

NEWS RELEASE
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**THE BOAT BUILDING ACADEMY HAS ONLY A FEW PLACES REMAINING
ON ITS NEXT BOAT BUILDING COURSE**

The Boat Building Academy (BBA), based in Lyme Regis, Dorset, is seeking seven committed and enthusiastic individuals to change their lives via its 40-week boat building course.

Starting mid-May, the course will teach skills such as lofting, traditional, modern and fibre reinforced plastic boatbuilding, as well as spar, oar and sail making and more.

Students step away with confidence, talent, a wide skill pool and a City & Guilds 2463 Level 3 Diploma in Marine Construction, Systems Engineering and Maintenance (the technical certificate of an apprenticeship).

"We see the next course as perfect for those who have taken a step back during the pandemic and re-thought about what they want to do with their lives," says Will Reed, BBA's Principal/Trustee. "Those individuals who want to work with their hands, who want to learn to craft objects of beauty and who want to pour their hearts and souls into creating truly unique boats."

The Boat Building Academy has an impressive alumni career path. It's long been seen as the formative steppingstone into the highly skilled world of high-end boat building. Many of those who pass through its doors are actively recruited by top UK and international boat builders like Spirit Yachts and T Nielsen's.

As well as a select number of school leavers, Will says the academy's courses always attract a mix of students who are changing from careers like the police, finance, and education. Others are starting their retirements with a purpose, fulfilling a passion ready for their retirement.

One of these is Graham Pickett, an ex-Deloitte's partner, who has finally fulfilled his life's ambition of building his own boat.

"I built a Yachting World Day Boat," Graham says. "It's glued clinker construction, made out of marine plywood for the planking, with everything else made from sapele and good

English oak. I'm going to use it for day sailing with friends who I met at the academy, and I've got an outboard for it so I can go fishing too."

Graham says the skills he gained on the boat building course have helped him significantly in his wider life.

"The expertise I gained has put me in great stead already - I live in a home that needs carpentry and woodworking jobs doing. The whole experience has been exhilarating and challenging, I've learnt so much in the process."

The BBA's academic structure is unique. The academy offers access to the tools and materials out of hours (including weekends), making the course very attractive for those serious about developing their skillset. And, the workshop space is currently being enlarged, thanks in significant part to a recent crowd-funding exercise. This means Will Reed is confident in the provisions the academy has made to ensure all students can work in a covid-secure environment.

The next cohort starts on 17 May, and it's not too late to get involved. The fee (£15,850) includes all tutoring and the vast majority of the materials needed but does not cover the cost of building a boat. The administration department can help with finding rooms. There are nine rooms on site and the academy enjoys a close relationship with a wide network of local houses who have rooms to rent.

Skills covered:

- Lofting
- Traditional boatbuilding
- Modern wooden boatbuilding
- Fibre reinforced plastic boatbuilding and fit out
- Yacht joinery
- Spar and oar making
- Engine beds and stern tubes
- Finishing coatings and compounds
- Rigging, chandlery and cordage
- Sail making and repair
- Marine systems

And, as well as boat building, students spend the 40 weeks learning maintenance and support

"I would recommend this course for anybody," says Graham. "It's got first rate tutors, a formalised programme, and some of us come out the end of it with a boat and a great qualification. You learn a lot in the process."

Find out more online at the www.boatbuildingacademy.com, which also details the other courses that BBA offers in its bespoke premises, including furniture making.

Ends

Editors' notes

High-res images are available from <https://maa.agency/gallery/boat-building-academy-has-only-a-few-places-remaining-on-next-course/>

- The Boat Building Academy was started in 1997 by Commander Tim Gedge and since then it has gone from strength to strength. The students are the lifeblood of the academy; from school-leavers to bankers, military personnel and retirees. Their boundless enthusiasm and energy enable the BBA to exist.
- The BBA also offers a variety of 2 to 5-day short courses, from basic woodwork and furniture making, to boat building, GRP repairs, wooden boat restoration and sail making. Find out more online at boatbuildingacademy.com.
- When students enrol on a boat building course, they spend the first 20 weeks preparing for their boat build. Techniques such as joinery and planking are taught on the mezzanine before students move to the ground floor and start their individual boat builds.
- For more information contact the Boat Building Academy on 01297 445545 or email office@boatbuildingacademy.com.