

## Timber frame builder invests in high efficiency future

Submitted by: Waugh Communications

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A leading supplier of engineered timber frames is bucking the gloomy trend by taking the opportunity to gear itself up for the future of the industry.

Lowfield Timber Frames (<http://www.lowfieldtimberframes.co.uk>) (LTF) has unveiled a new division which will deliver Structural Insulated Panel System (SIPS) solutions to people and businesses looking to build highly energy efficient homes and buildings in line with the Communities and Local Governments 'Code for Sustainable Homes' scheme.

LTF has chosen the TEK Building System from Kingspan Insulation and has now been awarded "System Supplier" status. This gives the firm the ability to purchase raw (SIPS) materials direct, and to design, engineer and process them into structural kits ready for delivery and site construction, through a network of approved installers or registered contractors.

LTF has also hired a SIPS specialist, Garry Dyke, from Market Drayton, in Shropshire, who has many years experience already with the processes required to get the Kingspan TEK Building System to market.

It is hoped that up to 15 new jobs will be created by the move in the next 12 to 24 months. Recent years have already seen major growth for LTF, which supplies a suite of engineered products to builders and developers across the UK.

Managing Director of Lowfield Timber Frames, Mark Phillips, said: "Like any good business we always have an eye on the future and we're really excited about this latest development at LTF. We can see how the market place for timber frame and other lightweight framing products is changing and the positive impact that new standards, such as the Code for Sustainable Homes, is having on construction.

"As our industry consumes such a huge percentage of the UK's carbon emissions we simply have to change our building methods and thinking. Our research shows us that SIPS are one cost effective and simple way of doing that.

"Over the next year it will become even more apparent that focusing on the building fabric and levels of air tightness first, our basic principles at LTF, will help reduce the costs required in achieving the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Combine SIPS with a simple and efficient Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery system and the amounts of other 'eco bling' products required will be dramatically reduced."

Mark added that demand for SIPS is growing rapidly across a number of sectors, in particular self-builders who want to achieve the very highest levels of energy efficiency with their new homes. The cost of a SIP system is expected to be around 10-15 per cent higher than non-SIP alternatives, however the performance benefits delivered are dramatically higher as standard.

The business, which is based on the Shropshire and Mid Wales border, close to Welshpool, has seen huge growth in recent years and a new continental shift system was introduced, allowing the factory to operate

seven-days-a-week.

Mr Phillips added: "The Kingspan TEK Building System will be offered alongside our standard timber frame kits, putting us in the enviable position of being able to offer both products competitively and without bias. In addition to our standard systems are a host of hybrid product solutions that we will also develop over the coming months.

"We believe that this new product solution will keep us at the cutting edge of our industry and help to differentiate from us our competitors. Offering two well known energy efficient, next generation systems and new hybrid concepts will definitely give us the strength to weather the current economic storm."

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Notes:

- An aerial photograph of the LTF headquarters is available on request.
- SIP is a next generation timber-based construction method. It consists of two sheets of 15mm OSB3 with a 112mm rigid polyurethane Zero Ozone depletion, Low Global Warming potential core. The product benefits from a BBA agreement certificate, and is approved for use by most of the major UK building warranty providers such as the NHBC and Zurich etc. It has also been submitted to the BRE for lifecycle assessment among other things and as a result has been given an A or A+ rating in the BRE Green Guide to Housing.
- Lowfield Timber Frames Ltd is part of the SJR Group, also including SJ Roberts Construction Ltd (<http://www.sjroberts.co.uk>) and homebuilder, Wyro Developments Ltd (<http://www.wyro.co.uk/>).
- Find out more about LTF at [www.lowfieldtimberframes.co.uk](http://www.lowfieldtimberframes.co.uk)