

We create homes to encourage connection and belonging,
that are designed to enchant every sense, and planned for living.

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Thank you for taking the time to discover more about Brown & Brown. We are a small architecture studio working on contemporary new-builds, unique extensions and substantial refurbishments. All our work is residential, developed through close collaboration with clients. We design homes that are a quiet and respectful response to place, both rural and urban.

This practice profile is an overview of how we work, and what you can expect of the process when designing and building your own home. As every project is unique, there is no exact formula for designing a new home — particularly knowing what it will look like, what it will cost and how long it will take. However, If you are considering commissioning an architect for your own home, we hope you'll find this guide useful.

We're here to discuss your ideas and answer any questions you may have.

Andrew, Kate — and the Brown & Brown team.

Brown & Brown is a multiple award-winning, modern architecture studio based in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, with a smaller base in Inverness. We are a design-led practice which helps people build contemporary homes that connect to themselves, to others and to their surroundings. Although our roots are in the heart of Scotland, we work across the UK.

We design buildings for some of the toughest rural environments where climate, site access and materials must all be carefully considered. We also have experience working in urban locations, which can of course bring their own unique challenges.



The impact of beautiful, thoughtful architecture can run deep — beyond the building itself — forging a connection between inhabitants and surroundings. We will design a home unique to you and which is specific to the location; guided by our technical expertise and experience, we aspire to create something better than you ever thought possible.

While every home we design shares a common ethos, every building is unique. Each is a response to landscape, site, history, materials, and client.

That is why we believe that there is no such thing as a typical ‘Brown & Brown’ home.

Sustainable architecture is all about minimising the carbon footprint of a project, and at Brown & Brown we have always taken our responsibility to this seriously. We aim to tread lightly.

Everything — from choice of materials, how these are transported to site, transparency of the supply chain and supplier practices, to decisions around how to heat a home — has a consequence. All these elements contribute to the impact a building project will have on the environment.

We will always design to current best practices and seek to understand the consequences of our decisions before we make them. By incorporating sustainable practices into every aspect of our work, we are proud to deliver low-carbon modern homes that are thoughtful, elegant and award-winning.



We know that the process can feel very personal, perhaps even overwhelming, and that there is a vulnerability to opening up and sharing thoughts, ideas, memories and inspirations.

We've helped lots of clients to work through their ideas and to visualise the life they truly want to live — so we can design them a home to make that happen. We can also help you to create a home with meaning and connection, to live the life you desire.

We understand that for many clients, building a home may be the biggest undertaking of their lives, often with their lifesavings. This is not something we take lightly at Brown & Brown and we are always honoured to be entrusted with such a task — and look forward to developing a deep and long-lasting relationship with our clients.

Designing a building is one thing, making it real is another. The process can feel complex and decisions daunting, and at times the project might feel out of your hands. There is no doubt that getting there can be a challenge, but we are here to guide and support, and help you to create a home of sanctuary and connection.

Here's what to expect from the process:

- The brief
- Site visit
- Initial design
- Planning consent application
- Building warrant application
- Construction documentation
- Tender administration
- Construction
- Post-completion

Project stages

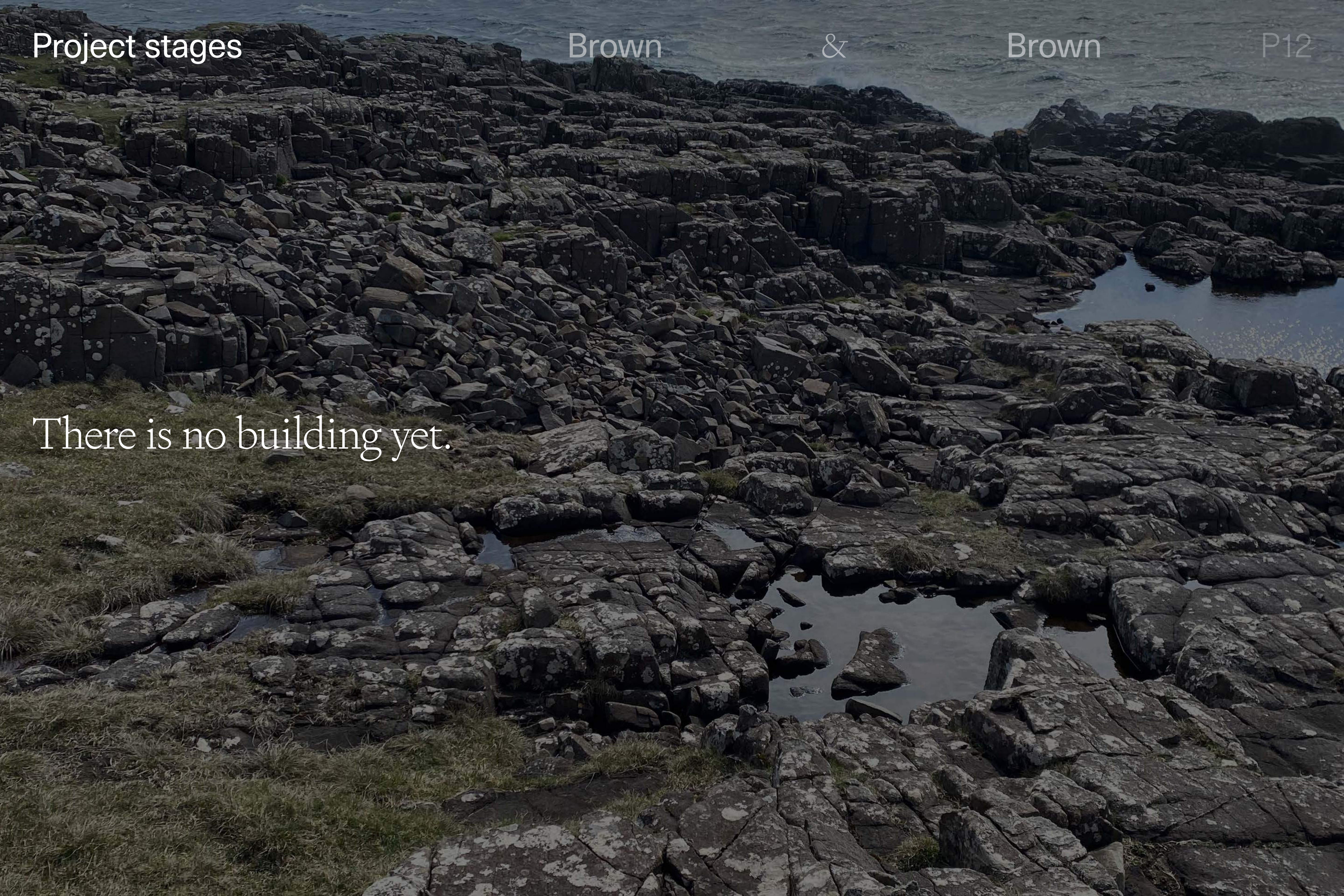
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There is no building yet.



The brief —
It all starts here.

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At Brown & Brown we never know what a new building will be like before we begin.

Memories, objects, a time or a place, light and shadow, colour, and people — past, present and future — can all inspire how and where you'd love to live. We'll discuss your likes & dislikes, expectations, budget and location. If you already have a site we will make arrangements to visit, if you don't we can advise on the steps you can take to find the right plot and see if we can assist.

We also encourage you to share your inspirations which is a great way to understand your ideas, however random they might feel. We typically use private Pinterest boards, but can work in other ways too. We'll help you to focus these into ways your build can (literally) take shape.

Site visit —
A place of promise.

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Once you have a plot we'll visit to assess everything: terrain, soil, aspect, light, services, neighbours, access, logistics — all these will influence the outcome of a design and may require a different approach from any ideas discussed at the briefing stage.

Ideally, this first visit will be with you present so we can discuss any findings on site as we explore it.

Initial design —
There is no building yet.

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We might all agree on how your home should feel (and how it should make you feel) but we can never assume to know what it will look like, what the layout will be, or what materials we'd use.

We believe in teasing it out gently — an intelligent meeting of ideas, place and expertise- with a focus on sustainability, craft, quality materials and fine details.

With our understanding of all of these, we'll present you with 2-3 designs that capture the essence of the brief and explore the possibilities of the building and the site.

Although we might not be able to incorporate everything you hope for, we always aim to create an element of surprise and playfulness to our proposals.

When you are happy to, we move to the next stage.

This is very much a behind-the-scenes stage that can feel frustrating and slow, but is a vital part of the process. It is when — for the best chance of success — local authorities are consulted to help finalise formal planning application plans.

From these discussions we can refine designs to account for practicalities, potential issues and planning considerations. We'll naturally share these with you to ensure you're happy with the planning proposal that will be submitted. We can also help with packages to help explain your plans to any neighbours that you'd like to keep informed.

We are then able to submit the designs for planning consent, without which the project cannot proceed.

This is a vital phase where we begin the process of consulting with and co-ordinating specialists such as structural engineers, SAP assessors and heating engineers. Occasionally we may need to refine details of the design based on their feedback, so we can make the application for a Building Warrant as smooth and successful as possible.

This is also the perfect time to start planning the interior, furnishings and landscaping (see ‘Additional Services’ for packages we offer and practical ways we can help). Although it may seem very early in the project, starting to gather ideas now can save a lot of time and stress as the build gets underway.



Portsoy Boatbuilding Centre, Aberdeenshire

Construction documentation — Stating the obvious.

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The construction documentation is the backbone of the project — it sets out what the building is going to be in detail so that the job can be put out to tender.

There is no one size fits all with contracts so we'll discuss the options best suited to the specifics of the build, the site, and also what particular expertise might be needed.

Things start to take shape as we seek the best contractors for your project. We're looking for the right contractor for the build, but also one that's a good match to you — it's an important relationship and part of the process we encourage you to be involved in. Tender responses will also include a current market price for the build — which may be beyond originally expected costs due to fluctuations in material costs. If that happens we'll discuss any modifications we can make to fit the budget — for example using an alternative material or changes to the design itself. We'll manage the responses and make a balanced judgement to report our recommendations to you. Once we have agreed and appointed the contractor, we're ready to start.

As we move from planning on paper to preparing the ground, the project gets very real. Plans are marked, ground is broken and foundations are laid. We'll be visiting the site every fortnight to catch up with you and to check progress. We'll also be on the lookout for any concerns from you or the contractor that may need addressing as the build progresses.

There are also several points that will involve sign-off and certification during this phase, before we can move to the final, and most rewarding stage.



Spyon Cop, Glenbuchat

Post-completion —
Over to you.

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We'll have been on quite a journey together, and we extend our heartfelt congratulations as we reach this significant point in preparing to pass the baton.

Although our job is largely done, the last and most important one is to complete a final, comprehensive inspection of the building.

This highlights any issues which we discuss with the contractor and agree a schedule for these to be remedied. This is an essential step, to ensure that the building is completed to the highest standards that we are proud to uphold at Brown & Brown.

Post-completion —
Over to you.

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Crucially it enables issue of the Final Completion Certificate — and also handover of the project — when you are into the final phase of shaping your new home. We are always here to offer advice and can help with the finer details of interior design and sourcing, if you choose.

Finally, we might wish to discuss featuring your home as one of our case studies on our website and other materials — it's a huge honour for us to be able to share your story and show others the potential of collaboration and connection.



We have a wealth of knowledge, expertise and trade connections to support your project, from early stages to post-completion.

We offer a number of different visualisation services which can bring your project to life and can really accelerate the decision-making, especially in the early stages. These often enable us to shortcut the numerous iterations typically needed when we are relying solely on drawings and plans to convey the scale, layout and spirit of a building.

Options include:

— Creation of physical 3D scale models

Physical 3D scale models are traditionally created to visualise the build. They are very valuable as a physical representation of the building, scale form and layout, but harder to emulate material, light and setting.

— Photo-realistic visualisations

Generated imagery can often bring a project alive for the client, and has been a big part of the success of many of our projects. Computer-modelled and rendered photo-realistic representations can include materials and even interior fittings. These are undoubtedly the closest thing to seeing the finished building, even representing the location's setting and lighting.

— Detailed room plans including finishes, items and specifications

These can really help to understand the space and aid in making choices at the later stages. These, as well as computer-generated visuals, are often combined with our full interior design packages.



Westerton Road, Aberdeen

We offer a range of optional design packages that take your build from ‘completion’ to finished — in other words, the fixtures, fittings and details that make it a home. Choosing to work with us beyond the handover means we can curate a fully complementary interior that matches the ambitions of the building and that suit your style of living.

We offer the following:

- Design of furnishings & integrated fittings
- Bespoke kitchen design & build
- Full Interior design packages

You are no doubt wondering how much you'd have to spend to achieve what might be a lifelong ambition. There is no simple answer — it depends on the land, the location and access, the design and the level of finish.

Every build is unique, so projects that might appear similar to what you have in mind, may be drastically different in cost. As a guide however, our homes typically cost upwards of £3,000 per m², as we work at the upper end of residential projects.

Architect fees naturally need to be considered too. At Brown & Brown we provide fixed-sum fees tailored to each project, rather than the typical model of fees based on a percentage of the expected build cost. In this way you are able to budget for our costs right from the start of your project, with no surprises.



A challenging but highly rewarding project involving the complete refurbishment and extension of this historic cottage in Rothiemurchus, near Cairngorm Mountain — in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. The brief was to create a modern home that could be used as a large sociable space, or as a series of smaller intimate spaces, for an extended family to enjoy this stunning setting.

A dilapidated steading next to the original building was demolished and the stone retained to build a new plinth for the extension. A local quarry — the source of the original stone used on the site — was reopened to match identical stone to the existing, to complete the plinth. This level of authenticity is a fine detail, but also meant transport of this material to site had a minimal carbon footprint.

Resting on the plinth is a beautifully simple glass and timber structure, flowing seamlessly from the original house. Sitting at the same level as the house, the extension floats high above the landscape at its furthest point, as the ground falls away beneath it.

Connections to the landscape beyond were designed to ebb and flow throughout the house, with differing views framed at each turn, in every space. From the expansive terrace serving the social spaces, to the focused view of the Spey Valley from the master suite, this home is enveloped by its spectacular surroundings.

Location: Rothiemurchus, Cairngorms National Park

Year Completed: 2021

Project Team: Andrew Brown, Kate Brown

Contractor: Spey Building & Joinery

Engineer: Design Engineering Workshop

Photography: Dapple Photography

Video: Wilding Film

Awarded:

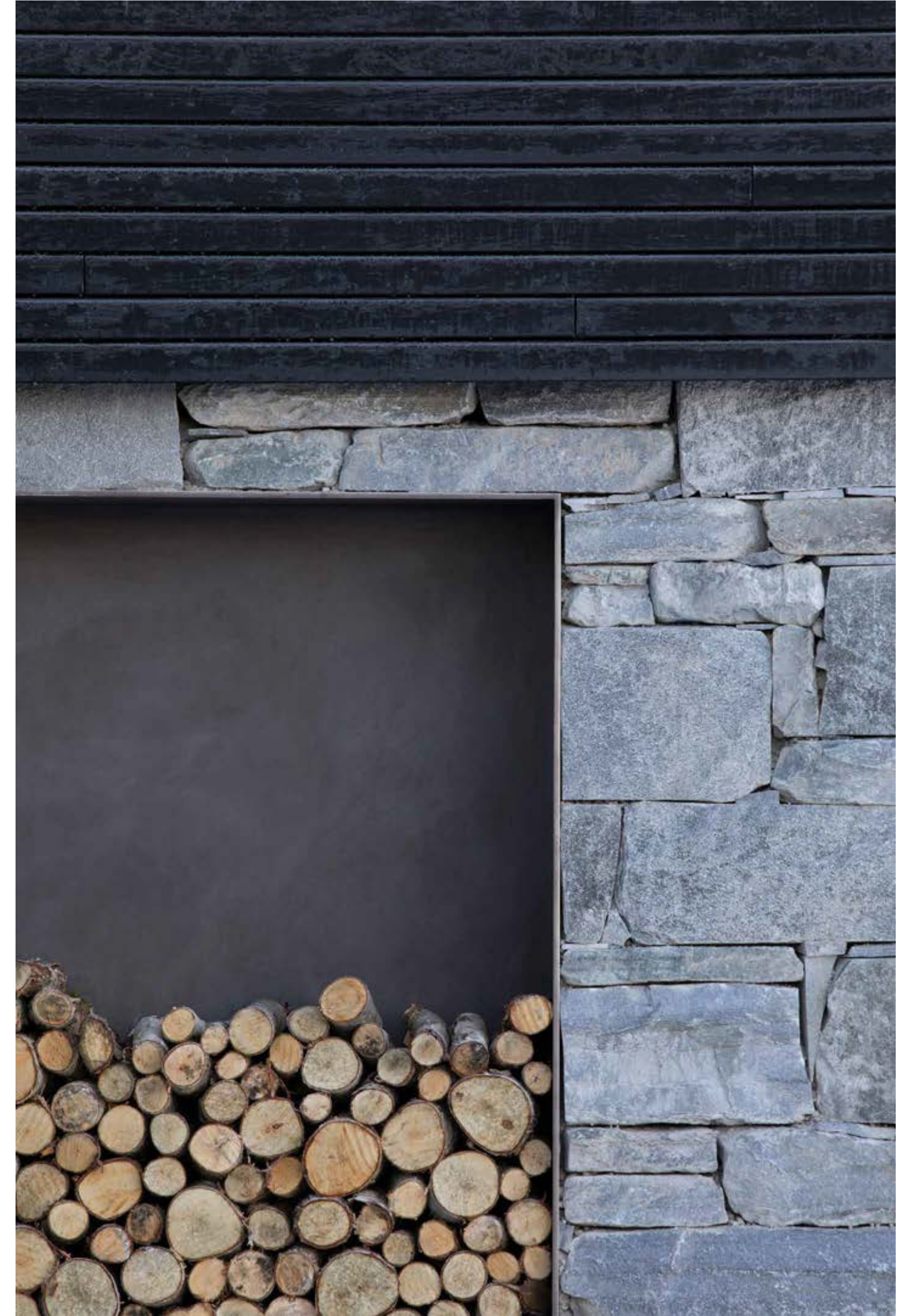
— AJ Manser Medal House of the Year Award (shortlisted)

— Scottish Design Award 2021– Chairman’s Award for Architecture

— Scottish Design Award 2021 (single home category)

— Saltire Housing Design Award 2021 (single dwelling)

— Aberdeen Society of Architects Award 2022 (residential category)





“Brown & Brown have been fantastic to work with. This includes the studio team and the various professionals that they curated for the build: environmental, engineering, building and joinery, even interior furnishings and lighting. From the beginning, we have been delighted with their fresh inspiring ideas in the design. The details are beautiful — the blackened steelwork throughout the house and the exterior stonework, for instance. We wouldn’t hesitate to work with Brown & Brown again on an ambitious project.”

See more of our projects [here](#).





Founded in 2010 by Andrew Brown & Kate Brown, the practice has gone from strength to strength and is now a small but dedicated team.

Although Andrew & Kate continue to bring their collective experience and quiet approach to each project, every person at Brown & Brown has earned their place. Hand-picked, nurtured and actively encouraged to contribute as equals — everyone is entrusted to carry the Brown & Brown name, ethos and values.

Andrew Brown — Founder

Kate Brown — Founder

Phil Booth — Senior Architectural Technologist

Alex Rece — Architect

Hazel Roe-Bose — Architect

Lukas Meurer — Architectural Assistant

Neil Macalister — Architectural Assistant

Brown & Brown are registered with the RIAS and also the ARB.

