(Housing associations – social housing)

SIPs the best option for social housing demand

For reasons of cost, speed of construction and performance, Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) technology is ideal for social housing.

This is the view of Siptec-Hemsec, Europe's most experienced manufacturer of SIPs panels and an increasingly important player in the 'off-site manufacture' (OSM) of building panel systems.

Following the government-inspired Egan Report, 'Rethinking Construction', which gave added impetus to improving the quality of materials and techniques used in the UK building industry, SIPs technology is set to become a major part of the trend towards 'Modern Methods of Construction' (MMC).

According to Siptec-Hemsec Product Manager, Peter Bxxxx:

"Recent technological advances have improved the quality and performance of SIPs to the extent that they represent a new generation of timber-based construction which can be used as wall, roof or floor panels and are suitable for buildings up to four storeys high."

Made from timber OSB 3 facings with a core material of fire-retardant polyurethane foam, Siptec-Hemsec SIPs are strong enough to form an integral part of the structure of a building which cuts out the need for expensive steel framework.

Equally significant for the economics of social housing is the speed at which a SIPs building project can be completed. The high-strength panels are delivered to site and erected in half the time it would take using traditional building materials.

For developers and builders, this has the obvious benefits of reducing financing costs as well as ensuring earlier occupancy of the building to produce the revenue streams which derive from that.

Occupancy levels can be maximised at a lower level of investment because SIPs technology allows for extra rooms to be created in the roof space. No roof trusses are required which effectively frees up an extra floor level at no extra cost to produce what is known as a 'room-in-a-roof'.

The thinner walls of SIPs construction results in additional floor space which meets the recommendations of the government's PPG 3 initiative. Internal walls also suffer no shrinkage of plaster which may otherwise require costly remedial work at the post-construction stage.

PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

- Timber OSB 3 (Orientated Strand Board) provides high structural strength.
- Panels are available in thicknesses from 75mm to 245mm, with optional finishes of OSB 15mm and cement particle board.
- Sandwich construction of panels produces similar characteristics to I-Beam.
- The polyurethane core contains a fire retardant to inhibit accidental ignition when tested to BS4735.
- U-values for insulation of 0.08 (245mm thick) to 0.28 (100mm).
- Excellent U-value to panel thickness ratio minimises wall thickness, thus maximising internal space.
- Multiple options for external finishes.
- Air-tight structure drastically reduces energy loss.

For further information contact:

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