

Floorboarding

As the builders took the shell of the house upwards, they covered each floor in lots of 8'x4' plywood sheets, to provide a safe working platform.

Once watertight, the time came to remove the plywood and replace with a proper floor.

I did the top floor a while ago but never took any photos, so while tackling the middle floor recently I took some photos to show what was involved.

(Hint: Click on photos to open fullsize!)

The following photos show the plywood sheeting used by the builders for temporary working platforms. Naturally as the house was built, these got covered in dust, mortar and general muck.

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The boards were all nailed down, so the first job was to start lifting them - I used a crowbar to lift them from the joists.

Then one by one, they had to be lowered down between the joists to the ground floor. The boards are pretty heavy and awkward to manoeuvre for one person. Protective gloves are a must !

I had to remove just enough plywood at a time to give space to lay the new boards - but still allow somewhere to walk around. So the boards were dropped down in stages.

These photos show me starting from the far end of bedroom 3 on the middle floor, and working towards the bathroom and landing. Below is the living room - you can see the oak joists and beams.

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This photo gives an idea of the muck & dust created while dropping the boards. A dust mask was definitely required !

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In order to try and make a solid floor, I used 22mm thick P5 chipboard flooring. This comes in 8'x2' sizes (2400mmx600mm) and is tongue-and-grooved together. The P5 stuff (greenish colour) is also reasonably moisture resistant. I ran beads of Gripfill along all joints before closing them up, and also ran a thick bead of Gripfill along the top of each joist. Each board was then screwed down to the joists using 4.2x55mm Floor-Tite flooring screws, bought from Screwfix.

Here you can see me crossing the landing (the area on the left is an open void - the landing is galleried). The boards had to change direction by 90 degrees here, to match the different joist directions used above the living room, and the rest of the floor. I figured that this area will receive a lot of foot traffic so used plenty of Gripfill to try and ensure the boards can't move....

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Here you see can bedroom 3, the bathroom and landing boarded out. It feels nice and solid to walk on, a welcome change from the dirty springy plywood. It also makes the house start to feel more like a house than a building site.

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After the landing had been crossed, bedroom 2 was the next target. Same joist direction as landing, so no changes in board direction needed. I ran out of Gripfill and the local builders merchant only had Pinkgrip in stock, same kind of stuff - but that's why the joints are all pink :)

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Next phase was the main bedroom, ensuite and wardrobe.

This is the state they were in before I began. There is a lot of sand from where the oak post, beams and joists were sandblasted a while back. In the first photo, the door on the left is the ensuite, the one on the right is the wardrobe. Between them is the chimney from the dining room fireplace below.

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First off was the ensuite.

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The wardrobe was practically identical. Here they are both finished:

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Finally, the main bedroom. Here you can see all the boards removed, it shows how the main oak beam below joints the exterior oak post and beams. (You can't see it here, but the main join between all those bits of oak is a masterpiece of craftsmanship by our joiner!!).

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A couple of evenings later and the boarding was finished. Before the boards were laid, in the main bedroom there was some bounce in the oak beam and joists, but this has reduced noticeably since all the boards have been laid, glued and screwed down.

Here is the finished main bedroom floor:

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