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GRAND DESIGNS



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**NEW LOOK
MAGAZINE!**

—
ALL YOU NEED
TO CREATE YOUR
DREAM PROJECT

Expand Your Living Space

Extend and make it
bigger, brighter, better

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**YOUR PROJECT
BUDGET ADVICE**

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to stay on track

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TV HOUSE EXCLUSIVE

**'The first time
I saw the lodge
it was magical'**

INSPIRING HOMES

BEACH RETREAT • COUNTRY FARMHOUSE • GARDEN TERRACE • CITY NEW-BUILD

Q Where can I make savings, and when is it best to invest as much as I can afford?



Property expert, social entrepreneur and TV presenter **Kunle Barker** offers his advice

Effectively managing your budget is a key factor in the success or failure of a self-build.

It is vital that you 'buy in' the correct skills for your project, so avoid trying to scrimp on expert fees as this can lead to mistakes that will be more costly in the long run. Pick the most skilled architect, structural engineer, project manager, builder and contractors that you can find. A great team with the right experience will save you money by making sure your build is delivered on time, on budget and right first time. Otherwise, a perceived saving at the beginning of your project could cost you thousands.

It's usual to want to rush to the construction stage of the project, but resist this temptation. Don't hurry along the 'pre-construction' phase – the design, planning and coordination of your build. Carefully designing and planning every aspect will greatly mitigate the risk of problems arising. Redesigning once on site, work stoppages and rectifying problems are the quickest way to blow your budget.

Once your property-to-be is designed and planned, the build itself gets under way and good project management is key to it running smoothly. Your architect may also offer project management services, which in some cases can be the most convenient method. Both your architect and project manager will charge between four to five per cent of the build cost for their services, but it's worth every penny.

Avoid trying to scrimp on expert fees as this can lead to mistakes

Your project manager will deal with your builders, their contracts and payments and ensure your build is being delivered to the design. Having this completed effectively and efficiently could save as much as 10 per cent of your budget, which may cover their fees.

You can also save money through smart procurement. For instance, early on in your project there may be savings to be made on the glazing. Call manufacturers to see if they have any cancelled orders, which does happen from time to time. Surplus units take up valuable space in a manufacturer's factory and you may be able to negotiate buying them at a discount to the retail price. And you might even get them free, as disposal

can cost the manufacturer dearly. Of course, if you find a great deal you will have to design and construct an opening to match the door, window or rooflight.

You can also leverage your buying power by bulk ordering from suppliers.

Try ordering all your plasterboard and ridged insulation at the same time, rather than buying them piecemeal. Ordering in bulk can present an opportunity to negotiate discounts of 10 per cent and more. Generally, the bigger your order, the greater the discount.

Negotiate to have your materials delivered to the site only when needed, as this will reduce the risk of damage and theft, and make your site run efficiently.

Price checking is also a great way to save money – include sundries as some suppliers will sell bigger products at competitive prices, but their fixings may not be nearly as reasonable. Also, don't be afraid to split smaller items from large orders if necessary, and buy them separately at a better price. **GD**

● **Kunle Barker will be on stage in the Grand Theatre during Grand Designs Live at London's ExCeL, from 5-13 May 2018. Visit granddesignslive.com for more information**

3 WATERSIDE PLOTS FOR SALE AROUND THE UK

These sites have plenty of potential. Is one of them the start of your self-build dream?



UPTON-UPON-SEVERN, WORCESTER

A riverside plot of 1.46 acres with planning permission for a four-bedroom house, with views across to the Malvern Hills. Offers over £380,000, Knight Frank. (knightfrank.com)



ABINGDON, OXFORDSHIRE

This plot ranges over 1.4 acres on the banks of the River Thames. The site comes with detailed planning permission to develop the existing property. Guide price £975,000, Savills. (savills.com)



NEWPORT, PEMBROKESHIRE

Planning permission has been granted to build two detached houses and a pair of semi-detached houses on this plot, which is approx. 200 yards from the beachfront and harbour. Priced at £350,000, Fine & Country. (fineandcountry.com)

ESSENTIAL CONTACTS

[Plotbrowser \(plotbrowser.com\)](http://Plotbrowser.com)
[Plotfinder \(plotfinder.net\)](http://Plotfinder.net)
[PlotSearch \(plotsearch.co.uk\)](http://Plotsearch.co.uk)
[PrimeLocation \(primelocation.com\)](http://Primelocation.com)
[Rightmove \(rightmove.co.uk\)](http://Rightmove.co.uk)
[The Land Bank Partnership \(thelandbankpartnership.co.uk\)](http://TheLandBankPartnership.co.uk)
[Zoopla \(zoopla.co.uk\)](http://Zoopla.co.uk)