



GREEN DREAM
THE ARC, BOXFORD

CHEWTON ROSE

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THE ARC BOXFORD

PROPERTY

Modern, architect-designed eco home

KEY FEATURES

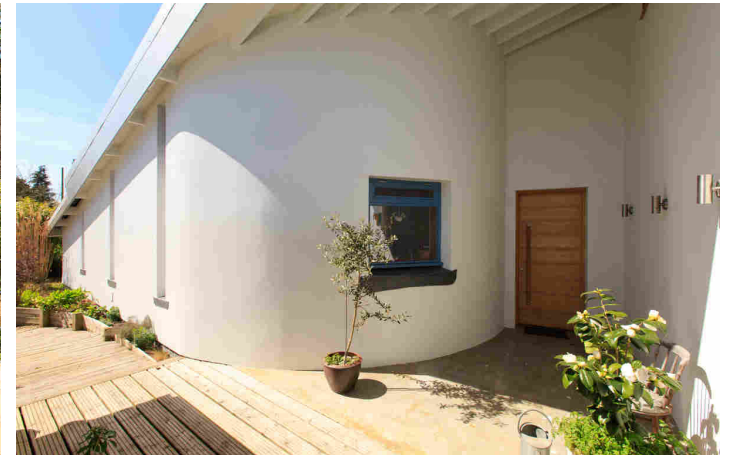
Featured on hit television programme Grand Designs

ACCOMMODATION

Four bedrooms and two bathrooms
High ceilings and polished concrete floors
Open plan kitchen/breakfast/sitting room
Detached studio and garage complex
South facing aspect whilst backing countryside
Private setting and convenient location

GROUNDS

Landscaped front garden with pond
Rear garden facing on to open countryside





GRAND DESIGN

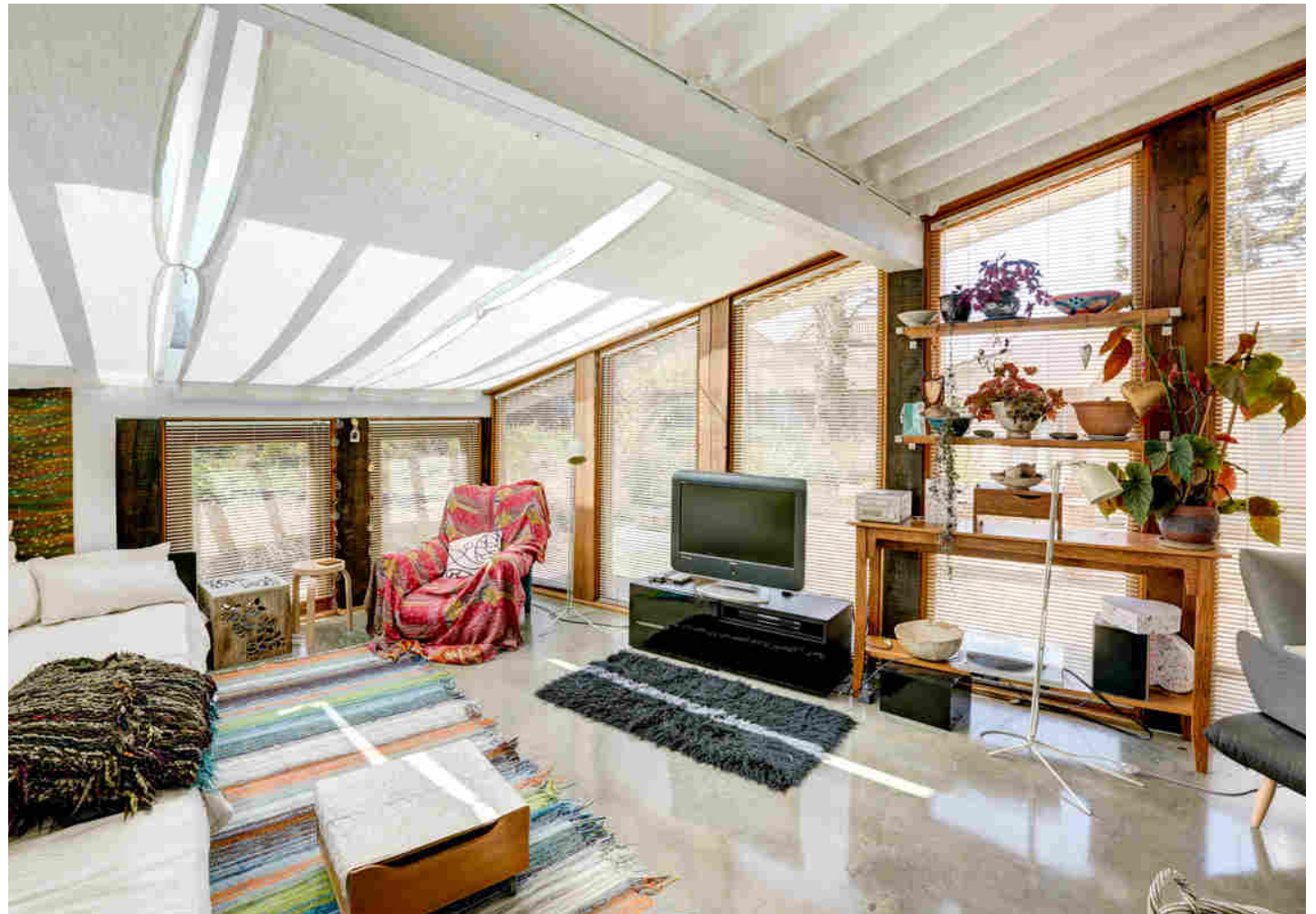
WITH AN INTEREST IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE AND A DESIRE TO BUILD AN ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE HOME, THE OWNERS OF THE ARC EMBARKED UPON THEIR VERY OWN GRAND DESIGN

Watching the sun stream into the central living area, Jonathan Belsey and Lindsey Nicholas admire the bright spaces and interesting shapes of their unique Suffolk eco home. The Arc, which was featured on Channel 4's Grand Designs, was designed and built to their exact specifications.

"We knew we wanted an ecologically sensitive home and I have always had an interest in contemporary architecture," says Jonathan. "After months of trying to find something we liked, and concluding it did not exist, we decided to build it ourselves, with the help of an architect who had similar interests."

The couple were keen to live in the Sudbury area and found a suitable plot in the village of Boxford, which also enjoyed easy access to Hadleigh and Colchester, as well as to the A12.

"I took the architect to see it and he roughed out a sketch in the pub afterwards. I liked what he did but suggested it might be nice to have a curve in it. I still have that drawing and it is very close to what we ended up with."



SENSE OF TOGETHERNESS

As both Jonathan and Lindsey had children, the plan was for an interesting home that could accommodate two families coming together. It had to have space for people to congregate, as well as enough bedrooms for everyone to have their own space.

"At the core we wanted a living and kitchen area, where we could all gather. It was important to us that it had lovely high ceilings to give it a feeling of space and that we could open up the doors on to the courtyard," he explains. "The bedrooms also all look on to the central courtyard area so even when people are in their own rooms there is still a sense of togetherness."

ON CAMERA

The unique plans for the Arc, which was also to have environmentally friendly features, caught the attention of the team at Grand Designs.

"When people heard what we were doing they kept telling us to contact Channel 4," Jonathan recalls. "In the end I dropped the programme an email and they did come back to us. I only discovered afterwards just how many applications they get." Work on the property began in 2006, with a director and camera person following its progress. Every few weeks Kevin McCloud would also come to the site to see how things were getting on. "It was fun doing it but I have only watched the final programme once and we have also resisted doing a 'Revisited' episode as this is now our private, family home," he adds.

LOW IMPACT

The curved, single-storey, four-bedroom house faces south to catch the sun as it travels from east to west throughout the day. Swathes of glass capture and retain the heat, as do the concrete blocks, which are made from recycled aggregate. The property also features an aluminium roof, which is largely made

from recycled material, and has photovoltaic panels, providing solar energy as well as a £1,500 feed-in tariff income.

"The whole project was about what we could do to have less of an environmental impact while also creating the home that we wanted – and I do feel we got the balance just about right," he says.

SPACE FOR FRIENDS

Certainly the Arc has been an exceptional family home, offering ample living and entertaining space.

"There have been lots of teenagers' parties here over the years and when we first moved in everyone was so curious about the house that we decided to host a couple of open days," says Jonathan. "We also held my 50th birthday celebration here, which was a bit of a bonanza. This is a very comfortable place for parties as the ceiling height gives that feeling of space and people can also spill outside quite easily."

SCENIC BACKDROP

The garden, which is low maintenance, has been kept simple in order to blend easily into its green surroundings. Someone else, Jonathan admits, might choose to do more with it.

"We wanted to feel connected with the fields and hills," he says.

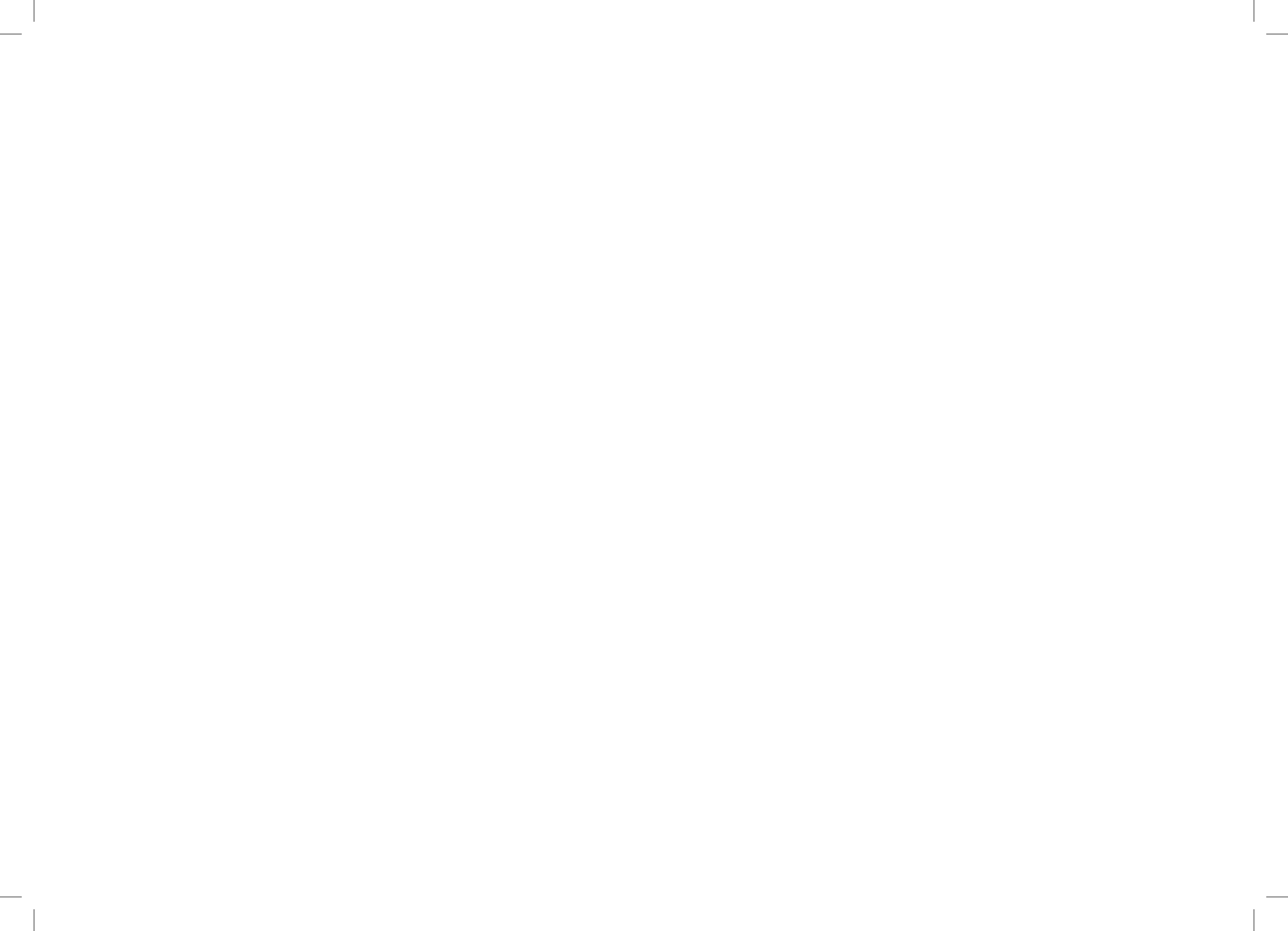
"And we enjoy being able to cut the grass in 10 minutes!"

The couple have enjoyed their semi-rural surroundings and hope to stay in the area when they move.

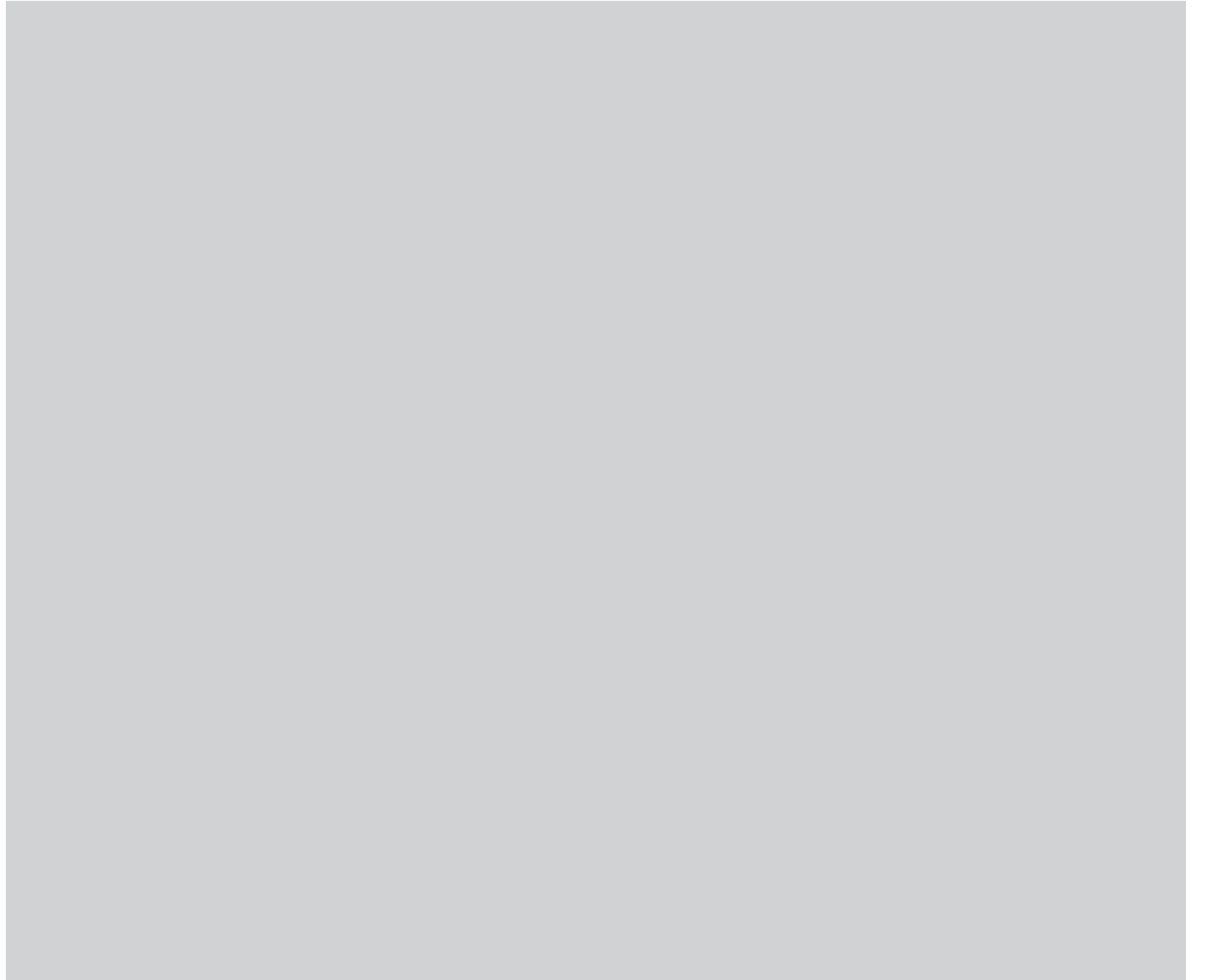
"But we will miss this house: the space, the curves and that sense for the first time ever of having started with a blank sheet of paper and then creating a home to meet our needs exactly," he adds.

"AT THE CORE WE WANTED A LIVING AND KITCHEN AREA, WHERE WE COULD ALL GATHER."











ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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