

Bath's Pigeon Man is fined by court but vows "I am going to carry on feeding the pigeons"

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Paul Charlton vows: "I am going to carry on feeding the pigeons"

Bath's Pigeon Man has appeared in court to learn his punishment after continuing to feed pigeons despite a community protection notice ordering him to stop. Paul Charlton was fined £300 and ordered to pay £300 costs and a victim surcharge £30 after being convicted of three charges of failing to comply with the community order. The defendant was also handed a criminal behaviour order which will last for two years. In those two years the pigeon man must not provide food for members of the public to feed the birds – and he must also stop feeding them himself. If Charlton

breaks the CBO by continuing to feed the pigeons, he could face time in prison. The 42-year-old got his nickname thanks to his act of balancing pigeons on his arms, shoulders and head and giving members of the public grain to feed them in exchange for loose coins. Despite being hit with a large fine and the threat of prison, Charlton told Magistrates: "I'm going to carry on feeding the pigeons." He also said he would not pay his fines and that "I will have to go to prison before I give you a single penny." Last year, Charlton was issued with a community protection notice by B&NES Council ordering him to stop feeding the pigeons.

But on May 9, May 10 and September 23 he was seen by council officers to be carrying on his act. Charlton denied three counts of breaching the notice against him, but was convicted in his absence on November 21. The defendant appeared for sentencing in Bath Magistrates' Court on December 19, but the case was adjourned until today (January 23) pending a psychiatric report. Just 10 days after his first appearance for sentencing, the pigeon man was back outside the Roman Baths, where he told the Bath Chronicle: "This has been my job for the past four years. It is how I pay my rent and my bills. I make a living out of it. "It's my occupation whether people want to see it as an occupation or not. It makes people happy." The defendant arrived at court today in his performance attire – a feathered hat, blue scarf and long coat. Barrister Carrie-Ann Evans told the court on behalf of the local authority: "He understood what was required of him to stop feeding the pigeons. "Despite this he carried on feeding the birds and providing grain." She also read out a victim statement from the manager a café by the Roman Baths, who said: "Paul Charlton feeds the pigeons directly outside my premises.

"We have a responsibility to make sure the tables are clean and hygienic. Many members of the public are uncomfortable and often find the number of pigeons unacceptable. We have had pigeons fly into the shop on multiple occasions. They have landed on our cakes which then have to be thrown away. There is an absolutely clear correlation between his presence and the pigeons. There's an emotional cost of frustration." Charlton responded that it was "a bit rich" for the court to go at him about feeding birds and called the legal system "totally corrupt". After some deliberation, Magistrates decided to accept the local authority's application for a CBO against Charlton. Mr Taylor said: "Mr Charlton there are three offences that have been brought before us. "And for each of those offences you will be fined £100 – that's £300 in total. "You will also pay a victim surcharge of £30 and £300 in contribution to costs." Charlton started putting his coat on while receiving his sentence and left the court while magistrate Peter Taylor was still talking. He exited court with a final "Tata".