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Gweithdy...

Gallery Teaching Resource

museum.wales/learn/

Gweithdy is a special space where you can celebrate the skills of makers across millennia, as well as learning some of those skills for yourself.

There is no one way to explore the gallery so be sure to match up the title of each page in this resource with the title on the specific display you are exploring.





This gallery has a 360 tour available online free of charge. This means this resource can be used online rather than in-person.

The link to the 360 tour is below.

Oriel Gweithdy | Gweithdy Gallery



POWERED BY



Select the display

Make with...

Clay



Stone



Metal



Plants





Make with....

Clay

Clay is a natural, earthy material comprised of extremely small pieces of mineral. When wet, it is soft and sticky, and can be moulded and shaped. It hardens when dry. Baking the clay hardens it further. Clay is used in making items such as bricks, pots and ceramics. Clay can be different colours depending on the soil content in which it is found.



What's in this display?



This display holds objects demonstrating the use of clay through time - including Neolithic pottery bowls, Bronze Age beakers, Roman pottery including Samian ware - a type of glossy red pottery made in the Roman Empire, Medieval jugs, Mediaeval and Post-Medieval figurines, medieval tiles and salt-glazed earthenware pots made by Ewenny potteries.

Make with...

Clay

Objects of
interest

Beakers

Dating to the Bronze Age, these decorated cups were important items included in burials. Some beakers show traces of how they were made (thin sausages of clay coiled around to form a cup), and could be decorated with tools including the crinkled edge of a seashell to create patterns.

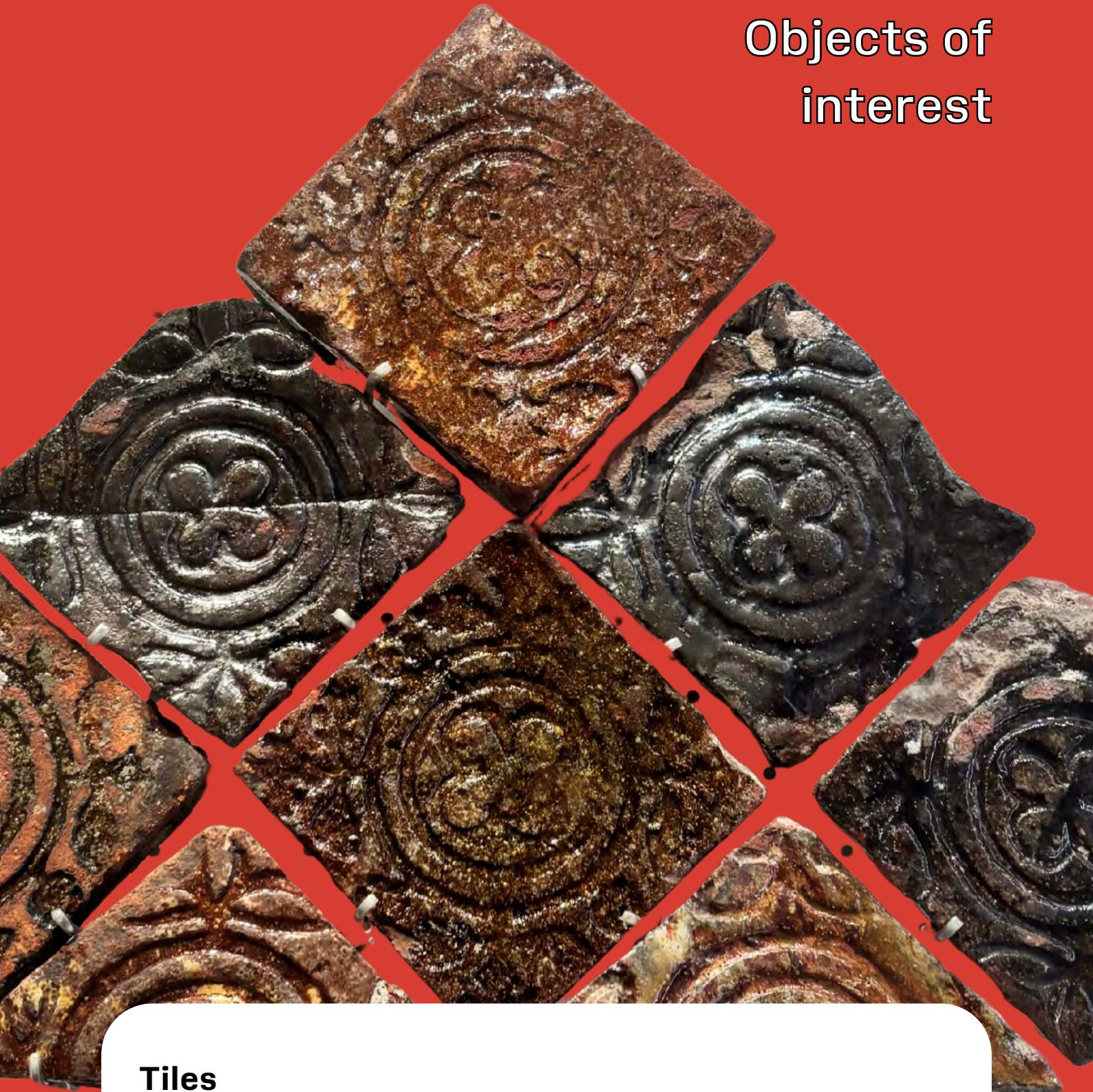


Moulds

These moulds are made of plaster and were used at the Ewenny Pottery in the Vale of Glamorgan. Moulds could be used to create decorative embellishments, animal models and candlesticks.



Objects of interest



Tiles

Many of these medieval tiles have come from Abbeys. Common forms of decoration include using wooden stamps to create impressions, or inlaying by stamping and then filling the impression with a light coloured slip.



***Line impressed mosaic tile with the design of a mythical creature,
1350-1400s. From Basingwerk Abbey, north-east Wales.***



- Why was the object made?
- How was the object made?
- Who made the object?
- What is the purpose of the object? Is it for everyday use? Ceremonial? Special occasion? Decorative?
- Do we still use this object today?

Links to buildings...

St Teilo's Church



Can you find the glazed tiles within this medieval church?

Tasks for back at school...

Crackle glaze



Create Picasso-inspired art with a simple crackle glaze effect finish.

Make with...

Stone



Stone is a hard substance found in the ground under the soil layer. Different types of stone have different properties, and are used for different purposes. For example, slate is a hard, impermeable stone which can be split into sheets, making it useful for creating roof tiles. Granite is coarse-grained, hard and impermeable. This makes it useful for road construction.

What's in this display?

This display includes slate carving, stone monuments, medieval sculptures, flint tools and weapons, stone axes, and a mosaic.



*Intricately patterned shaft of a sandstone cross, About 950-1050 CE.
This cross is from Glansannan Isaf, Llanfynydd, south-west Wales.*

Make with...

Stone

Objects of interest

Carved stones

These stones have been intricately carved and incised. Some stones were created as monuments to individuals or for religious reasons. Other carved stones' original purposes are unclear, but could be objects of worship, or symbols showing land as being Christian, for example.



*Sandstone cross shaft from Caerleon,
Newport, 900-1025 CE.*

Objects of interest

Flint tools and weapons

flint is a hard, glassy type of stone which has been used for thousands of years. An experienced flint-knapper understands that the stone can break predictably into usable flakes if it is struck in a particular way. Tools used for creating flint objects include hammer stones such as beach pebbles used to strike, and pressure flakers made of antler or copper used in the later stages of shaping.



Flint tools

Slate objects

People have been quarrying slate in north Wales for over 1800 years. The slate trade in Wales reached its peak in 1898, with 17,000 workers producing 485,000 tons of slate.



Slate fan



Carved slate fire surround from Dyffryn Ogwen, north Wales.

Discussion...



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Links to buildings...

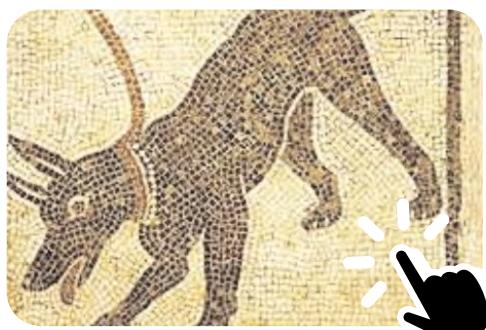
Circular pigsty



This pigsty built around 1800 is constructed entirely of stone. The roof is corbelled, meaning each circular layer of stones is reduced gradually until it creates the dome shaped roof of the sty.

Tasks for back at school...

Roman Mosaics



Study Roman mosaics and animals to create your own designs.

Make with...

Metal

Metals are minerals that can be found in rocks known as ores. They can be separated from the ore using heat in a process called smelting. There are many different metals, including pure metals such as iron, copper and gold, and alloys (a combination of metals) such as bronze and brass. Metals are usually hard, shiny and strong. They can be transformed into objects by heating them and shaping with a hammer, or casting into moulds.



What's in this display?

This display holds objects demonstrating how metalwork has been used over time by craftspeople such as blacksmiths and farriers – from Bronze Age and Iron Age tools and weapons, to uses in the household, in farming, and in the Church.



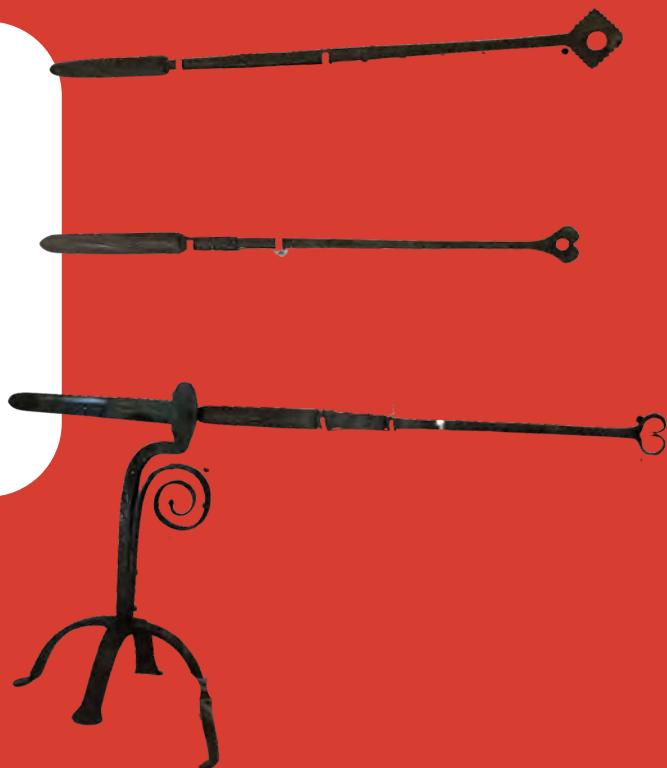
Make with...

Metal

Objects of
interest

Goffering irons

These special irons
were heated in the
fire and used to iron
ruffles in clothes.



Rushlight holders

These holders could
accommodate a
candle, or the cheaper
alternative of the pith
of the rush plant
soaked in tallow could
be held and burned in
the pincers.



Firedogs

A pair of firedogs would be used in the hearth to allow air to circulate around the burning logs, and to stop any embers from rolling away. In the Iron Age, the firedogs would be a status symbol, marking the central hearth of the roundhouse.



Capel Garmon fire dog



Discussion...



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Links to buildings...

Bryn Eryr Iron Age Roundhouses



These roundhouses are reconstructions of Iron Age dwellings containing replica artefacts such as firedogs, spearheads and shields.

Tasks for back at school...

Design a shield

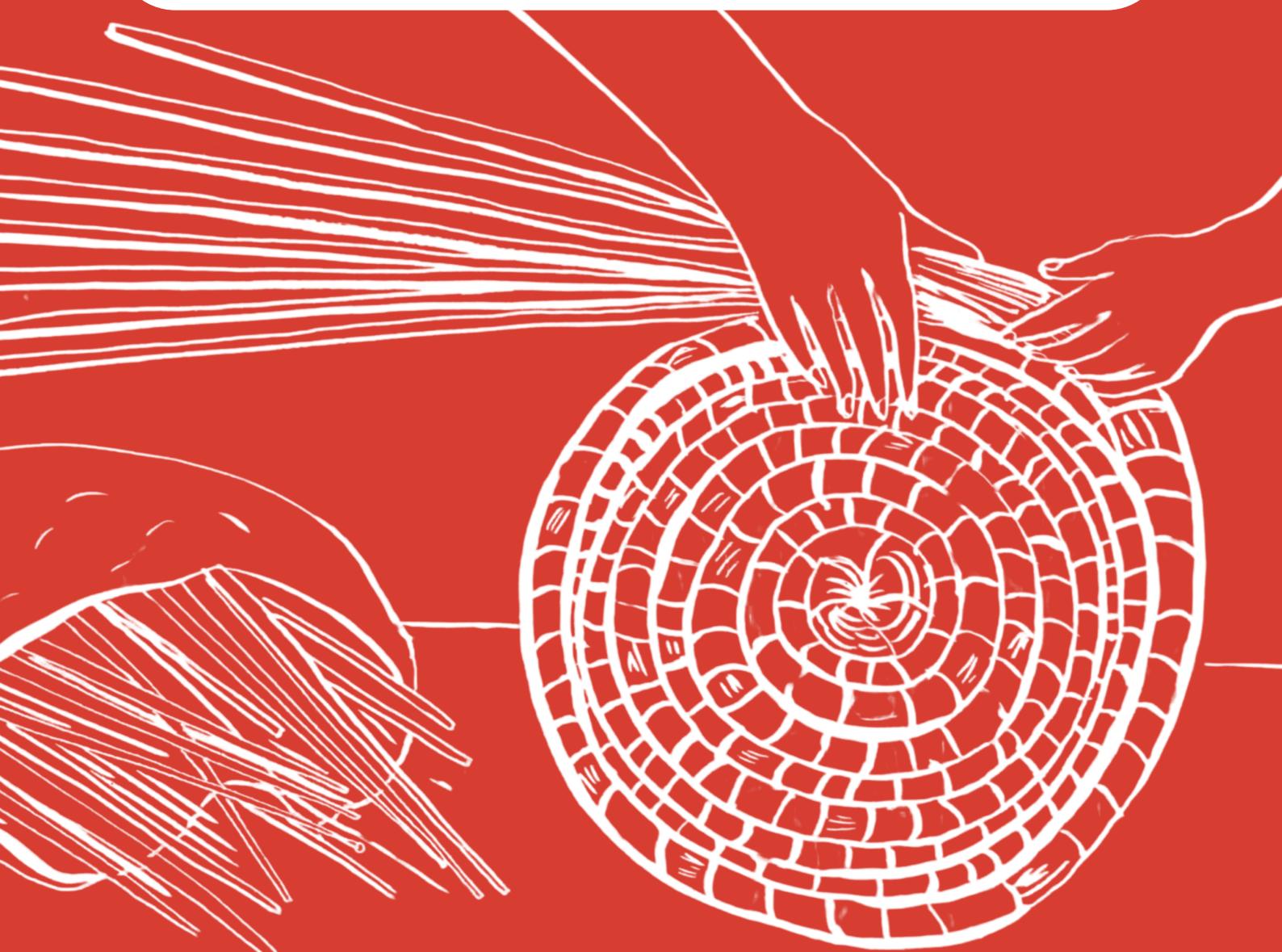


What would your shield look like? What would make it strong? Could you carry it in battle?

Make with...

Plants

Plants are living things which grow, and have roots, stems and leaves. Some plants are flexible yet strong and are used in creating objects. For example, willow and hazel trees can be woven, and straw can be bound together.



What's in this display?

This display highlights the use of plants such as willow, hazel and straw in the construction of basketry, fish traps, furniture, coracle frame, lip-work baskets and bee skeps, and the tools required in making them.



Basket used to store wool

Make with...

Plants

Objects of
interest

Baskets

What do you use for carrying things around today? Baskets have been used for a very long time for the transportation and storage of goods. The ones on display here could be used for carrying foodstuffs such as eggs, potatoes and fish.



Objects of interest

Willow pot for catching lobsters and crabs



Fishing

Fishermen have traditionally used plants such as hazel and willow to create their own traps. They're designed so that the fish/lobsters get in to eat the bait, but can't get back out.

Tools

Look at the tools used in working with plants. What are they made from? What are most tools made from today?





Coracle

Discussion...

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Links to buildings...

Kennixton Farmhouse



Observe the way straw has been used to create the decorative under-thatch of the roof. In the garden, you will find straw rope bee skeps where the family would collect honey.



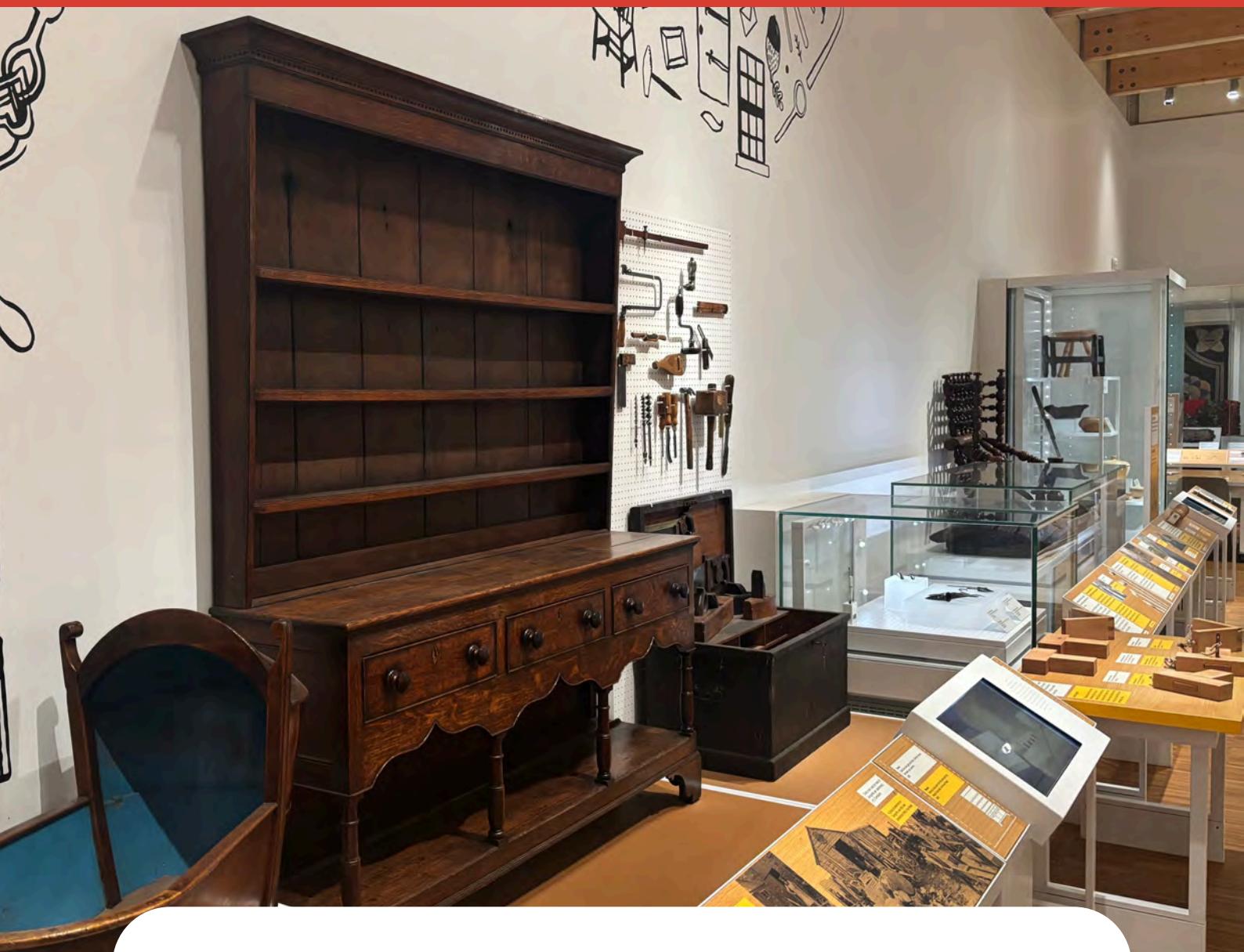
Make with...

Wood

Wood is the hard material that forms the trunk and branches of a tree. There are many different types of wood with different properties which make them suitable for particular tasks. For example, alder has been used historically to make water pipes due to the fact that it is durable under water. Oak is one of the hardest and most durable timbers, and has been used extensively to build houses and ships.



What's in this display?



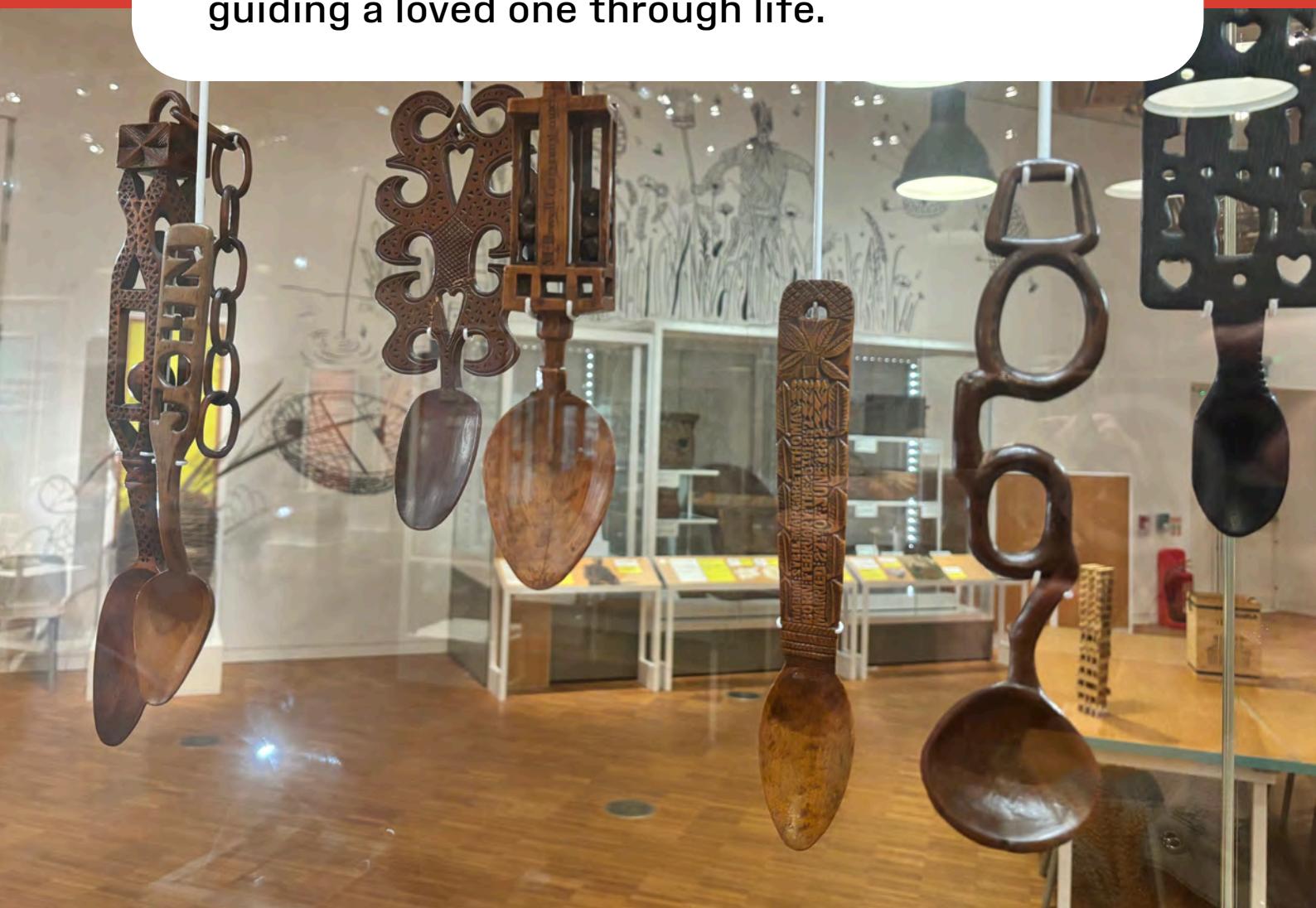
This display highlights the use of wood - in woodturning for furniture, bowls and spoons; the tools of woodworkers from the Bronze Age; carpentry tools of the 19th century; chair making, coopering, rake making, and the carving of lovespoons, butter prints and walking sticks.

Make with... Wood

Objects of interest

Lovespoons

These would be carved with great care and devotion, and given as gifts to a loved one. The oldest spoon in the museum's collection dates to 1667. Close grain woods such as sycamore, box and fruit woods were a popular choice of material. Common symbols in the designs include hearts for love, diamonds as a wish for good fortune, and the wheel as a symbol of guiding a loved one through life.



Objects of interest

Butter prints

These were used to stamp a design into the butter ready for market. They're made from a wood called Sycamore, which doesn't leave a taste. The designs can include hearts, acorns and pineapples. Though the craft of carving these stamps was commonplace in many countries, the canoe shaped stamps are unique to Wales.





*Hand carved lovespoon made by Siôn
Llewellyn, Nantymoel, Ogmore Vale.*



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Links to buildings...

Ty'n Rhos Sawmill



This was built in 1892 to house a water-powered saw. The family who owned the business were also highly regarded for their joinery work, furniture, carts and wagons.

Tasks for back at school...

Make your own digital lovespoon



Make your own lovespoon and email it to a loved one.

Make with...

Textiles

Textiles are materials made by weaving, knitting, knotting or pressing fibres together.



What's in this display?

This display contains items such as quilts, rag rugs, woven blankets and clothes, knitted socks, tools used for spinning wool into yarn, patchwork and samplers.



Make with...

Textiles

Objects of
interest



Rag rugs

Rag rugs are a great way to make new objects from old clothes. Scrap material can be cut to strips and inserted through a hessian sack backing with a prodding tool to make a colourful rug. People have made rag rugs for a long time, and they became very popular in times when money was tight, for example during the clothes rationing of the Second World War.

Objects of interest

Quilts

These quilts are made of different materials including cotton and wool. Quilts such as these could be made in quilting classes (and entered into quilting competitions), or be made by itinerant quilters, who travelled from farm to farm making and repairing quilts for the family. The designs can feature patterns made up of diamonds, roses, leaves, zig zags and trellis to name a few.





Hooked rag-rug made by Mary Ann Thomas, Garnant, 1930s.

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Links to buildings...

Esgair Moel Woollen Mill



This mill was built around 1760. Local farmers would bring their wool here to be turned into textiles. Today the mill is still in action, from dyeing wool to creating fabric.

Tasks for back at school...

Make a simple card loom



A video tutorial showing how to create a simple card loom and weave a square.

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More Gallery Teaching Resources...



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