

Colin Smith assumes full responsibility for Scottish Wholesale Association

The Scottish Wholesale Association has confirmed that Colin Smith will assume full responsibility of the trade body from 31st December.

Smith, who was appointed as chief executive (designate) in the summer, has been working closely with outgoing executive director Kate Salmon in order to ensure a smooth handover when she steps down from the role at the end of February after leading the SWA for 35 years.

She will continue to work for the SWA on a consultancy basis.

Julie Dunn, SWA president, commented: "I am delighted to confirm that Colin will assume responsibility for the association – reporting to the Council – at the end of the year.

"It has been important for Colin to benefit from Kate's experience and vast knowledge of the Scottish wholesale sector. He is now ready to move our association forward

as we support our members in times of change both within the trade and on the political landscape."

Smith, whose career in the wholesale sector spans more than 20 years, was Scottish regional manager for Bestway's symbol group Best-one before launching his own business, Pinkie Farm Convenience Store, in Musselburgh.

He previously worked for Bellevue Cash & Carry in Edinburgh in various marketing roles and has also worked for Costco Wholesale.

"Working alongside Kate over the last few months has helped me get to grips with the plethora of challenges facing our members and suppliers, and I have also been able to use this time to meet members and forge closer relationships with suppliers and other stakeholders," he said.

"What is also clear is that a collaborative approach is often the best way forward when debating the key issues affecting the wholesale



industry and the wider food, drink, retail and tourism sectors – and SWA is very much at the forefront of all of these important discussions.

"Wholesale is a vibrant industry offering great career opportunities and it provides suppliers with an

excellent opportunity to tap into the strong route to market that our members' independent retail and foodservice customers offer – I am looking forward to helping our sector grow and evolve, and giving wholesale a stronger voice."

SWA members triumph at FWD Gold Medal Awards



SWA members triumphed at the FWD's Gold Medal Awards, winning a number of accolades.

Jon Mack, general manager at Bidfood Scotland, won the prestigious Delivered Depot Manager of the Year while Katie Sillars, business development manager, won Young Wholesaler of the Year. In addition, Bidfood Scotland's depot at Newbridge, Edinburgh also scooped the award for Depot Team of the Year.

Another big winner was Glasgow-based JW Filshill's Joyce Johnston, customer

support manager, who was presented with the Customer Support of the Year award.

In the suppliers' award categories it was another great night for SWA's Foodservice Group joint chairman Ross Brown, independent foodservice and wholesale customer controller at Premier Foods, who collected the Process Innovation of the Year accolade on behalf of his company.

Martin Race, retiring Bestway managing director and former SWA Council



member, was presented with the Special Award.

Colin Smith, chief executive (designate).

The FWD Gold Awards took place in London on Thursday, 29th November and were attended by SWA President Julie Dunn and

For full information on winners, please click the following link to the [FWD website](#).

Farewell to Martin Race

SWA marked Martin Race's retiral from Council and Bestway by presenting him with a silver quaich in recognition of his distinguished career in wholesale.

Race, who retired at the end of November, spent 26 years at Batleys before moving to Bestway as trading director in 2014 with promotion to managing director following in 2016.

He will be replaced on Council by David Livingstone, head of catering at Bestway Batleys.



SWA and FWD attend Brexit meeting in London



In recent weeks the SWA has attended a number of meetings in London with our colleagues at the FWD.

FWD organised a meeting with Phil Earl, deputy director at the UK Government's Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) and Deborah Hankins, deputy director of food chain at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) – Colin Smith, chief executive (designate) and Margaret Smith of Caledonia Public Affairs attended.

While arrangements around Brexit are currently unclear, it is important that we air our industry's concerns and ask key questions on behalf of SWA members – and this meeting gave us the opportunity to do just that.

SWA contributes to tourist tax debate



Tourism operators were invited to attend a meeting in Edinburgh last week to discuss proposals to introduce a transient visitor levy (TVL) in Scotland.

A consultation into allowing councils to set a local tourist tax was called by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon earlier this year.

Some Scottish councils, led by Edinburgh, have called for powers to set levies on tourist accommodation. The Scottish Government has opposed this and, speaking at the Scottish Tourism Alliance conference in October, the First Minister said that the interests of the

hospitality and tourism industry “must be fully taken into account through consultation”.

SWA chief executive (designate) Colin Smith attended the meeting at the National Library of Scotland. He said: “This was a national debate, primarily for the tourism industry to voice its concerns to the Scottish Government about the implementation of TVL and especially devolving responsibility to local councils, which could mean several different tax rates across Scotland.

“Our concern is that we are already one

of the most expensive countries to visit and any further taxes could put people off visiting Scotland, affecting our

foodservice members’ sales.

“It could also affect any disposable spend

that would ordinarily be part of the £995 million spend on food and drink by visitors in Scotland.”



Helping the Scottish Government understand wholesale

SWA will provide the Scottish Government with an “introduction to wholesale” tour of member depots in early January as part of our efforts to help officials understand more about our members, the industry and the potential £250,000-plus sales impact that the current food high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) consultation could have on the sector.

Last month, executive director Kate Salmon, chief executive (designate) Colin Smith and Margaret Smith of Caledonia Public Affairs met with the Scottish Government’s Colin Baird and Mona Vaghefian to discuss HFSS.

This has enabled us to have input into a wholesale-specific Business Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA).

Please refer to the information on our [website](#). [The consultation](#) closes on January 9, 2019 so please share your views/concerns with us as soon as possible.

Scottish Wholesale Association to meet Michael Russell MSP

The SWA will meet Michael Russell MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations who has responsibility for Brexit within the Scottish Government, on 23rd January.

This meeting will provide the Cabinet Secretary with the opportunity to get a better understanding of the wholesale industry in Scotland, the contribution it makes to the Scottish economy and the challenges our members face, including Brexit.

Colin Smith, chief executive (designate), said: "It will also allow us to discuss with the Cabinet Secretary the Scottish Government-supported initiatives we're involved with, for example the national tourism strategy."

SWA joins Food Tourism Strategy Board



SWA has joined the Scottish Food Tourism Strategy Board, established early this year as part of a national strategy to boost food tourism in Scotland and position Scotland as a global destination for those in search of the world's best cuisine.

The board, made up of 14 organisations including the Scottish Tourism Alliance, Scotland Food & Drink and VisitScotland, aims to develop Scotland's first national framework to grow food tourism, with the goal of developing a strategy that will draw attention towards the country's wide range of quality produce.

Almost £995 million is spent on food and drink by visitors in Scotland. Colin Smith, chief executive (designate), said: "SWA members are the 'wheels' to Scotland's food and drink industry so it makes sense for us to collaborate with Scotland Food & Drink, the STA and others on the Ambition 2030 strategy to more than double the size of Scotland's food and drink industry to £30 billion by 2030."

season's greetings

SWA would like to wish all our member and supplier member colleagues a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. Rather than send out Christmas cards we have made a donation to the Circus Starr social enterprise – a touring circus boasting world-class, professional artists from across the globe. It was founded in 1987 and provides free seats for thousands of disadvantaged, disabled and/or vulnerable children who might not otherwise get the opportunity to enjoy the magic of the circus.