



Amazon Handmade reveals rapid growth in artisanal businesses as Brits quit the 9-5 in favour of crafty careers

November 9, 2021

The number of self-employed artisans in Great Britain rose by a third (33 per centⁱ) last year, the biggest increase over the past 10 years

Last year's lockdown inspired one in five Britsⁱⁱ (18 per cent) who took up crafts during the pandemic to leave their 9-5 in favour of selling handmade goods, with Birmingham, Edinburgh and London identified as 2021's Great British craft hotspots

To celebrate the rise of artisans across Great Britain, Amazon Handmade has gifted three makers in the craft hotspots free 3D billboards to help raise awareness of their bespoke handmade products and inspire those looking to turn their hands to craft

Images can be downloaded [HERE](#)

b-roll can be downloaded [HERE](#)

LONDON – 00.01am – 9th November, 2021 – A report released today reveals Britain saw the biggest increase of new handmade artisans in a decade last year, with a 33 per cent increase in self-employed crafters recorded between 2019 and 2020 alone. This growth contributed to an overall rise of 21 per centⁱⁱⁱ more makers setting up handmade businesses over the last ten years. Amazon Handmade – a store for handcrafted personalised products, supporting local artisans – conducted the research which identifies Birmingham, Edinburgh, and London as Great British craft hotspots. Birmingham and the West Midlands saw more growth during the pandemic year than any other region in the UK^{iv}, and Edinburgh (home to 18 per cent of Scotland's artisans^v) and London (31 per cent of Britain's artisans^{vi}) host the highest number of artisans nationally.

To celebrate these craft hotspots, and to support and inspire local artisans, Amazon Handmade has gifted three large-scale, 3D, handmade billboards to three established independent artisans in their home cities of Birmingham, Edinburgh and London. Brits interested in shopping for beautiful, local and handcrafted products can learn more at www.amazon.co.uk/handmadeshoplocal

The Craft Revolution

The growth shows no sign of slowing as Amazon Handmade found lockdown crafting has inspired a wave of creative side hustles among Brits. One in five (18 per cent) of those who took up creative hobbies during the pandemic have been inspired to leave their 9-5 to sell their own handmade goods, with over 80 per cent of people under 35 who took up craft during the pandemic now selling products they make themselves either full or part-time.

Those who chose to leave their 9-5 job to pursue selling their handmade goods full time cited improved mental wellbeing (66 per cent), a desire to be more creatively fulfilled (51 per cent) and career autonomy (52 per cent) as their reasons why.^{vii}

The data shows that Gen-Z and Millennials are at the centre of the nation's 9-5 exodus, as 36 per cent of people who took up craft during lockdown under the age of 35 surveyed now sell handmade items as their main income^{viii}.

Artisans in Beauty and Grooming saw the biggest growth since 2010, with a 141 per cent increase, followed by Sporting Goods (47 per cent) and Toys/Games/Musical Instruments (20 per cent). Craft specialisms for areas across Britain were also identified, with the South West specialising in tanning leather, North East in manufacturing carpets and rugs, Scotland for knitting and textiles, and West Midlands for jewellery^{ix}.

Amazon Handmade Billboards #CraftedWithLove

The report, based on data mined by economic consultants Metro Dynamics spanning the past 10 years, found that of the key UK craft hubs, Edinburgh indexes particularly highly for textile artisans, Birmingham for jewellers, and London for beauty and grooming artisans^x. To keep these traditions alive and support local makers, Amazon Handmade has chosen the below businesses to celebrate with a handcrafted billboard:

- **Dawn McKenna**, 52 from Edinburgh, has been celebrated with a Textiles billboard to promote her business Bowzos. Dawn commented: *"Bowzos started in 2014 when a new member of the family came along, our naughty Beagle, Honey. I was inspired to make her something special as I couldn't find anything unique, so with some scraps of fabric and my history of crafting, I made her a collar using local tweed. Now I sell tartan bow-tie collars worldwide, all inspired from my love for Honey. She's just turned 8 years old, and this billboard is just the birthday present she deserves!"*
- **Antje Kriesche**, 52 living in London, has been celebrated with a Beauty & Grooming billboard to promote her business Funky Soap Shop. Antje said *"Funky Soap started 10 years ago in my kitchen. With my obsession for skincare and everything handmade, I created our first batches of soap and shampoo. From this point business developed quickly and we soon had to find a workshop and expand. But our ideas have stayed the same. We are dedicated to crafting high*

quality, healthy and effective skin and hair care products that are kind to our planet. Our mission is simple: To use the power and simplicity of nature to cleanse, soothe, heal and protect your skin and hair!

- **Asad Bangash & Asiya Asad**, both 35 living in Birmingham, have been celebrated with a jewellery billboard to promote their business Mani and Lizaa. Asiya commented: “*Mani & Lizaa was started in 2019 named after our two beautiful daughters Iman & Aliza. I started making embroidery art when I was only 12 years old and never stopped since that moment. My husband is passionate about wooden jewellery and really loves making and designing exclusive designs and wooden products in between his mental health supporting job at NHS. All our products are designed/created by us and are truly one of a kind.*”

To find out more about the three makers and their products, as well as thousands of other local artisans producing beautiful hand-crafted products in time for Christmas, customers can visit www.amazon.co.uk/handmadeshoplocal

Lisa Butters, Global Store Manager, Amazon Handmade said: “*Last year was a record for the number of new self-employed artisans across the country, showing just how resilient Britons were in the face of a truly unique time. With the huge rise, we saw that people took to creative outlets to express themselves and created so much with their craftwork that they began selling their handmade goods, and even created their own businesses. The entrepreneurial Brit is growing, and we want to support our local artisans as much as possible this festive season and beyond.*”

Ends

For more information and interview opportunities with Amazon Handmade artisans, please contact AmazonHandmade@theacademypr.com / 07842 819304

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Survey of 2,000 British adults conducted by OnePoll between 29/10/2021 – 3/11/2021

Metro Dynamics data was collated by using Methodology A for national data, and Methodology B for regional data. Methodology A analysed artisanal occupations from the Annual Population Survey, identifying self-employed people working in specific Standard Occupational Classification codes that have been defined as ‘artisanal’ – artisanal codes available in full report, and separately on request. Methodology B used data from UK Business Counts and Standard Industrial Classification to reinforce data at a sub-national level for artisanal businesses.

About Metro Dynamics

Metro Dynamics is a market leading consultancy working in towns, cities, and regions across the UK.

We deliver strategic advice, research and analysis to a broad client base from the public and private sectors who are leading, growing or investing in places.

Our team are experts in economics, finance, investment, industrial and technological development, policy and governance, and are highly respected advisors to towns, cities, central Government and regions around the country. Our approach is evidence-led and underpinned by a deep understanding of the dynamics of places. Our client list, which shows the breadth and prestige of the organisations we have worked with, is available [here](#).

About Amazon

Amazon is guided by four principles: customer obsession rather than competitor focus, passion for invention, commitment to operational excellence, and long-term thinking. Amazon strives to be Earth’s Most Customer-Centric Company, Earth’s Best Employer, and Earth’s Safest Place to Work. Customer reviews, 1-Click shopping, personalised recommendations, Prime, Fulfillment by Amazon, AWS, Kindle Direct Publishing, Kindle, Career Choice, Fire tablets, Fire TV, Amazon Echo, Alexa, Just Walk Out technology, Amazon Studios, and The Climate Pledge are some of the things pioneered by Amazon. For more information, visit Amazon.co.uk/about and follow [@AmazonNewsUK](https://twitter.com/AmazonNewsUK).

ⁱ Metro Dynamics Research, Oct 21, Methodology A: Analysis of Annual Population Survey and Standard Occupational Classification Codes

ⁱⁱ OnePoll Research, Nov 21

ⁱⁱⁱ Metro Dynamics Research, Oct 21, Methodology A: Analysis of Annual Population Survey and Standard Occupational Classification Codes

^{iv} Metro Dynamics Research, Oct 21, Methodology B: Analysis of UKBC and Standard Industrial Classifications

^v Amazon Handmade: Artisan count data

^{vi} Metro Dynamics Research, Oct 21, Methodology B: Analysis of UKBC and Standard Industrial Classifications

^{vii} OnePoll Research, Nov 21

^{viii} OnePoll Research, Nov 21

^{ix} Metro Dynamics Research, Oct 21, Methodology B: Analysis of UKBC and Standard Industrial Classifications

^v Metro Dynamics Research, Oct 21, Methodology B: Analysis of UKBC and Standard Industrial Classifications