Underfloor heating (UFH) is another way to heat your home and is growing in popularity. There are two types of UFH system. There's the WET system where hot water is pumped through pipes beneath your floor and the ELECTRIC system where electricity is used to heat coils which are usually encased in matting. Not all UFH systems are compatible with all types of flooring and some flooring is not compatible with UFH.

The heat generated by your UFH system needs to pass through various layers in order to warm your room and it's therefore important that the subfloor and floor are prepared correctly to ensure your heating is as efficient as possible. A thin latex screed on the surface of the elements is the most efficient subfloor, wood can be used but ultimately will trap more of the heat.

The best types of flooring for UFH are ones that efficiently transfer the heat to the surface of the floor. So once you've decided on a wet or electric system, it's time to decide which floor is right for you and your home.

If you're thinking of a solid wood floor, then you should avoid all types of UFH. This is because the UFH will heat the wood and cause it to expand, when the temperature falls the wood will contract, and doing this repeatedly may cause your wood to warp, split or separate. For the same reason you should avoid a solid wood floor in a kitchen or other area prone to moisture and fluctuating temperatures.

Engineered wood on the other hand is less effected by the changing temperatures due to the fact it is built with a number of layers. Do remember though, that as with other floor types you must ensure your floor does not exceed 27°.

Laminate works well with UFH as it is also made with multiple layers, but the same thing applies in that the temperate of the laminate must not exceed 27°.

Luxury Vinyl Tiles (LVT) are a common choice to compliment UFH, being both water resistant and very hard wearing. Once again you must ensure they do not exceed 27°.

You can also fit a standard vinyl over your UFH should you wish and this is a cost effective option that's easy to upgrade at a later date. Again, 27° is the maximum temperature.

Carpets are another option which will enhance your home and work well with both types of UFH, if considering carpet you need to ensure that the combined Tog value for the carpet and underlay is 2.5 or less, the lower it is, the more heat will come through.

Finally, you may wish to consider ceramic tiles, these offer the best heat transfer but are hard and cold, although waterproof and resistant to stains.

We recommend that before you purchase or commence the installation of your system that you speak to us. Whilst it's the responsibility of the UFH manufacturer to advise whether the system you are planning on purchasing is compatible with the floor covering you intend to use; we can assist with advice on the preparation works, which are frequently done incorrectly.

We'll guide you through the zones to set up and where to place probes under the floor. Frequently UFH is installed with just a wall thermostat which controls the UFH based on the ambient temperature in the room. Whilst this works well for carpet or ceramic tiles, it doesn't offer adequate control for other materials. If you experience an issue in the future you will need to be able to demonstrate that you can control the floor temperature independent to the room temperature, and without probes this is easily not possible.

It's important that you don't allow your flooring to exceed 27°, ever, and without a probe to measure the temperature you'll need to rely on other methods. If your system is already installed without probes, then talk to us and we'll explain your options.

And finally, when using your new UFH system, remember to turn it on well in advance of when you need heat, and increase the temperature slowly by 1° a day until you maintain the ambient temperature required. When turning it off again, reduce the temperature by 1° a day until it's cooled down. The reason for doing this is to allow your floor to warm up or cool down slowly and prevent issues.

When we come to install your flooring the UFH needs to be turned off at least 3 days before we arrive to allow it to completely cool down. However, you will need to ensure your property has alternative means of heating as the room temperature needs to be a minimum of 18° throughout installation. After we have completed installation allow the floor to cure for at least 24 hours before turning on the UFH and then increase the temperature by 1° a day until it reaches the temperature you require, provided of course that's below 27°.

That's it, enjoy your floor.