

## Help and advice from your trusted local MasterBond Builder



### Need more downstairs space? Conservatory vs Extension... the pros and cons

Need extra downstairs space, but not ready to move? The most obvious solution is either a conservatory or an extension - and the decision comes down to time and money.

#### Conservatories

Conservatories are cheaper than extensions and can be built far more quickly. They add space and light, and are relatively quick to install.

Conservatories normally require a concrete foundation and floor slab to the same building reg. specification as an extension, usually with cavity brickwork lower walls, glazed upper walls and roof panels set within a framing system.

It is important to note that conservatories lose heat much faster than an extension, so unless you include adequate heating and ventilation, you may not be able to use your conservatory all year round. They are also very noisy when it rains!

While there are DIY conservatory kits available, it is advisable to employ a professional to install a conservatory.

#### Extensions

While a conservatory adds one extra room onto your home, an extension can transform the whole downstairs living area. Extensions provide the opportunity to rethink and redesign your downstairs living space, by knocking down walls to create stunning open plan living /kitchen/ dining areas as well as adding a useful downstairs loo or utility room.

Careful planning is key to a successful extension: make sure the style is in keeping with the rest of the house or at least works with it. Think how the extension connects on to the house and also how you will furnish the finished space. It pays to create as large an extension as possible, provided that it doesn't take up the whole garden.

As with all building work, prepare a clear brief, seek three written quotes from builders you feel you can work with, check out references and previous jobs. Select a builder on quality and 'gut feel,' not just price. Don't pay large amounts up front and avoid dealing in cash.

### HELM SEASONAL ADVICE



#### Maintaining your home

As soon as Spring blossom appears, it's tempting to nip off to the garden centre to buy a stunning window box or to start planning trellising, a patio or some decking. However it pays to make sure all the basics of your home have survived the winter in good order before embarking on new projects.

Check whether the exterior of the home - the fascia, brickwork, paintwork and gutters - need any repairs or maintenance. Inspect window frames and doors to make sure they have not sustained damage, and re-point and seal where required.

While much maintenance and improvement work can be undertaken by a competent DIY enthusiast, it's worth employing professional builders for specialist work, such as roofing, windows and brickwork pointing repairs, or for landscaping such as terraces, decking or brickwork.

Call Helm for a free no obligation quote for any of your Spring Time building projects.



Example pictures of a typical Helm extension project

**Do I DIY?...**With many people currently counting the pennies, DIY is increasing in popularity, but with this come reports from FMB builders that they are being called in to finish or re-do DIY projects which have overrun the available time, become too complicated or gone badly wrong. Sadly, this type of damage control often costs far more than hiring a professional from the outset. Unfinished projects can be dangerous and reduce the value of your home.

Careless DIY also brings with it the chance of injury - more than 200,000 people are injured every year whilst carrying out DIY activities to upgrade or maintain their property, according to the FMB. It's also worth checking your home insurance for accidental damage cover before you embark on any home improvement.

**If you require any advice or information regarding your own building project, call FREEPHONE 08080 333 333, or visit [www.helm.uk.com](http://www.helm.uk.com)**

### HELM FEATURED ACCREDITATION



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CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

