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SONS

A Simple Guide to Planning a Bathroom



A Simple Guide to Planning a Bathroom, Shower room or Cloakroom

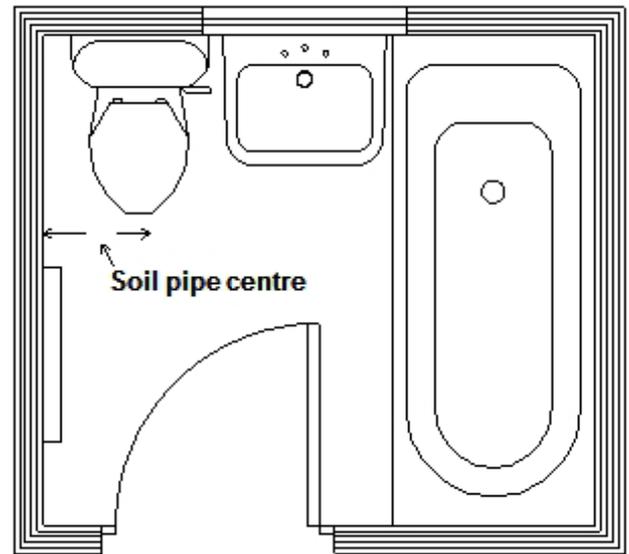
Planning a bathroom is simple!

if you have the wealth of experience we have at our disposal along with your “wish list”

Reading the following comments NOW will be to your advantage in the future

Due to the very many sizes and shapes now available for all of the items required in a bathroom or shower room it is now not as easy as it used to be. However, we have all the experience you need to assist you in giving you your ideal room but there are some simple thoughts to consider to make sure you get the best out of your room. Once we know your likes and dislikes we can then build on your idea's to give you your dream bathroom. Some of our best bathrooms or shower rooms are not the largest or most expensive but the simple well thought out and planned rooms which make them a pleasure to use rather than an inconvenience.

We would suggest you look at what items you ideally would like in your room. It is quite simple to find a website that enables you to plan your room and it will be easy to place items into the plan. We would however suggest that getting items to fit is the simple part. Having the room to be user friendly and work well is where our many years of experience help us to show you what does and doesn't work. Our aim is to make sure that after the room has been renovated you are confident you have chosen the best layout to suit you. There would be nothing more frustrating to find out afterwards that if you had planned the room differently you could have had something better. This is where we come into the equation.



An example of a straightforward bathroom

There are always going to be planning restrictions you need to consider. Normally the starting point is where the wc is to go. If you know where the soil pipe starts this helps in letting you know what flexibility you have for the toilet position. (should you wish to have a completely different position then it may be possible to have a macerator fitted giving you more flexibility). If we are talking about the most common layout of bathroom with a wc opposite the door, a basin next to it and then a bath then chances are there may not be too much you can do with the toilet position. This doesn't mean your bathroom is going to be plain and boring as there are still plenty of options open to you with different types of product available.

Planning a Bathroom

Other considerations...

Other considerations are the window and door positions. Once the items are installed they will all need some activity space to make them useable. It is possible that the space required to use an item can overlap into the space of another item but this could depend on how many people intend to use the bathroom at the same time. i.e. a family with small children will have different requirements to a family with teenagers.

What type of hot water system do you have? Is this likely to change and if so will it be the same type again. This can affect the type of taps and showers required. There is nothing more infuriating than buying the wrong taps and finding that it takes 3 times longer to fill your bath or that the shower doesn't work because you don't have enough pressure. Shower pumps can be fitted to increase the pressure to the shower or even the whole house should you wish to improve the flow.

Following is a list of the general items required in a bathroom and the points to remember when choosing them...

BATHS

Freestanding, built in, corner, shower bath. What type of bath are you looking for? Does it need to be compact or are you looking for a larger more luxurious bath possibly with a whirlpool, spa or hydrotherapy system included. Are you looking to have a shower over the bath to save space. If so a suitable bath screen will need to be chosen.

WC's

Conventional flooring standing with either open or closed sides. Wall hung or back to wall. If it is back to wall or wall hung, we will need to hide the cistern. Is it to be in tiles or a furniture unit. Are you looking for a more modern rimless or direct flush wc that make it easier to keep the bowl clean.

BASINS

Basins on pedestals or trap covers or a floor mounted or wall hung vanity unit. There are a great many different types of units and sizes available to hide away your soap's, shampoos and deoderants. They can also help to hide pipework.

FURNITURE

If you are looking for furniture then the typical british bathroom can have a built in furniture for the basin and wc to be fitted upto. Should space allow you can have additional base units and tall wall units. Wall units can be plain, mirrored or illuminated to give additional light if required. You can also have demister mirrors which do not steam up when the temperature rises in the bathroom.

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BATHROOM SHOWERS

There are generally electric showers or mixer showers that use the water from your boiler. This can be from a gravity hot water cylinder (which could be pumped) or from a combi boiler or pressurised cylinder. The most simple showers are bath shower mixers fitted to your bath instead of a standard pair of taps or a bath filler. Most of them are however not thermostatic and therefore it is very difficult to control the temperature of the shower. It is more common to have a thermostatic shower valve which monitors the water temperature for you and maintains it at the temperature you set it at. Most quality showers will also have a maximum set temperature normally around 38 degrees which you have to press a button to raise the temperature. This gives you the added security that young or elderly users will not be able to easily raise the temperature to undesirable levels

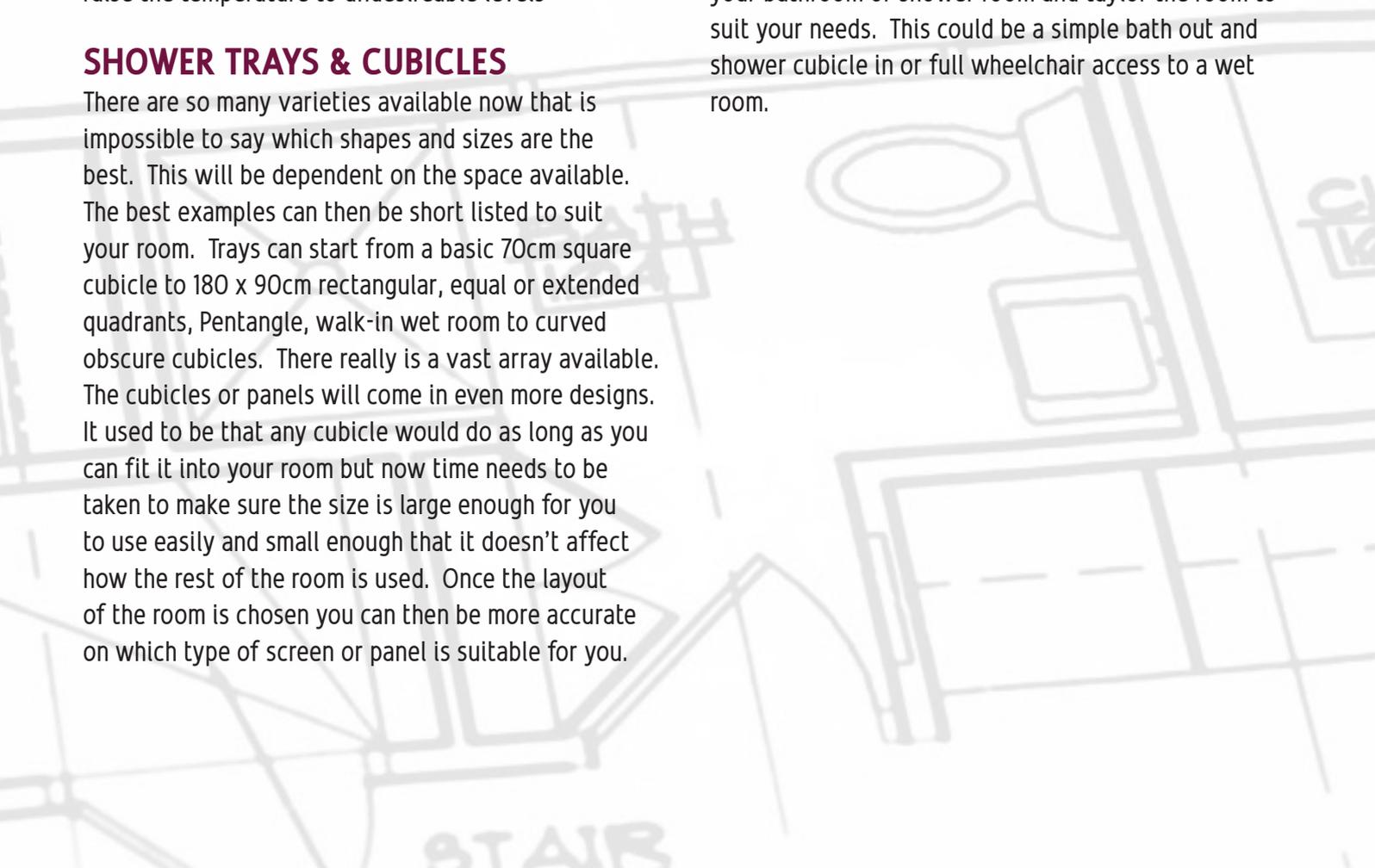
SHOWER TRAYS & CUBICLES

There are so many varieties available now that it is impossible to say which shapes and sizes are the best. This will be dependent on the space available. The best examples can then be short listed to suit your room. Trays can start from a basic 70cm square cubicle to 180 x 90cm rectangular, equal or extended quadrants, Pentangle, walk-in wet room to curved obscure cubicles. There really is a vast array available. The cubicles or panels will come in even more designs. It used to be that any cubicle would do as long as you can fit it into your room but now time needs to be taken to make sure the size is large enough for you to use easily and small enough that it doesn't affect how the rest of the room is used. Once the layout of the room is chosen you can then be more accurate on which type of screen or panel is suitable for you.

Minimalistic looking cubicles are very popular but are a little limited on the types of doors that can be incorporated. For example cubicles that have minimal aluminium framing will generally come as hinged doors or sliding doors. If you choose to have a door that has more, larger framework then you are likely to be able to have in-glide and bifold doors. The advantage to these types of doors is that they open into the cubicle area and not into the room. They can then be left open giving great ventilation to the cubicle helping with the damp environment. The downside is generally more metal in the framework. Easy clean glass can also be available for your shower cubicle.

DISABLED BATHROOMS

We can easily discuss your specific requirements for your bathroom or shower room and tailor the room to suit your needs. This could be a simple bath out and shower cubicle in or full wheelchair access to a wet room.



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WALL COVERINGS

The most common by far is ceramic or porcelain tiles, however in shower area's it is quite popular to have wall boarding fitted giving you completely flat walls with very little joints. The wall board panels are available in 600mm, 900mm and 1200mm widths. The advantages of these panels in a shower area are very easy maintenance and no grout joints to worry about. How easy would it be to simply wipe down the walls with no joints, dips or grooves to worry about. They are available in a great many patterns and colours so that matching them to your chosen wall and floor tiles shouldn't be a problem.

Tiles are still however the most popular with ever increasing sizes available. The general rule of thumb is that the larger the tile the less fussy and repetitive the walls are. This helps in making the room feel larger and more airy. This however is only a guide as there are other factors that come in to play like room sizes in relation to the sizes of tiles chosen, ceiling heights, window and door positions. A badly chosen tile size can give you more cuts making the walls potentially looking messy. When tiles sizes were considerably smaller it was acceptable to measure up the area of the room and add a percentage for wastage. Now with larger tiles this formula isn't accurate. Once a tile is chosen the wastage needs to be calculated differently to make sure you don't end up being short of tiles. We would always recommend keeping tiles for spares just in case you have an accident resulting in tiles being cracked or damaged. Then a problem can be solved without the need to completely retiling the room. As a side issue, always make sure the correct adhesive is used for the tiles you have chosen. We see many cases where the wrong adhesive is used resulting in the job needing to be done again a few years later.

FLOOR COVERINGS

The most popular by far are porcelain tiles although Karndean flooring is also very popular. The same principles as wall tiling are to be considered although if you choose Karndean you have the added bonus of the floor being a little warmer. Karndean is popular when you like a wooden looking floor without the worry of conventional wood expanding and contracting during the year giving gaps between the boards or using a laminate which is prone to chipping and expanding if water gets into them. Vinyl is another option which is likely to be less expensive. A point to consider is that porcelain tiles and Karndean are very hard wearing so will not need replacing like some of the less expensive options which will have a higher wear rate.

UNDER FLOOR HEATING

This can be used to heat the room on its own or used just to take the chill of the tiles. It can then be used in conjunction with a heated towel rail to both heat the room and dry your towels.

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ELECTRICS.

All bathroom areas are split up into Zone Areas and depending on how close to a water outlet you are depends on how strict the regulations are All electrics need to be completed by a fully trained and certified electrician. All new circuits with in the bathroom need to be protected by a 30ma residual current device (RCD). Once the wiring alterations have been completed the electrics need to be 'Part P' tested in accordance with the electrical regulations.

All installations must comply to guidelines which are based on a zonal concept. The colour coded diagram below illustrates this concept and must be followed to ensure the safe installation of bathroom lighting. These regulations apply to domestic installations only.

LIGHTING

How much do you need. Are you looking for spot lights that are recessed in to your ceiling or would you prefer surface mounted lighting. Spot lights can be good for bright lighting but you will need on average one per square metre of ceiling as they don't give a wide range of light. With led technology becoming more and more readily available it is now possible to get low energy LED Bulbs for your spot lights so you can have the look you're after and be good to the environment. If it is surface mounted light fittings your after there are a wide range of light fittings now available. If you fit a new fitting to the existing wiring you could find that you don't need to undertake any plastering work. If using the existing wiring, assuming it is suitable, you could also find that you don't need to undertake any rewiring and not have to have a 'part p' test done



Zone 1 refers to the area above the bath or shower up to a height of 2.25 metres and requires a minimum rating of IP44 or higher and if the fitting is 240v a 30ma RCD must be used to protect the circuit.

Zone 2 covers an area 0.6 metres wide immediately next to, and all round zone 1. Wash basins should also be treated as zone 2. The minimum rating here is IPX4.

Outside Zone has no special requirements, unless water jets are likely to be used for cleaning purposes.

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EXTRACTOR FANS

Bathrooms & Shower rooms typically suffer from condensation. Having an extractor fan fitted can considerably help reduce the issues caused by moisture in the bathroom. Extractor fan options can be through the wall or through the ceiling. Standard fans are simple switch on or switch off but if you have a timer model fitted then it can be set to run on via an adjustable timer. This I would suggest is a better solution as there is only a minimal increase in cost but the effects are far better.

STEAM ROOMS

Would you like to convert your shower cubicle into a steam cubicle. If you prefer the wet heat and humidity of steam instead of a sauna, why not consider a steam generator they come in numerous sizes to suit more or less any cubicle you like.

SAUNA'S

We can offer a large range of saunas to suit most budgets from small single units to bespoke made to measure. These units can be fitted in a bathroom, bedroom, utility room, basement, garage, summerhouse in fact more or less anywhere in your home.

STEAM SHOWERS & BATHING

The Romans have known the benefits of a Steam cleanse ever since sauna's where invented, both from a hygiene point of view and the feeling of your soft, smooth skin afterwards. Many countries like Finland have understood the purifying qualities brought to you from the steam where it is part of the daily routine not just a treat every now and again. It helps to unwind tense muscles, stimulate the flow of blood around your body and reinvigorate you once again.

Helo are very proud of the design and innovation of their steam generators paying particular attention to the quality of the product using energy saving techniques. These combine to give consistently high humidity for continued revitalisation and relaxation time and time again.

Why would you take a Steam Shower or Bath.

This type of bathing started many thousands of years ago. The ancient Greeks were the first, followed by the Romans who publicly used "Sudatoria's" built for this purpose. The Turkish nation still use public 'Hammas' in the same way the Russians use their 'Banja's'. It seems in the UK it is mainly enjoyed during Hotel vacations or in spa's or health clubs.

Many years of research has confirmed the benefits of sauna or steam bathing from the heat. The most obvious benefits are for the relaxing of both your mind and body but also it can aid breathing, muscular and joint ailments and finally the deep cleaning of your skin.

THE BASIC IDEA

Filling a cubicle with steam increases the temperature and raises the humidity. This creates the steam filled environment to relax and cleanse your skin in. A very popular way to do this is to convert an existing shower cubicle. We mostly install them in the bathroom or shower room as we have water and electrics generally easily available and an airing cupboard or loft is not far away to fit the generator. The larger the kilowatt of the generator, the more steam is produced and the larger the room/cubicle that can be used.

The cubicle to be used doesn't need to be completely sealed but the smaller the gaps the less steam escapes. Steam is likely to escape anyway when the door is opened and closed but a reasonable quality extractor fan can deal with this.

It would be an idea to be able to sit down so a wall mounted fold down seat would be ideal', although if your cubicle is large enough a bench seat can be created giving you the ideal place to relax whilst using the shower.

HELP IN THE PLANNING

We would suggest after taking all this information into consideration you make a rough sketch similar to the one shown below and then give us a call and book an appointment to come and see us. One of the team will then be more than happy to discuss your requirements with you.

Telephone us on: **024 7669 1469**

Email: sales@alanheathandsons.co.uk

