

The Coach Tourism Association

All the essential news and information for Coach Touring Association operators, suppliers and members.



Encore's John Wales (second from left) with new board members from the left; Daniel Kirby, Colin Powcus and Roger Bull.

John Wales, founder of Encore Tickets, was voted in as Chairman of the Coach Tourism Association in February this year along with Robert Shaw of Harry Shaw Coaches, Vice Chairman. A new board has been elected with the aim to set a fresh plan and direction for the association that will give all members increased value. In a survey last year, the overriding factor that emerged as the key membership benefit, was the networking and relationship building, allowing suppliers and operators to forge strong business links and for all members to address industry challenges aided by both formal and

informal events the association organises.

John Wales commented "I have always been passionate about the coach industry since organising daily coach tours to Normandy for Townsend Thoresen back in the early 80's. I have been on the board of the CTA and a supplier member for many years and really believe in the association where operators and suppliers do real business with one another. Becoming Chairman of the board enables me to influence the direction of the association delivering increased benefit for all members and promoting the benefits of travel by coach."

There are plenty of challenges the industry is facing, but constant communication and bonds forged within the CTA with operators and suppliers have made great strides to improve treatment and recognition of the groups market. There is always pressure on the traditional coach market with affordability of cruising, low cost flights from regional airports to multiple destinations and a decrease in demand for some longer traditional seaside holidays. However, increased frequency of travel, a growing senior market and a

trend for increased shorter domestic tours not dependent on the fluctuating Euro, presents a positive outlook for the professional, friendly door to door service the local coach operator delivers.

New Ultra Low Emission Zone policies will cost coach operators, either by paying the £100 fine if the coach does not meet Euro 6 standard in London, or a £20k upgrade to every vehicle that does not comply, or of course purchase new coaches at a cost of over £250k. Educational tourism specifically in London, where school groups are cost sensitive and typically use older coaches are predicted to fall. The £100 fine will have to be passed on to the schools resulting in up to a 50% increase in trips and will affect frequency of excursions or completely exclude educational visits to museums, attractions and theatres, unless an exemption for school groups can be incorporated into the new policy.

CTA members will continue to address the challenges, develop new products and forge strong commercial

bonds. The association provides the conduit with numerous formal and informal networking events and familiarisation trips for operators to key and emerging destinations. The annual conference always rates as one of the most beneficial events for both operators and suppliers and this year's post event survey of attendees gave overwhelmingly positive feedback. The coach tour operator members create programmes year round for individual clients as well as private groups, continuously searching for new products, negotiating rates with strong supplier relationships and giving their loyal clientele an unrivalled door to door service - the CTA coach members are the professional full service tour operators.

Forthcoming CTA Events:
CTA Summer BBQ - 29 July 2018, Marriott, Forest of Arden, Birmingham CV7 7HR
CTA Xmas Social - 25 November 2018, Cairn Hotel, Harrogate HG1 2JD

Website: www.coachtourismassociation.co.uk



CTA chairman, John Wales



CTA chief executive Chris Wales (left) and treasurer Steve Lee from Anderson Travel say a fond farewell to retiring chairperson Denise Bridges from Albatross Travel