

Welcome to the new style Vastern newsletter. We are a family-owned British hardwood sawmiller and timber merchant. Inside, you can read about some of the fascinating projects for which we have recently supplied timber, and of the interesting customers involved.

For more information on our products and services please visit our extensive website: vastern.co.uk

VASTERN TIMBER TRADER ISSUE 6





New clubhouse heralds golf course building programme

The new clubhouse at Woodbridge Park Golf Club, near Brinkworth, was built in 2007, using Vastern-supplied Siberian larch cladding throughout. The clubhouse includes a shop and members' facilities, and features a decked area with seating at ground level, and a first-floor veranda that gives fine views of the greens and the surrounding countryside.

The timber-built, chalet-style structure blends well into the landscape and would be equally satisfactory for commercial purposes or holiday letting. Siberian larch can be used untreated and unfinished for cladding, when, it is claimed, the product will last for more than fifty years. This is an extremely slow-growing coniferous tree that requires long, cold winters for its heartwood to develop properly. Siberian larch is unusually durable for a conifer, has good impact resistance, and good wear properties.

For this project, the current owner Boyd McKay chose a simple halflap cladding profile with 10mm x 10mm rebates, which, when attached creates a smooth, contemporary look. The lap joint can be altered to create a visible gap between boards, ranging from 2mm to 6mm, which increases the detail of the cladding and makes any shrinkage during the summer months less noticeable. Alternative profiles such as shiplap and T+G with V joint are also available.

Woodbridge Park Golf Club, Brinkworth, Wiltshire. T 01666 510 277

Product information

Species	Siberian larch
Profile	Halflap cladding
Dimensions	20mm x 145mm
Grade	Sawfalling / B grade



Vastern's Douglas fir frames new school hall in the Cotswolds

Vastern has supplied the British-grown, sawn Douglas fir (*pseudotsuga menziesii*) used in building the new arts, sports and drama hall at Wynstones School, Whaddon, Gloucestershire. Work is being carried out by Steiner-Waldorf students and volunteers from all over the world. Vastern-supplied timber is being used to make bow-string roof trusses, posts, rails, braces, aisle frames, and a mezzanine floor, which will form a viewing gallery. Timber bow-string truss technology involves labour-intensive but repetitive work that can be easily undertaken by volunteers.

Project Manager Richard Fox chose Douglas fir because it is “home-grown, naturally durable, and does not have to be treated with fungicides or pesticides”. This is useful if there is a reluctance to use such products on environmental grounds. Vastern was used “because of the quality of their timber, and because they could meet all technical specifications, provide the extremely large sections needed in quantity, and could guarantee stress grading and moisture content”.

Henry Russell is the professional carpenter on site, and a specialist in timber framing and conservation work.

Douglas fir was chosen because it is “home-grown, naturally durable and does not have to be treated with fungicides or pesticides”.

He regularly buys timber from Vastern, and on this project has used the company's fresh-sawn structural oak to make a pair of very strong shear legs – designed after a drawing in an 18th-century encyclopaedia – to raise the heavy bow-string trusses. The shear legs save the cost of hiring a crane, and Henry anticipates that he will be able to use them on innumerable projects in the future.

*Richard Fox can be contacted at
Yew Tree Farm, Whaddon, Gloucestershire.
T 01452 304 305*

Product information

Species	British Douglas fir
Profile	Sawn structural sections
Dimensions	Various
Grade	C16 / C24



Vastern's ash in landmark restaurant refit

“Vastern had some absolutely stunning English wild cherry flooring, which I used in my own house. Since then, they have always been my supplier of choice.”

Bristol's award-winning 120-cover Glassboat Restaurant, moored at Welsh Back in the historic docks area, has been in business since 1986. When owner Magnus Macdonald wanted to refit it, he turned to Vastern for the ash overlay flooring. Magnus says: “Vastern had some absolutely stunning English wild cherry flooring, which I used in my own house. Since then, they have always been my supplier of choice”.

Magnus and his business partner Arne Ringner built their restaurant from the remains of a Severn estuary barge of 1924, creating a microcosm of local industrial heritage by using reclaimed materials. The steel sides were originally Avonmouth molasses tanks; forming

timbers came from an Avonmouth flour mill; the wooden floors were from a Bristol print works; and the main floor and the glass of the windows came from one of Courage brewery's keg stores.

In the latest rebuild and refitting, the interior has been completely remodelled on two levels, and the stern is now a new glass box. The 65mm-wide tongue and groove floor boards used in the restaurant create a modern appearance, while the range of light ivory and olive colours, and strong grain pattern of the British-grown ash add a naturally organic feel to this eclectic interior.

Magnus commented: “the ash used in the restaurant marries very nicely with the original flooring, which was recycled oleander – a rare hardwood cut in the 1800s”.

*The Glassboat Restaurant, Welsh Back, Bristol.
T 0117 929 0704*

Product information

Species	British ash
Profile	Tongue and groove
Dimensions	12mm x 65mm
Grade	Mill run



Vastern oak in big Gloucester heritage rebuild

One of Gloucester's oldest buildings, a triple-gabled, double-jettied, timber-framed town house of c1530 in Southgate Street, is being completely rebuilt internally and is being externally restored using Vastern-supplied oak. This building was once associated with Robert Raikes (1735–1811), philanthropist, promoter of Sunday schools in the city, and his printer father who edited the Gloucester Journal.

According to St Blaise – the specialists in conservation and repair of old buildings – all the old woodwork was in terminal decay and in danger of collapsing. Essentially, the entire interior is being recreated as it was in pre-Georgian times. New posts, beams, purlins, roof trusses and bressummers within the building have been constructed out of Vastern oak, as has the reconstructed woodwork of the decorative and moulded façade.

Tim Potts of The Oak Frame Carpentry Company, which specialises in repairing ancient timber buildings, is creating all of the new timber framing and decorative woodwork on site. The company also works on heritage properties and new build using traditional and contemporary oak frames.

*St Blaise Ltd, Dorchester. T 01935 83923
The Oak Frame Carpentry Company,
Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. T 01453 828 788*

Product information

Species	British oak
Profile	Sawn sections and curves
Dimensions	Various
Grade	BS5756 THB / TH2



Vastern supplies Cotswold craft furniture collective

Vastern is the supplier of timber for Woodchester Studio, near Stroud – one of the Cotswolds' most prestigious collectives of designer craftsmen, working in the traditions of the Arts and Crafts movement. The enterprise has four partners.

Cabinet maker Nigel Wilson, who also operates as Auspicious Furniture, makes pieces to clients' requirements using Vastern-supplied English hardwoods, such as oak, sycamore, ash and beech. He specialises in chairs, tables, dressers, beds, sideboards, complete kitchens, and built-in fitments for any of the rooms in a house.

Chris Brain relocated his London business to Stroud three years ago. He uses Vastern-supplied oak to make windows, doors, a wide range of furniture, and the furnishings for fitted offices. Vastern also provides him with cherry, walnut and beech when his clients require it.

'Buying timber at Vastern is quite simply a great pleasure; the quality is excellent.'

Furniture maker, pole lathe tutor and demonstrator, and greenwood worker Paul Hodgson – who also operates as Green Man Workshops – is committed to preserving traditional skills in woodworking. He makes bespoke chairs and other furniture out of oak, ash, elm and sycamore, which are all provided by Vastern.

Adrian Bidmead – trading as Adrian Bidmead Furniture Design – is a specialist cabinet maker, furniture restorer, and woodcrafts teacher, working in a wide range of techniques and veneers. His speciality is individually designed reproduction furniture, made out of English oak, sweet chestnut, or cherry – all from Vastern.

The chaps at Woodchester Studio say that buying timber at Vastern is quite simply a great pleasure; the quality is excellent; there is no pressure or rush about the visit; they can take along their own clients to see the raw material; and everyone at Wootton Bassett is helpful and knowledgeable.

For more information on the workshop, visit woodchesterstudio.co.uk



Mixed hardwoods for new crematoria head office

Building contractors BG & AS Hallett of Chippenham selected oak, ash and Corsican pine from Vastern for the front door, staircase, architraves and skirting in the Westerleigh Group's prestigious new head offices on their extensive crematorium site near Yate.

Brian Hallett says of Vastern: "I can benefit from their expertise. You can tell Vastern what the applications are, and the conditions under which they will live, and be confident that they will always advise on the best wood to use for the job".

The client wanted a 'country-style' building to meld into the landscape, using native timbers such as oak and ash. All of the fittings were made on site by carpenter and joiner Glenn Pearce.

The front door is of solid oak, complementing the entrance pillars; the woodwork of the immediate interior is ash, against which, the oak on the steel staircase and the handrails is a beautiful contrast.

*BG & AS Hallett Ltd, Chippenham, Wiltshire.
T 01249 652 929*

Product information

Species	British oak, ash, Corsican pine
Profile	PAR to specifications
Dimensions	Various
Grade	Joinery

Western Red Cedar – it pays to buy British

Recent comparison tests show that British Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) is as durable as that imported from the north-west region of North America. This is good news for all architects and specifiers, who are increasingly requiring the product to provide an attractive and natural alternative to man-made materials.

WRC has natural oils which preserve the timber, and thereby help to resist damage by fungal pathogens and pests. It has excellent weatherproofing qualities, is thermally efficient, and is cost-effective. The species has been grown in the UK for about a century, and British standings of it are now at a point where they can be felled. As the price of imported foreign softwoods continues to rise, the British-grown alternatives are financially more attractive – considerably so in the case of WRC. The British-grown product is suitable for cladding and weatherboarding because of its natural durability and environmental credentials.

For further information, please visit the new cladding section on our website: vastern.co.uk/cladding.html



Vastern Timber

Product range

- Kiln-dried British hardwoods
- Kiln-dried British and European softwoods
- FSC-certified hardwoods and softwoods
- Constructional British oak
- Oak curves and shaped sections
- Constructional Douglas fir
- External timber cladding
- British hardwood flooring
- Floor treatments and adhesives
- Hardwood skirtings and architraves
- Traditional oak doors
- Treated softwood fencing
- Timber decking

Services

- Machining to profile
- Strength grading to BS5756 and BS4978

Price lists and further technical information available online or at our sales offices:

Vastern Timber Co. Ltd

The Sawmills, Wootton Bassett
Swindon SN4 7PD
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F 01793 855 336

Vastern Timber Co. Ltd

Studley Sawmills, Studley
Calne SN11 9NH
T 01249 813 173
F 01249 821 090

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