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Jane Pendlebury, CEO of HOSPA, on her predictions for 2022

◇ OPINION by EAMONN CROWE on JANUARY 14, 2022

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In our latest guest post, CEO of HOSPA Jane Pendlebury reflects on the past year and discusses her predictions for the hospitality industry in 2022.

I can't quite believe it's 2022. The last two years have flown by in the maelstrom of the pandemic, with crisis after crisis engulfing the industry.

Hospitality, to date, has done a quite magnificent job of surviving given all the trials sent our way.

But, despite 2022 being a new year, many of the same problems will remain. Staffing, a primary issue, will continue – it's something that's only been accelerated by factors such as changing lifestyles, Brexit, and, of course, the pandemic.

As people reassess their priorities, many continue to seek a more rural lifestyle outside the confines of the urban environment, and this is something that could spell a decline in casual dining within cities.

On the flipside, of course, this could be a great opportunity for the hospitality climate of towns and villages to embrace newcomers – giving people the platform to display some of the entrepreneurial flare that's so endemic in our sector.

With people continuing to work from home, and many business meetings continuing to be conducted remotely, routine trade for independent businesses who rely on people being out and about, such as sandwich shops, cafes and more, will continue to be affected, as will hotels who cater to business travellers.

Once again, the hospitality industry as a whole must show continued resilience.

Many of the issues we face are largely down to the influence of Covid and it's simply become impossible to ignore.

As much as we'd like this to be over, it's very much set to be a theme of 2022 and likely beyond. Uncertainty leads to reduced confidence, which in turn leads to reduced business for hospitality.

So with this in mind, it's vital that operators continue their commitment to providing the most Covid secure service possible – something that we have all become well versed in by now.

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“ *Once again, the hospitality industry as a whole must show continued resilience*

There is notable improvement already, with vaccine rollouts and testing criteria so I do believe this year will be as transitional as it is challenging.

A pressing issue, arguably more significant than Covid, is that of climate change. Adopting sustainable practises will be on the agenda of many more hotels and hospitality outlets in 2022, and this year could mark a real turning point towards a greener industry.

With much more knowledge and advice on how to be sustainable available to business owners, alongside rapidly evolving technology, hoteliers and restaurateurs alike now have the ability to make a real difference to an issue we are set to face far beyond 2022.

The rising popularity of veganism is also likely to correlate with this increase in carbon conscious attitudes, with many restaurants under increased pressure to provide vegan-friendly alternatives if they wish to remain competitive.

This will apply to both casual dining restaurants and those in hotels.

With continued restrictions on international travel, we may see another bumper summer of staycations, providing much needed trade for some of the UK's fabulous coastal and rural locations.

However, with increased domestic tourism comes increased demand on food and drink produce, which as we know since Brexit and the pandemic, have brought supply chain issues to stark prominence.

“ *One thing that truly resonated last year was that UK*

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The increased costs of importing goods, alongside ongoing logistical issues, mean it's likely to become more expensive to meet the excess demand with imported goods.

This could prove beneficial to local British food producers and turn the attention of hoteliers' towards locally sourced ingredients to cater for their guests.

One thing that truly resonated last year was that UK hospitality is a community and the same applies to 2022.

This year will not be without its challenges, however, if we address the key issues the industry faces we will set a strong course back towards some form of recognisable normality.

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HOSPA launches 'Share Your Success' scheme to celebrate industry opportunities

The Hospitality Professionals Association (HOSPA) has launched the Share Your Success campaign to highlight and celebrate the wealth of opportunity available in the hospitality industry amidst the ongoing staffing crisis. The initiative, which has been dubbed 'Share Your Success', encourages

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