

# Power To The Conservatory

Does the conversation from fitters of conservatories go something like this “hey Walt you have one of those neon screwdrivers and fit the plug on the kettle so you can be the electrician” unfortunately this shouldn’t be the case and qualified personnel should always be used.

In today’s conservatory people want more and more electrical equipment and could have any or all of the equipment as listed.

## **HIGH LEVEL IN THE ROOF**

- Lighting
- Fans
- Roof vent motors
- Ridgeflow ventilation units

## **LOW LEVEL ON THE WALLS**

- Power sockets
- Air conditioning
- Communications: telephones, computers, aerials
- Heating: by one or more of the following underfloor, convection heating, space heating etc

The electrical installation should be looked at as a major part of the project and as such should be subject to careful planning. Its not just a case of throwing in a cable or two, and tapping into the nearest ring main or lighting circuit and hoping there will be enough capacity there to run any or all the above.

The power distribution and cable requirements are more often than not overlooked, these two points are crucial to the successful electrical installation.

## **Cable Requirements**

The cable size and type are fully dependent on the equipment that is to be used on that circuit; lighting circuits for example are typically 20 to 100 Watts per lamp way therefore a small size cable 1.0mm<sup>2</sup> would be ok. Alternatively heating circuits could be in the kilo Watts therefore a larger size cable of 4.0mm<sup>2</sup> could be required

## **Power Distribution**

The power distribution should be via some form of distribution board with the correctly rated RCD’s (Residual Current Device) for each electrical circuit. This not only gives you protection against electrical shock, and protects the out going circuits, it also gives you local isolation should you require any maintenance on installed equipment.

Where and how do you run the cables? This should be looked at whilst the conservatory is being built, sockets and other low level devices could be easily be contained in either a CTS (cable trunking system), or should there be a dwarf wall with a cavity then the cavity could be used to contain the cabling.

Getting cables to the ridge or the roof vents is more of a problem and ideally should be done during the construction of the conservatory, and whilst the fitters are on site constructing the conservatory, this is where the planning is vital. Once the roof has been finished it can be very difficult to run the high level cabling as claddings will have to be removed or mini trunkin’s will have to be used, these can look unsightly especially if colours of the claddings are other than white or brown. If the electrician works with the fitter he can run the cables behind glazing bar caps or claddings

A competent qualified electrician who is trained to the current edition of the IEE wiring regulations should always carry out the installation of electrical equipment and cables.