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A SECTION OF THE TOURISM SOCIETY

TCN ANNUAL REPORT

January-December 2017

2017 was a year of significant change in the committee, marked by the retirement of four members who have contributed enormously to the professional standing and well-being of TCN over many years.

In the case of Ken Robinson FTS CBE and Chris Evans FTS, distinguished veterans of the UK consultancy sector, both had been active and conscientious committee members ever since the establishment of the Tourism Society Consultants Group in 1989. Elected in 2012, Gerry Carver FTS devoted time and resources beyond the call of duty to editing and producing five issues a year of TCN News over six years, an invaluable legacy and an initiative that regrettably has proved extremely difficult to sustain. Sean Owens MTS was a more recent member who set up and managed our social media accounts but has now moved out of consultancy into higher education.

Delighted as we were to welcome Chris Evans' colleague Dr Richard Denman FTS to the committee in November 2017, TCN urgently needs new blood if the committee is to continue to provide a range of services that can help members in their professional activity. Volunteers are needed.

Membership numbers continued to fluctuate, as always, and stood at 107 at the end of the year. TCN nevertheless is believed still to be the largest professional association of tourism consultants in Europe. The scope of activities that the committee can undertake is governed essentially by membership revenues (currently £35 per annum), so numbers are important; revenues go principally towards the costs of the administrative services provided by the Society, subscription to a project notification service and production of a newsletter. We maintain a healthy financial reserve to cover any unforeseen liabilities or take advantage of exceptional ad hoc opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

One of the committee's priorities over recent years has been to raise the profile, credibility and professional standing of TCN consultants. To this end, we drafted a Declaration of Good Practice, to which all members are expected to subscribe: we were encouraged to learn from more than one member that the Declaration had proved its practical worth in bidding for projects where professional endorsements were required.

As a result of sustained cajoling, by the end of 2017 more than 80% of members had signed the Declaration. Those who hadn't had chosen de facto not to receive further project notifications.

EVENTS

In March, a second regional conference was held, following the successful event we'd organised in York in 2016, this time in Cardiff in partnership with the Welsh Chapter of the Society. An excellent panel of speakers, expertly moderated by Kurt Janson (Tourism Alliance), once again drew a full house to hear presentations on the theme of "Destination Management: New Approaches for New Challenges".

In November, we organised a sixth consecutive discussion-meeting at WTM in partnership with UNWTO, on the topic of 'Funding Growth: How Can Destinations Access the Finance and Expertise Needed to Drive Expansion?' Speakers from UNWTO and EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), supported by contributions from TCN members Oliver Bennett and David McEwen who provided case studies from around the world, attracted an enthusiastic audience on the Monday of WTM.

PROJECT NOTIFICATIONS

Throughout the year, notification of project opportunities continued to be distributed to members, courtesy of the diligence of Chris Evans, who kindly offered to continue providing this service even after stepping down from the committee and retiring as an active consultant.

2018 AND LOOKING FORWARD

In March of this year, we welcomed the distinguished outgoing Secretary- General of UNWTO, Dr Taleb Rifai, to London, where he was presented with an Honorary Fellowship of the Tourism Society at a relaxed and enjoyable lunch at the Royal Garden Hotel. This was the seventh award made since TCN launched this initiative in 2014, and the event attracted representatives of the Tourism Alliance, Caribbean Tourism Organisation, ANTOR and WTM, as well as the Ambassador of Uzbekistan and High Commissioner of Rwanda.

On Thursday November 22nd, a third regional conference is due to be held in Manchester (Central Library), on the theme of Destination Management. Details will be circulated in the early autumn.

Committee 2017-18

Roger Goodacre (Chairman), Oliver Bennett (Vice Chairman), Silvia Barbone, Tom Buncle, Alison Cryer, Richard Denman