

John Letts

The combed wheat reed thatching tradition.

It's one of two hundred, two hundred and fifty rarest thatched buildings in the country, as far as I can see. In front of us we see a coat of combed wheat reed, which is the traditional material that's been used in the West Country for, who knows how long, at least a thousand years I'd reckon but probably before that, and if you go back through the layering on this roof you'll see that that tradition really hasn't changed, so there's a demonstrable continuity on this roof of six hundred years of tradition and material. I mean all thatched roofs use the materials that were available in their locality, so by looking at the layering on this roof, you're really tying this building to the local environment, to local farming; it can tell you all sorts of things about technique, about local farming and also about the history of the building itself.