

# THINKING OF BUYING A CONSERVATORY OR SUN ROOM?

*These are the basic steps you should ideally take:-*

- **How much would you ideally wish to spend**



- £5,000/£10,000/£15,000/£20,000 or possibly more.

- **Do you have a preferred design** and what would be the principal function of this extension to your home?



- **Terminology**

Victorian Edwardian Gothic and Lean-To are often used. You may well find it more easy to develop the project with more practical terminology such as Rectangular, Octagonal, Hipped and Pitched Roof. Your best way forward would be to look at appropriate websites, appropriate brochures and coloured supplements. Don't be afraid to tell a prospective supplier what you actually want, rather than the design they may wish to 'sell you'

- **Construction materials.** Most people will know that PVCu, Architectural Aluminium or



Hardwood are available. There is no golden rule but PVCu should be the cheapest option, please do thoroughly investigate the performance quality of choosing this material – we provide two of the very best PVCu extrusions which have been available from the very beginning and are marketed to some 50 countries around the world. Architectural Aluminium should be around 30% more and a good quality Hardwood model possibly 50% additional cost. It will very much depend on the ultimate dimensions and configuration but if it is to be a large structure, in an exposed position or if you desire the highest specification, then Architectural should be your choice or a substantial Hardwood design



- **Planning Permission.** Permitted Development for Sun Rooms and Extensions are currently very generous. If you are building onto a rear elevation and not facing a highway or byway you may extend across the entire elevation, no higher than 4 metres. If an attached property 3 metres deep and a detached home 4 metres into the garden. *There is currently an opportunity to double the depth, as Eric Pickles has doubled in size but work must be finished by the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019 . For further information go to - [planning.portal.gov.uk](http://planning.portal.gov.uk) You will see at the right hand side of the page, interactive guidance and this is a splendid way to carry out your research*

- **Building Regulations.** Will not be required if the project is less than 30 sq metres of floor area, at ground level, not a shared occupancy building, has a door into the home of external quality and independent heating. The roof should have at least 75% glass and all of the *new side elevations* 50% glazed. Make sure these issues are fully covered in writing before you make any binding commitment before signing any order form



- **Baseworks and foundations.** This is of course a major element of your project and your chosen supplier should offer the complete package including this. You should not sign any order papers until full assessment by an appropriate professional person has been made in relation to the depth which foundations should be prepared, issues regarding drainage below and in particular any shared foul water pipes, proximity to boiler vents or similar and all other issues including electrics, plumbing, brick matching, access for materials and appropriate lead flashing. Your quotation should bare reference to all of these considerations well before you are invited to sign any order form from which traditionally you may find it very hard to extract yourself



- **Heating, Electrics, Plumbing.** All of these and similar trades maybe organised by yourselves but ideally through the chosen supplier. The specialised tradesman should have visited your home to make their full assessment, so that complete details are within your quotation, unless you wish to be responsible for other trades



- **Choosing the best supplier.** Many people would consider this to be the hardest element of your initial research. Whereas it should be one of the easiest and there are very simple rules to apply. The first and most important is, who is the owner or director of the company. Research will most certainly show a staggeringly high percentage of glazing and building companies are run by people who have had several previous businesses, many of which they have run for just a few years before going into liquidation or closing down. If you do not have access by use of your computer programmes to research this, it is essential to pay a small fee and employ an appropriate person on your behalf. The next and equally important question would be what genuine references they can offer. If you cannot be given a substantial list of past customers, whose projects are **at least 10 years old**, then what validity will your 10 year guarantee have and at the same time, you should ask *how long the company has truly been active*. Is the system being offered to you, one which the company has supplied and constructed over an *extended period of time*. Many companies change their manufacturing suppliers several times, which means that the system offered to you has no substantial track record with regard to its potential long term performance. It also will mean that the designs previously constructed by them, no longer have a supporting manufacturer's guarantee

***I would suggest that the most important question of all, which would embrace the security you are looking for, is a substantial list of past customer's projects, which were constructed for over 10 years ago.***

*David R. Fennings*

There is hardly anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and the people who consider price only are this man's lawful prey.... **John Ruskin**