

New Chairman for UKHospitality Scotland

3 years ago



A leading figure from Scotland's hospitality sector has taken on the top role at the country's biggest hospitality trade body.

Chris Wayne-Wills, CEO of Crerar Hotels – a high quality, privately owned five and four star hotel group in Scotland – takes over as UKHospitality Scotland Chairman from Calum Ross, owner and proprietor of Loch Melfort Hotel in Argyll.

Elected by the UKHospitality Scotland Committee, Chris becomes Chairman at a crucial time for the sector as it moves out from the shadow of Covid and grapples with unprecedented financial pressures and workforce shortages.

Speaking on his appointment Chris said: "I am delighted to have been elected Chairman of UKHospitality Scotland and look forward to playing my part in supporting hospitality move towards recovery. Our businesses are bearing the brunt of the current economic challenges, but collectively we are resilient, innovative and determined to succeed.

"Working with the Executive Director in Scotland and the team in London, I will help ensure that our members and businesses have their voice heard on the issues that matter. Our sector is one of Scotland's greatest economic success stories, delivering jobs, enhancing communities and showcasing the very best of our country to guests and visitors. There has never been a more important time for our sector to speak with one voice and I look forward to working to benefit the industry to which I am so passionate and committed.

"My priorities are to push to end the staffing challenges, that so many of our businesses are experiencing, by working to enhance the sector's reputation as a career of choice; to press for reform of business rates to make them fairer for hospitality; and to continue to argue for the reduction in regulatory and policy

burdens.”

Welcoming Chris, Kate Nicholls, CEO of UKHospitality, said: “It is wonderful to see someone of Chris’s pedigree and calibre elected Chairman in Scotland.

“For almost 11 years our previous Chairman Calum Ross worked tirelessly, making the case for our members and sector – in particular providing vital leadership during the pandemic. On behalf of our members and colleagues at UKHospitality I would like to publicly thank Calum for all he has done.

“With Chris now at the helm, we move to securing the recovery for hospitality. Scotland’s sector is crucial to the UK’s hospitality and tourism offer and I am certain that Chris, working with our Executive Director for Scotland, Leon Thompson, will deliver the results our businesses need in order to recover and thrive.”

Chris has over 25 years of experience in senior management positions in the hotel and tourism industry. His career started as a Sales Manager before quickly becoming a General Manager. His wide and varied experience has included large city centre hotels, resorts with golf & spa businesses and various multi-property leadership roles.

His experience in Scotland includes General Manager of the Roxburghe Hotel in Edinburgh and Regional Managing Director for Scotland for Macdonald Hotels. He was also Chief Executive of the Macdonald Aviemore Resort and oversaw a successful and extensive investment and repositioning project.

As Regional General Manager for QHotels, Chris was responsible for multiple businesses including Slaley Hall in Northumberland and the Westerwood in Cumbernauld. During his time working with QHotels he was also General Manager of The Midland Hotel in Manchester, an AA 86% Silver Star hotel, which was the highest graded large four star hotel in the UK and the host hotel for the Conservative Party Conference.

As Cluster General Manager for Marriott International he oversaw all managed Marriott Hotels in Scotland and the North of England. He was awarded the Marriott International special recognition award for outstanding commitment in 2018.

Chris is a leading advocate of careers and high-quality jobs in hospitality. He was one of the first recipients of the HIT Scotland Leadership Scholarship in 2008 and attended the General Manager’s Programme at Cornell University. Chris is now a trustee of HIT Scotland, a fellow of the Institute of Hospitality and sits on the Institute of Hospitality Scotland Board.