

## CASE STUDY 01

# using more wood from and in the south west

### Eastern Hill Farm, Dunsford, Devon

Developing a new craft centre, woodworking and training facility near Exeter demanded a replacement building. The choice facing the farmer, John Rowson, was whether to have a 'standard' steel-framed building as seen on most farms and light industrial units, or to use local timber. Given that his farm is wooded, as are neighbouring farms, timber was the obvious choice. Timber framer Henry Russell of Bristol drew up the new building and then constructed it, using traditional timber framing techniques little altered since mediaeval times. John was 'hands on' throughout the building process and learned from Henry the essentials of timber frame construction. The oak timber came from the nearby woods, from low value, small diameter, damaged trees.

Material costs were approximately the same as a steel frame building but build costs, with greater labour input, were higher. However the timber frame will have far less environmental impact due to minimal transport distances as well as taking far less energy to make than a steel frame. It has also help the management of the local woods.

The building looks far better than a steel frame with cladding and will be much more in keeping with its rural setting and its end-use. Investment came from John Rowson and the Rural Enterprise Scheme, part of the England Rural Development Programme.



*Above:* Previous buildings on the site at Eastern Hill Farm  
*Below:* Work progressing on the timber frame for the new workshop  
PHOTOS: ANDREW RUMMING, DEFRA



For more information contact: John Rowson at [rowson@easternhill.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rowson@easternhill.fsnet.co.uk)