



HERITAGE
CRAFTS



English
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NEWS RELEASE

Tuesday 26 November 2024

Dry stone waller Barney Murray wins Heritage Crafts' inaugural Young Building Craftsperson of the Year Award supported by English Heritage

North Wales-based dry stone waller Barney Murray has won the first Young Building Craftsperson of the Year Award, supported by English Heritage, including a £1,000 prize awarded at a special presentation at Eltham Palace on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

Heritage Crafts was set up 14 years ago as a national charity to support and safeguard heritage crafts skills, and has become well known for its *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, the first research of its kind to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they will survive the next generation.

The new award, supported by **English Heritage**, celebrates a heritage craftsperson aged 25 years or under who has made an outstanding start to their building crafts career. The award is open to practitioners of any skilled craft that is primarily focused on the construction, conservation or repair of buildings or the human landscape. Examples include timber framing, stonemasonry, gauged brickwork and many others.



*Heritage Crafts is registered as the Heritage Crafts Association
Charitable Incorporated Organisation 1159208
Registered office: 81 North Street, Wellington, Somerset TA21 8NA*

Though still young, **Barney Murray** has already attained the highest standard, as recognised by the Dry Stone Walling Association, achieving Master Craftsman certification in September this year. He has won several dry stone walling competition prizes and has acted as an ambassador for dry stone walling, taking a keen and active role in helping others develop their skills by undertaking an instructor course.

The two other finalists for the award were **William Blackmore**, a multi-skilled conservation practitioner at Chester Cathedral with an NVQ in stonemasonry, carpentry and joinery, and **Rudy Hewlett**, a fourth generation thatcher in a family-run business that has been going for nearly 100 years.

Dr Nick Merriman OBE, Chief Executive of English Heritage said:

“English Heritage is delighted to have partnered with Heritage Crafts to sponsor the Young Building Craftsperson of the Year award. Craft is woven into the fabric of our lives and our heritage. The skills and talents of craftspeople make an important contribution to the conservation of the collection of great historic sites that English Heritage looks after. Securing a future pipeline of craftspeople is not only vital to the future of that collection but provides rewarding and fulfilling careers for young people.”

Daniel Carpenter, Executive Director of Heritage Crafts said:

“Heritage is about inheritance; passing on skills in a meeting of past and future. We can’t alter the past, but we can do our best to ensure that future generations have access to the cumulative knowledge of generations of craftspeople before them – to forge fulfilling livelihoods and find new ways to address the challenges of tomorrow. We are thrilled to be working with English Heritage to support, safeguard and celebrate this important part of our living heritage.”

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Contacts:

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

Photo captions:

- **Barney Murray**, dry stone waller and winner of the inaugural Young Building Craftsperson of the Year, and **Dr Nick Merriman OBE**, Chief Executive of English Heritage. Photo by Robert Wade.

- **Barney Murray**, dry stone waller and winner of the inaugural Young Building Craftsperson of the Year.

About English Heritage

English Heritage is the charity that cares for hundreds of historic sites in every corner of England. Some are internationally famous, some are local treasures, and all are there for everybody. There are over four hundred heritage sites across the country just waiting to be explored.

www.english-heritage.org.uk

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