

Twelve participants will receive bespoke, structured training and assessment with experienced heritage contractors leading to the achievement of the Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Heritage Skills (Construction) – Wood Occupations.

The funding will also provide an opportunity for three local college lecturers to assist in the delivery of the off-the-job element of the apprenticeship programme and become accredited to deliver the course in their respective colleges. In addition eight ambassadors / mentors will be funded to mentor the apprentices and promote the project and heritage sector in Northern Ireland.

On successful completion of this project the apprenticeship will be made available to other Further Education Colleges and Training Providers to deliver across Northern Ireland with the potential to increase provision to include other traditional building craft occupations. This will provide a structured apprenticeship pathway for new entrants to the sector especially from mainstream construction and increase the available knowledge and skills sets for both clients and employers.

Barry Neilson, Chief Executive, CITB-ConstructionSkills NI said: “We are delighted to receive this generous funding and it builds upon our previous and existing work with the Heritage Lottery Fund with over £500,000 invested in sustaining local traditional skills in the heritage sector. This project will provide an opportunity for craftspeople to obtain a recognised heritage qualification, widen the scope of their construction activities and make them more employable.”

**Notes to editors**

As an Industry Training Board and Sector Skills Council, the role of CITB-ConstructionSkills Northern Ireland is to encourage the adequate training of those employed or intending to be employed in the construction industry and to improve the skills and productivity of the industry, to deliver a safe, professional and fully qualified workforce across the whole of the construction industry in Northern Ireland.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) investment was made through its Skills for the Future programme as part of a £17million boost for 54 projects across the UK.

Skills for the Future is a one-off programme which supports the creation and provision of apprenticeships and work-based training opportunities within the heritage sector.

Launched in July 2009, Skills for the Future is a one-off HLF programme supporting organisations across the UK to create new training places. Grants range from £100,000 to £1million for a number of traineeships over a period of up to five years with an emphasis on high-quality work-based training.

**Further information**

If you are an experienced heritage contractor and want to help share your skills to shape the future of the built heritage sector contact Amanda Stevenson on 028 90 824204, email: Amanda.stevenson@citbcsni.org.uk to find out more about becoming a placement provider.

The training programme is expected to commence in September 2014. If you are an experienced carpenter/joiner with an interest in upskilling into the built heritage sector and getting a heritage qualification further details will be updated on our the CITB website and Facebook page as information becomes available.

For further information contact Siobhan Daly, Marketing Communications Manager, CITB-ConstructionSkills Northern Ireland on 028 90824 222, email: siobhan.daly@citbcsni.org.uk.