

creative
& cultural
skills



Mapping Heritage Craft: Focus Group Briefing Paper

Prepared by TBR's Creative & Cultural Team working with Pomegranate
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pomegranate



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1. Introduction

This research paper provides a written summary of two separate focus group workshops held in February 2013 to discuss the publication of *Mapping Heritage Craft*, and potential actions which could take place in order to address some of the issues arising from the findings and data within the report.

1.1 Aim of the focus group sessions and report

The aim of these focus groups meetings and this report is to build an understanding of the issues and challenges presented by the *Mapping Heritage Craft* evidence report. The groups primarily focused on the issues of skills, training and education for the existing workforce and entrants to the sector (whether those are young people or second careerists).

There is no single set of solutions for addressing issues within Heritage Crafts, due to the variety of individual roles and areas that the sector intersects with. Nevertheless, this work goes some way towards highlighting areas which cluster together in terms of potential solutions, whether those are individual areas of potential change or larger, longer term solutions to the problems facing the sector.

1.2 Methodology

In order to provide insight into the primarily quantitative work conducted in *Mapping Heritage Craft*, two focus groups were held, bringing together a range of people with different points of view from across the sector.

Each session followed the same agenda built around answering three questions:

1. What are the key challenges for the future development of Heritage Craft skills and knowledge?
2. What actions could be taken to remove/negotiate/alleviate these challenges?
3. How, realistically, could these actions be implemented moving forward?

As noted above, there is unlikely to be one single set of solutions for addressing all of the issues across Heritage Craft. Therefore, the primary aim of the focus groups was to discuss actions to address challenges facing the sector and identify a set of feasible recommendations that would support their delivery, where possible drawing on examples of existing best practice.

1.2.1 Focus group agenda

Each group followed the same agenda, which was as follows:

Part one

Objective: Agree a shortlist of key challenges facing the Heritage Craft sector.

Key question(s): What are the key challenges for the future development of Heritage Craft skills and knowledge?

- Do they apply across the sector?
- Who are they most relevant to?
- Which are the most pressing to address?

At the end of this session, participants were given five votes and asked to vote for which issues they felt were most important. A maximum of two votes could be given to any one issue.

Part two

Objectives: To suggest actions that would address the challenges, drawing specifically on examples of existing best practice where possible and to identify a set of feasible recommendations that could support the implementation of the actions.

Key question(s): What actions could be taken to remove/negotiate/alleviate these challenges?

- Are there examples of existing best practice that could be adopted more broadly?
- What risks/issues might there be to consider related to these actions?

How, realistically, could these actions be implemented moving forward?

- Are there any straightforward 'quick wins' that could be taken forward quickly?
- Is there scope for adapting existing provision/infrastructure?
- Where is there potential to use existing funding streams?

1.3 Participants

The following tables list the participants at each session:

Table 1: Participants at session one

Organisation	Name
The Heritage Crafts Association	Greta Bertram
craft&design magazine	Angie Boyer
Heritage Skills HUB	Cathie Clarke
British Artist Blacksmiths Association	Bill Cordaroy
Swansea School of Glass	Vanessa Cutler
Art Workers Guild	Monica Grose-Hodge
Royal School of Needlework	Gill Holdsworth
Centre for Conservation and Making, West Dean College	Rosemary Marley
Wooden Boatbuilders' Trade Association	Nick Newland
British Horological Institute	David Poole
The Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers (AMUSF)	Richard Ranklin
Heritage Lottery Fund	Jo Reilly

The Devon Guild of Craftsmen	Erica Steer
The Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights	David Viner

Table 2: Participants at session two

Organisation	Name
Administrator at Woodnet (Plumpton College)	Sarah Blackford
The Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers (AMUSF)	Bert Chapman
The Memorial Arts Charity	Harriet Frazer
The Crafts Council	Rosy Greenlees
CITB Construction Skills	Karen Hazelden
Cabinet Maker and Furniture Designer	Peter Kuh
Lantra	Nanette Lane
Creative & Cultural Skills	Paul Marijetic
The Institute of Historic Building Conservation	David McDonald
The Radcliffe Trust	Carole Milner
The Prince's Foundation for Building Communities	Edith Platten
British Artist Blacksmiths Association	Steve Rook
British Woodcarvers Association	Roger Tims

1.4 Structure of this document

This research note provides a summary of the discussions held at two focus groups on Heritage Craft. The findings of each focus group are presented separately, although an initial summary ties together the five most important priorities identified within the groups. Each section summarises:

- **Key challenges for the sector:** the challenges for Heritage Craft noted by the participants in the session. These are arranged in order of priority as per TBR's interpretation of the research outcomes. The number of votes each challenge received is also shown.
- **Actions and recommendations:** the detailed actions and recommendations suggested by the participants in relation to the key challenges selected for more detailed discussion.
- **Notes from facilitators:** the session facilitators have made a number of suggestions and interpretations based on the issues raised. These are noted separately to participant comments in order to maintain a division between participant and researcher opinions.
- **Best practice examples:** a list of initiatives and programmes currently being run, put forward by the focus group participants.

2. Summary of key challenges identified by participants

The two focus groups were able to cite issues for the sector independently from each other, but a number of challenges clearly emerged as more important than others, across both groups. These were:

Lack of clear entry routes (for young people and second careerists)

There is a myriad of entry routes into the various disciplines within Heritage Craft, which can often cause confusion amongst entrants, businesses and individual craftspeople looking to take on young people and second careerists. The current formal apprenticeship system still makes it extremely difficult for a self-employed designer-maker to take on an apprentice. Furthermore, funding is routed to training providers, rather than the craftsperson/business taking on the apprentice, making it difficult to take on the costs of a learner. There are individual routes for different craft disciplines, as exemplified in many of the examples of best practice, but it is often difficult to see the commonalities across these pathways into the sector.

Low earnings

The issue of low earnings within the Heritage Craft sector is a central problem to the lack of available entry routes, the inability of craftspeople to take on inexperienced learners and a lack of interest in craft from young people. Many craftspeople earn very small amounts of money, which means that their businesses do not have the capacity to take on and train people coming into the sector. Furthermore, young people (and their parents and mentors) are potentially put off from entering the sector due to not seeing craft as a means to creating a sustainable career.

Lack of national co-ordination

The majority of focus group respondents felt that there was a lack of unity within the sector, and an inability to join up often successful local initiatives at a national level. There was also a view amongst the focus group attendants that if there was a 'voice' for Heritage Crafts (as there is for contemporary crafts), resources would become harnessed in a stronger manner and it would be easier to draw funding into the sector.

Poor recognition of the value of craft

There was widespread acceptance across both focus groups that craft was not celebrated and appreciated enough by wider society and did not enjoy exposure within the mainstream media, which has led to a misunderstanding as to what craft education and careers entail. The diversity of craft practice is not generally accepted in the public sphere, which has also led it to become a poor career option for young people, with many parents trying to steer their children away from what is seen as low skilled, low paying work, rather than an expert and highly specific career.

Cost implications of training

It was widely asserted within the groups that the usual length of time it took an amateur craftsperson to become expert in their area (and so become a 'master') was approximately five years. However, with craftspeople on average not earning large amounts from their trade, supporting people to learn who might not become productive in the workplace for a number of years has been seen to represent a serious challenge for the sector. Funding for formal modern apprenticeships (many groups offer informal apprenticeships which do not lead to formal qualifications) is also currently routed through to colleges and training providers, which means that there is not a wage supplement for businesses or craftspeople that are able to take on a trainee.

3. Session one

3.1 Key challenges for the sector

The following is a list of the challenges for the Heritage Craft sector noted in this group. The order of the bullet points reflects the order in which TBR/Pomegranate would place the challenges (with the first bullet point identifying the largest challenge), based on an understanding of the research and interpretation of participants' viewpoints. The numbers quoted in brackets e.g. (4) are the number of votes a challenge received from focus group participants.

- Lack of clear entry routes (for young people and older, second careerists) (7)
 - Skills are not developed effectively at school (6)
 - Teachers' skills are often inadequate
 - Business skills are not developed in tandem with technical skills (2)
 - Desire to recruit fully trained people (2)
- Low earnings (8)
 - This compounds the issue of entry for both young people and second careerists
- School infrastructure (1)
 - Lack of careers information, advice and guidance for the breadth of the sector (3)
 - Competition for students between institutions which is driven by the availability of funding
- Market for craft and the perceived value of craft (4)
 - There is a fear amongst craft makers that they might begin to train their direct competition.
 - Getting people to access the international market and export their products and services
- Engagement with modern technology (4)
 - To support the production of items and business processes (marketing/sales)
 - Missed opportunity of enabling practitioners to be innovative in blending old and new approaches
- Enterprise development infrastructure in the UK (1)
 - Too focused on services, doesn't 'get' craft
- Lack of celebration of craft skills, and a lack of prestige for the sector (8)
 - Limited opportunities to engage, limited exposure to craft
 - A lack of ambassadors for craft
- Challenges surrounding providing training given the diversity of different crafts
- Shortage of training providers and facilities for training (5)
- Lack of national co-ordination in terms of information sharing and co-ordinating funding. (6)

To some extent, entry routes, low earnings and school infrastructure could be seen to be interlinked. However, there is strong recognition that young people and second careerists face different challenges and needs, and there is a risk that second careerist action becomes 'invisible' if grouped with young people.

3.2 Actions and recommendations

The second part of the focus group centred on a short list of key challenges. Those reviewed in detail by the group were:

- Entry routes
- Skills at school
- Low earnings
- National coordination
- Engagement with digital technology

3.2.1 Entry routes

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve:

- A more flexible apprenticeship scheme, whereby money would be routed directly to the master craftsperson conducting the training.
- Collaborative/shared apprenticeships would reduce the burden on one business. Guilds and livery companies in particular could examine whether this type of system could work effectively for their specific area of craft.
- Subsidies could be provided to create workspaces for new starters within the sector

More difficult and longer to achieve:

- Low interest loans to support training for programmes other than university degrees
- Subsidies could be provided for workspaces willing to be opened for specific use in training and development
- Work could be done to raise the public profile of craft, thus tackling the mind-set of the general public in relation to craft careers.
- Training schemes could be run by craftspeople outside of the workshop

3.2.2 Challenge: Skills at school

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve:

- Craft ambassadors for schools/regions
- Recognise the need for a slightly different focus in relation to craft education at secondary/further education and primary level.
- Visits and talks in schools (from peers and/or practitioners depending on age) are an important method of increasing awareness amongst young people, careers advisors and teachers
- Provide more opportunities for work experience
- Practical exposure to the sector is increasingly important, especially for years 7 and 8 (i.e. pre-GCSE to support exposure to craft related subjects prior to GCSE choice)
- Careers advice (for pupils, parents/carers and schools) should include Heritage Craft

More difficult and longer to achieve:

- Attempt to put craft skills development into changes to the national curriculum. This requires sustained advocacy and lobbying from the sector

- Young people's aptitude in craft skills needs to be gauged and developed from an early age, rather than from sixteen years old

3.2.3 Challenge: Low earnings

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve:

- Supporting people in entering the sector to be more aspirational in terms of their earning potential and access to wider markets (national/international)
- Use digital technology more effectively, increasing exposure through better sales and marketing, but also productivity within businesses
- Low earnings are also linked to increasing the wider appreciation for craft. This could come about through bringing craft to the high street through exhibitions and partnerships with shops, and through investment and sponsorship from private sector businesses

More difficult and longer to achieve:

- Tax incentives for heritage makers and businesses, perhaps related to research & development
- Exhibitions displaying UK Heritage Crafts could be used in order to raise prestige and the value (and therefore price) of craft products. Increased work could also be done to broker exhibitions in large galleries to this effect

3.2.4 Challenge: National coordination

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve:

- Role of key organisations such as The Crafts Council, Arts Council England, the Design Council, English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) needs to be clarified in terms of heritage support

More difficult and longer to achieve:

- An over-arching body which is sustainably funded could provide a clear voice for the sector.
- Philanthropic programmes should share good practice across the whole sector, leading to larger programmes of work.
- A series of awards could help to promote the sector and raise its profile more generally

3.2.5 Engagement with digital technology

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve:

- Expanding the market through positive images of people working in crafts and the products/services themselves
- More craft businesses could use digital technology in promoting their work, for example through professional business websites

More difficult and longer to achieve:

- Design CAD - 3D etc. can be linked to crafts specifically in schools - young people can bring a range of skills to add to traditional techniques

3.3 Notes from facilitators

The following notes are points for consideration from the facilitators.

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- **Funding limitations to take good practice nationwide:** It is often difficult to get funding for a nationwide project. There is perhaps an initiative to be developed around working with existing funders to specifically fund some national projects.
- **Engaging existing organisations:** A number of recommendations/actions are opportunities for existing organisations (e.g. HLF, The Crafts Council, English Heritage, National Trust) to come together to deliver something or simply share more information about what they do and can offer. There are also likely to be lessons to learn from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The sector might look at what the Music and Dance manifestos have achieved for those sectors or a model like Heritage Alliance.
- **Difficulty in identifying apprenticeship opportunities:** One guild tried to put together an apprenticeship database, but found this very difficult to do. Creative Choices or a similar careers website could act as a single point of information on what Heritage Craft training and education is available in the UK, including formal and informal apprenticeships.
- **Different operating models across guilds and associations:** Review the operating models of guilds/associations that are perceived to be successfully delivering training and try to provide some guidelines and support for the others on best practice.
- **Attracting private sector investment:** Heritage Skills HUB attracts sponsorship from private sector organisations. Key bodies within the sector could use data from *Mapping Heritage Craft* to identify companies operating across the sector and seek to leverage funding.
- **Showcasing how digital technology can be used:** Case studies and demonstrations of how and why Heritage Craft businesses are using digital technology could be used to highlight the various gains in terms of improving productivity, and innovation in design and making, in addition to sales and marketing processes.
- **Entry routes for most young people are limited:** There are a range of problems related to actually funding training. Student loans are applicable for higher education, but not so for someone doing an Apprenticeship. Even though Apprenticeships are paid, the minimum wage for them is set at a lower rate in their first year and for those under 19 (in 2012 - £2.65 per hour).. The government's new 24+ Advanced Learning Loan could be explored here.

More difficult and longer to achieve

- **Tackling the mind-set with regard to craft:** This is an overarching action, threaded through the majority of actions/recommendations from both sessions. People wanted a large-scale PR exercise, but the major issue is who would be the driving force of this.
- **Lack of crafts learning in education:** Re-integration of the word 'craft' in the curriculum and specific teaching of hand skills using hand tools at primary school, progressing through the system.
- **Young people are not necessarily shown the skills:** Work with guilds and those on undergraduate and post-graduate courses to go into schools (at all levels/ages) to do demonstrations and exhibitions. This would also link to the issue raised in the second session about practitioners being concerned that they don't have the skills to train young people. If an element of teaching the craft was integrated in degree programmes (and other routes) then people would develop these teaching skills too.
- **Older people are more attracted to industry as they have financial security, but hobbyist roles are not always converted into businesses:** There is a need to be able to effectively delineate between genuine second careerists and hobbyists. It can be difficult for guilds to understand the motivation of second careerists and cater for them effectively.
- **General lack of information available regarding Heritage Craft:** There is no central resource where a consumer looking to potentially buy Heritage Craft products or services could visit one website or centralised resource.
- **Dissonance between protectionism and sharing skills:** There is an element of protectionism which conflicts with the desire for skills not to die out. Makers are to some extent concerned about sharing a small local market with new craftspeople.
- **Mismatch in enterprise development culture:** There is sometimes a lack of understanding from an enterprise development perspective that craft businesses can sell services instead of products. As such, new business is about getting a commission – rather than having units to sell.
- **Lobbying for craft needs to happen at a higher level:** The focus should also be on craft skills as a whole, regardless of the nature of the application of that skill.
- **Public value campaign:** Having the right ambassador and promoting the sector is important; in particular reaching people through media promotion and TV would provide a needed boost for the sector.

3.4 Best practice examples

The following table summarises the best practice examples noted by participants at this session:

Example
<p>The Worshipful Company of Glaziers and Painters of Glass recently attended <i>World Skills</i>, which was effective in showcasing UK skills to a large audience. In particular, the element of competition within the event suits craft skills.</p> <p>The Glaziers offer student placements and the award of excellence for one individual per year, which gives a stained glass graduate access to a 40 week training course, along with funding for subsistence for the award winner.</p>
<p>Learning bursaries can be a good way to give <i>people</i> an introduction into craft practice. An example of this is West Dean College, which offers a variety of courses for makers, designers and artists.</p>
<p>The Heritage Lottery Fund has funded, and continues to fund, major interventions into Heritage Craft. In particular, Skills for the Future funding has delivered funding for a diverse range of schemes to enable Heritage Craft skills to be transferred between people.</p>
<p>The Prince's Foundation has an initiative called Building Skill in Craft, which provides an 8 month course for those looking to make the leap from having a basic knowledge of craft skills to becoming a master craftsperson.</p>
<p>Exposure for craft does not just have to come from national initiatives. Made in the Middle is a touring exhibition of the Midlands, launched by Craftspace. It also includes a craft mentoring scheme.</p>
<p>The British Artist Blacksmiths Association (BABA) has worked to provide a number of entry routes into the sector. There is now an Edexcel qualification in Blacksmithing and Metalworking. BABA members also often offer work experience once learners have some college experience, so that they are safe within the working environment.</p>
<p>The Heritage Skills Hub is an online network of craftspeople that also provides a directory of training. The Hub receives private sector funding, and acts as an important facility to raise awareness of the importance of traditional building skills and materials.</p>
<p>Yorkshire Artspace run mentoring programmes for silversmiths and are also able to share equipment across groups of learners, rather than allowing only one person to use the facilities and tools.</p>

The [Royal School of Needlework](#) runs a number of training courses which it funds in a sustainable manner. The school has developed a worldwide reputation due to the strength of its training provision.

There is an increased need to harness digital technology. In boat building, digital design and imaging technology can enable a faster craft making process, without compromising the individual making process. Needlework is another area where digital technology can be used in a number of areas, for example to match colours.

There are individual initiatives available to ensure that craft skills are passed on. The [Adopt a Potter](#) scheme aims to secure the future of pottery by funding apprenticeships with individual masters, offering yearly stipends to the apprentice. The model relies on charitable donations in order to fund three apprentices per year.

[The Crafts Council](#) is currently running a scheme whereby Members of Parliament select a craft maker of the month, therefore lending them exposure. While this has currently been aimed at contemporary craft, this could be expanded into heritage.

Artists and craft makers who take part in residency schemes could work more closely with young people and their teachers. For example the [Arts in Action](#) scheme in Swansea lets artists showcase careers in art, craft and design to give parents, teachers and young people more knowledge about what these areas of work entail.

The [Craft Skills Awards](#), now in its first completed year, could become a major event to publicise the practice of craft making.

Craft makers could be shown more prominently in the public sphere. Fortnum and Mason had a range of makers in store in 2011, while in Japan department stores have had two week residencies by craft makers.

4. Session two

4.1 Key challenges for the sector

The following is a list of the challenges for the Heritage Craft sector noted in this group. The order of the bullet points reflects the order in which TBR/Pomegranate would place the challenges (with the first bullet point identifying the largest challenge), based on an understanding of the research and interpretation of participant's viewpoints. The numbers quoted in brackets e.g. (4) are the number of votes a challenge received from focus group participants.

- Entry routes (10)
 - The cost of training is prohibitive to both prospective learners and craftspeople and businesses.
 - The length of apprenticeships can prove difficult for people entering the sector - in order to become expert in an area of craft it is generally accepted that 3-6 years of training is required.
 - Flexible delivery models are needed to support young people in training
- School/education infrastructure and access to/inclusion of craft
 - It was felt that a proper introduction to craft is not given before the age of sixteen. (2)
 - Limited careers information, advice and guidance is available for young people. (2)
 - Teachers' skills are often inadequate to teach particular areas of craft.
 - The cost of machinery is often prohibitive and health & safety requirements are often problematic.
- There is an insufficient balance between the development of technical and business skills. (6)
- Self-employment within the sector has led to a lack of profitable business models, poor entrepreneurial skills and limited links between businesses and the education sector. (1)
- Cost implications of training (in terms of time and money) (9)
 - Practitioner concern over their ability to train people
 - Opportunities to share experience and skills are limited, and this also requires co-ordination which is time consuming.
 - It takes a significant amount of time before learners become productive within the workforce.
- The complexity of qualifications available to people (4)
 - High level of change across the different frameworks
 - Accreditation often brings constraints
 - Lack of knowledge on who the awarding bodies are within the sector
- Poor recognition of the value of craft at many levels across school, government and amongst the general public (8)
- Lack of clarity of skills available and the businesses operating in an area/across the UK (4)
- The lack of a quality mark for craft businesses means that consumers do not necessarily know who they are buying from. (2)
- Small numbers of trainees make qualification development difficult. (1)
- The availability of funding for programmes of engagement is an on-going issue, compounded by the fact that there is always a risk of people dropping out of programmes. (5)

4.2 Actions & recommendations

The second part of the focus group centred on a shortlist of key challenges. Those reviewed in detail in this group were:

- Entry routes
- Funding for engagement
- Balance of technical and business skills
- Cost implications of training
- Recognition of craft

4.2.1 Entry routes

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- Offering careers information, advice and guidance from peers and practitioners
- Use mentors from within the sector more effectively to help teach young people
- Provide examples to school age children and people leaving school from real role models from within the sector
- Integrate business skills in all training related to craft
- Promote more taster days and experiences that link to the Heritage Craft sector

More difficult and longer to achieve

- Open up training opportunities and entry support for career changers and older entrants as well as young people, developing clear mechanisms to support people switching careers
- Creating support structures at the point of leaving education to aid transition into work and self-employment

4.2.2 Challenge: Funding for engagement

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- Information for employers could seek to clarify on what is funded and who will fund initiatives. A Heritage Craft Funders Network exists but more information could potentially be shared through this

More difficult and longer to achieve

- Funding attached to trainees – it would be beneficial to front-load funding for apprentices (either formal or informal) which diminishes as they acquire experience and can be productive within the workshop
- Funding attached to trainers – this could go to groups with accredited training programmes, which might need to be of a certain size with minimum turnover requirements

4.2.3 Balance of technical and business skills

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- Sharing good practice across the sector - seminars, webinars and online training tools could be harnessed more effectively
- Leverage existing resources from The Crafts Council and Arts Council England (and other similar organisations in the devolved nations)

More difficult and longer to achieve

- Craft and funding organisations working in collaboration to promote a balanced skill set that allows the industry to grow, this might need one lead organisation in order to work
- An online portal of information for the sector related to business growth and skills

4.2.4 Cost implications of training

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- Publicising good models for employers and individuals - case studies through craft associations, websites, livery companies, colleges and others can help to spread knowledge.
- More information regarding training delivery models and access to training is needed in the public sphere

More difficult and longer to achieve

- Both employers and training providers need to understand the benefits of investing in training for the sector
- Group Training Associations can potentially co-ordinate apprenticeship activities, however greater investigation into this is required

4.2.5 Recognition of craft

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- Greater exposure and public engagement through exhibitions, IT, access and participation
- Demonstrations of crafts over longer periods of time are significant to embed knowledge about these careers
- More collaboration between practitioners would help to boost recognition
- Using technology to market both products and the craftspeople that make them

More difficult and longer to achieve

- Craft organisations/disciplines uniting to provide a stronger and more unified sector with their own voice
- The creation of a lead body with overriding authority and national coordination. This would improve information regarding the different roles of The Crafts Council, The Heritage Crafts Association, Creative & Cultural Skills and others.
- The influence of the city could be useful - aldermen/livery companies/local authorities could all get involved in helping to raise awareness about the sector

4.3 Notes from facilitators

The following notes are points for consideration from the facilitators.

- **Entry routes:** Proposed actions to address challenges were almost exclusively concerned with young people and related to good careers advice exposure to crafts people in schools. Much of the focus was on raising profile through taster sessions. Given the dominant concern with young people, no one considered it more significant to suggest whether effort should be directed at second careerists.

More realistic and possibly quicker to achieve

- **Mapping out qualifications for the sector:** The maze of qualifications currently available is difficult for people interested in the sector to understand. A project could be run to map out and bring together opportunities in Heritage Craft.
- **Recognise different motivations:** School age learners and second careerists have different motivations and therefore information and guidance needs to vary for these audiences. Ensuring that a variety of case study material is available in order for all types of entrants to find it useful would be an initial step here. This also needs to include material for the parents and carers of young people looking to get into craft.

More difficult and longer to achieve

- **Funding for non-accredited frameworks:** where the respected frameworks for apprenticeships remain unaccredited this is always going to create an issue in terms of funding, because public money can only fund participation in an accredited course. There is therefore work to be done with awarding bodies to ensure that craft apprenticeship frameworks are fit for purpose

Sharing good practice across the sector: This could take place in a variety of ways, for example through seminars, webinars and the internet.

- **The definition of Heritage Craft:** Boundaries can often be unclear within the sector, particularly in relation to the funding offered to some areas of the sector and not others. There may be work to be done to continue to tighten the definition of Heritage Craft, or to simply focus on craft skills while removing the perceived split between heritage and contemporary craft.

4.4 Best practice examples

The following table summarises the best practice examples noted by participants at this session.

Example
<p>Individual livery companies and guilds can build localised relationships with schools, in order to boost an awareness and interest in craft. The Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers have been successful in building relationships with local schools and developing opportunities to engage with young people.</p> <p>The Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers have produced a curriculum and courses that run in six places across the country. Allied to this, they also allow traditional upholsterers to use their logo and branding on courses and training that they have not developed, in order to boost the recognition of courses.</p>
<p>Informal, non-accredited 'apprenticeship' relationships are still vital for the sector. Memorial Arts provide funding for apprenticeships, which allow the master to have the freedom to teach in the manner of their choosing, leading to a less constrained learning environment.</p> <p>There is potential to use Memorial Arts gallery space to run a promotional event for apprenticeships in order to increase exposure to alternative education routes.</p>
<p>The cost of training is a significant barrier within the sector, although there are examples of specific areas which have been successful in building up training schemes slowly. The Goldsmiths' Company have been able to tie their apprenticeship scheme to both modern qualifications, enabling them to 'draw in' funding, while also maintaining the traditions of the master-apprentice relationship, which has been running since 1334.</p>
<p>Trade bodies have an important role to play in pushing forward the development of qualifications. The Dry Stone Walling Association have developed accredited qualifications, in conjunction with Lantra Awards, which are now widely recognised and can be provided by colleges and training providers.</p>
<p>There may be the potential to promote and expand new approaches to facilitating businesses and makers taking on apprentices. There may, for example be scope to utilise Group Training Associations within the craft sector, to spread the burden of training across a number of businesses.</p>
<p>The Livery Company Skills Council is doing good work drawing money from the department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). There may be lessons to learn from how this approach has worked.</p>
<p>Information sharing is of increasing importance within the sector. There is a Heritage Craft funding forum twice a year to understand and coordinate funding going into the</p>

sector and outcomes. This information could be more widely disseminated.

The [Crafts Council](#) runs a range of training and CPD courses across the year. These are particularly focused on linking young people to the sector and providing support on business elements as well as advocacy for the sector in schools.

There may be potential to capitalise on larger events where craftspeople can showcase their abilities and trade. In particular, [World Skills](#) is a yearly event which could be harnessed for this purpose by the craft sector.

5. Conclusion

The two focus groups conducted in 2013 suggest that a range of issues are holding the Heritage Craft sector back from potentially reaching a sustainable long term position, particularly in relation to the skills within the sector. A number of these problems are set to remain intractable (particularly in the short term), while others appear to be solvable with a greater degree of co-ordination and effort from stakeholders within this sphere.

Issues related to low wages within the sector and a lack of esteem amongst the general public for Heritage Craft may be difficult to turn over in the short term, although increased publicity for the sector and an interest in less mass-market, high street products may yet spur change in this area. The majority of focus group participants felt that on-going and increased exposure for their areas of activity were vital to the success of the sector.

There are also significant issues regarding entry into the sector, either for young people or second careerists. The current formal apprenticeship system is ill-equipped to route funding to either the employer taking on a young person, or young people who may not be able to subsidise themselves in learning their craft. This is compounded by the fact that it takes 3-6 years to become a master craftsman. Despite this, the best practice examples listed here show a variety of methods in which this has been alleviated, with funding ranging from bursaries, competitions and grants to support specific training programmes. What is lacking however is an overall sense of how these isolated schemes fit together in the support of the sector.

Information sharing is a key theme running through the collective thoughts of the focus groups. There is a sense that no stakeholder is as informed as they should be; potential customers do not know enough about makers and their practices, young people do not know enough about what careers might entail in the sector, and individual craftspeople do not know enough about engaging with either the education or training systems to help them work effectively.

It seems then, that in the short term significant effort could go into consolidating the programmes, initiatives and actions on a local or regional level, before being able to strategise more effectively for the whole sector. Creative & Cultural Skills are currently facilitating the Craft Industry Board with the aim of building on the Craft Skills Advisory Board, set up by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, previously chaired by Skills Minister John Hayes MP. The new Craft Industry Board will be an industry-led group, inclusive of all craft. This will hope to synthesise some of the work conducted by stakeholders within the sector, with the goal of spurring growth across the sector.

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