



## PRESS INFORMATION

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### **Newbury legend is coming back to Northbrook Street**

Over a year ago Newbury BID asked residents whether they wanted to see a sculpture for one of the richest and most influential English cloth merchants of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Jack of Newbury (John Winchcombe II), installed outside his former residence in Northbrook Street. The answer was a resounding yes, which has led to local sculptor, Luke Webb, working on bringing a part of Newbury's heritage back.

Luke is creating a life-size bronze statue of Jack of Newbury that is hoped to be unveiled in Autumn 2017. Talking of the project Luke, who has been working with the local authorities on the project, said:

'As a Newbury resident I am familiar with Jack of Newbury and know how important he is to the town. It always struck me that he isn't celebrated enough and I feel his achievements are particularly underrepresented.

The bronze statue is designed to celebrate an important part of Newbury's heritage: the story of Jack of Newbury. By connecting people with the town's past I hope it will help promote Newbury's remarkable history and bring a greater sense of civic pride.'

Jack of Newbury lived from 1489 to 1557 and was not only responsible for the expansion of the cloth industry in Newbury, but also for creating the first cloth factory in England and bringing much employment to the town. Legend also says that he hosted Henry VIII at his home in Northbrook Street. He was eternally grateful to the town of Newbury where he'd made his fortune, and he also financed the rebuilding of St Nicolas Church where he is buried.

Artist Luke Webb who has been working with Newbury Town Council and other local authorities to bring Jack of Newbury back to his hometown said, 'Presenting the design to the town council and discussing the project was a very positive experience and it is fantastic they are backing the statue. I was particularly encouraged by how well received the clay model has been and I hope to exhibit a bronze of it in the near future. We are in the process of looking for funding and hope a combination of grants from arts bodies as well as some private contribution will make up what we need.'

Luke Webb is a sculptor and designer. His studio, Offbeat Creations, specialises in high-quality figurative sculpture for the public realm. For more information visit their website [www.offbeatcreations.org](http://www.offbeatcreations.org).

Managing Director of Newbury BID Russell Downing said, "Newbury BID are committed to working with local organisations to further enhance the town and we believe that the Jack of Newbury statue will be a great addition; bringing a piece of Newbury's heritage back to the town".