

PORTFOLIO
Log Cabin Self-build

A New Self-built Home

Jude and Roger built the tongue and groove cabin themselves on the footprint of a dilapidated cattle and hay barn on a farm that's been in Jude's family for three generations. The plot was the perfect spot, with connections to drainage and electricity and a pretty outlook over fields.

PORTFOLIO
Log Cabin Self-build

A LABOUR OF LOVE

Boundless energy and an abundance of optimism propelled Jude Hesselgrave and Roger Page to build a log cabin, which they subsequently extended and transformed over the years to create a characterful home — for just £60,000

Words **Jane Crittenden** Photography **Alastair Nicholls**

PROJECT NOTES

Homeowners

Jude Hesselgrave
and Roger Page
Project Log cabin
Location
Horam, East Sussex
Size 124m²
Build time
Feb 2009 - Jul 2015
Construction Timber
frame with tongue and
groove cladding
Plot cost £60,000
Build cost £60,000
Value Circa £250,000

Project Timeline

Groundwork and foundations
Feb 2009
Log cabin made watertight
May 2009
Internal fit-out (including electrics, plumbing, heating, kitchen and bathroom)
Jun 2009
Bedroom extension (including a cupboard)
Oct 2011
Living room extension
Dec 2013
Replaced bathroom
Jun 2014
Replaced remaining windows Jul 2015

Selected Costs

Groundwork and services	£7,000
Foundations	£3,200
Log cabins	£7,000
Insulation	£2,300
Tin roof	£800
Exterior cladding and guttering	£1,800
Kitchen	£1,100
Bathroom	£900
Plumbing	£2,200
Electrics	£4,300
BT connection	£1,300
Decoration	£500
Bedroom extension	£5,100
Living room extension	£21,000
Landscaping	£1,500
Total	£60,000

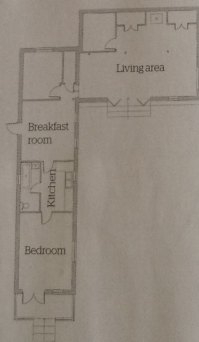
Suppliers

Main contractor
Roger Page at Kane Building Contractors:
enquiries@kanebuilding-
contractors.co.uk
Cabin company Log
Cabins Factory Direct:
logcabinsfactorydirect.co.uk
Windows
Polyframe Southeast:
polyframetrade.co.uk
Bifold doors Vibrant
Doors: vibrantdoors.co.uk
Insulation Seconds and
Co: secondsandco.com
Kitchen Ikea: Ikea.com
Bathroom
Wickes: wickes.co.uk
Reclaimed flooring (in ex-
tension) Salvo: salvo.co.uk
Interiors stylist
Jude Hesselgrave: jude.
hesselgrave@hotmail.co.uk

The Floorplan

"We constructed two log cabins to create 51m² of living space. At first we used the smaller of the two cabins as our living room," begins homeowner Jude Hesselgrave. "We used the patio doors in here as our front door, which face west with a veranda looking out onto fields. The second cabin was our kitchen, bathroom and bedroom with stud walls dividing the rooms."

"In 2011, we extended the cabin by 4m to create a second bedroom and cupboard, adding around 14m² in the process. Then we extended again in 2013 to create a 60m² living room perpendicular to the main cabin, which also makes our home more private because the structure encloses our garden. We reorganised the internal layout of the cabin at this point, turning the old living room into our bedroom. We fitted a new front door to open into the breakfast room (previously our bedroom) and this makes the layout flow so much better."



The Exterior

The log cabin evolved over time and the couple added a bedroom and then a living room extension, which encloses the plot. Steps down from the bifold doors lead into a garden of planter beds. Beyond, a footpath alongside the lawn leads into the back field.

PORTFOLIO

Coastal Self-build



Jude Hesselgrave and her partner, Roger Page, are self-builders in the absolute truest sense, building their log cabin home by hand and going on to make doors and furniture, then searching out bargain salvaged pieces to decorate their evolving home. It's a project that began in 2009 and concluded in 2015, with the cabin added to and upgraded over the years as funds allowed.

For Jude, in particular, their home harbours sentimental value because it sits within Sussex farmland that's been in her family for three generations. She grew up on a neighbouring farm and remembers summer evenings spent loading up the barn with hay for the cattle — a barn that the cabin replaced.

"The idea to build materialised over the years," says Jude. "The farm was deteriorating and I thought it was such a shame. Roger and I are creative and practical people and had the drive to take on the project, so I discussed the idea with my parents."

Conversations went back and forth for many years and then came to a head to-

wards the end of 2008 when the couple felt the sudden impact of the recession. Roger is a builder and his work dried up almost overnight, and Jude's architectural salvage business took a nosedive, too.

"We had a big mortgage on our house in Brighton and this became the catalyst to build something of our own," says Jude. "Neither of us knew what we were getting into and it was a big step to move from the city to the countryside. So we initially wanted a temporary solution."

The couple had already sussed out the perfect spot to build, favouring the site of a 400m² dilapidated cattle and hay barn with a collecting yard, and a lovely outlook over the fields. Practically, there was drainage on site and they could connect to the mains electricity. They figured a log cabin would be the sensible route for their circumstances and pocket. They chose an inexpensive, basic structure — something they could build themselves and dismantle with ease if necessary.

Jude and Roger went to see local company Log Cabins Factory Direct. They chose ▶

Home Comforts

The living room is a separate timber-frame build with a sloping roof to allow the extension to tie into the existing roofline. The exposed oak frame is structural, sourced from a 15th-century farmhouse. Roger made the 'post box' window set high on the wall to draw in south-facing light and to add interest to the mustard-coloured wall.

Clever Storage

The kitchen (above) and bathroom in the larger of the two cabins sit next to each other for drainage reasons and are separated by a stud wall. The compact space is packed with Jude's clever storage ideas such as the spice shelf above the window, the cookbooks above the door and shelves that slot into the stud wall.

New Breakfast Room

The breakfast room (shown) began life as a bedroom and now forms the entrance into the cabin where the original floors have been left bare and the exposed walls roughly painted in wood primer for a rustic finish. Roger made shelves and cupboards and Jude sourced furniture pieces at antique fairs and flea markets.



PORTFOLIO

Log Cabin Self-build



PORTFOLIO

Log Cabin Self-build

Salvaged Finds

Jude has sourced a treasure trove of salvaged and reclaimed pieces – including the French window shutters, which came from Lille's annual antique market La Grande Braderie, and were made into doors for the built-in cupboards. Jude sourced reclaimed wood flooring planks from a mill in Derby, and has cleaned, sanded and sealed them to create a characterful floor.

a design where they could introduce more windows on the south side facing the garden, and patio doors on the west orientation leading to a veranda overlooking the views.

To maximise the space, they realised they'd have to buy two cabins and fix them together. "We were fairly handcuffed by the long, narrow barn footprint," Roger explains. "We paid £7,000 for two log cabins and turned the shells into a home – the project was as basic as it comes."

The couple spent three months getting the site ready for the cabin. It took a week to pull down the barn; they then levelled the site and cleared away debris. They sorted out the services, and Roger erected a telegraph pole to connect the cabin to the farm's electrical supply and his electrician completed the installation.

Roger built a timber platform for the log cabin foundations; a cheap yet stable solution but also temporary if they decided to move the building later on.

Jude, who is now a prop maker and stylist, learnt carpentry at art college and Roger has the construction know-how, so they both looked forward to taking on the challenge of the build. The cabins were on order to arrive in May 2009. Remarkably, by June that same year the pair had moved in, spending a mere £15,000 or so to get the building watertight. Roger also fitted an immersion heater and a couple of electric storage heaters in the bedroom and living room. ▶

A Cosy Focal Point

The Franco Belge red woodburning stove (seen), sourced from eBay, is the primary source of heating (together with a handful of storage heaters). The stove is fuelled entirely by wood collected on the farm, and provides enough heat to keep the cabin warm in winter. The fireplace was designed around the reclaimed oak (found on site) that forms the mantelpiece.



New Master Bedroom

The old living room became the bedroom (now) when the second extension was built. During the changes, extra insulation was added to the west-facing wall and the room painted a cocooning dark grey. The patio doors open onto the veranda for views across the fields and the bedside lights are from Rockett St George.

An Upgraded Bathroom

The bathroom (seen) was upgraded in 2014 with wall insulation and new sanitaryware from Wickes, and the window was upgraded to better quality double glazing in 2016. The cast iron roll-top tub was reluctantly replaced with an acrylic bath because the water didn't stay warm long enough. Roger added tongue and groove panelling to the room; the shelves came from a flea market.



border oak

the finest hand crafted oak framed buildings

Design : Planning : Self Build & Turnkey packages : Project Management : Fixed Price : Bespoke : Plots



www.borderoak.com

01568 708752

PORTFOLIO

Log Cabin Self-build



Upgrading and Extending

Funds were tight at the start, and for many years they lived through freezing winters in a structure that was barely more than a shell. The couple's budget thinking and creative handiwork continued for many years; they went on to extend the cabin twice, and have upgraded the bathroom.

Today their home is a far cry from the freezing cold building they moved into all those years ago. The new woodburning stove had an immediate effect, as did adding insulation to the remaining walls, and so did the new windows added in 2015. Jude says that, compared to those early days, the cabin is a completely different place to live now.

The couple received a Certificate of Lawful Development in September 2015, permitting the property to remain their permanent home, and giving them good reason to sit back satisfied with what they've achieved. Jude says she and Roger are incredibly attached to their home. "The build was such a lovely process and we enjoyed every minute. We had our hard times, of course, but we've realised the potential now and I feel like we're living the dream.

"We've put so much of ourselves into the project. We're really proud of our achievements — this is a super special place for both of us."

An Updated Façade

Jude painted the wood cladding brown at first but when the surface began to peel a few years ago, she repainted in Bedec's water-based black Barn Paint that will last about 10 years and is durable and UV resistant.

PORTFOLIO

Log Cabin Self-build

The original two cabins arrived in the form of 1.5m x 0.5m interlocking tongue and groove planks, with five windows and a set of patio doors. The delivery lorry parked up on the main road and Jude hired a JCB and driver to bring the wood up the lane where she laid the pieces out in a field.

"The piles of wood looked quite daunting but they were numbered and we had a plan sequence and drawing," she says. "The build was like a jigsaw and flew up as the planks slotted into one another. We were more in control of the build quality than if we'd bought flat-packed walls and we both got a lot of satisfaction doing the building work." The couple built the cabin in two weeks.

They sourced a second-hand tin roof instead of opting for felt and shingle package offered by the log cabin kit provider. "Tin is lightweight, cheap and easy to fit and remove, but it can be noisy in heavy rain," says Roger. They also insulated between the floor joists and roof rafters with 40mm insulating board, bought cheaply as seconds from Seconds and Co. Battens were fixed to the south wall, which was insulated in the same way and plasterboarded, while the remaining walls were left exposed and painted.

"We made a major mistake by not researching the windows and doors properly," says Jude. "We had gaps around them because the wood in the cabin's structure swells and shrinks in different seasons. After a few years they wouldn't open or shut properly. The wind used to rush through the cat flap on the living room wall and sometimes even freeze open!" (They subsequently upgraded the windows in 2015.)

The couple lived like this for a few harsh winters, choosing to prioritise their funds so they could extend the cabin. They built the first extension in 2011 for a second bedroom. Roger used the same build method and materials and followed the profile of the cabin. In 2013, he built a second extension for a living room — a bespoke building, perpendicular to the cabin, supported off concrete foundations and brick piers over an existing concrete base. The structure is timber frame, with salvaged oak from a 15th-century farmhouse as the main supports, creating a beautiful exposed frame inside. ①

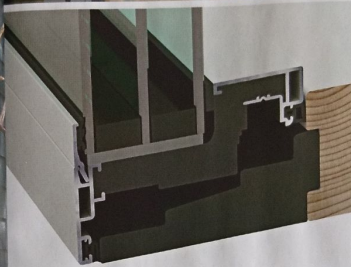
The Knowledge CONSTRUCTING THE LOG CABIN



DOMESTIC WINDOWS COMMERCIAL WINDOWS

idealcombi

INSPIRATION WINDOWS DOORS TECHNICAL HOW TO BUY



Idealcombi Futura+

aluminium | PUR | timber

The award winning composite window that has great energy performance with u-values from 0.74 W/m²K and still looks stunningly sleek. Even as an inward opening window with the same slim 53 mm. aluminium profile.

Idealcombi Futura+ and Futura+I is the result of 40 years of experience and innovation in the window industry.

All Idealcombi windows and doors are designed and manufactured in our own factory in Denmark, ensuring outstanding quality.

Danish quality
made in Denmark

Get a FREE quote

Windows
and Doors



Secured by Design
SBD
Official Police Security Initiative

DANISH
QUALITY
DESIGN
MADE IN
DENMARK

Build It
AWARDS
2018
WINNER

Idealcombi Futura+

Idealcombi Futura+I

Idealcombi Frame IC

Idealcombi Nation IC

@idealcombiUK | direct@idealcombi.com | 01582 869 010 | www.idealcombi.com