

Erin Sawyer and Edd Thompson – Co-Presidential Acceptance Speeches

Erin

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as BLS co-presidents.

Edd and I are looking forward to working with all of you to drive forward the BLS initiatives and interests that those before us have championed, such as ED&I and Bristol and Bath LegalTech and to create new opportunities to support our legal community, and the issues that concern it, with particular attention to wellbeing and community engagement.

We are excited to be able to realise our respective professional goals while maintaining a balance with our busy personal lives. I am passionate about the South West as a business hub. We have a lot of exciting opportunities forthcoming to build our national profile while supporting our colleagues across the legal sector.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing president, Ben Holt, for his unwavering leadership over the last 2 years. If the last almost 2 years has taught us nothing else, we know we can find ways to do more than just keeping calm and carrying on. We can leverage situations and make them work for us as a law society and as a legal community, finding new ways to connect and support each other, and I'm looking forward to being able to contribute as a co-president to continue to make BLS a more progressive and inclusive law society, which I promise will have a new website during our term.

I will be disappearing for a few months after December for reasons that I'm sure are visibly apparent (*Erin is due to go on maternity from January 2022*), so Edd will be steering the ship without his co-captain but well supported by all of you. So I will hand you over to my co-president, Edd, to say a few words.

Edd

Thank you Erin and thanks to Ben for his year's of service. I had an interesting conversation with a tipsy Ben at the Awards Dinner, where Ben then realised because we now have for the first time co-presidents, unfortunately for him he doesn't just have 1 more year left of service as Immediate Past President but 2 – I'm guessing by his reaction that he has forgotten this conversation!.

I am very much looking forward to working with Council and the Executive Committee to drive forward social inclusion and corporate engagement which are very important to me. Erin and I have a fantastic opportunity and are very thankful to have that opportunity in the 252nd year to jobshare – with me as a new parent and Erin as an impending parent. We are both pleased and would like to thank the oldest local law society for supporting parents and allowing us to jobshare and to set the tone for modern working. Thank you very much.