National Coppice Federation
Supporting the Coppice Industry

NCFed Weekend Gathering & AGM 2026
Thursday 1st – Sunday 4th October

Hosted by

EAST MIDLANDS COPPICE NETWORK

This Year's Host Group

East Midlands Coppice Network welcomes everyone to join them for what promises to be another great NCFed Weekend Gathering and AGM. This will be the second time EMCN will have hosted the Gathering in the famous Sherwood Forest-the last being a decade ago at Hill Holt Wood on the Notts /Lincs border. Whether you're a seasoned coppice worker, new to the industry, a green woodworker or just passionate about our great British woodlands, come and join folks from across the UK who share your passion for coppice crafts and sustainable woodland management. The weekend is open to members of NCFed affiliated supporter and coppice groups, friends and family as well as non-members.

The Venue

Located between the villages of Calverton and Oxton, Nottinghamshire, the very spacious site, used by scouts and Forest Schools, is a mixture of open grassland and woodland. There is plenty of camping space, an excellent range of buildings and facilities including kitchen, toilets, showers, bunk room sleeping accommodation and a beautiful outdoor "amphitheatre" style fire circle with log benches.

The Gathering will include:

- **Early arrival on site from 3.00pm Thursday** (open to ALL attendees)
- **Pre-Gathering courses** on the Friday
- **Saturday morning and (new this year) afternoon craft demonstrations, skill sharing and "have a go"** (including leather sheath making, hedgerow furniture, edge tool sharpening, natural fibre brushes, , split hazel frame basket components, pole lathe turning, besom brooms, spar making, chestnut shingle making, hurdle making, spinning, The Woodland Haberdasher, miscellaneous green woodworking skills and charcoal making.
- **Coppice Groups and individual attendees are also encouraged to demonstrate etc** over the weekend.
- **Tools on sale** from "Woodsmiths"
- Saturday afternoon **discussion group and visits to local Bodgers' camp**
- The NCFed **AGM** and presentation of the **Coppice Peer Awards 2026**
- **Coppice Craft Competition** and new this year, **Live Skills Competition**: Spar making plus "chain stepping".
- **Live music** on Saturday night followed by music and song jamming session.

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- **Tool auction**
- Sunday afternoon, **optional "homeward bound" local site visit to Sherwood Forest**

And of course, as ever, great food, Thursday & Friday night barbecue, fire pit, the famous Froe Up 'n Split bar, lots of chat, banter, laughs and catching up with old friends as well as making new ones.

Venue Information

Location

Sherbrooke Scout Camp, Mansfield Lane, Calverton, Nottingham NG14 6HP.

Facilities

Toilets:	Plenty of toilets onsite and shower facilities
Kitchen:	Dedicated area for free tea, coffee and biscuits on a self-service basis on all days.
Shelter/inside space:	There are two large, spacious indoor areas (the barn and main hall). There will also be an additional marquee.
Bunkrooms	These offer an optional alternative sleeping space to camping
Quiet space tent	A dedicated chill-out zone for those who might want to take some time out.
Barbecues:	Communal barbecues (including separate dedicated vegetarian/vegan one), plus local charcoal, will be supplied for cooking your own food on Thursday and Friday evening plus for cooking your breakfast, if wanted, on the Friday morning. Fridge storage available if required.
Fire pit:	Amphitheatre style fire circle with log benches for our fire pit on all 3 evenings

Dogs

Dogs on leads with their well-behaved owners (armed with poo bags!) are welcome.
Dogs must be kept away from any food preparation areas.

NO Smoking on site policy

The venue operates a no smoking/vapes policy. Please always adhere to this.
It is only permitted at the entrance drive.

Accommodation & Parking

Camping, Campervans / trucks / caravans

Plenty of space for camping on site for everyone. Separate dedicated areas for tents and campervans/caravans. Note: there are no electrical hook-up facilities.

Vehicular access is available all day from 7am until 10pm Thursday to Saturday, and until 4pm Sunday but subject strictly to admission times specified in the "Programme"

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On-site sleeping accommodation
There are nine bunk rooms with 58 beds in total providing shared accommodation. Available for only an extra £5.00 per night per person.

Car Parking

There is ample parking on site.

Food & Drink

Catering
Meals included in the ticket price: Saturday – breakfast, lunch & dinner.
Sunday – breakfast & lunch
All other meals: self-catering

Free tea, coffee and biscuits will be available throughout the weekend.

Please bring your own mug, cutlery, plate and soup bowl for all meals. Don't forget your favourite drinking vessel for the evening bar as well! Please note: NO glassware permitted on site. Please register any food allergies, intolerances or dietary needs when ticket booking.

Sadly, we are unable to offer the cooked breakfast option this year, but as always there will be an excellent range of breakfast cereals, toast (straight off the BBQ!) with marmalade (homemade) and jam etc.

Bar
The ever-popular on-site Froe Up 'n' Split Bar will be opening its "doors" on Thursday and Friday evening from 5pm, and from 5.30pm Saturday, serving local beer, cider and soft drinks. Payment by card is preferred- we will have a contactless card machine that accepts all debit and credit cards. Cash is, of course, happily accepted.

Other Information

Volunteers

We rely on many people pulling together to make the event run as smoothly as possible. Part of this will be carried out by members of the host Coppice Group and others. However, we do rely on attendees to the Gathering mucking in and lending hand! Jobs include assisting with the auction and craft competition, helping direct vehicles to the parking and camping areas, working behind the bar, or helping pack down and tidy up at the end of the event.

Please let us know on the booking form if you are willing to help in any way you can and thank you in advance!

A Green Gathering

Please be prepared to take your rubbish and recycling home with you and dispose of it responsibly. There are no waste disposal facilities on site.

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Programme

Thursday 1st October

3.00pm onwards	Arrival and registration open for everyone. Friday's course attendees are advised to arrive on this day if possible. Self-service tea/coffee/biscuits.
5.00pm	Self-catering evening meal - bring what you want to cook (BBQ & charcoal provided) Froe Up 'n Split bar opens. Fire pit lit.

Friday 2nd October

8.00am	Self-catering breakfast for those on site. Self-service tea/ coffee/ biscuits all day
9.00am	Registration opens for course participants, tutors and other attendees not already registered on Thursday. Registration is also open all day for any new arrivals on the Friday.
9.15am	EMCN Chair's welcome to course participants, tutors and other attendees present.
9.30am - 12.30pm 1.30pm - 4.30pm	} Pre-Gathering full and half day courses. Self-catering lunch for course participants (time by arrangement with tutors) and for any other Gathering attendees already on site.
9.30am - 4.30pm From 2.00pm	Non course participants free to: ~ To network, set up any impromptu discussions etc. ~ Just chill out and chat! ~ "Coppicing Show and Tell" - an informal general chat/ presentation about what coppice groups have been up to/are doing/have planned
5.00pm	Self-catering evening meal - bring what you want to cook (BBQ & charcoal provided) Froe Up 'n Split bar opens. Fire pit lit.

Saturday 3rd October

8.00 - 9.30am	Breakfast served. Registration opens for Saturday arrivals
10.00am	EMCG's Chair's Welcome and introduction plus housekeeping/ health & safety
10.30am to 12.30pm and continues after lunch from 1.45pm to 3.45pm	Demonstrations/skill sharing/have a go: Tools for sale –"Woodsmith" Leather sheath making Hedgerow furniture Get your favourite edge tool sharpened Natural fibre brushes Split hazel frame basket components: by knife and knee including hazel handles (without steaming). Spar making Chestnut shingle making The Woodland Haberdasher Hurdle making Spinning Miscellaneous Green woodworking skills Charcoal making Pole lathe turning Besom brooms and more…

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12.30pm-1.45pm	Lunch served
	After Lunch Options available are:
1.45pm -3.45pm	Continuation of demonstrations /skill sharing/have a go **OR**
1.45pm -2.45pm	NCFed discussion group: presentation/discussion/Q & A (subject/title yet to be announced) **OR**
1.45pm -2.45pm	**Group 1**-Site visit to nearby APTGW local bodgers camp **OR**
2.45pm -3.45pm	**Group 2**-Site visit to nearby APTGW local bodgers camp
3.45pm	Tea/ coffee break
4.00pm	NCFed **AGM** with brief questions from floor.
5.00pm	Coppice Peer Awards Presentation
5.30pm	Froe Up 'n Split bar opens. Fire pit lit.
6.00pm	Craft competition winners announced
6.30pm-7.30pm	Evening meal - Venison supper (with vegetarian/vegan alternative)
8.00m -9.00pm	Live acoustic music (first session) around the firepit
9.00pm -9.15	Interval
9.15pm -10.15pm	Live acoustic music (second session)
10.15pm onwards	Singing / jamming session (so bring your instruments and your voices!)

Sunday 4th October

8.00 - 9.15 am	Breakfast served
9.30am -10.30	Tool auction
10.30am	Tea / coffee break
11.00am - 12.30pm	Live skills competitions: Spar making plus Chain Stepping
12.45pm	Round up, closing remarks and vote of thanks by NCFed Chair
1.00pm-2.00pm	Lunch served
2.30pm	Depart for home / optional Sunday afternoon "homeward bound" local visits to: **1) Bodgers camp** used by the local APTGW group.(10 minutes away) . **2) Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve-**approx. 12miles/25 minutes' drive North of Sherbrooke Scout Camp Site**.** It has the largest collection of ancient and veteran oak trees in Europe, is noted for its wildlife, and particularly its invertebrates. The visit will be a circular walk of around 2.5miles, taking in some of the forests' most special trees and stories of the forest.
3.00pm	Site closes but attendees are welcome to stay over until Monday morning if they wish

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Activity Info

Craft Competition

Craft Competitions of pre-made items to give inspiration and interest to all but, most importantly, to promote best practice and high quality in coppice crafts. We'd encourage everyone to bring along one or more craft items to enter into the competition. There are lots of cash prizes to be won. Entries will be anonymous. The judging will be carried out by all in attendance. Tags will be provided when the competition entries are registered. Items will be displayed inside.

Craft Competition Rules:

1. Each category must have at least 3 entries for judging to take place.
2. Only one entry per person per category.
3. You may enter as many categories as you like.
4. You must declare species & materials, tools used, and time taken to make.

New Craft Competition categories for 2026

- **Category 1:Traditional Coppice Crafts** For example: charcoal item, besom, cleft gate hurdle (including garden gates), hazel hurdle, wooden whistle, walking stick, woodland basket, coppice furniture, willow basket or willow item and any other items not falling within Categories 2 or 3 below.
- **Category 2: Hand carved spoon, spatula, knife or fork**
- **Category 3: Miscellaneous treen** For example, turned/carved /handmade: bowls, plates, beakers, gypsy pegs, boxes, spurtles, breadboards, plant dibbers, etc. i.e. generally wooden household items

There is no separate "bundle of spars" this year, as we are holding the live spar making competition.

Craft Competition Prizes

- **Category 1-**There are 6 cash prizes this year, five of which are generously sponsored by the Association of Pole Lathe Turners and Green Woodworkers, plus one by Musgrove Willows, Somerset.
- **Category 2 -** There are 3 cash prizes this year sponsored by the National Coppice Federation
- **Category 3 -** There are 3 cash prizes this year, two of which are generously sponsored by Julie Taylor (member of West Midlands Coppice Group) and one by the National Coppice Federation

New Live Skills Competition for 2026

Spar Making

Generously sponsored by the National Society of Master Thatchers NSMT, this year will see the first ever live spar making competition at the Gathering. There will be three cash prizes comprising £75.00 for 1st prize, £50.00 for 2nd and £25.00 for 3rd. There is a detailed specification which will be made available to anyone wishing to enter.

Once you have booked your ticket to join us at the Gathering, then please follow that up, as soon as you can, with an email to agmenquiries@ncfed.org.uk to firstly register your intention to enter and then secondly to receive a current copy of the specification.

Judging will be by a member of NSMT. There must be a minimum 4 competitors for judging to take place and for the prize money to be awarded.

Chain Stepping

This competition will be open to anyone who thinks then can accurately pace out a Gunter's chain length on the ground. A chain is a traditional length used to map out sections, plots, or coupes inside managed woodlands. It is 22 yards long, i.e. 66 feet (or 20.117 metres!) and was designed and introduced in 1620 by English clergyman and mathematician Edmund Gunter. There will be three cash prizes sponsored by the National Coppice Federation.

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Coppice Peer Awards

These awards are designed to give members of our affiliated groups a chance to shine a light on the best within our coppice community. This year's categories are 'Best new entrant' (less than 5 years) and Training & Education. Nominations can be made here https://ncfed.org.uk/members/awards/

The winners will be announced at the Gathering, immediately after the AGM.

Tool & Equipment Auction

We will be holding the traditional auction where you are not charged any commission! There will be a maximum of TWO lots per person. Items should be registered on arrival at the Gathering, where full details (your name, mobile number, reserve price etc) will be taken. So, **don't forget to bring your tools to sell and cash to buy with!**

Please note that there will be no "Buy it now" or pre-sale option before lots go to auction - all lots submitted will be available to purchase via auction only.

Pre-Gathering Courses

Following on from the success of previous years, we are again offering a selection of half-day and one day courses on the Friday. **There are limited numbers on all courses so book early to avoid disappointment.**

Please note that pre-gathering courses can only be booked by those that are attending the Weekend Gathering and have paid for a full weekend or Saturday only ticket. If you are not buying a ticket to the Gathering then we are able to add your name to a waiting list for a particular course, in the unlikely event that it is undersubscribed. Please email agmenquiries@ncfed.org.uk to arrange this.

A polite request

To respect the course attendees and tutors, we would kindly ask that all other attendees, who are present on the Friday, to please refrain from going into the areas where the pre-Gathering courses are being held. There will be plenty of opportunities on the Saturday to watch many of these tutors demonstrating and sharing their knowledge and skills.

One day

Sharpening Hand Tools with Maurice Pyle of Woodsmith.co.uk
(Places available: Full day-6)
Good tools require an equally good edge to perform at their best. Whether you're green woodworking, coppice working or carving, a keen edge makes every task easier, safer and more enjoyable. While sharpening won't necessarily improve your woodworking skills, it will transform the experience of using hand tools into a safer and more enjoyable one.
This is an excellent opportunity to gain the knowledge and confidence to sharpen your hand tools to a high standard. This practical course focuses on the tools most commonly used in green woodworking and coppice work, including:

- Axes
- Billhooks
- Drawknives
- Knives

If there's a particular tool you'd like to cover, let us know (via agmenquiries@ncfed.org.uk) before the course and Woodsmiths will do their best to include it in the day's programme.

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You'll learn a range of sharpening methods, from traditional hand techniques using bench stones to powered systems including the Tormek and Robert Sorby ProEdge. Rather than simply showing you how to sharpen a particular tool, Maurice will explain why different methods work, helping you develop the confidence to maintain your own tools long after the course has finished. The day's tuition will also cover the day-to-day care and maintenance of hand tools, including correct storage, edge protection and simple habits that will help your tools stay sharper for longer.
Whether you're new to edge tools or looking to refine your sharpening skills, this course will give you the practical knowledge to keep your tools performing at their best.

Introduction to Charcoal Making with Chris Watts of The Rustic Coppice Company
(Places available: Full day-6)
This introduction to charcoal burning course will be using a 2ft ring kiln as well as a 45-gallon drum. This course aims to give you the opportunity to gain enough knowledge to go home and make your own either on a small or larger scale.

You will learn how to load and fire both types of kilns, grade the finished charcoal and discuss the suitable wood used and the uses of each grade. There will also be the chance to make a small tin of artist charcoal for those with a creative flare.
Each student will take away a sample bag of charcoal along with the artist charcoal

Half day (9.30am - 12.30pm or 1.30pm - 4.30pm)

Framed Hazel Hurdle Panel with Darren Abell of Abellto.co.uk
Places available: Morning - 4. Afternoon - 4)
On this half day course, you'll learn about hazel rod selection/how to split and rive hazel down the middle; about zales and how to fit them to the frame and then weave the frame with your newly split hazel.
Your will leave with your own woven hazel panel plus the knowledge and skills to use in the future.

Making chestnut shingles with Johnie Cameron of Touch-wood.co.uk
(Places available: Morning - 6 Afternoon - 6)
Learn how to make roofing shingles from sweet chestnut logs using a froe, maul and a shingle brake. Once the shingles have been split out from the logs, you will then use a draw knife and axe to produce shingles of a more uniform size and thickness. There will be a mock-up of a small roof section where you will learn how shingles are secured to a typical roof, and with the correct overlapping, necessary for a watertight roof covering.You will go away with your own set of shingles sufficient to roof may be a hedgehog house, a bird table or even a bird nesting box or two!

Low Impact Living (living mainly off the grid) with Andy Alder
(Places available: Afternoon - 5)
Join Andy for a half day course which will include a Power Point presentation on what he does, a skills audit and discussion on where participants are in life and where they want to get to. Areas covered will include off grid living in a normal terrace house, skills for self-reliance, ways to run a sustainable small business and the way we all live and moving away from the 'system'. All participants will receive a copy of Andy's book "Small Projects in a Big World".

Costs and Cancellation Policies

Full Event or Saturday Only ticket: Due to commitments to our caterers, we are unable refund to anyone wishing to cancel after Wednesday 23rd September.
Pre- gathering Courses: Due to Tutors' commitments (sourcing and preparing materials etc), there will be no refund to anyone wishing to cancel after Wednesday 23rd September. The only exception will be if there is a waiting list and we can fill that place on the course.

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Tickets		
	Full event (Thursday-Sunday**)**	**Saturday only** (inc. lunch & dinner)
NCFed members:	£66	£44
Non-members:	£88	£60.50
Apprentices:	£33	£22
Child (13-18):	£33	£22
Child (under 13)	FREE	FREE

Pre-Gathering Courses on Friday				
(costs for the courses are in addition to the Gathering ticket)		**Number of spaces available**		
	Cost per person	**Full day**	**AM**	**PM**
Sharpening Hand Tools	£120.00	6		
Introduction to Charcoal Burning	£75.00	6		
Making Chestnut Shingles	£45.00		6	6
Framed Hazel Hurdle Panel	£45.00		4	4
Low Impact Living	£45.00			5

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How to Book & Pay

Booking: www.ncfed.org.uk/members/agm2026/book

Contact us.

If you have any questions or queries about the Weekend Gathering and AGM, then please email agmenquiries@ncfed.org.uk

Car Sharing to the Gathering

Check out our dedicated car sharing Facebook page to see if you can share the journey with someone in your area or enroute to the venue - https://www.facebook.com/groups/1489925358465263/

Directions

Sherbrooke Scout Camp, Mansfield Lane, Calverton, Nottingham
DO NOT use the postcode on Google Maps etc as this will take you to a nearby site and NOT the Scout Camp There will be "NCFed" pointer signs as you get closer to the venue, so keep those eyes peeled!

What3words address-Just insert ///evolution.slams.adding into the free What3words app to view the precise location. Please note when using What3Words on Google maps the address will show up as "Little Adventurers Forest School, Calverton". This IS correct!

Any problems on the day then please call:
Ashley Martin 07399 159590 or **Andy Alder** 07879 465020

Public Transport

By Train and Bus:
Coming to site: From Nottingham Railway Station, take the Green Line 6 bus to Parliament Square and catch the Calverton bus (it's called "The Calverton") from Bus Stop P1. Alight at the Labray Road bus stop next to Calverton Village Hall. There will be a short walk from the hall to the site.

Leaving the site: At the same bus stop in Calverton, catch "The Calverton" back to Parliament Square in Nottingham before catching the Green Line 7 back to the station.

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