

Mode provides a healthy solution for Grand Designs project

Living with a suppressed immune system following a bone marrow transplant and treatment for Leukaemia, Toby Leeming, who recently appeared on Grand Designs, was determined to fulfil his long-held ambition to build his dream family home. This would require some careful consideration, particularly when it came to choosing materials and fittings that wouldn't compromise his health, and Scolmore's Mode antimicrobial wiring accessories provided a fitting solution for the electrical installation for his ambitious build.

In 2012, Toby Leeming was a musician in an up and coming band that had just released its first album. A year later, just as he had embarked on a tour of the US with his band, he became critically ill and was diagnosed with Leukaemia. With more than a year of life saving treatment to follow, during which time he was confined to hospital, he had a lot of time to think and dream about the ideal home he would like to build.

Six years later and free of leukaemia thanks to a bone marrow transplant, he and his wife and young daughter moved from London to a cottage in rural Suffolk - a much healthier environment for Toby who has a suppressed immune system and therefore prone to infections. The dream to build a home for his young family continued to drive him and following the purchase of 4.5 acres of land just 200 yards from their cottage, the dream started to become a reality.

The house was designed to incorporate features beneficial to Toby's on-going well-being and health. With some 370 square metres of accommodation to contend with, a huge quantity of wiring accessories was needed for the electrical installation. After much research, Scolmore's Mode wiring accessories were personally chosen by Toby specifically for their antimicrobial benefits, and switches and sockets have been installed throughout the six-bedroom, single-storey courtyard house.

Comments Toby: "I had been considering other options to work with the interior décor, such as copper accessories. However, as well as being very expensive, they didn't provide the much-needed protection health-wise that Scolmore's Mode accessories offered. As well as meeting those vital health requirements, they are very smooth, stylish looking products that look really good everywhere we have had them installed. We are grateful for all the advice and support we had from Scolmore to ensure we selected all the right products for the different functions that were required."

More than 80 x 13Amp sockets, 22 x 5Amp sockets, plus a quantity of 1, 2, 3 and 4 gang switches, dimmers, new media sockets, shaving sockets, oven switches and extractor fan overrides from the Mode range have been installed. For a couple of feature walls, Toby opted for black switches from the Definity range to provide a striking contrast.

The Mode range of contemporary, white wiring accessories remains Scolmore's best-selling wiring accessories collection to date. The range was conceived and developed as a high quality, flexible and modern solution for virtually any domestic wiring requirement. The modular design allows installers unprecedented flexibility in creating dedicated wiring solutions.

All of Scolmore's white moulded and Mode Part M wiring accessories are manufactured using



Urea Formaldehyde, which has similar inherent properties to antimicrobial additives that inhibit the growth of infectious diseases. All products independently tested achieved a 99.9% kill off rate across all four types of the strains of bacteria - MRSA, E-Coli, Salmonella and Klebsiella Pneumonia.

Scolmore has continued to invest in this range since it was originally launched, introducing products in visually contrasting versions to meet with Part M regulations. In 2016 the company added the award-winning Mode locating plug socket to the range. It was designed to assist people with impaired vision or poor hand to eye coordination to more easily insert a plug into a socket. Other innovations for the range include the addition of USB sockets - now available in one- and two-gang, and single and twin USB options. In 2018 a 3-pin safety shutter socket, which exceeds the required safety standards, was launched.

For Toby's ambitious build project sourcing the right electrical accessories was a minor hurdle when considering the main challenge that the couple faced with the project. At the heart of the plot of land was a huge, ancient oak tree and the idea was to design a building that would wrap around the tree which would provide much needed shade and protection for Toby whose condition has also left him susceptible to skin cancer. The challenge was to balance high architecture and health with a comfortable family home.

An architect worked up Toby's sketches for a nature healing home into a full scheme. Covering some 370 square metres, it spreads across four separate, steel-framed buildings placed in a horseshoe around the oak tree. To build around and near it with traditional foundations would compact the soil, damage the roots and threaten its survival. So the couple employed a main contractor who developed a lightweight construction method. It used small concrete pad stones to support the steel buildings which effectively float above the ground, thus leaving the roots of the oak tree uncompromised.

The four, interlinked barn-like structures are externally black clad to emulate the local Suffolk black barns that are famous in the area. The first block houses a work shop, a music studio for Toby and a utility room. Next door is the main living building - housing a boot room and double height kitchen/diner with high level windows to allow lots of indirect light in. Down the hall, sliding partitions reveal a core block of small rooms - a play room for his daughter, an office for his wife, as well as a snug. At the end is a large sitting room with views over the countryside to the west. A glazed link leads to a building for the sleeping quarters, made up of four bedrooms and including a suite for Toby and Libby. Finally there is a self-catering annexe for visiting family or for potential use as an income-providing B&B.

The end result is a stunning and unique six-bedroom home which, with a little help from Scolmore's Mode accessories, is providing peace of mind to Toby and his family, being specially adapted to his needs following his recovery.

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