

Women

in Blakemore

Supportive short stories 2023

By the people of AF Blakemore

a.f. **blakemore**
.....& son Ltd

Hello

Our success has been built by our people and we want them to prosper from their efforts. At AF Blakemore we empower individuals by encouraging accountability, personal development and the opportunity for growth.

We want to treat everyone equally and want people to enjoy their day at work because people matter.

The Women in Blakemore Short Stories celebrates some of the wonderful people in our business who inspire and initiate change.

This book tells the nomination stories from our Women in Blakemore Awards and champion those in our business who have helped us to progress towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

We hope by sharing these stories it will empower other people and organisations to make a difference too.

Sarah Ellis
Group Marketing Director



The Stories

Our stories have been crafted from the words used by colleagues in the nominations for the Women in Blakemore Awards. The comments received were caring, kind, considered and underpinned our values as a business.

**We are one
inclusive team**

**We achieve our
goals together**

**We behave with
honesty and integrity**

**We build a
better future**



Featuring

Outstanding Female influencer

Jo Wrate
Ruth Mutton

Outstanding Diversity & Inclusiveness

Carl O'Connor

Female Dream Builder

Liz Blakemore

Lifetime Achievement

Linda Carrington
Jo Bird
Lindsay Stephen
Terina Jones

Outstanding Resilience

Janet Bond

Outstanding Male SupportHER

Chris Bacon





Outstanding female influencer

An outstanding female influencer is a passionate and purpose-driven woman who inspires and motivates her team, community, and beyond.

She empowers and supports other women, builds honest relationships, leads courageously by example and embodies our values.

The most used words in the Outstanding Female Influencer nominations

Passionate, supportive, inspiring, energetic,
driven, excellent, motivating, empowering,
outstanding, great, positive, caring, successful,
amazing, ambitious, loyal, dedicated, hardworking,
fantastic, honest, enthusiastic, kind, confident,
approachable, influential, knowledgeable,
collaborative, female, professional and true.



WINNER



Jo Wrate
Head of Trading
Impulse and BWS



WINNER



Ruth Mutton
Blakemore Retail
Regional Manager

Outstanding Female Influencer Joint Winners



Ruth Mutton
Blakemore Retail Regional Manager

Outstanding Female
Joint Winner

Ruth is an outstanding leader who empowers her staff allowing them to thrive. She leads with honesty, integrity, and fairness, advocating for equality and standing up for her teams and the business. She takes a personal interest in her colleagues' lives and supports them both inside and outside of work. Ruth is highly regarded by her colleagues and peers, having risen through the management ranks and become the youngest and first female senior manager. She leads by example, listens to feedback, and empowers others to achieve their goals. She is a mentor to those wishing to follow in her footsteps, involved in projects to improve the business and fundraising for the NSPCC and community volunteering. Ruth always demonstrates passion, consistency, trust, support, guidance, and approachability.



Jo Wrate
Head of Trading Impulse and BWS

Outstanding Female Joint Winner

Jo is a fantastic role model who inspires others and brings out the best in them. She has an exceptional drive and is always enthusiastic about moving the business forward. She challenges the status quo and enacts positive change. Her support is unwavering, and she has an infectious energy that engages and motivates others. She makes a huge difference to the business and delivers great results. She is passionate about everything she does and leads by example, encouraging others to do the same. Jo is caring, supportive and deserves recognition for everything she does.



Outstanding Diversity & Inclusiveness

Being outstanding in diversity and inclusiveness is recognised for being a leader or individual, any gender, who promotes and maintains a diverse and inclusive work culture, while supporting those who have experienced discrimination or other challenges related to race, age, gender, sexuality, social hardship or other factors.

The most used words in the Outstanding Diversity & Inclusiveness nominations

Positive, inclusive, safe, great, excellent, similar, brilliant, clear, amazing, important, behavioural, stronger, committed, recent, female, valued, crazy, supported, witnessed, challenging, senior, advocate, engaging, openness, honesty, enrolled, embraced, reciprocal, developed, relationships, trust, drive, desire, challenging, change.



WINNER

Carl O'Connor

Group Customer Services Manager

Outstanding Diversity and Inclusiveness



Carl O'Connor
Group Customer Services Manager

**Outstanding Diversity
& Inclusivness Winner**

Carl is a well respected team member who champions EID and women in business. He is committed to promoting diversity and inclusiveness and has helped other employees feel safe and included in the 'lets talk about race' workshop. He has experienced discrimination relating to both race and gender – inside and outside the workplace and is an excellent role model for others facing similar struggles.

Carl wins this award in recognition of the work he has done to raise awareness of diversity and inclusiveness and the positive change he has made to help make the businesses and team members even stronger.



Female Dream Builder

A female dream builder is a woman working in a challenging male-dominated industry. She inspires others to dream big and influence positive outcomes. A cheerleader for women seeking employment in non-traditional areas and inspires others to dream big and to use their voice to influence positive, meaningful outcome.

The most used words in the Female Dream Builder nominations

Standout, logistician, advocate, women,
recognised, external, internal, visible, positive,
impactful, leading, delivering, dedicated, clear,
concise, confident, expressive, supportive,
fantastic, passionate, instrumental, successful,
practical, collaborative, competent, significant,
valued, capable, helpful.



WINNER



Liz Blakemore

HR Business Partner

Female Dream Builder



Liz Blakemore
HR Business Partner

Female Dream Builder Winner

Liz is a role model for female professionals in a predominantly male Logistics Division where she champions a level playing field and mutual respect. Her confidence in holding and expressing views has led to her delivering valuable assistance, support, and advice in promoting the company's EID strategy.

Liz's passion and energy for promoting women in traditionally male roles has helped create more career opportunities in transport, operations, and apprentice roles. She has played an instrumental role in advertising campaigns, featuring successful women, which have encouraged more women to apply resulting in a doubling of female representation to 12% in Logistics since 2019. Liz also supports women returning to work post-maternity and has facilitated the setting up of a breastfeeding facility.



Lifetime Achievement

Recognising an exceptional woman whose long service in the business has paved the way for successful women around her. She inspires others through dedication, personal achievements, colleague support, mentorship and friendship.

Most used words for Lifetime Achievement nominations

Dedicated, female, lifelong, supportive, excellent, committed, agile, various, loyal, meaningful, deep, outgoing, passionate, important, strong, confident, successful, personal, wonderful, inspirational, enthusiastic, individual, professional, unselfishness, kind, hardworking, and supportive.

**Ladies who are so
inspirational, we awarded
all four the Lifetime
Achievement Award**



Linda Carrington



Jo Bird



Lindsay Stephen



Terina Jones



Linda Carrington BEM **Store Manager**

Lifetime Achievement Winner

Linda is an inspirational figure, dedicating her life to helping others both at work and in the community. She spends all her free time looking out for the less fortunate and is always available to offer advice or assistance.

With over 40 years of service in the retail industry, Linda has achieved exceptional standards of leadership and has helped develop countless women and men within the business. She has won the Blakemore Retail Store of Excellence three times and was awarded the British Empire Medal for her community support. Linda's passion, enthusiasm, and dedication make her a deserving recipient of this award.



Jo Bird
Customer Service Manager

**Lifetime Achievement
Winner**

Jo has dedicated over 30 years of service to AFB, championing women in business by supporting and mentoring colleagues. She continues to put others and the business before herself, remaining agile and committed to AFB's mission. As a mentor and inspiration to many.

Jo has cultivated a team that has developed through her driven development. Working in a male-dominated workforce, Jo has always championed women and offers endless support to her team as Customer Service Manager. Encouraging her team to develop and grow, Jo has become a fabulous ambassador for AFB and women in the company.



Lindsay Stephen Office Manager

Lifetime Achievement Winner

Lindsay has dedicated nearly 28 years to Blakemore Design and Shopfitting, mentoring numerous colleagues and going above and beyond to help and support everyone.

Her extensive knowledge of the business and willingness to work out of hours have made her an invaluable asset.

Her unselfishness, dedication, kindness, and support have not only benefited AFB but also her colleagues and customers. This award recognises her hard work and contributions, which have made her a worthy nominee for the Lifetime Achievement Award. Always willing to help and consistently going above and beyond her job role, Lindsay is a respected and valued member of the team.



Terina Jones
Logistics Administrator

Lifetime Achievement Winner

Terina is a devoted and knowledgeable colleague who has worked for AF Blakemore for 40 years.

She is the person everyone turns to in times of need and is an integral member of the Talbot Green team.

Her dedication and exemplary work in all areas of Logistics have earned her the title of going above and beyond. Terina's stock control and claims records speak for themselves, and she excels in record-keeping and communication both internally and externally.

Her outstanding contributions to the workplace deserve recognition.



Outstanding Resilience

Outstanding resilience is achieved by colleagues who have overcome adversity with grace whilst inspiring others. They are a role model, mentor and advocate for those facing challenges at home, demonstrating that anyone can succeed.

Most used words for Outstanding Resilience nominations

Extraordinary, resilient, can-do, helpful,
passionate, inspiring, supportive, knowledgeable,
approachable, successful, coach, team-spirited,
driven, adaptive, positive, understanding,
juggling, caring, strong, dedicated, role model,
hardworking, encouraging, empowering,
competent, resourceful, experienced, adaptable,
talented, motivated.



Janet Bond
Blakemore Retail Area Manager
Outstanding Resilience



Janet Bond
Blakemore Retail Area Manager
Outstanding Resilience
Winner

Jan joined Blakemore Retail as a store manager in 2004 and successfully managed the Garden City branch. After three years, Jan relocated to manage the flagship Wrexham store, which she turned into a tremendous success, winning several awards. She played a key role in developing the team and regularly presented at manager meetings.

In 2016, when the Area manager position became available, Jan took up the challenge, even though she did not have a driving license. She passed her test after a one-week course and became an excellent area manager. Jan leads by example, is supportive, and an inspiration to others.

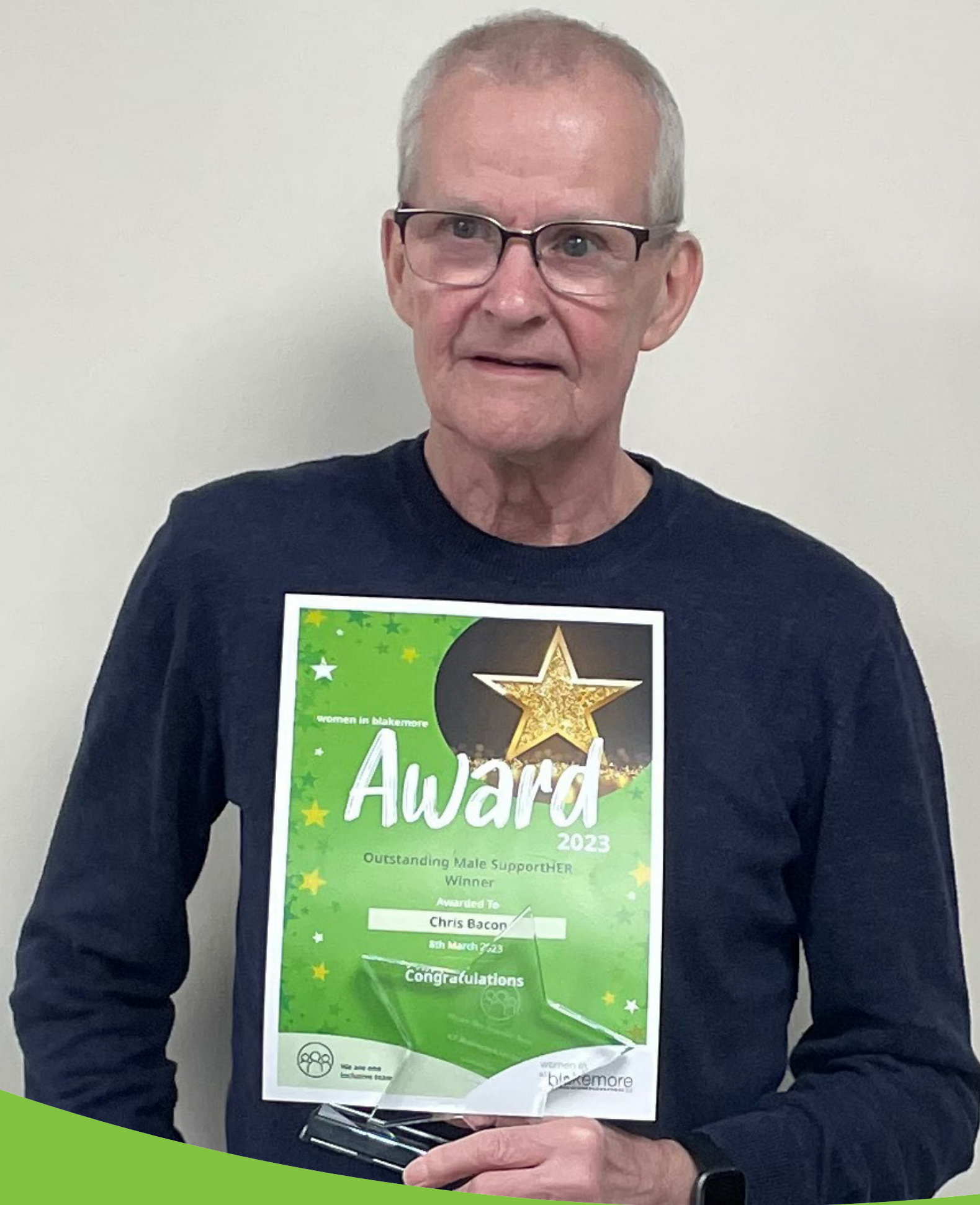


Outstanding Male SupportHER

We recognise people who champion, encourage and empower women in their workplace, network, and community. The outstanding SupportHer is a champion for women's health and wellbeing, supportive advancement, promotion and professional development.

Most used words for Outstanding Male SupportHER

Most, true, personal, successful, extraordinary,
extensive, sensitive, active, helpful, forever, quick,
friendly, approachable, sympathetic, honest,
great, caring, supportive, funny, biggest, bright,
positive, professional, incredibly, thriving, asset.



WINNER

Chris Bacon
Outstanding SupportHER

Blakemore Retail Store Operations Director



Chris Bacon
Blakemore Retail
Store Operations Director

Outstanding Male **SupportHER Winner**

Chris is a true Female SupportHER. He has demonstrated how changing attitudes to typical customs can widen opportunities for women. Through his senior position he has encouraged and supported many women to step up, progress and develop themselves.

He has given many hours coaching the women in our business to help and mentor them. He understands how flexibility in the business can change the pathway for many women and their careers and has ensured changes happen throughout the business to make this happen. Over the years he has supported and mentored many of the successful women we see in our business today.

THANK YOU

All of the people included in these stories are real people working in a family run business, AF Blakemore. The stories are told by people who have nominated them for the work they do to make people's lives better, every day.

We hope by sharing these stories it will empower other people and organisations to make a difference too.



Women

in Blakemore 2023

“Equality isn’t the
responsibility of just women,
and neither are they the
only ones to benefit”