

Property

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Wonder wall

A living wall is an eye-catching eco feature at this contemporary penthouse in Dublin's 'Silicon Docks', writes **Erin McCafferty**

109 THE WESTMORELAND
Address: Charlotte Quay Dock, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin 4
Asking price: €650,000
Agent: Owen Reilly (01) 6777100

Living walls, inside and out, are increasingly on trend with architects and designers. The walls, which are covered in living foliage, provide a splash of greenery on an otherwise ordinary structure, adding a more natural feel to an urban environment as developers and designers strive to be environmentally friendly in what they build.

You will see them on the sides of commercial buildings, in shopping centres, car-parks and even construction

hoardings. They're to be found in hotel lobbies, community centres and of course, in private homes.

There's the added benefit indoors that large amounts of plant cover will purify the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and impurities as well as producing oxygen.

But what starts off as a wonderful concept too often ends up as a tangled mass of dead shriveled leaves and stems, particularly if the wrong plants are used, if their particular needs aren't understood and tended to and if there's not enough light.

But in a bright and airy top floor

apartment at 109 The Westmoreland on Charlotte Quay in the heart of Dublin's Docklands, one couple has made a big success of their living wall design as a central statement piece in their overall interior scheme. Their verdant version contains 80 different plants which are thriving on a large square panel.

This 1,033 sq ft dwelling has two double bedrooms, two bathrooms and a balcony overlooking the city. But it's the unusually large open-plan kitchen, dining and living area that is spectacularly anchored for the eye by that vertical explosion of foliage.

Adding a living wall was the idea of owner Adam Starikiewicz, who bought the property in 2016 with his wife Natalia Starikiewicz. He hit upon the concept while renovating the apartment. "I'd seen living walls in other apartments and offices and I liked how they looked," he says. "We did some research online and decided to go with it."

Their living wall, which features ferns, spider plants and angel's wing, among other plants, has thrived. "It's remarkably easy to maintain," says Adam. "You simply fill up a tank of water on the wall once every four

to five weeks and it waters the plants automatically. From time to time, Natalia will do some maintenance, removing dead leaves and cutting the plants back, but it's not a big job."

The apartment itself has helped the cause for this greener interior. Its floor-to-ceiling windows and huge overhead skylights ensure the wall mounted plantation has plenty of natural light to help it thrive.

It helped with their apartment

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