

The main TV viewing room includes one of 12 flatscreen TVs in the property

INSTALL *of the month*



Safe and sound

This house in the North West of England puts security first, an increasingly popular choice, even for home cinema-centric installations

Most custom installations are based purely around fun – multi-room music and video servers, a few Sky+HD boxes and some stunning flatpanel TVs usually form the core. But a system from Cytech Europe is helping meet an increasing demand from customers for advanced security functions.

Home automation installer Morban has given a remote stone farmhouse on the West Pennine Moors has been given a hi-tech makeover and describes its core tech – Cytech Europe's Comfort Intelligent Home System – as one of CI's best kept secrets.

Built in 1870, the traditional farmhouse was modernised and extended as his family home by owner Nigel, a property investor and developer. His family – wife Ashley and two young children – love the ease and simplicity of a home automation system that they can all operate.

“Geoff and his colleagues are experienced enough to know that a patient approach is always best.”

Geoff Banks, Director of Morban, worked on this project for five months while the house was being restored, and identified that the key factor was the need for high security, easy remote access and no visible wires.

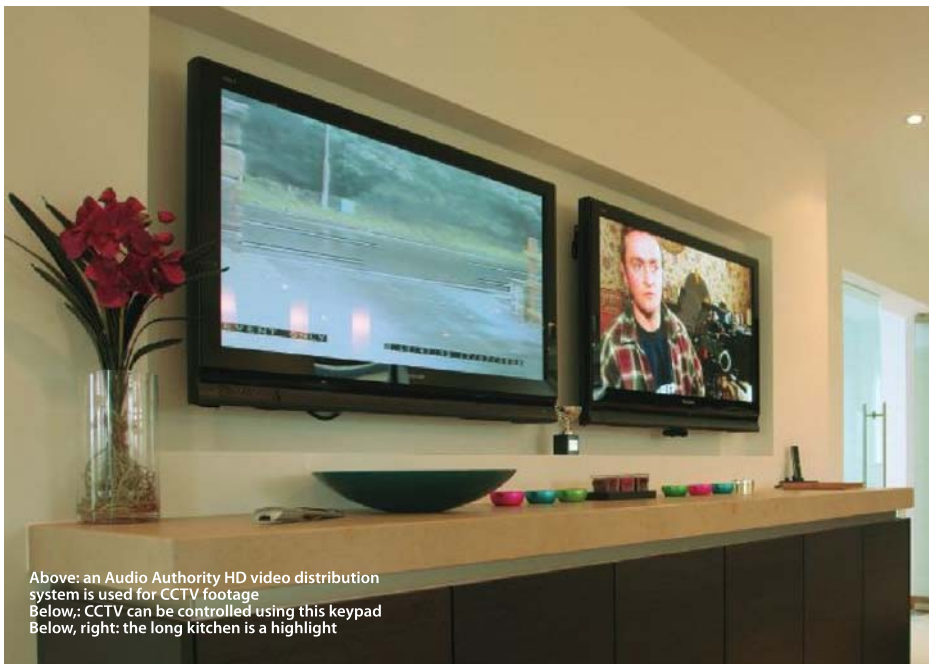
So why did Geoff select the Comfort Intelligent Home System? “It's built by Cytech out in Singapore and started as a device control system that rapidly adopted a security

aspect,” he says. “We've always thought it was a ‘best kept secret’ since we met the owner Chiu Lu Yung.”

Over the years, Geoff has seen the CI market change dramatically, but he and his colleagues at Morban were experienced enough

to know that a patient approach to projects is always the way forward. They spent a year and a half researching the market before they chose their products for this project.

“We didn't want to swap between product providers,” he explains. “We looked at the look and feel of Comfort, the ease of installation, the user interface, and, of course, the support.”



Above: an Audio Authority HD video distribution system is used for CCTV footage
 Below: CCTV can be controlled using this keypad
 Below, right: the long kitchen is a highlight



A caller at the front gate can be spoken to via mobile phone from any location

Too close for Comfort

In this installation, the Comfort Intelligent Home System from Cytech Europe used handheld and in-wall touch screen remote controls to operate the AV and security systems, gates, garage doors and Velux windows. The user can set timed programs to open the security gates automatically, and speak to visitors at the gate via mobile phone.

Inside the house, there's an AV server with HD video distribution system to 12 zones and centrally located and managed Sky+HD and Sky+ systems. The whole house audio system covers hallways and external patios, and includes both digital audio streaming of music and internet radio, and 5.1 surround sound systems to the lounge, snug and master bedroom.



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And, as everyone in CI knows, it's about people, not just products. "We constantly feed back info to Cytech and they react. A larger company probably couldn't – they listen to what we and the clients say – so it's not just a 'push' relationship."

The power of Comfort is the ability for programming. In this installation it operates the two sets of gates – one a quarter of a mile away and one on the boundary of the driveway. These can be operated by a voice prompted control panel beside the front door.

It's also all about security – if something is activated at home the system can ring the owner's mobile phone and tell them exactly which sensor has been activated. And if someone calls at the gate when the user is not at home, the call can be routed to a mobile, so a delivery van can

"Comfort operates the two sets of gates – one a quarter of a mile away and one in the driveway."

be let in, for instance.

The Comfort Intelligent Home System was installed to interface with control technology for the two gates, three garages, the Systemline audio control, three touch control panels and Velux windows throughout the house. Other tech installed by Morban includes the 12 flatscreen TVs (including a 65-inch plasma), an Audio Authority HD video distribution system for the TV and the CCTV cameras (using CAT-5), multi-room audio and video, and a 2.5TB AV server.

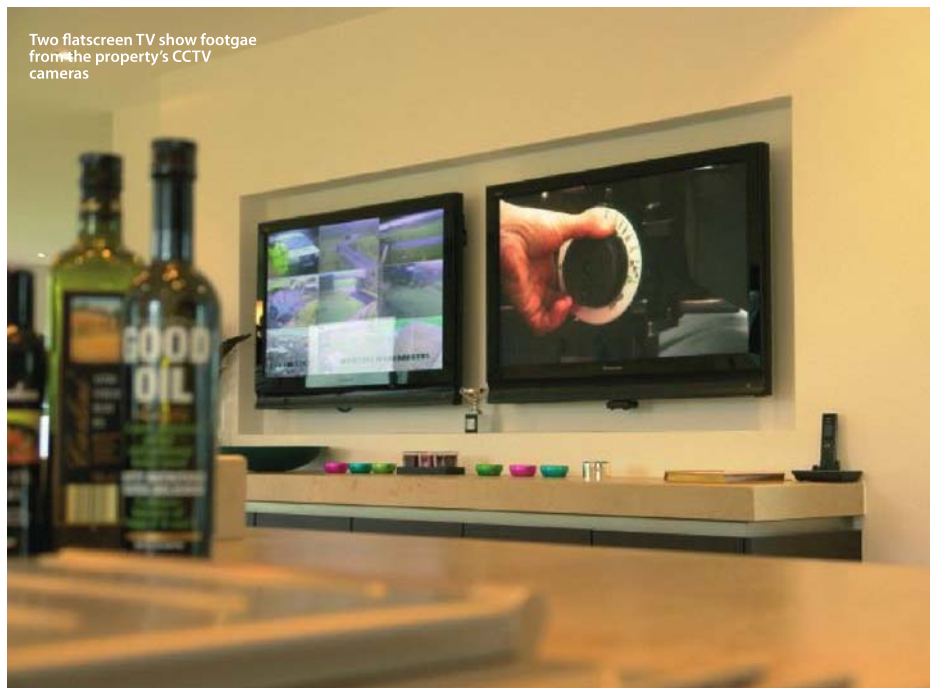
Geoff sees security – as well as lighting and heating – as growth areas in CI. "There's a lot of product out there and we can now take a client's ideas, and not only turn them into something that's easy to use and does what they want it to do, but we can constantly surprise them by doing something that they didn't even know was possible, and at a good price."



Even the bathroom sports a LCD TV – in this case, a waterproof model



The security system covers 12 zones within the property



Two flatscreen TV show footage from the property's CCTV cameras

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