



60 seconds with the chair: Siân Richards – AEV eGuide Working Group



Siân Richards began her career in the events industry as an exhibition organiser in 1987, and after building her event expertise through roles with P&O Events and SECC, she joined Olympia London in 1996 as a senior event manager.

Siân's keen eye for detail and talent for project management led to her being offered the role of customer services manager at the venue in 1997, taking responsibility for designing and implementing systems and procedures, client entertainment, customer communication and staff training and development.

In 2015 Siân took on the role of business services and sustainability manager within the Venue Management team at Olympia London, where she now leads the organisation's sustainability development and compliance with ISO 20121 as well as developing user-friendly departmental systems and procedures and managing the department's administration and reception team. A strong proponent of the AEV working groups, Siân also sits on the Sustainability Working Group and chairs the AEV eGuide Working Group.

What brought you into the event industry?

Cheese did! My first job after graduating involved organising a stand at the International Food and Drink Event at Olympia London. Looking around at Olympia Grand from my stand, I thought it would be great to organise a whole event and approached the organiser for advice. He pointed me in the right direction and I landed my first event industry job as an exhibition organiser with Philbeach Events.

Why did you get involved with the association working groups?

I believe the working groups offer an invaluable opportunity for industry professionals to exchange ideas and learn from each other. By collaborating in this way, I hope that we are able to improve the experience of all of our customers and make strides in innovation in our industry.

What do you think the best show, exhibition or conference was last year?

It's almost impossible to pick out one event, but I always enjoy Spirit of Christmas. The show is well-designed and the exhibits are good quality; I can never resist a bit of 'retail' when Spirit is on site.

What will be the next big change in venues?

I believe that venues have to be even more focused on sustainability in the future.

What piece of event tech is going to be indispensable in the future?

I don't believe the use of smartphones has yet realised its full potential.

What's your favourite quote, saying or motto?

'Treat others as you would wish them to treat you'.



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What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

Don't get stressed about things you can't control.

Which historical event would you most like to host at your venue?

The exhibition of Monet's 'Waterlilies'.

What film, book or TV series have you been recommending to others recently?

'Broken' with Sean Bean on TV is brilliant.

What music are you listening to at the moment?

I listen to a wide variety of music, from classical to heavy rock. Coldplay and Muse are my gym companions.

If you could attend any event, in the past, present or future, what would it be?

The first Shakespeare performance at The Globe theatre.