

UNESCO Living Heritage – DRAFT Submissions by the JMO

As at 14th March 2026

Contact the JMO working group - Any queries, please contact us at ich@thejmo.org

Background

Following the UK's ratification of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2024, communities across the UK have been invited to submit their living heritage to the new inventory. You can find out more information on the website:

<https://livingheritage.unesco.org.uk/>

Expressions of Interest (EOI)

15 Expressions of Interest (EOI) were entered in January 2026 by the JMO (Joint Morris Organisations) on behalf of our memberships:

- Appalachian Step Dancing
- Border Morris Dancing
- Clog Step Dancing (now Step Clog Dancing)
- Cotswold Morris Dancing
- English Country Dancing (being submitted by EFDSS)
- Fools and Beasts (now Fools and Beasts in Mumming)
- Longsword Dancing
- Maypole Dancing
- Molly Dancing
- Mumming and Guising Plays
- North West Morris Dancing
- Plough Morris Dancing
- Rapper Sword Dancing
- Stave Dancing
- Step Dancing (being submitted by Simon Harmer)

Next Steps

The next steps for the JMO are to draft the fuller submissions, and gain Community Consent from our membership. **The deadline for submissions for this first round is 27th March 2026.** Note that this is only the initial window for submissions – further windows for submissions will be open in the future, the next one is planned for mid 2027.

Here is the full list of Expressions of Interest (EOIs) entered to the UK inventory from everywhere: <https://livingheritage.unesco.org.uk/get-involved/elements>. Where there are duplicates, the DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) will bring contacts together to make a single 'submission'.

SUBMISSIONS INFO FROM THE DCMS

Data Usage

For the data provided in this form, our starting point is to be as open and transparent as possible. That means that we want the data on the inventory websites (e.g. the information about each element submitted) to be as easily accessible and (re)usable as possible in order to support researchers or anyone that wants to use the data.

To note - the information (or data) supplied in this form to describe the element of living heritage is separate to the rights or ownership of the skill / knowledge of the element itself.

We will therefore follow the [FAIR data principles](#), which are a set of guidelines that describe how to make it easier for research data to be found, accessed and reused.

We will use a Creative Commons license for granting copyright permissions to the general public of the data you provide. These are commonly used licenses that standardise how data can be used.

We will use the **CC BY-SA (Creative Commons BY attribution-Share Alike)** license. This means that anyone can distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material (e.g. data) in any medium or format, so long as attribution is given to the creator, plus the modified material must be licensed under identical terms (e.g. wherever the information from the inventory is used elsewhere it must credit the inventory).

This license is used on a number of other international inventories and is what Wikipedia uses, so it is a recognised and standard license that provides a suitable level of protection, whilst still enabling and benefiting future uses and research.

I understand that the data I supply will be available to license under the CC BY-SA license: Yes

COMMUNITY CONSENT

The JMO needs to consult with our membership on these items for the submission

Which Inventory – England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland. (E, S, W, NI)

Title - 15 words

Short Description - 50 words

Please tell us more information about your element - 200 words

Please include details about:

- Who the community of practice is (including active participants and knowledge bearers, and/or your audience, if relevant);
- Where it takes place (including any connections to other parts of the UK or internationally);
- How often your element is practised;
- Any associated objects such as the tools, instruments, costumes, materials or products; and
- If there are any commercial activities relating to your element - how do they benefit the community.
- Please note, brand names or trademarks should not be included unless they are part of the title of the living heritage.

Any questions? See [Guidance](#) and [FAQs](#).

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out?

For more information on what is meant by endangered, please see our [FAQ on endangered elements](#).

- No - your element is currently viable (it is in a healthy state and the skills / know-how are being passed to the next generation)
- Yes - your element is endangered (the skills / know how can be passed on but there are serious concerns about their ongoing viability)

- Yes - your element is critically endangered (there is a serious risk that the skills / know how won't be passed on and there are very few practitioners remaining)

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding - 200 words

Please include details about:

- The history of how long it has been practised and how it has been passed on to now.
- How it is currently passed on and if there are any risks to it.

Any questions? See Guidance and FAQs.

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail - 200 words

Please explain how the practising community has consented to your element of living heritage being submitted to the inventories. Please include details about:

- How you have engaged the community of your element in the submission process;
- Whether there are any concerns amongst the community(ies) in submitting your element to the inventory(ies).

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? - 100 words

For example, a link to the Red List of Endangered Crafts page.

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? - 100 words

STANDARD REPLIES FOR:

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see: <https://www.morriscensus.uk/> . The last 2023 census showed that the average age of a participant across all dance styles within the JMO is 56, with 24% of participants aged 70+.

In 2014 the average age of a new recruit was 41 years old, and in 2023 it was 45 years old. The community is continually recruiting, at roughly 10 years younger than the average age.

The Census shows that 59% of teams are optimistic about their future.

The rising average age and large percentage of older practitioners indicate that the future of these traditions could be at risk in the mid term future.

Either: xx% of [DANCE STYLE] practitioners are aged 50 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'

- 74% Appalachian, 67% Border, 71% Cotswold, 77% Mumming, 74% North West

Or: xx% of [DANCE STYLE] practitioners are aged 50 or over, so this style is not yet considered to be 'at risk'.

- 52% Molly, 55% Longsword, 37% Rapper

There is a lack of support from the establishment with national or major events marginalising English tradition by focusing elsewhere. The National Curriculum, unlike other nations, fails to include English dance.

Closure of pubs deprives Morris teams of their venues, and bureaucracy in regards to dancing in urban areas, contribute to limiting teams' exposure to audiences and chances for recruitment in both rural and urban locations.

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

Most dance teams in the UK are a member of one of three Morris Organisations - The Morris Ring, The Morris Federation or the Open Morris. Together these form the Joint Morris Organisations. Through their membership, the organisations have gained consent from the community to go ahead with the submissions. Feedback on the draft text was requested by email, and interactive sessions over zoom were also offered.

The Morris Ring kept its membership informed of the inventory through its newsletter and then, with the papers sent out for its Annual Representatives Meeting, sent out full details of what the JMO were undertaking and asked for consent from the teams to go ahead. The Inventory was discussed at the Annual Representatives meeting and consent gained from the room (by vote) for the Ring officers, under the auspices of the JMO, to work on the submissions to the inventory. Full opportunity was given for any side or its dancers to take part in the process and view / comment on the submissions as well as taking part in interactive zoom sessions.

Title (15 words): Appalachian Step Dancing

Inventory: England

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Related to English clog dancing and Irish step dancing, with a distinct exuberant style, Appalachian step dances originate from the USA, but are now performed by many teams in Britain in both Buck and Wing and Flatfooting styles. Dancers usually wear tap shoes.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

Appalachian step dance originates from the Appalachian mountains. As pilgrims from Europe settled in the mountains, they brought together various folk dance styles using stepping and clogs. Clog dancing from the Industrial North of England provided a significant influence mixing with Irish, Scottish, Dutch and Native American dance styles.

This hybrid appalachian stepping style returned to England in the 1970s and is now practised across the country in two main styles – flatfooting and buck and wing.

Dances involve anything from 1 to the whole team of dancers. They are usually self penned. There is no traditional repository of dances. Dancers wear tap shoes, usually with metal taps on the bottom. Most performing takes place at folk festivals and gatherings of dancers.

Costumes vary considerably and there are no standard expectations.

Dances are usually performed to live music from a variety of instruments. Most commonly these are stringed instruments.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

CAN ADD EXTRA TEXT HERE

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Appalachian dancing can be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): Border Morris Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Border Morris is a loose, energetic form of dance using heavy sticks, mainly to a single step and danced to live music, originating in the English counties along the border with Wales. Performers often wear rag jackets and paint their faces or use other forms of disguise.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

This style of morris dancing is based loosely on traditional dances collected from places such as Dilwyn, Evesham and Much Wenlock in the English Welsh border counties. It often uses 'single' step hop footwork, and dancers carry sticks which are used to sound different rhythms when clashed together. Dances usually feature a chorus 'sticking' pattern where dancers stand still, and 'figures' where different patterns are danced, varying from simple traditional moves to complicated and intricate modern patterns.

Music is live, often played on melodeons and drums, but with a wide ranging set of instruments included. Dancers often vocalise whilst dancing.

Costumes often feature rag or tattered jackets, made of simple strips of fabric sewn onto a base, to imitate historical recollections of dancers wearing ragged clothing. Each team has their own colours, though a lot use black or dark colours. Facepaint is also traditionally used.

Border morris enjoyed a revival in the style of Shropshire Bedlams, a team formed in the mid 70s. Today a lot of new teams are forming and the style is popular in the morris and folk world.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

No

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Dave Jones (1988) 'The Roots of Welsh Border Morris; The Welsh Border Morris Dancers of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire' - note this book contains images of full face black makeup.

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Border Morris Dancing can be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): Step Clog Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

A dance style, usually performed solo, focussing on percussive footwork with precise, rhythmic timing. Thought to have developed in northern English industrial areas where workers wore wooden-soled 'clogs'. Dances usually follow set routines in distinct patterns; the legacy of individual dancers is prized alongside creativity in a living tradition.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

Clog dancing is a distinctive form of percussive step dancing which evolved during the nineteenth century in industrial areas of northern England. It is performed in the wooden-soled shoes, 'clogs', worn in these working-class communities. Now particularly associated with Lancashire cotton mill towns, it was actually more widespread. It is closely related to other forms of step dancing once performed throughout much of Britain (and indeed Ireland) but has its own stylistic identity.

Its development was accelerated by local, national, and international competitions and by its adoption as a speciality act on the nineteenth-century music hall stage. Stage performance resulted in a two-way cross-fertilisation with North American dancing, elements of which fed back into clog dancing enriching the style and technique whilst maintaining a distinct identity.

As a primarily solo dance, individual dancers' creativity is prized. The legacy of earlier dancers (e.g. Johnson Ellwood, Pat Tracey, Norman Robinson and Sam Sherry) underpins contemporary dancing in a living, evolving tradition. Dances are usually highly structured (e.g. a series of eight-bar 'steps' each comprising six bars of stepping and a two-bar 'break') and can be fully choreographed or more improvisatory. More freely-structured improvisation is also found and was probably once more common.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

No

Step clog has attracted more practitioners since lockdown and is thriving within the scene at present. Dancers have ample opportunities to learn and this tradition can be accessed as an individual, making access easier.

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY, PLUS

This submission has been coordinated between the Joint Morris Organisation and Instep, comprising experts in all fields of traditional step dance representing the clog dancing community.

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Instep Research Team (Researching and Encouraging Clog and Step Dance) website: <https://insteprt.co.uk/>

Lancashire and Cheshire Clog Dancing Competitions website: <https://www.clogcomp.org.uk/>

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Historically, this style was simply called 'clog dancing'; 'step clog' (or 'clog step') is now sometimes used to differentiate it from English 'North West morris' dancing, which was sometimes performed in clogs, and is sometimes termed 'clog morris'.

Contemporary dancers recognise regional styles (e.g. Lancashire, Northumberland and Durham, and Lakeland), however these differences may largely represent individual dancers' styles.

Although clog dancing is essentially a solo dance it is now commonly danced in groups.

Clog dancing is also recorded in Scotland; both Wales and Cornwall have living traditions that are likely to be entered separately.

Title (15 words): Cotswold Morris Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Performed with hankies and sticks, to live music, usually by teams of 6 or 8. Dancers often wear ribbons, baldrics or waistcoats, bells and decorated hats. This style, from the Cotswold villages of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, is, for most people, the quintessential picture of 'morris dancing'.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

Earliest records of Morris dancing and pictures capturing it from the 1400s are thought to refer to Cotswold dancing. Dancers are shown with bells and hankies which is how Cotswold is recognised.

Current Cotswold was collected, carefully notated and written down at the turn of the twentieth century. From a handful of village teams where the tradition and practice was handed down from generation to generation, the tradition spread across England during the 20th Century. Recruitment is largely achieved now by word of mouth.

Dancers use hankies or sticks, dancing usually in sets of 6 or 8, or solo as a jig. Dances are largely traditional though some are self penned in the style of older dances. Jigs may include other equipment such as bacca pipes or a broom. Costumes usually consist of white trousers or black breeches, with white shirts and baldricks, waistcoats or tabards in a variety of colours. Bellpads are worn around the calf.

Live music is provided by a variety of instruments – most often squeezeboxes, violins or pipes.

Cotswold morris is a hobby with no commercial activities. It is usually danced outside in local areas and provides a pastime with significant physical and mental health benefits alongside preserving music and dances done for generations.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Garland, Michael (2018) "It's street theatre really!" A history of Cotswold Morris Dancing in the twentieth century. PhD thesis, University of Essex. <https://repository.essex.ac.uk/21805/>

Dr. Matt Simons' 2019 PhD thesis, [Morris Men: Dancing Englishness, c.1905-1951](#) (De Montfort University

Michael Heaney (2023) [The Ancient English Morris Dance : Michael Heaney](#)

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Cotswold Morris dancing can be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): English Country Dancing

Inventory: England

Element Categories: Performing arts, Social practices

Short Description (50 words):

Social dances for couples performed between the 17th and early 19th centuries. Many dances were published by John Playford, his descendants and others, from 1651 onwards. Some teams wear historical costumes and use acoustic instruments appropriate to the period.

NOT BEING SUBMITTED BY JMO - EFDSS are submitting this under 'Social Folk Dancing'.

Title (15 words): Fools and Beasts in Morris

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Many morris sides are accompanied by people dressed as a 'fool' or a 'beast' such as a hobby horse or hooden horse, or any other animal, either to add to the spectacle, to create a connection between the performance and the audience, or both.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

The costumes worn by the Fools are very colourful, and usually are based on their team's colours - and more! The Beasts can range from a hobby horse style, with a head on a stick under a skirt (Mast Horse); a hooden horse has a shorter stick and a head made of leather. A saddle horse has a rider. There are all sorts of other beasts in full costume as birds, bears, boars. Some are simply made, some are more complicated and professionally made.

Altogether, Fools and Beasts augment the Morris with a very colourful display!

Around 1975, three Morris Fools founded the Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts, so that there could be a way for all Morris Fools and Animals to meet up annually to participate in workshops, discussions on how to integrate with their teams and interact with the audience, without upsetting anyone and yet keeping up the humour. The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts organises the annual Unconvention, held in different parts of England.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE JMO STANDARD REPLY FOR MORRIS

It will die out unless the support is there from members of Morris Sides to want to become a Fool or a Beast.

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE JMO STANDARD REPLY FOR MORRIS

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts website: <https://www.foolsandbeasts.org/>

Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/FoolsAndBeasts>

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Fools and Beasts in Morris dancing can be seen anywhere that morris dancing might be found, most often, but not exclusively, with Cotswold and Border Morris Dancing.

Title (15 words): Longsword Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Originating mainly in Yorkshire and the North East, longsword dances use rigid swords with one handle. Usually performed by a linked circle of six or eight dancers who interweave dancers and swords, breaking the circle when the swords are locked together and are held aloft.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

The earliest records of English Longsword dancing date back to the 18th century and were probably linked to Plough Monday customs of the time. There are a number of traditional teams still in existence - e.g. Goathland Plough Stots, Flamborough, Grenoside and Handsworth – though the teams are now more widespread.

The dances come mainly from Yorkshire and neighbouring counties and are danced with rigid, single handed strips of metal or wood – originally working tools.

Dances usually involve 6 or 8 people, although some with fewer have been recorded. The dance is a hilt-and-point sword dance i.e. each dancer has the hilt of their own sword in one hand, and the point of their neighbour's sword in the other, forming a circle. Patterns are performed by stepping or leaping over or under the swords, occasionally breaking links to form other shapes. The dance finishes with a sword lock held up by one of the dancers. There may be extra characters associated with a longsword dance – a fool or captain.

Live music is provided by whistle, fiddle or squeezebox and ranges from stately to brisk.

Traditional costumes vary from work sweaters to military style costumes.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Sword Dance Union (SDU): sworddanceunion.org.uk

'Rattle Up My Boys' Longsword magazine: [Rattle Up My Boys - Longsword Newsletter Archive](#)

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Longsword dancing can be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found. The Sword Dance Union holds an annual Longsword Competition.

Title (15 words): Maypole Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Element Categories: Performing arts, Social practices

Short Description (50 words):

A traditional dance form, used both as a performance and a participatory social dance, maypole dancing features a tall pole with ribbons attached at the top, also often decorated with flowers. Dancers hold a ribbon each and dance around the pole in various intricate patterns, forming many different woven designs.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

A Maypole is typically around 5m tall, with a 'crown' on top decorated with flowers to which different coloured ribbons are attached. Dancers hold a ribbon each and move around the pole in simple or intricate patterns, weaving amongst each other to form different woven designs on the pole. They must then retrace their steps to undo the weave.

Maypoles are a centuries old custom with widespread occurrences throughout Europe. The custom of dancing round a maypole with plaited ribbons became popular in England from the middle of the 19th century, and was given a boost when it was introduced as part of a May Day revival to the teacher training institution, Whitelands College, in 1881, guided by John Ruskin; which led to its widespread dissemination by school teachers across the nation's schools.

Maypole dancing today takes place as both a participatory, community dance at fairs, fetes, festivals and celebrations in May, or throughout the year, as well as in a performance context at similar events. Dancers are usually children and family groups, but maypole dancing is often accessible for all ages.

Maypole dancing is often done to the accompaniment of recorded music, although live music is commonly used too.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

No

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY, plus:

Maypole dancing is a participatory community practice, with many participants taking part on a very casual basis. To obtain community consent, EFDSS and the JMO have consulted a wide group of Maypole practitioners and knowledge bearers and have produced this submission collaboratively.

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Mike Ruff's resources: <https://mikeruffmusic.co.uk/maypole/>

Maypole Manual: <https://the-maypole-manual.co.uk/>

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

EXTRA TEXT CAN BE ADDED HERE

Title (15 words): Molly Dancing

Inventory: England

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Firmly rooted in the Cambridgeshire Fens and areas around the Wash, Molly Dancing has developed alongside Ploughboy/Plough Monday celebrations at Epiphany and Straw Bear celebrations. It is recognisable by striking costumes and single step footwork. Dancers often use disguise or face paint and dance to live music.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

Molly dancing is from East Anglia. It is associated with the tradition of plough boys performing on Plough Monday (the first Monday after Twelfth Night in January).

Due to changes in agricultural practices, social reforms and wartime fatalities, Molly dancing became extinct by 1940. Little was known and collected about the dances until the 1970s, so many teams have composed their own dances and styles, often to contemporary tunes.

A variety of steps are used, the most popular modern variant being a hop step with a high knee lift and strong swinging arms with an earthy and vigorous style.

Traditionally, dancers would dress in their work clothes or sometimes Sunday best, and use some form of disguise. Modern teams wear a variety of costumes, from old fashioned country tweed and corduroy to brightly coloured clashing clothes and coloured face paint.

One of the dancers, the 'Molly', is sometimes a man dressed in women's clothes, but the entire team may use non gender specific clothing.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

George Frampton (2024) 'Witches, Bears and Mollies, Plough Monday-related Customs in Cambridgeshire (past and Present)'.
[George Frampton \(2024\) 'Witches, Bears and Mollies, Plough Monday-related Customs in Cambridgeshire \(past and Present\)'](#)

Elaine Bradtke (2000) 'Truculent Rustics: Molly Dancing in East Anglia Before 1940'.
[Elaine Bradtke \(2000\) 'Truculent Rustics: Molly Dancing in East Anglia Before 1940'](#)

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Molly Dancing can be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): Mumming and Guising Plays

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Mumming and guising plays are short verse dramas performed seasonally with regional variations in England, Northern Ireland and southern Scotland. The traditional texts feature a mock sword fight or assault, and a quack doctor is brought in to cure the loser. They may also feature songs and short dances.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

These plays are traditionally performed annually by around 200 groups, mainly at Christmas, but during other festivals in some regions. They also occur in Newfoundland and certain Caribbean Islands.

18th century in origin, they were taken from house to house by groups to collect money for themselves. Today's performers are mainly morris dancing and folk enthusiasts but may also be ad hoc community groups. Pubs are now the main venues, although some groups perform outdoors. Collections are usually given to charity.

A typical play has an introducer, the disputants who have a mock sword fight, a quack doctor to cure the loser, plus extra characters who ask for a reward. All versions have the Doctor, but the disputants vary widely according to region. The hero is often King or Saint George, and his opponent Slasher or the Turkish Night, but there are many others.

The actors may learn their lines from scripts or pick them up while playing bit parts.

Costumes may be representative, e.g. white coat and stethoscope for the Doctor, but may simply be clothing festooned with ribbons, streamers or plaited straw. Historically, faces were blackened, masked or veiled for anonymity. Today, facial colouring is rarely used.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

No

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

The two main sources for further information are:

The Master Mummers website – <https://www.mastermummers.org/> . This lists current folk play groups and events, and a selection of recent photographs. It also has distribution maps of groups, times of occurrence and regional variants.

The Folk Play Research website - <https://folkplay.info/> . This has many articles about the tradition and a selection of historical photographs,

Both websites include databases of plays texts and various research resources.

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

The traditional itineraries of some Mumming and Guising groups are being impacted by pubs being permanently closed down. This means they have to arrange substitute venues which are increasingly difficult to find. Mummers plays can also sometimes be seen at folk festivals, and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): North West Morris Dancing

Inventory: England

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Nowadays danced in clogs by teams of at least 8 dancers, the original dances were inspired by workers in the weaving industries of North West England. Large bands, including drumming, accompany the dancers. Many teams were associated with rushbearing celebrations which led to the processional nature of the dance.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

North West morris dancing originates from the mill towns in Lancashire, Greater Manchester, and Cheshire.

Dances were originally processional, moving through the streets of the local town or village. Today, static dances are usually performed in sets of 8 dancers, although sets of 6 to 12 or even more are not unusual, and processional dances are still popular. The dances are characterised by regimented and precise figures, interspersed with impressive 'step up' choruses, often featuring high kicks. The basic footwork is the polka step or 'rant', although single skipping steps are also used.

Music is live, with squeezeboxes, drums, woodwind and brass commonly featured.

Implements such as short sticks with bells on (sometimes known as 'bobbins'), 'slings' (short lengths of braided ropes), and occasionally garlands are used in the dances, with each dancer making regimented arm movements in time with the choreography.

Costumes are often breeches and shirts or mid-length dresses or skirts and petticoats with a pinafore or waistcoat, with hats decorated with flowers and strings of beads worn around the neck.

Although throughout history smart shoes have been the norm, nowadays dancers usually wear wooden clogs with rubber or occasionally iron shods, sometimes with bells on.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

No

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

ENTER TEXT HERE

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

North West Morris Dancing can be seen at folk festivals, carnivals, parades and events, and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): Plough Morris Dancing

Inventory: England

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Originating in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, this style is usually performed by teams in multiples of 3 or 4, holding a variety of percussive items or flags. Dancers often wear ribbons or tatters and use face paint or disguise. Performed to live, often local, music.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

This style of dance is based on various researches made into dancing in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.

It appears that this style of dancing survived longest in connection with the celebrations that took place on Plough Monday in January.

Costumes are generally decorated with ribbons or strips of fabric (tatters) and there is an element of disguise with either face paint, masks or veils.

The performance is generally accompanied by small percussion items, such as bones, clickers and rattles, used by the dancers themselves within the dance.

Dances can be performed in a single line or heys, sometimes involving complicated moves or formations. There are also dances using brooms, bacca pipes and swords.

Accompanying music is often loud and includes a variety of instruments including percussion.

There are currently only 2 teams known to be dancing this style of Morris - Flag and Bone Gang and Rattlejag Morris. (145 words)

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes critically

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY + email conversation with existing performers

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Paul Davenport (1993) 'The Forgotten Morris - An investigation into Traditional Dance in Yorkshire'.

Chris Rose (2019) 'Dancing in their Uncouth Fashion: A look at the survival of the Morris dance in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire'

Rattlejag Morris website: [Local Morris Research | Rattlejag Morris](#)

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Plough Morris Dancing can be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): Rapper Sword Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Originating in northeast England, Rapper Sword is danced by 5 dancers with flexible steel 'swords' with handles on both ends. Dances involve complex figures which interweave dancers and swords, only breaking the circle to form a 'lock'. Often accompanied by Tommy and Betty characters who interact with the audience.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

The rapper dance is a fast, traditional dance whose origins lie in the mining villages of the Northumberland and Durham coalfield of England though in the last few decades teams have sprung up worldwide.

The dances involve a circle of five people connected by short flexible metal strips (called rappers) with wooden handles on both ends. This dance form was enabled by the development of spring steel which was first produced commercially in County Durham in the late 1700s.

Without breaking the circle the dancers weave in and out of one another, twisting the swords to form figures for display, sometimes jumping or even somersaulting over the swords.

At intervals throughout the dance the dancers step using a percussive rhythm and the dances normally conclude with the swords being tied in a star-shaped lock and displayed to the audience, the dancers facing forward and finishing with stepping.

Music is fast, live, and provided by pipe, violin or squeezebox.

Sometimes the dance is preceded by a calling on song introducing the performers, this is usually done by one of two supporting characters – the 'Tommy' and 'Betty' – who then interact with dancers and audience and may even join the circle.

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

No

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Sword Dance Union website: sworddanceunion.org.uk

Rapper Online website: rapper.org.uk

The Nut magazine online: [The NUT on the Net - journal of the rapper sword dance](#)

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Rapper Sword Dancing dancing is most often found performed in pubs, but can also be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found. There is an annual competition called Dancing England Rapper Tournament (DERT).

Title (15 words): Stave Dancing

Inventory: England

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Originating from Friendly Societies in southwest England, especially Somerset, Dorset, and Wiltshire, where teams of dancers carry long decorated poles (staves) over their shoulders whilst performing. Few original dances are known, with others being created from contemporary accounts. 38

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words):

These dances are based on those described in Friendly Society minute books from approx. 200 years ago. Each dancer carries a stave about 2m long, bearing a distinctive finial and decorated with ribbons. Each society had its own design of stave head using material locally available – often brass or wood. Village Friendly Societies were the forerunners of today's insurance companies, being mutual self-help groups for the working people which flourished in the early and mid 1800's.

The dances are often unexpectedly lively, bearing in mind the constraint of carrying the stave, and accompanied by a small band of acoustic musicians. New dances have been created within the style.

The revival of this type of dance occurred about 50 years ago. (119 words)

Do you consider the element to be endangered, e.g. likely to die out? (No / Yes / Yes critically)

Yes critically

Please outline information relating to your element's safeguarding (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words):

SEE STANDARD REPLY+ direct email conversations with current practitioners

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words):

Stave Dancing on Wikipedia: [Stave dancing - Wikipedia](#)

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words)

Stave Dancing can sometimes be seen at folk festivals and anywhere that morris dancing might be found.

Title (15 words): Step Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Element Categories: Performing arts

Short Description (50 words):

Dance styles, usually performed solo, with percussive footwork and fine timing. Generally performed in hard soled shoes. Dances are often freestyle although there are some set dance routines.

NOT BEING SUBMITTED BY JMO - Simon Harmer is submitting this