

# Website's contract runs cowboys out of town

A website set up to expose cowboy builders has produced a contract to help empower consumers, thanks to an ex-builder from Mells.

Mike Edwards, the business development director of the DIY Doctor website, said the free document provides an easy to understand contract to bridge the communication gap between homeowners and tradesmen.

The Desired Outcome Building Contract outlines the responsibilities of the homeowner and the builder in domestic building work, to save time and reduce the potential for setbacks and un-

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foreseen costs.

He said: "Consumers commonly place high emphasis on the price of the job and so therefore do their homework in getting quotes beforehand.

"But often this is where the precautionary measures end. The majority of builders and tradespeople are honest operators who price their work fairly; a good contract should protect them as much as it protects the homeowner.

"However, there are any number of unscrupulous rogue traders out there that

will not think twice about landing a job by offering a very cheap price – and then spend the next week dreaming up a list of extras, or additional, unforeseen problems for which they will charge an arm and leg to overcome."

Over the last five years DIY Doctor has surveyed more than 100,000 people about their fears of having tradesmen in their homes.

Findings show the biggest fear of more than 80 per cent of these homeowners to be that of feeling out of control – of both their home and the cost of the work.

The contract is recom-

mended for use by homeowners with domestic projects not exceeding £75,000 in value, where no architect, building surveyor or consultant is being employed to oversee and advise.

Mr Edwards added: "By setting things out clearly from the start, there's a far better chance that the end result will be successful for both the builder and customer.

"Anyone who has a builder lined up for a job who is unwilling to sign a contract it's better to steer clear."

For more information visit [www.diydoctor.org.uk](http://www.diydoctor.org.uk).