# NEWS RELEASE

Monday 9 October 2023

## Heritage Crafts awards three new bursaries for heritage crafts trainees in Wales

**Heritage Crafts is delighted to award three new bursaries for trainees in Wales to learn heritage craft skills, supported by the Ashley Family Foundation and the Principality Building Society's Future Generations Fund**.

These bursaries are the first to be provided through the partnerships between Heritage Crafts, the Ashley Family Foundation and the Principality Building Society's Future Generations Fund, and are intended to support those in Wales otherwise unable to meet the cost of their training, as the UK continues to deal with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

**Ieuan Williamson** is a Gwynedd-based slate roofer whose great, great grandfather was a ferryman bringing slate down the river Dwyryd from the Ffestiniog slate quarries. He wishes to expand his skills into timber framing in order to incorporate whole building construction into his projects and make his business more viable to support his young family. His bursary will allow him, and his apprentice Dwyryd to attend an intensive two-week residential timber framing course. In the future he would like to pass on his skills to other young people in this area through the Welsh language.

**Barney Murray** is a Denbighshire-based early-career drystone waller who took up the craft after deciding that he preferred being outdoors than studying at college. His bursary will allow him to undertake the extremely rigorous and notoriously challenging Drystone Walling Association's Master Craftsman certification scheme, under the mentorship of master waller Andy

Loudon. In the future he intends to take on an apprentice of his own, replicating his own training path.

**Bodhi King**, based in Pembrokeshire, took up blacksmithing after attending a private week-long course last year in mid Wales. After experiencing homelessness he has spent the last few years building a more financially stable life for him and his son. His bursary will allow him to undertake a number of specialised courses focusing on traditional and heritage blacksmithing. He intends to operate as an independent blacksmith, doing smaller local jobs whilst developing his skillset and portfolio to do larger heritage and architectural work.

The **Ashley Family Foundation** (formerly The Laura Ashley Foundation) uses its funding to develop strong communities, social welfare and creative arts in England and Wales, with a particular emphasis on supporting rural communities.

The **Principality Building Society's Future Generations Fund** is a Wales-wide fund set up in partnership with Principality Building Society with the aim of having a positive impact on society and the lives of young people in Wales.

Heritage Crafts Endangered Crafts Manager **Mary Lewis** said:

> *"We are thrilled to be partnership with the Ashley Family Foundation and the Principality Building Society's Future Generations Fund to help young Welsh makers facing financial hardship to develop their skills and careers in viable heritage crafts. We are very excited so see the emergence of a new generation of Welsh craftspeople."*

ENDS

**Contacts:**

- For more information contact **Tess Osman**, Grants and Awards Officer – tess@heritagecrafts.org.uk.

**Photo caption:**

- Ieuan Williamson, slate roofer and timber framer
- Barney Murray, drystone waller (photo by Erin Lloyd)
- Bodhi King, blacksmith

**About Heritage Crafts**

Founded in 2009, the Heritage Crafts is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as the 'Heritage Crafts Association', the advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with government and key agencies, it provides a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts skills, and works towards a healthy and sustainable framework for the future. Its aim is to support and promote heritage crafts as a fundamental part of our living heritage.

www.heritagecrafts.org.uk

**About the Ashley Family Foundation**

The Ashley Family Foundation (formerly The Laura Ashley Foundation) is a registered charity founded by Sir Bernard and Laura Ashley following the success of the Laura Ashley fashion and interiors business. It uses its funding to develop strong communities, social welfare and creative arts in England and Wales, with a particular emphasis on supporting rural communities.

https://www.ashleyfamilyfoundation.org.uk

**About the Principality Building Society's Future Generations Fund**

The Principality Building Society's Future Generations Fund is a Wales-wide fund set up in partnership with Principality Building Society with the aim of having a positive impact on society and the lives of young people in Wales.

https://communityfoundationwales.org.uk/grants/the-principality-building-societys-future-generations-fund