



“Three times more wood is key to quality fencing”

says **Olly Bennett** of Cornwall’s Duchy Timber

According to Duchy Timber in Cornwall, which has been making fencing panels from local wood for decades, the key to good fencing is using more wood and the right kind of pressure treatment.

Olly Bennett, manager at Duchy Timber, said: “We use three times more wood than you’d find in an average DIY or trade panel in all of our fencing to make it hard-wearing, durable and reliable. We use local wood, sourced from sustainably managed forests within 50 miles of our sawmill. It’s some of the best quality timber in the UK and we are lucky enough to have it on our doorstep.”

The local wood is milled into blocks at Duchy Timber’s sawmill in Lostwithiel. The blocks are then ‘multi-ripped’ on its six-head Stenner saw into panel battens and slats. Each batten and panel is then pressure-treated on site prior to assembly. Duchy Timber uses Wolman’s® on all treated timber.

“Most cheaper fencing will be dipped in treatment before delivery but this will only protect the wood for a very short time. Pressurised treatment with the appropriate kind of treatment will ensure the fencing lasts for years, repelling wood moulds and wood eating insects as well as protecting from rot. Pressure treating on site allows all the processes to happen at the sawmill, keeping log miles down.

“We treat timber to different ‘classes’ depending on what they are required to do - and it’s vital to get it right and have a clear understanding of what exactly the fencing will be used for and its positioning,” added Olly. “For fencing that does not have ground contact, we use Class 3. This could include gates, slats or gazebos. But fencing that does have ground or fresh water contact, such as posts, needs a Class 4 to extend its life. We also use a special heavy duty highway fencing treatment to meet high-ways specification if required.”

Once treated in Duchy Timber’s pressurised treatment tank, the battens and panels are dried and then assembled on a new automated panel machine. This new machine, recently delivered to Duchy Timber, has seen production at the sawmill jump by 500%. Each panel is also checked by eye for quality control purposes. The company can now make up to 250 panels a day.

Duchy Timber offers a made-to-order bespoke service that allows any kind of fencing to be made to any size or design. The most popular designs include feather edge, hit and miss, palisade, T&G and waney edge fencing. These can be made in softwoods and hardwoods at Duchy Timber’s sawmill in Lostwithiel.

Established in 1958, Duchy Timber it was recently purchased by Premier Forest Group.



Heavy duty overlap panels and, top, Olly Bennett