



Green Wood and Coppice Crafts on the HCA Red List of Endangered Crafts

Workshop with Mary Lewis, Endangered Crafts Officer with the Heritage Crafts Association, 21st Jan 2021, 7pm

This research and survey is being run in partnership with the [Heritage Crafts Association \(HCA\)](#), Small Woods and the National Coppice Federation.

This workshop will focus on the challenges and opportunities facing green wood and coppice crafts.

The Heritage Crafts Association welcomes feedback and input to the 2021 Red List of Endangered Crafts. Please let us know if there is a craft that you are concerned about or about challenges that are facing traditional craft skills.

These are the crafts that currently feature on the Red List of Endangered Crafts.

Critically Endangered

- *Oak swill basket making*
- *Oak bark tanning*
- *Clog making (hand carved soles)*
- *Devon stave basket making*
- *Basketwork furniture making*
- *Withy pot making*
- *Hazel spale basket making (due to be added in 2021)*

Endangered

- *Broom making (besoms)*
- *Chair seating*
- *Coopering (beer)*
- *Coracle making*
- *Hurdle making*
- *Pole lathe bowl turning*
- *Rake making*
- *Trug making*
- *Wheelwrighting*

Currently viable

- *Coppice working*
- *Charcoal burning*
- *Bowyery*
- *Hedgelaying*
- *Pole lathe turning*



- *Wood carving*

The research currently being carried out has also identified the following areas that may be at risk.

- Spar making
- Tent peg making
- Tool making – specifically Billhook making as many coppice workers have commented that modern billhooks are inferior to the older ones.

In addition to this, there are challenges facing the green wood and coppice crafts sector:

- Sourcing materials – Ash die back was cited as a specific threat, other crafts people have reported difficulties in sourcing materials such as cricket bat willow.
- Ageing skilled workforce
- Loss of craft skills
- Market challenges
- Small business challenges
- Training
- Recruitment
- Technology – both as an opportunity and a threat

Before the workshop, we need ten minutes of your time to provide current data for the [HCA Red List of Endangered Crafts 2021](#).

If you are a maker of green wood or coppice crafts, professional or amateur, then we would like to hear from you.

Complete the survey here. <https://forms.gle/xHeVxcvKSvofF8Xf6>

A bit of background....

The HCA Red List of Endangered Crafts ranks traditional crafts by the likelihood that they will survive to the next generation, based on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding principles.

The 2019 Red List features 212 crafts that include everything from arrowsmithing to wheelwrighting. It found that:

- 4 crafts were *extinct*
- 36 crafts are *critically endangered*
- 71 crafts are *endangered*
- 102 crafts are deemed *currently viable*. Despite this classification, these crafts are not risk-free or without issues and will continue to be monitored.

Crafts that are categorised as endangered or critically endangered have very few practitioners remaining, and there is significant risk that the skills will not be passed on to the next generation.



Heritage Crafts Association

Founded in 2009, The Heritage Crafts Association is 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.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

In 2003, UNESCO adopted a Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, including 'traditional craftsmanship'. It stated:

“Any efforts to safeguard traditional craftsmanship must focus not on preserving craft objects – no matter how beautiful, precious, rare or important they might be – but on creating conditions that will encourage artisans to continue to produce crafts of all kinds, and to transmit their skills and knowledge to others.”

178 countries from Albania and Algeria to Zambia and Zimbabwe have signed up to the convention, effectively making Intangible Cultural Heritage part of their cultural policy. Unfortunately, the UK is not one of them.

The Heritage Crafts Association supports the 2003 UNESCO Convention and its goal of safeguarding traditional craftsmanship by supporting the continuing transmission of knowledge and skills associated with traditional artisanship to help ensure that crafts continue to be practised within their communities, providing livelihoods to their makers and reflecting creativity and adaptation.

The Heritage Crafts Association is one of only three UK-wide NGOs recognised by the UNESCO Convention for Intangible Heritage (accredited as an NGO under the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention 2003), and the only one with an explicit focus on craft skills.

For more details please get in touch with Mary Lewis on redlist@heritagecrafts.org.uk