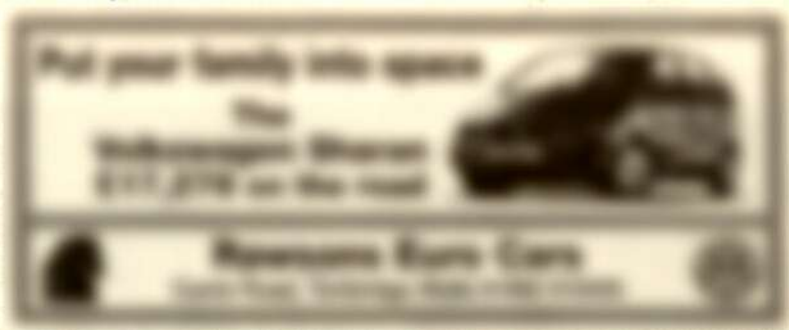


Focus

News in



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15p WHERE SOLD

Green house gets design award

By Iain Luxford

A "GREEN" house in Tunbridge Wells has won a special award from the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The low-energy Boundary House, tucked in woodland by the Nevill Cricket Ground in Upper Cumberland Walk was specially designed to be environmentally friendly and has won RIBA's Downland Design Award.

The house is the creation of chartered architect Michael Winter and his partner, Elizabeth Monk, who is a chartered accountant.

Three years ago the couple bought half an acre of woodland and set about building a "green" house to fit in with the woodland setting, with low energy consumption and within a sensible budget.

Solar

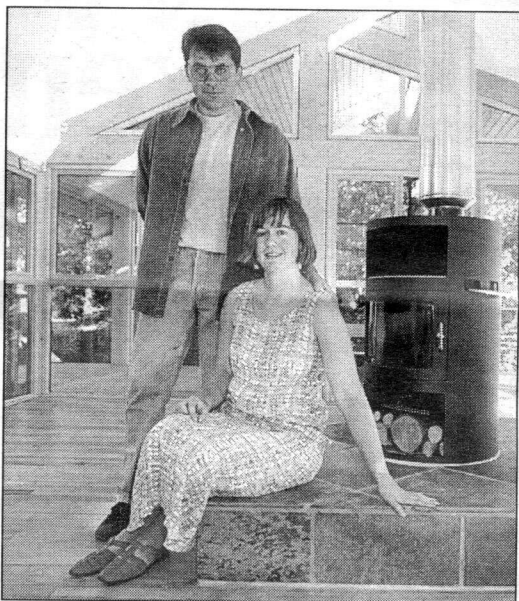
Timber-framed, the house is raised off the ground to minimise damage to tree roots and is clad in timber. The main living areas face south for as much solar heat as possible and deep overhanging eaves keep the building cool in summer.

Highly insulated the cavity walls are filled with cellulose fibre made from recycled newspaper and incoming fresh air is warmed by waste heat from the kitchen and bathrooms processed through a combined heat exchanger and heat pump.

Most of the water used is rainwater, which drains from the roof into a large tank and is heated by solar panels.

Built within a budget of just over £200,000 the Downland Design Award jury described the Boundary House as "a spacious and stylish family house which appears to sit in the trees".

Michael and Elizabeth are delighted with the

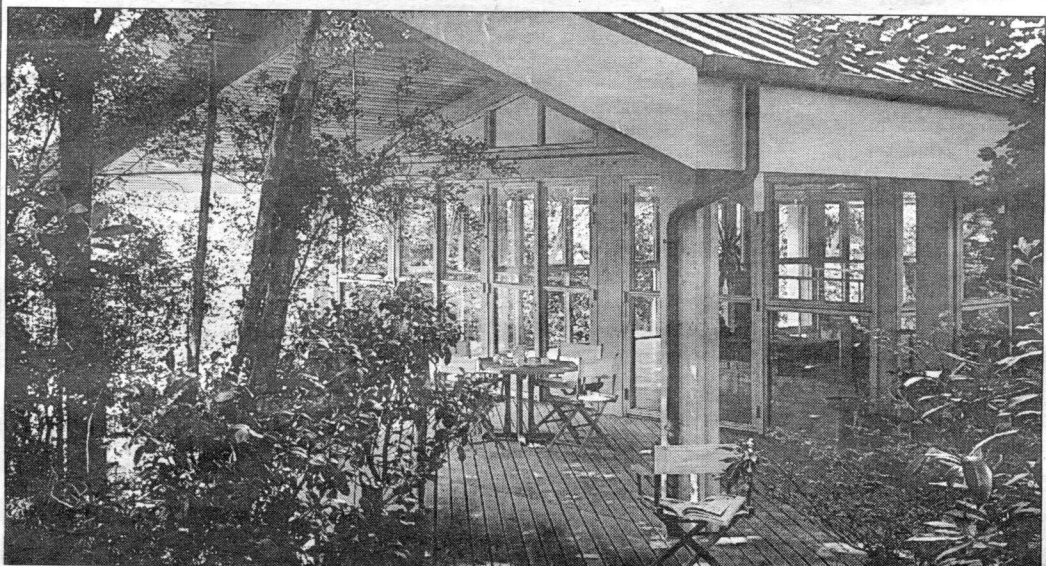


Michael Winter and Elizabeth Monk in their award winning home

award. Elizabeth said: "When we first found the site, I honestly couldn't see its potential. But the strain of the building works really has been worthwhile."

Michael added: "It just goes to show that a green building can be an acceptable and interesting piece of architecture. Tunbridge Wells does have a reputation for being stuffy and there's been little new contemporary architecture here."

"It would be good to think that our house could be the first of several new buildings in the town to be designed with the local ecology and global environmental needs in mind."



The decking at The Boundary House leads off into the trees surrounding the property. The entire house is supported on relatively small concrete pads to minimise damage to trees.