



MANIFEST

Architects



Oak Framers



Natural Builders

What If
Yesterday
Made
Tomorrow?



Manifest is a multi-disciplinary architects' practice and craft workshop. We combine architectural design and historic conservation with practical construction, traditional oak framing and natural building crafts, operating from our workshop and working woodland in western Gloucestershire, with projects across the south-west of England, the Midlands and south Wales.

Our practice is research-led, engaging in woodland education and outreach.

We source & we build



Food miles, local sources, organic and regenerative farming - these are issues at the top of the contemporary agenda. But what if we thought not only about the food we eat, but the houses that we build? We believe that the time has come for a real engagement with **local materials** and a consideration of the lowest possible impacts and carbon footprints. Our **working Dragon Wood** provides us with some of the raw materials we need for our projects, such as hazel from sustainable coppicing (carried out in this ancient woodland for centuries), as well as tall standard oak and ash.

We can work with other felled timbers - perhaps from your building site itself, or through local tree surgeons and sawmills.

Our expertise doesn't just reside in timber. We are also **lime burners**, with extensive contacts in local quarries, able to produce a variety of lime-based products (mortars, renders) on site.

We firmly believe that being trained in practical building skills makes us better designers. Director Hugh Conway Morris is an **oak framer** in the British traditions, having worked with Peter McCurdy on the Sam Wanamaker Theatre project in London. Scribed carpentry allows for the use of timbers both curved and straight, minimising waste and maximising beauty.

Natural building is the term given to construction that uses local, natural and unprocessed materials in the spirit of sustainability: **timber, earth, straw, stone and lime**. These coincide with traditional building crafts, and produce buildings of great sensitivity which sit comfortably in their site and landscape. We work in **cob** (earth+straw) and **straw-bale** construction too: where we cannot supply suitable in-house skills, we have extensive contacts among other craftspeople and natural builders: thatchers, tilers, slaters, bricklayers, stonemasons and plasterers.

Our active engagement in the local landscape, and the natural materials which can be sensitively and sustainably sourced nearby, built into beautiful and locally appropriate buildings, is key to our approach to architecture.



We design & we conserve



We are chartered and conservation-accredited **architects**, with a deep understanding of natural building and traditional construction. We understand how to achieve compliance with the Building Regulations for such "non-standard" building techniques, avoiding the use of membranes, plastics, artificial foams and concrete. This gives us the opportunity to create healthy indoor spaces for occupants, while minimising impacts on the construction team, the local and the global environments.

We offer a full professional service, from measured survey and brief definition, planning permission and Building Regulations consent through to the administration of the construction contract for works on site.

"You truly did design a wonderful house - I'm sitting in here now with the family, and it just feels so good."

Our philosophy of design and construction stems from our deep experience of the **conservation of historic buildings** and the living craft traditions which sustain them. Hugh Conway Morris is actively involved with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, serving on their Technical & Research Committee and staffing their Advice Helpline, as well as teaching lime-burning at regular Working Parties. Hugh completed the SPAB's prestigious Lethaby Scholarship programme in 2009, and is registered with the AABC.

Without the benefit of the knowledge of centuries, we could not make new and beautiful natural buildings today, and our engagement with both paradigms picks out these deep interconnections. We love the small and the **vernacular**, carrying out **church quinquennial inspections**, management plans, and the specification and installation of **repairs** in sensitive and appropriate materials to buildings both sacred and secular.

Our skills in design and in conservation come together in the **design of new**, sensitive buildings and extensions in the context of existing structures. Our deep understanding of **building anatomy** allows an intelligent approach, reducing impacts while bringing to bear all the advantages of natural, breathable building and the continuation of traditional crafts. We don't try to make our new buildings look old: they work because they develop the craft and use those timeless materials which are the basis of the local tradition.



We teach & we research



We believe that any good design practice is enhanced by carrying out its own **research**, pushing boundaries in materials, structures and construction to move the craft forward. Once again drawing on our extensive contacts, we have carried out original research into **lime mortars & lime-stabilised soil** construction, **straw-clay** and insulated cob walls, and **reciprocal timber frames**, with more projects in the pipeline. Small-scale tests, large-scale mock-ups and real buildings all form part of this trail.



The **Manifest Woodland Guild** offers **craft & woodland education** programmes, extending our outreach, working with adults &

children in west Gloucestershire and further afield,

to promote an understanding of the landscape and the natural world, the sourcing of sustainable materials and the concepts of low impact living. Further training is available

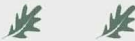
in lime-burning, woodsmanship, green woodworking and earth construction, as well as a range of courses in drawing, wild food foraging and star-gazing.



Manifest are also delighted to join the **Fathom Trust** as specialists, working through craft and teaching to provide important supplements to mental health in Wales and south-west England.



Get in touch



We're always happy to hear from potential clients, craftspeople, architects and course participants. Get in touch via the details below, or drop in to visit us.

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