

Love Heartwood  
Liz Pearson

Woodturner

Reading, Berkshire



*Turned Wooden Vessels in Liz's Workshop*

From her woodturning workshop in rural West Berkshire, Liz Pearson, founder of Love Heartwood, crafts sustainable wooden homeware, gifts, and toys. Her practice emphasizes low-waste methods, using locally sourced or reclaimed British hardwoods with plant-based finishes and plastic-free packaging. She also leads hands-on woodturning workshops for beginners and groups, fostering slow living and a deep connection to nature.

How would you describe your practice and how you came to it?

My practice is centred around woodturning—both making and teaching. I create handmade wooden objects, often from locally sourced timber, and I run small-group workshops where I guide people through the process of making something themselves.

I came to woodturning through a lifelong love of making. As a child, I was happiest creating—often inspired by whatever I'd seen on Blue Peter that week—and I grew up in Scotland, surrounded by woodland where I learned the names of trees and developed a deep sense of connection to them. That early relationship with nature has stayed with me. Woodturning began as a hobby, driven by a simple desire to make beautiful objects, and gradually grew into something more. I started selling my work locally and online, and in 2022 I became a full-time turner. Alongside this, my background in Product Design and many years of teaching have shaped how I approach both making and sharing the craft.

***That early relationship with nature has stayed with me.***

What do you enjoy most about your work?

There are two parts I love equally. One is the moment when a piece of wood reveals itself—when the grain appears, or the form starts to feel right.

***There's always a sense that you're working with the material rather than imposing something on it.***

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The other is teaching. Watching someone arrive unsure or nervous and leave with confidence—and something they've made with their own hands—is incredibly rewarding. That shift in how they see themselves is something I never get tired of.



Wooden Mushroom and Bowl for Demonstration Purposes

What does a typical day look like for you (if such a thing exists)?

No two days are quite the same, which I really value. Some days are spent in the workshop teaching—working closely with small groups, guiding them through each step, making sure they feel safe and supported.

Other days are quieter and more focused on making, developing ideas, or preparing materials. There's also a lot of time spent on the unseen parts—planning courses, maintaining tools, sourcing wood, and running the business.

***It's a balance between practical, creative, and reflective work.***

What do you wish other people knew or understood about your work?

I think people often underestimate how much skill, patience and attention is involved.

From the outside, it can look quite quick—especially on social media—but in reality it's built on years of learning, mistakes, and refinement. Even now, I'm still learning every time I step into the workshop.

***Wood isn't uniform—it moves, it reacts, it has its own character.***

I also think there's a deeper relationship with the material than people might realise. Wood isn't uniform—it moves, it reacts, it has its own character. You have to listen to it.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your practice?

Helping people realise they are capable of making something themselves.

Many people arrive thinking they won't be able to do it, or that it's "not for them." By the end of a session, they've created something they're proud of, and that shift in confidence often extends beyond the workshop.

That sense of achievement—and the joy that comes with it—is incredibly meaningful to be part of.



Liz Working With a Roughing Gouge



Liz Creating Curves With a Spindle Gouge



Different Gouges in Liz's Workshop



Locally Sourced Wood for Woodturning

How has your work impacted your view of the world? How does this translate to your everyday life?

***It has definitely slowed me down.***

Working with wood requires patience. You can't rush it without consequences, so you learn to work at the pace the material allows. That mindset has carried into everyday life—being more present, more observant, and more accepting of process.

It's also deepened my awareness of where materials come from and the value of using resources thoughtfully. That awareness shapes a lot of my decisions, both in work and at home.

How do you incorporate sustainability into your practice?

Sustainability is something I actively build into the way I work. I source timber locally wherever possible, often from tree surgeons—wood that might otherwise be chipped or burned. I also try to understand the provenance of the materials I use and minimise waste throughout the process.

Packaging is plastic-free and recyclable, and I've made changes in the workshop to reduce energy use and environmental impact. I also plant a tree for every purchase or course booking through Ecologi, which feels like a small but meaningful way to give something back.

What led you to start running workshops?

It came from a desire to share what I had learned. Woodturning can feel quite inaccessible at first—there's equipment, safety, and a lot of unknowns. I wanted to create a space where people could try it in a supportive, calm environment and build confidence step by step.

Teaching also brings a different dimension to my practice. It's not just about what I make, but about what others discover they can make too—and that feels just as important.

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In your opinion, what is the most important thing that we, as a society, must do to preserve traditional crafts around the world?

We need to value them—not just culturally, but practically. That means supporting makers, choosing handmade where we can, and creating spaces where skills can be taught and shared.

It also means introducing craft to younger generations. When people experience making something with their own hands, they begin to understand its value in a completely different way. It is a huge shame that craft is no longer a part of the school curriculum and I believe it should be reintroduced in some way.

What do you think the future of your craft will look like?  
What is needed to achieve this future?

I think there's a growing desire for slower, more meaningful ways of making and living, and craft has an important role in that. For woodturning—and traditional crafts more broadly—to thrive, we need access, education, and visibility. People need opportunities to try it, to learn safely, and to feel that it's something they can be part of.

***Passing on skills is essential. Without that, knowledge is easily lost.***



*Woodturned Bowl with Exposed Bark Made by Liz*