

UNESCO Living Heritage – Submissions by the JMO

As at 27th March 2026

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

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

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

Submissions

12 Submissions were entered in March 2026 by the JMO (Joint Morris Organisations) on behalf of our memberships:

- Appalachian Step Dancing
- Border Morris Dancing
- Cotswold Morris Dancing
- Fools and Beasts in Morris Dancing
- Longsword Dancing
- Molly Dancing
- Mumming and Guising Plays
- North West Morris Dancing
- Plough Morris Dancing
- Rapper Sword Dancing
- Stave Dancing
- Step Clog Dancing

These styles represented by our membership were covered by listings submitted by others:

- English Country Dancing
- Maypole Dancing
- Step Dancing

Next Steps

The DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) will review all submissions over the next 4 to 6 months before they launch the 'live' Inventory.

The submitter is obligated to update their submissions every 2 years, so there is an opportunity for correction and refinement.

March 2026 was 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 will bring contacts together to make a single 'submission'.

SUBMISSIONS INFO FROM THE DCMS

Frequently Asked Questions

See FAQs: <https://livingheritage.unesco.org.uk/info/faqs>

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

Element Categories - Oral expressions / Performing arts / Social practices / Nature, land and spirituality / Crafts / Sport and games / Culinary practices

Tags - single words, e.g. dance, see: <https://livingheritage.unesco.org.uk/info/faqs#what-are-tags>

Location - click on the map - a single location or an area described by several points.

Image - (optional, single image JPG, PNG or GIF, up to 10MB) Please get consent from any people featured in the image before submitting it.

I am happy for the supplied image to be shared under the CC BY-SA license: Yes or No

I understand that I will be the point of contact for my element and responsible for checking the information is up to date on a two-yearly basis. I confirm.

The information and data I have included is correct and truthful to the best of my knowledge and is submitted on behalf of the practising community. As per the data section earlier, the information will be available to license under the CC BY-SA license. I confirm.

STANDARD REPLY FOR:

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words): [191 words]

Most UK teams are members of one of three 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 zoom sessions took place.

Requests for feedback were also posted on the morris Facebook groups by Open Morris.

In addition to emailing members, the Morris Federation emailed the draft text to its 200 'news' subscribers, many of whom are not part of member teams, and includes contacts in other performing arts organisations and interested parties.

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.

Title (15 words): Appalachian Step Dancing

Inventory: England

Short Description (50 words): [43 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): [197 words]

First performed in the UK in the 1980s, Appalachian dance encompasses two distinct but interconnected practices. Soloists often consider themselves percussive musicians, using leather-soled shoes to join Old-Time music sessions—a genre defined by the rhythmic dialogue between the fiddle and the banjo. Their style is primarily freestyle, rooted in flatfoot and buck dance traditions. Conversely, teams focus on performative display, practising a "precision style" influenced by the Green Grass Cloggers. This involves choreographed, uniform stepping typically devised by each team and performed in tap shoes, to project complex rhythms to an audience.

Though now primarily a performance art, the dance originated as a social activity. It is a hybrid form, shaped by Indigenous American groundedness and a foundational African American influence that introduced the syncopation and "down-driven" energy of the banjo. These elements intersected with the diverse percussive traditions brought by Irish, Scottish, Dutch, and English settlers. By synthesising these styles, this practice acknowledges a diverse cultural heritage, reflecting a history of interracial exchange rather than a single ethnic lineage.

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): [178 words]

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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. 57% of Appalachian practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 37% of teams are optimistic about their future.

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

Closure of pubs deprives 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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): [38 words]

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> , <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words) [88 words]

The Morris Census shows that performances are most popular on late May bank holiday, St George's Day, and other bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 9 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 30 teams who regularly perform Appalachian Step Dancing, and 15 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, morris, folk, taps, music, community, performance, Appalachian, American, clogging, bluegrass, old time

Title (15 words): Border Morris Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Short Description (50 words): 44 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 bordering 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): 199 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 counties bordering Wales. It often uses 'single' step hop footwork, and dancers carry sticks (typically 4-7cm in diameter and ranging from 30 to 100cm in length), which they clash with those of other dancers to create different rhythms. 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, usually played on squeezeboxes and drums, but with a wide ranging set of instruments included. Dancers often vocalise freely whilst dancing.

Costumes frequently feature rag or tattered jackets - 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, and some teams wear bells.

Border morris enjoyed a revival in the style of Shropshire Bedlams, a team formed in the mid 70s. Today many 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): 178 words

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/> . 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. 44% of Border Morris practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 63% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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): 68 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.

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events:<https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>,
<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> ,
<https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain':
<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

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

The Morris Census shows that performances are most popular on May Day, St George's Day, Boxing Day, Summer Solstice, May and summer bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 21 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 200 teams who regularly perform Border Morris Dancing, and 100 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, morris, music, community, performance, border, sticks, face paint, disguise, bells

Title (15 words): Cotswold Morris Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Short Description (50 words): 48 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): 200 words

Cotswold dancers use handkerchiefs 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 often include white trousers or black breeches, white shirts, and baldricks, waistcoats or tabards, but any costume may be worn. Bellpads are worn around the calf.

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

Current Cotswold Dancing was collected and carefully notated at the turn of the twentieth century though some elements of the style and costume exhibit characteristics which may date back to the 16th and 17th centuries. 'Cotswold' is used to refer to all dances in similar style though collected from a much wider area of England. From a handful of village teams where the tradition and practice was handed down between generations, the tradition spread across England during the 20th Century. Recruitment is largely achieved now by word of mouth.

Cotswold morris is 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):

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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. 55% of Cotswold Morris practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 61% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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): 100 words

Michael Heaney (2023) 'The Ancient English Morris Dance':
<https://www.archaeopress.com/Archaeopress/Products/9781803273860>

Cotswold Morris Music: <https://themorrisring.org/music>

Gwilym Davies (2023) 'The Music Tells You - The Origins of Cotswold Morris Music':
<https://themorrisring.org/morris-music/music-tells-you-origins-cotswold-morris-music-thesis-gwilym-davies>

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

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

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org.

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro>, <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance>, and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials>

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

Cotswold Morris Dancing is a hobby with no commercial activities.

The Morris Census tells us that performances are most popular on May Day, St George's Day, Boxing Day, May and summer bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 21 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 300 teams who regularly perform Cotswold Morris Dancing, and 50 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, morris, music, community, performance, cotswold, bells, sticks, handkerchiefs, may day, competition

Title (15 words): Fools and Beasts in Morris Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Short Description (50 words): 44 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): 185 words

Fools and Beasts appear in conjunction with a morris team performance, and interact with the dancers and audience.

The costumes worn by the Fools are very colourful, and usually are based on their team's colours - and more! Beasts can include hobby horse styles, or 'hooden horse' costumes which envelop the performer, though not all beasts are horses, and anything is possible. 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 disturbing the performance and yet keeping up the humour. The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts organises the annual Unconvention, held in different parts of England.

Cotswold Morris teams often, but not always, appear with a Fool, and Beasts are growing in popularity, and may appear with Cotswold or Border Morris teams.

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): 174 words

Although many modern teams are embracing this element of the Morris tradition, there is a noticeable decline in the frequency of teams appearing with a traditional fool.

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see: <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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): 57 words

Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts hold an annual 'Unconvention' in October, see their website: <https://www.foolsandbeasts.org/> and Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/FoolsAndBeasts>

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> , <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words) 97 words

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

Sidmouth Folk Festival holds an annual Sidmouth Horse Trials competition, for any kind of morris animal.

Performances are most popular on May Day, St George's Day, Boxing Day, May and summer bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 21 events a year on average. Taking on the role of a fool or beast is primarily from within the dance team.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, morris, community, performance, fool, beast, hobby horse, morris beast (animal)

Title (15 words): Longsword Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland

Short Description (50 words): 49 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, for the most part breaking the circle when the swords are locked together and are held aloft.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words): 199 words

Longsword 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, for the most part breaking the circle only when the swords are locked together and are held aloft 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.

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

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.

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):

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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. 43% of Longsword practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 54% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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 archive: <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/magazines/rumb/>

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org , and the Sword Dance Union .

Annual morris-related and folk events:<https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>,
<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> ,
<https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain':
<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

Is there any additional information you would like to provide? (100 words) 94 words

Performances are most popular on Plough Monday, St George's Day, Boxing Day, followed by May and summer bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 18 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 45 teams who regularly perform Longsword Dancing, and 30 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

The Sword Dance Union holds an annual Longsword Competition.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, music, community, performance, swords, competition, plough monday, boxing day

Title (15 words): Molly Dancing

Inventory: England

Short Description (50 words): 46 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 positive footwork. Dancers often use disguise or face paint and dance to live music.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words): 164 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)

No

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 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. 48% of Molly practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 65% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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)'.

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

Russell Wortley (1980), ed John Jenner and Andrew Richards, 'Russell Wortley' articles and notes:
<https://catalogue.efdss.org/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=76447>

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> , <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

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

The Morris Census tells us that performances are most popular on Plough Monday, St George's Day, May and late May bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 15 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 30 teams who regularly perform Molly Dancing in the UK, and 30 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, morris, music, community, performance, molly, face paint, disguise, plough monday

Title (15 words): Mumming and Guising Plays

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Short Description (50 words): 49 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):

18th century in origin, Mumming plays were taken from house to house by male groups, mainly at Christmas. Today's performers are primarily morris dancing and folk enthusiasts but may also be ad hoc community groups, of any gender. Mumming and Guising Plays are most often found performed in pubs, usually as a tour of several pubs in quick succession over the course of a few hours.

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 and the script is often altered to take account of the region or the current events. The hero is often King or Saint George, though his traditional opponent of a foreign knight has been replaced by a range of 'baddies'.

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

Costumes and props 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, anonymity or disguise was encouraged for performers.

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): 170 words

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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. 63% of Mumming practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 60% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little support from the establishment with national or major events marginalising English tradition by focusing elsewhere. The National Curriculum fails to include this traditional type of folk drama.

Closure of pubs deprives teams of their venues, and bureaucracy in regards to performing in urban areas, contribute to limiting teams' exposure to audiences and chances for recruitment in both rural and urban locations. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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

SEE STANDARD REPLY, PLUS over word count - removed last sentence from our standard text

The JMO consulted Peter Millington, an expert on Mumming and Guising plays, who consulted with additional contacts outside the morris community.

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words): 82 words

The first two main websites include databases of plays texts and various research resources:

The Master Mummers website – <https://www.mastermummers.org/>

The Folk Play Research website - <https://folkplay.info/>

Cawte, E.C, Helm, Alex and Peacock, N. (1967): 'English Ritual Drama, a geographical index'.
<https://www.mastermummers.org/erd/>

'VWML Archive catalogues', <https://archives.vwml.org/collections>

Some groups are members of a morris-related organisation: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events:<https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>,
<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

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

The Morris Census tells us that performances are most popular on St George's Day, May Day and Boxing Day, mostly at pubs and local shows, and sometimes at days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 15 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 70 teams who regularly perform Mumming or Guising Plays in the UK, and 80 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: plays, entertainment, folk, festivals, tradition, community, performance, Christmas, Boxing Day, Easter, disguise

Title (15 words): North West Morris Dancing

Inventory: England

Short Description (50 words):

This style of morris dancing arose in the rushcart processions of mill towns around Manchester before the early part of the 20th century. It is danced in clogs by sets of usually 8 dancers, and is characterised by precise, regimented moves. Large bands, including drummers, accompany the dances.

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

North West morris dances are usually performed in sets of 8 dancers, although sets of 6 to 12 or 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, and most teams have large bands.

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.

Alongside breeches, shirts, mid-length dresses or skirts, pinafores and waistcoats, costumes usually include hats decorated with flowers, strings of beads worn around the neck, and wooden clogs with rubber or iron shods and bells are sometimes worn.

Historically performed by teams from 8 to 80 dancers strong, from the 1890s the dances spread all across Lancashire and Cheshire in the May Queen carnivals popular at the time, and evolved in that process.

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):

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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. 59% of North West Morris practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style may be considered 'at risk'. The Census shows that 54% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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.

Dancing clogs are often handmade or bespoke, which is an endangered craft in itself, and the price can be prohibitive.

Closure of pubs deprives teams of their venues, and bureaucracy regarding dancing in urban areas, contribute to limiting teams' exposure to audiences and chances for recruitment in both rural and urban locations. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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):

Michael Heaney (2023) 'The Ancient English Morris Dance':

<https://www.archaeopress.com/Archaeopress/Products/9781803273860>

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> , <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

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

The Morris Census tells us that performances are most popular on St George's Day, early and late May bank holidays, Boxing Day, and other bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 17 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 120 teams who regularly perform North West Morris Dancing, and 30 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, morris, north west, music, community, performance, bells, clogs, garland, may day

Title (15 words): Plough Morris Dancing

Inventory: England

Short Description (50 words): 45 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):

Plough Morris Dancers are often 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. The dancers themselves also use small percussion items, such as bones, clickers and rattles.

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.

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.

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

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): 171 words

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. The rising average age and large percentage of older practitioners indicate that the future of Plough Morris could be at risk in the mid term future.

There are currently only 2 teams known to be dancing this style of Morris, although workshops are offered to other dance teams at festivals.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

Please outline how you have gathered free, prior and informed consent from the community in more detail (200 words): 171 words

Both existing teams are members of The Morris Federation. They have been consulted individually through email and/or telephone to gain consent from the community to go ahead with the submissions.

The wider morris community was also consulted by one of three organisations - The Morris Ring, The Morris Federation or the Open Morris. Together these form the Joint Morris Organisations. Feedback on the draft text was requested by email, and interactive zoom sessions took place.

Requests for feedback were also posted on the morris Facebook groups by Open Morris.

In addition to emailing members, the Morris Federation emailed the draft text to its 200 'news' subscribers, many of whom are not part of member teams, and includes contacts in other performing arts organisations and interested parties.

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.

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

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

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

Rattlejag Morris: <https://www.rattlejagmorris.org.uk/local-morris-research>

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org.

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro>, <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance>, and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials>.

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

The Morris Census tells us that performances are most popular on Plough Monday, St George's Day, early and late May bank holidays, Boxing Day, and other bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 17 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth. There are currently only two Plough Morris Dancing teams active in the UK.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris federation, festivals, tradition, morris, plough, music, community, performance, sticks, face paint, disguise, bells, rattles, plough sunday, may day, flags

Title (15 words): Rapper Sword Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales

Short Description (50 words): 50 words

Originating in northeast England, Rapper dances are performed by five dancers with flexible steel 'swords' with handles at both ends. The dances involve complex figures which interweave dancers and swords, usually only breaking the circle to form a 'lock'. They are often accompanied by characters who interact with the audience.

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

Rapper dancing is a fast paced traditional performance, involving skill, spectacle and great musicianship. It is performed to the accompaniment of live music in 6/8 time, and extravagant accompanying characters often interact comically with the audiences and dancers.

Rapper is most often performed indoors in pubs, usually as a tour of several pubs or other venues in quick succession. Teams wear smart costumes to enhance the show, sometimes short 'hogger' trousers, and most teams wear sashes. Hard soled shoes are worn to enhance the sound of the stepping.

The five dancers are connected in a circle by flexible short swords, called 'rappers', which are made of sprung steel with wooden handles at each end. The dancing has origins in the older, slower longsword dances of Northumberland and Durham, and was developed by miners from coalfield villages who added percussive stepping, and exciting movements such as jumps and somersaults, known as 'tumbles'. A further development was the quest by each team to achieve high status by beating rival dancers in highly organised competitions, which continues today at an annual competition called Dancing England Rapper Tournament (DERT). Traditional routines and figures are still danced, but innovation drives the modern form.

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): 179 words

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see: <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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.

26% of Rapper Dance practitioners are aged 60 or over, so this style is not considered to be 'at risk'.

The Census shows that 67% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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): 49 words

Sword Dance Union: sworddanceunion.org.uk

Rapper Online: rapper.org.uk

The NUT journal: <http://www.the-nut.net/>

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro> , <https://www.efdss.org/wml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

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

The Morris Census tells us that performances are most popular on St George's Day, Plough Monday, Boxing Day, bank holidays, in pubs, at local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 15 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. In the UK there are currently approximately 30 teams who regularly perform Rapper Dancing, and 45 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, competition, swords, rapper, stepping, music, community, performance, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition

Title (15 words): Stave Dancing

Inventory: England

Short Description (50 words): 38 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.

Please tell us more information about your element (200 words): 132 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, held vertically, with the top over their shoulder. The staves bear beautiful distinctive finials, and are 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 live musicians. New dances have been created within the style.

The revival of this type of dance occurred about in the mid 1970's.

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):

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see: <https://www.morriscensus.uk/> . 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.

There are currently only 5 active teams who perform Stave Dancing. The Census shows that 57% of these teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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 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. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. fewer village halls allow sleeping overnight, and viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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

The 5 active teams are members of The Morris Federation. They have been consulted individually through email to gain consent from the community to go ahead with the submissions.

The wider morris community was also consulted by one of three organisations - The Morris Ring, The Morris Federation or the Open Morris. Together these form the Joint Morris Organisations. Feedback on the draft text was requested by email, and interactive zoom sessions took place.

Requests for feedback were also posted on the morris Facebook groups by Open Morris.

In addition to emailing members, the Morris Federation emailed the draft text to its 200 'news' subscribers, many of whom are not part of member teams, and includes contacts in other performing arts organisations and interested parties.

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 for the Ring officers, under the auspices of the JMO, to work on the submissions to the inventory.

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

Stave Dancing on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stave_dancing

Most UK teams are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance> , and KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials> .

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

Performances are most popular on May Day, St George's Day, early and late May bank holidays, Plough Monday, and other bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 21 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth. There are currently approximately 5 teams who regularly perform Stave Dancing in the UK, alongside other styles of dance.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris federation, festivals, tradition, morris, stave, music, community, performance

Title (15 words): Step Clog Dancing

Inventory: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Short Description (50 words): 49 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): 191 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.

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 famous individual dancers 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 a stepping pattern and a two-bar 'break' of 'finish') and can be fully choreographed or more improvisatory. More freely-structured improvisation is also found and was once more common.

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

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): 197 words

A Morris Census has been run every 3 years since 2014, see <https://www.morriscensus.uk/>. 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. The Census shows that 53% of teams are optimistic about their future.

There is little 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.

Bureaucracy in regards to dancing in urban areas, contributes to limiting teams' exposure to audiences and chances for recruitment in rural and urban locations. In general there is a threat from reduced spaces to perform (pub closures, trend towards less outdoor space at pubs, city centre fragmentation of land ownership etc) and organise events (e.g. viable festival organisation becomes harder each year).

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.

Dancing clogs are often handmade or bespoke, the making of which is an endangered craft in itself, and the price can be prohibitive.

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 JMO and INSTEP, comprising experts in all fields of traditional step dance representing the clog dancing community. INSTEP posted a public announcement on the 10th March 2026 to various online clog dance pages on Facebook; they invited people to contact INSTEP with any questions and did not receive any. As at 16th March 2026 they had received a number of explicit words of encouragement, and on the biggest group they received 79 'thumbs up'.

Would you like to provide links to any sources of further information? (100 words): 56 words

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

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

Many UK teams and dancers are members of one of: Morris Federation: www.morrisfed.org.uk; Morris Ring: www.themorrisring.org; Open Morris: www.open-morris.org; EFDSS: <https://www.efdss.org/> .

Annual morris-related and folk events: <https://themorrisring.org/events/traditional-morris-events>, <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/wheretoseemorris/> and <https://calendarcustoms.com/>

Learning resources: <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/10501-morris-hey-intro>, <https://www.efdss.org/vwml-subject-guides/beginners-guide-dance>, KS2 'Buzzing Britain': <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/education/teaching-materials>

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

N.B. North West Morris, also performed in clogs, is a separate tradition.

Performances are most popular on the spring and summer bank holidays, at pubs, local shows, days of dance and folk festivals. Teams perform at 12 events a year on average.

Each individual team will publish listings of their performances, and how to contact them to book a performance or join in weekly practices. The Morris Census tells us that there are currently approximately 60 teams who regularly perform Step Clog Dancing in the UK, and 30 occasionally. Recruitment is primarily by word of mouth.

Element Categories: Performing arts

Tags: dance, entertainment, folk, morris ring, morris federation, open morris, festivals, tradition, clogs, step dancing, music, community, performance, EFDSS