



a.f. **blakemore**
.....& son ltd

**Responsible
Business Report
2017**

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH TOGETHER



FOREWORD

2017 marks a significant year in the history of A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd, as it represents the year when the company will celebrate its 100th year anniversary.

Our family business was founded during the early part of the 20th century when my grandparents Arthur and Harriet opened a counter-service grocery store in Merridale Street, Wolverhampton.

The company continued to grow and under the stewardship of Arthur's son, and my father, Frank along with my mother, Mary, expanded into new markets and trading areas.

This spirit of innovation and investment has continued throughout my tenure and the organisation has grown to become the 39th largest privately owned company in the UK, employing more than 8,100 people with annual sales of £1.31 billion.

While our centenary year represents a time to look back and reflect it also provides an opportunity for us to look ahead to the future and the company's 2020 vision, which is focused upon generating sustainable growth and long-term prosperity.

A.F. Blakemore has set out a vision to solidify its position as a multi-market national food operator

with a fantastic reputation for service among trade partners and consumers.

Collaboration is now required across the A.F. Blakemore Group for the business to achieve its goals. More than ever we need to use the expertise from across our divisions to benefit the whole company, capitalising on economies of scale and the sharing of best practice.

This publication symbolises this approach and combines the great work taking place across the wider Blakemore Group into one single document.

Our success has been built upon a distinct culture focussed upon positive and friendly relations with staff, customers and the communities we serve and our commitment to sustainable business will remain undiminished as we enter our next 100-years.

**Peter Blakemore Group Chairman –
A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd
January 2017**



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WELCOME TO **a.f. blakemore** & son ltd

A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd is one of the largest and most forward-thinking family-owned businesses in the UK. The company began life in 1917 as a counter-service grocery store, and has grown from these humble beginnings into a company that now employs more than 8,100 people with a turnover of £1.31 billion.

Food and drink have always been the lifeblood of A.F. Blakemore and the business now entails retail, wholesale, distribution and shop fitting operations amongst its divisions.

A.F. Blakemore is the largest division of SPAR UK, owning 300 SPAR stores and serving more than 1,000 in total across England and Wales. The company is also the largest member of the Landmark Wholesale group and a

significant supplier to the independent grocery sector across the UK.

A.F. Blakemore has always been committed to developing a loyal and dedicated workforce that is focused upon excellent customer service and behaving with integrity. The company has always strived to build partnerships with suppliers and trade partners while never underestimating the role that it plays within the communities it serves.



Underpinning everything that A.F. Blakemore does is the company's values statement, the Blakemore Way. This highlights what A.F. Blakemore stands for and the way that the company has always done and will continue to do business.

the **blakemore** way

OUR PURPOSE

“ To grow a family business in ways that are profitable and sustainable for the benefit of our staff, customers and community. ”

OUR VALUES

- ✓ Maximise staff potential and their contribution to the company's success
- ✓ Give great service to all our customers and add value to our trade partners
- ✓ Make a significant, positive contribution to the community
- ✓ Attain excellence in everything we do
- ✓ Behave with honesty and integrity in all our relationships

KEY STATISTICS FOR 2015/16

2,030
STORES (SPAR, RETAIL CLUB & BMORE LOCAL...)



306
COLLEAGUES ENGAGED IN LEADING THE BLAKEMORE WAY ACTIVITIES



TOTAL NUMBER OF DIVISIONS **12**



NUMBER OF APPRENTICES **18**



2,666
EMPLOYEES TO HAVE UNDERTAKEN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT COURSES



£236,263
DONATED BY THE BLAKEMORE FOUNDATION



8,100
EMPLOYEES



24 DEPOTS



11,414
VOLUNTEERING HOURS



3.00/4
OVERALL COLLEAGUE ENGAGEMENT SCORE



£1.31bn
TURNOVER



55,907
CO₂t
TOTAL CARBON EMISSIONS





a.f. blakemore

.....2020 strategy

A.F. Blakemore has developed a strategy that has set out a vision of what the company will be like in 2020.

Collaboration is required across the A.F. Blakemore Group for the business to achieve its strategic goals and vision of being a multi-market national food operator with a fantastic reputation for service among trade partners and consumers.

The 2020 Strategy is focused upon generating sustainable growth and long-term prosperity, not just short-term success. It is also important that the business delivers increased profitability, and a clear target has been set to achieve 2% profit before tax by 2020.

Profit Improvement Plans (PIPs) have been identified at Group, cross-divisional, divisional and business unit level to help us achieve our financial targets.

To support the implementation of these PIPs a series of enablers have been established focussed upon leadership development, project leadership, class-leading IT and process improvement.

A.F. Blakemore is a business that has been built upon reinvestment in

both its internal infrastructure and the customers and trade partners who we work alongside.

The need for increased profitability is therefore vital for us to achieve sustainable growth for the benefit of our staff, customers, suppliers and the communities that we serve.

Therefore the bedrock of our 2020 Strategy is the Purpose and Values outlined within the Blakemore Way, which will remain a constant, while our business plans and priorities will continue to adapt and reflect the culture of innovation that has been demonstrated throughout the company's history.

The 2020 Strategy is focused upon generating sustainable growth and long-term prosperity, not just short-term success. It is also important that the business delivers increased profitability, and a clear target has been set to achieve 2% profit before tax by 2020.



Vision

A multi-market national food operator
with a fantastic reputation for service among
trade partners & consumers
To achieve a 2% net profit before tax

Profit Improvement Plans (PIPs)

Leadership Development

Develop attitudes
& behaviours in
accordance with
Leading the
Blakemore Way

Project Leadership

Standardise our
approach to
delivering new and
improved business
activities

Class- Leading IT

Innovate &
improve the way
we do business
through class
leading IT

Process Improvement

Standardise,
improve &
reduce waste
across all
processes

A Culture of Innovation

Purpose

To grow a family business in ways that are profitable and
sustainable for the benefit of our staff, customers and community

blakemore retail

With 300 SPAR stores across England and Wales, Blakemore Retail is the largest independent convenience store operator in the UK.

Offering a wide range of locally sourced products, fresh meal solutions and essential services, the stores are invaluable to local areas.

Blakemore Retail works with a number of leading brands, including the Post Office, Subway, Greggs and Costa Coffee.

Along with its strong links to local good causes in the community, Blakemore Retail has been a corporate partner of the NSPCC for the past decade and has raised more than £2.3 million for the children's charity.



blakemore ... trade partners

Blakemore Trade Partners provides sales, marketing and trading support to retailers across SPAR UK's Meridian & Welsh Guild.

With more than 1,000 stores, this is SPAR UK's largest guild of retailers and covers an area which stretches from the Welsh coast to East Anglia and from the south east coast to north Lincolnshire.

The guild system encourages retailers to exchange ideas with each other and to build successful partnerships with both customers and suppliers.

The retailers serviced by Blakemore Trade Partners extend all the way from single-site store operators to nationally recognised multiple account operators including Euro Garages, MRH Retail, Rontec and HKS Retail.



blakemore logistics

Blakemore Logistics services the 1,000 stores across SPAR UK's Meridian & Welsh Guild and supports the distribution needs of the A.F. Blakemore Group.

The operation distributes to more than 8,500 delivery points across the UK, with more than 280 vehicles travelling 25 million miles per year.

A.F. Blakemore's 10 distribution centres carry over 13,000 lines, picking and distributing 92.5 million packs per year.

Competency, availability, responsibility, efficiency and sincerity underpin the division's approach to business, and a dedicated customer service team operates seven days a week.

blakemore wholesale

Blakemore Wholesale entails the cash & carry and delivered wholesale arm of A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd.

The division operates 14 cash & carry depots across England and Wales, based in Bangor, Barnsley, Birmingham, Cardiff, Gateshead, Grimsby, Hexham, Killingworth, Middlesbrough, Newport, Penrith, Swansea, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Products stocked include fresh, ambient, chilled and frozen foods as well as licensed, tobacco and other non-food products.

The business is the largest member of the Landmark Wholesale group and serves independent retailers as well as vending, forecourt and catering customers nationwide. Blakemore Wholesale's retail clubs currently serve more than 900 members.



blakemore foodservice

Blakemore Foodservice is a leading multi-temperature food distribution company.

The business has a diverse range of nationwide customers that include public houses, restaurant chains, the leisure industry, schools and professional caterers amongst many.

In 2010 Blakemore Foodservice underwent a huge expansion programme following the launch of a second depot. The 80,000 sq ft site in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, was a clear statement of intent for the division to grow and expand its customer base across the north of the UK.

This has also allowed the division's head office and 69,000 sq ft distribution depot in Walsall in the West Midlands to increasingly focus upon further expansion across the south. The business now distributes throughout the UK, from Scotland to the Isle of Wight.



blakemore wholesale distribution

Blakemore Wholesale Distribution is a leading delivered wholesaler with a diverse range of customers across the UK.

The division services multiple and independent retailers, forecourts, vending operators, fellow wholesalers plus education, leisure and hospitality sites.

Blakemore Wholesale Distribution is the second largest supplier of goods to the UK vending market and provides customers with access to 20,000 ambient, chilled and frozen product lines.

The division's operation is headquartered at an 84,000 sq ft distribution centre in the West Midlands and is supported by A.F. Blakemore's wider distribution network.



blakemore fine foods

Blakemore Fine Foods is a purveyor of speciality and fine food products from the UK and the rest of the world.

The division represents more than 260 producers and supplies in excess of 3,450 chilled, ambient and frozen product lines.

Customers include farm shops, garden centres, delicatessens, convenience stores and other independent retailers across the UK, as well as multiple retailers.

In addition to consolidating orders, invoices and deliveries for customers, Blakemore Fine Foods also supports retailers with services ranging from point-of-sale marketing materials to recycling.



blakemore fresh foods

Blakemore Fresh Foods is a UK-based international wholesaler and distributor of fresh meat, committed to the highest standards of quality and customer service.

The business is a major importer of quality meat sourced across Australia, New Zealand, South America, North America and Europe.

The division's customers span across the UK and Europe and include fresh meat suppliers, retail butchers, caterers, catering butchers, meat wholesalers, meat traders, cash & carry operators, retailers and small supermarket chains.

A specialist meat processing operation in South Staffordshire provides a bespoke cutting, boning, slicing, dicing and mincing service to meet all customer requirements.



blakemore

●●●●● design & shopfitting

Blakemore Design & Shopfitting specialises in cutting-edge store design and refit solutions to help retailers drive sales and profitability and reduce operating costs.

The business works with clients on a personal basis to provide bespoke shop fitting services, from the initial design stage to completed projects.

Shop fitting developments range from the most basic of works to comprehensive, floor-to-ceiling refurbishments, all focusing on the latest energy-saving solutions.

The division operates its own joinery workshop in Willenhall to enable the business to manufacture some of its own store service counters and equipment.



blakemore

●●●●● technical services

All divisions across the A.F. Blakemore group of companies are supported by the company's Technical Services team. This encompasses Finance, IT, HR and Management Services.

More than 220 colleagues provide a wide range of support services to the business, including operational HR, learning and development, internal and external communications, payroll, accounts and IT.



Blakemore Creative Print creates bespoke and off-the-shelf innovative and effective point-of-sale and display solutions for the A.F. Blakemore group, SPAR stores and external clients.

blakemore

●●●●● creative print

The creative graphic design team help clients with their retail designs, permanent displays, brand advertising, promotions and in-store and out-of-store themed marketing.

A.F. BLAKEMORE GROUP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

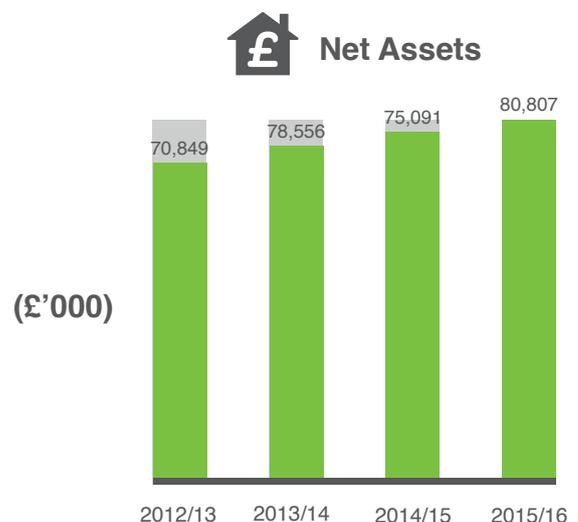
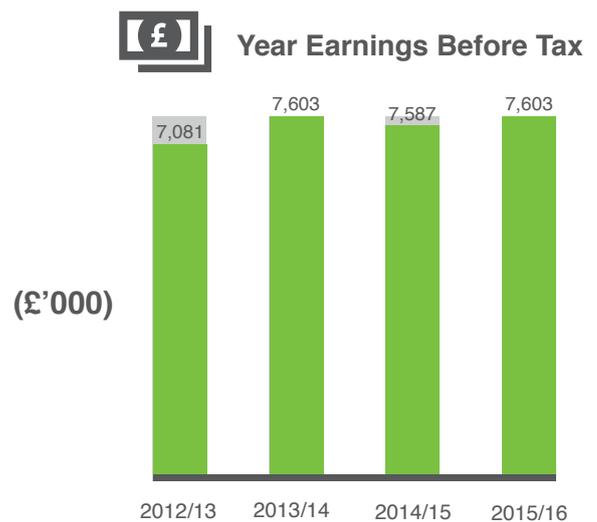
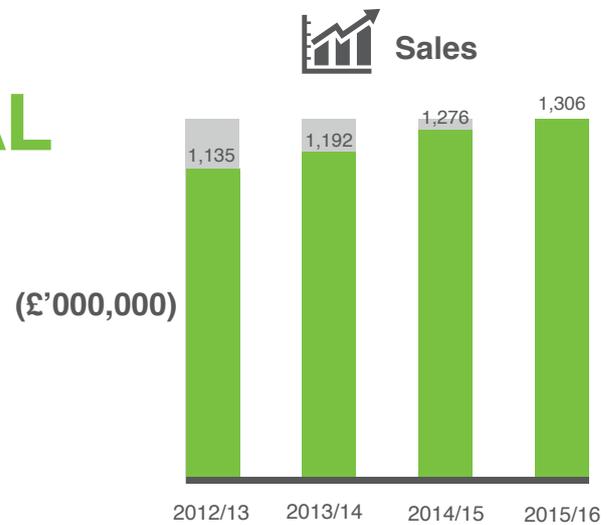
The following graphs represent A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd's recent financial performance to April 30 2016.

The group had a good solid performance for the year to April 30 2016. Sales increased by 2.4% to £1,306m whilst pre-tax profits increased by 0.2% from £7.587m to £7.603m. Shareholders' funds increased from £75.1m to £80.8m.

This result has been achieved against a background of difficult trading conditions in the food retail and wholesale markets together with significant levels of price deflation.

FRS 102 came into force during this financial year which has changed the accounting treatment applied to the group's results this year and the previous year.

The group has continued to retain and re-invest all of its post-tax profits into improving our group operations and those of our independent retail customers.





A.F. BLAKEMORE & SON LTD - CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd is committed to responsible business practice. This commitment is demonstrated through the company’s corporate responsibility programme and purpose, as outlined in the organisation’s values statement – The Blakemore Way:

“ To grow a family business in ways that are profitable and sustainable for the benefit of our staff, customers and the community. ”

Our Workplace Objectives:

“We will maximise staff potential and their contribution to the company’s success.”

- Monitor key workplace indicators such as staff absenteeism, turnover and satisfaction.
- Fully induct, appraise and develop our staff and measure the value of our training.
- Create a working environment that supports and promotes the health, safety and well-being of staff.
- Establish two-way communication channels with our staff such as consultation groups and surveys.
- Promote diversity and equality in the workplace via recruitment, staff development and work practices.

Our Community Objectives:

“We will make a significant, positive contribution to the community”

- Use the skills of our staff to support education, employability and economic renewal in the communities we serve.
- Promote community engagement across our workforce and listen to the views of staff in relation to the good causes that they want to support.
- Maximise the resources of the Blakemore Foundation to help us achieve our community objectives.
- Measure, evaluate and report upon the inputs, outputs and impacts of our community activity.
- Use community activity to engage and inspire our customers, suppliers and other external stakeholders.

Our Marketplace Objectives:

“We will give great service to all our customers and add value to our trade partners.”

- Engage with suppliers and customers to generate positive environmental, social and business outcomes.
- Provide a great service to our customers by responding to their needs and measuring our service levels.
- Diversify our products and services to support new and underserved markets.
- Support local and small suppliers.

Our Environment Objectives:

“We will acknowledge, measure and minimise our environmental impact.”

- Undertake activity to minimise waste in our operation.
- Minimise our impact upon climate change by improving efficiencies in fuel and energy usage.
- Help suppliers and customers minimise their environmental impact.
- Measure and minimise the carbon footprint of our organisation.

A.F. BLAKEMORE & SON LTD GROUP SAFETY, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

The management of A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd; incorporating all areas of business and subsidiary companies (The Company), regard the promotion of safety, health and environmental protection measures as an absolute requirement for management and employees at all levels.

The company has made a commitment to:

- ✓ Comply with current and forthcoming legislation in regards to matters that relate to health and safety or the environment.
- ✓ Take account of the views of its stakeholders when formulating and reviewing its policies and procedures.
- ✓ Take all reasonably practicable steps to eliminate or otherwise reduce to an acceptable level, risks of injury and ill health to its employees, customers and others who may be exposed to such hazards.
- ✓ Prevent pollution and ensure effective control of the aspects of its business that could impact upon the environment.
- ✓ Develop and maintain occupational safety, health and environmental management systems that are compatible with the BS EN OHAS 18001 and ISO 14001 standards and implement them across all sectors of its business.
- ✓ Set clear targets to ensure continual improvement within its management systems and the performance of its undertaking.
- ✓ Provide employees with suitable and sufficient information and training in order that they are able to carry out their responsibilities in a manner consistent with this Group Policy.
- ✓ Ensure that this policy has been effectively communicated to all persons that are employed by or otherwise undertake activities on behalf of The Company.

Primary responsibility for setting objectives and reviewing performance resides with the Managing Director and the Board of each division of the company.

A copy of the Group Safety, Health and Environmental Policy Statement shall be clearly displayed at each of the premises occupied by The Company. A copy of the Company's Policy Manual is kept in the Senior Manager's office and will be made available to interested parties upon request.

This Group Policy Statement shall be reviewed annually by the Main Board or more frequently as circumstances require.

WORKPLACE

“ We will maximise staff potential and their contribution to the company’s success ”

2,666

COLLEAGUES ATTENDED LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT COURSES



leading the blakemore way

306

COLLEAGUES HAVE ATTENDED LEADING THE BLAKEMORE WAY WORKSHOPS

NUMBER OF APPRENTICES 18



20

EMPLOYEES HAVE SIGNED UP TO THE WAREHOUSE TO WHEELS PROGRAMME

PEOPLE HAVE ACHIEVED AN ILM QUALIFICATION

25



53%

COLLEAGUE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

3.00/4

OVERALL COLLEAGUE ENGAGEMENT SCORE



Blakemore Retail Achieves Investors in People Silver.



Blakemore Retail’s commitment to developing colleagues has been recognised with the achievement of the highly prestigious Investors in People Silver accolade.

The division, which employs 5,530 people, has held Investors in People accreditation since 2002. The Silver

status comes just three years after the business achieved Bronze in 2013.

Investors in People Practitioner Kathryn Shepherd commented: “Silver accreditation is a fantastic outcome given the size of the company and complexity of the working environment.

“ Many congratulations to everyone for their contribution to this success; it could only have been realised through the participation of people at all levels throughout Blakemore Retail. ”

LOGISTICS APPRENTICES RECOGNISED AT HOUSE OF COMMONS



Two Blakemore Logistics colleagues have been recognised for their hard work and achievements at a training and career development awards ceremony at the House of Commons.

Warehouse & Admin apprentice Marianne Ball and Business Admin apprentice Andrew Howell both picked up 'Outstanding Commitment to Career Development' awards at the Federation of Wholesale Distributors' Skills and Development Awards.

The awards ceremony celebrated the important role that apprentices and trainees play in the wholesale sector and their exceptional work.

Warehouse Supervisor Adam Ball also provided a glowing reference for Marianne, saying: "In the time I have worked with Marianne she has consistently gone the extra mile to deliver exceptional performance.

“ Marianne arrives at work every day focused and full of energy, and she has made herself an indispensable member of our goods-in and stock operations at Axxess 10.

"I fully expect to see Marianne become a leader in our business in the future and I believe she has the correct drive and attitude to succeed in any avenue she chooses to follow."

Andrew's line manager, Blakemore Logistics Customer Services Manager Jo Bird, who also attended the awards, commented:

“ I found great pride in seeing Marianne and Andrew receive their awards at the FWD event.

"Andrew has become a very valuable asset to our team. He is dedicated, committed and passionate in his approach to his responsibilities and has a very positive attitude."

Both Marianne and Andrew are now employed in permanent positions with the company. Marianne, who joined the business on her apprenticeship in February 2016, is now employed as a Goods In & Stock Control Clerk, and Andrew, who joined the business since April 2015, is a Customer Service Clerk.





GRADUATE SCHEME

Now in its second successful year, A.F. Blakemore has welcomed three new employees to the business as part of its Graduate Scheme in 2016.

The scheme demonstrates the company's commitment to developing future leaders to help us continue to be a profitable and sustainable business for the long term.

Group HR Director
Ian Diment commented:

“ This is the second year that we have run a graduate scheme and I am delighted with the calibre of people that we have attracted and recruited.

The scheme demonstrates A.F. Blakemore's commitment to developing future leaders to help us continue to be a profitable and sustainable business for the long term. **”**

FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAMME

Blakemore Retail has launched a brand new development programme to support managers to step into senior roles in the future.

The Future Leaders programme was established in April 2015 and the two year programme aims to equip candidates with the skills, confidence and knowledge required to provide support in their current role as area

managers and prepare them to step into senior roles in the future.

Two success stories from this year's programme are Gareth James and Ruth Mutton who have both been promoted from area to regional managers.



Regional Manager
Gareth James commented:

“ I was delighted to have been accepted on to the company's inaugural Future Leaders course. With over 16 years' experience as an Area Manager within Blakemore's I am familiar with the role, but what I was lacking was a global picture of how it all interlinked.

The scheme demonstrates A.F. Blakemore's commitment to developing future leaders to help us continue to be a profitable and sustainable business for the long term. **”**

Training & Development Manager
Kerry Hunt commented:

“ The programme is intended to give candidates a wider understanding and knowledge of A.F. Blakemore and the convenience sector by improving operational, commercial and behavioural skills. **”**

LOGISTICS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Out of 17 candidates, five were successful and offered the position of team leader.

In 2016, future leaders from across the business were invited to take part in an assessment centre to identify warehouse and distribution team leaders for the Blakemore Logistics operation.

The assessment day looked for individuals from across the business that demonstrate the attributes of good leaders and identify those with potential.

Out of 17 candidates, five were successful and offered the position of team leader. In addition, candidates will be given the opportunity to attend an ILM Level 2 programme in Leadership and Team Skills provided by A.F. Blakemore's Learning & Development department.

Logistics Manager
Marc Deakin commented:

“ This is the sixth consecutive year that the Logistics development programme has been run. It continues to play a significant part of our people development strategy and demonstrates our commitment to maximising staff potential. ”

WAREHOUSE TO WHEELS

Launched in 2008, A.F. Blakemore's Warehouse to Wheels programme gives warehouse employees across the business the opportunity to train as LGV drivers.

Since the start of 2016/17 a total of 12 delegates have completed the programme with a further eight currently on the scheme.

Group Logistics Director Andy Grinsell commented:

“ Warehouse to Wheels is a fantastic opportunity for colleagues that want to develop a career in driving and a great example of the investment that the company is putting into its in-house development programmes. ”



Since the start of 2016/17 a total of 12 delegates have completed the programme.

MARKETPLACE

“ We will give great service to all our customers and add value to our trade partners ”

Foodservice Customer Surveys



Foodservice Marston's Survey Satisfaction =

96.75%



Foodservice Local Authority Survey Satisfaction =

97.54%

INDUSTRY ACCOLADES



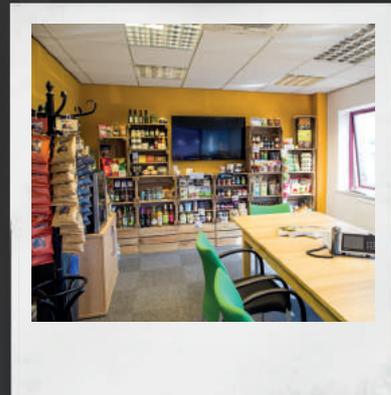
Blakemore Retail scooped Best Forecourt Retailer, Best Food to Go Retailer and Best Chilled Retailer at the Retail Industry Awards.



Blakemore Retail was crowned Independent Retail Chain of the Year at the Grocer Gold Awards.



Blakemore Fine Foods was reaccredited at the Business in the Community Responsible Business Awards for their Producer Growth Scheme.



BLAKEMORE WHOLESALE RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Independent retailers from across the Blakemore Wholesale estate came together in October 2016 for the annual Retailer of the Year Awards and Gala dinner.

The awards, now in their seventh year aim to recognise exceptional retailers who go the extra mile to deliver excellent service and store standards.

A total of 12 regional winners and five category awards including Best Work in the Community, Best Promotional Execution, Best Own Brand Compliance, Best Core Range and Best Fresh Foods Retailer in addition to Best New Store and the Overall Retailer of the Year are awarded on the night.



The awards, now in their seventh year aim to recognise exceptional retailers who go the extra mile to deliver excellent service and store standards.

Taking the prestigious title of Blakemore Wholesale Retailer of the Year 2016 was the first Bmorelocal... store in the country, BK Stores in Immingham, Grimsby.

Judges commended the store for its excellent standards and service including internal and external imagery, customer relationships that are second to none, an extensive product range, up to date merchandising and significant local community involvement.

In addition to maintaining the highest standards, BK Stores plays an important role in the community in which the family have operated for over 20 years hosting numerous events during the year. They have invested in their store to take it to the next level of Independent Retailing.

INDEPENDENT RETAILER SCHEME

The Blakemore Foundation Independent Retailer Scheme aims to recognise and support retailers supporting their local communities. In 2015/16 a total of 47 grants were awarded worth £6,951.



SPAR RETAIL SHOW 2016

Retail Excellence was the key message from Blakemore Trade Partners SPAR Retail Show 2016.

The division launched a brand new Retail Excellence programme dedicated to driving the basket spend and frequency of visit of our retailers' existing customers.

To help implement these initiatives, A.F. Blakemore and the Meridian & Welsh Guild have continued to evolve the Guild Academy by creating a Retail Excellence team to promote Retail Excellence principles and share best practice across the company's SPAR estate.

Also unveiled at this year's SPAR Retail Show was a £4 million investment in A.F. Blakemore's IT strategy and a further £1.6 million investment in the company's Retail Partners Scheme.

The Retail Partners Scheme now encompasses almost 60% of the Blakemore Trade Partners retail estate. In addition to offering a reduction on wholesale prices on over 180 lines it



provides retailers with a rolling programme of initiatives that will drive customer loyalty and deepen brand engagement, including category management principles, an extensive fresh offering, competitive meal deals, a strong promotional programme, in-store theatre and engagement, active selling advice and SPAR's award-winning own-brand range.

IGD SUPPLIER SEMINAR

In March 2016 A.F. Blakemore held its first IGD Supplier Seminar to promote greater collaboration between its supplier base and the business.

The event provided a unique chance for suppliers to get up to date with the latest developments across the A.F. Blakemore Group and learn about opportunities to develop their sales in partnership with the business.



A.F. Blakemore Chairman Peter Blakemore commented:

“ We would like to make this the start of a new strategic way of working with our suppliers and I would encourage you to engage with A.F. Blakemore to find out more about the mutual success that can be achieved through closer co-operation. ”

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY FOR SPAR RETAILERS

Blakemore Trade Partners held a series of operational efficiency workshops for SPAR retailers to help prepare them for the introduction of the National Living Wage.

More than 200 retailers across SPAR UK's Meridian & Welsh Guild attended one of seven half-day workshops with the purpose of informing retailers about the National Living Wage and to offer them advice on ways to improve the efficiency of their operations to help minimise the impact of increased staffing costs.



Retailer Malcolm Crump from SPAR Compton in Wolverhampton, who attended one of the workshops, commented:

“ I definitely found the event helpful. It provided a great chance to meet other retailers and I think it's really important that we can network in this way. It was particularly useful to learn about employment law. ”

This was further supported by Gareth Thomas, a SPAR retailer based in Solihull. He added:

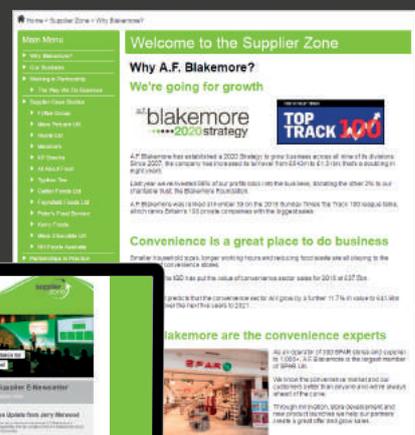
“ It was a really good, well presented day. The rotation presentations generated a lot of questions and the interactions with the presentation leaders were very, very good. I met some new friends and I've got lots of good ideas to take back to base. ”

FOCUS ON IMPROVED SUPPLIER COMMUNICATIONS

As part of A.F. Blakemore's commitment to developing stronger strategic partnerships with its supplier base a new digital communications plan has been introduced.

To help keep the company's suppliers up to date with the latest news across the Blakemore Group of Companies a monthly supplier e-newsletter is distributed to key contacts every quarter, linked to a new Supplier Zone platform on the A.F. Blakemore website.

The Supplier Zone showcases some of the great collaborative work already taking place and allows suppliers to have a greater insight into the Blakemore business strategy and meet the key individuals from the company's commercial team.



COMMUNITY

“ Making a Significant, Positive Contribution to the Community ”

Volunteering Statistics


1,058 EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS
 
£236,263 DONATED BY THE BLAKEMORE FOUNDATION
 
204 PROJECTS

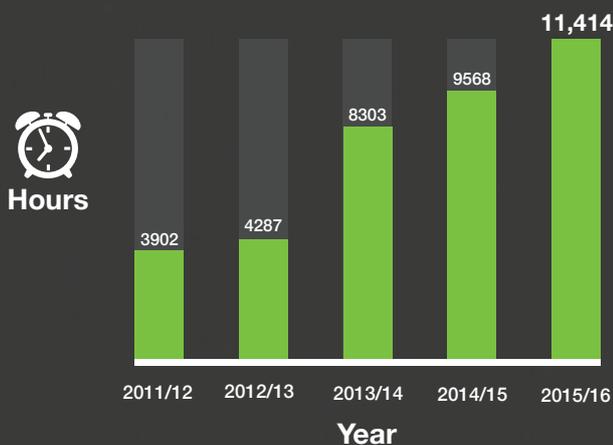
EMPLOYEE HOURS  **11,414**

£448,993 GENERATED IN LEVERAGE FUNDING

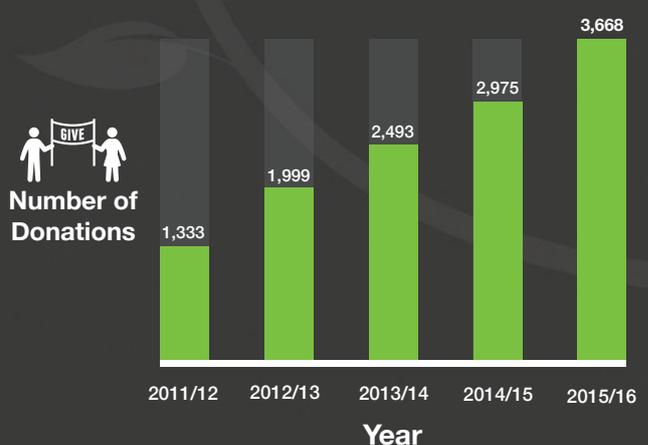

56,489 MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTED
 RAISED FOR THE NSPCC **£342,120**


3,668 BLAKEMORE FOUNDATION DONATIONS
 
£91,816 RAISED BY EMPLOYEES FOR GOOD CAUSES

Employee Volunteering Hours:



Blakemore Foundation Donations:



BLAKEMORE FOUNDATION



A.F. Blakemore employees have helped the company's charitable trust, the Blakemore Foundation to donate over half a million pounds over the past six years.

The rate of support given to local good causes is down to the hard work and devotion shown across the A.F. Blakemore's trading estate. This has enabled the Blakemore Foundation to donate £500,000 to over 12,000 good causes over the last six years.

In addition, employees have fundraised a further £91,816 for a wide range of good causes including Macmillan, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice to name but a few.



NSPCC

Over the 2015/16 financial year, Blakemore Retail donated £314,316 to the NSPCC bringing the total fundraised throughout its ten year partnership to £2.3million.



NSPCC Partnerships Manager Tianna Cowan commented:

“ Each year, Blakemore Retail does a fantastic job of fundraising for the NSPCC, and we continue to be blown away by stores' enthusiasm! In the last year alone, we have had gifts donated to our Birmingham Service Centre for the children that we help there.

Thank you to everyone who has raised money for us- with every penny donated, you are helping us in our fight for every childhood. ”



REGENERATION



39,158
PEOPLE
SUPPORTED



465
STAFF



63  **5,138**
HOURS
REGENERATION
PROJECTS

96%
STAFF AGREEMENT THAT
THE ACTIVITY HELPED
THEM DEVELOP SKILLS
THEY CAN USE IN
THEIR WORKPLACE

98%
AGREEMENT FROM
COMMUNITY GROUPS
THAT THE EVENT HAS
IMPROVED THEIR
PERCEPTION OF AFB

99%
AGREEMENT THAT
THE ACTIVITY MADE A
SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE
CONTRIBUTION TO
THEIR GROUP.

100%
AGREEMENT FROM STAFF
THAT THEY WOULD
COMPLETE ANOTHER
REGENERATION
PROJECT



Regeneration events are proven to provide a great way to help foster team spirit and encourage colleagues to work together in a fun, non-work based environment.

A wide range of activities have been completed as part of the companies community regeneration programme, from painting school halls to creating sensory gardens at local care homes.

Regeneration events are proven to provide a great way to help foster team spirit and encourage colleagues to work

together in a fun, non-work based environment.

This principle has also been extended to developing cross-functional team building events or those involving customers or suppliers.

A great example of this is The Trade Partners Sales and Recruitment team challenge which involved staff from multiple sites and roles completing an outdoor gardening project with Hill End in Oxford.

DESIGN & SHOPFITTING STUDY TOUR

Study tours are a great way of inspiring young people to get into the world of work, and in particular explore and understand our business and the job roles within it better.



The open-door visit was attended by students who had expressed prior interest in pursuing a career in design or construction.

In June, Blakemore Design and Shopfitting hosted a study tour for year 11 students from Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy.

The open-door visit was attended by students who had expressed prior interest in pursuing a career in design or construction.

Students were given a behind-the-scenes tour of Blakemore Design & Shopfitting's offices, where they were given the opportunity to hear about the latest developments in computer-aided design technology and understand the design process from start to finish.

The students took part in a competition where they had to work in teams to design the layout of a convenience store.



In addition, the students took part in a competition where they had to work in teams to design the layout of a convenience store.

Finally, they took a tour around the joinery workshop to see Blakemore Design & Shopfitting's computer numerical control machine in action.

BLAKEMORE FRESH FOODS SUPPORTS CARFEST

Blakemore Fresh Foods has supported BBC Children in Need by making a 500kg donation of meat to CarFest.



CarFest is an annual event that was founded in 2012 by radio and television presenter Chris Evans to raise money for BBC Children in Need. The festival features a mixture of cars, food, drink and live music.

Blakemore Fresh Foods worked in partnership with meat supplier Westvlees to provide 500kg of pork to support the event's new 'RoastFest' food fair.

Blakemore Fresh Foods Trading Director Richard Brownjohn said:

“ We are delighted to have supported BBC Children in Need at CarFest South and to have contributed towards the overall success of the festival. Thank you to Westvlees for helping us to back the event. ”

INSPIRATIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

It is important that work experience inspires, motivates and enables young people to enter the world of work successfully.

A work experience placement will typically be unpaid and run for up to 15 days continuously or a day-a-week up to six-weeks within the business.

A total of 40 placements were hosted in 2015/16 across a number of departments including Logistics, HR, Accounts, IT, Marketing and Customer Service roles within SPAR.



COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

A.F. Blakemore has received recognition for its commitment to community engagement, picking up awards from Business in the Community, the NSPCC and the Retail Industry Awards.



ROAD SAFETY

More than 900 pupils from across the West Midlands have been educated on the rules of the road as part of Blakemore Logistics' annual road safety campaign.



Children from five different secondary schools across the region took part in the week-long event, to coincide with Brake's national Road Safety campaign. The company's Road Safety Week was led by volunteers from Blakemore Logistics and supported by Spillard Safety Systems.

This year was the first that Road Safety Week targeted Year 7 pupils, a group specially chosen as for many of them this will be the first time that they commute to school on their own.

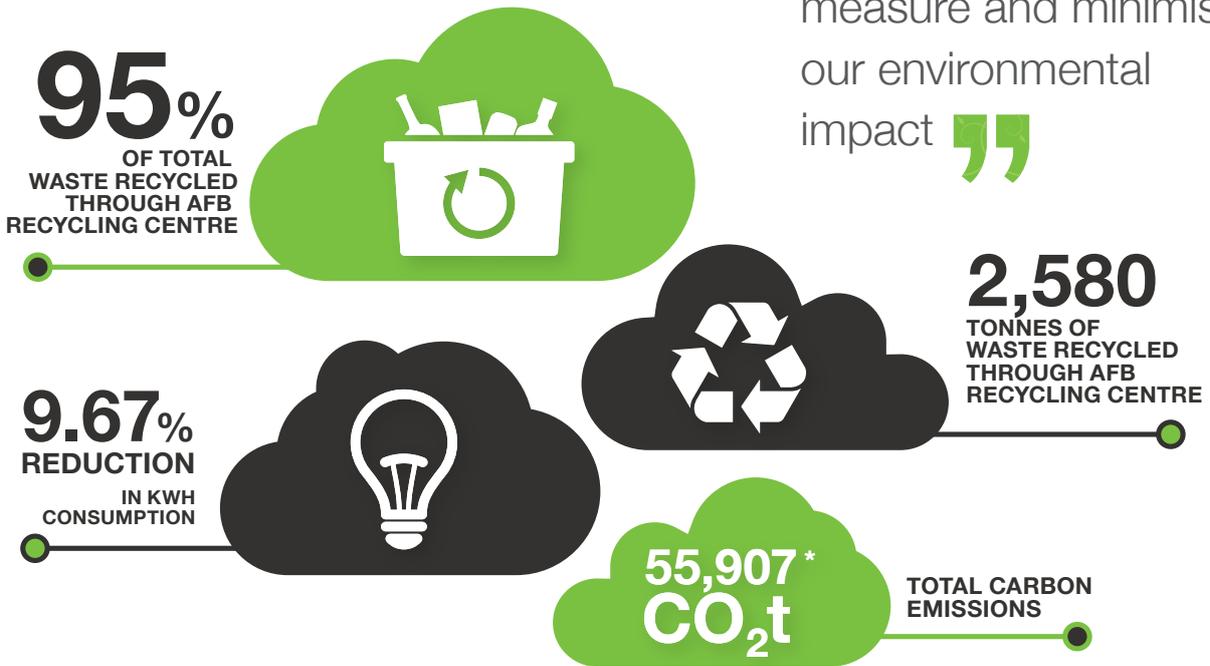
A.F. Blakemore Community Affairs Officer Liz Bell said:

“ As a food and drink distributor with more than 300 vehicles on the roads each day, we have a responsibility to educate pupils about the importance of road safety.

Each year we incorporate a new element into our core road safety campaign and we are delighted to have partnered with Spillard Safety Systems to raise awareness of blind spots and the risks that young people may come across on their journey to school. ”

ENVIRONMENT

“ We will acknowledge, measure and minimise our environmental impact ”



*FIGURE BASED ON OUR ENERGY AND DISTRIBUTION FUEL USAGE.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING GROUP

Following the completion of the Business in the Community CR Index in 2015 a decision was taken to introduce a cross divisional Environmental Steering Group to the business to improve the company's performance and management of environmental issues.

The group is chaired by Business Improvement Manager Tom Blakemore with the aim to share best practice and develop a consistent and collaborative approach to environmental issues affecting the business.



WASTE REDUCTION

Waste reduction is a key priority area for the business and the company's recycling centre was established to reduce its environmental impact.

The centre represents a £700,000 investment from A.F. Blakemore and provides facilities to recycle paper, cardboard, polyplastics, aluminium, glass and clothes.

Retail stores can recycle waste packaged food, paper, soft plastic, bottles and cans, which are backhauled as part of the distribution process.



The centre represents a £700,000 investment from A.F. Blakemore and provides facilities to recycle paper, cardboard, polyplastics, aluminium, glass and clothes.



Not only does the recycling operation reduce stores' impact upon the environment but it also helps to minimise the rising costs associated with waste disposal.

Waste food is processed at an anaerobic digestion plant, which generates biogas to supply the National Grid and agricultural supplements.

The impact of the centre upon Blakemore Logistics has been huge and has resulted in 95% of the division's overall waste being recycled.

Not only does the recycling operation reduce stores' impact upon the environment but it also helps to minimise the rising costs associated with waste disposal.



VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

As part of the company's vehicle replacement programme, a total of 50 new delivery vehicles and units have been purchased across the company's Logistics, Foodservice, Fresh Foods and Wholesale Distribution divisions over the last 12 months.

All new vehicles are Euro 6 specification- the latest in diesel engines which halves the amount of nitrogen oxides that a diesel vehicle can emit.

On average, the purchase of the new vehicles has generated a £178,000 saving on fuel and increase in MPG from 9.2 to 10.61.

 **£178,000**
SAVING ON FUEL

9.2 TO 10.61 
INCREASE IN MPG



ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN STORES

Blakemore Retail have undertaken energy trials in more than 22 company owned SPAR stores to improve the efficiency of lighting, refrigeration and air conditioning in stores.

A total of 11 different initiatives have been trialled in new and refitted stores together with existing test stores resulting in a 4.46% reduction in KWH consumption.

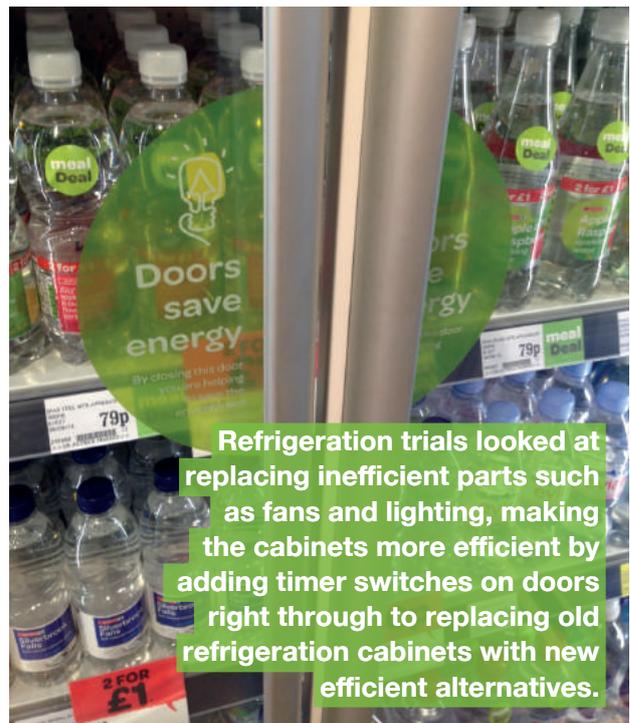
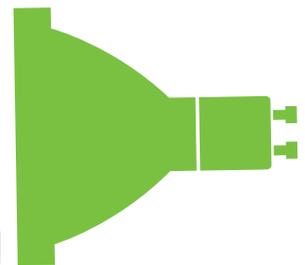
Lighting trials have ranged from replacing inefficient sales areas with L.E.D or T5 fittings and installing movement sensors in back office areas so that lighting is only on when a staff member is working in those areas.

In addition, refrigeration trials looked at replacing inefficient parts such as fans and lighting, making the cabinets more efficient by adding timer switches on doors right through to replacing old refrigeration cabinets with new efficient alternatives.



CONVERSION
OF SALES AREA
LIGHTING TO L.E.D

12.86%
REDUCTION





LOOKING AHEAD

A.F. Blakemore's responsible business programme will continue to evolve and change throughout 2017 and beyond.

In 2015 the company undertook a private benchmarking exercise with Business in the Community aligned with its Corporate Responsibility Index. The C.R. Index has enabled the company to identify strengths in the management of corporate responsibility, assess where future progress can be made and benchmark itself against like-minded organisations.

As a result of this exercise an action plan has been approved by A.F. Blakemore Group Board, which will further embed the principles of responsible business across the organisation – the key highlights of this are listed below:

ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING GROUP

An Environmental Steering Group was launched in 2016, comprised of senior representatives from all divisions of A.F. Blakemore. The group has initially begun by compiling an Environmental Risk Register and will look to share best practice and agree group-wide solutions to achieve A.F. Blakemore's sustainability targets.



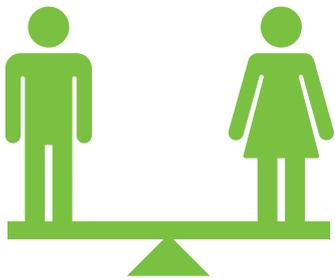
BRANCHING OUT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

A.F. Blakemore will build upon the decade long success of its community programme by launching a new educational-led volunteering strategy in 2017. Branching Out will utilise the expertise and resources within A.F. Blakemore to develop the employability and prospects of young people across the company's trading area.



A.F. BLAKEMORE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

The introduction of the Government's National Apprenticeship Levy will be seen by A.F. Blakemore as an opportunity to create a more strategic approach to apprenticeships and provide further opportunities to develop colleagues across the organisation. Plans are also being drawn up to align apprenticeships with the company's education programme to help A.F. Blakemore attract and recruit future talent.

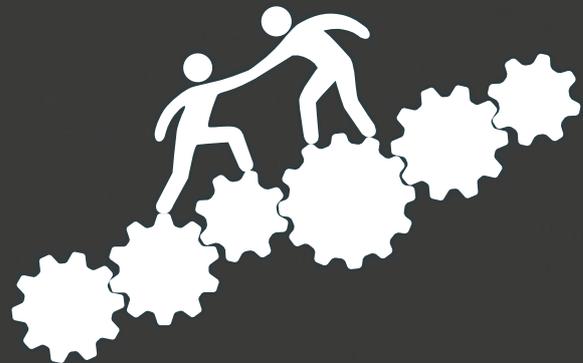


EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STRATEGY

A cross-divisional Equality & Diversity Steering Group has launched to help ensure that A.F. Blakemore reflects and meets the needs of the diverse communities it serves. The group has initially focussed upon gender, but ethnicity and disability will be two other key areas of focus for the future.

SUPPLIER COLLABORATION

A.F. Blakemore will continue to focus upon building stronger supplier partnerships in 2017. In addition to the on-going support it has provided to smaller, regional producers the company will build upon the success of its inaugural IGD Supplier Seminar to establish stronger strategic partnerships with its supplier base. This collaborative approach will seek to share best practice and deliver joint corporate responsibility objectives, in addition to meeting mutually beneficial commercial goals.



100 YEARS OF A.F. BLAKEMORE

In addition the company will maximise the opportunities provided by its 100-year birthday celebrations to help build a more sustainable future. The Blakemore Foundation will launch a new larger grants scheme with 10 Heritage Grants worth £1,917 donated to good causes helping to achieve a better tomorrow. Colleagues will also be invited to participate in a series of sustainability weeks focussed upon the environment, education and equality & diversity along with company-wide Blakemore Birthday Celebrations that will take place across the company.

