



**Tom Lewis – Apprentice Boat builder**

**Peninsula Marine Services, Plymouth.**

**Final progress report, August 2022**

**<http://peninsulamarineservices.co.uk/>**

At the start of my apprenticeship, I found the course challenging and needed to ask questions, until I gained some self-confidence about certain jobs, I often needed assistance from my work colleagues due to my low understanding of the trade and works that it required. This advice was graciously given, and I have felt like I have improved great amounts over the first year of my apprenticeship.

The evidence of this is that I'm now able to undertake some works unsupervised, or with a little help to a good standard. My goal for the coming years is to greatly widen and master skill sets, such as woodwork, fiberglass repairs, GRP and spraying. I am really dedicated to my job whilst really enjoying it at the same time. Self-motivation and dedication is the key to improvement, and I feel like I am on the right path to be successful.

My understanding and knowledge of some common problems with GRP crafts such as osmosis and galvanic corrosion has greatly improved. I have gained this, through experiencing the results of these issues and work colleagues who have been teaching me.

I have been taking part in jobs, such as gel plaining, due to osmosis in the fiberglass, I was required to gel plain so that the fiberglass was exposed, and the osmosis treatment could begin. Common signs of osmosis are blisters beneath the gel coat and mostly always have a certain smell that comes along with it.

I have experienced electrolysis/ galvanic corrosion first hand on props and p brackets Due to the anodes not being connected the correct way, or not replaced on a regular basis. Indication of electrolysis on props and brackets also tend to become brittle and slightly change colour when electrolysis is active.

In my progression in GRP, I have been tasked with doing small gel repairs independently. Whilst I am struggling with the colour matching, I am determined to improve over time.

I have a good understanding of the way to mix gel coat and polyester resin, and the importance of the correct catalyst percentages and additives, such as MW solution. Also, the process once the gel repair has been complete such sanding through the grades of sandpapers and the final compounding, polish, and wax.

Paint repairs- I have also been involved the prep work, for repainting of crafts and smaller paint repairs. This has involved sanding back old coating, repair, and application of build coats. Then the sanding back ready for the final application of the topcoat paint. I am really looking forward to learning how to spray so that I can complete jobs from start to finish.

Recent tasks my employer has given me:

Full prep work for respray on 18ft Bayliner

The first step of the prep work was to sand the old paintwork so that any new epoxy primers can fully bond without causing flaking of the

paint in the future. This is an important part of the final respray. I am really looking forward to learning how to spray in the future as it is a long-term goal of mine.



After that I applied a base coat of epoxy which acted as a great guide for the next step which was a fair and fill. Epoxy highlights any dips and scratches that would cause the respray to not look the correct standard that my employer would expect. Epoxy is also great for added protection on the hull.

Once the fill and fair were completed and the epoxy was applied:



Once the epoxy was abraded, we applied four coats of build primer which needed to be correctly sanded with 320-400 grit sandpaper



Result of the respray:



We are also in the process of professionally applying copper coat antifouling on the hull which is almost complete.



I have also been involved in a variety of other tasks, such as deck refurbishments, internal furniture, fixtures, and fitting removal. Skin fitting removal and replacement and refits and a range of gel revitalization.

What I could improve on:

I am looking to improve on every aspect of my trade. The area I feel like I could improve the most on is my woodworking knowledge and skillset. This is an area of the trade I am finding difficult because it takes a long time to master. I am getting fantastic help from employees that currently have the knowledge and experience which is a fantastic gateway to strive and move forward in the future

Collage:

I have recently completed my first year of my apprenticeship which I am really enjoying. I am fully committed to completing my apprenticeship. I'm also impressed with the amount of experience I have gained over a short period of time, and I am keen to learn new things constantly. I am very happy with the progress I am making with collage and in the workplace. I cannot wait to see what the future holds. The next few years of my apprenticeship I will be a level 3 trainee. It is going to be a challenge, but I'm really committed to learn more about the industry and progress my trade. My goal would be to have my own marine repair business.

Thank you for reading- Tom, level 3 boatbuilder apprentice.

