

Future tradesmen bring new-learnt skills to life

ST EDMUND'S College year 12 student Daniel Dickens is among the small army of Ipswich's future tradesmen and women who is transforming a run-down Ipswich house.

Some excellent progress is being made on the timber home on Hill St, North Ipswich, as the school-based apprentices and Certificate 1 Construction students pick up skills that will serve them well when they embark on careers in their chosen trade.

Daniel said the renovation work required to transform the project house was giving him and his classmates skills that they wouldn't learn while working on new homes.

"I am doing the employment pathways program at school for year 11 and 12 and we previously got to work on some new colonial homes out near Boonah," he said.

"That was great but this project is much different to building new homes.

"Here, we are learning a lot about where you can re-use materials like the old VJ boards that were used in this house."

Daniel is one of 35 students from schools across Ipswich and Brisbane who are taking part in the Apprenticeships Queensland and TAFE Queensland South West initiative.

As part of the Building Futures Program, the renovator's dream house was purchased with a view to doing it up and selling it off for a profit, which would then fund a project house for the next round of apprentices.

Now a couple of months into the six-month project, the apprentices have progressed to the back section of the house, where they have knocked down an interior wall to create a large living space and kitchen.

Work is also under way to build a huge back deck, which will significantly increase the area of entertainment space in the once-cramped timber home.

Daniel said he wanted to be a carpenter when he left school and the project would ensure he had a lot more knowledge and experience when he entered the workforce.

Training assistant Clint Halliday, who is overseeing the work being done on the house, said safety was just as important a consideration as passing on new skills to the young workers.

"You need to make sure they are thinking about safety - just the little things that are going on around them all the time," Mr Halliday said.



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