software."

He has set up a website where examples of his work can be seen and also bought up the domain name 'democratic architecture' which he intends to use as a platform to develop his thinking on increasing client involvement in the design of buildings.

He believes that even in the current climate there will be a demand for his services as people will be wanting to extend their existing homes as an alternative to moving.

And in that case they will be wanting value for money from their architect, which he believes he can supply.

Mr Wright reckons a typical design can be produced for as little as £200 with a complete building redevelopment/rebuild in the region of £2,000.

A prime example of technology bringing convenience and value for money.