

HANDS BEHIND THE HERITAGE: *Masters and Apprentices*

THE MASTER MASONS



Pascal Mychalysin

MASTER MASON

Pascal has devoted more than 30 years of his life to Gloucester Cathedral, serving as Master Mason for the past 13. Recognised by the Worshipful Company of Masons, he has overseen major restoration campaigns and trained more than 40 apprentices, many of whom now work across the UK heritage sector. His leadership has shaped Gloucester Cathedral into a national centre of excellence for stonemasonry training, creating the framework on which today's apprentices continue to learn.



Paul Synan

SENIOR STONEMASON

Paul combines academic insight with practical mastery, holding a Master's in Ancient History and a Foundation Degree in Heritage Skills. His conservation highlights include work on the 15th-century Lady Chapel and carving new gargoyles for the Cathedral. Today, Paul is directly training apprentices, guiding them through carving and conservation. He is also an ICON-accredited conservator and a Module Leader for the Cathedrals' Workshop Fellowship (CWF). Paul led the conservation trial for the Cloister, contributing key insights that continue to shape the programme of works.



James Bayliss

SENIOR STONEMASON

James joined the Cathedral in 2012 for what was meant to be a one-year placement—his exceptional skill soon secured him a permanent role. He has led the North Ambulatory restoration, conserved ancient memorials, and installed new gargoyles. A central figure in the Cloister Project, James also serves as a Module Leader for the Cathedrals' Workshop Fellowship. Alongside Paul, James provides hands-on training to apprentices, ensuring that practical site experience sits at the heart of their development.



WELFARE and EDUCATION

Training the Next Generation of Stonemasons

Through our apprenticeship programme, delivered as part of the Cathedrals' Workshop Fellowship (CWF), twelve apprentices will have the opportunity to work directly on this extraordinary project and learn from our master masons. These apprentices are integral to the Cloister Project, gaining valuable hands-on experience in traditional stonemasonry and conservation techniques. Our expert stonemasons provide direct training and mentorship, guiding them as they contribute significantly to the restoration work while earning a Foundation Degree in Heritage Skills.

THE APPRENTICES:

Securing a Living Legacy

From Pascal's decades of leadership to the hands-on mentoring of apprentices by Paul and James, and the growing skills of Zak, Lewis, and Lucy, the Great Cloister Project is far more than a conservation programme. It is a living classroom where rare craft skills are transferred from master masons to the next generation, public engagement brings heritage to life, and Gloucester Cathedral's Cloisters are safeguarded for centuries to come.



Zak Nutting

APPRENTICE STONEMASON

Zak is just beginning his masonry career, joining Gloucester straight from Bath College. He is working towards his Level 3 qualification through the CWF. Born and bred in Gloucester, Zak is learning directly under Paul and James, gaining his first experience of live conservation work on one of the most important Gothic buildings in Europe.



Lewis Evans

APPRENTICE STONEMASON

Lewis has six years of masonry experience and is now working towards his Level 4 CWF qualification. Having started mainly at the banker's bench, he is moving into on-site conservation under James's guidance—learning how to make the careful conservation decisions required beneath Gloucester's world-famous fan vaulting.



Lucy Newlyn

APPRENTICE STONEMASON

Lucy joined Gloucester Cathedral in November 2024, moving from commercial masonry into traditional hand-tool work, carving, and conservation. Under Paul and James' mentorship, she has already shown great promise in both fine carving and heritage practice.

"I am really enjoying my time as an apprentice here at Gloucester Cathedral. Getting to learn from seasoned masons in this environment is such a brilliant opportunity. Since joining the team, I have seen and helped with the final stages of the North Nave project, and I am looking forward to entering the new phase of work on the Cloisters, arguably the most recognisable and beautiful part of Gloucester Cathedral. This will be a new experience for me, and I am keen to learn how work decisions are made and facilitated. I couldn't ask for a better setting for my personal and professional development; the Cloisters are a fantastic example of Gothic architecture and innovation, demonstrated by the fan vaulting, blind tracery, and carvings. I can't wait to get started."

Lucy Newlyn