HERITAGE
CRAFTS

RED LIST OF ENDANGERED CRAFTS 2025

Pilgrim Trust

THE ROYAL MINT®
THE ORIGINAL MAKER

Cover: Quilting in a frame. *Photo by Deb McGuire.*
Right: Training bursary recipient Kate Robertson

The Red List of Endangered Crafts

2025 edition

HERITAGE CRAFTS

Written and designed by
Mary Lewis and **Daniel Carpenter**

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2025 edition

The Red List of Endangered Crafts

- ***285 crafts*** *now feature in the research, up from 259 featured in 2023.*
- ***No new crafts have become extirpated*** *(extinct in the UK) since 2023.*
- ***72 crafts are listed as critically endangered****, up from 62 featured in 2023, including nine new entries and three re-classifications from other categories.*
- ***93 crafts are listed as endangered****, up from 84 featured in 2023, including eight new entries and six re-classifications from other categories.*
- ***115 crafts are deemed currently viable****, up from 112 in 2023. Despite being classified as viable, these crafts are not risk-free or without issues, and will continue to be monitored.*

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, first published in 2017, was the first report of its kind to rank traditional crafts by the likelihood they would survive to the next generation, based on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding principles, and led by Heritage Crafts, the only UK UNESCO-accredited NGO working primarily in the domain of traditional craftsmanship.

The list attracted extensive media coverage both in the UK and abroad, shining a light on heritage craft practices under threat from a number of identifiable issues.

Heritage Crafts is committed to updating the list on a regular basis, and so, with support from the Pilgrim Trust, over 900 organisations and individuals were contacted directly by email and telephone and invited to contribute to the research between September 2024 and May 2025. Participants were asked to provide background information about each craft, such as its history, techniques and local forms, as well as current information relating to the number of skilled craftspeople and trainees, and the ongoing issues affecting the viability of the craft, including the effects of the current energy crisis.

Each craft was then classified into one of four categories of endangerment using a combination of both objective criteria (such as numbers of crafts people and trainees) and subjective criteria (issues affecting the future viability of the craft).

Issues affecting the viability of heritage crafts vary on a craft-by-craft basis, though many can be grouped, and possible solutions devised to help many crafts practices become more viable.

Glass artist Elena Fleury-Rojo received a bursary to train as a scientific glassworker.

As we mark ten years since the launch of the *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, it is a moment to reflect on how far we've come. What began as a bold and ambitious idea has grown into a respected, sector-defining resource.

In its early days, the *Red List* challenged a perception that traditional crafts were little more than nostalgic or whimsical pursuits. It reframed them as vital expressions of cultural heritage, economic activity and identity. It has provided policymakers, funders, educators and advocates with the data and stories needed to take action. It has also brought visibility to crafts that might otherwise have faded quietly from view, and inspired a new generation of makers to learn, revive and reimagine these skills.

Alongside this, Heritage Crafts has grown into a powerful voice for the craft sector. Through research, partnership building and advocacy, we have worked to ensure that craft is seen not just as a creative endeavour, but as a living, evolving part of our shared cultural landscape.

> *Behind every entry are **stories of extraordinary people**. It is their **passion**, **resilience** and **quiet determination** that give this work its meaning.*

The *Red List* has been central to this mission; and now, with the launch of the Heritage Craft Inventory *(see pages 16 and 17)*, we are extending our commitment even further. This new approach will allow us to embed our **Red List** work within a broader representation of craft today – from the critically endangered to the resurgent, and from the locally distinctive to the globally connected.

As in previous editions, the *Red List* presents a deeply mixed picture of the state of traditional crafts today. While some continue to thrive, many are under growing threat from the pressures of an unforgiving economic climate. In 2023, we highlighted the difficult and often heartbreaking choices that craftspeople were being forced to make simply to earn a minimum wage. Sadly, over the past two years, this situation has only deteriorated, leaving the future of many skilled trades hanging in the balance. Rising operational costs, a lack of structured training and mounting market pressures are placing unsustainable strain on crafts that depend on expert hand skills. Trades such as cut crystal glassmaking, pewter working, organ building, industrial ceramics and the allied trades that support silversmithing are examples of those that are becoming vulnerable.

At the same time, however, heritage craft is emerging as a powerful force in sustainability and cultural resilience. Skills such as flax processing are being rediscovered as a viable source of textile fibre, showing how ancient knowledge can find new relevance in a modern world. And craft is increasingly recognised as a vital expression of cultural identity. From Ukrainian pysanky egg decorating to canal art, heritage crafts offer communities accessible and meaningful ways to engage with their histories, skills and traditions.

As I reflect on this year's *Red List* and a decade of documenting endangered crafts, I'm struck not only by the challenges we face, but by the astonishing diversity and breadth of skill that exists across the UK. Behind every entry are stories of extraordinary people. It is their passion, resilience and quiet determination that give this work its meaning.

It has been a privilege to meet so many of them through this process – and it is their voices, their hands and their stories that continue to inspire the work we do at Heritage Crafts.

Mary Lewis
Head of Craft Sustainability

Made possible with Heritage Fund

In February 2024, Heritage Crafts received a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £158k to capitalise on the heightened interest in traditional craftsmanship in the UK. Made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, the two-year project is increasing the charity's capacity to support craft skills as a vital part of the UK's heritage.

With the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Heritage Crafts has invested in additional staff and freelance consultants to help it achieve long-term sustainability. This includes broadening and diversifying its funding and supporter base, mobilising a network of volunteers all around the country, and ensuring that equity and diversity remain at its core.

Daniel Carpenter, Executive Director of Heritage Crafts, said:

> *"We are thrilled to have received this support thanks to National Lottery players, which will allow us to make the most of the opportunities afforded by the UK's growing appreciation for craft skills, and increase our support for under-represented and marginalised communities in the sector. With UK ratification of the UNESCO Convention, this is a key moment for the promotion of heritage crafts, and we are keen to make the most of it... for everyone."*

Chanelle Brown, potter and Lottery-funded bursary recipient

Critically endangered crafts

Crafts classified as 'critically endangered' are those at serious risk of no longer being practised. They may include crafts with a shrinking base of craftspeople, crafts with limited training opportunities, crafts with low financial viability, or crafts where there is no mechanism to pass on the skills and knowledge.

Arrowsmithing
Basketwork furniture making
Bell founding
Besom broom making MORE ENDANGERED
Bow making *(musical)*
Bowed-felt hat making
Chain making
Clay pipe making
Clog making
Coiled straw basket making
Coppersmithing *(objects)*
Copper wheel engraving
Currach making
Cut crystal glass making NEW
Devon stave basket making
Diamond cutting
Encaustic tile making
Engine turned engraving
Fabric pleating
Fair Isle chair making
Fan making
Figurehead carving NEW
Flower making *(trade and manufacturing)* NEW
Flute making *(concert)*
Fore-edge painting
Frame knitting
Glass eye making
Glove making MORE ENDANGERED
Hat block making
Hat plaiting
Horse collar making
Horsehair weaving
Linen beetling NEW
Linen damask weaving
Maille making
Matte painting *(filmmaking)* NEW
Metal thread making
Millwrighting
Northern Isles basket making
Orrery making
Paper making *(trade and manufacturing)*
Parchment and vellum making
Piano making
Pietra dura NEW
Plane making
Plume making
Pointe shoe making
Pottery *(trade and manufacturing)*
Quilting *(frame)* NEW
Rake making MORE ENDANGERED
Rattan furniture making NEW
Saw making
Scientific and optical instrument making
Scissor making
Sieve and riddle making
Silk ribbon weaving
Silver spinning
Spade making
Spinning wheel making
Straw hat making
Sussex trug making
Swill basket making
Tanning (oak bark)
Thatching *(Irish vernacular)* NEW
Thatching *(Scottish vernacular)*
Thatching *(Welsh vernacular)* NEW
Tinsmithing
Wainwrighting
Watch face enamelling
Watch making
Whip making
Wooden fishing net making

Cut crystal glass making

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

In 1674, George Ravenscroft, a glassmaker based in London, patented a new method for producing glass with lead oxide, making it easier to work with, heavier and more brilliant, giving it a high level of clarity and sparkle due to its increased refraction of light.

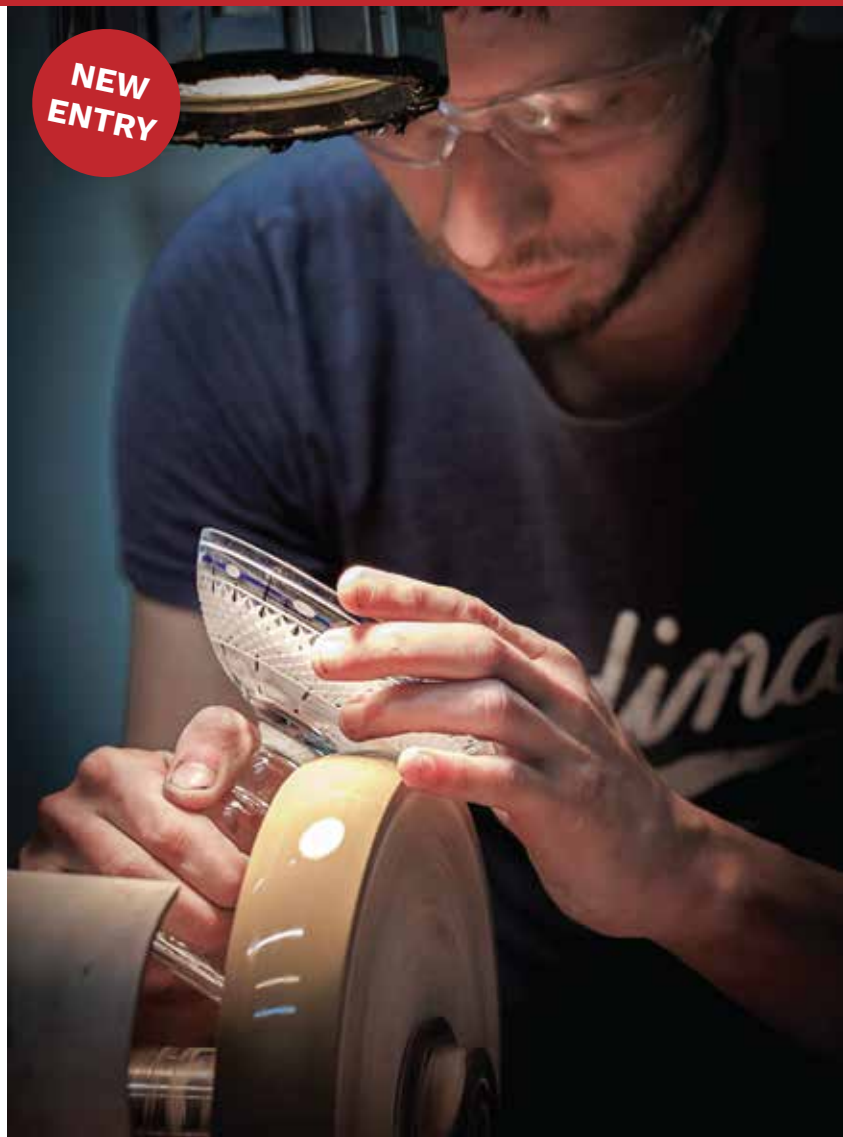
This lead crystal became highly suitable for cutting, as it could be deeply engraved and polished, giving rise to intricate designs and brilliant finishes.

During the 19th century, the British crystal industry reached its height. Crystal glass was highly sought-after, and many of the cutting patterns that we associate with traditional crystal glassware today were developed.

From the mid-20th century onwards, British glassmakers shifted focus from mass production to preserving the artisanal quality and heritage of glass cutting.

The glass is cut using various diamond or carborundum grinding wheels. The wheels cut grooves into the glass with straight, sharp angles to increase the sparkle of the glass by adding more light-reflecting surfaces.

Surfaces can then be cut a second time, a process known as smoothing, to create a finer finish. Few people do the second cut anymore as it adds considerable time to production.



Opposite and right:
Cumbria Crystal

Issues facing the craft

Recruitment has become very challenging due to a lack of training provision. Companies are now often looking to recruit from overseas. The visa regulations and salaries for skilled migrant workers makes this prohibitively expensive.

High setup costs and lack of specialist equipment hinder training, and insufficient job security prevents guaranteed employment after training.

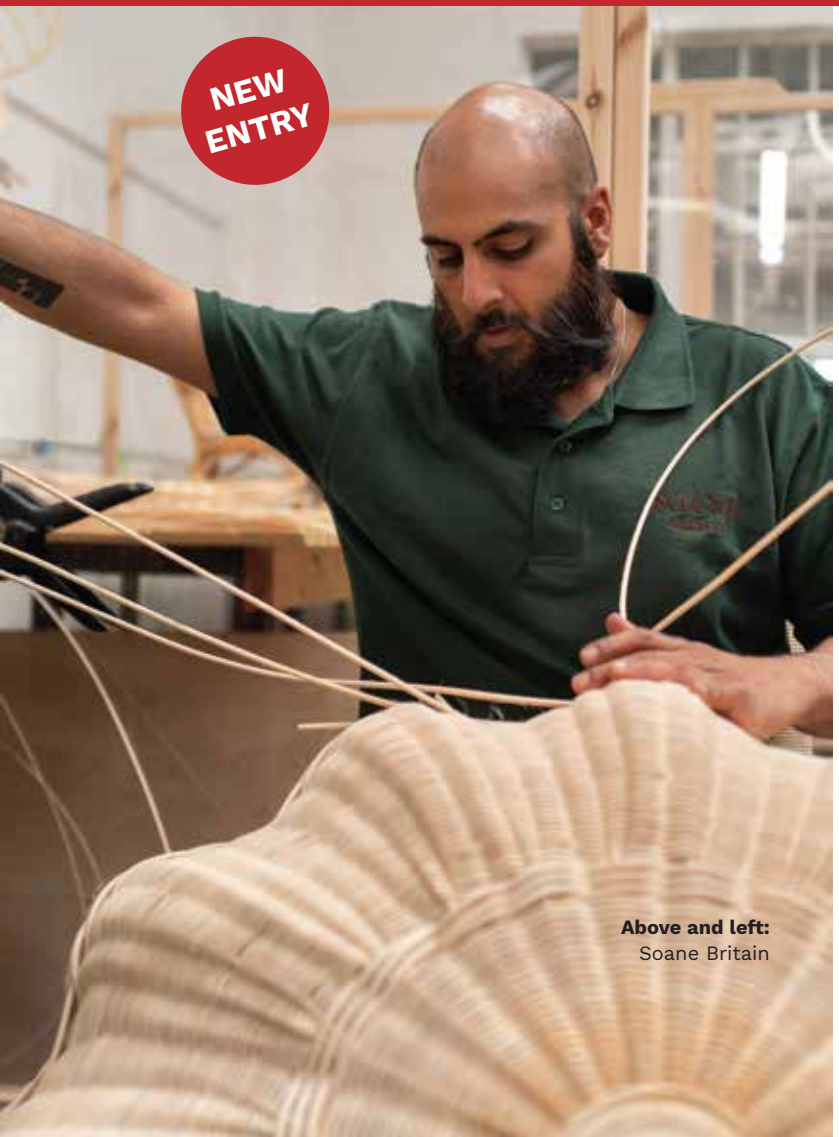
Issues facing the craft

Currently there is only one rattan company working in the UK, meaning that all the skills and knowledge are held in one place.

Rattan can vary widely in quality. Tracing sources and verifying production methods in extended supply chains outside the UK is extremely challenging, and there are no verified standards or certification systems specifically for this material.

Rattan furniture making

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED



Above and left:
Soane Britain

Rattan furniture gained prominence in Britain and Europe during the Victorian era, becoming favoured props for artists and photographers.

In the early 20th century, rattan furniture was featured in luxury transport, including aeroplanes, yachts, and trains. Founded in 1907, the British rattan workshop Dryad quickly gained recognition for its craftsmanship.

When Dryad eventually closed in 1956, Angraves, another English workshop, and the last remaining rattan weavers in the UK, absorbed the Dryad archive and continued to make many of their best-known designs until 2010.

Soane Britain was a customer of the company and, on learning that it had gone into administration, subsequently bought the machinery and re-employed the only remaining practitioners of traditional rattan weaving to ensure the survival of the craft. Soane Britain continues to manufacture contemporary rattan furniture in Leicester today.

Rattan is harvested primarily from Southeast Asia. It is cleaned, stripped of its outer layer and cut into various sizes depending on the intended design. The core is often used for weaving, while the thicker sections form the furniture's frame.

Traditionally, the frame making, weaving and finishing were carried out by different craftspeople, and this distinction remains today, with craftspeople trained in their specialism.

UK ratifies UNESCO Convention

In a historic decision lauded by Heritage Crafts, the Government announced in December 2023 that the United Kingdom was to ratify the 2003 UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, bringing it in line with the 182 other UNESCO Member States already ratified, and opening the way to greater international cooperation on the importance of the UK's knowledge, skills and practices as part of our living heritage.

Adoption of the Convention opens the way to increased monitoring of the UK's intangible cultural heritage, including practices that have come here through migrant and diaspora communities, and better safeguarding of the most at-risk examples.

Traditional craftsmanship is one of five domains of intangible cultural heritage recognised by UNESCO, alongside oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.

Heritage Crafts had already been monitoring and safeguarding the traditional craftsmanship domain since 2017 through the *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, the first research report to rank craft skills by their likelihood of survival in the UK, and its Endangered Crafts Fund, which has provided 79 grants to improve the chance of survival of the most at-risk examples.

The Government launched a public consultation in 2024 to inform the UK's approach to creating a new national inventory through which communities across the UK will be able to nominate their most cherished local traditions.

Heritage Crafts is working closely with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on UK implementation of the Convention.

Speaking at our 2024 conference *Culture in the Making*, **Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay**, Arts and Heritage Minister, said:

> *Let me first of all start off by giving huge thanks to Heritage Crafts, both for putting on this brilliant event today, but also for all your campaigning work since you were founded in 2010 to get us to this point of formally ratifying the 2003 Convention. While I'm very conscious that I have the honour of being the Minister who gets to take it over the line, there's been in your case 14 years ... of campaigning to get us to this point, and the work that we have been doing at DCMS has been very much informed by all of that ... so thank you very much.*


WHEREAS the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible
Cultural Heritage ("the Convention") was done at Paris on 17 October
2003 and entered into force on 20 April 2006;
AND WHEREAS the procedures necessary for ratification have
been completed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland;
NOW THEREFORE the Government of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland, having considered the aforementioned
Convention, hereby confirms and ratifies the same in accordance with
Article 32 thereof, and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the
stipulations contained therein.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Instrument of Ratification is signed
and sealed by the Rt Hon. the Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, His
Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and
Development Affairs.
Done at London the
day of
and Twenty-four.

Quilting in a frame

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Hand quilting in a frame is the process of hand stitching soft wadding sandwiched between two fabrics in elaborate, often regional, patterns to create a textured, quilted and hardwearing surface for bed coverings and clothing textiles.

This form of quilting traditionally utilises a flat wooden quilting frame which facilitates a unique 'rocking stitch', a sewing method where the needle is balanced rather than held, and which generates characteristic small and even stitches.

There is evidence of quilt making using the frame as early as 1300 in Britain, and quilted clothing appears in depiction and description from the Middle Ages through to Tudor and Stewart England.

Quilt making today is often seen as an American folk craft, but it was exported through the global diaspora which peopled North America, particularly associated with English and Dutch settlers.

Quilting as a paid occupation remains hidden by its domestic setting, but more recent research uncovers the female dominated networks of entrepreneurialism that have sat at the centre of this vibrant industry.

Quilts have been made and commissioned to mark family and personal occasions as well as local, royal and national events, and are kept, gifted, inherited and repaired through generations.

Right and opposite:
Within the Frame

Issues facing the craft

Existing quilting qualifications do not include hand quilting in a frame. There are no current training opportunities for this technique.

Because there has been no supply of high-quality authentic quilted items, as there has been with other heritage crafts, there is currently no demand for them. But there is no reason to suspect that a market could not be developed as more commercially-minded makers adopt these skills.

Issues facing the craft

The main challenges to this craft are around making, maintaining and sourcing beetling engines and equipment. Most engines were broken up over time.

The linen used for tailoring is currently imported, but there are potential future opportunities for using locally sourced, sustainable materials.

There is a loyal customer base, so the core market is stable, but it is more challenging to expand into new markets.

Linen beetling

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Beetling is a mechanical textile process in which fabric is wound around a large wooden beam and evenly pounded over the course of several weeks by blunt wooden hammers.

The hammers are lifted and dropped by 'wiper' beams, a large helix-shaped beam positioned above the fabric beam. Traditionally beetling is performed on linen which is impregnated with starch before being loaded by hand onto the beam still wet, where it slowly dries over time creating a very flat fabric with a beautiful sheen.

The beetling operation needs skill to achieve quality finishing. Operation of the engines involves heavy, hands-on work from loading the beams, manoeuvring them into place, lifting and dropping the hammers, with the beetler ultimately deciding from experience when the fabric is ready to take off the engines.

The engines at Upperlands Mill have been in operation for around 150 years. In 2025 the lease transferred to Andrew Wilson, who intends to operate it commercially.

A recent research and development project with the University of the Arts London has helped in the revival of linen beetling and paved the way to offer a more durable sheen in linen products with water and stain repellent properties, widening the application of this centuries-old craft.

Left and opposite:
Upperlands Beetling Mill

Heritage Crafts Inventory

The 2025 edition of the *Red List of Endangered Crafts* marks a significant evolution in how we understand and safeguard traditional crafts.

This year, we introduce the Heritage Craft Inventory – a new, inclusive framework that ensures all heritage crafts, regardless of their current status, have a place where they are recognised and valued under one umbrella. This expanded approach allows us to shine a light not only on endangered and critically endangered crafts, but also on those that are resurgent, culturally distinctive, or rooted in specific communities and regions. It reflects the dynamic landscape of craft today – one that is constantly evolving and shaped by both challenges and opportunities.

Culturally distinctive crafts ...
... and crafts in need of cultural safeguarding

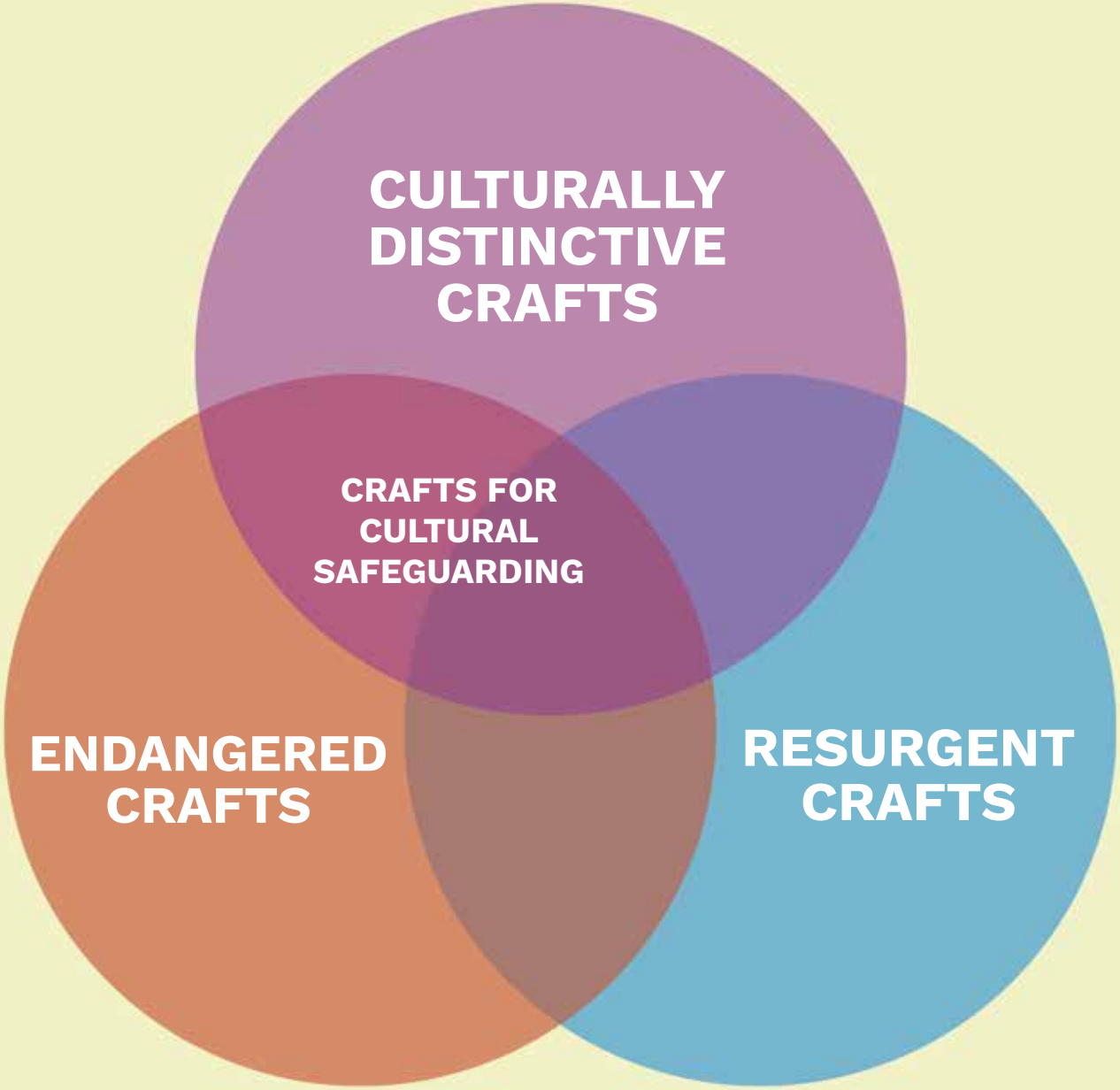
Crafts designated as 'culturally distinctive' might have a broad uptake across the UK, but hold a particular significance for a defined community of practice, whether that is geographic, cultural, ethnic or religious. Those that are also on the *Red List* are known as 'crafts in need of cultural safeguarding'.

Resurgent crafts

Crafts designated as 'resurgent' are currently experiencing a positive trajectory as a result of an upswing in new entrants. Just because a craft is considered resurgent does not mean that it cannot also be endangered, but rather that its decline has started to reverse and that its situation is likely to continue improving.

Check the Heritage Crafts website for the latest designations.

INVENTORY


CULTURALLY DISTINCTIVE CRAFTS
CRAFTS FOR CULTURAL SAFEGUARDING
ENDANGERED CRAFTS
RESURGENT CRAFTS

Issues facing the craft

Many thatched roofs are becoming homogenised and more similar to English styles of thatch.

Sourcing high-quality, locally available materials has become more difficult, further restricted due to land-use changes and the decline in traditional farming practices.

There is sometimes a lack of awareness among the public about the importance and value of thatched roofs to Welsh heritage. This can lead to a lack of interest in preserving and maintaining these traditional roofs.

Welsh vernacular thatching

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Thatched cottages were common across Wales in the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly in rural areas where the craft was passed down through generations.

The roofs were steeply pitched to shed rainwater efficiently, and thatch was often secured using hazel spars or ropes. Regional variations in style emerged, influenced by the local availability of materials and the specific needs of each area.

The techniques used in Welsh vernacular thatching overlap with other forms of thatching, but there are some characteristics that are typical to Wales, such as a rounder outside appearance, roll gables strapped down with handmade rope, a greater use of locally-found materials, and base coats made of gorse, bracken, heather or threshing waste... forming a literal local seedbank.

By the mid-20th century, the widespread use of more durable and lower-maintenance materials, such as slate and corrugated iron, led to a decline in Welsh thatching. Economic shifts, rural depopulation, and modernisation further contributed to the decrease in thatched buildings, meaning that many of the local and regional variations were lost or Anglicised as the skills and knowledge of the Welsh techniques diminished.

Today, only a few thatched cottages remain in Wales, but efforts by heritage organisations and skilled craftspeople continue to preserve and restore this traditional craft.

NEW ENTRY

Opposite and right:
Alan Jones, Pembrokeshire Thatch

Figurehead carving

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Figurehead carving in the UK has a rich history, evolving from an ancient tradition into an elaborate art form that adorned ships through the 18th and 19th centuries.

Originating in medieval Europe as a way to bring good luck or ward off evil spirits, figureheads became increasingly detailed as craftsmanship improved.

For merchant ships, figureheads often depicted mythical figures, animals or classical symbols meant to convey strength, resilience and trustworthiness to all who encountered them. Each figurehead became an emblem of the ship itself, marking its unique identity. Naval ships, by contrast, were often adorned with figureheads depicting royals, military heroes or national emblems such as lions.

A ship's carver is expected to have a good working knowledge of ships in order to design and carve decoration that is both beautiful and does not interfere with the performance of the vessel. All carving has to be durable enough to withstand long journeys and avoid any damage that could occur when carrying out manoeuvres.

Andrew Peters, one of the last master carvers in the UK, has played a crucial role in reviving this nearly-forgotten tradition. His work reflects the historical accuracy and the artistic finesse that made figurehead carving so admired.

Right and opposite:
Maritima Woodcarving

Issues facing the craft

There are currently no trainees in figurehead carving, though there are some in general wood carving who will have transferrable skills. It is difficult to train someone within a business where the work is itinerant and working patterns are unpredictable. A ship's carver will often have to go to where the ship is to do the work.

Conservation companies are increasing only interested in conserving rather than restoring, and often do not have the hand skills to make new carvings or replace damaged ones.

Endangered Crafts Fund

As well as highlighting the plight of the UK's most endangered crafts, it is also important to offer practical support to help stem the decline.

Thanks to generous support from a number of donors and charitable trusts, since September 2019 we have been able to provide grants of up to £2,000 to 79 practitioners for projects that increase the likelihood of an endangered craft surviving the next generation.

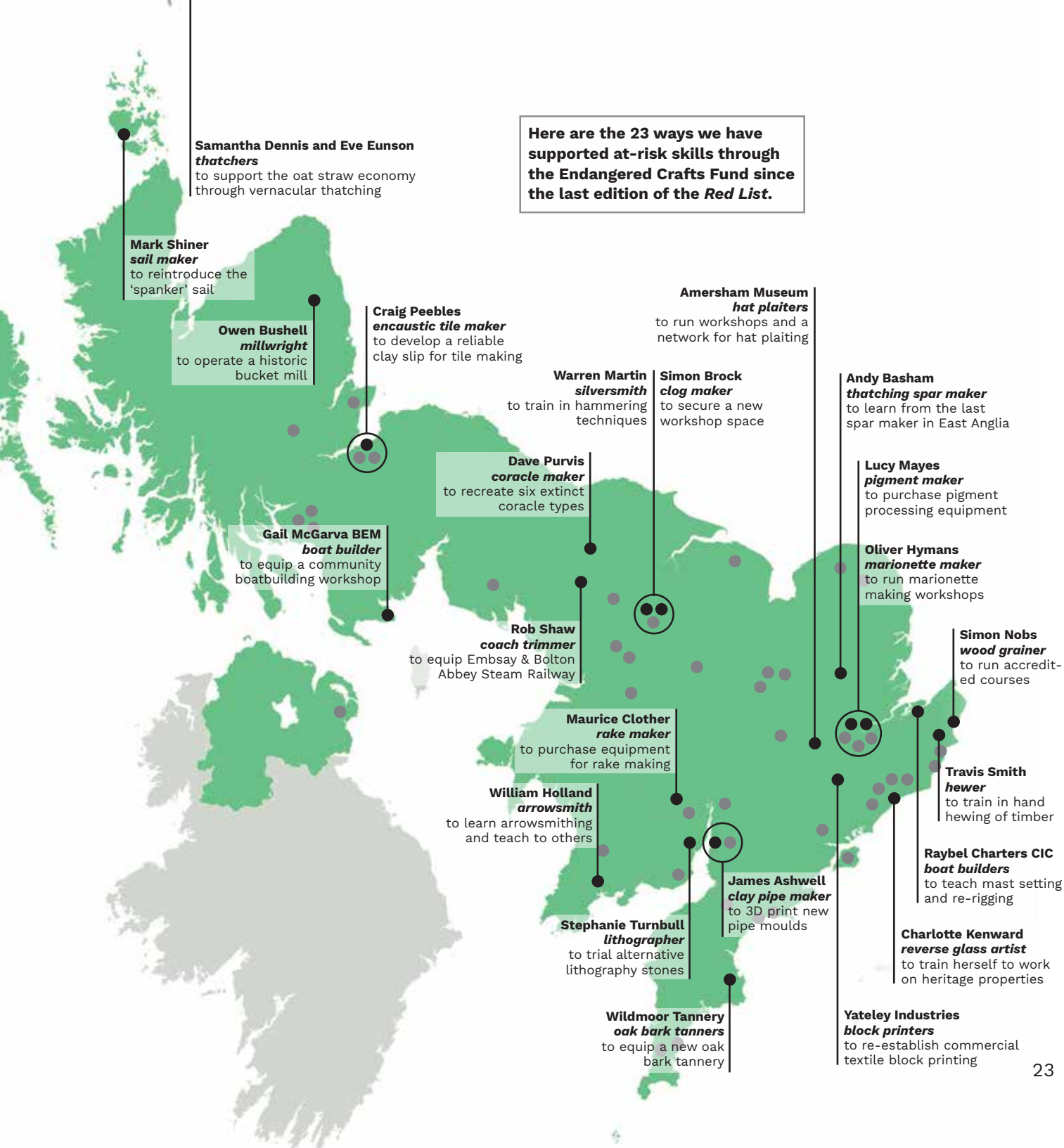
Support is focused on projects with the potential to halt an imminent loss or provide a route to viability for the recipient and fellow practitioners.

Funded with the generous support of:

- *Radcliffe Trust*
- *Pilgrim Trust*
- *Semma Fund*
- *Sussex Heritage Trust*
- *Dulverton Trust*
- *William Grant Foundation*
- *Ashley Family Foundation*
- *Swire Charitable Trust*
- *Garfield Weston Foundation*
- *Essex Community Foundation*
- *Benefact Trust*
- *King Charles III Charitable Fund*

...and the kind contributions of individual donors.

Owen Bushell, millwright, was funded through the Endangered Crafts Fund to maintain and operate a historic bucket mill


Here are the 23 ways we have supported at-risk skills through the Endangered Crafts Fund since the last edition of the *Red List*.
Samantha Dennis and Eve Eunson
thatchers
to support the oat straw economy through vernacular thatching
Mark Shiner
sail maker
to reintroduce the 'spanker' sail
Owen Bushell
millwright
to operate a historic bucket mill
Craig Peebles
encaustic tile maker
to develop a reliable clay slip for tile making
Amersham Museum
hat plaiters
to run workshops and a network for hat plaiting
Warren Martin
silversmith
to train in hammering techniques
Simon Brock
clog maker
to secure a new workshop space
Andy Basham
thatching spar maker
to learn from the last spar maker in East Anglia
Dave Purvis
coracle maker
to recreate six extinct coracle types
Lucy Mayes
pigment maker
to purchase pigment processing equipment
Gail McGarva BEM
boat builder
to equip a community boatbuilding workshop
Oliver Hymans
marionette maker
to run marionette making workshops
Rob Shaw
coach trimmer
to equip Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Simon Nobs
wood grainer
to run accredited courses
Maurice Clother
rake maker
to purchase equipment for rake making
Travis Smith
hewer
to train in hand hewing of timber
William Holland
arrowsmith
to learn arrowsmithing and teach to others
Raybel Charters CIC
boat builders
to teach mast setting and re-rigging
James Ashwell
clay pipe maker
to 3D print new pipe moulds
Stephanie Turnbull
lithographer
to trial alternative lithography stones
Charlotte Kenward
reverse glass artist
to train herself to work on heritage properties
Wildmoor Tannery
oak bark tanners
to equip a new oak bark tannery
Yateley Industries
block printers
to re-establish commercial textile block printing

Matte painting

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Matte painting is a visual effects method where artists create detailed, realistic landscapes or set extensions on glass or canvas, typically using paints, to blend seamlessly with live-action film footage.

The craft gained prominence in the UK during the mid-20th century as a vital tool for creating expansive and imaginative environments. British studios like Pinewood and Shepperton became key centres for visual effects, where matte paintings were used to enhance sets or depict large-scale landscapes that were impossible or too costly to film.

During this period, British artists like Les Bowie and Albert Whitlock became renowned proponents. Whitlock, who worked on numerous classic British films, later found fame in Hollywood.

In the latter half of the 20th century, matte painting contributed significantly to major productions such as the *James Bond* series and the original *Star Wars*, both of which employed matte painting to create grand, believable scenes.

As digital technology emerged in the late 20th century, traditional matte painting began to wane, to be replaced by computer-generated imagery and post-production work. But the craft is now experiencing a modest increase in demand with film makers who are keen to use traditional in-camera techniques.

Opposite and right:
Leigh Took, Mattes & Miniatures

Issues facing the craft

There is a general lack of awareness that the craft is still a viable tool in visual effects. Many people now assume that all visual effects are done digitally.

The craft has almost fallen out of use but is seeing an increase as filmmakers are becoming more interested in traditional techniques.

Some film equipment is becoming obsolete but there is no issue with the painting materials.

Glove making

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Above and left:
Dents

Leather gloves possess a rich history that spans millennia, evolving from practical hand coverings in ancient Egypt and Rome to prominent symbols of nobility in the Middle Ages.

During this time, they were often elaborately adorned with embroidery, jewels, and precious metals to reflect the wearer's wealth and power. The Renaissance marked a peak in glove craftsmanship, with fine materials like kid skin and doe skin being favored for their softness and intricate designs becoming highly coveted.

In the UK, leather glove manufacturing has a long tradition, dating back to at least the 14th century, with centres like Worcester, Yeovil, and Woodstock becoming particularly renowned for their glove-making industries. These regions developed specific expertise, contributing significantly to the nation's industrial heritage.

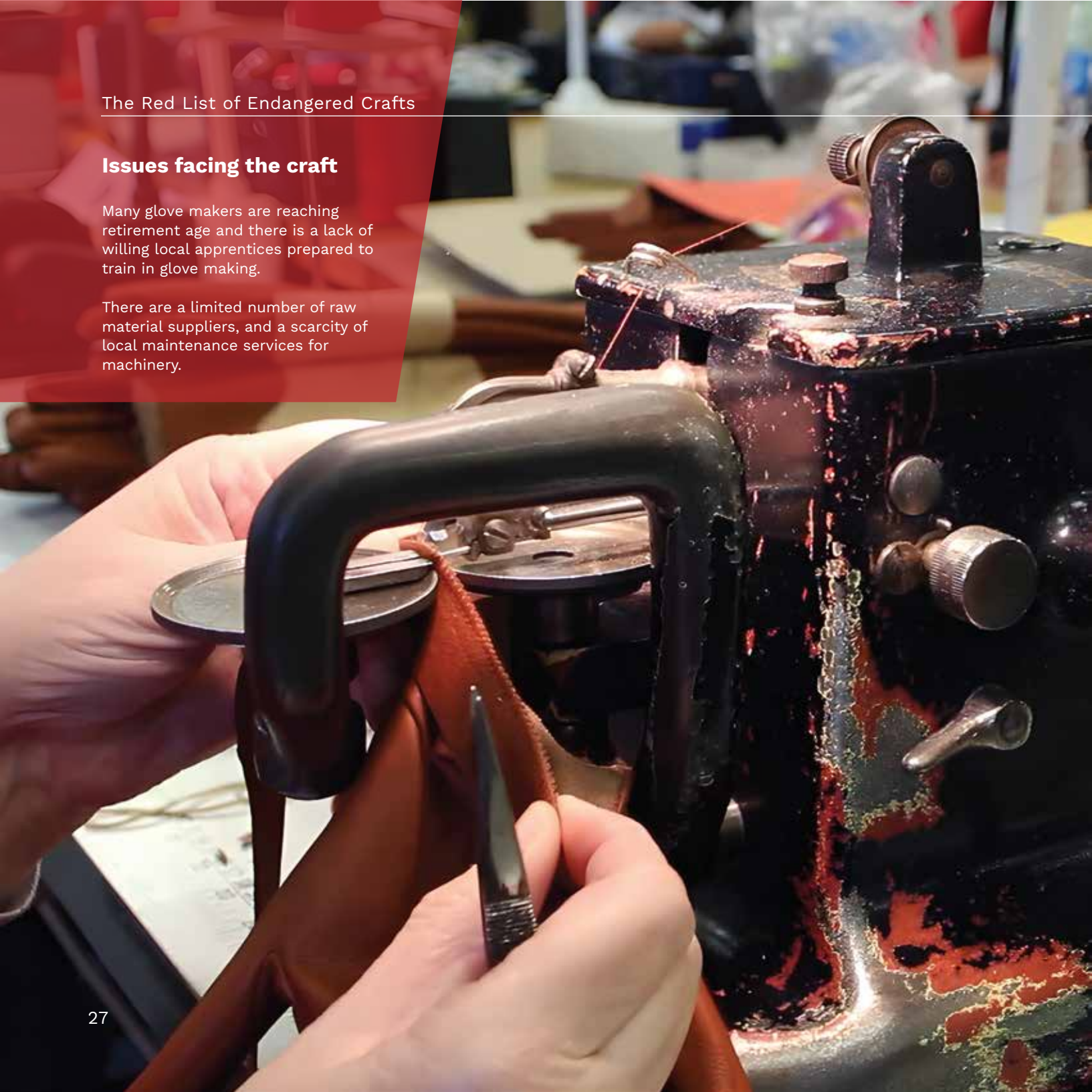
However, over the centuries, the UK leather glove industry has faced numerous challenges, including shifts in fashion, economic downturns, and increasing global competition, particularly from cheaper imports.

While the large-scale manufacturing that once characterised historic glove towns has largely diminished, a number of dedicated artisans and smaller companies still uphold the craft, catering to a range of needs, such as classic fashion gloves and driving gloves, demonstrating the enduring appeal and versatility of this craft.

Issues facing the craft

Many glove makers are reaching retirement age and there is a lack of willing local apprentices prepared to train in glove making.

There are a limited number of raw material suppliers, and a scarcity of local maintenance services for machinery.



Common issues affecting craft viability

We can group many of the issues craftspeople are dealing with into a number of broad categories. Doing this can help focus our advocacy and support so we can help as many crafts as possible.

Training: these issues often centre on the prohibitive cost of training, the reluctance of qualifications agencies to accredit niche occupations, and the resulting difficulty in attracting funding.

Recruitment: this includes difficulties in recruiting trainees and new entrants to the crafts.

Ageing practitioners: in some crafts the youngest known craftsperson may be approaching retirement age.

Technology: new technologies can make older ones seem redundant, but often there is room for multiple technologies to operate alongside each other, each offering something of value.

Market: this can include a reduction in the demand for the product or the inability to reach out to potential customers through marketing and distribution networks; it also includes competition with lower-wage economies worldwide.

Supply of materials and tools: the availability and costs of materials and tools; as crafts become more niche then suppliers may no longer find it cost-effective to supply a wide range of materials.

Small business challenges: increased bureaucratic burden for small businesses; business rates and the cost of affordable workshops; the need for business skills; the challenges of passing on a craft business.

Miscellaneous: including restrictive legislation and loss of allied industries upon which many crafts rely.

Bursary recipient
Elliot Walker, glass blower

Endangered crafts

Crafts classified as 'endangered' are those which currently have sufficient craftspeople to transmit the craft skills to the next generation, but for which there are serious concerns about their ongoing viability. This may include crafts with a shrinking market share, an ageing demographic or crafts with a declining number of practitioners.

Armour and helmet making MORE ENDANGERED
Bagpipe making *(smallpipes)*
Bee skep making
Bicycle frame making
Block printing
Boat building *(traditional wooden)*
Brass instrument making
Brick making
Brilliant cutting
Brush making
Canal art and boat painting
Clock making
Coach building
Coach trimming
Composition picture frame making
Coopering *(beer)*
Coracle making
Corn dolly making
Cornish hedging
Cricket bat making
Fairground art
Falconry furniture making
Fender making
Flax, hemp and nettle processing NEW
Flintwork *(building)*
Folding knife making
Free reed instrument making
Gauged brickwork
Globe making
Hand engraving
Hand grinding
Harp making
Hat making
Hazel basketmaking LESS ENDANGERED
Hewing
Horn, antler and bone working
Hurdle making
Illumination
Keyboard instrument making
Kilt making
Lace making *(bobbin lace)* MORE ENDANGERED
Lacquerwork *(lacquer, japanning and coromandel)*
Ladder making
Letterpress printing
Lithography
Lorinery
Lute making NEW
Marbling
Marionette making
Mechanical organ making
Nalbinding
Neon making
Oar, mast, spar and flagpole making
Organ building MORE ENDANGERED
Orkney chair making
Pargeting, stucco and scagliola
Passementerie
Percussion instrument making
Petrakivka NEW
Pewter working *(trade and manufacturing)* NEW
Pigment making
Pysanky NEW
Reverse glass sign making
Rigging NEW
Rope making
Rush matting
Sail making
Scientific glassworking
Sgian dubh and dirk making
Shetland lace knitting
Shinty caman making
Shoe and boot last and tree making
Shoe and boot making
Silk weaving
Silver allied trades NEW
Skeined willow working
Slate working
Spar making
Spectacle making
Split cane rod making
Sporran making LESS ENDANGERED
Stained glass window making *(historic)*
Straw working
Tanning *(vegetable)*
Type founding and manufacture
Umbrella making
Vardo and living waggon crafts
Welsh double cloth weaving NEW
Wheelwrighting
Withy pot making LESS ENDANGERED
Wooden pipe making
Woodgraining and marbling
Woodwind instrument making

Issues facing the craft

Businesses are finding it hard to recruit and retain skilled workers and there is a lack of skilled technicians and tutors to train the next generation.

Raw material and energy costs have surged.

Demand for handcrafted silverware fluctuates significantly, making it difficult to predict workforce needs. Businesses struggle with periods of 'feast or famine'.

The historic centres of the trade are attractive to property developers. Businesses are facing high rents, limited availability of suitable space, and challenges in maintaining traditional methods within modern industrial regulations.

Silver allied trades

ENDANGERED

While silversmithing remains a high-profile craft in the UK, many well-known brands and designers are dependent on workshops in the historic centres of Birmingham, Sheffield and London to provide the specialist skills that support the manufacture of silver objects.

The allied trades in silversmithing have always been carried out by highly-specialist craftpeople, including drop stampers, platers, wire drawers, buffers and polishers, each representing generations of accumulated knowledge.

Today, these skills are becoming rarer, forcing many craftspeople to become skilled in more than one area. Businesses that previously relied on a local network of independent sub-contractors now have to bring more of the skills in-house, at much higher cost.

Many allied trades work 'behind the scenes', without any direct relationship to customers. They are sometimes subject to non-disclosure agreements that prevent them from being recognised for their work. This lack of visibility can mean that skills gaps are not evident until it is too late.

As the local ecosystems of allied trades comes under increasing pressure, there is a danger that a tipping point could soon be reached, and the hidden infrastructure that underpins the craft of silversmithing is lost completely.

Opposite and left:
British Silverware Ltd

Training bursaries

These bursaries of up to £4,000 each have been set up to help cover or subsidise the cost of training for new entrants and early-career practitioners who would otherwise be prevented from pursuing this career path as a result of the cost.

The 62 bursaries awarded since the last edition of the Red List, by funder:

The Royal Mint:
- William Appleby, silver spinner
- Richard Barber, jewellery maker
- Andreia Gomes, jewellery maker
- Horatio Hawes, armour maker
- Annie Higgins, silversmith
- Rebecca Oldfield, silversmith
- Lily Smith, silver spinner
- Tilly Whitehouse, jewellery maker

National Lottery Heritage Fund:
- Chanelle Brown, woodturner
- Sacha Chandisingh, tutu maker
- Roisin Gearty, jewellery maker
- Celina Sawicka, potter

Maxwell Hanrahan Foundation:
- Amanda Boachie, bookbinder
- Isabella Cobby, milliner
- Elena Fleury-Rojo, glassworker

City & Guilds Foundation:
- Ayham Adoghim, plasterer
- Hannah Girvan, woodworker
- Ziyaad Lorgat, bookbinder
- Leena Patel, jewellery maker
- Exauce Mondo, pattern cutter
- Marcia Vidal, silversmith

Costume Society:
- Mia Brennan, milliner
- Megan Graham, pattern cutter
- Maya Howes, costumier
- Katie Sawyer, costumier
- Ryan Rix, tailor

Leathersellers' Foundation:
- Amar Patel, leatherworker
- Emily Perigaud, saddler
- Rob Price, shoemaker
- Johnette' Taylor, leatherworker

William Grant Foundation:
- Jo Hills, hat maker
- Kate Robertson, sporran maker
- Jamie Smith, boatbuilder

Ashley Family Foundation:
- Cai Gwilym Roberts, blacksmith
- Lily Thomas, silversmith
- Ieuan Williamson, timber framer

Army Benevolent Fund:
- Roy Evans, coppersmith
- Leon Fairbrother, dry stone waller
- Andy Fisher, leatherworker
- Kate Holmes, stone carver
- Gareth Roberts, bookbinder
- Leo White, straw marqueter

Royal British Legion:
- Hannah Macfarlane, kilt maker
- Katie Raithby-Veall, punch needler

British Leather Industry Development Trust:
- Michelle Wong, leatherworker

Cordwainers' Company:
- Eleni Kai, shoemaker

Newby Trust:
- Nicola James, jewelley maker
- Tobias Wright, stone mason

Society of Scribes & Illuminators
- Lesley Romano, calligrapher

International Guild of Knot Tyers
- Felix Gillies Creasey, rigger

Sussex Heritage Trust:
- Joseph Lancaster, plasterer

Principality Building Society:
- Bodhi King, blacksmith
- Barney Murray, dry stone waller

Company of Arts Scholars:
- Alison Pascoe, passementerer

D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust:
- Tim Wills, Cornish hedger

Anthony and Elizabeth Mellows Charity and Kendrick Hobbs:
- Oliver Kinge, blacksmith

Golsoncott Foundation and Jenn Chen:
- Devin Valentine, luthier

Arts Society
- Abby Gray, dressmaker

Sponsors *(DCA Consulting, Soane Britain, Kendrick Hobbs):*
- Logan Beckford-China, dry stone waller
- Elliot Walker, glass blower
- Cameron Wallace, lettercutter

Donors *(Malcolm and Rosalind Gammie):*
- Saul Beardsley, blacksmith

Welsh double cloth weaving

ENDANGERED

Welsh double-cloth weaving uses British wool and traditional Welsh designs. The most common use of the technique is for traditional Welsh tapestry blankets. The Welsh word *carthen* refers to a traditional woven blanket, with the plural form being *carthenni*.

Weaving in Wales dates back to the Middle Ages when wool production was a major industry. Wool was abundant, thanks to Wales' large sheep-farming economy, and weaving became a traditional household craft in rural communities.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, as the Industrial Revolution took hold, Welsh woollen mills expanded, allowing for larger-scale weaving. This era marked the rise of distinct regional patterns.

Using a double-cloth technique (plain weave), which weaves two layers of fabric simultaneously, weavers created durable, reversible textiles with intricate geometric patterns.

By the mid-20th century, Welsh double cloth weaving saw a resurgence in popularity, especially in the fashion and interior design markets. Welsh mills became renowned for their unique woven products, showcasing bold, colourful designs.

Historically, the term *carthen* has been used to describe a coarse woven cloth and checked blankets in Welsh. Today, however, it has come to describe double-weave Welsh blankets, the most distinctive of these featuring the Caernarfon Portcullis pattern.

Right and opposite:
Melin Tregwynt

Issues facing the craft

A limiting factor is a lack of skills and knowledge to maintain and repair historic looms and to create the pattern chains required to weave the traditional designs.

An apprenticeship scheme developed in 2014 is now no longer available, but discussions are taking place between Melin Tregwynt Mill, the National Wool Museum and Cambrian Wool to develop an alternative more suited to the woollen textile industry.

The PRESIDENT'S Award

Gail McGarva presented with the President's Award 2024 by Heritage Crafts Chair David Clarke
Photo by Robert Wade

The 2024 Heritage Crafts Awards were presented at a prestigious Winners' Reception at Eltham Palace on 26 November 2024, introduced by Natasha Kaplinsky OBE, and supported by headline sponsor The Royal Mint and venue sponsor English Heritage.

This was an expanded version of the previous year's Heritage Crafts Awards, with additional investment from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation to build on the previous success of the scheme.

The 2024 winners were as follows:

- **President's Award** – Gail McGarva BEM
- **Lifetime Achievement Award** – Nick Checksfield
- **UK Maker of the Year** – Nicola Laird
- **England Maker of the Year** – Nick Gill
- **Northern Ireland Maker of the Year** – Cara Murphy
- **Scotland Maker of the Year** – Nicola Laird
- **Wales Maker of the Year** – Phil Parkes
- **Precious Metalworker of the Year** – Warren Martin
- **Woodworker of the Year** – Shem Mackey
- **Fashion Textile Maker of the Year** – Shannon Bye
- **Leatherworker of the Year** – Natalie Thakur
- **Young Building Craftsperson** – Barney Murray
- **Young Woodworker of the Year** – Sean Evelegh
- **Young Leatherworker of the Year** – Preethi Kosanam
- **Young Upholsterer of the Year** – Libby Payne
- **Young Weaver of the Year** – Scarlett Farrer
- **Young Embroider of the Year** – Beth Somerville
- **Young Metalworker of the Year** – Caius Bearder
- **Environmental Sustainability** – Rachael Colley
- **Environmental Sustainability** – Allister Malcolm
- **Trainer of the Year** – Emma Brackenbury
- **Trainee of the Year** – James Morton
- **Community Catalyst of the Year** – Dee Curtis
- **Robin Wood Changemaker Award** – Sam Rowland

The **President's Award for Endangered Crafts** was established in 2020 by Heritage Crafts President HM The King. Each year £3,000 is awarded to a skilled practitioner of an endangered craft who will use the funding to ensure that their skills are passed on to the future. Former Heritage Crafts' Chair Patricia Lovett MBE generously provides a £1,000 prize for the runner-up.

2024 Winner – Gail McGarva BEM

As a traditional wooden boat-builder, Gail is passionate about preserving working boats in danger of extinction. Her specialism is the building of replicas or as she prefers to call them 'daughter boats', breathing life into a new generation of these traditional craft. Gail is using the funds to build a traditionally-constructed St Ayles Skiff and pass on the skills to the next generation through the process of the build.

Pewter working

ENDANGERED

Note: *This entry refers to the hand skills of pewter working as carried out in a production and manufacturing context. Pewter working by individual artisans is deemed currently viable.*

Pewter working arose in the Roman Britain due to plentiful supplies of local tin and lead. Production seems to have stopped after the Romans left, but reappeared in the 12th century, mainly in ecclesiastical contexts. The craft was quickly established countrywide with large centres soon to develop in London, Wigan, Bristol, Newcastle and Exeter.

For most of its history the production of pewter items was undertaken by casting the component parts of an item in expensive bronze moulds, before welding or later soldering the pieces together.

The Industrial Revolution however saw the introduction of new manufacturing techniques, whereby sheets of pewter were cut, spun or stamped into the component parts. Articles such as teapots could be mass produced, something not possible with casting.

These techniques saw the rise of new manufacturing centres in Sheffield and Birmingham and the trade from the other areas rapidly decrease. Pewter underwent a brief renaissance during the Art Nouveau movement and today is mainly associated with trophies and bespoke art wares.

Opposite and right:
AR Wentworth Ltd

Issues facing the craft

The demand for traditional pewter products such as tankards, flasks and goblets is steadily declining.

Compounding this is a lack of investment in innovative design, resulting in the remaining companies competing over a shrinking, saturated market. While there is potential to reach new audiences through product innovation, many businesses have yet to respond effectively.

The cost of tin has risen sharply in recent years.

Celebrating our members

"After years of research, planning and consultation with its members, Heritage Crafts updated its membership programme in 2024 alongside the launch of the charity's new website.

Membership continues to be a key source of unrestricted financial support to the organisation and Heritage Crafts is grateful for the continued support of its members. Membership expanded from one to three tiers: Entry, Supporter, and Guardian. The Supporter and Guardian tiers of membership are new levels of giving for members who wish to gift more in their annual membership dues toward Heritage Crafts's charitable aims. Thank you to the hundred plus members who have joined and renewed at these tiers since the launch of the new programme.

The new membership tiers were not the only changes made to the membership programme this year. As members give more to the charity, Heritage Crafts strive to provide further support and resources. Alongside the expanded tiers came the unveiling of a member portal hosted on the new Heritage Crafts website.

The portal is an inclusive platform for craft curious and maker members alike to engage with more craft content. It includes an expanded profile editing section for the Maker Directory, where practising craft members can now share a photo gallery of their work, enabling more connection between makers and the general public who visit the directory.

Additionally, the member portal has a section for exclusive craft-curious readings and videos for members to learn more about different makers and craft practises across the UK. There is also a member resource hub, which contains recorded seminars and workshops for craft business support.

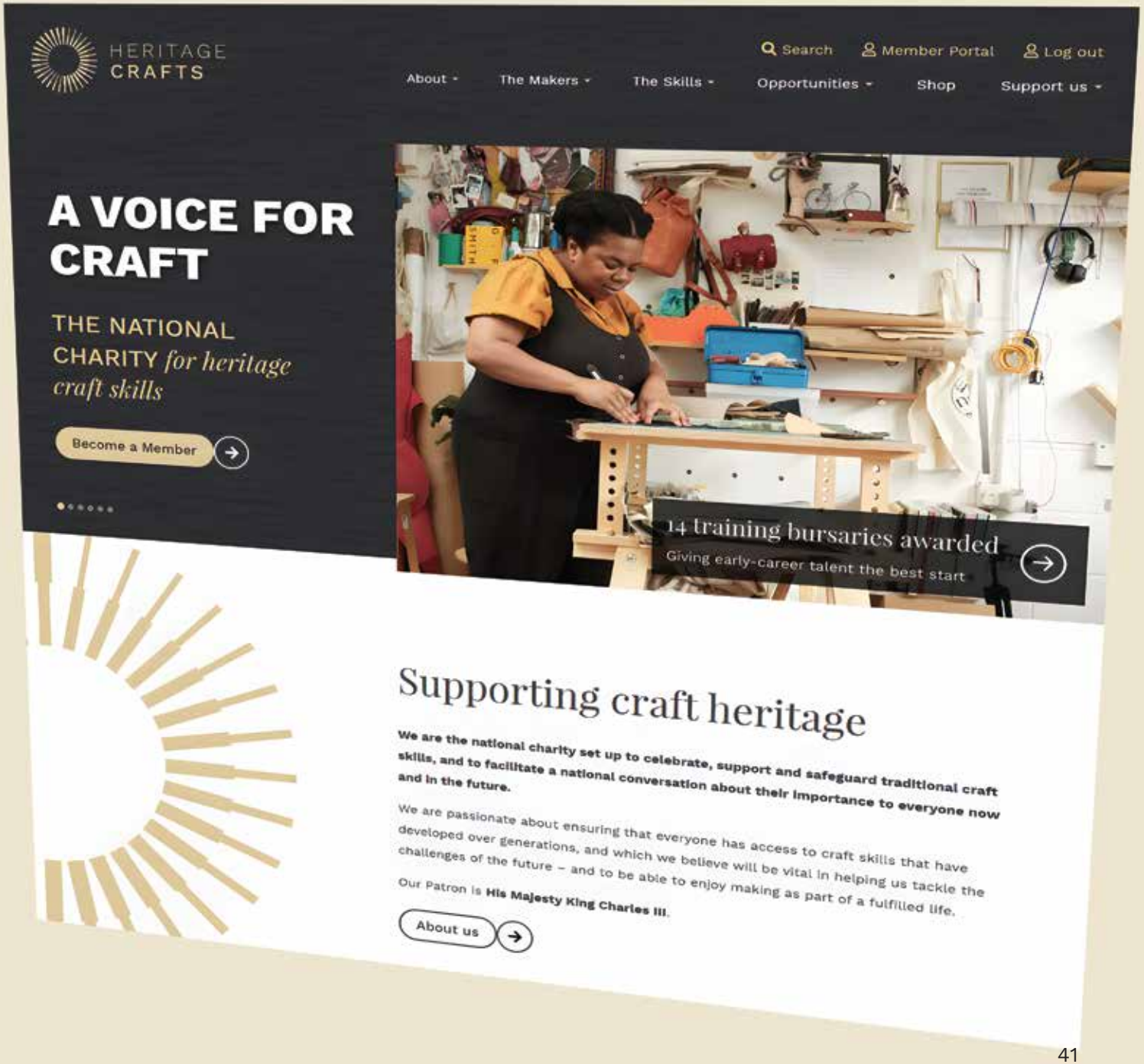
The member portal enables the charity to not only strengthen its programming to transmit and exchange heritage crafts skills and enthusiasm amongst members of all ages and backgrounds, but also to alleviate difficulties facing makers who either currently or hope to run a craft business.

To amplify craft perspectives from all corners of the UK, we have also launched our regional Craft Cafés, facilitated by member volunteers and overseen by myself and our Volunteer Coordination Officer Finn Arschavir. These online and real-world sessions simultaneously promote makers' experiences and enable them to engage in craft rich conversations together.

This year saw the third annual Members' Month in April, including online events and a real-world get-together in Cardiff, and concluding with its second printed Members' Showcase catalogue featuring 30 maker members. Members month continues to be a highlight in the year for members and we look forward to expanding programming next year.

As the first year on the new membership tiers and website concludes, we are grateful to all our members who have renewed and continued to support our goal to safeguard and promote traditional craft skills. More maker stories, member events and content are on the horizon."

Bizz Fretty
Philanthropy and Membership Lead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A VOICE FOR CRAFT
THE NATIONAL CHARITY for heritage craft skills
Become a Member
14 training bursaries awarded
Giving early-career talent the best start
Supporting craft heritage
We are the national charity set up to celebrate, support and safeguard traditional craft skills, and to facilitate a national conversation about their importance to everyone now and in the future.
We are passionate about ensuring that everyone has access to craft skills that have developed over generations, and which we believe will be vital in helping us tackle the challenges of the future – and to be able to enjoy making as part of a fulfilled life.
Our Patron is His Majesty King Charles III.
About us

Issues facing the craft

There has been a great deal of interest in hemp and flax growing in recent years both as a craft and as a way to work towards a more sustainable future. Hence Heritage Crafts designating this a resurgent craft.

The supply chain isn't yet functioning well, so local farmers are not yet growing on any scale. Any UK made linen is likely to be higher in cost.

Getting flax seed is an issue as it is imported and sold under licence.

Flax, hemp and nettle processing

ENDANGERED

This entry refers to the harvesting, drying and retting of bast fibres which are then mechanically processed using breaking, scutching and hackling/heckling.

Historcially these fibres would have been processed across the whole UK. Evidence of flax cultivation dates back to the Bronze Age. The Romans expanded linen production and by the Medieval period linen cloth was widely used, especially in Scotland and Ireland.

Likely introduced by the Romans, hemp became crucial for making ropes, sails, and textiles, especially for the navy. And wild nettles were used for textiles before cotton became common. Medieval peasants and soldiers wore nettle-based cloth, particularly during times when other fibres were scarce.

Today there are pockets of activity across the UK involved in the growing of flax, hemp and other fibres.

The only commercial flax scutching is currently taking place in Northern Ireland, while small-scale experimental scutching, on newly developed open-source machinery, is happening in Scotland and Dorset.

NEW ENTRY

Opposite and right:
Mallon Linen

Recognising our Living National Treasures

We have some of the best craftspeople in the world, the likes of whom are recognised and revered in other countries for their expertise and prowess; yet they are so rarely even acknowledged in the UK.

Heritage Crafts set about changing this, and to date 32 wonderful makers have been awarded National Honours as a result of our nominations.

The organisation is working on nominating even more in the coming years so that makers from across the huge and varied range of traditional crafts are recognised in this prestigious way for their excellence, proficiency and often rare skills.

Phil Speight MBE

Ewan Clayton MBE
calligrapher 2013

Owen Jones MBE
swill basket maker 2013

Malcolm Appleby MBE
hand engraver 2014

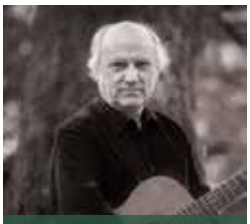
Gail McGarva BEM
boat builder 2014

Ray Key BEM
wood turner 2015

Robin Wood MBE
green wood worker 2015

Lida Kindersley MBE
letter cutter 2015

Jane Short MBE
enameller 2015



Roger Bucknall MBE
guitar maker 2015

Hector Cole MBE
arrowsmith 2016

Lisa Hammond MBE
potter 2016

Wim Visscher MBE
parchmenter 2017

Felicity Irons BEM
worker in rush 2017

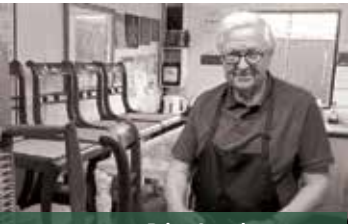
John Lord BEM
flintknapper 2017

Kaffe Fassett MBE
textile designer/maker 2018

Martin Frost MBE
fore-edge painter 2019

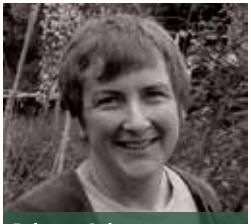
David A Smith MBE
reverse glass artist 2020

Wendy-Shorter Blake MBE
upholsterer 2020



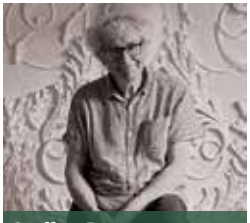
Brian Crossley MBE
chair caner 2020

Hilary Burns MBE
basketmaker 2021

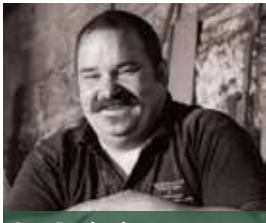


Rebecca Oaks MBE
coppice worker 2021

Veronica Main MBE
hat plaiter 2021



Geoffrey Preston MBE
plaster worker 2021



Greg Rowland MBE
wheelwright 2022

Ronald J Maclean MBE
boat builder 2023

Delyth Done MBE
blacksmithing trainer 2023

David Poole MBE
clockmaker 2023

Phil Speight MBE
canal artist 2024

Rauni Higson MBE
silversmith 2025

Brian Alcock BEM
hand grinder 2023

Robert Woodland MBE
woodgrainer/marbler 2023

Jeanette Sloan BEM
knitwear designer 2023

Issues facing the craft

Training and recruitment is a huge problem for the craft. There are no qualifications and very few young people entering the trade.

Materials such as galvanised wire, Stockholm tar and hemp cordage are all becoming more difficult to source.

The craft also relies on specialist equipment that is no longer made. Crafts people are relying on antique tools, repurposing modern tools or importing costly tools from the US.

Rigging

ENDANGERED

The history of rigging for traditional boats and ships in the UK spans centuries, evolving alongside maritime technology, trade, and exploration.

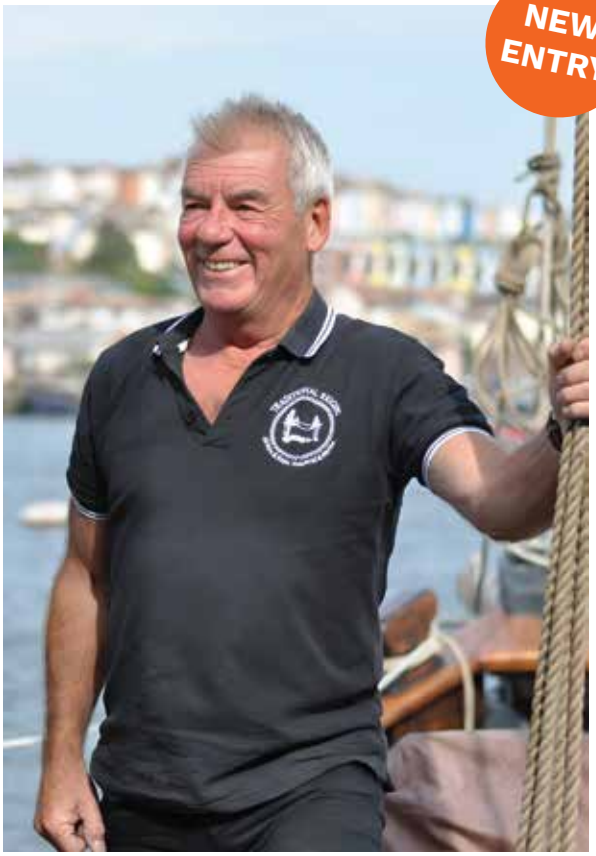
During the Anglo-Saxon and Viking eras, seafarers used simple square-rigged sails. By the 12th and 13th centuries, the introduction of larger vessels saw the evolution of more complex rigging systems.

The Age of Sail from the 16th to the 19th centuries marked the pinnacle of traditional rigging. Tall ships like galleons, brigs and frigates used intricate rigging to support multiple masts and a combination of square and fore and aft sails. British rigging reached its height in the 19th century with clipper ships, renowned for their speed and agility.

Today, traditional rigging remains alive in the UK through historical preservation efforts, sail training vessels as well as privately owned traditional working craft and classic yachts.

The majority of the craft is done by hand, including splicing ropes and wires in various different methods, setting up and supporting masts and spars correctly, rigging and de-rigging ships and boats, making wooden elements such as pulley blocks, mast hoops, bulls eyes and dead eyes.

The rigger works closely with sail makers, shipwrights and rope makers to provide a full service.



Opposite and right:
Traditional Rigging

Stacking the odds in their favour

"For many, finding their way into a heritage craft or trade can seem to be through a series of fortunate events, rather than a fluid or predictable journey.

Cameron found his way into monumental masonry by spending ten years working for different memorial companies and undertakers. During this time he learned basic skills of the trade including sandblasting computer letters. Working with stone every day, Cameron found a material he loved, but a way of working that felt removed from the emotive nature of what he was creating.

Through a series of fortunate events, Cameron met stone carver Gillian Forbes, who was keen to pass on her skills of lettercutting by hand. A training bursary helped solidify this arrangement so Gillian could spend dedicated time with Cameron, during which he developed a series of samples under her tutelage. Cameron is now creating memorials in a far more personal and meaningful way within his own business, Cameron Wallace Stone Carving.

Those working in crafts can find that one small incident such as a loss of premises or essential equipment can have huge consequences to their ongoing practice. However, if your craft is already at risk due to few practitioners or sensitive supply chains, these challenges are not only felt by the maker, but have a significant impact to the ongoing practice of those skills in the UK.

Andy Basham is a coppice worker and spar maker. Spars are used for roof thatching, and competition from foreign imports, or even plastic spars, have forced many spar makers out of work. However, with changes for imports since Brexit, there is now an opportunity for an efficient spar maker to generate funds alongside other coppice work.

With thanks to an Endangered Craft Fund grant, Andy has overseen two group training days with Charlie Potter (the last full-time spar maker in East Anglia). During the days, Charlie shared tips and skills on how to make spars quickly, but without compromising quality. Without this grant, skills would not have been shared in such a focused way, helping develop meaningful income stream for coppice workers in a developing area.

In both scenarios, the craft space is a delicate ecosystem, with many interdependencies. Thanks to wonderful partners, we have continued to grow our training bursaries and Endangered Craft Fund Grants to support individuals and to safeguard craft at risk.

However, as much as we have grown, we have also seen a huge increase in demand. Where there were once traditional entry points into crafts through apprenticeships and well connected trade pathways, these no longer exist. If they can afford it, some may now make their way to a course at university, but are often left without the hand skills required and a sizable loan to repay.

While we are steadfast in our commitment to supporting makers to develop or continue their work, we cannot do this alone. To create the level of impact needed to support entry into the vibrant crafts sector, we need to call on government to offer meaningful pathways to learn and ensure an individual's curiosity and passion is met with accessible support and not emptiness."

Tess Osman
Grants and Awards Officer

Last June we visited Ladybridge High School in Bolton with Patrick Grant (*BBC Sewing Bee*), pewter caster Ella McIntosh, hat maker Holly Johnson, neon sign maker Richard Wheater and willow weaver Joe Gregory to inspire a new generation of young makers with a talk and workshops. The event was organised in partnership with North West Comino Consortium.

Bobbin lace making

ENDANGERED

Bobbin lace gets its name from the handles (bobbins) on which individual threads are wound. The basic technique is quite simple – a pair of bobbins is held in each hand, and twisted one over another before other bobbins are taken up.

Bobbin lace was introduced to England in the late 16th century, probably arriving from Flanders and Italy, regions well-known for their lace making traditions.

Bobbin lace developed into a thriving cottage industry across parts of rural England, becoming particularly prominent in Devon, where Honiton lace was made, and in the Midlands counties of Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, where styles like Bucks Point and Bedfordshire lace evolved. Lace making was typically done at home by women and children, providing an important source of income for many rural families.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw bobbin lace reach peak popularity, used in fashion, on church linen and later as part of the household decoration of middle class homes. The craft experienced a steep decline in the second half of the 19th century primarily due to the proliferation of machine-made lace.

The second half of the 20th century saw a revival of interest in making lace, particularly bobbin lace. Today individuals can rarely sell their lace, instead making lace for the joy of it, reconstructing the old patterns and using centuries' old techniques to create new and exciting pieces in two and three dimensions.

NEW ENTRY

Opposite and below:
Louise West Lace Design

Issues facing the craft

Whilst the number of practitioners is still high, many are at or past retirement age. The craft has not enjoyed the revival that has been seen in other textile crafts such as knitting and crochet.

Whilst the overall number is still high, the number of skilled practitioners has declined by around 30 per cent since the *Red List* data was first collected.

There are very few opportunities to learn lace making and accredited routes such as City & Guilds are no longer available.

What is Heritage Crafts doing?

Since the publication of the first *Red List* in 2017, Heritage Crafts has taken the following actions to help safeguard endangered crafts:

With the support of the Dulverton Trust, the Swire Charitable Trust and others we have employed Mary Lewis as **Head of Craft Sustainability**, tasked with carrying out interventions that make a difference to endangered crafts.

We have set up the **Endangered Crafts Fund** to help at-risk crafts to overcome the short-term obstacles standing in the way of their long-term viability and awarded 79 grants so far, totalling over £130,000.

We have continued to **advocate on behalf of the heritage crafts sector** to policymakers and funders on the issues facing heritage crafts and what is needed to solve them, including directly with Government Ministers and officials.

We have committed to **continuing the *Red List of Endangered Crafts*** at two-yearly intervals, though this will rely on continued funding following support from the Pilgrim Trust and Radcliffe Trust.

*We can't do all this alone... please **join Heritage Crafts** and this growing community of like-minded individuals dedicated to celebrating our heritage craft skills and safeguarding them for the future...*

What can policymakers do?

We have some very clear asks to put to Government to help improve the support for heritage crafts:

Effectively implement the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Ratifying the Convention in 2024 was a huge step in the right direction, but we need to ensure that both the inventorying and safeguarding stages provide lasting benefit.

Take action to address the issues affecting the future viability of heritage crafts, particularly relating to education, training and small business support. For example, the current apprenticeship system in the UK is unfit for the myriad of niche micro-businesses and sole traders that make up the heritage crafts sector.

What can YOU do?

One of the most effective ways to help is to support our work by **becoming a Member or Benefactor of Heritage Crafts** at *www.heritagecrafts.org.uk*. Not only will this help us become more financially sustainable as an independent charity but it will also help build a community of likeminded individuals whose voice will become increasingly difficult for policymakers to ignore.

Secondly please **donate to our Endangered Crafts Fund** at *www.heritagecrafts.org.uk/ecf* which helps to ensure that our most at-risk heritage crafts within the UK are given the support they need to thrive.

Thirdly, but no less importantly, you can **support your local craftspeople** by buying and commissioning their work, creating heirlooms for the future!

Currently viable crafts

Crafts classified as 'currently viable' do not appear on the Red List as they are in a healthy state or have sufficient practitioners to transmit their skills to the next generation. This does not mean that the crafts are risk-free or without issues affecting their future sustainability/viability. We will continue to monitor them for changes.

Automaton making
Bagpipe making *(Highland)*
Basket making
Batik
Bead working
Billiard cue making
Blacksmithing
Boat building *(modern wooden)*
Bookbinding
Bowyery
Braiding
Button making
Calligraphy
Candle making
Carpentry and joinery
Chair making
Chair seating
Charcoal burning
Cob building
Coopering *(spirits)*
Coppersmithing *(stills)*
Coppice working
Corset making
Crochet
Cutlery and tableware making
Darkroom photography
Decorative plasterwork
Drum making
Dry stone walling
Dyeing
Edge tool making
Embroidery
Enamelling
Fair Isle knitting NEW
Farriery
Felting
Fletching
Flintknapping *(objects)*
Floristry NEW
Fly dressing
Founding
French polishing
Gansey knitting
Gilding
Glass engraving
Glass working
Goldsmithing
Green wood working
Guitar making
Gun making
Harris Tweed weaving
Hedgelaying
Heritage tiling and mosaic
Intaglio
Islamic calligraphy
Jewellery making
Knife making
Knitting
Lapidary
Lead working
Leather working
Letter cutting
Lime plastering NEW
Macrame
Marquetry
Medal making
Metal spinning
Millinery
Model engineering
Net making
Origami
Paper making *(studio)*
Patchwork
Pewter working *(studio)*
Pole lathe turning
Pottery *(studio)*
Puppet making
Quilling
Quilting *(not flat frame)*
Rag rug making
Rocking horse making
Rug tufting
Rug weaving
Saddlery
Screen printing
Shingle making NEW
Side saddle making
Signwriting
Silversmithing *(studio)*
Smocking
Sofrut calligraphy
Spinning
Stained glass *(studio)*
Steel pan making
Stick dressing
Stone carving
Stonemasonry
Surgical instrument making
Swordsmithing
Tailoring
Tapestry weaving
Tatting
Taxidermy
Thatching
Tile making *(roofing)*
Tile making *(wall and floor)*
Timber framing
Toy making
Upholstery and soft furnishing
Violin making *(and violin family)*
Weaving
Wheeling LESS ENDANGERED
Wig making
Wood carving
Wood turning

Following His Majesty The King's accession in September 2022, a major review of more than 1,000 Royal Patronages and charity Presidencies was undertaken.

As HRH The Prince of Wales, His Majesty had been President of Heritage Crafts since 2013, and in 2020 initiated the *President's Award for Endangered Crafts*, won most recently by boatbuilder Gail McGarva BEM. Gail is using her £3,000 prize to build a traditionally-constructed St Ayles Skiff and pass on the skills to the next generation through the process of the build.

To mark the first anniversary of Their Majesties' Coronation, it was announced that Heritage Crafts was amongst the charities to be retained, and the King would become Heritage Crafts' Patron.

At the launch of the first edition of the *Red List of Endangered Crafts* in 2017, His Majesty said:

> *I very much hope that the Red List will encourage more interest and further research into this prized aspect of our heritage, expanding our knowledge and shared appreciation of traditional craftsmanship. And, of course, placing these crafts on a sustainable footing so that they can continue to bring genuine economic and cultural benefits to our communities for generations to come.*

Funders, sponsors and donors

We couldn't do any of this work without our generous funders, to whom we are immensely grateful.

***Red List of Endangered Crafts* 2025 edition**

- Pilgrim Trust *(research)*
- The Royal Mint *(publication)*

Core and major project funders

- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Swire Charitable Trust
- Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation
- Hugo Burge Foundation

Endangered Crafts Fund

- Semma Fund
- Radcliffe Trust
- Pilgrim Trust
- Sussex Heritage Trust
- William Grant Foundation
- Ashley Family Foundation
- Essex Community Foundation

... and anonymous donors

Training bursaries

- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation
- The Royal Mint
- Costume Society
- Leathersellers' Foundation
- Capri Holdings Foundation for the Advancement of Diversity in Fashion
- City & Guilds Foundation
- Army Benevolent Fund
- Royal British Legion
- William Grant Foundation
- Ashley Family Foundation
- British Leather Industry Development Trust
- Cordwainers' Company
- Society of Scribes & Illuminators
- International Guild of Knot Tyers
- Newby Trust
- Sussex Heritage Trust
- Golsoncott Foundation
- D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
- Anthony and Elizabeth Mellows Charitable Settlement
- Company of Arts Scholars
- Arts Society
- Principality Future Generations Fund
- DCA Consulting, Kendrick Hobbs, Soane Britain, Malcolm and Rosalind Gammie, Jennifer Chen

Awards

- Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation
- King Charles III Charitable Fund
- Marsh Charitable Trust
- The Royal Mint
- Axminster Tools
- Costume Society
- Leathersellers' Foundation
- British Leather Industry Development Trust
- English Heritage
- Broderers' Company
- Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust
- Silverlining Furniture, House of Sonnaz, Rose Uniacke, Sims Hilditch, Lucy and Laurence Butcher, Patricia Lovett MBE

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