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JUDGING UNDER WAY FOR ACHIEVERS 2017

JUDGING for Scottish Wholesale Achievers 2017 is now well under way with our supporting suppliers and independent judges travelling around the country to interview entrants.

The high-profile awards, created and organised by the Scottish Wholesale Association to recognise professionalism and excellence across all sectors of the industry in Scotland, celebrate their 15th anniversary in 2017.

Kate Salmon, executive director, commented: "It's hard to believe that this is the 15th anniversary of Achievers but the fact that our awards continue to go from strength to strength confirms that remain relevant to the industry and are a fantastic showcase for everything that is great about wholesale in Scotland."



BBC Scotland presenter Catriona Shearer will host Achievers 2017

JIM CUMMISKEY JOINS TODAY'S BOARD

COUNCIL member Jim Cummiskey, chief executive of Glasgow-based Fáilte Group, has been appointed to the board of Today's Wholesale Services.

Simon Hannah, managing director of JW Filshill, was re-elected to the board at the group's AGM on November 23. He is currently deputy chairman.



The categories are:

- **Great Place to Work,**
sponsored by Philip Morris International
- **Employee of the Year,**
sponsored by Britvic Soft Drinks
- **Best Symbol Group,**
sponsored by Lucozade Ribena Suntory
- **Best Marketing Initiative,**
sponsored by AG Barr
- **Best Licensed Wholesaler,**
sponsored by Halewood International
- **Best Delivered Operation – Retail,**
sponsored by Mondelez International
- **Best Delivered Operation – Foodservice,**
sponsored by Premier Foods
- **Best Cash & Carry,**
sponsored by JTI
- **Champion of Champions,**
sponsored by Cott

Categories for suppliers are:

- **Best Overall Service**
- **Project Scotland**
- **Best Advertising Campaign**
- **Supplier Sales Executive of the Year,** *sponsored by Sugro*

The gala dinner takes place at the Sheraton Grand, Edinburgh on Thursday, February 9, hosted by BBC Scotland presenter Catriona Shearer.

Please direct any queries to Kate Salmon or Joanne Mathieson on 0131 556 8753.

JOSH LITTLEJOHN AND RUTH DAVIDSON TO ADDRESS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SOCIAL entrepreneur Josh Littlejohn, the man behind the not-for-profit Social Bite sandwich shop chain and Brewgooder craft beer, and Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson will give keynote presentations at the 2017 Scottish Wholesale Association Annual Conference.

Littlejohn, whose influence has brought Hollywood A-listers George Clooney and Leonardo DiCaprio to Edinburgh to speak at the Scottish Business Awards, will talk about Social Bite and his new restaurant venture, Home.

Social Bite has also recently announced plans to build a village to support homeless people in Edinburgh.

Brewgooder, the world's first craft beer to donate 100% of its profits to clean water projects, is also supported by JW Filshill's managing director Simon Hannah and Chris Miller, group commercial director, who both sit on the company's board. Filshill is a distributor of the brand.

Ruth Davidson, who was recently awarded the Scottish Politician of the Year award, is the MSP for Edinburgh Central. She has won plaudits from across the political spectrum – both at Holyrood and Westminster – for her debating skills and is also known for her sharp wit and sense of humour.

Originally from Glasgow, Davidson is a graduate of Edinburgh University and a former BBC journalist who also served in the Territorial Army as a signaller before she entered politics. She became the first female Scottish politician to appear as a panellist on the BBC One satirical news show *Have I Got News for You* and is an accomplished kickboxer.

Other speakers confirmed for the 2017 Annual Conference – themed 'The Times They Are A-Changin' – include:

- **Robert Graham**, managing director of Graham's The Family Dairy
- **Marc Crothall**, CEO, Scottish Tourism Alliance
- **Tim Clay**, sales director of Asahi UK Ltd
- **Iannick Melancon**, sales director of Danone Evian
- **Laura McKechnie**, associate director, Coca-Cola European Partners
- **Richard Crabtree**, group sales director, Quorn
- **Katie Hemmings**, commercial director, him!

CHANGES TO FORMAT

The 2017 Annual Conference will adopt a slightly different format with the gala banquet dinner taking place on the Friday and the Saturday adopting a sporting theme to accommodate the Scotland v England World Cup qualifying match at Hampden.

All queries about the conference, which takes place at Crieff Hydro from June 9-11, should be directed to Kate Salmon or Jo Mathieson on 0131 556 8753.



*From top:
Josh Littlejohn,
Robert Graham
Ruth Davidson*

PRGS UPWEIGHTS OPPOSITION TO DRS

MEMBERS of PRGS (Packaging Recycling Group Scotland) are gearing up for a busy few months at the start of 2017 as the group continues to make its case for opposing the introduction of a DRS (Deposit Return Scheme) in Scotland.

Campbell Evans, PRGS consultant, updated members – including the Scottish Wholesale Association – on likely activity in the first quarter of the year. This includes:

- Scottish Parliament Environment Committee sub-group is likely to commence its inquiry into a DRS
- Scottish Government is scheduled to convene a number of evidence gathering workshops
- Scottish Government ministers will come under pressure to move towards making a decision on a DRS.

He pointed out that the Government's current concern is tackling food waste. It is also committed to making the Household Recycling Charter a success. If the Recycling Charter is a success, the case for a DRS reduces.

While PRGS has developed a clear and reasoned position of why a DRS is not the solution, the group must demonstrate what actions members or others are undertaking that makes a DRS unnecessary and, indeed, counter-productive to other Government objectives.

A meeting/conference call will be held at the offices of the BSDA in London on January 17 to allow PRGS members to review the Scottish Government's position and political picture, and also review PRGS (and other) activity demonstrating alternative activity to a DRS.

FOODSERVICE GROUP GATHERS PACE

THE new Foodservice Group set up by the Scottish Wholesale Association earlier this year is gathering pace.

James Withers, chief executive of Scotland Food & Drink, asked to present to the group's most recent meeting, chaired by Julie Dunn, SWA vice-president and operations director, Dunns Food and Drinks who was delighted to welcome James given the industry organisation's strong links with foodservice operators.

Withers looked back over Scotland Food & Drink's strategy for 2007 to 2017 and its success in creating one coherent identity for producers with a common goal of growth plus its collaboration with the Scottish Government. He also reminded attendees that food and drink is now Scotland's best-performing industry sector.

Meanwhile, the Scotland Food & Drink Leadership Forum has been touring the country to discuss the future of the sector. The Forum has visited Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Perth and Oban, gaining insight on issues affecting the sector and ambitions for the future from CEOs, directors and business owners. Next year's events will kick off in Stirling before heading to Stornoway and Lerwick.

Withers said: "2016 has seen Scotland's food and drink industry achieve record-breaking turnover and, as we come to the end of the current 10-year industry strategy, we are on track to achieving the target of £16.5 billion by 2017."

The discussions, he said, will help shape the development of the new industry strategy which will "map our course to 2030" and suggested that the Foodservice Group should have a central role in assisting with the development of this strategy.

Discussing the biggest opportunities as well as biggest threats and challenges, the group talked about skills shortages. Attendees also discussed Brexit and its implications on the workforce, on exports and on agricultural funding.

The issue of commodity pricing was also raised with Jim Rowan, managing director of Dunns Food and Drinks, suggesting that a Brexit economist be invited to a future meeting.



James Withers

Another guest speaker was Lesley Richard, strategic procurement manager at Scotland Excel, the Centre of Procurement Expertise for the local government sector. Established in 2008, it is a non-profit shared service funded by Scotland's 32 local authorities.

“2016 has seen Scotland's food and drink industry achieve record-breaking turnover and, as we come to the end of the current 10-year industry strategy, we are on track to achieving the target of £16.5 billion by 2017”

Richard presented the background to Scotland Excel, discussing possible future challenges presented by Brexit with current tenders being written on a two-year plus one basis to reflect that insecurity. She discussed the evolution of the organisation from purely tendering to influencing the Scottish economy and explained how tendering offers suppliers protection through framework agreements.

The group has agreed to maintain contact with Scotland Excel as it develops its strategy document.



Julie Dunn

Other topics discussed included training with John Taylor, regional sales manager of Unilever Food Solutions, presenting a paper on where the group believes training efforts should be directed in relation to foodservice. Raising the profile of wholesale generally through education and then creating an industry specific qualification was also discussed and the group will investigate where to potentially access support from government bodies before the next meeting.

Members of the group in attendance were: Julie Dunn, SWA vice-president and operations director, Dunns Food and Drinks; Jim Rowan, managing director, Dunns Food and Drinks; John Forteith, head of business development at Bidvest Foodservice Scotland; Jon Mack, general manager at Bidvest Foodservice Scotland; Jim Cummiskey, chief executive of Fáilte Group; Stephanie Pritchard, project manager (access to markets) at Scotland Food & Drink; John Taylor, regional sales manager of Unilever Food Solutions; and Margaret Smith, Caledonia Public Affairs.

Guests in attendance were: James Withers, chief executive, Scotland Food & Drink; Lesley Richard, strategic procurement manager, Scotland Excel; and Chris Boyle, channel head of public sector Scotland at Brakes.

The next meeting will take place at Bidvest Foodservice Scotland, Newbridge, on January 10, 2017.

MENTORING PROGRAMME CONTINUES TO GROW

RECENT publicity in the trade press about our high-profile Mentoring Programme has led to applications from a number of potential new mentees and mentors.

Sandie Holmes, principal consultant at 121 HR Solutions, who facilitates the programme on behalf of the Scottish Wholesale Association, said she was encouraged by the interest for the initiative which is designed to improve skills and nurture emerging talent within the Scottish wholesale industry.

“The programme is progressing well and we’re experiencing excellent results with mentees benefiting from regular one-to-one sessions with their mentor plus unlimited telephone contact,” she said. “One of the benefits to employers is that the programme is structured around the needs of the business and that is an attractive proposition for the members who have encouraged individuals to participate.”

Matching individuals with an appropriate mentor who could be from within or outside the wholesale industry, the initiative currently focuses on the key areas of buying, sales and management.

“We continue to invite prospective mentees to volunteer themselves for the programme but we also want to hear from members who wish to nominate an employee they think would benefit from being mentored. We’re also keen to hear from potential mentors.”

If you are interested in being mentored or you wish to put forward a prospective mentee within your business, please speak to Kate Salmon on 0131 556 8753 or email kate@scottishwholesale.co.uk.



PASTURES NEW FOR STEVIE RAMAGE

ONE of the Scottish Wholesale Association’s biggest supporters, Stevie Ramage of AG Barr, has left the company to pursue new opportunities.

Stevie, who had been with Barr’s for 28 years, was latterly impulse channel business team manager and will be missed by his many friends in the Association. “Stevie has been one of our industry’s greatest characters and a leading supporter of the work of the SWA,” said Kate Salmon, executive director.

“We’re going to miss his big personality but wish him well in his next venture.”

Stevie was a regular attendee at SWA events, including Achievers and the Annual Conference – our photograph shows him collecting one of Barr’s many Best Overall Service by a supplier awards at Achievers.



Sandie Holmes, principal consultant, 121 HR Solutions

FREE HR SUPPORT FOR SWA MEMBERS

MEMBERS of the Scottish Wholesale Association are reminded that they can access free HR support via 121 HR Solutions.

Wholesalers can contact the consultancy with human resource queries and advice, and speak to one of its experienced and CIPD-qualified HR consultants.

The company issues a monthly employment law update as part of the service.

For further information please call Sandie Holmes on 0792 121 3892.

TRAINING A PRIORITY FOR SWA IN 2017

A COMPREHENSIVE training programme is being planned by the Scottish Wholesale Association for 2017.

Workshops covering social media, sales training, effective management skills, telesales and foodservice will be available for members throughout the year, it has been confirmed.

Sandie Holmes, principal consultant at 121 HR Solutions, said the topics to be covered next year had been chosen in response to feedback from members.

“We want to provide relevant training for members and the feedback we’ve received has highlighted demand in these subjects,” she said. “We’ll be kicking off with an introductory session on social media early in 2017 and there will be a more advanced course available later in the year.

“Members also said they wanted courses in sales training and telesales, plus sessions covering foodservice and effective management skills so we’re delighted to be able to provide what the industry needs.”



The 2017 training events will be delivered by suppliers, 121 HR Solutions and external training providers for some courses.

Full details of all courses will be available on the SWA website when dates and locations have been confirmed.

ROUND-UP

- **ROYAL BURGESS** Golfing Society in Barnton, Edinburgh was the venue for the annual SWA Golf Day in September. The day was sponsored by Red Bull and allowed members and suppliers to enjoy great golf and network. Thanks also to Graeme Clark of Scot Serve for organising the golfers and congratulations to the winning team of David Grant, Kate Salmon and Joe O'Raw.
- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Kate Salmon attended the FWD Gold Awards event in London in November. This was an excellent event with Maxine Brown from our member Lomond Fine Foods taking home the Gold Medal Telesales Executive Award.
- **PRESIDENT** Eddie Lynagh of Booker and executive director Kate Salmon both attended the SGF's Annual Conference at RBS Gogarburn and the Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh in October.
- **ANDREW SELLEY**, chief executive of Bidvest Foodservice, will take over as FWD chairman in January. Selley, who is the first chairman to come from a foodservice distributor, takes over from Martin Williams of Landmark Wholesale.
- **GLASGOW'S** 29 Club was the venue for the SLTA Chairman's Lunch. Both SWA president Eddie Lynagh of Booker and executive director Kate Salmon attended this excellent networking event as guests of SLTA chief executive, Paul Waterson.
- **TWO** recent training events – Growing Category Management Sales and Time Management – were sold out. Thanks to Coca-Cola European Partners for running the Growing Category Management Sales event and Bidvest Foodservice Scotland for hosting the Time Management workshop.
- **KATE SALMON**, our executive director, attended the Today's Group Annual Conference in Lisbon in October. She joined other high-profile stakeholders from across the industry for a panel debate.
- **MARTIN WILLIAMS** is to leave Landmark Wholesale after 33 years with the business. He has spent the last 14 years as managing director of Landmark, and before that spent five years as trading director. The Scottish Wholesale Association wishes Martin well for the future and thanks him for his support over the years.

SCOTTISH POLITICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

THE Scottish Wholesale Association hosted a table at the recent Scottish Politician of the Year Awards, sponsored by The Herald.

Our guests included Peter Chapman MSP (Conservative), an Aberdeenshire farmer and Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity. His portfolio responsibilities include food and drink.

Rhoda Grant MSP (Labour), who is Rural Economy and Connectivity spokesperson and a member of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee, also joined us as our guest. She is co-convenor of the Cross Party Group on Food and a member of the CPG on Whisky.

The third politician to join us was Stewart Stevenson MSP, a member of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee and the Justice Committee. He is the MSP for Banff & Buchan.

Kate Salmon hosted the table, accompanied by SWA vice-president Julie Dunn, operations director of Dunns Food and Drinks, and Jim Rowan, managing director at Dunns.

The Politician of the Year was won by Ruth Davidson, Scottish Conservative leader.

UK GOVERNMENT PUBLISHES DRAFT SUGAR TAX LEGISLATION

THE UK Government has published draft legislation on a sugar levy scheduled to come into force from April 2018. It said it will announce final levy rates as part of next year's Budget.

Under the proposed legislation, soft drinks producers will pay an additional levy on non-alcoholic beverages containing added sugar at a quantity of five grams per 100ml or greater.

Milk-based drinks and alcohol substitute drinks such as low and no-alcohol beer will remain unaffected by the new legislation.

The draft legislation was produced following a consultation with key stakeholders, which found 95% of medical and health bodies in favour of the levy, while 78% of manufacturers and associated trade bodies were opposed to the move, according to the Government.

Gavin Partington, director-general of the British Soft Drinks Association, said there is "no evidence" that a tax on soft drinks will reduce obesity.

"It is ironic that soft drinks are being singled out for tax when we've led the way in reducing sugar intake, down over 17% since 2012," he commented. "We're also the only category to have set a 20% calorie reduction target for 2020."

Jane Ellison, financial secretary to the Treasury, said the soft drinks levy will form a "central pillar" in the Government's plan to tackle childhood obesity.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

WE wish all our members, supplier members, friends, colleagues and supporters a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.