



**PARK REGIS**

### How to become a serviced apartment expert in two hours...

On Thursday 10th May, the HBAA Business Accommodation Committee held their inaugural educational event at the Park Regis in Birmingham, attended by 30 HBAA agents and 10 suppliers.

#### Home from Home

The panel discussion began with Chapman detailing the main benefits for choosing this type of accommodation, stating that it has the comforts of home but with hotel touches and flexibility on tenancy.

Chapman explained that for long projects their teams need a '*Home from Home*' base; where guests need the freedom to have a normal life while away from home. The ability to cook and relax in a home environment but with services available if needed, like a gym or laundry service is important to them.

#### Employee welfare

Neale disclosed that for SilverDoor their typical users are those relocating; theatre workers, construction and IT, with an average stay of two months.

He revealed that Corporates are starting to think more about wellbeing. Where there is a stay that is deemed too long to be comfortable in a hotel, they understand the benefits of what a serviced apartment can offer in regards to the welfare of their employees.

Bailey highlighted the mix of clients, from pure leisure to those on very short projects. CitySuites consciously put a minimum 4 night stay into their apartments as they believe serviced apartments are a good all round product, offering flexibility, short lead bookings, ease of use and transparency of billing.

#### The Airbnb effect

The panel inevitably was questioned over the Airbnb effect and what if any competition this brings to the sector. Health and Safety aspects and a record of employees location is key to Siemens; they ask themselves the question about Airbnb, but it's how they make this work with these fundamental issues.



Pictured left to right: Erica Livermore, HBAA Business Accommodation Committee Chair; Alex Neale, Head Account Manager, SilverDoor; Amy Chapman - Senior Buyer, Siemens Plc; Gavin Bailey - Operations Director, CitySuites. Picture: Sparkle Media.

Neale responded with highlighting that on one hand there's the fully rigid serviced Hotel product, then on the other, someone's house on Airbnb. Sitting in the middle you have the Serviced Apartment with all the home comforts and services that's Health & Safety checked.

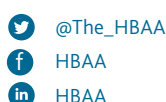
#### The panelists top tips

- **Communication** across all parties to ensure the briefs and needs are fully understood.
- **Flexibility** from both suppliers and agents, appreciating that corporates can't always be tied into onerous contracts and that 'one solution fits all' is no longer viable.
- **Choice and understanding** the client's needs, they are forever changing and any type of facility has to be explored and presented back, the agent support in this area is vital.

**"This was an important event for us, it served to highlight the importance of a growing sector in hospitality and hopefully enlighten both agents and venues on the various buying behaviours and requirements by our corporate clients."**

*Erica Livermore, HBAA Business Accommodation Chair*

We'd love to hear your thoughts on this or any of our events, so please share via any of the below channels:



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