



**AWTE Annual General Meeting  
30 April 2019  
Board Director Reports**

**Chair report – Sarah Clayton-Turner**

It has been another interesting year at AWTE. Once again, the team has worked brilliantly together to work towards the Association's common goals. Our visibility has increased, partly due to our partnership with Travel Weekly, and partly due to the hard work and dedication of the board.

Our chapter in Ireland continues to go from strength to strength with 100 members in total now and a fantastic series of events throughout the year. Unfortunately they are unable to be with us tonight, but have provided a board report, which you can read.

We have increased our visibility through our strategic partnership with Travel Weekly. This has provided us with a vehicle to promote membership and our events alongside event coverage, which has been useful.

We had a member's lounge at WTM once again and we also had a stand at the Business Travel Show once again. This was a huge success and we've seen a number of new members joining as a result.

The website continued to be a challenge last year, and as a result we decided to change provider. This was frustrating as yet more costs were involved, however I'm delighted that service has dramatically improved as a result with reduced down time and more importantly, a cheaper cost base.

Our events last year stepped up a notch, with brilliant venues and speakers! We made a decision to pay for a series of sessions with the brilliant Jenny Kovacs.

Last year's AWTE Awards was a huge success, with some outstanding winners in each category and a further 5 ladies being inducted into our AWTE Influential Women in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality list. The nominations were opened up much earlier and the name was changed to the AWTE Annual Awards, revised the judging process and had external judges from the industry as well as introduced the new AWTE Ambassador award, which recognised a male member who has really embraced what we are trying to achieve at AWTE and really champions women in business and their personal development.

A highlight for me was the Christmas lunch. We mixed things up a bit, with a comedian, who was the compere but also did a very funny set, and who could forget our wonderful charity speakers, Jim Carter and Imelda Staunton who treated us to an impromptu song. The after

bar was a huge success and proved to be very popular. We are working hard already to make this year's an even greater success with tickets on sale earlier than ever and working to secure remaining sponsorship as early as possible and a new venue.

We took AWTE events outside of London for the first time, running two networking sessions in the Malmaison Piccadilly in Manchester, which proved a great success. We have another one coming up this week.

Attracting members to the events has proved more challenging than ever and as a result some of the events did make a loss this year. In fact the association as a whole has made a loss this year, but this is largely down to costs such as the website, advertising, staff costs as we now have both a bookkeeper and an administrator. But I will let Jess go into more detail on that shortly.

Huge thanks to all of our sponsors in the past year – without you, we would be unable to put on such great events and more importantly be able to keep them at the great value we have come to expect from AWTE. So thank you to Pinpoint Communications, Attraction World, Gold Medal, Holiday Extras, Thomas Cook and The Travel Network Group for your fabulous support.

We decided to take on some paid help. Whilst the board are extremely committed, we are all voluntary and sometimes work has to take precedence. We felt that some things simply can't wait, i.e. dealing with member enquiries and also to have some consistency on an ongoing basis, when the board changes on a regular basis. Nat has done a sterling job in fielding enquiries and assisting all board members with their various challenges at different times of the year. However, this is an added cost to the Association.

Moving forward, as a board we will continue to seek new partnerships. We will look to run more development sessions on topical issues and become more of a voice on women's issues but also look to make the Association much more inclusive, and campaign to ensure a diverse and inclusive workplace for all.

I would finally like to thank the amazing board that we had in 2018/2019 and for making my final year as Chair a pleasure. These ladies have been extremely hardworking and given their time to ensure the Association goes from strength to strength. But I'm also really lucky to have made some fabulous friends as a result. I feel sad that I am unable to stay on as I know that there are some amazing plans afoot, but I know that the Association will be in extremely safe hands with the new Chair, and I wish Claire the very best of luck in her role and I will be a phone call away to support whenever I can.

## Secretary report – Sarah Long

Draft minutes were submitted to the Chair for approval and circulated to the board/uploaded to dropbox immediately afterwards.

The Secretary organised locations for the majority of the board meetings and other ad-hoc meetings as well as sending reminders for board requirements throughout the year and providing general assistance to the board at all times. The Secretary has also attended as number of AWTE events and supported the events team when required with organisation and administration.

## Finance report – Jessica Bain (Vice Chair)

Gross Profit

**2019**

-£31,514

We have had a great year and although we have made a loss over the year, there are a number of reasons that attribute to this.

We made a decision as a Board to invest previous profits into events, speakers and staff in the 18/19 year. As a result, we hired Jenny Kovacs, a professional speaker for 4 sessions throughout the year and took on a part time administrator to support the mounting administration and to help develop the Association.

We also initiated a mutual partnership with Travel Weekly, with the aim of gaining visibility and a voice for AWTE through PR and advertising. Some events did make losses due to lack of numbers however, overall these broke even. However, our increased cost base has largely contributed to the loss.

|                     |                       |            |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>Income</b>       | Company Membership    | £6693.72   |
|                     | Individual Membership | £5050.44   |
|                     | Chairs Awards         | £8130.00   |
| <b>Ticket Sales</b> | Christmas Lunch       | £36,894.00 |
|                     | Summer BBQ            | £1990.00   |
|                     | Jenny Kovacs sessions | £4316.00   |
| <b>Expenditure</b>  | Advertising           | £5033.00   |
|                     | Website Development   | £5727.66   |

We were delighted to raise over £14,000 for the Richard House Charity following an amazing appearance from Imelda Staunton and Jim Carter at the annual Christmas party, and we raised a nearly £4k for the Benevolent- thank you again to those who attended and your guests of course.

We have continued to develop the website, changing providers and developing the site, which is much more user-friendly and modern however this has also costs attached to it.

Whitehart Associates have once again audited our accounts and thank you to Nikki Spoor for her continued support.

We are very grateful to Lisa Morton, our book keeper, and Nat Ryan, our Administrator who deal with many of the queries from members which allows the Board to concentrate on the development of the Association.

Many thanks to all those who supported our events this year.

### Membership report – Deb Merrifield

The membership year has seen us maintain our member numbers, including company, individual, associate and honorary members. Our very active Irish chapter continues to flourish and is now operating completely autonomously.

Keeping up an active membership has been achieved by the combined effect of our regular weekly emails, constant pushing on social media and a much-increased PR presence alongside a full and varied programme of events. A great job done by the relevant ladies - thank you all. More recently membership has seen a boost from our partnership with GTMC and our presence at the Business Travel Show.

The website which launched in late 2017 presented considerable challenges, particularly from a membership perspective. Thankfully these have now been almost completely resolved due to the efforts of our Web Director and the appointment of a new supplier.

I have continued to work with Lisa, our finance manager, to improve business processes around membership, particularly from the financial/accounting perspective. I am pleased to say that we now have much more reliable and manageable processes in place. I am confident that the role is in good shape to hand over to my successor.

We are currently in the renewal period and are hoping that, as in previous years, the vast majority of members will renew. Our membership prices have not risen for at least 6 years and represent extremely good value for money, particularly when compared to other travel trade bodies. The recent appointment of additional admin assistance will help with following up those who have not renewed, as this is generally due to genuine oversight. I am sure that this will guarantee that we achieve our best renewal rate ever.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the current board, and particularly our Chair, Sarah, for their efforts and support this last year, all of which has made my job as membership director a great pleasure and lots of fun.

I wish my successor the best of luck in the role and hope that she finds it as satisfying and enjoyable as I have.

## Web and Coms report – Claire Osborne and Lindsay Garvey Jones

Overall, the AWTE social presence has increased quite significantly over the last year. Our new Instagram account has continued to grow and attracts over 230 followers to date. The new company page on LinkedIn has now reached 175 followers and our posts there outperform many of our peers in terms of engagement. We do still support the LinkedIn group but are less active in this part of the platform, allowing this to be an engagement area driven by group members, rather than board activity.

Our Facebook presence has grown slightly in terms of page followers but we do see a slight drop in engagements as the popularity of this media dwindles in favour of other social media. Twitter continues to be our strongest social platform with over 2,560 followers and high levels of engagement.

We continue to use the FRU (Friday Round Up) and solus emails to communicate events and newsworthy items to our members and other interested parties, linking in with Social campaigns and to specific pages on the AWTE website.

As reported in last year's report, the website had been a significant challenge and we took steps to address this this year, first by moving the site to a new host and support organisation. Point 64 were appointed to manage the site and service has dramatically improved as a result with reduced down time and more importantly, a cheaper cost base. We continue to work on the user experience of the site and are currently undergoing a content refresh to ensure the information and visuals on the site are as up to date as possible.

Please see below for social media growth statistics:

### **Friday Round Up Emails:**

Redesigned layouts have continued to be used and drives increased engagement. Open rates vary between 21% - 29.4% with CTRs peaking at 8%. Sourcing relevant and timely content is key.

### **Twitter:**

The number of followers has growth significantly to 2,566 up from 2,378 last year (+7%), live content continues to perform the best. We will continue to push live content throughout the coming year. Event tweeting works well in generating activity and increased AWTE representation at events will support this.

### **Instagram:**

The number of followers has grown from 108 last year to 236 this year.

### **Facebook:**

Page Likes have increased from 570 to 622 with the number following the updates increasing from 562 to 666. Engagement varies from an average of 100 reaches to over 1000 when post is referring to events or topical commentary. More recently, we have seen a drop in Facebook growth as other platforms become more prevalent.

### **LinkedIn:**

Take up in subscriptions to the company page has grown from just under 50 last year to 175 today with steady growth. This also allows those involved in the organisation to register their connection on their LinkedIn profile and create an AWTE alumni.

### PR report – Michelle Laverick

Over the last 12 months as PR Director for AWTE, my role has incorporated working with media partners to leverage media coverage for the organisation, creating content across multiple channels and supporting the Chair at a variety of meetings throughout the year.

In the last 12 months we have partnered with Travel Weekly as our Media Partner, which has delivered an increased profile for the organisation within the travel trade press and has guaranteed media attendance at all our events. The partnership provided us with bi monthly coverage in Travel Weekly promoting the organisations events and membership, and guaranteed post event media coverage including the AWTE Chair Awards and the infamous Christmas Lunch, both of which are key events in the calendar. It also ensured we were front of mind when issues arose for comment.

This role is also responsible for being a spokesperson for AWTE commenting on issues from Gender Pay Disparity amongst other topics.

Recently, the board of the AWTE unanimously voted to take a stand to distance itself from the ITT (Institute of Travel & Tourism), an organisation which the AWTE has been supported for many years and regularly hosting the conference's welcome drinks. Our board believes that the ITT values are no longer in-line with the values held by the AWTE board and its members, with the male-heavy/non-diverse speaker panel for this year's conference in June.

The support for this stance has been widely acknowledged across the travel industry and provides the organisation with confidence to put itself forward more often on issues surrounding gender pay, equality, flexible working and women on boards

### Partnership report – Lisa Henning

Since joining the AWTE Board as Project and Partnership Director, I have been reaching out to new partners across the UK Travel Industry and working closely with existing partners to establish and enhance both awareness and support for AWTE.

My goal has been to ensure that as many partners as possible, understand what we are trying to achieve as an association and the opportunities available to work with us. As part of this strategy, I have been working on maintaining the close partnership with GTMC and building on this relationship from last year.

I am currently in the process of reviewing new partnership opportunities with local universities and woman-lead organisations. I can see a lot of potential in the local community and am in the process of establishing some good contacts.

I am pleased to report that I have contributed to the increased membership and secured existing membership by bringing different partners into support AWTE events. I am delighted that for the second year running, The Travel Network Group has been able to support the annual awards and we have also introduced partners to support the different award categories.

Also, through working with these partners and by holding our first judging panel, we further strengthened our partnerships and raised awareness. We have also worked with large tour operators, including T2/GM, to share our learnings from our great speakers.

For the past 12 months, I have also been in close contact with Lucy Huxley of Travel Weekly, and this has helped us secure Travel Weekly as our media partner.

We are now working closely with CLIA, looking to establish a strong partnership for the future. As an organisation The Travel Network Group has supported AWTE and we remain a proud member of AWTE.

### Events reports – Jane Pinfold

#### **Events Directors this year:**

Jane Pinfold & Kate Irwin

Kate Irwin left Dec 2018

Lorna Willis was co-opted to assist in Jan 2019

#### **Events Summary 2018/2019**

**New event introduced in 2018 was the Summer BBQ , which was successful and had a broad range of attendees. The Christmas lunch was a roaring success and generated more money to charity than prior years.**

**2018 saw our first Manchester Networking event , and we have added 2 for 2019.**

#### **Social**

- Networking Drinks in the South – Jan 2019
- Networking Drinks in the North – Jan and May 2019

#### **Development**

- Development sessions – tbc – May
- Rada Sessions - TBC

#### **Main Events**

- Summer BBQ
- Annual Chairs Awards on 23/9 – Venue to be decided
- Legendary Christmas Lunch At Pavilion at the Tower of | London – After party - TBC

### **Industry Collaboration**

- BTS – Olympia - February
- ITT Cocktails in Sicily
- WTM Lounge (November)

### **Benevolent**

- Summer Lunch 27 /6/19
- Jointly hosted the AWTE Legendary Xmas Lunch

### **Coming Up!**

We have already been working on how we make the 2019/ 2020 events year even better:.

- **April 30th** – AGM and supper/networking
  - **May 1st**– Manchester networking
  - **May early** – Development sessions
  - **Aug 5<sup>th</sup>** – Summer BBQ
  - **September 23rd** – AWTE Awards dinner
  - **November 6<sup>th</sup>** – AWTE WTM members’ lounge
  - **December 2nd**– Legendary Christmas Lunch, Pavilion
- 
- Thank you for the fantastic support of industry and non-industry contacts for their support, time and generous expertise in attending and speaking at our events
  - Thank you to those who provided venues –
  - Thank you most of all to the members for turning out to our events in all weathers, venues to network, support and champion each other and our organization

### **AWTE Ireland – Clare Dunne**

AWTE Ireland was formally launched in April 2017 and has grown from strength to strength in the past two years.

Our membership currently stands at 101 plus several new membership applications currently being processed.

AWTE Ireland committee members are:

Clare Dunne The Travel Broker Lead Trustee

Lorraine Quinn Celebrity Cruises Trustee

Yvonne Muldoon Aer Lingus Secretary

Niamh Waters Travel Media Web, PR & Communications

Fiona Foster Cassidy Travel Membership & Events

Maura Moloney Dublin Airport Membership & Events.

## 2018 Events

### 18 Apr 2018

Development Session – ‘Invest in Yourself’ - Full Day with James Sweetman.

**22 Jun 2018** Dublin Airport Behind the Scenes Tour & Lunch Sponsored by Dublin Airport

**14 Aug 2018** Celebrity Cruises Ship Tour & Lunch

**23 Aug 2018** Charity Frock Swap at Trinity Capital Hotel Our nominated charity was Dress for Success and we were delighted to have raised € for them on the night

**11 Oct 2018** Business Afternoon Tea with Jim Power at the K Club

**Tue 27 Nov 2018** AWTE Christmas Lunch at Cleaver East, Dublin

**Tue 12 Feb 2019** Digital & Technology Forum sponsored by Travelport.

**International Women’s Day event – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia** To coincide with Ethiopian Airlines International Women’s Day event in Addis Ababa AWTE Ireland was invited to send 3 delegates to participate in the ceremonies and celebrations.

## Onwards in 2019

Our next event is our first AGM, which will be held on May 21st in advance of our next Development Session which will be led by James Sweetman in answer to many requests from members to have a follow on session from our very successful event last year. This event is sponsored by British Airways and American Airlines.

We are currently preparing for our AGM and our current committee have all put themselves forward to continue their work for AWTE Ireland in the coming year.

2019 will also see us extend AWTE Ireland to Munster and we are currently planning our first Cork Development Session event for Jun 26th and a second event in October with the sponsorship with Travel Counsellors Ireland.

As a result of discussion and suggestions at our Technology forum in February we are currently planning our first Social Series, a series of Social Media practical courses run by our own Niamh Waters to guide our members through optimising their businesses and careers on Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, Instagram and the use of video.

Autumn plans include an Industry Panel discussion with high profile women discussing the issues highlighted in our survey results.

Our Christmas Lunch is planned for Friday December 6th and we are currently checking out new venues.

We are now financially independent with our own bank account and credit card payments system for membership renewals and events.

We share our website support with the UK – however we have had some ongoing challenges such as members area, profiles, access to UK members, creating a new email address for the upcoming AGM, we look forward to meeting the new Chair in the coming weeks and continuing to working together to build on the successes to date and shared learnings.

Our 2019 Key Strategies;

- Overarching objective is to provide a platform for AWTE members to achieve their professional and personal goals

- By delivering a balance of informative and personal development sessions. Eliminating self-imposed barriers.
- By enhancing our engagement and interactions as members.
- And, to strive for continuous improvement of association by leveraging best practice from other associations

### **Benevolent report – Aphrodite Burton**

The AWTE Benevolent is the Helping Hand of our Association. There to help and support YOU, our members - There when YOU need us.

A dedicated committee of seven Active AWTE members spend time raising funds at our large Events – our **Christmas Lunch** and our **Summer Lunch** with Raffle prize draws. We are also very fortunate to receive donations from members - every penny we raise goes directly towards helping and supporting our members.

Many members have benefited from gifts and subsidies that have helped them through job losses, illness and bereavement.

Any financial assistance is given in absolute confidence; recipients' names are never disclosed to anyone other than the Trustees and Committee who take the decisions

For the third year running we proudly presented the annual Benevolent Enterprise Gift at the 2018 Chair Awards - Members nominate an AWTE Member who could benefit from a cash gift to help their development in business.

Many letters, cards and messages have been received with great appreciation!

Funds are also raised through the **100 Club Lucky Numbers** - unique numbers are purchased at £10 each – every month a draw is held where the winner receives **£30.00** and each year, at the **AGM** the lucky winner receives **£100.00**.

This financial year, **£5,738.00** was spent on helping members in need, donations to charities selected by members, in memory of their loved one, gifts, subsidies and fruit and flowers for members in hospital.

**Christmas Lunch Raffle/2018** raised: **£ 3,710.00**

**100 Club Lucky Numbers** raised: **£1,740.00** - **Paid out** prizewinners: **£ 380.00**

### **The Year Ahead**

#### **Summer Lunch in Support of the Benevolent**

This year's Summer Lunch will take place on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at the Royal Garden Hotel / Kensington – at this lunch we will also be presenting the **Benevolent Enterprise Gift** - booking details are on the website – we all look forward to seeing you then!

### 100 Club Lucky Numbers 2018/2019 Winners

|                          |           |      |     |              |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|-----|--------------|
| 100 Club<br>Winners      |           |      |     |              |
| 2018-2019                |           |      |     |              |
| Rebecca<br>Chapman       | May       | 2018 | 86  |              |
| Laura Dear               | June      | 2018 | 73  |              |
| Tracy Sharp              | July      | 2018 | 25  | Donated back |
| Diane Harkness           | August    | 2018 | 127 |              |
| Gloria Harding           | September | 2018 | 155 |              |
| Candice Cheyne           | October   | 2018 | 51  |              |
| Ambreen Sher             | November  | 2018 | 47  |              |
| Tricia Handley<br>Hughes | December  | 2018 | 5   |              |
| Faisal Fazeli            | January   | 2019 | 62  |              |
| Stephen Button           | February  | 2019 | 94  |              |
| Yolanda Stewart          | March     | 2019 | 31  |              |