



THE IRISH TIMES

Up to 30,000 people expected at spring homes event at RDS

Young property owners and buyers, and families looking to extend and redecorate are the focus of the Permanent tsb Ideal Home Show, which takes place next weekend



Sandra O'Connell

Up to 30,000 visitors are expected to attend the spring Permanent TSB Ideal Home Show, which takes place this week from Friday, April 21st to Sunday, April 23rd, at the RDS Simonscourt in Dublin.

A one-stop shop for anyone with an interest in designing, building, extending or decorating their home, the event includes the Irish Times Home Interiors Fair and the Irish Times Home & Design Theatre, with interiors experts on hand to share ideas and tips.

As befits a show aimed at home and design, the Ideal Home show, which takes place in spring and autumn, uses extensive market research to keep it on trend. "New this year is the First Time Buyers' Advice Centre, which we are seeing a lot of activity in as a result of changes in the last budget to the Help to Buy scheme," says event organiser Sean Lemass

of SDL Exhibitions.

The Government's Help to Buy incentive is designed to assist first-time buyers in obtaining the deposit required to purchase or self-build a new house or apartment to live in as their home.

It provides for a refund of income tax and deposit interest retention tax (Dirt) paid over the previous four tax years to first-time buyers or builders of a new residential property.

First-time buyers

"Because we have seen increased interest from first-time buyers we wanted to provide more information at the show about everything from finance to snagging to the pros and pitfalls of self-building, as well as offering people a way to source all the interiors ideas and products you need to make a home," says Lemass.

The Ideal Home Show's extensive market research enables it to stay fresh. "One of the other things we've found is the growth in the number of people building their own home, which is why we are working with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland. It has brought together a panel of experienced, registered architects who will be offering talks and panel discussions on all things relating to building and extending homes."

Visitors will also be able to book free one-to-one consultations with Jackson & Groarke, a Dublin architectural studio. "We're encouraging people to come who don't already have a design and who are looking for preliminary advice about extending or building.

"To make best use of the session we're asking people to give some thought to what they want to get out of it first, whether it's questions about what's possible, about budgets or about how the whole process works and what's involved. If possible, come with pictures or a site map," says practice partner Donal Groarke.

Exhibitors

The other strength of the Ideal Home Show is the breadth of exhibitors it attracts, with everything from design and building services through to heating systems, bespoke kitchens and artworks available under one roof.

One of the most pronounced trends Lemass is seeing is a shift away from the traditional design of Irish homes. "Very many of us were brought up in standard three-bedroom semi-detached houses with a door into a sitting room leading through to another room and then another door into the kitchen. Now people are say-



THE IRISH TIMES

ing, 'Why only live in one part of your home at a time?' As a result, they are opening out the space so they can enjoy all of their home at a time, with the kitchen as the central point."

Other trends include the continuing desire to open the house out to the garden, and to bring in more light.

The Colourtrend Interior Design Forum includes specially designed and executed room sets, with various professional interior designers with whom to discuss ideas. Colourtrend will also have a pop-up paint shop on site.

Among the 230 exhibitors are garden homes specialist Shomera, Laois hand-crafted furniture-maker FinLine and Enniskerry's The Paintmakers House.

Passive house

This year's show house, always a central feature, is a fully finished passive house from building company Innovative Homes Solutions.

"We do a complete job from conception through design and build, and a passive house like this offers energy savings of up to 90 per cent," says Colette Silver, a member of the interior design team at Innovative Home Solutions.

Such homes have doubly thick walls, triple-glazed windows and floors with 300mm of insulation - three times the normal amount.

Innovative Home Solutions will also use the show to launch an interiors range of "mid-century modern" furniture. Having come from San Francisco, where Silver worked as an interior designer for 20 years, she believes the benefits of a passive home to the Irish climate are inestimable.

"It was only when I came to Ireland I experienced having to move from warm to cold rooms all the time. A passive house will cost about 10 per cent more to build than a standard block house, but you'll earn that back with savings, and the quality and comfort they offer, especially in the Irish climate, is invaluable," she says. idealhome.ie



■ Interior motives: 'People are opening out the space so they can enjoy all of their home at a time, with the kitchen as the central point,' says Seán Lemass of SDL Exhibitions



THE IRISH TIMES

