

HERITAGE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS BOOTCAMP 2026



Course Overview

NORTH DEVON
Heritage Skills



Canolfan Tywi Centre



PEARCE

PETROC

SEAN WHEATLEY
PLASTERING SPECIALIST



Devon
County Council

northdevon
COUNCIL

CLIVEDEN
CONSERVATION

Heritage Construction Skills Bootcamp



There is an increasing demand for repair and maintenance of old and traditional buildings in the South West. A critical skills shortage in the heritage construction sector means we do not have workforce to carry out this work.

Specifically designed for builders and tradespeople already working in the construction sector, this is a unique professional development opportunity to upskill and meet local demand.

Bringing together specialists from across the UK, this intensive Skills Bootcamp has been carefully crafted in response to local research. You will learn about the repair and maintenance of pre 1919 buildings, whilst developing practical skills in stonemasonry repair, lime plastering and sash window repair.

Dates: The course will take place over three weeks during Jan & Feb 2026

Week 1 – January 19, 20 & 21

Week 2 – January 28, 29 & 30

Week 3 – February 2, 3 & 4

Location: Pearce Construction, Roundswell Business Park,
Barnstaple EX31 3TD

Cost: This course is funded by Devon County Council on behalf of the DfE and is free for self-employed professionals and sole traders. If you are an employer and wish to upskill your staff, there will be a charge of £247 (10% of the tuition fees). Apprentices are eligible.

Course Content



Week 1

Monday 19th January 09:00 – 13:00

Introduction

- Legal framework for listed buildings and contractor responsibility
- Local case studies

Tutor: Collette Hall, Conservation Officer for North Devon Council & guest speaker tbc

Tuesday 20th & Wednesday 21st January 09:00 – 16:30

Stonemasonry

- Defects diagnostics, discussion around condition surveys and approach to maintenance and repairs.
- Tool skills and cutting to lines, preparing stones for mortar repairs and applying base coat mortars

Tutor: Tom Flemons, Master Stonemason from Cliveden Conservation

Week 2

Wednesday 28th, Thursday 29th & Friday 30th January 09:00 – 16:30

Traditional lime plastering

- Case studies
- Different types of lime & aggregates – where and when to use them
- Fixing laths & other plaster carrier boards
- Application of backing, floating & finishing coats – interior & exterior

Repairing ornamental plasterwork – interior & exterior

- Case studies
- Fibrous & run in-situ – tools & materials
- Mould making

Tutor: Sean Wheatley, SPAB Master Plasterer of the Worshipful Company of Plasterers

Course Content



Week 3

Monday 2nd & Tuesday 3rd February 09:00 – 17:00

Level 3 N Level 3 Award in Repair and Maintenance of Traditional (Pre-1919) Buildings

- Mechanics of old buildings
- Lime and breathability
- Practical demonstrations relating to lime science, types of lime, mixes and aggregates
- Building defects- causes and appropriate materials and methods for repair
- Building defects- case studies to look at good and bad examples of repair work
- Legislation, definitions and roles
- Planning work on historic building
- Specialist investigation techniques
- Principles of alteration
- Low carbon and historic buildings

Wednesday 4th February 09:00 – 16:30

Traditional Window Surveys and Condition Reports

- Significance of historic windows
- Components
- Identifying decay and its causes
- Drawing profiles
 - Recognising the extent of repair required
- Specifying materials and finishes
- Writing condition surveys