



**The Tywi Centre**  
**Foundations in Heritage - Skills for the Future**  
**Heritage Building Bursary Scheme**

**Evaluation Report**  
**September 2011 - December 2014**



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**January 2015**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / CRYNODEB GWEITHREDOL

This bursary scheme based at the Tywi Centre, Llandeilo addressed the skills gap and increased the capacity of the heritage construction sector through training 51 trainees between September 2011 and February 2015 in heritage carpentry and joinery, stone masonry and lime plastering. Students gained an NVQ 3 in heritage construction at the end of the year long course. Trainees learned alongside skilled craftspeople; most working with a number of employers in order to gain the experience necessary for the NVQ portfolio as well as receiving comprehensive training at the Tywi Centre and through site visits and in-situ projects.

During years 1 and 2 the assessor/trainer was from Heritage Craft Alliance in Yorkshire and during year 3 specialist trainers were used – E I Flood & Sons (Bristol) for plastering and The Traditional Building Skills Company (Hay-on-Wye, Hereford) for stone and carpentry. The assessment in Year 3 was done by assessors trained by CITB at the Tywi Centre.

All placement providers and trainees were regularly interviewed during the evaluation and online surveys were used to gather information. Trainers, assessors, CITB and Tywi Centre staff all contributed to the evidence for the evaluation.

Findings show that the scheme achieved its aims with most people stating that it exceeded expectations. The training was of an exceptionally high standard and the separation of assessment and training, the involvement of CITB and the use of specialist trainers made a positive difference in year 3. The scheme went from strength to strength. Heritage construction employers became more enthusiastic and committed as the scheme developed; they could see the benefits to themselves and the industry and they also gained satisfaction from passing on skills and knowledge.

The project officer ensured everything ran smoothly: that trainee received all the support they needed, that they were placed with appropriate employers and that all aspects of their training were covered. Administration was also excellent with streamlined paperwork and procedures. Excellent staff with dedication and professionalism was most important factor in the success of the project.

Recommendations include: disseminating the success of this model widely and developing the training including the possibility of higher levels; continuing the partnership with CITB and working with specifiers. An expansion to include satellite centres and new partnerships for funding and for widening the agenda to include synergies with other agendas such as regeneration could be considered. Inclusivity should remain a priority as women and local people are recruited. The Tywi Centre is continually improving and moving the agenda to mainstream heritage building skills forward; it is the Wales centre of excellence for Heritage construction skills and training and this scheme has enhanced its reputation.

## **Crynodeb Gweithredol**

Mae'r cynllun bwrsariaeth yng Nghanolfan Tywi, Llandeilo wedi gafael â'r bwch ym myd sgiliau'r sector adeiladu treftadaeth ac wedi cynyddu gallu'r sector drwy ddarparu hyfforddiant i 51 o fyfyrwyr rhwng mis Medi 2011 a Chwefror 2015 mewn gwaith saer, gwaith maen a phlastro calch. Roedd y cwrs yn flwyddyn yn arwain at NVQ 3 mewn adeiladu treftadaeth. Dysgodd yr hyfforddeion ochr yn ochr â chrefftwyr medrus; gweithiodd y rhan fwyaf gyda nifer o gyflogwyr er mwyn cael y profiad angenrheidiol ar gyfer y portffolio. Un ogystal oedd hyfforddiant cynhwysfawr yn y Ganolfan Tywi a dysgu trwy ymweliadau a phrosiectau yn y fan a'r lle.

Yn ystod blwyddyn 1 a 2 roedd asesydd / hyfforddwr o 'Heritage Craft Alliance' o Swydd Efrog, ac yn ystod blwyddyn 3 defnyddiwyd hyfforddwyr arbenigol – E I Flood & Sons (Bryste) ar gyfer plastro a The Traditional Building Skills Company (Y Gelli Gandryll, Henffordd) ar gyfer gwaith maen a gwaith saer. Yn ystod Blwyddyn 3 roedd yr asesiad yn cael ei wneud gan aseswyr a hyfforddwyd gan CITB yn y Ganolfan Tywi.

Yn ystod y gwerthusiad cafodd y cwmnioedd adeiladu a'r hyfforddeion eu cyfweld yn rheolaidd a defnyddiwyd holidauron ar lein er mwyn casglu gwybodaeth. Cyfranodd yr hyfforddwyr, aseswyr, CITB a staff Tywi i gyd at y dystiolaeth ar gyfer y gwerthusiad.

Mae'r canfyddiadau'n dangos bod y cynllun wedi cyflawni ei amcanion gyda'r rhan fwyaf o bobl yn datgan ei fod yn rhagori ar y disgwyliadau. Roedd yr hyfforddiant o safon eithriadol o uchel a bu gwahanu'r asesu a'r hyfforddi, cyfranogiad CITB a'r defnydd o hyfforddwyr arbenigol wedi gwneud gwahaniaeth cadarnhaol ym mlwyddyn 3. Aeth y cynllun o nerth i nerth. Bu'r cyflogwyr adeiladu treftadaeth yn fwy brwdfrydig ac ymroddedig wrth i'r cynllun datblygu wrth iddynt weld y manteision iddynt hwy eu hunain ac i'r diwydiant, hefyd roeddynt yn cael boddhad o drosglwyddo sgiliau a gwybodaeth.

Roedd y swyddog prosiect yn sicrhau fod popeth yn rhedeg yn esmwyth: bod hyfforddai yn derbyn yr holl gefnogaeth oedd ei hangen, eu bod yn cael eu lleoli gyda chyflogwyr priodol a bod pob agwedd o'r hyfforddiant yn cael ei gwmpasu. Roedd y weinyddiaeth hefyd yn ardderchog gyda gwaith papur a gweithdrefnau clir. Ffactor bwysig yn llwyddiant y prosiect oedd y staff rhagorol gydag ymroddiad a phroffesiynoldeb sylweddol.

Mae'r argymhellion yn cynnwys: lledaenu llwyddiant y model hwn yn eang a datblygu'r hyfforddiant gan gynnwys y posibilrwydd o lefelau uwch; parhau â'r bartneriaeth gyda CITB a gweithio gyda rhagnodwyr. Dylai'r posibilrwydd o ehangu i gynnwys canolfannau lloeren a phartneriaethau newydd ac ar gyfer cyllid ac er mwyn ehangu i gynnwys synergeddau gydag agendâu eraill fel adfywio cael eu hystyried. Dylai Cynwysoldeb parhau i fod yn flaenoriaeth yn enwedig i gynnwys menywod a phobl leol. Mae Canolfan Tywi yn datblygu'n gyson ac yn symud sgiliau adeiladu treftadaeth i'r brif ffrwd; mae'n Ganolfan Cymru er Ragoniaeth mewn Sgiliau a Hyfforddiant Adeiladu Treftadaeth ac mae'r cynllun hwn wedi ychwanegu at ei enw da.

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Tywi Centre, Llandeilo is part of Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC), and sits within the Planning Department. A skills gap in Heritage Construction was identified by the Centre which aligned with the findings and recommendations from the report 'Traditional Building Craft Skills - Assessing the Need Meeting the Challenge: Skills Needs Analysis of the Built Heritage Sector in Wales'. This research, carried out by the National Heritage Skills Training Groups (NHTG) in 2007,<sup>1</sup> underpins the rationale for this scheme.

The recommendations in that report to upskill the existing workforce have however not been followed up, and statistics provide strong evidence of the need for training in heritage building skills. A report commissioned by the Tywi Centre in 2010 identified that there had in fact been a decline in course provision in Wales, and in 2010 no colleges in Wales offered specific Heritage training courses at NVQ Level 3.

"Foundations in Heritage: learning core heritage skills in the workplace" was a bursary scheme delivered by The Tywi Centre to address this skills shortage. Its main aim was to train construction qualified individuals through onsite training with heritage construction companies, where they would develop skills working alongside skilled craftsmen and women. In 2010 the Tywi Centre received Heritage Lottery Funding to pilot 30 accredited training places over a 2 year period, predominantly in South West Wales; in 2012 they were able to extend the project for an additional year, taking the total up to 50 trainees over three years.

The bursary scheme focused on skills that were commonplace prior to 1919 and which are essential to the appropriate repair and maintenance of older buildings. The skills gap is a risk to polite architecture, for which highly specialist abilities are needed, and also to vernacular buildings, that is, the one third of the Welsh building stock which was built before 1919. Maintenance of this huge stock is often inappropriate due to the use of modern rather than traditional materials and techniques.

**The aim of developing the bursary scheme was to raise the base level of understanding in these foundation heritage building skills and increase the capacity of the sector through training more people. This would contribute to mainstreaming all aspects of heritage building into the construction industry and training.**

Training people to become skilled and knowledgeable craftspeople, with an understanding and commitment to heritage building and heritage building skills was one of the main

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nhtgskills.org/uploads/files/nhtg\\_skillsresearch\\_wales\\_summary2007\\_englishlang\\_tcm27-11123.pdf](http://www.nhtgskills.org/uploads/files/nhtg_skillsresearch_wales_summary2007_englishlang_tcm27-11123.pdf)

objectives of the scheme. Each trainee would work over a 12 month period with a number of different placement providers in order to gain a broad range of experience leading to an NVQ3 qualification in heritage building. Practical experience was combined with formal training in the following core trades: Lime Plastering, Stone Masonry and Carpentry and Joinery. This training ensures a good foundation for a career in the heritage construction industry.

Trainees received a bursary of £12,800 (years 1 and 2)/ £13,200 (year 3) per annum and an allowance for tools and travel. Funding came from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Rural Development Plan for Wales 2007-2013 (RDP) through the Welsh Government and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, Carmarthenshire County Council; it also had the support of the National Trust.

In Year 3 the Specialist Apprenticeship Programme (SAP) and the Construction Skills Specialist Up-skilling Programme (SUP) were incorporated into the training through involvement of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB). During this year CITB also trained assessors who were assessing the trainees for their NVQ3.

**Year 1 - 15 Recruited, 14 Qualified (5 Stone Masonry; 6 Carpentry; 3 Plastering)**

**Year 2 15 recruited, 15 Qualified (6 Stone Masons; 5 Carpenters; 4 Plasterers)**

**Year 3 - 22 recruited, 20 Qualified, 2 due to qualify in March 2015 (9 Stone Masons; 7 Carpenters; 6 Plasterers)**

A Bursary Officer, Helena Burke, has worked with the project throughout and there is also a part time administrator and a steering group to support the project. (Appendix 1 – list of Steering Groups Members) For the first two years Heritage Craft Alliance<sup>2</sup> was contracted to deliver a substantial amount of the training and provide assessment for the NVQ. During the third year the training and assessment was split with the Traditional Building Company<sup>3</sup> delivering masonry and carpentry training and the Flood Brothers<sup>4</sup> delivering the lime plastering training. Assessment was done by a group of assessors trained by CITB (See Appendix 2 for a list).

There are two interim evaluation reports covering the first two years of the scheme and recommendations from each report informed developments in the following year. Copies of the reports are available from the Tywi Centre; see Appendix 3 for recommendations from

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.heritagecraftalliance.co.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.traditionalbuildingcompany.com/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.eiflood.co.uk/courses.html>

the formative evaluation reports. This final and summative evaluation summarizes the findings from the first two years and the conclusions and recommendations are based on the findings across the three years.

This report covers the period from August 2011 to December 2014. A narrative sets the scene, giving background and context to the findings which are organized in themes.

### 3. THE EVALUATION

The main aim of the evaluation is to highlight how the Scheme has achieved its aims and objectives and the outputs and outcomes as outlined in the funding bids. It identifies and highlights elements that contributed to and enabled success, and those elements that were challenging.

Gaining the perspective of all stakeholder groups was important in order to provide evidence of the range of outcomes and the longer term impact of the work; the evaluation is therefore mainly qualitative. Achieving the NVQ3 is one measure of success for the trainees and the scheme; however there are many other learning outcomes and elements to the Heritage Building Bursary Scheme.

#### Stakeholders:

- the trainees
- the placement providers
- assessors and trainers
- CITB (Construction Industry Training Board)
- the Tywi Centre and staff
- the wider heritage industry in Wales

**Year 1** - The focus was on gaining as much feedback from the trainees and their placement providers as possible. In depth work was done in order to inform the second year.

**Year 2** - Following on from year 1, the evaluation focused more on the placement providers and their changing perceptions, attitudes and experience.

**Year 3** - The third year was different in many respects and the evaluation focused on the changes and the future.

Areas explored during the evaluation included: support issues, expectations, processes and procedures, the NVQ, training, quality, communication, benefits and impact on individuals

and the industry and importantly learning outcomes for the trainees and also for placement providers and other stakeholders.

## METHODS

### Year 1

#### Monitoring Systems

The evaluator worked with project staff to set up data capture systems. The Training Plan outlined the importance of obtaining the appropriate data regularly and consistently. The monitoring data provides the quantitative evidence for reporting.

#### Trainees

- Three focus groups were conducted at the Tywi Centre - November 2011, January and March 2012. Trainees were asked to consider elements of the training from the induction to the NVQ assessment, paperwork, skills learned and confidence issues.
- 2 online questionnaires - October 2011 and February 2012 - the first focused on expectations, hope and fears (9 respondents) and the second one (12 respondents) focused on their experiences with the placement providers.
- Interviews – informal phone conversations throughout the project

#### Placement Providers

- Telephone interviews
  - November 2011 – January 2012 (10)
  - March – June 2012 – (8)
- Email questionnaires (the same question-set as interviews) - these were sent out intermittently throughout the year when requested in place of an interview.
- Visits to three sites at the end of the year and face to face interviews (4 employers)

#### 3 Case Studies

Three case studies provided more in-depth evidence and insights into how the Scheme was working and the benefits and impact on trainees and placement providers.

#### Staff and other Stakeholder

Face to face interviews with Tywi Centre staff and the NVQ assessor: 2 in-depth interviews each and also many informal conversations at meetings and over the phone.

### Year 2

#### Trainees

- Face to face interview with all trainees at the Tywi Centre in November 2012



- 2 Online surveys:
  - 2012 - September/ October (15 responses)
  - 2013 - May/June (9 responses)
- Phone conversations with a sample of the trainees throughout (5).
- Face to Face interviews at various points throughout (4).

### **Placement Providers**

Two periods of interviewing with all placement providers:

- 2012 - Interviews over the telephone and also some emails (13)
- 2013 – June - In-depth interviews with all placement providers (13)

### **Staff**

- One meeting per term with the project officer to discuss trainees and their progress and also regular conversations throughout the year
- 3 interviews with the NVQ Assessor. Also regular phone conversations.
- Telephone interviews with members of the steering group (5)

## **Year 3**

### **Trainees**

- Online questionnaires
  - 2013 - October / November (13 responses)
  - 2014 -August (10 responses)
- Face to face interviews (4)

### **Placement Providers**

There were two phases of interviewing providers, done mostly over the telephone, with some face-to face.

2013 - December (16)

2014 -August/September (16)

### **Staff**

Regular interviews and meetings with the project officer.

### **CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) / NSAC ( National Specialist Accredited Centre)**

Interviews with staff (7) including the manager of the Specialist Apprenticeship Training Service UK, the Specialist Apprenticeship Officer allocated to the project and NSAC Internal Verifier.

### **Trainers / Assessors**

The two companies delivering the training and assessment - the Flood Brothers and John Munro from the Traditional Building Company were interviewed twice, once in December 2013 and then again in August / Sept 2014.

### **Trainee Assessors**

All trainee assessors were interviewed (5)

### **Steering Group**

Members were interviewed over the telephone or responded to email questions during the year. The Tywi Centre Board of Management (Steering Group) commented on the final draft of this evaluation and their feedback has been incorporated.

## **4. NARRATIVE SUMMARY**

### **Training plan and preliminary workshops for placement providers**

Alyson Jenkins was commissioned by the Tywi Centre to produce a Training Plan as part of the application for funding to the Heritage Lottery Fund. She worked with the Heritage Lottery Fund, conducted research and consulted with relevant groups in order to find examples of good practice. The Training Plan provided a template for the delivery of the project, it covered the following: background to the project including identifying the need, the national context, the vision of the Tywi Centre and the possible impact and benefits; it covered the resources needed to support the training; recruitment of trainees and placement providers; management and support offered by the Tywi Centre; a detailed account of the training programme delivery; health and safety; accreditation & assessment; project outcomes; monitoring and evaluation; marketing, publicity and dissemination and finally sustaining the project.

Heritage construction companies in South West Wales were invited to two half day workshops in September 2010 at the Tywi Centre. This brought together potential placement providers to discuss the project outline; it was a forum to share thoughts and opinions and contribute ideas and suggestions on all aspects of the proposed training. This proved to be a worthwhile process that began a creative dialogue, established relationships and ensured a shared understanding of the bursary scheme and its goals. The final training plan was in place by November 2010.

Skills supported by the project were restricted to the following core trades:

- Lime plastering
- Stone masonry
- Carpentry and joinery

Roofing (slate and tile) was included in the original bid but there were no applicants.

The project, whilst not being an apprenticeship scheme, draws on the successful model of the Carmarthenshire Shared Apprentice Scheme (CSAS)<sup>5</sup>.

### Placements

There was a geographical spread of companies across south Wales. The companies involved in the Scheme varied from small ones employing 2 or 3 people to large companies working on many projects and employing up to 100 people across the different trades. The projects the trainees worked on ranged from conservation work on listed buildings to domestic work; from churches, listed buildings, new builds in clom, restoration of structures and buildings, dismantling, modern conservation work and combining modern and traditional methods; there was even the construction of sustainable play structures.

The Scheme aimed to offer trainees a wide range of experiences that would not only contribute to the NVQ but would make them better and more commercial craftspeople. The Tywi Centre officer and NVQ assessors operated with the knowledge that one placement provider is not always able to provide the full range of jobs and their role was to ensure that the trainees move around between companies to gain the experience and necessary skills.

Many companies were well established and had teams that had worked with them for some time. All those involved had a strong commitment to their crafts and to heritage building and they were passionate about maintaining skills and developing a workforce for the future.

#### **Year 1**

**40 applications sent out -26 applied - 24 interviewed 15 recruited, 14 completed**

#### **Year 2**

**50 applications sent out - 40 applied - 24 interviewed, 15 recruited, 14 completed**

#### **Year 3**

**84 applications sent out – 52 applied - 45 interviewed, 22 recruited, 20 completed by December 31<sup>st</sup> 2014 with 2 more on target to complete by March 2015**

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cctal.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=27&Itemid=17](http://www.cctal.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=27&Itemid=17)

## Year 1

A full time Bursary Scheme Officer - Helena Burke, was appointed on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011 and Heritage Craft Alliance (HCA), a private training provider was appointed in July 2011 to support and assess the NVQ. Kevin Lambert from HCA was the appointed lead.

The project began promptly with sufficient time to conduct a thorough recruitment and induction process. The scheme was advertised in local papers, through the local Further Education Colleges (Coleg Sir Gar, Pembrokeshire College and Coleg Ceredigion) and through the network of heritage construction companies in the region. There were also open days at the Tywi Centre. Interviews took place in August and the first cohort of trainees was recruited in the summer of 2011, they were all from South Wales except one. Training began in September and they completed in August 2012. One trainee left the course in February; the other 14 gained their NVQ 3.

The officer's role included finding placements for all trainees and also supporting them throughout their training ensuring all issues and problems were resolved. She provided pastoral and practical support. She liaised with all placement providers, and maintained all data and records along with the part-time administrator.

Some trainees were placed with one employer throughout, although working on many different projects; most moved between employers (up to five). Trainees also came into the Tywi Centre for training in their individual crafts and to cover the theoretical and technical work such as drawing plans, calculating quantity of materials and project management. They also completed their NVQ files at the centre if needed with one to one support from the assessor or the officer.

Towards the end of the year each of the three crafts worked on an on-site project

- North Wales – Carpenters and joiners
- Shropshire - Plasterers
- National Botanic Gardens - Stone Masons

There were also day visits: Saint Fagan's museum Cardiff and West Wales Lime Company.

Other training included: Ty Mawr Lime delivering a one day 'Introduction to Lime' course; Dewis Menter provided training on setting up and running a business. Sophie Norton also provided a two day course on the law and heritage buildings, architectural identification and conservation philosophy.

## Year 2

50 application packs were sent out in the second year and there were 40 applications, 24 of which were interviewed in June 2012. 12 trainees began working with placement providers in September 2012. The officer, working through contacts in the network and following up

people who had applied previously, recruited another 3 trainees who began in November 2012 and one ended in December 2012.

New Placement Providers were also recruited this year; the officer had been contacting people throughout the preceding year and 4 more were included.

The training in year 2 followed the same format as year 1 with some additional elements including more work on in-situ projects; which had been particularly successful in the first year. Training included:

- Field Trips – to Machynlleth and Welshpool
- Job Application and interview course
- Business
- Working from Drawings
- Planning a structure
- Sessions at the centre – looking at crafts

The NVQ files were all in by the end of June and 14 trainees achieved the qualification.

In February 2012 the Tywi Centre was invited to apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for an extension to the Bursary Scheme. The application was to train 20 students and it also included a proposal to train assessors in Heritage Crafts.

### Year 3

Funding for the third year was secured through a £769,400 extension grant from HLF. Trainers were employed to deliver specialist training: the Traditional Building Company delivered masonry and carpentry training and the Flood Brothers delivering the lime plastering training. Assessment was done by a group of assessors trained by NSAC at the Tywi Centre during the year. Their feedback is included in the report.

CITB ensured rigorous processes and 6 NSAC (National Specialist Accreditation Centre<sup>6</sup>) officers were involved in Quality Assurance. They monitored and supported the trainee assessors. CITB's Specialist Apprenticeship Officer Dave Manser worked closely with the Bursary Officer mentoring and supporting the trainees; he visited them and conducted reviews.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.the-nhtg.org.uk/training-quals/training-providers/by-english-region-or-country/east-midlands/national-specialist-accredited-centre-nsac/>

## **Specialist Apprenticeship Programmes (SAP)**

As a result of the lack of availability of traditional college based Modern Apprenticeships for a range of specialist occupational sectors, the CITB National Specialist Team worked with industry to develop and introduce Specialist Apprenticeship Programmes (SAPs).

These programmes are comprised of training modules, which are delivered through a flexible timetable of short duration off the job training sessions (typically total of 30 days) as well as on the job mentored training. The content within the modules provides the trainee with the necessary formal training to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge required in working towards achieving the NVQ Level 3 qualification.

The programme for the SAP in year 3 was as follows:

Carpentry and masonry: September 16<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> 2013; December 9<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> 2013

Plastering: September 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> ; November 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> 2013; January 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> 2014; March 17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> 2014.

## **SUP - Specialist Upskilling Programme**

SUP has been developed for crafts people who have a higher level of skill and experience and require less training input to reach NVQ3 level than trainees following a SAP. SUP training follows a 2 week off the job training as well as mentored training on site.

### **There were 22 students in year 3**

Recruitment in year 3 was done in 3 stages. Stage 1 attracted 35 applications, 28 of these were invited to interview, 16 were offered a place and 14 accepted. The second round in October attracted 7 applicants and 5 were offered a place and all accepted. The third round attracted 12 applicants and 4 were offered a place and accepted. One of the trainees decided to leave the scheme for personal reasons in December 2013.

Training this year involved a range of projects and specific courses:

- CADW - Cardigan castle - talks from archaeologists, architects, Cadw, Bat Conservation
- Pontypridd Lido restoration- talks from archaeologist, project managers, contractors and Cadw
- Alan Richie - Traditional Timber Framing Course
- Timber framing repair
- Three day First Aid at Work
- Business
- Careers
- Richard Jordan- Traditional Roofing

- Health and Safety- Asbestos Awareness, Safe Work at Heights, Manual Handling and Abrasive wheels
- Chainsaw course
- Equality and diversity

## 5. FINDINGS

Quotes are anonymous throughout so as to gain honest responses.

### RECRUITMENT

Two open days were held prior to the beginning of the Scheme and the Tywi Centre also marketed it to the heritage construction industry through the initial workshops in 2010 and consultations. The project officer liaised extensively with the three local FE colleges and advertisements and articles were placed in local papers. Information about the scheme was also distributed through Carmarthenshire County Council. The second year employed a similar recruitment strategy and in the third year, having become established and known to wider groups of people connected to the heritage construction industry, there was less need for marketing as word of mouth ensured a good response.

*"I have let a few lads know about it, I have recommended it to them – they will apply"* placement provider

The recruitment, vetting and interview process were seen as crucial by all concerned. The placement providers commented:

*"The Tywi Centre do the vetting - The lads who come to us through the Centre have a good attitude and also basic skills – it works well for us."*

*"The calibre of student is very good, they are capable young men - so the interview process must be good."*

Some placement providers had their own vetting and recruitment procedures.

*"Helena offers us candidates - then we look at their CV's and we then send them a link to our website and we also send them an induction pack (lots of H&S details in this)"*

*"There is an application that they have to do - for us"*

Placement providers were offered the opportunity to meet with the student before they committed to offering them a placement. They also took the trainees on a trial basis for a few weeks to see how they fitted in with the team.

*"We are involved in choosing the trainees that come here - we have a very rigorous process"* placement provider

The profile of the applicants changed over the three years as the scheme became established; applicants in the third year were more mature and experienced. During the first year more applicants came straight from having completed an NVQ2 and 3 in construction at local FE colleges.

### **Interviewing**

Shortlisting and interviewing was done at the Tywi Centre. The interview panels were carefully selected and the interview process carefully considered, taking into account knowledge and theoretical understanding, experience, attitude, capabilities and commitment.

The interview panel in the first and second year included: Helena Burke (Heritage Bursary Officer); Nell Hellier (Tywi Centre Manager); Tom Duxbury (Training Officer) Anthony Rees (Carmarthenshire Construction Training Association Ltd.) and Kevin Lambert (Heritage Craft Alliance). Year 3 interviews were conducted by Nell Hellier, Helena Burke, Anthony Rees, Tom Duxbury and John Munro (Traditional Building Company). The interviews took a half day and included a written exercise followed by an interview where the trainees, using portfolios demonstrated and talked about the training and work they had done. Trainees commented that the interview process was good: *"The interview was a good experience"*

### **Women**

One woman was recruited in the first year, a stonemason. She completed the course having had a successful year. One placement provider had some reservations at first:

*"The gang had some reservations – but they have been unfounded – she is very hands on – no problems at all - she is good."*

In the second year two women accepted places but both withdrew; one because she decided that she could not move into the area at that time and the other was recruited but left after one month, feeling that her skill levels were not adequate because her previous experience was mainly in heritage decorative work. In year 3 no women were recruited. A project is now underway at the Tywi Centre focusing specifically on recruiting and training women in heritage construction.



It is very noticeable that placement providers and most people spoken to in the course of the research spoke of 'lads' and 'young men' when referring to trainees and potential trainees.

## COMMUNICATION, REVIEWS AND PAPERWORK

Placement providers commented often on the excellent communication with the Tywi Centre Staff and the NVQ assessor during years 1 and 2:

*"It is good that they came out to visit trainees on site – this is really good "*

*"They talk to us and the trainees on site – this is a real positive"*

*"Everything is fine - some hiccups and then they [staff] are there straight away"*

Review meetings took place every six weeks in the third year these were conducted by Dave Manser CITB's Specialist Apprenticeship Officer or the bursary officer. One trainee commented: *"The six weekly reviews have been really helpful and a necessary component, without which I would have been really lost"*. During the first two years reviews were also carried out regularly, but not as systematically.

*"They were very useful in pointing me in the direction of the work I have to do to gain my NVQ"* trainee

*"Reviews were useful kept mind focused on NVQ, assessments were really straightforward"* trainee

*"Having the reviews from Dave Manser is essential as it gives an independent view on how you're doing"* assessor/ trainer

Placement providers praised the streamlined approach to paperwork; the comments sum this up well:

*"We have had had 10 trainees before (National Heritage Training, English Heritage and the National Trust for example) - you have taken away the pain of the paperwork – it makes my life easier."*

*"Paperwork – all fine – no problems "*

*"I would not do it if it was heavy on the paperwork or admin – I am very busy – I am on site."*

The trainees also found the paperwork easy:

*"Timesheets - all clear and easy"*

Of course nothing is perfect and sometimes people commented on ways to improve:

*"It would be good if on the Assessment plan/review there was a little more detail – the proforma could be better designed"* placement provider

## THE TRAINING

The mix of on-site learning, training with specialists, in situ projects and theoretical work at the Tywi Centre is the ideal way to train people in heritage construction.

*"On site assessment - this is the way we have done it - this is the way to go"* CITB

During year 3 the specialist trainers and the involvement of CITB training a team of assessors made a difference to the quality of the training and assessment. There was a more focused approach; the trainees received more specialists training and had a greater breadth of expertise to draw on.

A commitment to the learning of the trainees was apparent with all placement providers:

*"There's been mix and match – different boys – different techniques - they have had a chance of going with each one and leaning their own way."*

*"We vary it for them - we hope they feel as if they are getting a lot out of it."*

*"They are doing repair work in heritage - they are not only leaning plastering they are seeing the whole thing around them – all the different aspects of the work on the house – it is a big learning curve."*

*"Because of their enthusiasm and their willingness to learn - not just the skills but the philosophy too - I have been more inclined to spend time with them talking about the philosophy - because they are enthusiastic - it takes time and energy but if they are keen - I like to do it"*

The trainees developed a range of skills, knowledge and personal attributes to enable them to work successfully in Heritage Building. Although the trainees are the focus of the learning, all stakeholders: the placement providers and also the Tywi Centre learned a great deal about the different elements including: the process of training, learning, systems, working with others and about the infrastructure of heritage building skills and training in the region and in the country.

## Trainers

The trainers were highly skilled and experienced. Trainees commented on them:

*"The highlight has been working with the Flood Brothers, they are brilliant."* trainee

*"All my placement providers and tutors have been excellent and have tried to teach me as much as they can during the bursary scheme. It has been a very hands on experience and it has been one of my best years in education."* trainee

*"The roofing course was fantastic, I learned so much - all the training has been good though, better than I expected"* trainee

Comments from the trainers and assessors:

*"We hone in on their [trainees] weaknesses' and work on those with them"* assessor / trainer

*"We partner the weak with the strong - so they learn from each other"* trainer

*"Plastering involves a lot of team work - so they need to know how to work together and learn from each other"* trainer

*"They do everything - reading drawings - measuring up - they get a comprehensive, full training - the full agenda. They appreciate this - we want them to succeed"* CITB

## Induction and SAP Training

During years 1 and 2 there was an induction week at the Tywi Centre where trainees familiarized themselves with the paperwork and the plan for the coming year and also had 3 days training on Health & Safety. Evaluation forms were completed at the end of each week and feedback was very positive. As a member of staff said *"A bit of a dull week really but necessary."* In the third year CITB contributed to the induction and it was followed by the SAP training. The induction period at the beginning was an opportunity for trainees to settle and familiarize themselves with the requirements of the NVQ as well as cover basic requirements such as Health & Safety, reporting requirements and paperwork. Trainee comments from years 1 and 2 include:

*"Meeting the people who will be responsible for delivering the qualification - good"*

*"The induction was helpful because it went through in detail everything we would need to do to pass this course successfully"*

*"It was very useful, I learn about health and safety which is paramount to any site"*

*“Sessions weren't too long - so at least you could keep your concentration”*

*“Meeting all the other candidates and the staff at the centre - good “ trainee yr 2*

With a few misgivings:

*“I found the induction week somewhat intimidating, leagues and leagues of legislative jargon, tales of how you will be kicked off site or prosecuted for this or that left me a little unmotivated to embark upon a future in such an environment” trainee yr 2*

*“The week in the Tywi Centre was quite tedious but I do know it was also essential to the course and relevant to the year ahead.” trainee yr 1*

### **SAP Training**

This included the induction alongside the SAP programme and it was very successful, developing their knowledge and enthusiasm immediately. Feedback from the trainees on the SAP training in year 3 included:

*“I think it's good to get the worst out of the way first; the following two weeks on the SAP course were such a relief and no feeling of having to go through it again” “Dave Manser was good in his describing how the course would run. The session covering equality and discrimination was very interesting and thought provoking”*

*“Somehow this man packed hours of numbing information into one day and expressed it captivatingly”*

*“The SAP training at the beginning - more please”*

### **In Situ Projects and Field Trips**

These ‘live’ projects involved going away for days or weeks and all trainees throughout the scheme commented on how much they enjoyed working on in situ projects and how much they learned; they were one of the highlights of their learning experience.

*“The weeks you go away are really good – because we concentrated on one thing – all heritage stuff” trainee*

*“We learn from each other – the group.” trainee*

*"Going to the National Botanic Gardens and splitting them into 3 – doing the whole job – they do ALL the work – the practical and also all paperwork – recording – surveys – specifying and then present to everybody else"* trainer

*"This sort of work gives them high level skills – puts it in the real world – what they would have to do, for example present to architects"* assessors and trainer

Organizing these projects was not without problems. The placement providers were often irritated or annoyed because the trainees went away during an important job or when staffing was an issue.

*"The trainee going off to do work – is a nightmare – we are a small company and this is really difficult"* placement provider

*"I wish they gave us more notice about these projects and trips - it is good for the lads but sometimes it has caused us problem."* placement provider

Field trips were also commented upon positively by the placement providers: *"The field trips are good - it whets their appetite I think - gets them emotionally - they see what is possible - what they can do and achieve"* placement provider

## **Other Training**

This included: Job application and interview techniques; Business skills; Conservation; Traditional Roofing; Traditional Timber Framing; Introduction to Lime; Health and Safety Training; Equality and diversity; First Aid; study tours to Cardigan Castle, Leighton Centre and Pontypridd Lido.

The response to these courses / learning experiences was generally very good with respondents saying that they learned a great deal and that the quality and content of the courses was excellent. The business course was the one where most participants felt they gained the most: *"It was brilliant, just the job, loads of information – really useful."* trainee

*"Not just about Heritage building skills - much more - interpersonal - getting on with people - organisation skills"* trainer

*"Being commercial - whether working for someone else or setting up a business and working for themselves - many skills needed"* trainer

## NVQ3 AND ASSESSMENT

During years 1 and 2 one person from Heritage Craft Alliance was responsible for assessing and also delivering a great deal of the training. Kevin Lambert was a highly skilled and experienced craftsperson and trainer; he was respected and admired and provided excellent training. He maintained close contact with trainees throughout and worked closely with the project officer to support them and ensure their success.

*"Kevin was old school - an old hand - very skilled - respected and admired – has as an encyclopedic knowledge"* placement provider

Gaining an NVQ3 qualification was important for the trainees; it was a significant stepping stone in their careers in heritage construction. The trainees valued the qualifications, it gave them credibility and it evidenced their level of experience and competency.

*"It is important – so people know immediately what level I am at – you can't always get an opportunity to demonstrate to people – so it is useful."* trainee

They also received a 'Gold CSCS Card' which confirms that they have the necessary qualifications and training to work on Heritage construction projects. Assessors and placement providers had differing views on the NVQ3 qualification and the gold card:

*"It is too easy for them I think - too easy for them to get their qualification. A year to get a gold card - too easy. It could possibly be phased - they get a full card after they have worked in the industry for 12 months - with a probationary - or provisional card until then. We will otherwise flood the market with mediocre people - this devalues the qualification"* placement provider

*"In France they do it differently – college and 3 years also journeyman training - Should be longer than 1 year "* assessor and trainer

Responses to these comments from trainers, assessors and CITB staff include:

*"The NVQ standardizes how we work in the industry"*

*"People learn a trade over years! But this is a good start"*

*"It gives a national benchmark"*

*"It is not too easy - it might be too hard!"*

*"The industry is full of older skilled people who do not want to share - this NVQ is more advanced than the college stuff"*

A suggestion made by a few placement providers was: *"Possibly an NVQ 4?"*

Trainees all felt that working towards the qualification was fine. The language used was overly complicated but it was as they said *"all OK because we get the support to work through it"* trainee

*"Kevin is very good at explain the NVQ to us"* trainee

*"The NVQ can look daunting – loads to do but . . . I work backwards – I tick things off quickly – doing the work then seeking where it fits with the NVQ"* trainee

*"Confident about the NVQ – easier as you go on"* trainee

Kevin Lambert visited all trainees at all their placements, taking photos and helping them gather the evidence from their NVQ portfolios. In year 3 there were more people to support the assessment process, which became more thorough. Interviews and review meetings were audio recorded by assessors.

SAP training delivered in year 3 was linked to the content of the NVQ3 and John Munro had translated the language of the NVQ for use in a Learner Resource Pack that he was using in his training company with his students. Because of his experience he was able to make the whole process as easy as possible for trainees and the placement providers, who as he commented could sometimes be *"lazy about witness statements"*

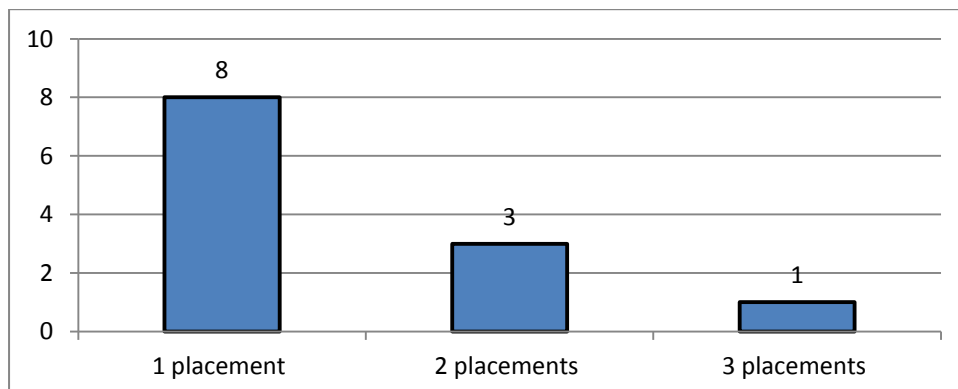
*"Examples are given to the placement providers - to make it easier"* assessor

## PLACEMENTS

**Number of Placements throughout the year - from the surveys**

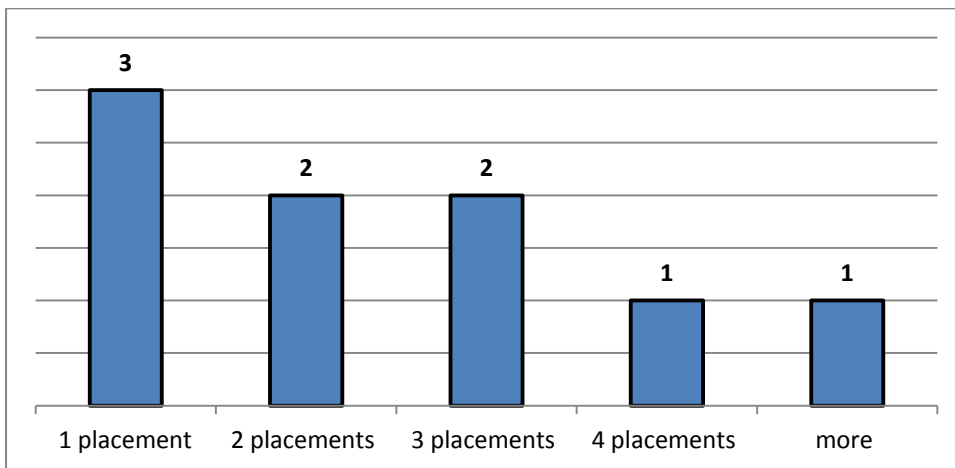
**Year 1**

**12 respondents**



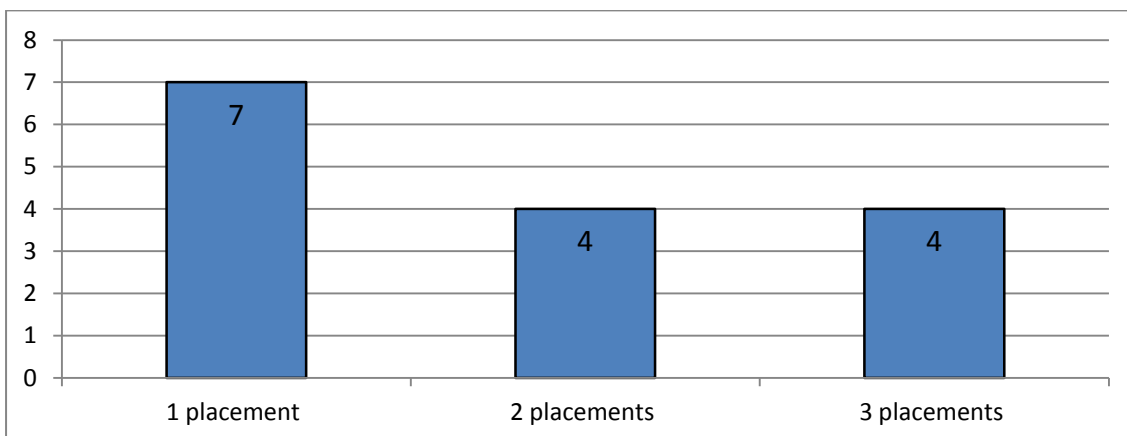
## Year 2

9 respondents



## Year 3

15 respondents



*"It has been my own choice to stay with the same company as I have medical issues it made sense for me to work with people who know me"* trainee

*"Moving around has meant I have seen how different people work - it's good experience"* trainee

*"I just didn't get on with the placement - I moved and all OK."* trainee

There are advantages to be gained by remaining with one placement provider and there are clearly advantages to moving around. Sometimes it was necessary to move trainees, once



or up to 8 times in one instance; this was in order to cover the NVQ requirements and also for reasons such as travel, personality differences or preferences. The bursary officer ensured that the trainees were moved when necessary or appropriate:

*“It is a heritage unit but some have to do modern stuff as well – Have to move them. They have a good all round experience.”* Bursary officer

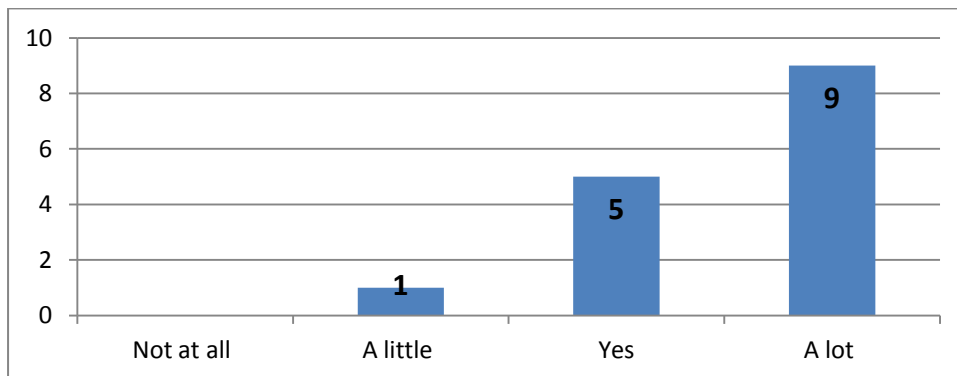
## SUPPORT

The Tywi Centre has maintained excellent levels of support. In the surveys and in interviews the trainees commented favorably and felt the support was always available and accessible. Different sources of support included: the bursary officer, the trainers and assessors and also the placement providers and in the third year from Dave Manser from CITB.

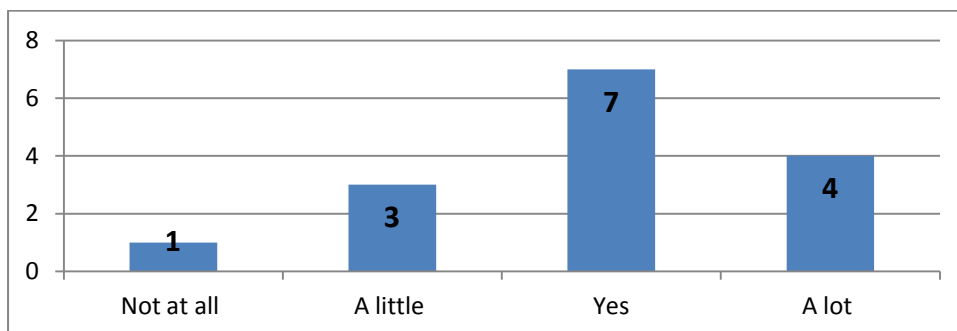
### Sources of Support for Trainees

These graphs are from year 3 however they reflect the responses in the first two years, which were very similar. Trainees were asked where they received support from.

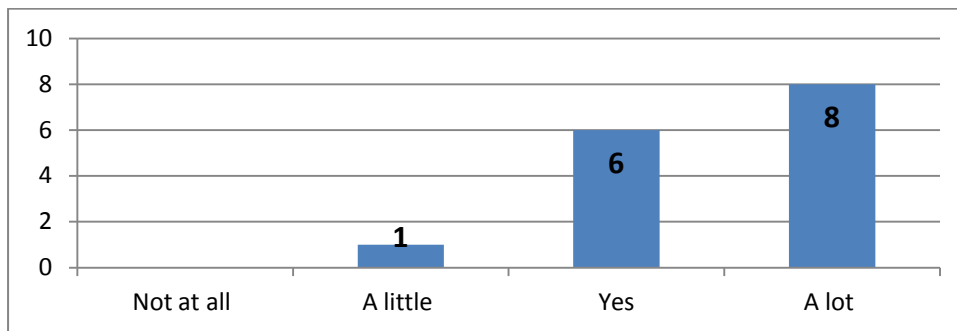
#### From the Staff at the Tywi Centre



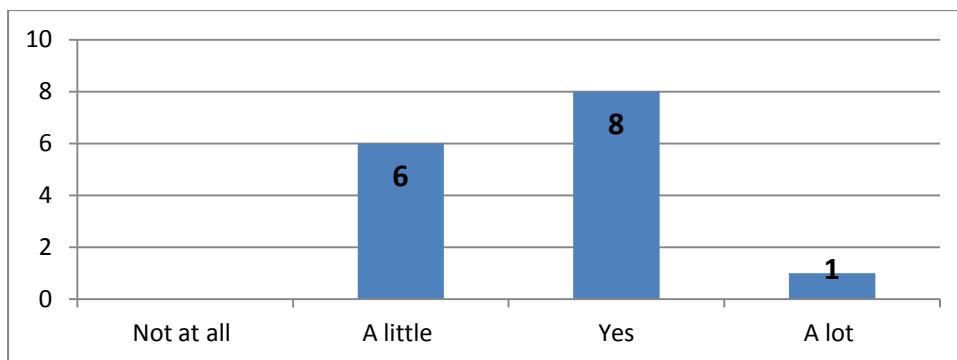
#### From the Assessors



### From the Placement Providers



### Fellow Trainees



Trainee comments include:

*"I've had constant support around me since I began on my bursary, which has really enabled me to give it my full attention"*

*"There was a problem of a personal nature that cropped up and the help from the staff at the Tywi centre and the support from the CITB specialist apprenticeship officer was invaluable and enabled me to continue the course. My assessor was not helpful"*

*"The staff at the Tywi Centre are excellent - Help you loads if you have any queries"*

*"I am taken aback by it – they really help you!"*

*"Helena and Kevin are very quick at answering emails "*

The majority of trainees felt they received a great deal of support from the Tywi Centre throughout the scheme. Kevin Lambert from Heritage Craft Alliance offered excellent support although he was not available at all times and the assessors in the third year also offered good support on the whole, with a few negative comments.

### **Support from Placement Providers**

Most trainees felt the placement providers offered them a broad range of experience and generally made them feel welcomed. There was slightly less confidence in their support for the NVQ in the first years and there were comments about the varied nature of the companies and the levels of support received.

*"Felt comfortable straight away, nice team."* trainee

*"One company was very supportive and offered me much guidance, I can't say the same about the other one"* trainee

*"A company which does all aspects of construction to a VERY high standard, it was a pleasure to learn from my site foreman."* trainee

It was noticeable that from year to year the placement providers were more engaged and offering higher levels of support and training.

The bursary officer maintained regular contact with trainees by text messaging; she did this especially at the beginning of the year. Helena worked closely with the assessor and trainers throughout to support the trainees and ensure their progress with the NVQ and general well-being.

*"John and Fred [CITB] very supportive - been excellent - can't fault them, and the Tywi Centre is another source of info and support. The students get feedback and support from them as well - the link is excellent. Everyone has someone to talk to"* Trainee assessor

## LEARNING AND SKILLS

Trainees each year were asked how they had benefited. These responses are from year 3:

	None	Some	Yes	A lot
Learned from highly skilled crafts people	0	0	5	9
Working with companies of different sizes	2	3	6	3
Working on many different projects	0	3	8	3
Experience of different elements in heritage building	1	3	5	5
Good all round construction skills & knowledge	0	2	4	8
Good experience of developing my craft	0	1	6	7
Support with working towards achieving NVQ 3	0	1	7	6
Benefiting from training provided	0	1	4	9
Business development/careers advice	3	4	5	2

The trainees value, and benefited from the high quality training provided and working with skilled crafts people. They commented:

*"Working around really passionate craftsmen has really pushed me on to aim higher"*

*"A really good course which gives not only provides good training and theoretical knowledge but active experience of working in the heritage sector"*

All trainees, in each year said that they had learned a great deal: all aspects of work from the skilled craft to understanding the work of other team members on site to conservation issues. They also learned about business, Health & Safety and essential things like looking after and organising tools. Getting along with people, the teams on site and placement providers, was an important area they felt they had gained confidence in. One trainee commented: *"The people there give me a hard time - However – I learned a lot 'bout working with people I suppose"*

Working on a variety of different jobs and projects whether it be with one or more placement providers was important. Working on non-heritage projects and in different locations all contributed to a range of experiences that helped develop skills and confidence. Below are comments from the trainees showing the breadth of their learning, and their enthusiasm:

*"VARIETY is great – different building styles – techniques and tools "*

*"Good to do it with people who are used to doing it - this is invaluable experience – learning"*

*"I get to sit in and look at plans where I am – the architect plans - so it has been really good learning – working from plans"*

*"I am doing everything – slate hanging cladding – all aspects of roofing"*

*"Lath – framework and learning about sheep's wool insulation too - great learning"*

*"Definitely learning lots – gaining in confidence – good"*

*"1<sup>st</sup> day he was carving stone – on an instant learning curve – this is great - then off to botanic gardens – pointing and lime work – and we went through another job at the botanic gardens – so I / we had the opportunity to do costings and estimating money and time – very good experience"*

*"I learned about tools - looking after your tools is important "*

*"Being involved in and seeing 'real life' situations in the heritage construction industry, for example when there were issues with clients or when things did not go to plan was an invaluable lesson."*

*"I saw stuff in action that I had been hoping to see for years"*

Doing a range of jobs was important so that they became familiar with the whole picture and could understand how it all fitted together:

*"The trainee learns everyone's trade "*placement provider

*"We give them training in business too - business support"* placement provider

*"Logistics! Getting materials to a building down a lane – through a churchyard – so it is not just about laying stone! It is about the day to day challenges you face."*  
placement provider

Placement providers commented on the development and learning of the trainees:

*"They have grown over the year - especially their confidence"*

*"They begin by asking us and then towards the end we are having to ask them what they are doing"*

*"They really appreciate the experience they learn many skills - how to cost a project and how to set up"*

*"We have been doing plaster and lath in a church - the lecturer from the college came out - he said he had never had the opportunity to work on this - to actually do the restoration and rebuilding even though he had taught it - this is real life building work"*

There were also theory and the wider conservation issues:

*"Whether they were interested or not – practical understating on CORE conservation principles – I gave them some of the philosophy and rationale – and they would've benefited from this - Conservation is not just building!"* placement provider

*"I talk to them about the theory and the men on the team teach them the skills"*  
placement provider

Each year two surveys were conducted, one at the beginning and one towards the end of the training. The second survey showed how the trainees had developed; they expressed appreciation for the scheme, the Tywi Centre, the placement providers, the trainers and assessors.

*"I enjoy working there - people there are fun and informative and very helpful I couldn't have wish for a better placement."* trainee

*" I have learned so much not just to do with masonry - history and how building where built, how versatile lime is and how many ways it can be used, how beautiful Wales is."* trainee

Each year there were some trainees who had negative or difficult experiences. Often the mundane aspects of the work irritated some.

*"I've enjoyed fixing window boards. I did not enjoy cleaning the floors and cleaning the bricks. I did not expect to be doing that sort of stuff."* trainee

## PRACTICAL ISSUES

### Tools

Difficulties were encountered in the first year; each trainee had an allowance and bought basic tools and safety equipment. This was not always what was needed though, and in the second year trainees bought tools after consultation with placement providers and staff. This worked well.

*"We just had a list – the basic tools – I had nearly everything I could've spent the money on things I needed."* trainee year 1

*"He should've had advice – e.g. tape measure – essential but he did not have the right sort."* placement provider year 1

Comments from years 2 and 3 include:

*"The allowance has been very good and has enabled me to purchase some of the tools that will be required in career as a heritage carpenter/joiner"* trainee

*"Good substantial tool allowance"* trainee

### Travel

There were genuine difficulties for some trainees with regard to traveling to and from work and with accommodation if they were working away from their homes. The majority of trainees however coped well with these challenges and were supported by the placement providers.

*"He lived in the caravan we have here"* placement provider

*"The training allowance was not enough to cover my travel costs – almost not worth claiming it"* trainee

One suggestion was *"allow mileage allowance to be spent on accommodation. I rent a caravan pitch instead of driving 100 miles a day I get no help for this but my friend drives instead and is better off!"* trainee

More comments from trainees include:

*"It's expensive getting to placements, the expenses help a but I still spent about £60/week on petrol"*

*"I found travelling over 50 miles per day to be impractical and taxing. I was sometimes disappointed when the work wasn't really worth travelling to"*

*"I completely rely on public transportation, I told them at the interview I did not have a car yet they still placed me 75 miles from my address."*

## 6. SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AND CHANGES - YEAR 3

The involvement of CITB / NSAC has been significant and brought with it many positive changes and also a few challenges.

*"I felt the previous training programme at the Tywi Centre - the previous year - was not as robust"* trainer and assessor

*"Our SAP programme is developed by specialists - 20 days worth of training on each occupation - it is more inclusive and robust"* CITB

*"We said - if they could use us - then we would train assessors - this is synergy"* CITB

*"We do the whole package"* CITB

*"This is trickle down, the assessors are trained and are working with apprentices - they will benefit from all this"* CITB

*"We are measuring the quality of the training being delivered "* CITB

*"We - and the Tywi Centre are raising the game"* CITB

When applying for the third years funding the Tywi Centre manager felt CITB should be involved *"the aim is that heritage will be in mainstream construction - an awareness of it at least at all levels of training"* Tywi Centre manager

The Centre and CITB are working in partnership: *"They are partners with us – you can see the results"* CITB

### **Assessor Training - year 3**

The invitation to become an assessor with CITB was sent to all placement providers and a few attended an introductory session at the Tywi Centre. This session contributed to placement providers knowledge and understanding of the qualification and assessment process even if they did not continue with the training. Five people completed the training to become A1 assessors and all five were interviewed as part of the evaluation. Some people were experienced and had been involved in assessing previously, whilst others were new to it.



CITB delivered the training and assessed the assessors. Training took place at the Tywi Center and all trainee assessors were allocated two trainees to assess as part of their training.

Below are comments from the trainee assessors:

*" I get a lot of support from John Parks and Fred Earl - IQA - they have a wealth of knowledge and experience I can call on "*

*"I get a lot of information and support from the Tywi Centre - Paperwork support"*

*"Assessor Role - I love it"*

*"Centre has been great in giving us information – they keep good records at the Tywi Centre. We get registration and details for all those who come to us – a biography, Helena emails to us. We know their level of experience etc."*

CITB staff commented:

*"People came to the first briefing - I don't think they understood fully what was needed to be an assessor"*

*"We are getting good results - they have really come on"*

*"They are working at the level we want them to - it is working - they understand the principles"*

CITB Internal Quality Assurance systems are robust, they ensure that those assessing the trainee assessors are also assessed and supported. CITB offer ongoing mentoring and support to the trainee assessors, *"there is always someone to talk to"* as an trainee assessor said.

*"We really do try to support them"* CITB

*"The assessor training and assessment needs to be separate - this is carefully looked at"* CITB

Placement providers commented on the changes in year 3 regarding the assessment arrangements.

*"The assessment seems to be getting better"*

*"It is much more structured"*

*"The students this year are much better informed - in skills generally and traditional skills"*

*"Better provided for all round"*

*"The training at TC is better - more specific and also broader - wide ranging"*

Placement providers saw less of the bursary officer, but saw the benefits of having a broader base of people involved. They praised CITB, the IVA and IQA staff, and spoke of their support, professionalism and friendliness.

**More comments from the trainee assessors:**

*"As a trainee assessor I get a lot of support"*

*"NSAC training has been very good"*

*"We did it in groups here at the Tywi Centre - it was well presented"*

*"The process of learning is the same on all the links - it is a learning chain - so it works very well - everyone has been in the link below so has understanding"*

*"I do it because I want the industry to continue and thrive - I do it for love of the job"*

## 7. STRENGTHS OF THE SCHEME

### **Groundwork**

Before the scheme started the groundwork of consultation with the heritage construction industry in South West Wales had laid the foundations for good working relationships. The potential placement providers that attended the workshops run at the Tywi Centre in 2011 commented on the usefulness of the process. Those who were unable to attend were also consulted by the bursary officer.

*"Helena spoke to us first and asked us what we were looking for - this was good"*  
placement provider

### **Recruitment**

The recruitment process was excellent, a few trainees left the scheme but trainees were highly motivated, enthusiastic and committed. During years 2 and 3 the trainees that were recruited were more mature and experienced. In the surveys throughout the three years motivation was high with trainees all expressing a passion for heritage constructing and wanting to make a career and successes in the industry.

### **Communication**

Consistent, clear communication and liaison between the Tywi Centre and the employers was a significant factor in the success of the scheme. Without a doubt the excellent

communication skills, support and commitment of the bursary officer has been a key factor in the success of the scheme and a key factor in the positive outcomes for all stakeholders. The communication is all levels between all parties. Issues do not become problems, matters are dealt with quickly, and suggestions acted upon so that there is development.

### **Continual improvement**

Each year the scheme has been evaluated and staff worked with the evaluator so that formative findings informed developments and lead to improvements. The Tywi Centre is a future facing organization committed to heritage building and skills. Sustainability is a goal and new ways of working are explored. The manager approached CITB and the scheme, with their involvement, has changed and improved in many ways.

*"The scheme was contributing to the heritage construction training - to the industry - so I wondered how CITB could contribute to this scheme"* Tywi Centre manager

*"We have worked with the centre for three years, building up relationships - it is growing"* placement provider

The placement providers became increasingly committed and could see the long term benefits of this scheme:

*"It is a great scheme – I had my reservations at first – but it is good."* placement provider

*"I am pleased to be contributing and helping the trainees."* placement provider

*"Everything is fine - some hiccups and then they [staff] are there straight away"* placement provider

### **Professionalism**

*"Everyone is very professional - all issues are worked out - dealt with immediately - we discuss everything about the programme and work it all out - brilliant!"* Dave Manser, CITB

CITB staff, placement providers, trainers, trainees and all those involved with the scheme and the Tywi Centre commented on the professionalism, knowledge and enthusiasm of the staff at the Tywi Centre.

*"It is really impressive at the TC - really good people - really good assessors too"* CITB

*"That is the key to success - having good people in place"* CITB

*"It is easy to work with the Tywi Centre"* trainer

*"Tywi Centre and Staff - very helpful - efficient and nothing is too much trouble for them"* trainer

Comments on the quality and excellence include:

*"The TC has anticipated - identified this gap - this project will help fill that gap - it is essential"* CITB

*"Quality work - restoration and building - it is fantastic, such a good scheme, staff are brilliant."* CITB

*"They were all great - as usual - the standard of the trainees is excellent"* placement provider

*Completely straightforward for us – the assessors came out – no bother"* placement provider

**The Bursary Officer** has worked tirelessly through the scheme and is the cornerstone in the success of the project. All stakeholders commented on her professionalism and hard work. She ensures that the trainees are moved between placement providers, she is the link between assessors, CITB, the Centre, Placement providers and the trainees. Pastoral care and a support are essential and Helena has done this throughout.

*"First week – Helena is keen to get feedback on students - so she can act and get the right placements"* Placement provider / trainer

*"Helena ask for an appraisal of each student – so that she knows which ones need specific training - she finds this our ASAP so it can be addressed – understanding where they need help/support"* assessor

*Helena is excellent* placement provider

### **The network of support**

*"It is a learning chain - so it works very well - everyone has been in the link below so has understanding"* assessor

*"The lads get support from assessors - Tywi Centre and Helena and also from their tutors and from me"* Dave Manser CITB

CITB and the Tywi Centre support the trainee assessors who in turn support the trainees. CITB's Specialist Apprenticeship Officer also supports the trainees alongside the bursary officer. Trainees also have support from the trainers who can also turn to CITB and the Tywi Centre for support and information. There is a strong network of support for everyone.

*"The link with CITB is excellent. Everyone has someone to talk to"* trainee assessor

*"The assessor was really helpful and the Tywi Centre is good - always ready to help you if you have a problem"* trainee

*"The training was top notch and I felt supported - not always easy though"* trainee

*"If I have a question - I know Helena is on the other end of the phone, she is very good"* placement provider

*"The review meetings are great, things get discussed and sorted - they come out regularly - this is good"* placement provider

### **Administration**

The streamlined administration and paperwork has played a part in the success. Placement providers were surprised at how unproblematic it was in terms of administration and paperwork.

*"The admin and organisation is faultless - this is amazing for us"* placement provider

*"Having the paperwork out of our hands in a blessing"* placement provider

*"This is the best scheme I have worked on in terms of the paperwork and admin"*  
trainer/assessor

### **The Tywi Centre**

The physical space, the buildings also contribute to the success. It is an inspirational and practical place.

*"It is a practical - site orientated place - the space is fantastic"* trainer

## **8. CHALLENGES AND HOW THEY WERE DEALT WITH**

No one issue or challenge stands out and as previously mentioned, whenever there was an issue it was dealt with promptly therefore avoiding any major problems. Below are some of the challenges that arose during the three years.

Trainees were, especially in the first year, immature with very little experience. It took time for some of the placement providers to identify, what at first appeared as a lack of motivation, as a lack of confidence. Once this was recognized it was addressed with placement providers taking a more direct approach and communicating with the trainees differently offering support and feeding this back to the bursary officer. A case study from year 1 documents how with some "straight talking" one of the trainees realized that he had to ask for help, and change his approach and attitude even though he was motivated, skilled and wanted to work, his lack of confidence and inexperience held him back.

*"A few times when he did not do work up to scratch then I spoke to him then he bucked up - he is young, this is to be expected, he is a good lad."* placement provider

The bursary officer had the challenge of placing the trainees with appropriate employers. This was a difficult task, not only in terms of ensuring that all elements of the NVQ were covered, but also because of personalities. *"It is a bit like a dating agency"* she commented.

*"Placement Provides - you need the best there too. Helena struggled to find some for joinery"* assessor

There were difficulties with some trainee, placement provider matches. Some placement providers built good relationships whilst others or some individuals within companies did not always get along so well. Some trainees were difficult personalities and placement providers worked extremely hard to get them through the qualification. Some did not fit in well with teams; this was a minority experience though. Placement providers commented:

*"He thought he knew it all"*

*"Most of our work is mundane – cleaning – pointing, restoration – 95% . Only about 5% is carving etc. He had pre conceived ideas – his perception was all wrong!"*

*"He didn't have a clue at first; he was a danger on site. He's good now, really good - but it's taken a lot of effort – I was surprised how little experience he had had."*

*"Everyone tried their best with him, he was a difficult case, just wound everyone up, upset some people"*

A few trainees left the scheme and the reasons for leaving varied from personal circumstances changing to offers of other work or recognition that this was not an appropriate career path for them.

*"Always towards the end the problems arise – they get nervous and anxious – thinking of employment and completing their NVQ's"* Bursary officer

In year 3 a placement provider was also an assessor and this was a mistake that will not happen again. Some Health & Safety issues arose with some placement providers and they were dealt with promptly by the Bursary Officer.

*"Not putting boards on top of joists - I spotted it straight way so the student came from there immediately"* Bursary officer

Travel and accommodation for the trainees has been a problem throughout, it is unclear what can be done about this.

The language of the NVQ was unnecessarily complicated. In the first two years part of the assessor trainer Kevin Lambert's role was to explain the NVQ and in year 3 this was solved as the Traditional Building Company produced a pack using straightforward language.

*“Kevin translates it for us - I really wish it was written in plain English”* trainee

*“The wording of the NVQ is not aimed at workers! The language is odd. What are they trying to ask me?”* placement provider

Companies felt strongly about a certain degree of lack of communication about the timetable for the trainees going on course, trips and to work away during the first two years. In the third year this was not identified as an issue.

## 9. BENEFITS AND OVERALL IMPACT OF THE SCHEME

Identification of a lack of heritage construction skills in Wales was the starting point for an 'Outcomes Map' which was produced at the outset of this project (Appendix 4). The long term goal was 'A functioning market exists for heritage construction skills in Wales.' It is clear that the bursary scheme has contributed to this goal through the realisation of the outcomes as outlined below.

### OVERARCHING OUTCOME

Availability of heritage skills to support the construction industry in Wales

	TRAINEES	TRAINERS
<b>Outcomes</b>	The base level of understanding is raised in Wales	Demand for Heritage Skills exists
	The capacity of the sector to deliver training has been increased	
	Trainees are employed within the construction industry	Reputation of Heritage Centre of Excellence enhanced
	Template for heritage training exists	
<b>Intermediate Outcomes</b>	Trainees gain appropriate qualifications	Shared good practice based in the heritage industry
	Trainees supported through the training programme	Knowledge of Wales' built heritage, and the skills required to maintain it has been enhanced.
	Recruitment of trainees	

### INITIAL CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

Delivery of Appropriate Training

Training Pathways Developed

## **Availability of heritage skills to support the construction industry in Wales - Increasing the capacity of the sector**

Trainers, assessors, placement providers and CITB staff praised the scheme and the Tywi Centre and commented on its contribution to skills development and helping to sustain and increase the capacity of the sector.

### **48 students have qualified as of 31st December 2014**

#### **50 Students by the end of February 2015**

*"This is a substantial contribution to the heritage construction industry"* Tywi Centre manager

*"This is a positive thing - the age of present craftsmen is quite old now - so in 10-15 years there will be a gap"* CITB

*"It is fantastic that this has happened - this training happening here"* placement provider

*"The Tywi Centre is utilizing the skills of local people - and training them up"* trainer

*"There are not straightforward college courses avail be for these lads - for this skills - Training is done by firms"* CITB

Good financial management by the centre has meant that an additional 5 trainees will be taken on and qualify by the end of December 2015; this further adds to the skills available in the sector.

### **Sustaining and Developing the Training**

'Building our Heritage' is the name of the training programme that is running in 2015 at the Tywi Centre; it follows on and builds on the success for the Foundations in Heritage Bursary Scheme. 'Building our Heritage' has two main differences: women are a part of it and it is a Wales wide training programme. It will also include a 'training the trainer' element and already the benefits of this were being seen in year 3 with the roofing course where the trainer was part of this new development. These developments, this growth in breadth and quality all indicate that the Bursary Scheme has provided a foundation and legacy on which to build.

*"We have been focusing on qualifications for too long - now the focus is on training - the Qualification will follow"* CITB

*"There is good structure now - theory linked to the on-site work - learner needs at the centre"* CITB

### **Training and Skills Infrastructure**

An infrastructure for training and skills development has been established in Wales through



this scheme. It has created bridges and a network. Previously there were no CITB assessors in Wales. Through this scheme there are now 5 accredited assessors.

*“Wales needs a skills training centre – especially in Heritage Skills - the Tywi Centre can provide this – and we are more than willing to assist”* placement provider

*“The way it has been done - an excellent start - kick started it well - there has been no cost to contractors - to the placement providers”* placement provider

The Tywi Centers reputation as a centre of excellence continues to grow. Staff at the centre have increased their skills and knowledge base and the centre will continue to focus its resources and energy into developing the high quality training it delivers and co-ordinates.

### **Heritage construction companies benefiting**

Heritage construction companies felt that they were giving the trainees valuable experiences and also felt that they were benefiting by having extra and free labour:

*“It is good for us another pair of hands – and he has already got a lot of skills – not starting from scratch so we don’t have to spend too much time with him.”* placement provider

*“From an employer point of view you can’t fault this - They are shadowing tradesmen – we are getting free labour.”* placement provider

Heritage Construction companies saw the benefits of training young people, of passing on their skills and knowledge. They also learned a great deal in the process:

*“Two benefits - 1. It has enabled us to develop our training abilities - particularly our foreman and other craftsmen who work with the students day to day. 2. It has helped us get more done.”* placement provider

Over the three years the mutual benefits were reiterated and this became more evident in the final year. Placement providers commented:

*“He’s done some good work here - it is swings and roundabouts “*

*“I want to pass on knowledge - many older men want to do this - this scheme gives them that opportunity”*

*“This has been of great benefits to us – they worked well and were able to take a lead“*

*“As a company owner - this is a sort of subsidised labour - so overwhelming positive point!”*

*"They are keen and it is hard to find good staff – it is nice that the filtering has been done for us already "*

*"I worked along chaps in their 60's. There is progression now – you can move up – they can see career paths these days! "*

Good practice has been shared amongst the placement providers and through the involvement of CITB, the trainers and assessors. The trainees helped to spread awareness of heritage construction and building and contributed to increasing the demand:

*"When people saw the work the lads were doing - they wanted it too"* placement provider

*"He has now become an advocate of our products – set up his own business"* placement provider

*"Done some odd jobs for clients – useful"* placement provider

### **Professionalising a sector**

The changes in the scheme, the involvement of CITB, robust training and assessment has meant increased professionalization. However there is a down side to this and some placement providers spoke of the dangers of over emphasizing qualifications; this would polarize the industry in their opinion.

*"These lads get the gold CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card . The other lads that work for us are equally as skilled - more experienced - highly skilled - they don't have it! This seems a bit unfair"* placement provider

Many came into the sector without having high levels of literacy or numeracy but with practical skills. The emphasis on academic qualifications was of concern to some.

*"Our staff have to have NVQ (labourers) - showing 'evidence of competence'"* placement provider

*"Academic nature of assessment - it is a disadvantage - many have practical learning styles"* placement provider

*now they are saying labourer have to have an NVQ - but - some come into this profession because their literacy skills are not good - they are practical - one can't read or write*

Whilst the involvement of CITB had improved the scheme and the learning outcomes for trainees, some felt they would now take over the agenda. On the other hand as a trainer and company owner *said "The demand for tuition is doubling every year and feedback is brilliant"* and so there is clearly a need to develop and ensure quality.

*"It is all good - desperately needs to be secured - it would be a tragedy if the Tywi Centre did not get the funding to carry on "* placement provider

*Can't take on any more trainees 'cos we are not CITB registered (60% of our work is classified as non-heritage) this is a shame 'cos we are growing and can offer more. This has been a positive experience for us - it is a shame that we can't take anyone next year - we have a lot of work we are a big company - expanding. This is disappointing"* placement provider

## **Buildings**

In the long term vernacular and historic buildings in Wales have and will benefit as the sector develops. Placement providers were mindful of how the skills being learned would benefit the trainees *"they can always adapt these skills – to modern work"* and how valuable this training was in order to ensure a heritage construction industry with skilled and experienced craftspeople.

*"Modern contractors are taking over some of the heritage work - jumping on a bandwagon - then off - the gold card protects people and buildings"* trainer

*"You can't touch the building if you have not got this training - this is good"* trainer

*"This scheme has contributed to the skills needed to maintain heritage buildings; it is a model that we can develop. Such good work has been done."* Cadw

## **Mainstreaming Heritage Construction Skills**

All the outcomes and benefits contribute to a critical mass and to the raised profile of the importance and significance of heritage construction skills. Mainstreaming the knowledge, skills and the ethos of heritage construction is the long term aim, so that elements of it will be integrated or embedded into mainstream construction courses in colleges.

*"Heritage will be mainstream and people will aspire to be part of it"* assessor

## **The Economy and Employment**

Companies emphasised the importance of the need to earn money that heritage construction was a business. Some instilled this in the trainees:

*"I speak to the lads, I want them to earn money - we try to teach them to earn money from their craft – or otherwise they will give up on their training."* placement provider

The economic downturn of 2008 did affected the industry and this scheme has helped to mitigate these affects *" this scheme is really helping in this economic climate"* placement provider/ large company

In the third year the commercial aspects, the business side of heritage construction was emphasised more. Companies felt this was positive; they are all running businesses and felt the trainees had to be 'commercial'. Recognition of the need to develop people locally was also evident.

*"I have clients that need to be kept happy - we are a business!"* placement provider

*"Having local assessors is good - local craftspeople"* placement provider

*"There is always travel - but the more local the better"* CITB

*"We want them to work - this is the point"* Assessor

*"This is fantastic for the lads – we employed the trainee from last year"* placement provider

**Of all 48 trainees, as of 31st December 2014, 26 were in employment**

**18 were self employed**

**16 working with companies they had previously been placed with on the scheme**

*"we think it is a wonderful model - for how these things should work – even on projects and schemes outside the conservation building world"* placement provider

*"Skills are important – need to be retained – I think it is fantastic for Wales and UK. It is an amazing project – we really want to participate – we want to give a little bit to it"* placement provider

*"It is all positive - long may it continue!"* placement provider

*"I really enjoy teaching – passing it on and watching them grow"* placement provider

*"It is very positive – done more than we expected"* placement provider

## 10. THE FUTURE

### Infrastructure - a Network

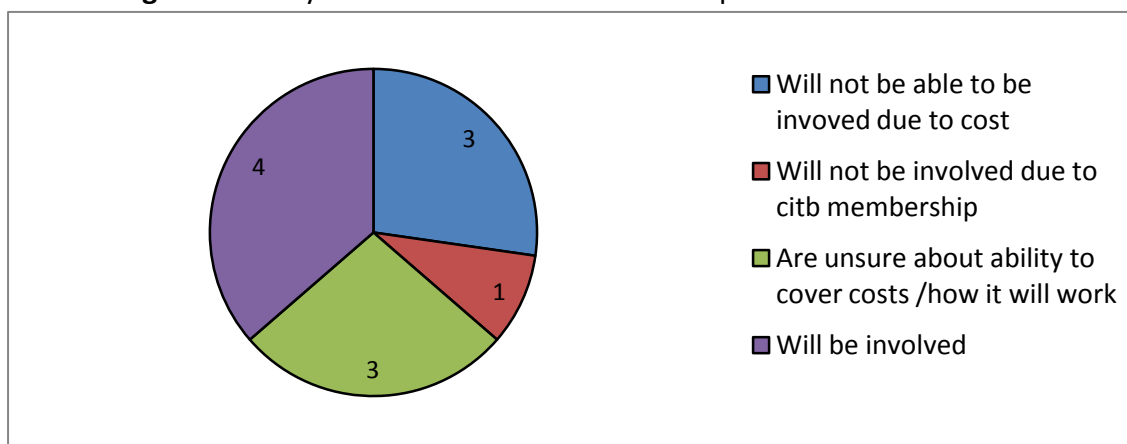
Developing a Network/ Forum was spoken about at the workshops held in 2011. This is an idea that has been mooted by CITB and by the Tywi Centre and will form part of the focus for the coming years. A large Wales wide conference is being held in Llandudno, North Wales in March 2015 entitled 'The Future of Heritage Construction in Wales - Training, Collaboration, Mainstreaming'. All placement providers and trainees are invited. There are speakers on each theme and activities designed to facilitate discussion to help identify gaps, tensions and ways forward for investing in skills, mainstreaming heritage construction and collaborating in order to tender for work and develop a robust infrastructure for the industry in Wales. This conference will also celebrate the achievements of the Bursary Scheme which has successfully developed the heritage construction training sector and contributed to the demand for and a market in Heritage methods and materials.

### Paying for Trainees

In the future companies will be asked to contribute to the cost of having a trainee due to funding constraints and a move towards co-investment in skills by the Welsh government<sup>7</sup>, which will, in the long term develop a more sustainable training delivery model. Placement providers spoke about this and wanted to discuss the issue in the latter stages of the evaluation.

*"Next year placement providers are being asked to contribute - this will change the scheme. It would be difficult for us"* placement provider

**Introducing costs** next year will have a considerable impact.



<sup>7</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/141120-framework-for-co-investment-in-skills-en.pdf>

Some realized this development would happen and most companies are prepared to try, to support the scheme if they can. Smaller companies might not be able to. This will be a loss.

*"As this Scheme develops – the issue of co-funding / match funding might appear – we would consider this"* placement provider - year 2

*"I definitely would not be able to take on trainees if I had to pay, we are too small, I really wish I could but..."* placement provider

*"The small companies will find it difficult - easier for the larger ones"* placement provider

*We put a lot of time into it – spend a great deal of time with the trainee – so it would not be worth us paying* placement provider

*"We have the incentive – 'cos they are funded – we train them and also get work from them - morally it is right we contribute"* placement provider

### **CITB - Specialist Apprenticeship Programme**

Alan Wemyss, SAP Manager with CITB-ConstructionSkills' National Specialist Team spoke of plans to develop the current training at the Tywi Centre and CITB's involvement in order to ensure the sustainability of the Centre and the training programmes. The longer term aspirations are that the Tywi Centre will run the Shared Apprenticeship Programmes

*"If they take on 15 apprenticeships - we can train 24 and then another 9 will be fee paying"* Alan Wemyss CITB

*"The Tywi Centre will be the Heritage Training Centre for CITB in Wales"* Alan Wemyss CITB

CITB will work with the Tywi Centre to develop sustainable training and continue to train assessors in a range of crafts. It can also expand to include roofing and tiling. This was begun with the introduction of roofing course and the training of a specialist roofing trainer.

*"The Tywi Centre could be a complete Heritage training Centre - We would support them in the delivery of the shared apprenticeship programme"* Alan Wemyss

### **Training the Trainers**

Specialist roofing training will be offered as part of the training programmes developed for the following year. During year three of the Bursary Scheme trainees received a short roofing course (3 days) whilst the trainer, Richard Jordan, was being trained and assessed as a CITB accredited trainer with a Learning and Development Diploma that fits in with the Credit and Qualification Framework. Richard was interviewed and the evaluator observed a

training session which was planned with a variety of learning methods to suit different learning styles with engaging and appropriate activities.

*"The lads said it was brilliant training - it was really good - relevant - excellent training - good response from the students"* CITB

### **Geographic Spread**

A lack of provision in urban South East Wales was mentioned consistently by companies based there:

*"I wish there was more in South East Wales - more training - more students. A similar project here?"* placement provider

*"We just can't get the skills - People from West Wales have to travel - not good"* placement provider

### **Filling a Gap, Creating a Demand - Needs for the future**

These comments sum up the need to continue and to develop this work:

*"I wish we could spread this wider in Wales - there is a demand which is growing"* placement provider

*"You are creating a demand through the Tywi Centre"* trainer

*"My order books are full"* placement provider

*"People see the work and then they ask the lads if they can do work for them"* placement provider

*"Seeing the damage done to lots of buildings, people are seeing the value of the old ways now"* placement provider

*"The results are spectacular!"* Steering group member

The comments below are from members of the steering group and they sum up the issues for the future:

*"Awareness raising across the board is important. From owners of houses – how to treat and use material – through to the bursary training. There is a need for professionals to have more training in this area too - the specifiers."*

*"We need to look at training for council staff – building control officer – highways – housing officers "*

*"Things will change in terms of funding – and this scheme has so much scope!"*

*"Financial independence and stability is important – planning for future"*

*"To have the flexibility to respond to opportunities is something that should be worked on for the future"*

*"Wonderful to see how it has grown and it needs to continue to grow"*

*"I spoke to a trainee who is now working with the company he was placed with working on Llanelli House – he has set up his own businesses. They will be in a position to offer placements and spread the word – self perpetuating"*

*"It is important to get message out there about how well it is doing"*

*"Blowing your own trumpet is vital - get case studies out there"*

## 11. SUMMING UP - CONCLUSION

The Bursary Scheme has been successful in achieving what it set out to do: providing high quality training to 50 individuals in heritage construction to NVQ level 3. It has exceeded the expectations of all stakeholder groups. Excellent management of the scheme has contributed to it developing each year, with increased capacity, professionalism and quality. Good financial management has also meant an additional 5 people will be trained by the end of December 2015. The skills development, training and upskilling has also been extended to include training assessors thereby further increasing the capacity of the sector.

Mainstreaming heritage construction has been advanced through raising the profile of heritage construction, providing high quality training and assessment. The Tywi Centre is working to make heritage more understandable, more accessible and fully integrated into people's daily lives.

There was excellent collaborative working and partnerships with a number of organisations and with companies in Wales. This forms the foundation for future work. Each year recommendations from the evaluation have been acted upon and the centre staff, in partnership with others (employers, colleges, CITB, Carmarthenshire County Council, CADW, the National Trust and the Welsh Traditional Building Forum for example) have continually improved the scheme and aimed for excellence.



**Learning and growing characterize the scheme.** Trainees; Placement Providers; Assessors; Trainers and the Tywi Centre have all learned a great deal during the past three years.

**The recruitment, vetting and interview process** were seen as crucial and the Tywi Centre executed these to a very high standard that ensured the trainees were of a high caliber. The scheme did not do well in recruiting women, but this is being addressed with a project specifically recruiting and training women which starts in February 2015.

**Processes and Procedures are streamlined** and commented upon often. There was a difference in year 3, as CITB forms were used, but paperwork and administration maintained clarity.

**Communication and excellent interpersonal relationships** are the cornerstones of success. The bursary officer held the scheme together, creating channels of communication and networks between the placement providers.

**The structure of the training works well from** the induction, the SAP and SUP training, in situ projects and visits and the additional training in business and careers for example.

**Placement providers** increased their commitment and involvement throughout the three years. Maintaining close contact with them, informing and including them ensures 'buy-in'. They understand the importance of the scheme to the industry and many have developed as mentors and trainers, some enrolling on the assessor training. Introducing cost next year will have a considerable impact which needs careful consideration.

**A range of benefits are associated with the scheme, it has considerable impact.**

Individuals, the trainees have benefited, the employers, new assessors, the Tywi Centre, the heritage industry, heritage buildings and also the wider community and environment.

**Strategic Government Objectives are met:**

- Skills development, upskilling and employment
- Sustainable development
- Rural regeneration
- Heritage
- Economic development

*“Our collective past can ably support the future of our cities, towns and rural economies and contribute towards the aims of other bodies to drive economic growth and prosperity.”*

Heritage Works<sup>8</sup> page 1

### **Significant changes**

Year 3 assessor arrangements came to fruition through working with NSAC and CITB. The Tywi Centre brought in different specialist trainers and separated the training and assessment. The SAP training was, according to the trainees in year 3, the best bit of the year and the third year offered a better learning experience for the trainees. The placement providers also commented on the professionalization of the scheme and the quality improvement in training and assessment.

Other significant changes:

- SUP
- Assessment - allocated assessors for each craft
- Training – specific, focused, high quality
- Mentor – CITB and Bursary Officer offering more support for trainees
- The network of placement providers has extended

During years 1 and 2 the training and assessment was excellent, however with one trainer it was impossible to deliver every facet of training to a high standard in all areas. A great deal more depth in the training was provided in year 3 and professionalism and the imperative of being commercial was also emphasized more in year 3 by all those involved.

The first cohort was young and inexperienced in the main with very little exposure to heritage building; they lacked confidence. The learning curve was steep for all concerned. Some uncomfortable situations led to a great deal of learning however. The cohort in the third year was more experienced, mature; there was a higher calibre of applicants. Word of mouth through the industry meant that not many trainees came straight out of college. There is a danger that those straight from college who might be interested and talented could be excluded in the future. The possibility of a more polarized training infrastructure and sector due to increased professionalism and emphasis on qualifications should be reflected on; it is important that inclusion and equal opportunities are considered in the planning of new initiatives and developments.

### **The future - Heritage Centre of Excellence**

Heritage is valued by people - *"Heritage assets matter to communities and may form part of*

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/heritage-works/heritage-works-2013.pdf>

*their identity, whether large or small, urban or rural.*" Heritage Works<sup>9</sup>, Page 7. Heritage building, material and skills are an integral part of this.

The Scheme and the Tywi Centre has built a reputation. The quality of the scheme has given it the credibility to attract the best people as trainers, placement providers and assessors. The Tywi Centre is the only organization facilitating this qualification in Wales in such numbers and all those associated with the centre and the scheme want to see it continue and grow, to see it become a centre of excellence in Wales.

## 12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continuing the momentum of NVQ3 provision and developing the capacity of the partner organizations at this point is critical to the sustainability of the scheme and sector.
- Continuing and developing the partnership with CITB - the synergy can help the Tywi Centre offer a complete package of skills development and training for the industry.
- Building on the success of the Centre, an expansion with satellite centres in South East Wales as well as in North Wales could be considered.
- Disseminating information about the success of the project and this model of excellence is paramount. It should be done through different channels, to different audiences at different levels from the Welsh government to local people.
- The skills agenda is a priority with the Welsh Government and the Tywi Centre should ensure their successes are heard about - the model is an excellent one that can be rolled out across different sectors.
- The benefits of the scheme have to be 'sold' convincingly to employers who will be asked to contribute financially next year.
- To incentivize placement providers to contribute financially, a new recruiting procedure could be developed where the placement providers are involved as employers of the trainees.
- Ensuring trainees are local to the placement providers is recommended so that travel is kept to a minimum. This is important when placement providers are paying towards costs as they will want to retain good trainees.
- Sustainability of the Scheme and the Centre is a central concern; the Tywi Centre could look at wider networks in the areas of regeneration and heritage tourism for example.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/heritage-works/heritage-works-2013.pdf>

- Different partnerships and collaborations will give access to different funding streams which could be explored along with other innovative and entrepreneurial avenues.
- Inclusivity should remain a priority. With continued professionalization and the success of the scheme it is important to continue to recruit locally and to target underrepresented groups.
- Developing a Network / Forum for Heritage building in Wales to help further the aims of the Tywi Centre and its partners is an aspiration to be taken forward.
- Possibly looking at higher level qualifications in heritage Building - NVQ4 and higher, to fit in with the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales.
- Mainstreaming Heritage Building skills and knowledge should remain as a central goal for the Tywi Centre and inform future developments.
- Having backup for all trainers and assessor in case of illness could be considered at the beginning of the each year.
- Working with specifiers and architects is a gap that, whilst not being able to address immediately could be included in discussions for future developments.