

LIGHT HEARTED



Futronix's lighting solutions can cater for every part of the home

Sometimes an installation can be a simple, straightforward process. But sometimes, as DARREN HARVEY discovered, the client's smart demands can be quite extensive. Fortunately, Futronix are more than up to the job...

Situated on the northern perimeter of Hampstead Heath sits an impressive contemporary-styled family home called Longwood.

Built for the owner of one of Futronix's property-developer clients, in addition to the extensive reception, living and bedroom areas that make up the family home, the owner wanted to incorporate recreation and outdoor entertainment in the gardens, as well as the convenience of being able to work from an office fitting snugly into the design.

So, combining as it does the functions of both home and office, Longwood has been fitted with the finest lighting, audio-visual, computer and security systems available... which is where the Futronix Enviroscene came into play.

Let there be light

In all, a total of 11 Futronix Enviroscene 805 racks were specified and installed in two locations. Fabricated of corrosion-proof stainless steel, the Enviroscene enables installation of the main racks in the same location as the underfloor heating system and, together, these panels provide no fewer than 96 programmable lighting circuits – each with a maximum load of 5A.

Once in place, this extensive Enviroscene-based system provides control of all external lighting for the front and rear gardens and tennis courts, as well as interior lighting in the lobby and hallways, reception rooms, morning room, dining room, music room, kitchen area and office.

Plus, thanks to simplicity of control, a PC link to the systems allows monitoring, programming and control from the owner's office at the touch of a button, using Windows-based Futronix software.

The main living room, meanwhile, - with dining and lounging areas - is illuminated by several clusters of three grouped PAR recessed spotlights, which keep the ceiling uncluttered and thereby in keeping with the simplicity evident in the décor and modern furniture.

Additional ceiling lamps include individual PAR Flood mains halogen recessed downlights - more usually utilised in retail spaces - and with this many lights and circuits available the Enviroscene system can easily deliver a wide selection of lighting scenes' for any required purpose.

Additionally, Futronix P400 dimmers are installed in each of three bedrooms, with a P800 dimmer - complete with three remote switch panels - installed in the Master Bedroom / Dressing Room, each with all dimming and control functions built into the one module, an integral timer and 20 programmable scene settings to provide the same capability as the Enviroscene systems installed throughout the property.

Elements of design

Seeing as the owner wanted a dramatic entrance to the home and a warm feel to the hallways during the evening and at night, the designers responded

with translucent glass floor panels inset in the ground and first floor hallways and stairwell, backlit by fluorescent tubes dimmed using the Futronix 0-10v ballast controller option.

Complemented by tall, dark-framed etched-glass doors leading from the lobby to the various living areas, the contemporary design of this area is offset by the ebony-coloured stairs rising from the glass floor, the striking handrail set deep into a brushed stainless steel-lined recess, and by huge clear glass panels replacing the usual outer balustrades. Meanwhile, illuminating it perfectly are large translucent glass circular luminaries and low voltage dichroic lamp downlights inset in the ceiling, ensuring the stairwell retains the clean look design of the rest of the house.

The overall effect is stunning, combining sophisticated elegance and a welcoming ambience.

A design point that carries through to one of the reception rooms where dimmable fluorescents have been used effectively for backlighting the 42-inch plasma screen wall-mounted there.

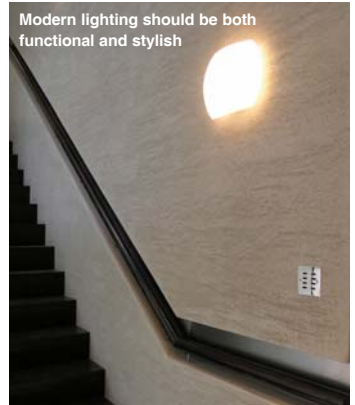
Set the scene

When it comes to security, lighting around the property has been integrated with the garden and landscape lighting, specially adapted by Futronix to operate either from the standard PIR security system or - at the flick of a switch - dimmed along with the pre-programmed garden lighting scenes.

External lighting extends to the contemporary-style plate glass conservatory, which runs along one side of the property, with low-voltage lighting linked into the system. Numerous PAR Floods - also linked to the main system - control general garden lighting.

Throughout the grounds, sandstone-flagged external walkways have been fitted with LED lights at intervals, subtly delineating the pathways at night. These walkway LED circuits and the glazed entrance lobby lighting have also been linked through an external PIR system custom-designed by Futronix which, between dusk and dawn, overrides the 'lobby' scene settings and brings the lights full on when triggered by a visitor. After one minute, if not re-triggered, the lighting reverts to the previously set scene.

All of which amounts to some of the cleverest architectural, lifestyle and secure use of lighting technology around. Thanks to Futronix, Longwood is now not only a stunning, contemporary home, but also a highly impressive haven of smart control, providing all the luxury and convenience of a true smarthouse. ■



Modern lighting should be both functional and stylish



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The lighting at Longwood integrates seamlessly with the properties contemporary interior

