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STATIONERS'
C O M P A N Y

David Allan to build on heritage as Master of the Stationers' Company

On 3 July 2018 David Allan was elected Master of the Stationers' Company

With a background in publishing, printing and book-selling, and a fear that within the family business they might become insular, David Allan joined the Stationers' Company in 1987. Thirty-one years on he is stepping up to be Master of a Livery Company with an ambition to "use the past to plan the future".

David Allan is Chairman of the Ian Allan Group, a business founded by his father to publish rail and other transport titles but a business which has repeatedly diversified and reinvented itself. Today its publishing side is focused on Masonic titles and the group also includes corporate travel, property and organic seaweed extract. His brother Paul is part of the senior management, a competent team which allows David to commit to a busy year as Master.

"Stationers has proved to be a really good networking organisation. Some of the best people in the content and communications world are in it and are happy to provide advice and chat over problems and opportunities which are common to us all. It remains a really relevant organisation with its lectures, talks and round tables and the broadening of the membership has allowed us to address an even wider range of issues and to learn from the entire supply chain. You get to hear about and understand the whole process," he says.

Building work, and the fundraising to enable modernisation to go ahead at Stationers' Hall and the adjacent church St Martin-within-Ludgate, will be progressed during his term of office. Already the Company's archive has moved to the new Tokefield Centre but there are ambitious plans which will safeguard the fabric of the Hall and provide facilities to safeguard the future of the Company.

He cares deeply about attracting new talent into the industries that the Company represents. It is for that reason that his favourite role within Stationers was as a Trustee of the Stationers' Foundation where, under his chairmanship, the bias changed from donations of equipment to schools to increasing the number of bursaries to post-graduate students who are planning careers in our industries and, in partnership with Civitas, the introduction of Saturday schools, which focus on improving literacy. Now with the Stationers' Crown Woods Academy and the Shine Awards added as well as apprenticeships (he does not take credit for these) he believes that the Company really has a foothold in all levels of education and that youngsters are getting to hear more about the opportunities within the trades. Also members can, and do, give practical support for employment and work experience as mentors and potential employers.

David Allan is a team player but competitive in all matters. For instance, when he served on the Livery Committee (which raises money for charity by organising fun and interesting events) he was determined to beat the total raised by his predecessor. But in terms of becoming Master, he recognises his role is not to compete but to build on the work of his predecessors. He takes on the mantle in succession to Nick Steidl and David Allan congratulates Nick on fulfilling his personal mission statement: "We are the architects of our future".

David Allan is a "people person". He says that he has been greatly supported and encouraged by fellow Liveryman and particularly the Court where he has served for ten years. He admires many within the Company but it is the Clerk William Alden who he singles out for special mention. "William is a first-class Clerk. He is very popular and good in his role because he understands the Livery and the industries it represents."

Outside business and the Livery, David Allan is a man with passions and this includes a keen interest in military history (Nelson and the American Civil War in particular) and Chelsea FC. He even has a room decorated in blue with the white and yellow trim of the club! By his side for many of the social events at Stationers will be his wife Gillian. They have three grown up children: Marc, an illustrator; Nicholas, who manages the Ian Allan Group's property company; and Victoria, a special projects manager.

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About The Stationers' Company

The Stationers' Company is the City of London Livery Company for the Communications and Content industries. The Company's mission is to be the most effective independent forum in the UK Communications and Content industries, actively contributing to the strategic development, success and education of these industries. The majority of our members work in or supply the paper, print, publishing, packaging, office products, newspaper, broadcasting and online media industries.