

The City and Country Bursary Scheme for Essex County Council's Traditional Building Skills Courses



The new building materials and techniques used in the 20th century have put our traditional buildings at risk. Cement, which has replaced lime, can destroy old bricks and timbers. Those who work in the construction industry are no longer trained in traditional methods. This shortage of skills, and lack of training, is widely recognised. The National Heritage Training Group, set up in 2003 to address the issue, published a survey of the sector of the construction industry in 2005 entitled *Traditional Building Craft Skills – assessing the need, meeting the challenge*. This found that contractors were having difficulties recruiting craftspeople, and that in the next 12 months there would be an estimated shortfall of 6590 craftspeople required to meet demand to repair and maintain 5 million traditionally built pre-1919 buildings and 500,000 listed buildings. Aware of the problem through its work funding the restoration of historic buildings, the Heritage Lottery Fund has set up a Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme for craftspeople and trainees qualified to NVQ Level 3 or above.



Essex County Council and City and Country are pleased to announce the second year of their initiative to help address the problem of the traditional building skills shortage by running their own bursary scheme. As part of its responsibility for helping look after the county's 14,000 listed buildings, Essex County Council Historic Buildings and Conservation Section have long run courses at Cressing Temple on traditional building skills and related subjects. The current programme comprises 11 three-day hands-on courses, 9 half-day lectures, and 6 seminars. Attended by contractors, building professionals and homeowners, these courses have succeeded in raising awareness of the need to use materials and techniques appropriate for historic buildings and have established a reputation for quality and good value.

Although very reasonably priced, the cost of the courses is an obstacle to trainees and small contractors who lose several days work and have the expense of travel and possibly accommodation. To offer discounted or free places to such people has long been an aspiration, and that is why we are so pleased that City and Country have agreed to sponsor this Bursary Scheme. The funding offered

by City and Country will make it possible to offer 2 free places on each of the hands-on courses, and one on the seminars and lectures.

City and Country Group are an Essex-based development company which has specialised in refurbishing and regenerating historic properties. Quality, attention to detail and good craftsmanship are the hallmarks of their projects which have succeeded in finding a new use for historic buildings whilst respecting their character. Recently completed developments include The Galleries, the former Warley Hospital at Brentwood, and Herringswell Manor near Newmarket, Suffolk. Amongst current projects are Balls Park, Hertford, and the conversion of St. Michael's Hospital in Braintree.

Contacts

Katie Seabright, ECC Historic Buildings and Conservation 01245 437 672

katie.seabright@essexcc.gov.uk

EssexWorks.

For a better quality of life