Design for the future

With most UK practices housed in converted domestic buildings, this can pose a challenge when designing your ideal space. Chris Davies offers some tips

These days, there is an enormous amount of pressure placed on dental teams to satisfy stringent infection-control protocols. Often, the team has to face several obstacles to do this, one of them being the practice itself.

It is no secret that most UK practices are converted domestic buildings. The downside of this is that the spatial aspects of the building have not been designed with the unique needs of the dental industry in mind. This can cause serious issues when transporting instruments from the treatment site to the disinfection and sterilisation area.

Meeting protocols

Of course, an experienced dentist can take a look around a building and make an educated guess as to how easy, or how difficult, it will be to meet all necessary protocols. So when you are having your dream practice designed and built from the ground up, choose a company that lets you take a virtual tour through your very own practice of tomorrow.

After discussing your needs and preferences, the company should then present you with images of what the finished project will look like. By this stage, you will have seen the preliminary designs, but actually seeing full colour artwork that shows you exactly what you will see when you walk into the practice after completion is a whole different experience.

Looking down on a technical drawing criss-crossed with lines and measurements does not give you the full story, and many dentists have found themselves treating patients in a practice that has not met the vision they had when they hired their design and construction company. When you select a company, ask their specialists if they provide a visual tour of the new building, with full colour images. If they don’t, can you really rely on them to provide you with something close to your unique vision?

Vision for the future

The leading company will also go one better. By presenting you with samples of material and textures too, you will not just get a complete idea of the look of your new practice, you will also get the ‘feel’ of it. This gives you the perfect opportunity to change anything that you do not like.