

**New Chairman appointed as Bath Preservation Trust pays tribute to Edward Bayntun-Coward following 10 years of service in the role**

**Bath Preservation Trust bids a fond farewell to its Chairman of 10 years, Edward Bayntun-Coward, and announces the appointment of Thomas Sheppard who started his role as Chair of Trustees for the 82-year-old Trust this week.**

Edward Bayntun-Coward owns and manages George Bayntun bookshop and bindery in Manvers Street, Bath. He chaired Bath Preservation Trust’s Architecture and Executive Committees before being elected Chair of Trustees in 2006. In March 2016 Edward will become High Sheriff of Somerset.

At his final AGM he said to Trust Members:

*“I remember how proud my parents were to support the important work of Bath Preservation Trust, which at that time was halting the Sack of Bath. The Trust is no less relevant today, with a vital and positive role to play in navigating this unique city, and its environs, through the generations to come. Our success in challenging Network Rail to instate appropriate railings and fittings for a World Heritage Site is a case in point. And I am very proud that during my chairmanship the Trust has reunited No. 1 Royal Crescent with its original servants’ wing, taken on the full management of the Herschel Museum of Astronomy, and used its common sense judgement in guiding the developers of city–centre projects. History will be the judge of many of our decisions.”*

Thomas Sheppard has over 40 years' experience as a lawyer including being Managing Partner of Thrings LLP for ten years – until 2013. His primary expertise is as a Commercial Property lawyer and that follows through with his love of buildings and the city which has always been his home. Thomas has always found time to support Bath’s charitable and voluntary sectors. He is Chair of the Council of the University of Bath and also held the positions of Chair and Trustee of Dorothy House (Hospice Care) and RICE (Research Institute for the Care of the Elderly), Non-Executive Director at the Royal United Hospital, Chairman of the Finance Committee of Bath Festivals Trust and Vice Chair and Trustee of Bristol Arnolfini as well as many smaller charities and organisations.

He first became a Trustee of Bath Preservation Trust in 2002 and during that period served as Chair of the Architecture Committee for a number of years. He retired as a Trustee in 2012 but was re-elected in June 2014.

Thomas took over on 1 February. He says:

“*It is a huge privilege to have been invited to the role of Chairman of Bath Preservation Trust*. *There is much to celebrate with our great team of staff, trustees and volunteers and our very special museums. We have the unique opportunity in Bath to not just encourage and support conservation but also influence the inevitable evolution of a modern city and its setting; not just for the people that live and work in it but also our visitors and those who simply love it.*

*Perhaps it was easier when there was “just” the Sack of Bath to rail against whilst now change and pressures come from every direction; debates on traffic – students – electrification – rugby – urban expansion are all there to be engaged with. Our opportunity is to be the city’s conscience and particularly through our educational resources support those who want to evolve and enhance our World Heritage City.”*

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**Notes for editors**

**Photographs of Edward Bayntun-Coward and Thomas Sheppard are attached**

The Trust exists ***“to preserve for the benefit of the public the historic character and amenities of the City of Bath and its surroundings”.*** In a City with such a wealth of heritage there are inevitably difficult challenges to be faced in reconciling the demands of a modern thriving City alongside the exceptional level of conservation care demanded in a World Heritage Site. The 21st Century has brought with it the added pressures of encroachment to the City’s green belt setting. The role and influence of the Trust is needed as much now as ever before.

The Trust believes the protection of the unique qualities of the City and its environs is vital to Bath’s success in creating and maintaining a sustainable and buoyant economy for the future. Much of the Trust’s work involves engaging with those whose decisions determine the city’s future, inspecting and responding on all planning applications in the conservation area and to listed building consent applications, and providing informed witnesses at planning meetings and public inquiries.

The Trust is also a major provider in the tourist economy as it owns and runs museums and educational activities at No. 1 Royal Crescent, The Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel, Beckford’s Tower and the Herschel Museum of Astronomy, all of which have been restored by the Trust and provide a valuable resource for the city and its visitors.