



NEWS RELEASE

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Sheffield scissor maker wins Heritage Crafts *Trainee of the Year Award* supported by the Marsh Charitable Trust

James Morton has won the 2024 Heritage Crafts *Trainee of the Year Award*, supported by the Marsh Charitable Trust, 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 award, supported by the **Marsh Charitable Trust**, celebrates an outstanding student of heritage crafts, whether that's through a formal apprenticeship scheme, a less formal traineeship, an institution-based course with a high degree of practical training, or even be pursuing 'portfolio-style' training comprising of short-courses and workshops.

James Morton joined Ernest Wright Scissors in Sheffield at 17, bringing a passion for metalworking that began at age 12, having taught himself blacksmithing in his parents' garden and garage. Now an apprentice at Ernest Wright, he is learning the art of metalworking from two experienced Master Putters – Eric Stones aged 81 and Cliff Denton aged 80. James excels not only in the technical aspects of metalworking but also in his deep appreciation for the art and history of the craft.

The other two finalists for this year's award were **Marlene Lagnado**, who joined the stonemasonry workshop of Matthias Garn following a two-week internship, picking up skills naturally and with real deliberation and focus, and **Sam Rowland**, who began helping wheelwright Greg Rowland in his workshop during COVID, since when he has completed two apprenticeships, gaining a merit and a triple distinction.

The **Marsh Charitable Trust** runs a portfolio of awards with a number of nationally and internationally recognised partners to celebrate the outstanding contributions of people who are committed to social, cultural and environmental causes.

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Contacts:

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

Photo captions:

- **James Morton**, winner of the 2024 *Trainee of the Year Award*, and David Clarke, Heritage Craftst Chair. Photo by Robert Wade.

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 *Red List of Endangered Crafts*

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, created by Heritage Crafts, was the first to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they would survive the next generation. The 2023 edition of the Red List, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, assessed 259 crafts to identify those which are at greatest risk of disappearing, of which 62 have been classified as critically endangered, 84 as endangered and 112 as currently viable.

The Red List shows that the craft knowledge, skills and practices that form an important part of our shared cultural heritage are – for a number of reasons – at risk of being lost. Heritage Crafts believes that these cultural assets are as important as unique heritage buildings and ancient beautiful landscapes and could provide future generations with fantastic opportunities to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

<http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk>