



Timber Talks

*regular news from
WLW & PRO*

Issue 196

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

European Legislation Changes

As part of the work being done to reduce the volume of illegal logging worldwide, the European Commission has agreed a regulation that forces everyone who trades in timber or timber products to have a due diligence system to check on the provenance of the timber or products they sell.

As members of the Timber Trade Federation we are signatories of the Responsible Purchasing Policy (RPP). This is an annually audited scheme

which entails us reporting on our annual timber purchases.

Having read the EU regulation, it does seem that it is open for interpretation. The regulation states that it is the operator first placing the timber or product for sale within the EU boundaries that has responsibility for reporting. It goes on to say that the 'trader' (anyone who sells or buys on the internal market) must be able to identify where the timber came from and who it was sold to, the information

should be able to be produced for competent authorities on demand and be kept for 5 years!

Another piece of legislation!



Iroko & Idigbo — Prices affected by Civil War

The United Nations has warned that Ivory Coast is on the brink of a new civil war, as post-election violence spreads from Abidjan to other areas. Alassane Ouattara is internationally recognised as having won last November's election, but the incumbent (former) President Laurent Gbagbo has not handed over to him. Forces loyal to the

former President have clashed with supporters of Alassane Ouattara.

Following EU Council regulation 25/2011 to impose restrictive measures on the Ivory Coast, European ships will not accept further bookings to collect loads of Idigbo and Iroko which means that timber exports have stopped and are not expected for some time.

As a result, there are already shortages of all thicknesses of Idigbo and prices have increased by over 30%. Iroko is expected to follow suit in the future.

It is unlikely that this situation will change in the short term. So when specifying these species, you should bear the increased costs in mind.

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WESTS WOOD SHOW 2011

Friday 6th & Saturday 7th May

Held at our site in Selham, all things wood.

Pop in and have a browse

Timber Talks

Exotics now in stock — in small sizes



Nicaraguan Cocobolo

We do try to listen to our customers, so recently Jo and Sonia went on a buying trip for the Shop. Their aim was to select a range of Exotic timber for you.

We now have a range of squares and rounds in the following species:

- Purpleheart
 - Zebrano
 - Lignum Vitae (Palo Santo)
 - Padouk
 - Madagascar Ebony
 - Nicaraguan Cocobolo
 - Roupala Lacewood
 - Pau Amarello
 - Chechem
 - Bubinga
 - Wenge
 - Mexican Cocobolo
 - Pink Ivory
 - Partridge Wood
- Pop in and have a browse.

A peep in the past

We were reminiscing the other day about how things used to be done and the question of sawpits came up. We do not really have pits any more because we have extraction systems, but prior to that pits were made large and they had to be dug out on a fairly regular basis or the green sawdust would smoulder and then catch light. Dust was then put into two hundredweight sacks and taken to the dumping grounds. A consequence of this was that there was always a surplus of sacks around and mill workers would double them over and wear them around the waist

as aprons and the yard workers would take an empty sack and turn one corner of the closed end into the other corner and use it over their head as protection from rain (rather like “hoodies” today). It didn’t matter how funny it looked, it worked and humour tended to be different then.

It often would happen that a new worker would be given the task to walk into town (about half a mile) to get a “left-handed” hammer at the ironmongers only to be sent back empty handed with the message that they only had “right-handed” ones and

“would that do?” The ironmonger was in on the joke and a raw recruit could be kept running back and forth with similar ridiculous requests for quite a time.

On one occasion the joke back fired as the charge hand who was making the requests found his shoes nailed to the floor when he went to go home that evening.

It was all done in good humour though, and one must wonder whether the company would be held responsible today through some obtuse “Health and Safety Regulation!”

Offer

German White beech squares

Part kiln dried

100 x 100mm 50 /
0.80m lengths based
on £2200m³ + vat
(£17.60 each + vat)



Industry & Education a partnership

Apprenticeships have hit the headlines recently. The need to train our young people in this country. I think all of us in industries that have manual trades would say about time! Over 10 years ago, we started a partnership when one of our directors was visiting Chichester College. He noticed a sponsorship sign from a local supplier. From there we came to an annual sponsorship of a quantity of hardwoods for the furniture department of the college each year.

We also started visits from the furniture department of, generally, 1st year students as part of their first year

studies. The aim of the visit is to give them an insight into the purchasing and conversion of timber and the sawmillers view. This has been very successful over the years, and continues to be so today.

Chichester is one of a few colleges that visit us. In the past we also had visits from Central Sussex College (Crawley) and Highbury (Portsmouth). Sadly, it seems some colleges have stopped their furniture courses. We work with Singleton Open Air Museum and West Dean College on their courses. On occasions we have visits from Buckinghamshire College (now Bucks New University) and a number of London colleges. One thing that has

become evident with the Chichester students, is the high level of quality and ideas. About 8 years ago we began sponsoring the Best Furniture Newcomers annual award, from that time it has been incredible seeing the improvements in standards. This culminated in 2009 in one of the college students, Luke Griffiths, representing both Chichester College and the UK in the World Skills competition in Canada where he won a Medal of Excellence. Proudly, Luke earlier also won our award.

It is clear to us that it is important to spend time with education and encourage the students to do well in their chosen career, after all, they are our future customers.

Chichester
college

Olympics 2012

Now don't get too excited, unfortunately we can't report that we have a competitor in our midst or that we are producing vast swathes of cladding for the Velodrome or Aquadrome but we have been involved with a couple of Olympic projects.

The yachting village in Weymouth, where we machined the decking.

But more recently we have been working with an architectural public space design company on a project sourcing London Plane Trees from within the 38 Boroughs of London. These are being donated to be milled and air dried. We will then part kiln dry the timber for exterior use. We will be making 32 angled rectangular boxes

approx 3.70m long by 1.20m wide, to house the electronics and display for public signs. These signs will give the games goer information in prominent locations around London.

This information technology is a first, and will have information regularly uploaded to them. Mounted on the roofs of bus shelters, these will be visible to passengers. Made to be robust and 'vandal resistant' they will be powered using photovoltaic cells.

The timber is all from a sustainable source felled in the inner London area. One of the main key issues to these games is its raw material sourcing and Carbon efficiencies.

Why Wood?

The main reason the team Art Public want to use timber is that it has a life span which will work within the life cycle of the games, through the lead in, during and at the close of the games. It works very well as an insulator shielding the electronics from variable temperature changes and conditions, the expansion and contraction of the jointing in the display boxes are predictable worked out for best performance. To see a wane edge on the front leading edge of the module has a real contrast to the high tech contents it's protecting. Osmo oil will finish the cases, and they will be left to blend into the background over time with UV exposure.



Offer

1 – 2 grade well air dried Euro Oak

**100 x 100mm
50/1.00m lengths
£1236.00m³**

(£12.36 each + vat)

Eggs - not just for breakfast

An American idea called the 'Big Green Egg' has reached our shores. In conjunction with a superb shop fitting company in Southampton we have constructed a display module to be built into a promotional Double Decker London Bus. Using 54mm Character grade Euro Oak Through & Through boards kiln dried, the table tops had circles cut out to allow the Big Green Eggs to sit in them.

What's a big green egg I hear you ask? visit

www.biggreenegg.co.uk to view them.

This ceramic method of home cooking has extended the life cycle of BBQ's and outdoor cooking into an art form. Originating in the USA and launched in the UK last year, this method of cooking will be promoted this year on a road show type exposure.

The target market is the Farm Shop, the organic market place. We have the option to make the tops and stands in Euro Oak which can be

wheeled around the patio/lawn/pool side.

Sample test marketing is going to take place in the next weeks ahead, the sizes of the eggs will dictate the construction of the 'F' jointed top and stout undercarriage to support their ceramic BBQ. We can make flat pack and sand and Osmo oil all the components using E Oak to a specification that lends itself well to complement the latest growing cooking method for 2011.



Fence Erecting improves after a slow start

2011 started where 2010 left off, slow!! But it seems that tenders are now being accepted and work is starting to trickle through.

Hopefully this isn't just budgets being used up before the end of accounting periods, but a general upward trend. We are part the way through installing 1km of

Dragons tooth bollards for a local NHS site.

Other outstanding tenders include repair to 3½ kms of fencing.

With regard to prices, steel prices are rising weekly, and have already risen some 15% over the past 6 months. Concrete products seem sta-

ble currently, but it is probable that we will see softwood products rising in price during April and May.

What you may not know is that we can manufacture and install softwood or Oak Pergolas to your sizes.



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

W. L. WEST & SONS LTD

Learn to Turn — Achieved!!



After a short break in our ability to offer wood turning courses, we have now held our first with our new tutor.

We first met George Karon through a friend of ours, Paul Bignall at the Bentley Wood Fair last year. George is a member of the Register of Professional Woodturners, and after a couple of chats and a meeting or two,

George liked the way we wished the courses to proceed and agreed to come on-board to take our courses.

At the moment we will only be holding beginners courses. These are two days in length, and, at George's insistence, are two very full days. In time we may add other courses to this. We have now just completed the first two

courses and they were well received.

We will shortly be publishing the dates for the next courses. These are held at our site in Selham in a purpose built training room. We include a light lunch, and we try to ensure you are able to have a browse in our shop as well. Keep an eye on our website for more details.

And finally.....

U turns in the forest — not easy with a log lorry! But the government have achieved it. We commented recently about possible changes in the Forestry Commission, well events have overtaken this, although we don't think they are out of the woods yet (excuse the pun).

But things mustn't stay the same. The 'about turn' was brought on through public protest, but this was, in the main, due to the public want-

ing to access the forests for leisure pursuits. Admirable as that may be, the reason for creating the Forestry Commission should not be forgotten. In September 1919 the FC was created to 'promote forestry, developing afforestation, the production of timber, and making grants to private landowners'.

Times have changed, and certainly the quality of the timber we are asked for has changed. But the require-

ment to continue to encourage, develop and produce UK grown timber is still here.

Leisure and industrial use of timber can co-habit, but there has to be an acceptance on both parties that this needs to happen. There has also to be an acceptance by the FC that more structured planting needs to take place, and from our perspective this means hardwoods!!.

Offer

Siberian Larch U/S FSC long lengths

25x150mm £2.96/m +vat excellent for external cladding and flooring work if re dried

Go to www.wlwest.co.uk for our normal monthly offers



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