

Accessible Hospitality Alliance Partners with Corinthia to Launch Mediterranean Accessible Hospitality Hub

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[The Accessible Hospitality Alliance \(aha\)](#) has announced launching a new international chapter in Malta, establishing a dedicated Mediterranean accessible hospitality hub for operators across the region.

Partnering with Corinthia St George's Bay in Malta, aha will launch its inaugural Mediterranean forum in March 2026, extending the momentum gained through two London forums held this year.

The decision to expand into the Mediterranean follows strong engagement in London, where hospitality and catering businesses united behind the alliance's purpose: a hospitality world that welcomes everyone.

The London forums brought the industry together around the common goal of inclusivity, focusing on accessible workplaces and venues. The forums offer a platform to share experiences, best practices, and a network of professionals fully invested in making hospitality more accessible.

The new forum will carry forward the same focus on practical action and operator led change, set within the context of Mediterranean hospitality.

Spearheading the Mediterranean launch are Robin Sheppard, co-founder and chair, Accessible Hospitality Alliance; Denis Sheehan, co-founder and managing director, Accessible Hospitality Alliance; Frank Bothwell, group CEO and founder, Thomas Franks; Shawn Pisani, vice president, HelmsBriscoe.

Corinthia St George's Bay was founded in Malta more than 60 years ago by the Pisani family. Since then, Corinthia Hotels has grown into an internationally recognised luxury brand through its Maltese cultural

roots. St George's Bay reflects that heritage and provides an appropriate base for a forum designed to serve operators across the Mediterranean.

The Mediterranean region spans diverse cultures and markets, from the Iberian Peninsula to North Africa through to the Levant. Malta's position at the centre of the Mediterranean, combined with its established hospitality heritage, makes it the natural meeting point for operators across interconnected markets.

The Mediterranean aha Forum will convene leaders from Malta, neighbouring Mediterranean countries, and the wider European hospitality sector.

Shawn Pisani, vice president, HelmsBriscoe, and member of the Accessible Hospitality Alliance advisory board commented on the opening of the new chapter saying: "Organising the Alliance's first forum outside of the UK, on the island of Malta, an economy that depends on tourism, a country that has historically been a crossroads for many cultures, and a people renowned for their hospitality, is a strategically sound choice. It is certainly a project I and my peers are excited about."

Co-founder and chair Robin Sheppard, who was born in Malta and is a celebrated champion of accessible hospitality and travel, said: "Sometimes collective ambitions combine to find a moment when the stars align. The launch of Accessible Hospitality Alliance in Malta is set to accelerate our plans to make hospitality open to all."

Frank Bothwell, group CEO and founder of Thomas Franks, the headline sponsor partners of the UK forums, and member of the Accessible Hospitality Alliance advisory board said: "The aha Forums have shown that when our industry comes together with purpose, real progress is possible.

"Accessibility is not a nice to have, it is fundamental to the prosperity of our industry. My colleagues and I are proud to stand alongside Robin, Denis, Shawn, Charlotte and our partners as we build a hospitality and catering sector that truly welcomes everyone."

In addition, to support operator engagement across Malta, the Mediterranean, and Europe, aha has appointed Charlotte Evans as group partnerships director, an experienced international hospitality events and media specialist.

Evans brings more than 25 years industry experience, including 12 years as group publishing director of Conde Nast Johansens, leading its global print, digital, and events strategy.

Accessible Hospitality Alliance co-founder and managing director Denis Sheehan said: "Charlotte is the ideal person to lead our partnerships with operators in Malta, the Mediterranean, and across Europe. Her extensive international hospitality media and event experience is unique. We are delighted to have her on board."

Details of two forthcoming UK forums will also be announced in January.