



Merry and Ben Albright have built a traditional style oak frame home in just four months thanks to the use of a new construction system. The project was followed for the new series of C4's *Grand Designs*.

Words:  
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Ben and Merry Albright's quaint Herefordshire cottage was built on a tight budget in just four months using structural insulated panels (SIPs).

Pearmain Cottage is the first home for the newly married couple. It is also a first for Border Oak, who designed the small Arts and Crafts style building as a prototype for a new range of houses. The company is well known for its traditional, oak framed homes but decided to offer an alternative: combining oak framing with structural insulated panels to create an ecologically acceptable construction system.

For many self-builders an idyllic country site, affordable budget and fast build time are all dreams which are frequently never realised. Finding building land of any description can prove difficult, whilst over-stretched budgets and prolonged builds are well-known problems. Admittedly, Merry was well placed to find the perfect plot. As the daughter of John Green, founder of Border Oak, she has spent her life amongst architects and builders and is now the company's creative assistant.



A handmade free-standing kitchen from De'Vol Kitchens (01609 620 620), with maple and granite worktops and a double Belfast Sink, perfectly suits the cottage style.

# Instant Character

Building an oak framed cottage in just four months

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