

## Structural Timber - Where to Start

November 2025



## Where to Start

---

# 12 steps to building in structural timber

If this is your first structural timber construction projects, you'll find the following helpful in highlighting what to plan for, include and identify to make your project a success. Share our 10 Steps to building in Structural Timber and make it easier to identify the differences when you build a project using structural timber.

**1 Pre- design** The most valuable first step when considering structural timber is to engage a timber systems manufacturer. Collaboration at this early stage enables the manufacturer to have a better understanding of your project, so they can recommend the system that best suits you, saving you time and duplication of design work later on. You can then set out the cost for that system with your specification for your initial commercial viability.

All STA members are compliant with quality protocols and go through stringent audits to secure our STA Assure status .



**2 Commercial viability** Once a projects' design, system design, build method and programme are better understood then a detailed commercial assessment can be undertaken. This provides the opportunity to identify and realise the benefits of structural timber, considering cost efficiencies at different stages and including elements specific to structural timber.

**3 Contract Award** Agree what you want to include in the structural timber system and what can be added on. Numerous additional components can be included if required to make your project easier. Visit the STA website to check that your chosen supplier is compliant.

<https://www.structuraltimber.co.uk/members/>

**4 Design sign off** Once your architectural concept is approved and the architectural and engineering information spatially coordinated, you're ready to focus on the detail design. Collaborate early with your chosen manufacturer and they will provide guidance through the concept and design process to ensure that the project is deliverable in premanufactured panels. Ensure that the project team understands the 16 Steps to Fire Safety during construction, and responsibilities are clear to ensure safety on site.

**5 Planning** As the project proceeds through the stages of the RIBA Plan of Works, compliance with various standards and in particular safety during construction will be required. This is also a good time to agree logistical requirements with access for large components and safe dry site storage, with agreed crane location points. Sign off your scaffold requirements based on NASC guidance and agree supplier works under the CDM regulations.



## Where to Start

---

- 6 Benefit from speed of build** Understanding the speed of construction is one of the fundamental ways to ensure your project benefits from the use of structural timber. The programme will enable you to plan and book your follow on trades so that work can commence as quickly as possible once the structural timber panels have been erected.
- 7 Design freeze** Once all detailed designs are agreed, all technical specification and performance requirements of the project should also be agreed as part of the pre-commencement process. This eliminates errors further ahead and enables commencement of the manufacturing designs.
- 8 Training** During these stages, it's good practice to arrange training for your team and their other appointed sub-contractors. This ensures the teams who will interface with the timber system build and installation process, understand the process, how they can contribute, what they need to plan in advance to facilitate a smooth build.
- 9 Manufacture** Once all designs, specification, delivery schedules and installation are agreed, the manufacturing process will begin in line with agreed lead times and delivery programmes. Always ensure that the installation is undertaken by carpenters, certified under the STA Installer Training Scheme.
- 10 Installation** A pre-start meeting, including tool box talks, will enable all practical matters for the safe delivery, unloading and installation of the timber panels to be agreed. The installation team will take responsibility for installing the timber systems using the selected methods and plant (craneage) applicable.
- 11 Quality and safety** Once the panels are erected, quality inspections should be undertaken and agreement of completion reached between all parties. Our members are accredited under our STA Assure and Installers Training Scheme, giving you reassurance that your project is delivered by professional competent teams on which you can rely.
- 12 Payment and warranties** Once completion is approved and in line with the pre-agreed contractual terms, payment will become due. Warranties that have been agreed as part of the project will become valid, in line with the agreed contractual terms.



A vertical bar with a color gradient from orange at the top to dark teal at the bottom.

## Head office

Structural Timber Association  
Dorcan Business Village Murdock  
Road Swindon SN3 5HY

**t:** 01793 234509

**e:** [office@structuraltimber.co.uk](mailto:office@structuraltimber.co.uk)

**w:** [www.structuraltimber.co.uk](http://www.structuraltimber.co.uk)