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Craft NI's New Chairman looks to future thriving sector in the North West

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CRAFT NI today announced the appointment of former Mayor of Derry, Martin Bradley MBE, as its new Chairman.

Martin will take over from Professor Brian McClelland who announced his retirement from the board earlier this year after serving as Craft NI's Chairman since 2005.

His appointment comes after long standing service to the arts including his positions as chairman with several arts organisations in Derry including the Millennium Theatre and Conference Centre.

In 2008 Martin was appointed Chairman of Ormeau Baths Gallery in Belfast and was a board member of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland from 1997, where he also served as Vice-Chair from 2003 to 2007.

His commitment to the arts was formally acknowledged when he was awarded an MBE in 2008. Martin was also a member of Derry City Council from 1993 to 2001 and served as Mayor from 1997 to 1998.

Acting Chair of Craft NI, Elizabeth McCrum, speaking after his appointment earlier this month, highlights the significance of Martin's appointment for creative development in the North West:

"Martin's chairmanship signals a welcome boost for the craft sector in Northern Ireland."

"As the overall regional body responsible for supporting and representing craftspeople in Northern Ireland, Martin's wealth of expertise and experience will certainly support the consolidation of the sector and help to strengthen the creative community in the North West."

“Over the years Martin has made a very significant contribution to the Arts in Northern Ireland and we are very fortunate to have someone of his ability and experience guiding Craft Northern Ireland through a new and exciting period of development.”

Speaking after his appointment earlier this month, Martin Bradley said:

“I am both delighted and honoured to be invited to take over as Chairman of Craft NI at such an exciting point in its history. I would like to pay tribute to the leadership of Prof. Brian McClelland and I hope that I can build on his success.”

“As a resident of Derry I hope my appointment will support a new and exciting period of growth and expansion for craft businesses in the North West.”

“I will support Craft NI to develop a thriving sector that can tap into local tourism and rural development initiatives which have achieved significant success elsewhere in Northern Ireland.”

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Image:

001_ Craft NI: Craft NI's New Chairman looks to a future thriving sector in North West.

L-R: Craft NI's new Chairman, former Mayor of Derry, Martin Bradley MBE and Joe Kelly, Director of Craft NI, pictured at Craft NI's showcase of emerging craft talent. The showcase features pots by ceramicist Adam Frew who is based in the North West at Flowerfield Arts Centre, Portstewart.

Editor's notes:

- Craft Northern Ireland is a limited company which was set up by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland as a regional agency to represent and support the development of the crafts sector. You can find out more about Craft Northern Ireland at: <http://www.craftni.org/>
- There are more than 300 craft businesses and 500 people working in the crafts sector in Northern Ireland with a combined turnover of some £8m. These are some of the findings of Craft NI's survey of the craft sector, commissioned in 2006. The executive summary is available to [download here](#).

- More information about Northern Ireland’s craft sector is contained in Craft NI’s advocacy document for the craft sector, ‘Why the crafts matter’, available to [download here](#).
- For further details and to arrange any interviews, please contact: Emma Duggan, Craft NI, E: emma@craftni.org, Tel: 0044 (0) 28 9032 3059, Mob: 07708 178667