

# **Fusion is ready for post pandemic recovery**

## **FUSION GROUP CELEBRATES FIVE FOLD GROWTH IN ACCOMMODATION SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS**

**With hospitality industry paralysed by Covid-19 pandemic, Fusion seizes opportunity to recalibrate & redeploy, putting itself and its partners at forefront of anticipated recovery**

With over 600 bedrooms currently on its books, across hotels, self-catering lodges, serviced apartments, and B&B's, Accommodation Services Trading Company has experienced a five fold increase in room numbers since the very start of the Covid19 pandemic. Having retained all its existing staff in the business, it's now poised to hit the ground running when recovery in the sector kicks in, with an extensive portfolio which now stretches from Edinburgh to Dornoch, St Andrews to Highland Perthshire.

Beginning life eight years ago as Central Reservations for Old Churches House in Dunblane, when, acquired by The Fusion Group of Companies, Old Churches House was fully upgraded to offer modern hotel, wedding and conferencing facilities, Central Reservations also looked after bookings and room rates for The Red Brolly Inn and Logierait Lodges, both in Highland

Perthshire.



As the business evolved it began to offer yet more specialist, “one stop shop” services for hospitality owners and investors, designed to maximise their revenue streams. In addition to its core service of Reservations Support, the re-named Accommodation Services Trading Co, which is now a stand alone business within Fusion Group, offers a comprehensive list of dedicated services to the hospitality and leisure industries. These include Corporate Restructuring support, together with the more practical services of property maintenance & landscaping, property protection & security, and utilities and hospitality procurement.

Other support services include ensuring business continuity, uninterrupted sales process, holiday cover and business overflow. Accommodation Services can provide a completely bespoke package tailored to a business’ exact needs, or work under a more conventional basis.

“At the start of the pandemic in March 2020 we were experiencing steady growth with the marketing of some 112 bedrooms across Scotland under the Accommodation Services umbrella,” said Alex McKie, Managing Director of Fusion. “This was entirely satisfactory, although we were always looking to take on more in different parts of the country. But rather than stagnating during lockdown we found that we were dramatically picking up new business, attracting several properties from Aberfeldy, Aboyne, Dornoch, Fort Augustus, Motherwell, St. Andrews, and now Edinburgh Rooms & Apartments in McDonald Road in the Capital.”

“I think it became clear to some owners and investors, as the pandemic went on, with hospitality harder and harder hit, that a stronger together approach was needed, along with expertise in managing costs.”

Alex explained that Accommodation Services can add additional value through a mix of outsourcing, promotion, restructuring and refurbishment, having successfully used this business model at Fusion properties,

A former customer of Accommodation Services is Neil Menzies of The Royal Dunkeld Hotel, who has now been able to retire. He spoke of how using the service had benefited his business, ultimately enabling him to sell the business on at a price that suited him after it had spent years on the market.

“Accommodation Services transformed our booking, operating, and reservation procedures at the Royal Dunkeld, with their staff feeling like an extension of our own. Everyone worked like an extended team to increase efficiency at reception. We were able to free up reception staff to spend valuable face to face time with guests, along with pursuing other sales avenues. Ultimately this led to greater profitability across the board.”

Alex McKie went in to say: “The experience of Neil at Royal

Dunkeld is just one such success story which demonstrates that we now have a very solid track record to put to investors, property, asset and estate owners in the last few years. We've been able to repay stakeholders with very positive returns on their investment. This in turn, has attracted more new business."

"Sadly, we all know now that many hospitality and leisure businesses will not make it out of this pandemic in their present format. We've recently added a specialist commercial property agency to the Fusion portfolio. Drysdale & Company will service hotels and hospitality businesses that may wish to sell or restructure. We're expecting it to work in tandem with Accommodation Services on certain commercial opportunities, as and when they arise."

Accommodation Services also sees potential in Student Accommodation, Business Centres, and Retail & Licenced Trade Units.

Alex finished by saying that as the Accommodation Services sector had proved vibrant for him at this time, he was pleased that he had been able to retain his full team across the board at Fusion, with staff from the Meetings & Events sector successfully redeployed into Accommodation Services.

"Like many businesses we launched in the teeth of a recession, and are used to adapting and rolling with the punches."

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