



NEWS July 2025

From the Acting Chair

It was very heartening to see the level of engagement of our Guilds with the AGWSD AGM in June. Guilds sent delegates and observers in person and on Zoom and contributed with postal votes. The organisation is here to help and support all the associated and affiliated Guilds in their activities that support our shared aims of preserving and developing our crafts and educating ourselves and the public.

Those who joined the meeting via Zoom or in person will know that we had found ourselves in the position of having the key roles of the officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) all standing down by rotation as their time in post had come to an end. Luckily the committee that steers the Association's activity (General Purposes Committee or GPC) had found excellent candidates for the Secretary and Treasurer roles, both of whom were elected, and I was fortunate to be nominated and elected as Vice Chair. However, at the end of the meeting we were without a Chair as no nominations had been received. Some members might have met me as one of the Area Links for the Association and in the subsequent Area Link meetings, the Guilds present asked about how the Association would proceed and also for us to find a way to avoid the unfortunate timing that saw the key roles all vacated at the same time. I have to emphasize that we have been so fortunate that the previous holders of the posts all remain in contact with the AGWSD as they have ongoing support roles for our activities and have been very generous with their time and expertise in helping with the handover of duties - not least the 'nuts and bolts' of signatories on bank accounts and monitoring our ongoing contracts with the professional services we need to use as a registered charity.

At the first meeting of the GPC after the AGM we considered the need for a Chair not only to literally chair the GPC meetings, but also to help and support the network of volunteers who help the Association and the Guilds. I was proposed and elected by the GPC as Acting Chair for the year until the next AGM with Lorna Shannon (AGWSD Newsletter Editor) being proposed and elected as Acting Vice Chair for the same period.

This should help us avoid having all the officers standing down by rotation in 5 years time, as an incoming Chair at the next AGM will still be in post in the year that the other officers hand over their roles.

Of course, this is a question around a few roles while the GPC members who are continuing in their roles are supporting all the activities of the Association and their remarkable dedication is crucial to helping the Association meet its remit.

We are lucky that the Journal Editorial Committee (JEC) is strong and active as they continue to produce the essential publication for weavers, spinners and dyers. The close relationship between the two committees ensures that everything both do is relevant and interesting to members of our Guilds - with the added benefit of being interesting for the wider craft community too.

In the meantime, we have a very exciting few months ahead as those attending Summer School will be coming together in August. Again, this is the culmination of people with similar interests coming together to organise an event that is unique in covering such a wide range of crafts. I'll be there as one of the students so do come and say hello.

We'll also start to look forward to next year when we will have the Conference and the National Exhibition and more information on those will be circulated. We have some volunteers to help organise both events - but some more volunteers for the Conference, which will be in Loughborough, are needed. You don't have to live on the doorstep! As we know - these days we can all contact and meet people from anywhere in the world without leaving the house.

I'll also continue as Area Link for the East and South East Area and will try to drop into the Zoom meetings held by other Area Links in the coming months in case other Guilds have questions for me.

Andrea Easey
Acting Chair, AGWSD

AGWSD Events

Summer School 2025

Summer school is almost upon us! For those of you attending, you will no doubt be busy packing and assembling all your equipment – ready to set off for Musselburgh.

For anyone who will be within striking distance of Queen Margaret University on Saturday 9th August – come along to the Open Day and Trade Fair (free admission) – this will be an opportunity to see all the wonderful work which has been produced during the week – as well as to stock up on essential crafting items from the wide range of traders attending.

National Conference 2026

We are still looking for people to help organise the Conference, in hotel accommodation at Loughborough University, 10th – 12th July. Thank you to the one person who has so far volunteered.

If you feel you could help to research potential speakers, contact them and 'book' them for a slot at Conference please get in touch, as soon as possible, with me at events@wsd.org.uk You would have support in this and be working as part of a small group.

There will also be admin jobs to be done – receiving and confirming bookings from delegates and relaying information to the venue. The jobs can be shared between several people to make them less onerous. None of the jobs requires you to live locally to Loughborough – nor does it preclude you from doing so. Thank you for considering this.

National Exhibition 2026

Plans are under way for the exhibition next year at Weston Park on the Shropshire/Staffordshire border – for the month of October. A theme has been suggested by the organising group and agreed by the GPC at their recent meeting.

The theme will be 'A Festival of Flora and Fauna' - so you can begin to think how you might portray this.

The Open Section will be for individuals to each make a piece of bunting, which we hope Guilds will enter as a combined 'string of bunting' - and then be able to use for Guild displays in the future. The exact measurements and entry requirements will be detailed and sent out to each Guild in the Autumn – this is an early warning, to allow your creative juices to start working!

Sue Collins,
AGWSD Events Coordinator

JEC News

The next issue of The Journal WSD will have the theme of 'Cotton' and be a bumper issue to fit in all the content we have received this time. Assuming the final stages of the production process and the distribution go according to plan, copies should reach their delivery addresses around the end of August. A treat to look forwards to for those returning from Summer School and craving another fix of textile things? I hope so. As one issue goes to print, work steps up a gear on the production of the following one and JEC members are currently finalising the

AGWSD Certificate of Achievement

If you are in the Edinburgh area or at summer school at Queen Margaret University, please visit the Open Day on 9th August to see the CoA assessment exhibition. If you are thinking of undertaking the CoA it will give you an idea of how others have approached self-directed learning. I will be there to talk with anyone interested.

Janet Crowther

Certificate of Achievement Co-ordinator
certificate@wsd.org.uk

Herefordshire Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers: Friendship Day



**We would like to
invite you to join us
for our November
meeting**

Bring along a project you're working on—whether it's spinning, weaving or anything to do with yarn. Enjoy a relaxed space to share ideas, tips, and laughs. And if you don't have a project, just bring yourself and soak in the inspiration.

Don't forget to bring your purse, Wonky Weaver and Hedgehog Equipment will be bringing a selection of goodies for you to purchase
<https://wonkyweaver.com> -- www.hedgehog-equipment.com



**November 15th
10 AM - 4PM**
Stretton Sugwas
Village Hall
HR4 7PT



**Tea, Coffee and
Cake Provided**
Bring a packed lunch

Focus on....Wales and Central

Glamorgan Guild set up a WhatsApp Group for members to come together to take part in this year's Tour de Fleece, which is inspired by and follows the schedule of the Tour de France. Members have enjoyed sharing their work and their progress once the Tour was underway. To include as many members as possible they did not limit participation just to spinning, so there was also knitting and weaving - some using what they had spun during the Tour to start making. Sharing on WhatsApp inspired the members to push themselves a little bit further, much like the athletes involved with the Tour de France! Glamorgan Guild recommend this method to other Guilds, as members with all different levels of experience enjoyed seeing the progress made, it was a fun endeavour for all those taking part.

Images © members of Glamorgan Guild



Several North Shropshire Guild members have also been taking part in the Tour de Fleece again this year - right is just one member's haul after the first week. The Guild generally alternate between a workshop activity and a work evening at their regular monthly meetings - one workshop this year was exploring Nalbinding - with various degrees of success! In August they will be having a talk about natural dyeing. While several members will be attending Summer School in Musselburgh, others will be demonstrating at our local agricultural show in Oswestry - and they plan to spin at two separate venues for the Worldwide Spin in Public Day this year in September. Image © all rights reserved



The Gwynedd Guild has had another busy year, with increasing membership and well attended meetings. The Guild enjoyed talks from members including Pat Webb on 'Sewing With Handwoven Fabric' which was inspiring and full of useful tips. Pat has made coats, jackets, waistcoats, rugs, cushions, table runners and more, from fabric woven on pin looms, peg looms, four shaft and rigid heddle looms and a Saori loom. Members have been enjoying the sight of colourful jars of fibre decorating their sunny windowsills following a popular solar dyeing session with Sarah Key who also delivered a fascinating workshop to help



solve the problem of the lack of pockets in clothing by reusing pieces of fabric, for Victorian Pockets which were further embellished with lace and embroidery. They also enjoyed a finger braiding workshop in July with Lora Alaw. Recent demonstrations by the Guild included Anglesey Vintage Rally, Anglesey Show, Breakwater Park Heritage Fair, Draig Beats Festival at Treborth Botanic Gardens, a Garden Party at Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens, Cemaes Bay Carnival and a new venue for us, Galeri Performing Arts Centre in Caernarfon.

Images © members of Gwynedd Guild

Focus on....Wales and Central, continued



Coventry Guild (www.wsdcoventry.weebly.com) have been out and about and sharing inspiring Guild meetings. Their membership is the highest in living memory! Last year they hired a minibus to get to the National Exhibition in Hay and had a brilliant day, with the group (pictured below) returning with lots of ideas whizzing around on the journey back. Each year they have Liz's challenge. This time it was on the theme of jewellery. The bracelet below was made with recycled metal chain warp and natural dyed yarn. This year they have had an inhouse

workshop giving tips

for knitting better fitting garments and chain plying. Visiting tutors have led workshops including Penny Jane Designs turning 2D into 3D for felt basket designs (see right) and Teresina Roberts on indigo dyeing – to prepare this busy Guild for their natural dye workshop in August.



Images © members of Coventry Guild

Herefordshire Guild have had a busy Spring programme with workshops on plying techniques from Katie Weston of Hilltop Clouds. This was an extremely popular workshop; even the very experienced spinners felt that they had learnt something new. This was followed by a workshop from Jennie O Leary on Batik Dyeing with 'Patterns from the East'. Some incredible pieces came out as a result and members were keen to think of ideas for using their pieces. One was going to incorporate them into a bag and another a textile embroidery piece. On November 15th 2025, Herefordshire Guild will be holding a Friendship Day. All local Guilds will be invited and any other members who wish to come would be warmly welcomed. Wonky Weavers and Hedgehog Equipment will be in attendance.



Llyn Guild's recent friendship day saw a display table of members' work, a corner for visitors to *have a go* and a separate table of member-made items for sale. Children and adults alike were able to try their hand at weaving on looms made from mushroom crates, whilst guild members demonstrated spinning, plying and peg loom weaving. Two members from Gwynedd Guild also brought their spinning wheels and the guild sends a very big thank you to them for adding further interest to the day. A Raffle added to the days' excitement with the prizes being generously donated by the Suppliers and Guild members. Visitors came from local villages, with some from further along the Llyn Peninsular with most saying what a wonderful day they'd had, especially seeing our crafts being maintained

and enjoyed by members new to spinning and weaving.

Thank you to all guilds in the Wales and Central Area who sent in their contributions. Your new Area Link, Amanda Lawrence will be making contact with you in the next few weeks.

Speakers List Update

I write this as we head into our third heatwave of the year and towards what is often a quiet time for the Guilds. Perhaps you use the summer months to review your programme plans for the upcoming year, so it is an ideal opportunity to take a glass of chilled water out into the garden and peruse the Speakers List – either online or printed. If you prefer the latter, please make sure you have the most up-to-date version as things can change month-by-month.

If you have booked a speaker or workshop tutor from the Speaker's List, do share your feedback which can be added to the speaker's entry, to help other Guilds make their choices.

Highlight of the month: Penelope Hemingway

Penelope, and her partner, David, run talks and workshops focusing on the history and folklore of British textiles. Penelope is a qualified teacher (University of Birmingham) and a certified workshop enabler (University of Northern Colorado), so you can be confident you will be learning with a professional teacher who can find your personal learning style, and teach accordingly. David is a qualified Teaching Assistant (York College) and professional Historical Interpreter with many years of experience. The topics they offer can be explored as either talks or workshops – or both! Check the list to see details of the wide range of subjects they cover.



You can access the web-based Speaker's List at <https://www.wsd.org.uk/speakers-list> using your Guild's login. Or if you prefer the print-based/fully searchable PDF version it can still be found, without any password, on the GIH at <https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/contents/speakers-list>. If you have any problems, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

Matty Smith

speakerslist@wsd.org.uk

From Tradition to Modern Concepts

The Highland Guild of Weavers Spinners and Dyers

Exhibition of Work

at WASPS Creative Academy, Midmills Building,
Inverness

Monday 25th to Saturday 30th August 2025

We shall be open to the public from 10am to 4pm
daily with members on hand demonstrating.

Funding of up to £18,000 available for craftspeople

QEST offers three grants to support makers and conservators at various career stages, strengthening the pipeline of talented craft professionals in the UK.

QEST provides funding for education and training, with Scholarships of up to £18,000, Emerging Maker Grants of up to £10,000, and up to £12,000 towards an apprentice's salary.

Deadline: 13 August, 5pm.

Applications are open twice a year, the Spring round will take place 7 January to 11 February 2026.

[Visit gest.org.uk/gestgrants](https://gest.org.uk/gestgrants) to apply

Contact

If you have an item for inclusion in the next monthly newsletter, please send to: newsletter@wsd.org.uk
All news received by 20th of each month will be considered for that month's edition.

If you have an event/exhibition for inclusion in the next issue of The Journal, check page 3 of the Journal for print deadlines and send to: jecdiary@wsd.org.uk If you miss the deadline your copy could still be included in the Diary on the Journal website.

Association Website: <https://www.wsd.org.uk/>

Stuart Groom Memorial Library: library@wsd.org.uk