



Linaceae 2025/6 FLAX PROJECT

Historically, England used to produce flax for the production of linen on a commercial scale. Near my childhood home in Somerset, it was once transported by rail across the country after being harvested and processed by hundreds of women during World War one and two.

When the wars ended, the manufacturing of flax was replaced by cheaper imports and today it is no longer grown in England on a commercial scale.

In 2025 I applied to the Cotton Research Trust for grant funding to set up a project growing Flax on my partners family farm near Saltash. I wanted to learn how flax was grown for fibre production, how to harvest and process it and eventually how to spin and weave the fibre into a finished product.

The goal of the project is to invite local primary school children to learn some of these traditional skills on the farm.

FLAXLANDS WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 2025

My grant funding paid for a two day workshop with Flaxlands on how to process and spin flax.

It also funded some equipment so that I would be able to teach these skills to school children on the farm and some seeds to grow the flax.

Images show retted flax (top left), combed flax (bottom left), a distaff (top right), and spinning the fibre (bottom right).





SOWING FLAX,
MAY 2026.



GROWING FLAX,
JUNE 2026.





FLAX FLOWERING,



EARLY JULY 2026.



FLAX HARVESTING, SEED
HARVEST AND RETTING,



LATE JULY 2026.



The background of the entire image is a close-up, slightly out-of-focus photograph of dried flax seed heads and some yellow flowers. The seed heads are small, round, and light brown, attached to thin, dry stems. The yellow flowers are in the lower left and bottom center, adding a pop of color to the warm, golden-brown tones of the dried plants.

NEXT STEPS...

We have a week of primary school visits booked in at the beginning of September, the flax will be retted and ready for the students to learn to process by hand.

In October, I will complete a weaving course (funded by the Cotton Research Trust grant).

I will learn how to set up a loom and basic weaving techniques. I will naturally dye our home grown linen skiens and I hope to use these to weave in to fabric.