

APPG *for* CRAFT

All-Party Parliamentary Group for Craft

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 17th June 2021 at 2pm on Zoom

Attending

Julia Bennett	Crafts Council	Lisa Hammond MBE	Adopt-a-Potter & Clay College
Daniel Carpenter	Heritage Crafts Association	Sir John Hayes CBE	Chair
Judy Cobham-Lowe	Worshipful Co of Goldsmiths	Patricia Lovett MBE	Secretary
Susan Coles	NSEAD / Art Educator	Carole Milner MBE	Former executive UK National Commission for UNESCO
Prue Cooper	Potter	David Mortlock	Worshipful Co of Wheelwrights
Dr Kelly Cordes	Heritage Craft & Small Museums	Ann Packard	RSA
Mary Crabb	Basketmaker & Teacher	Rajni Patel	Founder, Old Skills, New Ways
Brian Crossley	Chair caner	Andrew Petherick	Artichoke
Dr Harriet Deacon	Coventry University	Paul Playford	Allchurches Trust
Gillian Dye	Lace maker	Judit Seymour	Consultant
Dr Chrissie Freeth	Tapestry Weaver	Rebecca Struthers	Watchmaker
Baroness Garden	House of Lords	Ann Whittall	National Wool Museum
Kai Holmes	Subject Leader, Kings of Wessex Academy		

- Welcome and Introductions:* Sir John Hayes welcomed the members of the APPG and guest speakers.
- Apologies for absence:* Apologies for absence had been received from: Deirdre Brock MP, Lord Cormack, the Earl of Clancarty, James Grierson, Greta Bertram, Derek Stimpson, Wendy Shorter-Blake, Katy Bevan, Michael Osbaldeston.
- Update on DCMS and Intangible Cultural Heritage:* Patricia Lovett gave an update on progress to encourage the government to ratify the UNESCO Convention on ICH. She has a meeting with Oliver Dowden's SPAD on Friday 18th June and Sir John Hayes has a meeting with Oliver Dowden the following week when the situation should be clearer.
The EEC and UK Assay Marks: Judy Cobham-Lowe raised the problem of the EEC not recognising UK Assay Marks post-Brexit at the APPG for Craft AGM in January. Sir John Hayes pursued this on behalf of the APPG and has had meetings with relevant government ministers. It was also featured in the Sunday Telegraph.
To consider the letter to be sent on behalf of the APPG for Craft to Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence on the decision of the Ministry of Defence to buy sporrans for the Royal Regiment of Scotland from Pakistan and not from UK sporrans makers. As sporrans making was identified by the Heritage Crafts Association's Red List of Endangered Crafts, this did not seem like a very patriotic

decision. It was agreed that Sir John Hayes would send the letter as circulated.

4. *The Artichoke School of Furniture: Andrew Petherick, Director of Artichoke and Kai Holmes, Kings of Wessex Academy*

Andrew explained that Artichoke is based in Somerset, was set up in 1992 and now has a team of 50. They work on houses all over the world using traditional skills and materials and build to last. They use many aspects of British craftsmanship and designers, engineers, machinists, French polishers etc. He noted that the number of entries for Design and Technology qualifications had dropped by two-thirds and so the company now work with the Kings of Wessex Academy to take small groups of pupils, organised as school trips so the youngsters are accompanied by teachers to take part in the project. This has these objectives: giving experience, demystifying, inspiring, teaching, assisting and advising, and creating a model which is cost-effective and supportive of the school. During 2 hours each week over 6 weeks students learn skills to make a wooden puzzle, at the end of which they get a certificate and a book on craft. They trialled with 4 and want to increase to 12.

Kai Holmes enjoys silversmithing in his spare time and explained that there is a focus on computer aided design (CAD) in the school, but the experience at Artichoke gives pupils a chance to experience craft, use hand tools, see a working business in action, talk to professionals and get work experience. All this is really invaluable, and in addition the school benefits from the offcuts of wood!

Questions and points: JH – could this fit into the apprenticeship system with a qualification? There is prejudice in schools against non-academic learning. AP – Not at this stage. At Artichoke people come from different backgrounds, not necessarily academic. Artichoke helps to spark passions for those for whom an academic education isn't the best.

JB – Are there any links with FE? AP – Not at the moment.

5. *The Forces in Translation Project: Mary Crabb, basketmaker, artist and teacher*

Mary Crabb has a varied teaching background and believes that the experiences shape who you are and your creativity. She qualified as a teacher in 1993 just as the Science and Maths curriculum was becoming narrower. After teaching in a primary school, she then worked in the education department of a Museum, but is now a basketmaker. She teaches mostly adults and believes that there is a strong link between basketmaking and mathematics. Mary explained the 'Forces in Transition' project where a group of makers and academics had funding to meet, make, share and teach. This started in March 2020 with one meeting but others have been held online. They aim to take the results of their collaborations to an audience to pass on to that group. She believes that craft education offers the experience of working with hands and learning by doing. Not everyone learns by aural instruction or from books,

some need to do.

Questions and points: JH – noted the relationship between maths and making baskets and the link to anthropology.

PL – asked if there were plans to take this into schools? MC – not until there was funding.

GD – noted the similarities with her experience of lace making

Baroness Garden then took the Chair.

6. *Old Skills, New Ways: Raj Patel, Founder*

Raj Patel began by showing a film of children learning outside in the open air.

Working with 25 young people the experience was calm, at a pace and orderly.

It was easier to 'disguise' actual learning when outside. In 2017 Raj received a Churchill Fellowship to travel to India and Japan to see where new, innovative and traditional can combine and then applied to schools, promoting inclusive ways of working. Working in the woods gave school age children a link to life, craft and design outside the classroom, thus effecting change within a narrow school curriculum. The projects mean that children develop their skillsets and extend them. Over the last 3 years the inclusive programme has encouraged creativity and a knowledge of nature, reduced stress, enhanced well-being and controlled behaviour. The benefits of a craft-based approach has led to changes in schools with one teacher using it to develop the curriculum in a number of schools for which she had responsibility.

Questions and points: Baroness Garden – some children were very small and the tools they used looked lethal. Was this OK? Raj – only blunt tools are lethal. Encouraging children to use these hand tools gives them confidence. DC – it is important for children to manage risk for themselves, often not allowed in a structured school environment.

PL – sharp tools are crucial in all crafts and when their use is taught properly, far safer than blunt or plastic ones.

RP – it is important to develop a progression of skills through crafts.

AP – can we develop a cross fertilisation of crafts – how can crafts be introduced at grass roots level to 16–17 year-olds? We should look at developing a package for young people.

7. *AOB: Ann Packard* – are craft skills still taught to uniformed organisations as they used to be. It was confirmed that they were.

Baroness Garden thanked all speakers for a most interesting meeting.