



Category EC/NIC/5
No. ETH/GB/109.7
Directive of 1 April 1993



ON THE STANDARDISATION OF FOLK CUSTOMS, TRADITIONS, AND NATIVE PECULIARITIES WITHIN THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Directive issued to standardise folk customs, traditions, and native peculiarities throughout the European Community, with and for the purpose of allowing all who wish to participate to achieve minimum acceptable standards. Each member country's administration has been charged with listing and categorising those customs, traditions, and peculiarities found within that country.

A full list of all such customs, traditions, and peculiarities is available from HMSO/DTI, Victoria Street, London, HM Government Central Office.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Ritual Dance (ETH) / England (5) / The Cotswold Morris (109.7)

The following shall apply to all groups who perform any dance derived from any Cotswold Morris Tradition.

Performers: People wishing to dance the Cotswold Morris may do so only if they are in groups of the same sex. Mixed groups do not make for Morris. Mixed Sex groups are categorised under EC/GB/109.15—Social Dancing.

Dress: The preferred basic colour is white—trousers, shirt with collar and buttoned to the wrist, socks. Black or any other colour will be permitted only in exceptional circumstance. White knee breeches are acceptable. The costume will be clean, made of a sufficiently thick material so as to obscure all flesh tones and undergarments, and with absence of any staining. At all times all dancers will present themselves in a pristine condition, and if, during the course of the dance, some part of the costume should become soiled or stained, as from, say, mud, shoe marks on or about the knee from galleying, or any other source, then that whole costume will be changed before the next dance.

Shoes will be black, leather, and clean.

Handkerchiefs will be white, clean at all times, and a minimum of 400mm square.

Hats will be worn. Each person will clearly mark his or her hat, and not allow any other person or animal to wear it. This is in the interest of public hygiene. Where clubs have not hitherto worn hats, then some form of hairnet will be worn. Under no circumstance will the hair of any dancer come into contact with the public.

Decorations of the basic clothing may be made only from material and dyes permitted in current EC regulations. This covers tabards, waistcoats, baldricks, rosettes, and badges. No other form of identifying costume is to be allowed. Rosettes may not exceed 100mm in diameter, baldricks must be 62.5mm wide, and badges 80mm diameter. For permitted waistcoat and baldrick patterns see separate supplement ETH/109-37c(i). To retain its fresh appearance, identifying costume must be replaced in its entirety at least once during the dancing season.

Bellpads must conform to current regulations and patterns. They must have no moving parts which can be easily swallowed, and must be either totally indestructible or totally biodegradable. The pad itself must be made of European leather, be 3mm thick, and measure 200mm by 150mm. It must be securely attached to the trousers in such a way that it cannot come loose. All bells will have clappers that work. The total noise from all bells shall not exceed 70dba at 3m.

Performance: It is to be understood that the Cotswold Morris is somewhat energetic in style, and groups will be expected to give a performance that reflects this. Thus the following minimum requirements for each individual dancer will be met before any practice for public performance begins. Please note these are minimum requirements: a higher standard should be expected.

Stepping—the heel shall not touch the ground, except in heel and toe dances. The free leg will remain under control (preferably by the dancer).

Jumps—which includes feet together, jump, step jump, capers of all kinds. The minimum height to be attained is 150mm.

The Galley will be made with 2 distinct hops of the foot to correspond to 2 distinct circles of the free leg, the thigh of which shall be parallel to the ground. The Hookleg will be made with one distinct hop, corresponding to one distinct circle of the free leg. The foot of the free leg shall point upwards.

At all times will the individual maintain proper balance.

For group practice particular attention is to be paid to distinguishing features of particular traditions, to straight lines, and to discipline within the set so that the public will be provided with a true and proper representation of the Cotswold Morris.

Each group will keep clear and accurate records of each practice session and public performance, showing what dances were performed, who performed them, and what individual standards were achieved. Such records will be made available to HM Government inspectors on request.

The Cotswold Morris and the Public

The public has a right to expect a performance of the highest quality, and at the same time not in any way feel threatened, cajoled, or put in any kind of danger. Thus, all items of costume will be fixed securely, handkerchiefs will not be starched, hats or hairnets will not be allowed to come off, and sticks, if they are to be used, must be shatterproof, or conform to British Standard no. BS 3823. Any defective piece of equipment must be immediately and safely replaced.

For the performance in public, only those dancers who have practised a particular dance, and who are familiar with it, will be allowed in the set. The group will walk on smartly, perform, and walk off smartly. The dance will be announced clearly by one person. Unless the group comes from the particular Cotswold village which gave rise to the dance, then the dance shall be announced as "in the style of..." or "our interpretation of...". There will be no extraneous conversation with the public, and the groups will at all times act with complete decorum and sobriety. At no time will the Morris be brought into disrepute by unsolicited smut.

If the group has a 'fool' (or animal, or betsy, or whatever), then that character may only be used provided he or she has attended an appropriate approved course and obtained a certificate of competence which will be displayed at all times. See a separate Directive dealing with Fools, their Functions and Performance (ETH/109.45).

Though it is expected that each group will provide a unified performance, under no circumstances should the activity be so vigorous as to cause dehydration, undue perspiration, or anything else which may endanger the health of the public. The taking of alcohol in public to overcome thirst will result in the instant withdrawal of registration, and any undue perspiration should be countered by a complete change of costume before continuing, or by dusting with an approved talcum powder.

To protect the public fully, it is recommended that a medical practitioner be present at all public performances.

Registration and Inspection

No group shall be permitted to perform in public unless they have first registered for inspection and been awarded certificates of competence for a) dancing, b) public display.

For initial registration the names of each member of the group shall be provided, and only those listed shall be eligible for inspection. If, in the course of a spot inspection at a later date, an unregistered dancer is found to be performing, then the whole group will be fined or debarred from further activity in the Cotswold Morris.

Written records of all practices and public performances will be kept and made available to the inspectors on request, and the decision of the inspector will be final.

Those clubs who were in existence before 1st January 1924, and who can trace their pedigree back to 1824, and who have maintained an unbroken tradition to the present day will be exempted from registration, though not inspection.

The cost of the initial registration shall be £20.00 per club and £5.00 for each performer. The cost of the annual inspection shall be £100.00 per club, plus travelling and accommodation expenses for the inspector(s).

Appointed Inspecting Authority

Official registration and inspection shall be by groups or individuals who have firstly satisfied the requirements of the European protocol, EC/ETH/DDMM/Inspector grade.

A full list of all inspectors is available from the general secretary of the appointing authority, Mr P. Redhead, 43 Hartington Grove, Cambridge CB1 5VA.