

FOUR YEARS AGO YOU WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BUILD YOUR OWN HOME.

It wasn't something that would have made an episode of Grand Designs, but because you had a big hand in its overall conception it became very personal, and rather special. And it still is.

HAVING MADE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO LOWER THE FAMILY'S CARBON FOOTPRINT, you decided to heat the house with the most modern and efficient method on the market: underfloor heating. You remember it cost a fortune, but as you had no inkling about what was going to take place to the economy in 2008, you decided to throw caution to the winds and spend the money anyway.

YOUR ARCHITECT ENLISTED THE SERVICES OF A SPECIALIST HEATING COMPANY, who measured, designed, offered an opinion – and a number of quotes – and eventually lay what appeared to be miles of one continuous white pipe clipped into every floor. Over the entire labyrinth they poured two-and-a-half inches of concrete and waited for it to harden; before installing the specially imported Burmese teak flooring and extortionately priced Terrazzo tiles that went down in all three bathrooms and the kitchen.

rate. Even though the heating specialist talked you through every eventuality, you made one fatal decision: choosing the cheapest type of heating pipe. The no-one-will-see-them-so-who-cares attitude prevailed.

FAST FORWARD FOUR YEARS, and the family has grown by two, whilst at the same time your ailing parents need constant care and attention. Naturally, you've invited them to live with you, however, the layout of the house needs to be reconsidered and an extra room created on the ground floor. The study and the downstairs loo can be knocked together and an extension added to the laundry room, but this will entail major construction works and the addition of new partition walls, requiring sound footings.

SADLY, PARTS OF THE FLOOR you've walked over time and again in bare feet, even when the temperature outside has been well below freezing, is going to have to come up. And whoever is responsible for this mammoth task is going to ask that all-important question: where is the exact location of each and every heating pipe?

NOW, IMAGINE IF YOU WILL THAT ALL THE WORDING YOU'RE READING IS DRIED CONCRETE and the red headline is the location of the plastic

limited concentration and a jack hammer chipping up your entire heating system. Tracing one tiny hole – or in Kev's case, a major crack – in any of the pipes could result in a whole (no pun intended) new floor.

WHAT YOUR HEATING EXPERT OMITTED TO TELL YOU IS THAT AN EXTRA 15% WOULD HAVE bought you a heating pipe with a metal core. One that is easily traceable with a metal detector, so that fixing a new stud wall into the existing floor wouldn't pose a frustratingly awkward problem.

OPTING FOR THE CHEAPER QUOTE AND THE EXTRA TWO WEEKS IN ST. LUCIA, WOULD NOW appear to have been ill-advised. Needless to say, hindsight is a wonderful characteristic, usually only possessed by leading politicians.

IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF HAVING TO MAKE THE SAME DECISION AGAIN, CALL US AT Underfloor Heating Now for a chat. You see, we have the experience, we have the know-how and we stock miles of Unipipe – the world's largest supplier of metal core pipes. We even offer big boxes of tissues to those who choose to ignore our advice and unwittingly allow Kev to drill through something both he and you might regret forever.

How do you pinpoint the location of underfloor heating pipes once the concrete covering them has hardened?

DURING THE CONSTRUCTION, IT FELT LIKE YOU WERE EMPTYING CHEQUE BOOKS faster than the bank could mail them out, and the contents of your savings account was draining at a worrying

heating pipes. Could you say with pinpoint accuracy how close the centre of the word 'covering' is to the top of this ad? We doubt it, but that's how close you must be if you don't want some spotty oik, named Kev, with

ALTHOUGH KNOWING OIKS LIKE WE DO, we suspect it will only be you doing the regretting. And the one left haggling with an insurance company who insists on hiding behind the small print.

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