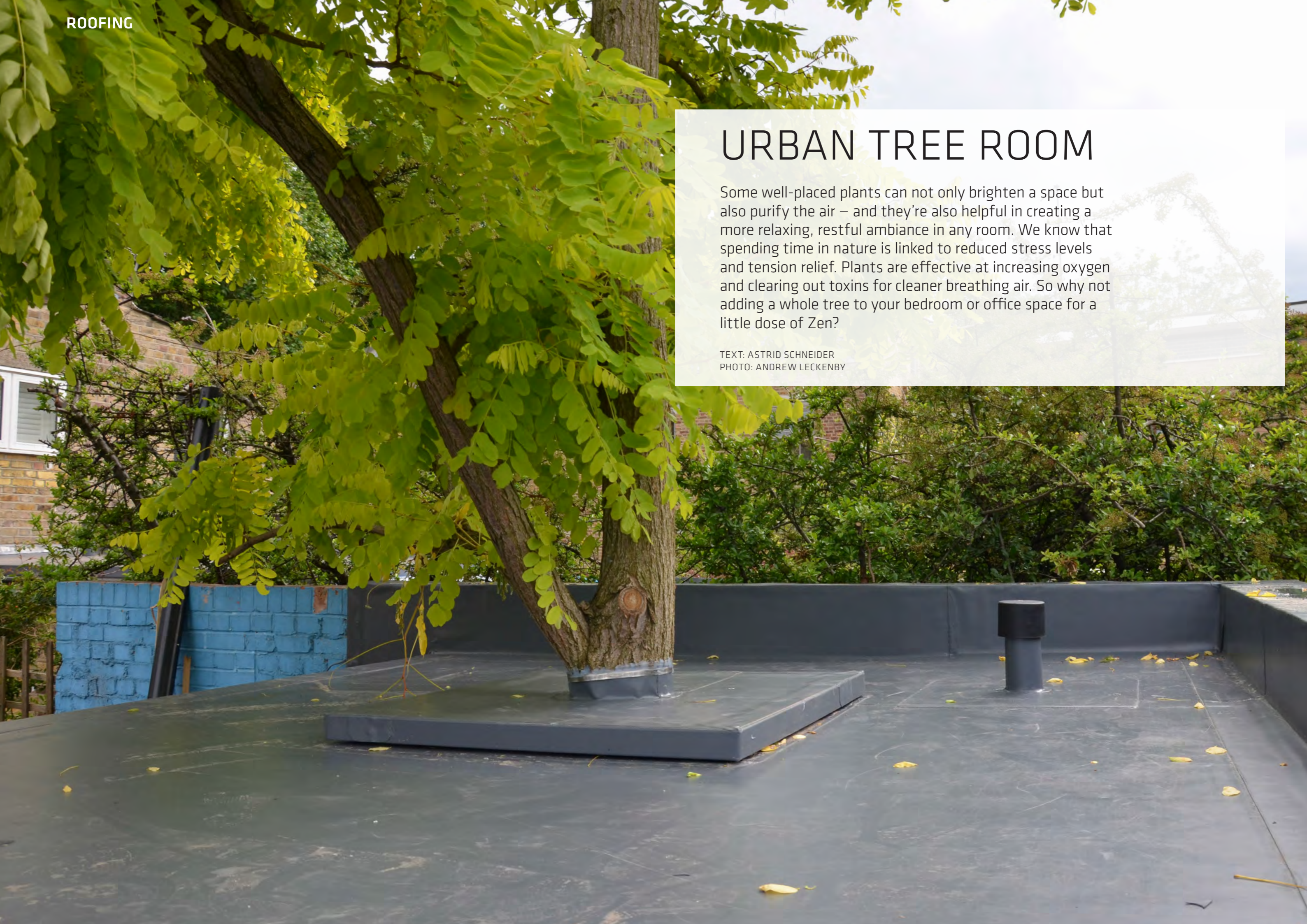


URBAN TREE ROOM

Some well-placed plants can not only brighten a space but also purify the air – and they're also helpful in creating a more relaxing, restful ambiance in any room. We know that spending time in nature is linked to reduced stress levels and tension relief. Plants are effective at increasing oxygen and clearing out toxins for cleaner breathing air. So why not adding a whole tree to your bedroom or office space for a little dose of Zen?

TEXT: ASTRID SCHNEIDER
PHOTO: ANDREW LECKENBY





The outcome is a striking, yet homely multi-functional space, used as a garden room that extends the summer season and as a home office.

The garden room, designed by Leckenby Architecture, in Hackney. Sika Sarnafil's durable and flexible single ply membrane was used in the roof to allow the tree to grow and sway.

> But plants and trees also enhance interior and outdoor design. Architects the world over have built commercial buildings and private homes with trees growing through the roof in one or more rooms, either through openings in the slabs or directly inside the building. Waterproofing the roofing is a particular challenge in such cases. This is why architectural greening of this kind is frequently only encountered in countries where the sun is shining virtually all year round. But this didn't deter Sika Sarnafil from constructing what is possibly the only building of its kind in the UK, when the company used its proprietary single ply membrane to waterproof a garden room with a live tree growing through it.

Hackney-based architect Andrew Leckenby specializes in working with private clients to improve their homes. But when it came to extending his family home, Andrew became his own client. Living in an urban area meant imagination was required to increase his living area.

Deciding to make the most of his home's outdoor space, Andrew settled on a garden room. However, the rear of the gar-

den contained a beautiful false acacia tree, which he did not want to remove. Thinking outside the box, Andrew drew up plans for a room that would incorporate the tree, making it the focal point of the space.

Andrew explained: "There are countless examples of trees being integrated with architecture - but these are generally found in countries where it doesn't rain quite as much! To be able to achieve the same effect in the UK, we needed a roofing membrane that was flexible enough to allow the tree to sway and grow, as well as being durable enough to keep the building watertight.

Andrew had specified Sika Sarnafil on many extensive commercial projects during his career working with larger architectural practices, so knew that the product would meet his requirements.

"Faced with a challenging roof design, I instantly thought of Sika Sarnafil. As the industry-leading single ply membrane, after decades of specifying it for corporate clients, I was confident that I could trust its quality and durability. In addition, Sarnafil's Registered Contractor

programme allowed me to identify an installer that had the training and experience to do the job - essential for detailing of this nature."

The finished article is a striking, yet homely multi-functional space, used as a garden room that extends the summer season, a home office - and not to mention a unique sleepover location for Andrew's son.

A member of the Sika Sarnafil technical team inspected the project once complete and gave a 15-year guarantee on the roof. The low maintenance membrane means Andrew only has to check the waterproofing once a year to ensure the detailing around the tree is still sound. A small price to pay, says Andrew, for such a fantastic family space. <

For more information visit <http://gbr.sarnafil.sika.com> Visit the Leckenby Architecture website <http://www.leckenbyarchitecture.com/> for more details on Andrew Leckenby's architectural design.