

Bursary programme to support people who want to learn the skills

People who want to learn or improve traditional skills will be able to apply for funding in a move to help save buildings in decline in East Lothian.

Dunbar Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) has launched a new bursary programme to support people who want to learn the skills needed to restore and maintain older buildings including stone masonry, joinery and metalwork.

The new scheme will open for application from April 1 and aims to ensure many of the town's traditional buildings can receive the care they need.

East Lothian Council said traditional buildings – those generally built before 1919 – make up about 20% of Scotland's dwellings and the appropriate skills needed to work on these buildings are in decline, so they are often repaired in an inappropriate manner which can accelerate the deterioration of the historic fabric, often causing irreversible damage.

The Dunbar CARS Traditional Skills Bursary Scheme is designed to be flexible, supporting a wide range of courses, workshops and seminars linked to building conservation and traditional skills.

Among course providers offering activities and events related to the work are the Scottish Lime Centre Trust, the Engine Shed (Historic Environment Scotland), the Institute for Historic Building Conservation and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

Applicants to the bursary scheme can apply for up to £2,000 to support the cost of attending identified courses including fees, travel costs and accommodation if needed.

A number of hands on activities will be held in Dunbar in the coming weeks to promote the scheme and give people a chance to find out more.

They include a Close Repair and Refurbishment event in Purves Close, in Dunbar High Street, between Tuesday, April 8 and Thursday, April 10 with morning and afternoon sessions where people can learn about raking out, pointing and plastering a rubble wall.

A Hot Lime Workshop is being held in Black Bull Close, Dunbar High Street on Saturday, April 26 and there will be trainers available for Q&A and tasting sessions, which can be booked.

Local social enterprise, Forge and Equip, will carry out demonstration sessions outside the Museum and Town House on Saturday, April 26, on how to repair and look after rusty gates or railings, with drop in sessions running between 11am and 4pm.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter