

SHTP Blog November – Hannah Fraser

The next part of the traineeship began at the International Boatbuilding Training College (IBTC) in Lowestoft. We began with an introduction to the college, a tour of the workshop, and a health and safety briefing. The college has such a great set-up with a classroom, workshops and boatyards, along with a break room filled with a library of maritime books!



We also had the opportunity to see *Excelsior*, had a tour and had the chance to meet all of the crew during their winter maintenance plan.



During a tour of the workshops one of the tutors showed us a reconstruction of a medieval boat that local archaeologists had found sunk in the mud. IBTC were asked to make a replica boat using traditional methods, and the original medieval boat is now on display at a local museum.

The first part of the course started with a classroom session covering timber technology, and all the different timbers used in boatbuilding and their properties. Also we looked at the different types of rot in wood, how they occur and pest management.

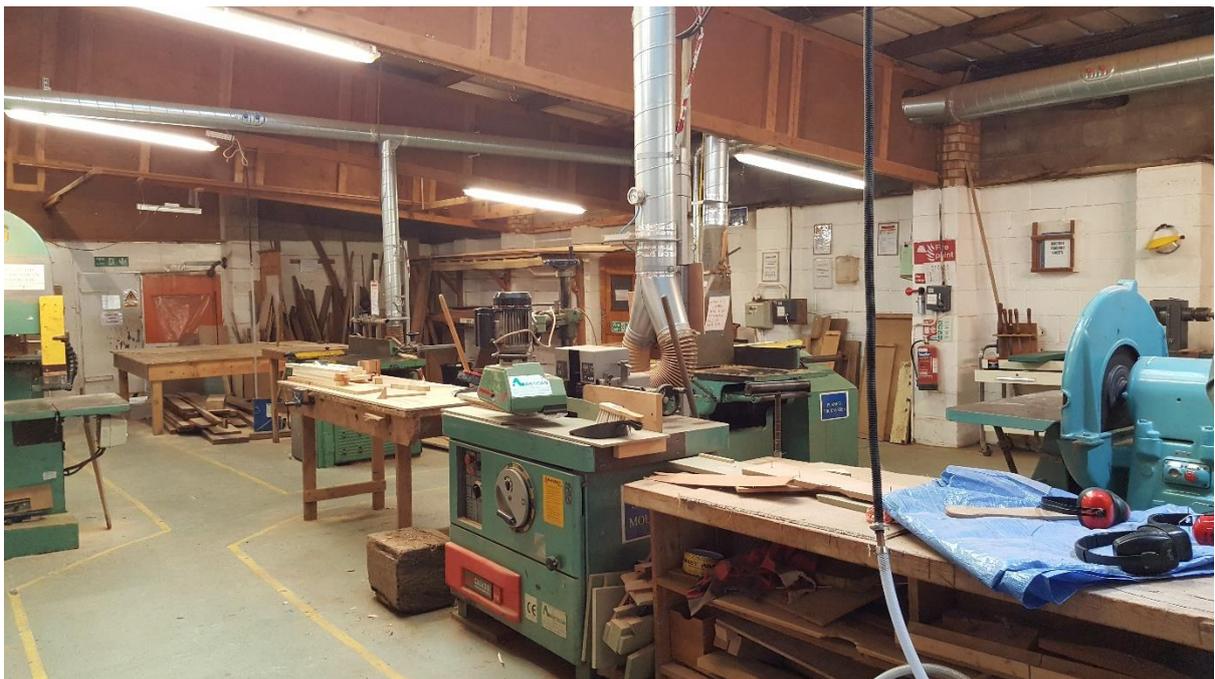
I was then shown how to do laminating and steaming, essentially different methods to bend wood. The first was laminating in which I learned how to make a rounded template and then used the band saw to cut pieces of wood into my chosen curved shape. Then I glued individual pieces of wood together and clamped them overnight. I then learned the method of steaming, where individual pieces of wood are steamed and the lignum fibres are then softened which makes the wood easy to bend.



Drawing out the templates for laminating and steaming the wood.



In the machine shop, using the sanding machine after cutting individual pieces of wood on the band saw.





The planks of wood that I had laminated and glued together, clamped down to keep shape until the glue had dried.

I then moved onto woodwork and joinery. I started with wood planing and learning how to use the number 4 plane. The method of planing is to smooth down the surface of the wood and achieve an even surface. After practising with the number 4 plane and learning different joinery techniques I moved on to make a bench hook.



Making the bench hook, using the number 4 plane to ensure the surface is smooth and an even edge.