

## The art of brick laying – Braintree District Museum reaps the rewards of hosting an Essex County Council building conservation course



Wendy Schmitt with Mac Knox-Weir and course delegates get to work on the wall.

A Victorian wall from the 1860s which lines the front of Braintree District Museum is to be given a new lease of life when 7 bricklayers from across Essex and beyond set to work with trowels and lime mortar to restore the ageing brick work.

Cllr Wendy Schmitt, Cabinet Member for the Green Heart of Essex joined course tutor Mac Knox-Weir of Weir Conservation to try out the skills alongside the brick layers; joined by Rebecca Carter, Historic Building Education Officer and Claire Willetts, Museum Collections Manager.

Museum staff were delighted when the wall was selected by Essex County Council as an excellent case study for its traditional building skills course. The two day course will give working bricklayers the opportunity to broaden their experience in conservation techniques and encourage correct brickwork repair and the use of lime mortar.

Cllr Wendy Schmitt said: "This is a great idea and, once the work is complete, it will really improve the appearance of the area. Making the most of the county council's courses to improve the infrastructure of the museum means that the course delegates leave the two days with new practical skills and the museum is left with a healthier, more attractive and better conserved wall."

The course is from the Traditional Building Skills training programme run by Essex County Council Built Environment. It is supported by LandSkills East which offers a range of training courses and support for those involved in farming and land-based industries in the East of England. Bursary places have been provided by the City and Country Group who generously continue to support the Traditional Building Skills courses at Essex County Council.

Braintree District Museum in Manor Street, Braintree, CM7 3HW is open Monday to Saturday from 10.00am until 5.00pm (not open Bank Holidays). There is an admission charge of £3.00 for adults with free repeat admissions for one month. The current exhibition is Local Heroes: Local Lives until 17th July 2010. Enquiries can be made to [museum@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:museum@braintree.gov.uk) or telephone Visitor Services, 01376-325266.

**The following courses will be running this year:**

*An Introduction to Conservation Brickwork for Home Owners, 2nd- 3rd September 2010, Castle Hedingham*

*Building a New Flint Wall, 8th 10th September 2010, Wendens Ambo*

*Lime Plaster for Home Owners, 15th October & 19th November 2010, Cressing Temple Barns*

*Lime Plaster, Run Mouldings & Pargetting, 20th- 21st January 2011, Cressing Temple Barns*

*Repair & Conservation of Historic Windows, 17th 18th February 2011, Cressing Temple Barns*

Anyone who would like to find out more about traditional building courses run by Essex County Council; can contact... Rebecca Carter, Historic Buildings Education Officer on 01245 437672 / 07760 251676 or email: [rebecca.carter@essex.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.carter@essex.gov.uk) | webpage: <http://www.visitparks.co.uk/placestovisit/cressingtemplebuildingcourses.php>



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### Calling all green-fingered Greenfields residents!



Greenfields Community Housing is holding its annual garden competition and is looking for any Greenfields residents to enter. Any kind of garden is able to enter, whether it is a vegetable garden or a colourful flower garden. No previous experience is necessary.

This year, gardens will be judged not only on the overall presentation and look of your garden, but the amount of effort that has gone in. So it doesn't matter if you have been working on your garden 20 years or 20 days, everyone stands the same chance of winning.

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- ◆ Best individual garden
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- ◆ Best new tenant's garden
- ◆ Best tub or hanging baskets

There will be a free packet of seeds for every entrant, with National Garden Vouchers for the winner of each category. Please place your entry by 31st July 2010.

If you would like more information or would like to enter, please contact Kelly Scott on 01376 53400 ext 4119 or [kelly.scott@greenfieldsch.org.uk](mailto:kelly.scott@greenfieldsch.org.uk) or Shaun Williamson on 01376 332484 or [shaun.williamson@greenfieldsch.org.uk](mailto:shaun.williamson@greenfieldsch.org.uk)

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## Who am I?

Canadian/American actress born in 1967; You might associate the initials CJ with me, thanks to a character I portrayed in a popular US series; I co-wrote a book entitled *Star*, and followed that with one called *Struck*, released in 2005, which is said to be a thinly veiled look at my life with Tommy Lee.

For solutions see pages 28 & 29

