



## Timber Talks

regular news from  
WLW & PRO

Issue 198

March 2012

**Hardwoods • Machining • Worktops • Cladding • Decking • Gates • Fencing  
and so much more.....**

### NOW Available - OAK ..... with knots!!

What a funny industry we are in. We deal with a natural product, one of the only renewable resources in the world, but do we truly understand it's properties or beauty. Or rather do we really make an effort to ensure our customers understand the raw material that we convert?

In the UK we live in a predominantly rural environment, there are few roads in the country where you cannot see trees, even in our major cities, everyone can see the branches which provide shade in the summer, even from the occasional shower!

So why have we such an insistence for timber without knots? Now it is understandable where it would affect a product's structural stability, but in many products it is purely aesthetic. Knots give the timber character and warmth, yet we

get many complaints that this timber or that has knots!

We are regular visitors to the French sawmills and timber industry. The French do not understand our insistence on high proportions of clear timber, they have a natural love of the character that knots, pin holes and splits gives to the end product. Indeed, during a recent visit to France we noticed in one particular old building, the walls were constructed with timbers similar to the falling product that we now send for chipping!!

So where does the UK's passion for clear timber come from? Is it the makeover TV shows? Although there are not many of those now. Is it the up market property magazines? Is it so called experts selling the wrong story? Or is it a mixture of all of the above together with our industry not

helping to educate our customers.

Although our industry is centuries old, many of the traditional craftsmen who fully understood timber have now, sadly, gone. We need to educate both our new generation of craftsmen and our customers that knots, pin holes and splits are natural in timber, they enhance the beauty, without affecting the strength. Timber is a resource that we should take more care with, we should use the parts of the tree that often get rejected at present.

Let's take a fresh approach and start to understand how to use all of the product in the products that we make, and not just reject timber instead of taking time to think how to use it in our products.



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### WESTS WOODSHOW

We have taken the decision NOT to hold a Woodshow in 2012. We have run the event for seven years, and we feel that the format has become a little tired. We do have ideas for a new format, and will be putting plans together over the coming year. It is probable that it will not be until 2014 that we launch the new look show. **We will, however, be holding specialist days. Please keep an eye on our website. We will also be mailing out details to customers on our mailing list. Contact the shop if you would like to be included on this list.**

*We would like to thank all of the exhibitors, suppliers and members of the public who have supported the past shows. Keep an eye on our website for future events.*



# Timber Talks

## Oak Sandwiches ..... mmmm tasty



The advantage of laminating timber into Engineered sections are:

- Lamination increases the stability of the timber section.
- The section surfaces can be made free from knots and other surface defects.
- The process reduces the risk of surface movement and splits.
- Smaller sections of wood can be utilised which reduces waste and the pressure on our forest resources.

There are many sizes and sections of laminated European Oak available off the shelf. Most off the shelf laminates are made from numerous small sections of lower quality wood glued together with an envelope of good timber surrounding the core. Problems can occur where the sections are machined (turned into stair spindles etc) which exposes the lower quality inner cores along with gaps in the glue joints.

To solve this issue we have worked with a Polish manufacturer to make European Oak Sections 90mm x 90mm manufactured from two pieces (two lamels) of Oak to make an

“AA Grade Laminated Component”. These are at the top end of the market, and made from raw material which is at least 3 sides clear (similar to the top grade QFA). The lamella in each piece are carefully selected for grain, moisture and colour match -you can hardly see the join!

The 90mm x 90mm Lengths will generally be available from 600mm up to 1200mm although other lengths up to 2500mm can be specially made. These are suitable for a wide variety of internal applications (stair newel posts, table legs etc). Finding out what lengths the market needs is not easy, so your feedback would be appreciated. We can also offer 41mm PAR and 44mm sawn laminated Oak squares for turning into spindles.

One massive bonus of our partnership is that as well as stock items we can offer tailor made European Oak laminations in quantities of 6m<sup>3</sup>, rather than full lorry loads (30m<sup>3</sup>) which most manufacturers offer. The sections available are:

- Edge Glued Panels, 18mm & 24mm thickness x 600mm wide Solid (not FJ

in the length), falling lengths 2600 – 1000mm at 100mm increments

- Table Tops, 30mm & 40mm thickness x 900/915mm wide
- Stair Treads size
- Spindle Blanks in solid European Oak 41mm x 41mm finished PAR or 44mm x 44mm in a sawn finish.

Another reason why we have developed our relationship with this manufacturer is that all of the Oak Laminations they produce are certified as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). The company uses Oak from Poland’s Forestry Service which has national FSC Certification. When Poland was a communist country its Forests were well managed and controlled with Russian based standards. These regulations and processes formed a good basis for FSC certification and needed tweaking rather than re-inventing in order to achieve FSC approval.

If you would like to see a sample of the 90mm x 90mm sections please contact the Sales Office.

### Offer

**Draw Side English Ash**  
ex 20mm planed 2 sides  
to 15mm  
£697.50m<sup>3</sup> + vat

**English Sycamore**  
ex 20mm planed 2 sides  
to 15mm  
£697.50m<sup>3</sup> + vat

All kiln dried and good  
to stain or clear finish

## Fencing the Downs

We have been working with Brighton & Hove City Council since 2009 installing and repairing fencing on their estate.



It is pleasing to see that they are choosing traditional fencing for a project that is ongoing on the downs.

They have been creating

areas to re-populate with sheep, to get the downs back to a state that they would have seen it several decades ago.

We have been installing cleft rail fencing on Oak posts with galvanised stock fence on one side of the fence.

We have installed Oak field and hunting gates keeping



the whole installation very close to what may have been seen on the downs many years ago.

## Olympic Bus Stops



Late in 2010 we were approached by **Art Public** to become involved in the **Bus Tops** project for the 2012 Olympics. They asked us to build a number of timber cases to house screens to show electronic art in 30 locations across London in the run up to the 2012 Olympics. The project was one of 12 commissions across the nation, one in each of the English regions and one in each of Scot-



land, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The original idea was to construct these using London Plane trees sourced from the many Boroughs of London. We spent a lot of time with Art Public manufactur-

ing and modifying the prototype case as we came across technical issues.

To enable us to mill the logs through our sawmill and dry the timber, it was essential that we received enough timber by September/October 2011 to produce the cases ready to go live in January 2012.

Unfortunately, Art Public were unable to locate enough volume of London Plane to do the job. Thankfully, in stepped Windsor Great Parks. We visited the park forester to select enough English Beech to do the job.

Now, those of you with a modicum of timber knowledge will know that neither London Plane or Beech are durable species, this was pointed out to our customer, who clarified that the project was planned only to last for 9 months. So we treated them with a good oil to protect them from the elements in that time. That in itself produced problems in achieving a good dry surface with the reduced tem-

peratures experienced in November and December.

The project went live as scheduled in January this year. We are proud to be working with Art Public on this project, and hope that we will have further projects together. We are also happy that we have been involved in some way with the 2012 Olympics. This was the second Olympic project for us, having been involved in machining some of the decking material for the Olympic sailing village in Weymouth.

**If you have a special project that you would like help to bring to fruition, give our sales team a call. We pride ourselves in working closely together with our customers to ensure a successful conclusion to a project.**

**01798  
861611**



### Offer

**Caucasian Elm 54mm  
T/T kiln dried  
£888/m<sup>3</sup>+vat**

**The 54mm has a unique grain very similar to the Japanese Elm, there are some wide boards here ideal for table tops and seat bases - be different!**

## WLW BLOG ????

What on earth are you on about — I hear you say? Well we do try to keep up with technological changes in the timber industry, and we are acutely aware that sometimes we are not always good at keeping our customers up to date with what we are doing and what we can offer.

We have started to correct this by more frequent updates on our website and more recently creating the WLW BLOG.

There are a few definitions for a BLOG, but basically it

is an extension of a web site that is ordered chronologically with the latest post at the top. It enables regular publishing of anything you wish to talk about.

You will see the following ICON on our website pages, click on it to see the latest postings.

We aim to ensure that there is at least one new post per week.

On the WLW BLOG pages there is a facility to 'follow', by pressing this button it reg-



isters your email with the website and you will be informed by email of any future posts.

We hope that this will be a new and informative way of keeping you up to date with the timber industry and what we are doing.

Have a look, see what you think, there's also a comments button to give us feedback, all comments will be available for all to see (as long as their not rude!!).

### Offer

**We have available a cancelled order of 11 handmade European Oak Lugged and Braced Doors 6'6" x 2'6" untreated.**

**These are not mass produced in China or Eastern Europe - but hand made in our workshops, truly Made in England!**

**On offer for £165 each + VAT or at a discounted rate of £155 each +VAT for orders of 5 or more doors.**

Big enough to cope, small enough to care — a family run business.

W. L. WEST & SONS LTD

## And finally.....



In the current times it is very hard to find a building team that is so dedicated to produce a unique building to amazing high standards such as Downley House.

incorporated many different building materials from concrete, steel and copper to natural stone, timber and glass, all blended expertly to produce a spectacular outcome.



Part of the external walls have been vertically clad in timber, with selected 1–2 grade European Oak, which is FSC certificated. The timber has been fixed and allowed to start weathering naturally, using stainless fixing with the drill holes being greater than the shank to allow for movement throughout the seasons.

cal alignment with a clever head joint to act as a feature and a practical weather.

Situated on the South Downs, the owner bought a derelict house and has incorporated the frontage of the original house into a contemporary building for his family.

We had only a small part to play in the build which I am sure Kevin McCloud would have been proud of.

The uniqueness of the project has been realized from a dream, into a home. The owner had a quite specific vision and worked with his Architect to make it happen. Skilled tradesmen ensured that there was a practical and quality outcome.

The site for the home has been excavated from the side of the downs. The building has

The Oak was conditioned before sending it to site to ensure the moisture content was approx 16%+-2% to give this the best chance for minimum movement. Some sound small features are permitted to keep costs to below budget and ensure the timber cladding looks real and natural. The lengths are all under 2.50m to ensure perfect verti-

The addition of specially selected Oak beams to form a substantial pergola makes this more of a mansion than a house. It is a wonderful example of clever design, expert trades and superb materials being brought together to result in a spectacular property that will stand proudly on the Downs for decades to come.



### Offer

#### Garapa Decking

With out doubt this is the best option for stability durability and bare foot traffic - compared to some. Excellent value 21 x 145mm smooth and grove

£4.90/linear metre +vat (This has been a best seller - now in its 7<sup>th</sup> season)

Go to [www.wlwest.co.uk](http://www.wlwest.co.uk) for our normal monthly offers



The mark of responsible forestry



Member of the Timber Trade Federation



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