



A riverside retreat with the technology to guarantee its owners a life of relaxation.

illuminating stuff

When it comes to intelligent lighting, one company is capable of taking the 'intelligent' part further than ever. MARK TRENT visited the latest enlightening work of Futronix...

The owners of this newly-built family residence wanted, above all, a relaxing riverside retreat. Set in spacious lawns with spreading trees and a private dock on the banks of scenic stretch of river at Henley-on-Thames, this two-storied brick home is indeed as relaxing inside as out, with views of moored river craft and charming homes on the opposite banks.

The home fronts onto a local roadway with garages, gardens and an understated front portico. On the ground floor is the lounge - with stone fireplace, comfortably overstuffed sofas, a plasma TV with surround sound, and large windows giving river views - as well as an elegant dining room, the study and the fully equipped kitchen. A semi-circular morning room with French doors leads onto a wide stone-flagged terrace, with steps down to the lawns and jetty. There is also a guest bedroom with en suite, and a separate bathroom and WC.

The master bedroom with en suite is on the upper floor overlooking the river, along with three family bedrooms and a separate bath and WC.

Sliding glass doors from the upper hallway open into the owners' favourite room - the sun lounge - with 180-degree panoramic views over the broad reaches of the river, wicker tub chairs and natural wood floor.

With gently sloping lawns to the riverbank, the large terrace, and a boat at dockside, outdoor entertainment and family recreation is well provided for.

Let there be light

To ensure comfort and relaxation appropriate to the setting, the home is equipped throughout with quality smart lighting, audio-visual and security systems. To control lighting throughout most of the house and grounds, eight Futronix Envirosene 805 racks were specified and installed in a single utility room, supplemented by several individual dimmer units where localised lighting control was desirable. All Envirosene panels are linked as a single lighting control system.

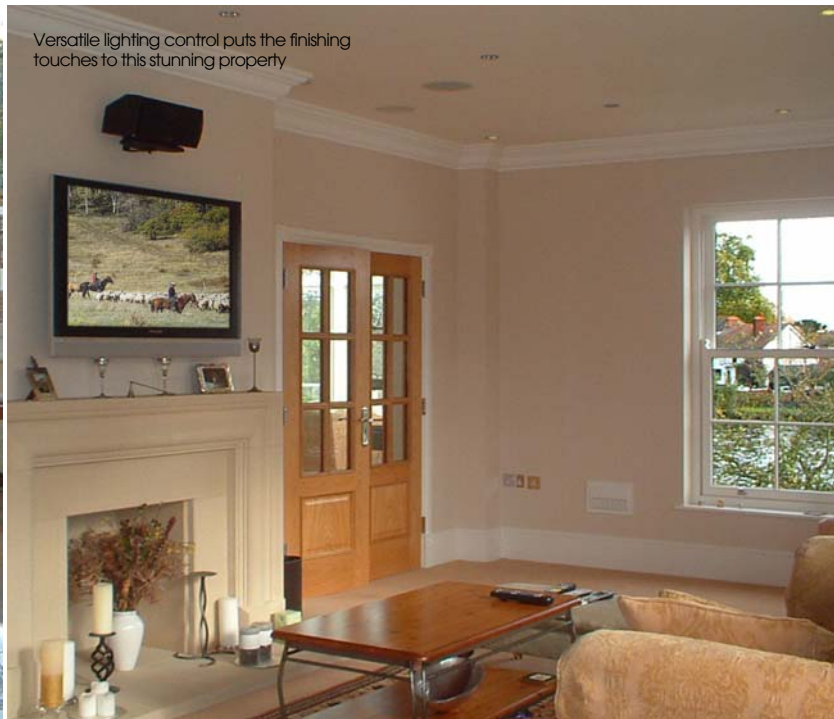
This intelligent lighting system controls all external lighting for front and rear gardens, garages and entrance, as well as all interior lighting. The Envirosene racks control lights in the hallways, lounge and dining rooms, morning room, study and bedrooms on the ground floor, and bedrooms, bathrooms and sun lounge on first floor.

Main living room areas are illuminated by several clusters of

Unobtrusive wall-mounted controls make using the Enviroscene system simple



Versatile lighting control puts the finishing touches to this stunning property



Futronix's system extends its influence to all areas of the home



spotlights, recessed in keeping with the light and airy feel of the interior décor. Ceiling lamps in the dining room include individual recessed halogen downlights for illumination over the dining table. Similar lamps illuminate the morning room and owners' study, augmented by standard and table lamps. External lounge-perimeter lights are controlled as part of the lounge lighting.

The combined Enviroscene panels provide more than 60 programmable lighting circuits with a maximum load of 5A each. Windows-based Futronix software and a PC link to the systems allows monitoring, programming and control from a PC in the owner's study. Futronix SP4 switchplates provide system control in the lounge and dining rooms, with other Futronix switchplates elsewhere throughout the ground floor.

With an extensive system of integrated lights and circuits available, the home's Enviroscene system can easily and conveniently provide lighting 'scenes' for any mood, working or security requirement.

Panel beating

In addition to the Enviroscene racks, two Futronix P400's were installed at the ground floor - one to control lights for the kitchen and laundry room, and another for the lower bathroom and WC - and a P800 dimmer with four remote switch panels was installed in the guest bedroom and en suite. These dimmer units have all control dimming functions built into the one module, plus integral timer. With 20 programmable scene settings each, these dimmers provide multi-zone localized control with multi-point switching with the same ease and flexibility as the Enviroscene systems installed elsewhere throughout the home. The P400 dimmer in the kitchen and laundry also controls several fluorescent tubes dimmed using the on-board 0-10v ballast controller.

All bedroom lighting on the first floor is controlled by two Enviroscene racks, with SP10 switchpanels located in the master bedroom and upper hallway, SP6 switchpanels in the master en suite and dressing room and all other bedrooms and bathrooms (SP10 dual-zone switchpanels control two zones with each having the capability to select scenes 1 to 3 and OFF).

The master bedroom - as the place where the day begins and ends - was also the logical place to locate a master switchplate for the whole-house system. With the Enviroscene system installed, every light in the house can be dimmed or turned off from this one location before going to bed, leaving pre-programmed security lights switched on.

Providing the lighting in the master bathroom - for peace of mind in a wet area - is an extra low voltage switchplate linked into the whole-house system. This means that, with no live mains power behind the unit to short if water splashes onto the switchplate, the owners can safely brighten or dim lights over the vanity, illuminate wall sconces, and dim overall bathroom lighting.

A warm welcome

The owners desired a comforting, warm 'feel' for the elegant portico entrance and hallways during the evening and at night. So, exterior floodlights were fitted to illuminate the entrance from without, whilst recessed overhead lights and standard lamps light the hallways - all controlled, of course, by the Enviroscene system. Meanwhile, low-voltage dichroic lamp downlights recessed in the ceiling illuminate the stairwell area.

A master switchplate inside the front door gives one-touch whole house control and allows the owners to activate the security lighting when leaving. Entrance hall lighting is linked via an external Futronix PIR system which, between dusk and dawn, overrides the lobby scene setting and, when triggered by a visitor, brings the lights full on.

Landscape and security lighting is integrated with garden lighting, and can be operate either from the installed PIR security system or can be dimmed along with the pre-programmed garden lighting scenes. The terrace area is lit by an external low-voltage lights linked into the system, and exterior weatherproof floodlights provide general garden lighting.

With the in-built 24-hour/7-day timer, the owners can pre-programmed multiple events to periodically adjust all property lighting during their absence to give the impression that the home is occupied, whilst a battery back-up maintains correct time even if power is interrupted.

All of which combined leads to a remarkably advanced home lighting system. With professional specification and installation married to creative design and planning, Futronix intelligent lighting control systems have worked to transform a stunning property into an ideal riverside retreat, achieving the owners' vision of security and convenience. ■

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