

WITH COMPLIMENTS
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23rd February 2026

Re: Letter of Support – Nomination of Wildfowling for Inclusion in the UK Living Heritage Inventory

I am writing to express my strong belief in that wildfowling is an important element of UK Living Heritage Inventory and, to confirm, that I fully support the efforts of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) to seek formal recognition of wildfowling in the UK Living Heritage Inventories. I assume my being awarded the Stanley Duncan Award by BASC, in the centenary year, will carry some weight.

I suspect that within the confines of the wetland shoot I ran, my flight ponds and their regular success, played a part. I have, of course, some experience of foreshore wildfowling in Anglesey and Porthmadog, together with experience of goose shooting in Aberdeenshire; also coastal shooting in Co., Wicklow in Ireland. The latter many years ago!

Wildfowling has a history dating back centuries, that set's it aside as a living and evolving practice combining traditional knowledge and skills to maintain a sustainable harvest. It includes locally rooted knowledge of tides, weather, habitat conditions and the behaviour of the plants and animals found in coastal areas managed for wildfowling. These practices embody a close, beneficial relationship with nature underpinned by a strict ethical code, established safety practices, and a strong sense of responsibility towards the environment. This, of course comes into play in the (Welsh) Dee Estuary, where I shot over sixty years ago. This estuary changed when the upper reaches received a straight retaining wall. In addition to focussing effect on the Spring Tide "bore"; it also made the sandbanks facing the ancient ferry port of Parkgate extremely complex when shooting there.

Historically wildfowling was an important source of livelihood in coastal areas and an affordable source of food. This particularly so in the days of the punt gun, when the birds taken provided sustenance for many local rural communities. Wildfowling's role in shaping coastal areas and traditions is reflected in landscape, local language and customary practices.

Wildfowling skills and traditions continue to be transmitted through informal teaching, mentoring and community involvement supporting a strong connection to place, local identity, and conservation engagement with wetlands.

Inclusion in the UK Living Heritage Inventory would provide appropriate recognition of wildfowling as a **living tradition** and would help ensure that the associated knowledge, customs and community practices are recorded and safeguarded for future generations. For these reasons, I am pleased to offer my full support for the nomination of wildfowling to the UK Living Heritage Inventory.

Finally, still having active links to the Arctic and some research there, will you forgive me if I point out, prior to research commencing there, the experience of the "elders" is taken into account. I qualify as an elder!

Yours aye,

J. Noel Hulmston