

# BEST USE OF TIMBER 2017 SHORTLIST

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



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RIAS



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Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

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## TIN HOUSE

**Location:** Isle of Skye  
**Date Completed:** July 2016  
**Building Type:** Private House  
**Architect:** Rural Design  
**Client:** Alan Dickson  
**Main Contractor:** Self Build

## THE PROJECT

The Tinhouse celebrates corrugated metal sheeting, commonly used on the agricultural buildings of the rural landscape. Internally its timber boarding, concrete floor and plywood cabinetry add to the handmade palette. It contains one bedroom along with the living space, kitchen, and bathroom. The long, horizontal slot window cut in to the North elevation creates a point from which to view the landscape and seascape in good weather and bad.

The house has been designed and self-built by the practice founders, and materials were chosen to allow for an ease of build by one person. In this way, the handmade Tinhouse celebrates the rural self-build tradition.

Colour also informed the aesthetic of the house with highlights inspired by colours found naturally outside: the yellow or pink of the wild flowers, the green of the grass, the blue of the sky and the sea and the orange of the sunsets.

Similarly, the furniture informs the aesthetic and celebrates the handmade spirit of the house. This includes a concrete topped dining table on Douglas Fir sawhorses, beds and seats built in using leftover structural timber, a prototype “Mobius” coffee table which sits at the centre of the social space and offcuts of Douglas Fir as bedside tables.

## USE OF TIMBER

Despite its name, timber played a very large role in the construction of Tinhouse. The site was very hard to access, so from a logistical perspective the architects wanted to maximise the number of small size elements to ensure ease of delivery. The project was entirely self-built, the structural timber frame was also self-built and erected by a group of friends.

The interior linings and fittings were also self-built. Timber lined walls used tongue and groove pine flooring, fittings were constructed from Douglas Fir plywood. The doors were laminated together from waste timber that was stripped out of a local building. Other surfaces and details used a variety of timber including Oak and Douglas Fir. Leftover pieces of Oak were generally transformed into door handles, wardrobe fittings and toilet pulls! The recycled, timber pocket doors have simple cut-outs instead of “ironmongery”, elsewhere wooden dowels are used as door handles or coat pegs, and left-over cement board frames the shower opening.

The external landscaping uses timber and hand poured concrete surfaces which together with rough, large section timber walls create sheltered spaces and routes from which to enjoy the view beyond.

Images: Rural Design, David Barbour



