

**For immediate release**

## **ASAP appoints Richard Whittaker of Oakwood Worldwide as new Chairman of the Association**

The Association of Serviced Apartment Providers (ASAP) - the not-for-profit trade body for the serviced apartment sector - is delighted to announce that Richard Whittaker, Director of Supplier Management (EMEA) at Oakwood Worldwide, has been appointed as its new Chairman.

Richard Whittaker has held the position of Deputy Chairman of the Association since September 2016 and takes over as Chairman from 16 February 2017, succeeding Don James, Managing Director of Berkshire Rooms, who has held the position for the last 2 years.

James Foice, Chief Executive of the ASAP, comments:

*'I am delighted to welcome Richard as our new Chairman of the Association. Richard's passion for our serviced apartment sector along with his very considerable experience, having held senior positions in the industry for the last 17 years, will be a tremendous asset to the ASAP. He has been a very strong advocate of the Association since he first joined the industry and has been actively involved since being elected to our Steering Committee in 2015. Richard's leadership will be particularly instrumental to the Association at this time as we continue our global expansion, with the further rollout of our Quality Accreditation Programme internationally.'*

Foice continues:

*'I would also like to pay tribute to Don James for the fantastic contribution which Don has made as ASAP Chairman over the last 2 years. We are enormously indebted to Don whose leadership and vision has enabled the Association to expand significantly and consolidate our position as the voice of the serviced apartment industry.'*

Outgoing Chairman Don James of Berkshire Rooms comments:

*'It's been a privilege to be Chairman of the ASAP for the last 2 years. It's been very rewarding to lead the Association at this time of rapid growth of our sector and in particular to see us deliver on our objective for our membership to double in size to the 170 members we represent today. I am especially pleased to have seen our membership expand beyond the UK to 13 countries and for us to have quality accredited operators in 130 cities across the world. Our significant membership growth has also enabled us to strengthen our central team and expand our range of membership benefits to reflect our broader membership base.'*

*I am proud to be handing the Chair on to Richard Whittaker and am confident that the Association will continue to go from strength to strength under his leadership.'*

Incoming ASAP Chairman - Richard Whittaker of Oakwood Worldwide - comments:

*'I am honoured to be taking over as Chairman of the ASAP and very much look forward to continuing Don's excellent work by driving forward the further growth of the Association and in particular expanding our ASAP Quality Accreditation programme to new overseas markets. We also have exciting plans to extend our global reach by partnering with other trade associations to strengthen awareness of our sector internationally.'*

Richard Whittaker will take up his position as ASAP Chairman with effect from Thursday 16 February 2017.

Ends

**Further media information:**

- Joyce Cawthorpe, Marketing/Media Manager, ASAP  
T: 07590 123299; E: [jcawthorpe@theasap.org.uk](mailto:jcawthorpe@theasap.org.uk)

**Background**

**Richard Whittaker** has more than 17 years' experience in the serviced apartment sector and has led the Europe, the Middle East and Africa supply chain management team at Oakwood Worldwide since 2011. Oakwood Worldwide is a premier provider of corporate housing and serviced apartment solutions with presence in more than 95 countries.

**ASAP: Association of Serviced Apartment Providers** is the not-for-profit trade body dedicated exclusively to the serviced apartment industry. Our 170 members own and operate over 100,000 properties globally. Our membership also includes 15 serviced apartment agencies committed to supporting and growing the sector.

**ASAP News Hub:** 'The Voice of the sector' - <http://hub.theasap.org.uk>

Our hub features all the latest news stories for the serviced apartment sector as well as interesting trends/insights in the wider travel industry.