

mia hails successes of strong but challenging year



The [Meetings Industry Association](#) (mia) celebrated key achievements of the past year at its AGM today, which included delivering continued support, insight and guidance to members during a busy but challenging period.

Taking to the stage at the association's 33rd annual general meeting, outgoing chair Steve Jones acknowledged the many external factors impacting the sector's ability to trade, from high inflation to political instability, which he said the mia continues to lobby and influence the relevant powers that be about on its members' behalf.

"We are in regular dialogue with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and hold a three-way meeting every six weeks. The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA), part of the Ministry of Defence, connects us with organisations that have benefited from grant funding and have developed new safety and security innovation that could support the meetings industry," he said.

The association's events programme delivered content that supported members across the country and a variety of subjects in both live and online formats. These included Connect Days in Exeter, Liverpool, London and Birmingham, Destination Summits in Llandudno and Newcastle, and more than 25 webinars covering topics from proposal writing to managing people's performance.

Thanks to its ongoing public relations strategy, the mia reinforced its role and position in the sector, once again achieving the greatest media share of voice compared to other associations – further demonstrating its credibility and validity beyond the pandemic.

“As I hand over the reins to Charles Sargeant, I feel confident we will continue being highly valued by our members in supporting you with whatever comes next,” Jones concluded.

Chief executive Kerrin MacPhie was upbeat about the “unprecedented business levels across the industry” and acknowledged the resilience of the sector, which she said has once again shone through despite the onset of a series of additional challenges.

“Our work informing government of our sector’s needs and any challenges to its continuity continues,” she said, adding that the new quarterly mia Insights research provides members with an opportunity to be heard.

One of the many areas of focus in the coming year is helping members understand the importance and value of SIC/SOC codes, which will give government a clear understanding of the value of the sector. Greener meetings and more sustainable ways of operating will also continue to be high on the agenda.

“As well as planet and profit, this also involves people and ensuring that organisations recognise the importance of implementing robust wellbeing strategies. This will be more important than ever as we seek to attract and retain talent in our sector, something we are committed to championing,” said MacPhie.

Members can now take advantage of a new partnership with Stress Matters who are delivering a series of webinars, white papers, discounted courses, a wellness manager programme and offer guidance. A new AIM Excellence assessment which will include ED&I, sustainability, wellness and more, will also give venues the opportunity to show clients they are striving to be the very best.

Concluding the AGM was the appointment of the mia board for 2023/2024. Charles Sargeant of Whittlebury Hall takes over as chair from Steve Jones, who becomes past chair. Barry Cope of ACC Liverpool retains the title of treasurer and Kevin Breeze of Robinson College University of Cambridge remains as company secretary.

Other board members for 2023/24 include: PwC’s Samantha Van Leeuwen; Lime Venue Portfolio’s Jo Austin; NEC Group’s Allan Boyle; Meet Devon’s Nicky Harding; Hilton Birmingham Metropole’s Nicola Underhill; Off Limits Group’s Martin Stevens; The Delegate Wranglers’ Neil Thompson; Grand Brighton and Richmond Hill Hotels’ Andrew Mosley; Park Plaza Hotel Group’s Manju Goel; and NFS Technology Group’s Luis Desouza.

NOTES TO EDITOR

About the mia

The mia is one of the fastest growing associations in the conference, meetings and events sector, founded by a proactive group of hotel and conference centre operators and booking agents to lead the conference, meetings and events industry, providing accreditation, industry awards, research and a voice to government.

The mia supports over 700 members by:

- Providing extensive regional networking opportunities on a monthly basis.
- Helping them to achieve the highest standards of facilities and service through achievement of AIM, the industry standard of quality and excellence.
- Providing a library of best practice and quality standards guidelines.
- Promoting AIM to industry buyers.
- Delivering tangible benefits which support members in the achievement of their own business goals.
- By the provision of information, education, research and advice all of which lead to improved business performance.
- By sharing issues of sector importance with them.
- By raising the profile of business tourism with government.

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