

“Reflections on MDA Consulting’s successful week in Cannes 2017” by Lettice Swan, responsible for Business Development in London and the South of England - lswan@mdaconsulting.co.uk



MDA Consulting have been heading to Cannes for over 20 years; we first went to the MIPIM conference when it was in its infancy. This year five of us turned out in force and as well as our annual, and highly successful, lunch and dinner, between us we attended nearly 80 breakfasts, lunches, dinners, drinks dos, cocktail parties, boat parties, street parties, wine tastings and of course conference seminars, whilst racking up close to 50 “official” and diarised business meetings.

This was my second time and I’ve really caught the bug! I now completely understand how last year’s rain put a dampener on people’s spirits; even though the political climate is less positive than a year ago, overall moods definitely seemed higher. Blue skies and bright sunshine allowed people to wander up and down La Croisette and mingle outside the legendary Café Roma and for me, more ad hoc meetings and catch ups were conducted this way, which I think really is what the week is all about.

My role has a London and Southern focus so most of my conversations surrounded the future for these areas. Development and investment in the South West is ever increasing and the South Coast seems to have much in the pipeline which was great to hear first-hand. Londoners, although more tentative than years gone by given the “B” word, seem optimistic that strong investment in “The World’s Greatest City,” will continue.

“PRS” was the buzz-word of the week, not a far cry from last year’s “Housing Crisis” topic which made its way into every conversation. It seems that London’s desperate need for housing, whatever form that may take, will keep us building no matter what lies ahead. An uncertain landscape for the industry going forward no doubt, but it seems that many of my fellow professionals feel a positive outlook and a “business as usual” approach will keep us afloat. Next year though, I predict “Offsite Manufacturing” and “Modular” to be what the conversations and seminars surround.

These are just my own thoughts and reflections, see what my fellow MDA colleagues had to say...

Steve Jones, Managing Director:

Quieter than the last few years, a little more sombre but still a quiet confidence from the UK contingent.

Rob McGuinn, Director of the Midlands region:

I think that despite all of the over-zealous concerns surrounding Brexit, MIPIM was considered to be a very encouraging conference.

This probably had a lot to do with the fact that everyone seemed busy and as a result the networking was more relaxed and natural. The Midlands engine came across very positively and was well supported with a genuine message for opportunity. Looking forward, the Midlands has plenty to be optimistic to be about.



Clare Bennett, Business Development for Manchester and the North of England:

As a new addition to MDA Consulting's business development team, the week in Cannes was an invaluable opportunity to raise the company's profile and capitalise on our recent growth.



With a range of daily networking opportunities on offer, new and beneficial connections were within reach throughout the week. Building relationships is at the core of MDA's philosophy, and this offered a flourishing environment in which to do so, with clients old and new.

Stuart Nightingale, Director of Project Monitoring:

With the weather on our side, we spent time discussing with our Clients' their current and future funding requirements; ranging from PRS and Student schemes in the midlands and north, to dealing with amendments on residential proposals in the south. Bristol and the West Country are seen as areas of immediate growth, supported with a strong message that the sources of funds are still readily available for development, and investment.

The need for more accessible housing remains strong, but greater innovation is still being sort.

One of the wonderful things about this week in Cannes is the chance of a 'brief encounter' ranging from dinner with old contacts, to a welcome chat with known professionals based across Europe.



Everybody we spoke to was busy, fizzing with enthusiasm and still enjoying being involved in such a large and diverse industry.