



The green green GLASS of home

Bob Moxon-Browne's architecturally stunning timber and glass eco-friendly house nestles in its own private wooded valley, where even the bats are warmed by solar power

Story: **Eleanor Wilde** Pictures: **Steve Taylor**



When Bob Moxon-Browne first dreamed of building a house which would resemble 'a cathedral in the woods' his inspiration came largely from the fantastic site he had just purchased. Little did he realise that it was the very nature of this sloping, irregular landscape which would cause all manner of problems for virtually everyone involved in the build.

For the past thirty years the secluded plot had been used as a plant nursery, and the owners had constructed unofficial living accommodation there, for which they later gained retrospective planning permission. The site and property were wholly powered by diesel – a major pollutant – and there was no gas, electricity or proper drainage in place.

Bob had just spent several years refurbishing his parents' Devon property for sale, which is how he first met with builder John Ward, who was then working as contracts manager for a timber frame company. John later went to work with Bob, and the two men determined to take on a major building project together.

"Once the work to my parents' property was finished I found myself with some money, a good building team and the need for a new base in Devon," explains Bob, a busy QC practicing in London who also sits as a part-time Judge of the High Court, often hearing cases arising from building disputes. "My wife, Kicki, is a pianist who has an attitude of weary detachment towards my role as Bob-the-BUILDER. →

Far left Owner Bob Moxon-Browne (front right) with builder John Ward and architect Richard Webster outside Lyneham Coombe which stands in its own wooded valley, running down to the River Teign.



Occupying a magical setting in its own wooded valley, Lyneham Coombe is stunning to look at, fun to visit, comfortable to live in, cheap to run and proof that a green lifestyle does not involve compromising the enjoyment of a splendidly ambitious architectural statement. This is truly a house for the 21st century and beyond.