



**SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT
WILDFOWLERS ASSOCIATION**
Founded 1887



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

*On behalf of **Southport and District Wildfowlers' Association** I am writing to express our strong belief that **wildfowling** is an important element of **UK Living Heritage Inventory**, and to confirm that we 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.*

*Our wildfowling club was established in **1887** and has maintained an active wildfowling community for **139 years** on the tidal marshes of the **Ribble Estuary**. Wildfowling in our area represents and remains a long-established traditional practice. This enables knowledge, skills and appreciation of the internationally recognised estuarine habitat of the Ribble Estuary to be shared by multiple generations in families and handed down from one generation to the next.*

UK wildfowling has a history dating back centuries. It possesses a number of elements that set 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.

Membership of Southport and District Wildfowlers' Association still contains a sizeable number of members whose families have been actively involved in the traditional pursuits on the estuary and hinterland, including wildfowling, shrimping, fishing, farming and market-gardening for over 100 years. This way of life has been gradually eroded by urban encroachment, economic drivers and the subsequent cultural shift towards a more urban-centric, commuter-belt community.

Historically wildfowling was an important source of livelihood in coastal areas and an affordable source of food within traditional coastal foodways. Today, this tradition is still relevant for many members and their families, providing a sustainable, organic supply of locally-sourced meat. Wildfowling's role in shaping coastal areas and traditions is reflected in landscape, local language and customary practices.

Nationally, the knowledge local wildfowlers possess of these tidal marshes has proved invaluable in advising rescue parties and assisting with searches and rescues.

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, Southport and District Wildfowlers' Association is pleased to offer our full support for the nomination of wildfowling to the UK Living Heritage Inventory,

*Margaret Dickinson - Secretary
Southport and District Wildfowlers' Association*

Signature: _____

