

**News release:** 24 February 2022

## **TrustedStays appoints new board of directors to accelerate growth**

Following its recent announcement that the UK Apartment Association (UKAA) has become the latest partner of TrustedStays, the industry platform for corporate and government stays, it has announced the appointment of a new board of directors. The new board includes Shomik Panda, Director General of the UK Short Term Accommodation Association (STAA), Dave Butler, CEO of UKAA, Deborah Heather, CEO of Quality in Tourism and Merilee Karr, Chair of STAA and CEO of UnderTheDoormat Group.

To accelerate the growth of the platform, TrustedStays works in partnership with key industry bodies. The UKAA has recently joined the STAA to help the build to rent sector forge a new route to the corporate and professional flexible let market.

The new partnership provides a way for Build to Rent owners and operators across the UK to access new sources of demand for flexible corporate stays. By working collaboratively across the industry it helps corporates have a single point of access to this market and for member companies to benefit commercially from new channels to market.

TrustedStays will bring the best property partners on board from across the UK to help the corporate and government markets access the short-term rental and flexible let sector in a trusted way, providing peace of mind for employees as business travel returns.

TrustedStays launched in 2021 out of the Homes for NHS scheme which united the industry in providing key workers with clean and safe homes to stay in during the pandemic. Since then, it has won an industry-first Government RFP (Request for Proposal). The platform has taken its first Government bookings and it is also the first time that corporates and Government can access this type of accommodation through their own travel management systems and the GDS. TrustedStays is onboarding the first properties to the GDS as part of a pilot scheme. Companies that are interested in getting their properties listed on the GDS register with Trusted Stays and corporate booker can secure accommodation directly on the website.

Bringing perspectives from the short-term rental, build to rent and accreditation sectors, the new board will develop the platform driving collaboration across industries and growth for professional operators.

Shomik Panda, Director General of STAA, said, “I am delighted to become a board member of TrustedStays and am proud to have been a part of this initiative since its inception as Homes for NHS. As the platform continues to build momentum and open new doors to this market, we’re really looking forward to making a difference in 2022.”

Dave Butler, CEO of UKAA, said, “The build to rent sector is always looking for ways to reach professional renters and TrustedStays has developed great access to the corporate booking market. I am very pleased to be joining the TrustedStays board to help continue build this innovative and hugely valuable partnership.”

Deborah Heather, CEO of Quality in Tourism, said, “This is a really exciting opportunity for the short-term rental sector to access a new market through corporate travel bookers. Accreditation is the way to build trust among corporate travel bookers, who are increasingly considering their duty of care for employees travelling for work. I am delighted to join the board and bring this opportunity to more operators across the industry.”

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#### **About the STAA**

The UK Short Term Accommodation Association (STAA) was founded in March 2017 to support the development of short-term accommodation in the UK, ensure greater co-operation in tackling common industry challenges and seize shared opportunities. It seeks to work with all stakeholders towards a stable and supportive regulatory environment that promotes the UK as a global leader in the provision of short-term accommodation.

#### **About the UKAA**

The UKAA ([www.ukaa.org.uk](http://www.ukaa.org.uk)) is the membership organisation for the UK Build to Rent (BTR) sector. The organisation’s ambition is to grow the sector, and members’ businesses, faster than would happen otherwise.

This will be achieved by sharing information, promoting best practice amongst members and raising standards to benefit customers. UKAA activities help reduce risks for investors, developers and operators and assist providers of services and products to enter and operate successfully in the BTR market.

Founded in 2016, the UKAA currently has c.310 members and is growing at c.30% per annum. Members comprise leading investors, operators, advisors and suppliers operating in the sector today. The UKAA also is a member of the global alliance of the NAA (National Apartment Association of USA), which represents over 82,000 members with more than 10 million rental housing units globally.

#### **About Quality in Tourism**

Quality in Tourism carries out assessments of hotels, guest houses, B&Bs and self-catering accommodation across the UK. It has a field force of experienced assessors and a highly dedicated in-house team. Each member of the assessment team visit hundreds of businesses every year and are able to provide practical help and support to help a business to grow,



share ideas on how to increase bookings and profitability plus offer insights into changing customer perceptions and market trends. Quality in Tourism is the accreditation partner of the STAA.