

Hospitality firm hits new heights as it celebrates 20 years

A major player in Scotland's hospitality sector is celebrating its twentieth anniversary in what could be its most successful year to date.

[Surgeons Quarter Ltd \(SQ\)](#), the commercial arm of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd), is on track to achieve turnover exceeding £12 million, through growth across its conferencing, events and hotel services.

Officially incorporated on 29th September 2003, the organisation was established as the commercial arm of the revered RCSEd estate in the heart of Edinburgh's Old Town.

Since its inception it has opened and operates Edinburgh's largest independent hotel the 129-bed Ten Hill Place Hotel, a high street café, Café 1505, as well managing an array of historic event spaces and a purpose-built conference centre making it one of the Scottish capital's major names in business tourism.

It has also provided space for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in the last decade and is now one of Edinburgh's largest performing spaces during the summer festivals.

In 2020 Surgeons Quarter Travel, the most recent addition to the SQ portfolio, opened its doors providing a travel agency

service to Members and Fellows of RCSEd as well as the general public.

Scott Mitchell, Managing Director of Surgeons Quarter, said: "Celebrating 20 years is an incredible achievement and its down to the determination of our people that ensures we deliver the best experience.

"We've learned so much from our dedicated staff over the years. We're not blind to the fact that hospitality is not renowned for its pay and conditions however we are committed to provide support so our people can thrive, not only in their workplace, but outside of work too.

"This is why we offer numerous opportunities and reward schemes to all of our staff members to not only benefit them at work, but also outside of the office. We can't wait to watch them and the business grow over the next 20 years."

The forward thinking SQ has also implemented a number of innovative sustainability initiatives, including installing EV charging ports, removing plastic water bottles from rooms, and partnering with Ecologi. In 2023 the organisation celebrated 15 years of retaining the Gold Green Tourism award.

With 160 employees across the venue, SQ has committed to supporting its staff by taking on their ideas – from sustainability initiatives to free staff meals – through a voluntary committee, SQ Cares.

Reflecting on his time with SQ, General Manager, Mark McKenzie, who celebrates a decade with the organisation this year said: "I stumbled into hospitality years ago and have worked my way up to General Manager. Working in the industry can be tough, but it's been extremely rewarding doing it at Surgeons Quarter.

"I'm incredibly proud to work for an organisation that looks after its people, the SQ Cares Committee is testament to that.

“We’ve all learnt a lot, but we’re not afraid to try new things to ensure we look after our staff, ensure all our guests and visitors have a first-class experience and implement eco-conscious measures where possible.”

The venue has also been recognised by the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) for ensuring that all members of staff are contributing at least 12% of their salary towards their pension. 7.5% of that comes from the employer – 4.5% more than the required minimum. The organisation was also recognised as the first hospitality business to sign up as a Living Pensions Employer.

As a people-focused organisation, Surgeons Quarter offers industry-leading pay comfortably above the £12.00 per hour LWF Living Wage. On top of this, staff benefit from a 50% discount at all Best Western Hotels, access to an employee assistance programme, Bike2Work scheme, complimentary gym membership and discount cards.

Profits from SQ support the charitable aims of the College which are education, assessment and advancement in surgical standards worldwide.

For more information on Surgeons Quarter, visit <https://www.surgeonsquarter.com/>



Surgeons Quarter, Cafe 1305
Barista Andi Muheim



Surgeons Quarter, Cafe 1305
Scott Mitchell – Managing Director



Surgeons Quarter, Cafe 1305 Mark McKenzie