

For immediate release

World's biggest outbound travel market – CHINA – recognises there's a new 'way to stay' when travelling in the UKserviced apartments

- **China is now largest overseas market for many serviced apartment operators in the UK**
- **Serviced apartment sector is booming right across the UK;**
 - **3,803** new serviced apartment units across 47 properties expected to open by 2020, according to STR. This represents an **18% increase** to the country's current supply of **21,375 serviced apartments**.

'*China Daily*' – yesterday (23 October '17) - the leading English-language newspaper in China (daily circulation 500,000 in 150 countries/regions) ran a special report about the phenomenal growth in Chinese visitors to the UK using serviced apartments as their accommodation of choice. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2017-10/23/content_33623376.htm

The serviced apartment product – a self-contained apartment with living and sleeping areas along with a fitted kitchen and bathroom (sizes vary from studio to 3 or 4 bedroom apartments) meets the needs of Chinese guests exactly, as they so enjoy having an accommodation base which delivers a true home-from-home experience and especially having the flexibility to be able to cook for themselves.

VisitBritain – the national tourist board - reported earlier this month that inbound visitors from China to the UK had grown a staggering **+47%** in the first 6 months of 2017 to **115,000 visitors** and expenditure similarly reached record levels at **£231 million, up 54%** year on year.

James Foice, CEO of The **Association of Serviced Apartment Providers (ASAP)** – the not-for-profit-trade-body for the serviced apartment sector – confirms:

'Our member operators right across the UK are reporting a very strong uptake in Chinese inbound business between January and the end of August this year. The profile of the Chinese visitor covers all market segments including business, leisure and visiting friends and family (there are significant numbers of Chinese students studying at UK universities and their friends/family come to visit them) and clearly the favourable exchange rate is also helping.'

ASAP's members in Scotland in particular report a very strong increase in Chinese business. For one member in Edinburgh - **The Knight Residence by Mansley Apartments** (33 serviced apartments in the city centre) – Chinese visitors are up 18% year on year and China now represents their single biggest overseas market for the very first time; so much so that they have invested in a special app in Mandarin, a Mandarin language information pack and a special breakfast welcome pack including noodles, chopsticks and a selection of Chinese teas. And their vending machine is stocked with Chinese snacks and drinks!

Similarly the Chinese business is up 30% year on year at **Premier Suites in Glasgow** - and again covers the full age spectrum of visitors – the older generation as well as younger travellers. They too have invested time and resource to be part of the GREAT China Welcome Charter with information in Mandarin on their website. A total of 6 of ASAP's UK members are part of the CHINA Ready Welcome charter.

Indeed the phenomenal expansion of the U.K.'s serviced apartment sector is confirmed by the current pipeline, with 3,803 new serviced apartment units across 47 properties expected to open by 2020, according to STR. This represents an 18% increase to the country's current supply of 21,375 serviced apartments.

The future for the sector looks very buoyant as more and more customers prefer this flexible way to stay in a serviced apartment.

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Further media information:

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Background Information

ASAP: Association of Serviced Apartment Providers is the not-for-profit trade body dedicated exclusively to the serviced apartment industry. Our 190 members own and operate over 100,000 properties globally. Our membership also includes 15 serviced apartment agencies committed to supporting and growing the sector. www.theasap.org.uk

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

The real-time news hub also offers the option to subscribe to receive the dedicated e-newsletter (weekly) which features all the latest news stories for the serviced apartment sector as well as interesting trends/insights in the wider travel industry.

‘China Ready’ Welcome Charter –

Six of ASAP’s members are currently members of the CHINA Ready welcome charter – Go Native, Marlin Apartments, Premier Suites, The Apartment Network and The Knight Residence in Edinburgh and Week2Week in Newcastle. Find out more:

<https://www.visitbritain.org/great-china-welcome>

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