

COSTLY FUEL BILLS COULD BE THING OF THE PAST

Norrie's eco dream home is energy giants' nightmare

By Murray Scougall

mscougall@sundaypost.com

IT'S said Scotland often gets all four seasons in one day.

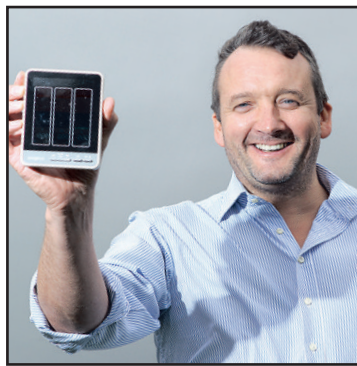
And that's fine by Norrie Smith, because he plans to use our unpredictable weather to change the way we live.

The innovative Prestwick plumber intends to utilise wind, rain and sun as part of an eco blueprint he believes could be the future for affordable housing in the UK.

Norrie says his zero energy house will banish costly fuel bills forever and allow homeowners to take revenge on rip-off energy companies.

His masterplan, which has been seven years in the making, goes before his local council's planning department on Tuesday.

If he's given the go ahead, Norrie will build a new home in the garden of his ex-local authority end terrace house that will depend upon solar panels, a rainwater



■ Norrie with an emergency monitoring device.

harvesting system and solar hot water collectors to provide power and heat.

"It kills me every time I turn on a light switch," Norrie said. "There are so many ways to reduce costs and it's not rocket science."

"I became interested in regeneration in 2005 and decided to learn all I could, with the aim of helping local communities."

"I noticed there were large grants available for landowners

when it came to renewable energy, but nothing for the working man.

"So I looked at how I could bring renewable energy into poorer areas, because they're always worst hit with fuel bills."

"I started working on the concept of a zero energy home and hit on the idea of utilising the large gardens of ex-council houses for these new builds, creating something called achievable urban sustainability."

"Not only are we looking at building on ex-local authority land so the homeowner is already the landowner, but we want to install the technology into existing properties — something we call retrofitting."

"This is my way of fighting back against the energy companies. It's about giving families alternatives and having almost no fuel bills."

He added: "While it's one thing to have a crazy idea, I needed the science to back it."

Norrie contacted Dr Masa Noguchi, a lecturer in architectural technology, to collaborate on the project and the technical aspects slowly came together.

Then he set up his company, NRGStyle, and now has a team of top architects, designers and consultants on board.

"If we're granted planning permission we'll build the new home in the garden of my house," he added.

"We'll carry out a study and with the data we collect we'll be able to build the ideal council house."

A host of experts are backing Norrie's scheme, such as Prof John Onyango from the University of Miami's School of Architecture.

He said:

"This is a great project demonstrating that it's possible to deliver Scotland's first zero energy, affordable mass-customisable house."

"This is especially useful considering that both the younger and ageing populations are affected by fuel poverty, as well as the lack of affordable housing."

And renowned professors Avi Friedman and Colin Ripley came from Canada last month to see the plans first-hand.

Friedman, who received a United Nations award for building his own prototype eco home, said Norrie had come up with the future of housing.

Now the pioneering plumber hopes South Ayrshire Council agrees and grants him the power to take on the energy companies at their own game.



■ Norrie with the design plans for the house he believes is the future of affordable housing.

Age UK Guaranteed Funeral Plan

Will your savings guarantee to cover funeral costs?

The Age UK Guaranteed Funeral Plan does

- Guarantees to cover cremation funeral costs in full
- Guaranteed funeral arrangements and help for your family
- Guarantees to beat inflation

For your FREE guide pop into:

Age Scotland Enterprises Limited
Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside
Edinburgh EH9 1PR
Open: 9am to 5pm Mon to Fri

Age Scotland Enterprises Limited
7 Sandyford Place, Glasgow G3 7NB
Open: 9am to 5pm Mon to Fri

Or call 0800 032 9413
www.ageuk.org.uk/funeralplan



AGE
Concern

ageUK
The new force combining
Age Concern and Help the Aged

F2887V10CT11 KE040482_12

Maggie's wedding mystery revealed

CARTOON babe Maggie Broon threatened to break men's hearts everywhere when she became engaged in the 1970s.

However, as the big day approached, the storyline was dropped without explanation.

Mystery has always surrounded the wedding that never was — until now.

A new book reveals the reason why the most attractive member of The Broons never got hitched.

The Broons and Oor Wullie — Classic Strips from the 70s' features new drawings that conclude the storyline

more than 30 years after it was dropped.

The new book, created by Broons scriptwriter Morris Heggie, takes up where the story left off.

The book also features the original strips from the 1970s that encompassed The Broons' wedding

preparations and the story of the romance.

Fans will have to buy the book to learn just what it was that doomed the union to failure.

It comes with a CD featuring a recording of the wedding reception that never was.

The CD has 20 hits

chosen by The Broons, including Maggie May, Beautiful Sunday, Night Fever and Dancing Queen.

Between each track there's hilarious commentary from MC Tam McDougall who keeps the crowd amused throughout the night.

When The Sunday Post approached Maggie for comment she said: "Daphne told me tae haud ma weesht when it a' happened but it's time fowk knew the truth!"

The Broons and Oor Wullie — Classic Strips from the 70s' is out now priced £12.99.

