

# BEST USE OF TIMBER 2013 SHORTLIST

AS PART OF THE ANNUAL RIAS AWARDS SCHEME, FORESTRY COMMISSION SCOTLAND AND WOOD FOR GOOD HAVE COMBINED TO SPONSOR A NEW AWARD AIMED AT ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE USE OF TIMBER IN NEW BUILDINGS IN SCOTLAND



**Wood for Good**  
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**Forestry Commission Scotland**  
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

**Architecture & Design Scotland**  
Aithearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

## THE TURF HOUSE

**Location:** Kilmaluag, Isle of Skye  
**Date Completed:** November 2012  
**Building Type:** Residential  
**Architect:** Rural Design  
**Client:** Indi and Rebecca Waterstone  
**Contract value:** £132,000  
**Main Contractor:** Donald Lamont  
**Timber Supplier:** Russwood

### THE PROJECT

The Turf House is located on the northernmost tip of the Trotternish peninsula on the Isle of Skye – a particularly exposed landscape regularly battered by the forces of nature. From certain angles the building recalls the low pitch agricultural sheds that pepper the rural landscape, and in other views the drumlin land forms found throughout this glaciated landscape.

The Turf House was designed as an affordable family home for a local couple whose desire for an environmentally responsible house was combined with two key requirements: A turf roof was to be an essential component of the build; and the aim that the house take a distinctive perpendicular relationship to the north view.

The form of the house is unusual. Tapering towards each end, the plan form expands in the middle to accommodate the internal spaces such as kitchen, bathroom and entrance space. A wood-burning stove acts as the only heat source. A system of whole house ventilation with heat recovery, coupled with high levels of insulation and airtightness, ensures that the heat is distributed around the house and there is no need for central heating.

### USE OF TIMBER

The Turf House provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate a new confident timber architecture appropriate for the 21st Century. It is not intended as a demonstration project, yet it demonstrates clearly the potential of timber throughout the project to assist the development of a progressive regional architecture for Scotland.

This project was not intended as a pristine jewel to be handcrafted by shopfitting joiners, instead it was built by roughing kit joiners using skills native to the West Highlands. Timber-clad externally using native Larch board on board cladding on a 200mm timber frame, the detailing is simple and uniform.

This project considers a new typology for timber construction in the Highlands using forms that could not be constructed in anything other than timber – demonstrating the possibilities and flexibility that can be addressed using simple materials.

Photography: Nigel Rigden



