



latest business&jobs

★ jobs ★ commercial property ★ media & technology ★ finance ★ auctions ★

ANGEL'S TOUCH

Making architecture approachable at ARCH-angels

In the list of real professions that includes doctors, dentists and surgeons, comes architects. But for many people, the idea of hiring an architect is a daunting one. Maybe we are frightened of the expense, maybe it's the idea that they will force you to build something that looks like a cross between the Gherkin in the city of London or Frank Gehry's impressive but weird Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. And all you wanted was a kitchen extension or a loft conversion. Surely your builder can design that?

But can they? That is the question local architectural firm ARCH-angels ask. Nicola Thomas, had been working for ten years from home. Then eighteen months ago she met architect Richard Zinzan and they started ARCH-angels. Since then the company has doubled in both size and reputation something they attribute to their client-first philosophy.

The practice is varied in what it does. While they still enjoy the challenges of one-off projects for individual clients, whether it be simple extensions and conversions or new build houses, they also work on larger scale projects with community organisations and developers, one thing always remains the same: they are always client led and client focused.

"We are not the kind of architects who tell people what they want. We very much listen to what our clients have to say," Nicola says. "Much of our experience comes from the domestic market and we've encountered 'architect fear' plenty of times. We want to change the way architects are perceived..."

"We always try to exceed expectations," Richard adds. "When we look at all the referrals we are getting and the positive feedback, it seems that this philosophy works well."

"We enjoy working on many different projects, from multi-million pound regenerations of whole streets to small porch extensions," Nicola continues. "The big projects can be very exciting but we get as much pleasure from working in the domestic market."



on the cover

"We listen to what clients want and then we strive to exceed their expectations"

"We can often find solutions a client or builder might not have been able to envisage," says Richard. The company also has a strong commitment to working in as environmentally friendly a way as possible. "Sustainability is increasingly more important to our clients," says Nicola. "We're currently working for a developer on two eco-homes in Mile Oak, and we worked on a house in Hanover for an individual who had very demanding eco-standards. Whatever the property, we always strive to exceed current building regulations. It's a passion for us."

"People tend to shy away from green architecture because they assume it will be an added expense," says Richard. "That's another perception we'd like to change. The truth is if you get the basic, rather un-sexy stuff right, green architecture can be very affordable."

"We want to let people know that by employing an architect you don't only get added value, you often save money. Our experience with planners and regulatory bodies means we get things right the first time, saving our clients' money in the long run. If you add that to the money you can save through energy efficient design, you start to see the benefits."

"We never want people to build something they aren't entirely happy with, so our first ideas and designs are never set in stone. A builder may suggest a solution that is the cheapest or easiest route, based on their building experience. However, we will always push for the best solution possible. We want all our clients to be more than satisfied with the final result – we want them to be overjoyed. We certainly are not about enforcing our style on people, but with our design experience, we will maximise the space and realise the potential of an existing building or site – things that someone without our experience might not even consider."

"To dispel this architect fear we always offer a free initial consultation with no commitment to take things further," Nicola adds. "We work on a fixed fee basis so there are no hidden costs. We want people to see us as approachable and as people who are here to help them realise their dreams."

ARCH-angels Architects, 128 Edward Street, Brighton, BN2 0JL, 01273 267184, www.aarchitects.co.uk



"ARCH-angels' knowledge and expertise took our project from ordinary to exceptional. We are absolutely delighted with the results and would thoroughly recommend them to anyone"

- customer testimonial



**GRAVES
JENKINS**

Whatever the market, you need to rely on good advice
For the most comprehensive selection of commercial property in the area
www.gravesjenkins.com 01273 701070

**GRAVES
JENKINS**