

Ply away

Whilst some major companies already ensure their plywood comes from responsible sources, the guide indicated that there are still far too many purchasing unsustainable plywood manufactured, for instance, in China and South America with raw materials originating from threatened rainforests, such as those in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Brazilian Amazon. This is where FSC certified OSB that is CE marked in accordance with EN 13986 has a vital role to play, as a versatile and extremely tough alternative to all plywood available on the UK market.

"If there is the choice, I will buy FSC certified timber. The quality of the materials I use is also integral to what we do because it is our reputation at stake but price is often the number one concern for the majority of our customers and, through our quotations, OSB is shown to be the most cost-effective option with a comparable life expectancy. For the customer, they are going to get a finished

timber framed building that is guaranteed to perform, but will cost half the amount than if we had used plywood in the place of OSB."

Indeed, the dollar has risen against sterling in recent months which has in turn caused the cost of imported plywood to increase considerably. Combined with the ever-convincing environmental argument, OSB does provide better value for money, which is why more people like Roy are making the switch for both economic and environmental reasons.

"At the end of the day, I feel as a business we had to make the change to OSB because otherwise we would have lost out to our competitors. The important thing is to specify the right product for the job at hand, and the lower price-point of OSB means that we can produce high quality timber frame buildings without a high cost to our customers."

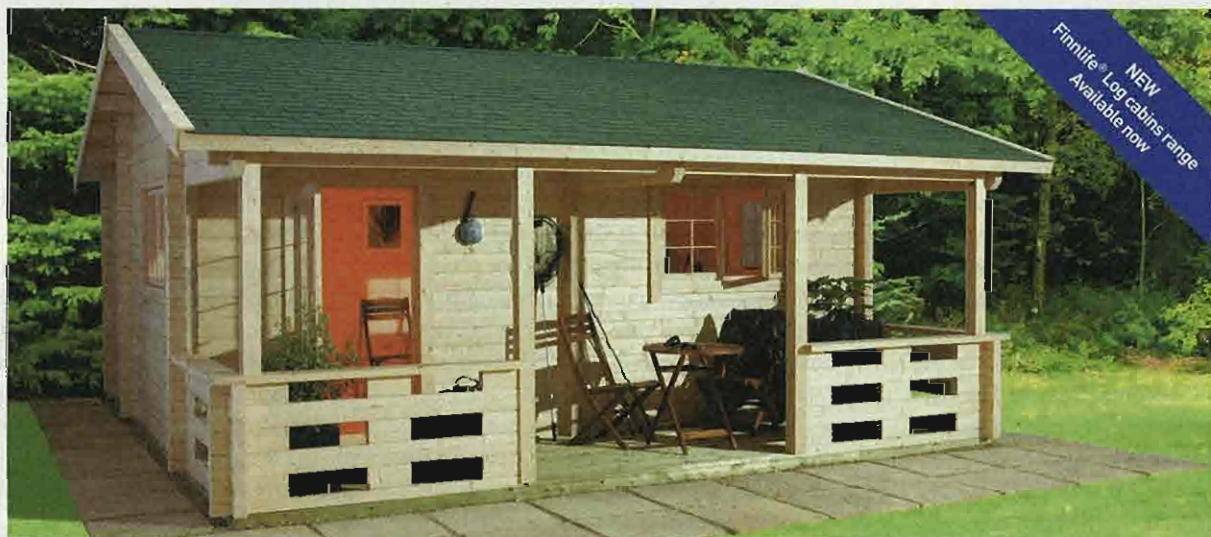
The JOSB Done campaign to promote



OSB – Oriented Strand Board – is now in its third year, backed by leading timber panel manufacturers Norbord and SmartPly, with support from major resin supplier, Huntsman, and the Wood Panel Industries Federation.

■ For further information on the JOSB Done campaign use the reader enquiry number below...

Readerlink enquiry 214



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With over 33 years of experience working with timber, Roy James certainly knows his panels. Setting up his own joinery business in November 2005, the company now employs three full-time and one part-time member of staff to help meet customer demand for their standard and custom-made timber frame buildings.

"When I started the company, I was a one-man-band based in a small workshop in Talgarth, and I set out to offer a range of timber frame sports and agricultural buildings," says Roy. "Within two years, the business had taken off and we needed larger premises to cope with the volume of work, which is when we moved to Hay-on-Wye, where we are now based."

Stand and deliver

RJ Joinery's success largely comes from the adaptability to customer requirements, with the aim to provide purpose-built timber frame buildings for a variety of uses, and part of this flexibility relates to the materials they choose to use. Roy explains:

"Originally, when we first started, we favoured plywood over Oriented Strand Board (OSB), as we were unsure of how it would perform. However, we saw our competitors start to use OSB panels and we wanted to see why this was becoming more common place. Once we started to work with OSB ourselves, we quickly gained confidence in its stability and longevity and know that in most given situations, it can live up to ply.

"We use OSB for floors, walls and



Achieving a high quality finish at the right price for the customer is all about knowing your timber panels, says Roy James, Managing Director of RJ Joinery. Here, he talks to *Professional Builder* about how he chooses the right material for the job to ensure the end product lives up to its customer expectations.

kickboard lining, plus 95% of the roofs we build are lined with OSB. This enables us to create a well-insulated building that keeps the heat out in the summer and the warmth inside for winter."

"Some people may be stuck in their ways and assume that OSB has a lower quality, but when you come to use it you realise it has that strength and durability you need. On occasion, I have had problems when buying in plywood and the consistency of the boards can sometimes be touch and go. In the past two years, the

issue of unsustainable plywood imports has been widely highlighted, and so I will now make a point of asking where the timber I use comes from."

This is a fact that has been brought to the public domain by a guide issued by Greenpeace last year, titled 'Setting a New Standard: Alternatives to unsustainable plywood in the UK construction industry', which cited FSC certified OSB as one of the most environmentally sound alternatives to non-FSC certified plywood for all manner of building projects.

