

Timeless elegance

The new-build country or town house needs real character to stand the test of time. Geoff Heath-Taylor takes a look at houses built after 2000 that showcase the best of British domestic architecture



Paul Highnam; Andrew Lee; ImageGap/ Getty Images; Will Pryce/Country Life Picture Library

“The tradition of new country houses in Britain remains as strong as ever in the 21st century”

↑ Neo-Georgian

This Wiltshire house was built in two phases by Ross Sharpe Architects and the Cirencester-based practice Yiangou Architects. The principal section was finished six years ago in the style of a gentrified 18th-century Cotswold farmhouse and the extension, with its Venetian window and Regency garden façade, was added in 2012. It combines Classical design with modern building materials, incorporating a concrete structure covered in lime render. *Yiangou Architects (01285 888150; www.yiangou.com)*

↑ Palladian

Quinlan Terry and his son, Francis, are leading advocates for Classical architecture today. At Ferne Park, Viscountess Rothermere's house on the Wiltshire/Dorset border, they have skilfully reinterpreted the language of Palladianism to suit the needs of a family in the 21st century. The pediments and pilasters will age gracefully and the gleaming, locally sourced Portland stone will weather to a soft silvery-grey. *Quinlan & Francis Terry Architects (01206 323186; www.qftarchitects.com)*

→ Minimalist

This award-winning clifftop home on the north-west coast of the Isle of Skye is a wonder primarily because of the way the house sits so well in its extraordinary setting. Designed as 'two connected volumes', the entrance façade is built in traditional Scottish stone, which makes the building sit well in the rugged hills. In contrast, the north-west front looks suitably stark in the barren landscape, a mass of silvery larch wood and glazing that offers far-reaching views across Loch Dunvegan. *Dualchas Architects (0141-550 1401; www.dualchas.com)*



← London skyline

Completed in 2012, The Shard has very quickly become a defining part of the London skyline. Its tapering form—like a huge spire of glass—soars over the capital, with a viewing platform at the top that commands 360° views for up to 40 miles around. The apartments on the upper levels enjoy some of the greatest cityscape vistas in the world, with St Paul's appearing as small as a matchbox from the penthouse. *Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects (00 39 01 06 17 11; www.rpbw.com)*



↑ Arts-and-Crafts

The Arts-and-Crafts Movement transformed the way in which we view and value materials. This new farmhouse in Hampshire, with its dormers and arched porch, is designed in the spirit and idiom of that movement. It makes use of locally sourced brick, flint and clay. These materials relate the building directly to its setting. *ADAM Architecture (01962 843843; www.adamarchitecture.com)*

↑ Eco

In COUNTRY LIFE's 'Best of Britain' number last year (*June 11*), Editor-at-Large Clive Aslet commented that Downley House in Hampshire demonstrates 'that the tradition of new country houses in Britain remains as strong as ever in the 21st century'. Hidden in a valley near Petersfield, Downley is at once romantic and Modernist. The house includes turrets and a great hall and makes extensive use of cross-laminated timber from sustainable forests in Switzerland. *Birds Portsmouth Russum Architects (www.birdsportsmouthrussum.com; 020-7253 8205)*