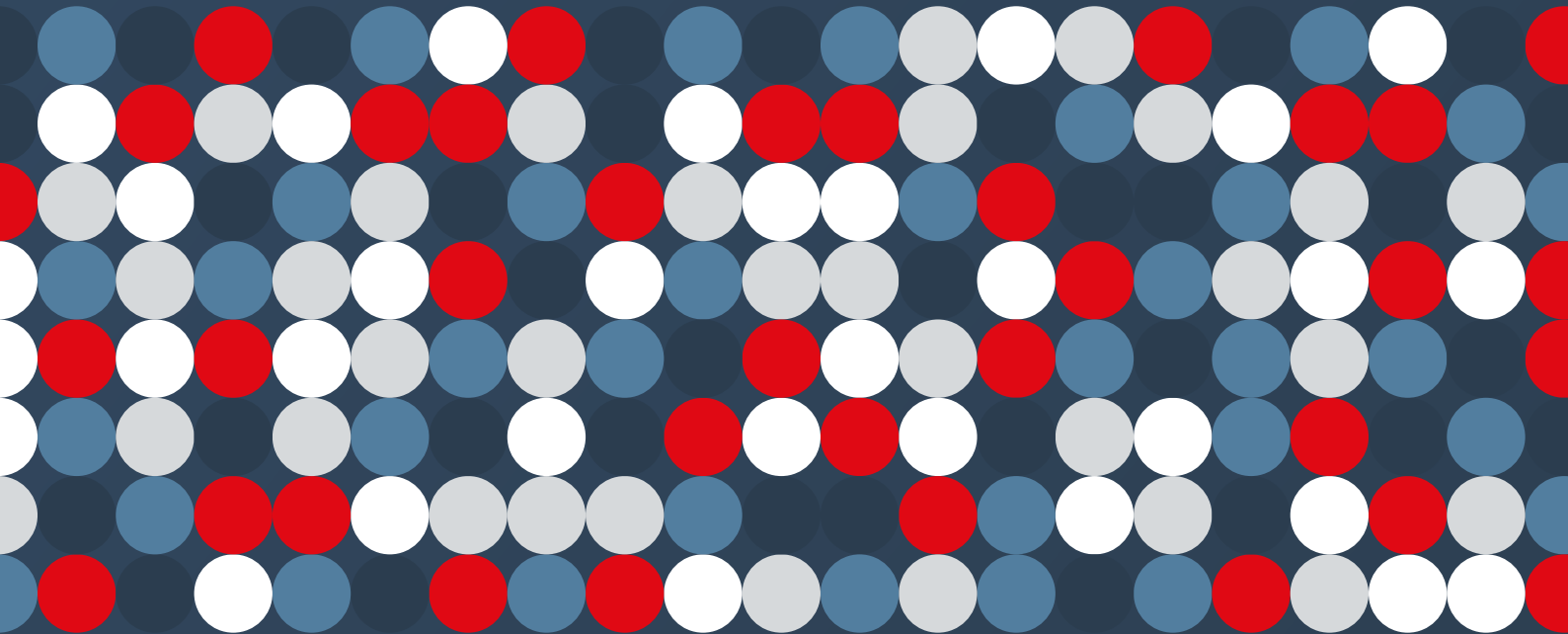
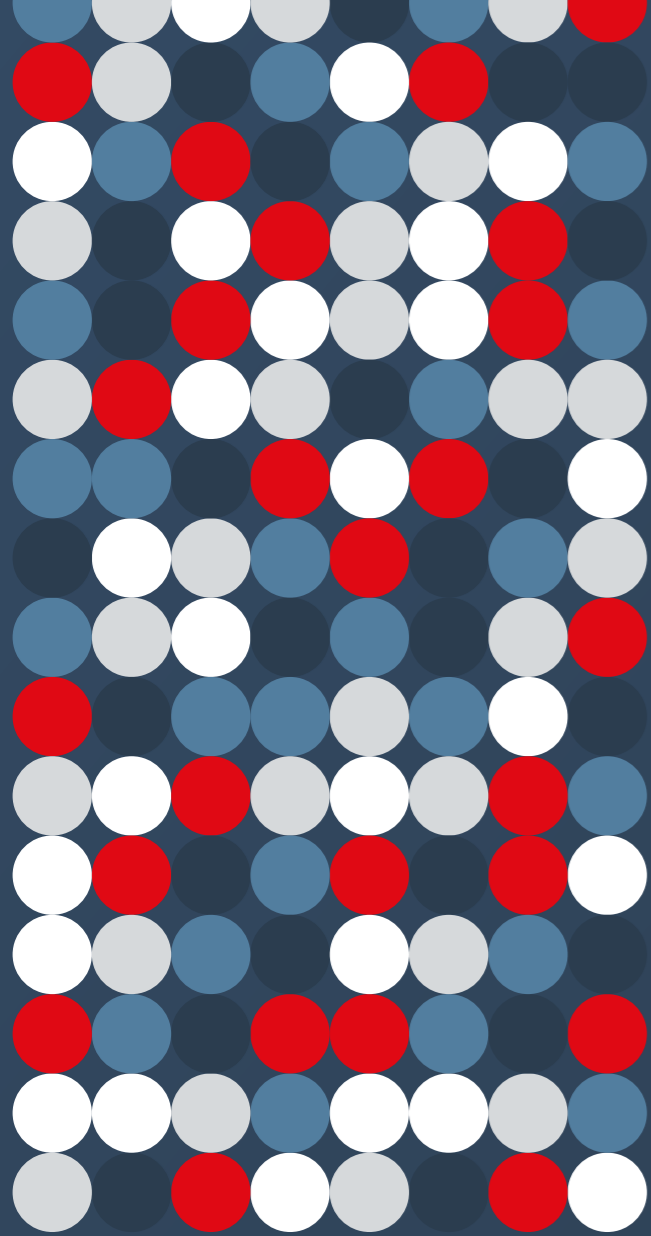




# WOMEN IN FAMILY BUSINESS



Celebrating the role of women and their  
contribution to family firms across the UK



“Women play a massive role in driving the family business agenda and family businesses across the country and their contribution to such a vital sector should not be ignored.”

# FOREWORD

**Family businesses are the backbone of the UK economy, making a significant impact on a daily basis through the jobs they provide, income they generate and the wealth they create, not forgetting the impact they have on the broader communities in which they operate.**

Women play a massive role in driving the family business agenda and family businesses across the country and their contribution to such a vital sector should not be ignored. In all corners of the UK, women are going above and beyond on a daily basis - as inspirational leaders, champions of change, drivers of innovation and sustainability, motivators of others - and making a truly positive impact on the family firms in which they work.

Here at Family Business United we wanted to recognise their contribution, as leaders, next generation ambassadors, non-family executives, agents of change and even the unsung heroes, those women that ‘get it’ and ‘get on with it’ and help build sustainable family businesses with little or no obvious recognition for their contribution.



This report celebrates a collection of wonderful individuals, great ambassadors for the family businesses in which they are involved and their impact on the broader community, and their contribution to this thriving sector which is at the very heart of our nation.

We set out to identify women who really do make a difference and have uncovered some remarkable and inspirational individuals in compiling this inaugural report.

**PAUL ANDREWS**  
Founder & CEO – Family Business United  
*THE Family Business Champions*

[www.familybusinessunited.com](http://www.familybusinessunited.com)

# INTRODUCTION

**The role of women in family businesses has evolved significantly over the years, reflecting broader societal changes and a shift in traditional gender norms.**

Historically, women were often relegated to supporting roles within family businesses, primarily involved in administrative tasks or managing the household, with many businesses going through succession with the business passing to the son and heir. However, in recent years the landscape has started to change and continues to evolve, enabling families in business to consider alternatives to make decisions so as to build businesses with the right team in place to be sustainable for generations to come.

The very nature of family business, the interaction of the family and business systems, adds to the complexity of the situation and the dynamics and relationships that being involved in a family business therefore entails.

Women wear many hats within a family and this gets even more complicated when roles are taken within the family business, or they become owners of shares in the family firm but as we can see from the individuals included within this report, women can and do flourish within the family business environment, breaking through glass ceilings that may have been present in the past and making significant contributions to industries that historically have been male dominated.

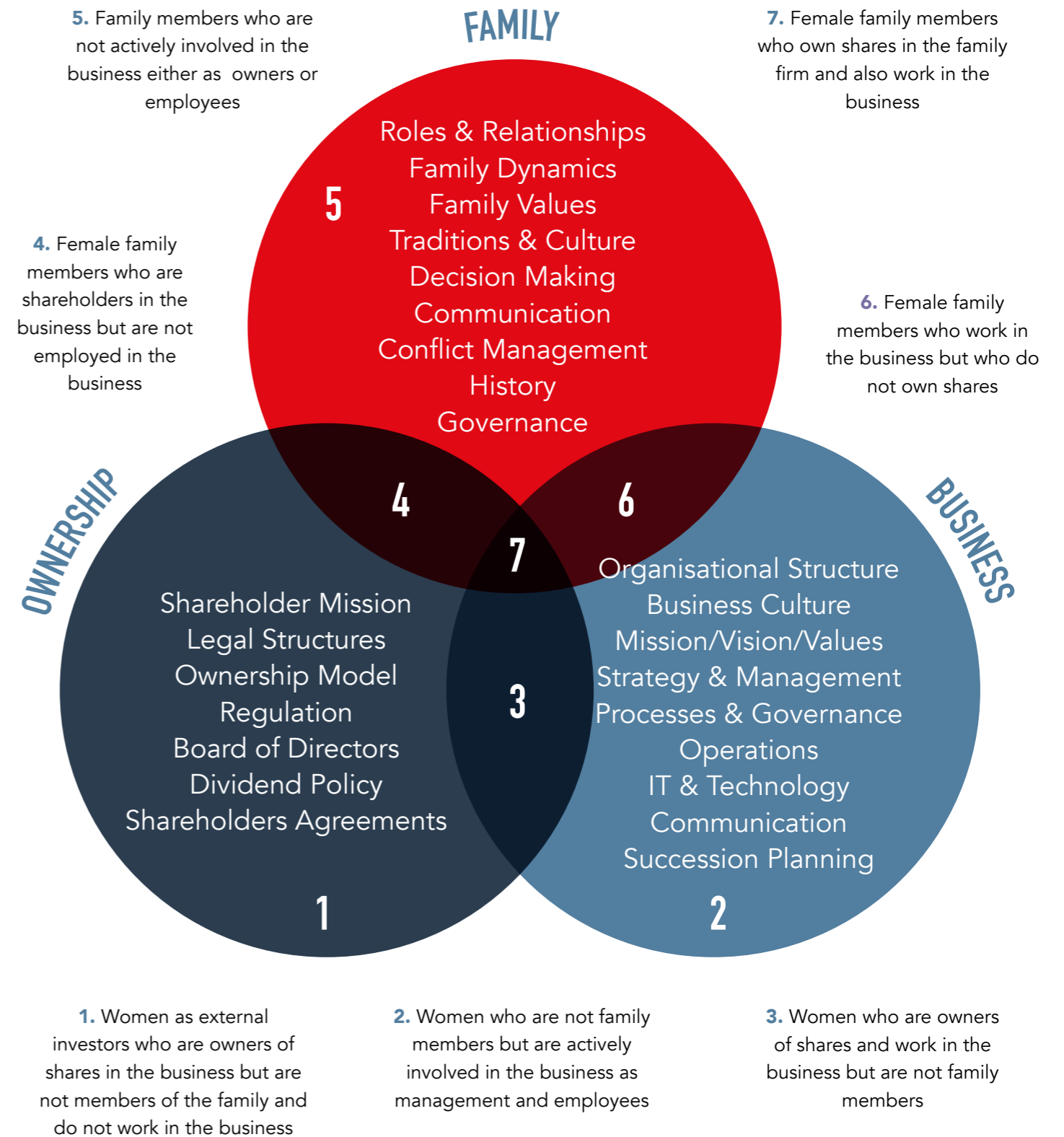
The changing landscape continues to present more opportunities for women within the family business sector.

There are plenty of factors contributing to the change, not least the recognition of the invaluable contributions that women can make to the success of family businesses. As societies increasingly embrace gender equality, there is a growing acknowledgment of the diverse skill sets and perspectives that women bring to the table. This shift has opened doors for women to assume leadership positions, challenging the traditional male-dominated hierarchy.

The changing role of women in family businesses is also influenced by evolving attitudes towards education and professional development around the world. With more women pursuing higher education and gaining expertise in various fields, they are better equipped to take on key roles within family enterprises. This not only enhances the overall competency of the business but also fosters innovation and adaptability and enables businesses to select the right candidates for roles within the business from a greater pool of appropriately talented and qualified individuals.

Furthermore, as family structures become more fluid and adaptable, the notion of predefined gender roles within businesses is eroding. It is believed that more women are running family firms across the UK than ever before and encouraging to see women recognised as capable leaders, decision-makers, and visionaries, capable of steering family businesses through complex challenges. This shift is not only evident in large enterprises but also in smaller family businesses where women are breaking barriers and assuming prominent roles, making a significant contribution and driving positive change as a result.

## THE THREE CIRCLE MODEL OF FAMILY BUSINESS AND THE ROLES OF WOMEN





**DIRECTOR**  
Matriarch  
GRANDMOTHER  
MOTHER  
Wife INFLUENCER  
SHAREHOLDER  
DAUGHTER  
MANAGER  
PHILANTHROPIST  
COUSIN  
CHIEF EMOTIONAL OFFICER  
CHAIRMAN  
EMPLOYEE  
SISTER NON-EXEC CHAIR  
PERFORMANCE MANAGER  
PEACEKEEPER CEO  
NIECE AMBASSADOR  
SUPPORTER IN-LAWS

**SOME OF THE ROLES WOMEN HAVE TO JUGGLE  
IN FAMILY BUSINESSES**

**“Clearly, more needs to be done to enable businesses to nurture and develop the next generation of talent, male and female, to deliver the skills required for future leadership candidates to successfully take on the family business challenge but the message is clear.”**

In terms of opportunities, the changing dynamics present a wealth of possibilities for women in family businesses. They can now explore entrepreneurial ventures, contribute to strategic decision-making, and leverage their skills in all areas of business. The evolving business landscape encourages diversity, and family businesses that embrace this diversity are likely to thrive in an ever-changing global market.

Despite these positive changes, challenges persist. Gender biases, both explicit and implicit, can still hinder women's progress in family businesses. Overcoming these biases requires a concerted effort from both the family and the broader business community to create an inclusive environment that values and supports the contributions of women.

The changing role of women and recognition of their achievements and significant contribution in family businesses signifies a positive shift towards inclusivity and diversity.

As societal attitudes continue to evolve, women are finding new opportunities to contribute meaningfully to family enterprises. By breaking free from traditional constraints, embracing education, and challenging gender norms, women are reshaping the landscape of family businesses and contributing to their sustained success in the long run.

This report celebrates the contribution of women across the UK and represents women who have, and continue, to make a positive impact in a diverse array of business sectors. Clearly, more needs to be done to enable businesses to nurture and develop the next generation of talent, male and female, to deliver the skills required for future leadership candidates to have the skills required to take on the challenge but the message is clear. People need to be selected for roles based on merit, not gender, and for family businesses to succeed they need to focus on the needs of the business and bring in the right people to enable them to achieve their goals.

The world is changing, technology continues to make a big impact and the way that businesses are managed and run will continue to evolve.

**With change comes opportunity and it is great to see more and more women being given the opportunity to flourish within UK family businesses, taking the lead, managing businesses, taking opportunities and inspiring those around them.**



RECOGNISING GREAT AMBASSADORS FOR WOMEN  
IN FAMILY BUSINESS ACROSS THE UK

**KAREN GREENSHIELDS** JOANNE GUALDA  
 JESSICA MORRIS JOSIE MORRIS MBE  
 ANGELA MORRIS **VICKY SIMPSON**  
**MIRANDA HAYMAN** LYNNE JHANGEER  
 FIONA LECKIE JOANNE BOORSMA  
**CLAIRE WATKIN** ANGELA FAN ELLIE JOBES  
 HELEN TONKS ELAINE THOM  
**HEIDI REEDER** SAMANTHA FERNANDO  
 HEATHER MATTHEWS **ROBYN HOLMES**  
 AMANDA CHAPLIN TRINA BEARE  
**JODIE & PARIS WELTON** JACKIE DUNNETT  
 JULIE ORNSBY **CHLOE HECTOR** NIKI FUCHS  
 ANNE MARIE CAIRNEY HANNAH BARLOW  
 RACHEL LOWE JANE WYLIE-ROBERTS  
**TAMARA ROBERTS** JACQUI POWER  
 LAURA COLTON-SMITH **MARDI ROBERTS**  
**JOYCE ONUONGA** VICTORIA GREEN  
 ELIZABETH COLLERAN ABBY BAKER  
 SAM FOSTER LENA BORTHWICK  
**ROWAN MCCALL-SMITH** DR POONAM GUPTA OBE  
 BECKY VALENTINE **ISSY HOWELL**  
**GRACIENNE IKIN** REBECCA BRISTOW  
 HELEN CLARK **SHANNON WILLIAMS**  
 MELISSA STROWBRIDGE MIREILLE HADDAD  
**NICOLA BIRD** NATALIE KING



# KAREN GREENSHIELDS

MANAGING DIRECTOR – TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, GAP HIRE SOLUTIONS

**Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership, Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion**



GAP Hire Solutions leads the UK's equipment hire industry, offering an extensive range of construction equipment for hire. With 10 divisions and nearly 200 locations nationwide, their comprehensive offerings encompass reliable solutions in plant machinery, tools, welfare units, non-mechanical equipment, pumps, trenching and shoring solutions, tankers, lifting gear, survey instruments, and event services. With over 50 years of operation, GAP remains a family-owned and operated business which enables them to make prompt decisions, delivering solutions to customers faster than their competitors.

Karen stands as a driving force in the remarkable transformation at GAP Hire Solutions. As the Managing Director for Technical and Environmental Services, Karen played a pivotal role in establishing new specialist technical divisions, including Trenching & Shoring and Tanker Services, positioning them as industry leaders. As a key decision-maker, Karen has not only enhanced operational efficiency with her strategic vision but also fostered a collaborative and inclusive workplace culture, significantly contributing to the company's outstanding reputation in the community. Karen's commitment to excellence is evident in her pioneering initiatives and a customer-centric approach, reflecting the values upheld by the business which was recognised as the UK's National Supreme Champion Family Business of the Year 2023. Her impact on GAP Hire Solutions makes her a standout figure in the world of family businesses.

Karen is an exceptional ambassador for Women in Family Business. With over 14 years at GAP, Karen has held diverse roles, including Major Account Manager, Lifting Division Director and Head of Business Development and Marketing, showcasing her versatility and remarkable career progression.

Her leadership and strategic acumen have played a vital role in driving innovation and sustainable growth within the family business, evident in her introduction and directorship of the Technical Services divisions. As the sole female member on the Group Board, Karen not only brings diversity but consistently contributes to shaping the future of GAP.

In recognising Karen's contributions, we acknowledge her professional achievements introducing crucial technical advancements, and breaking barriers as a female leader within the family business. Karen embodies the spirit of excellence at GAP Hire Solutions and stands as a beacon for women in family businesses.

# JOANNE GUALDA

GROUP MARKETING DIRECTOR,  
ALFRED BAGNALL & SONS LIMITED

**Inspirational Leadership, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador, Lifetime Contribution**



Bagnall is a specialist, national painting and decorating contractor that was established in 1875 and today employs around 630 people. They work within a range of sectors including industrial, commercial, rail, retail, healthcare and education applying paint and specialist protective coatings.

Joanne has worked for Bagnalls since 2000 and joined the Board as Marketing Director in 2006. As a marketeer, Joanne has helped to expand their customer base through bid support, sales development, and leading the Special Projects division, which delivers painting services to customers nationally. She leads on accreditations which allows Bagnalls to work in complex, high-risk industries including rail and utilities.

Joanne's engagement across the business has contributed to a near doubling of turnover during her time in the business. Joanne is keen to gain recognition for Bagnalls and with teamwork has achieved RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Gold status for 14 consecutive years, as well as Ecovadis Gold, a sustainability accreditation. Joanne is passionate about promoting the quality and range of decoration projects completed by Bagnalls resulting in the company being named Supreme Champion at the Painting and Decorating Association's Premier Trophy Awards in 2023.

Joanne is a passionate advocate of sustainability, driving the company's commitment to the environment, the local community and good governance. She launched "Community Paintbrush" in 2012 through which Bagnalls supports numerous organisations by donating paint, local team sponsorship and offering employee time to paint community projects.

Joanne is hugely supportive of family businesses, having been at the heart of one for 23 years. Joanne is driving the Bagnall's green agenda and works closely with paint manufacturers to reduce waste through recycling empty cans and recovering waste paint. Joanne was the first female member of Bagnalls' Board and is an inspiration to female colleagues to take on more senior roles and often mentors women to progress their careers.

# JESSICA MORRIS

FINANCE DIRECTOR, THE WOOL PACKAGING COMPANY LTD TRADING AS WOOLCOOL

Entrepreneurship, Next Generation/Young Pioneer, Innovation



Woolcool are manufacturers of sustainable insulated packaging using 100% pure sheep's wool for the global food and pharmaceutical sectors.

Jessica joined the Woolcool business as Finance Director in 2015 and together with her MD sister Josie, they have been instrumental in helping take the second generation Staffordshire family business, founded by their mother Angela in 2009, to becoming a sustainable manufacturing organisation with 65+ employees and one of the largest single buyers of sheep's wool in the UK. Jess is a professional, she has a LLB degree and is also a CIMA-qualified management accountant with a flair for creativity and insightful thinking, even though she may not always recognise it in herself!

Tenacious, and with an inherited entrepreneurial spirit – Jess ran her own successful high street café in Stafford for seven years prior to Woolcool - she excels not only in financial strategy but also as a skilled organiser and manager, adept at leading both production and accounting teams to achieve high levels of performance.

The success of any family business relies upon family members working closely together in complete trust, combining their different skills to reach agreed objectives. Jessica is no exception to this. She and her sister, Josie, have a unique, intuitive way of sharing ideas, dealing with problems and challenges, and executing complex plans.

Jessica particularly deserves recognition for her practical, no-nonsense approach to major commercial undertakings, such as coordinating Woolcool's strategic move to new manufacturing premises in 2021, at a time when the nation was just emerging from the global pandemic.

Jessica ensured that all orders for their rapidly growing customer base were 100% fulfilled during this chaotic period. Jessica is ambitious for the growth of the business and knowing Jess's determination, attention to detail and willingness to undertake calculated risks, the team are confident of success!

# JOSIE MORRIS MBE

MANAGING DIRECTOR, THE WOOL PACKAGING COMPANY LTD TRADING AS WOOLCOOL

Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership, Next Generation/Young Pioneer, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion



Joining the company as Sales Manager in 2014, Josie is today Managing Director at Woolcool.

A graduate of Birmingham University in Classics, Josie also emerged as a natural team player and born leader, as evidenced in the world of hockey, her sport. She has a unique ability to see 'the bigger picture' in the world environment we inhabit today and championed Woolcool to achieving B Corp certification in 2020, which promotes business as a force for good.

Josie is a leading advocate for creativity, diversity, and is passionate about the development of strong cultures within businesses. Josie is taking forward a serious, second generation, modern family business dedicated to an underlying belief in renewable natural materials supported by the cutting-edge scientific research. 'Created by Nature, Driven by Science'.

In addition to her outstanding management, sales and marketing skills, Josie contributes something unique to the business, particularly evident in terms of its culture and ethos, which are tangible to all stakeholders and visitors to Woolcool.

Josie is also committed to her local community and sits on the Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce Council. She is a champion of Small to Medium Business Enterprises for the ICC and is currently one of the Midlands DiT Export Champions. Josie also sits as a trustee for a number of charities in Staffordshire. In 2021 she was awarded an MBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to Manufacturing and the Environment. In 2023, Josie was also honoured to become a Deputy Lieutenant (DL) for Staffordshire.



# ANGELA MORRIS

CEO & FOUNDER, THE WOOL PACKAGING COMPANY LTD  
TRADING AS WOOLCOOL

**Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership,  
Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador,  
Lifetime Contribution**



On graduating from Staffordshire University in 1978 at the age of 22, Angela worked briefly for one year with a local packaging company. Thereafter, following a century of entrepreneurial spirit in the family, she ran her own creative packaging design businesses for over 30 years and in 2008 created the Woolcool brand.

Her 'eureka' moment for what was to become Woolcool came while Angela was engaged as a packaging consultant with the National Trust in 2002, and the idea of using pure sheep's wool as a superior and genuinely sustainable insulated packaging material was first conceived. Following the dramatic growth of ecommerce in food home deliveries, Angela branded this innovative solution 'Woolcool' and in 2009 The Wool Packaging Company Limited was founded.

Angela's unflagging determination, passion and resilience over the last 14 years have led to Woolcool products becoming the insulated packaging of choice for many leading food and pharmaceutical companies globally.

Angela's family has a history of women running their own businesses, stretching back over 100 years to her great, great grandmother, who had a grocery business in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent.

Angela founded the Woolcool business on longstanding family values and genuine principles of sustainability. It is her passionate belief that sustainable development must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

For the last 45 years she has pioneered the use of sustainable natural materials in packaging applications. Since conception in 2002, Angela's Woolcool packaging innovation has used over 35 million kilos of renewable pure sheep's wool to produce ecologically-sound chilled packaging that not only protects its contents, but also looks after the planet and its people.

Angela's commitment to sustainability is embedded within Woolcool, as recognised by its B Corp accreditation and two Queens Awards for Enterprise in Innovation and Sustainable Development.

# VICKY SIMPSON

DIRECTOR, VCARE-24 LTD, THE BECKLANDS SCHOOL  
AND VCARE TRAINING SOLUTIONS

**Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership**



Vicky is the driving force behind a business that is engaged in health and social care and education services.

Vicky as a female entrepreneur has seen gaps in education and health care and over the last 5 years and has built the family business so that each area complements the other.

Having started with the provision of mental health transport and children crisis support 5 years ago, she has now successfully built the organisation to include five registered children's homes that support vulnerable young people around the UK with three mental health depots that support several trusts with mental health patient transfers.

Vicky identified the issues with getting these young people into education so opened an SEMH school that supports not only the young people in her homes but local students too. Recognising the individual learning needs of students she has just built a vocational learning site together with a training company to ensure that staff have the right knowledge and skill set to support every patient and child they support.

Vicky is dedicated to ensuring the positive outcomes of everyone supported by the business, from patients to young people, with everything focused on how the services can be improved to give everyone the opportunity to try new experiences or achieve their aspirations.

Vicky not only focuses on the outcomes of those the business supports, but also on the development and wellbeing of all the staff team, regularly reviewing staff incentives and health benefits for all staff. Vicky is also a motivator for supporting the wider community with sponsorship of local football teams, participating and helping to fund and organise charity events with staff and so much more.



# MIRANDA HAYMAN

CO-FOUNDER, HAYMAN'S GIN

**Inspirational Leadership, Sustainability Driver,  
Family Business Champion**



Hayman's is the original family gin distiller, dedicated to making the best-tasting gin in London – and winning awards all over the world.

For Hayman's, gin is a family tradition. It all began with Miranda and her brother James' great-great grandfather, who was a pioneer of London Dry Gin. You can taste it in everything Hayman's makes, from classic recipes for London Dry and Old Tom to new twists like the wonderfully refreshing Exotic Citrus and innovative Small Gin and London Light.

Miranda has led the sustainability efforts, which culminated in Hayman's Gin becoming B-Corp certified in December 2023. B-Corp is a certification to make business a 'Force For Good' and it is the goal at Hayman's to have a positive impact on the daily standard of how they operate socially, ethically and environmentally. Miranda has led Hayman's Gin to achieve certification and continues to lead the business in their ongoing efforts to be a Force for Good.

B Corp is of the highest of standards and widely acclaimed to be the gold standard of sustainability. To achieve this has required a review of all aspects of the business and the way that they operate. Miranda was instrumental in leading this effort, engaging colleagues from across the business to work with her, and ensuring that all employees within the business are aware of B Corp and why as a business, Hayman's are championing it.

Miranda deserves recognition as a reward for her drive and determination to achieve B Corp. Whilst many review what is required to achieve accreditation and back away, Miranda successfully led the family business through the process at a time when they are still handling the impact of the global pandemic and the subsequent challenges such as supply chain issues and unprecedented inflation. Without Miranda's leadership and motivation, Hayman's would not have achieved this fantastic recognition.

# LYNNE JHANGEER

CO-FOUNDER & GLOBAL SALES DIRECTOR, LINIAN

**Inspirational Leadership, Innovation, Entrepreneurship,  
Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador,  
Sustainability Driver**



LINIAN were the creators of the first single component BS7671 18th Edition Compliant fire-rated cable fixing for faster, safer and simpler cable installations.

During the time of Lynne's leadership and guidance as the Global Sales Director, the business has experienced growth from 150 to over 530 branches stocking their products. Additionally, LINIAN's turnover has grown exponentially with Lynne being the key figure representing the business and creating strong ties with key industry organisations.

Lynne has also played a big part in LINIAN's product penetration & sales growth with the major electrical wholesalers in the UK. Furthermore, LINIAN's new packaging was totally redesigned and became fully sustainable in 2022 under Lynne's supervision which was marked by the independent Made In Britain Impact Awards in the category Sustainable Packaging Project of the Year.

Lynne's dedication, business acumen, hard work, ability to motivate the team and strategic thinking have contributed massively to LINIAN's strong position and associated product and brand recognition in the electrical industry.

Lynne has exceptional leadership skills, strong strategic vision and goal setting and is fully responsive to customer feedback and needs. She is an inspiration and support to the team around her as well as an advocate and support of other family businesses, a force for good and a real agent and driver of change.



# FIONA LECKIE

HEAD OF PROJECTS & INTERIORS,  
CRIEFF HYDRO FAMILY OF HOTELS

Unsung Hero, Lifetime Contribution



Crieff Hydro is a family-owned business that owns and operates seven hotels and resorts in rural Scotland.

Fiona has been involved directly in the business for over thirty years. She has been an ever-present influence across the business, at first with four young children in tow who were raised in such a manner that they are now part of the succession plans for the family business.

Alongside specific responsibilities for the Projects and Interiors portfolio (one that has grown to cover not one but seven hotels) she has been a steady and influential member of a Board which comprises family and non-family members together with NEDs.

Her presence around the family table has been just as important as the boardroom. Here she has acted as a sounding board and support to husband Stephen (CEO) whilst gently introducing their children to the business.

As they have grown, she has helped them assume responsibility and a shared enthusiasm for the family business acting as both parent and mentor.

A role like Fiona's is unique to a family business and does not fit into any category for conventional business awards. Nor, within the context of the business would it be right to put her forward as "employee of the year" or something similar.

As such this report provides a unique opportunity to recognise women like Fiona who represent the very essence and special qualities that family businesses are all about and in many instances are the unsung family heroes who sustain their success.

Fiona deserves recognition for a lifetime of commitment, dedication and achievement from an ever and continuing presence in this award-winning family business.

# JOANNE BOORSMA

MANAGING DIRECTOR, GROMMETS LTD

Inspirational Leadership, Unsung Hero, Family Business Champion, Lifetime Contribution



Grommets Ltd manufactures thousands of moulded rubber products and bespoke items for use in electrical engineering and manufacturing, covering wires and cables or protecting sharp edges. They supply over 8,000 firms across a wide range of industries, from wind farms to the rail industry, with clients including Thales, Unipart Rail and the Forth Bridge.

Grommets are proud to be a fourth generation family business, established in 1993 by Sid Wells and located in West Sussex.

Joanne has been in the family business for over 40 years, alongside her father Sid Wells. Joanne took the reins as Managing Director in 2009, with Sid sadly passing away in 2010.

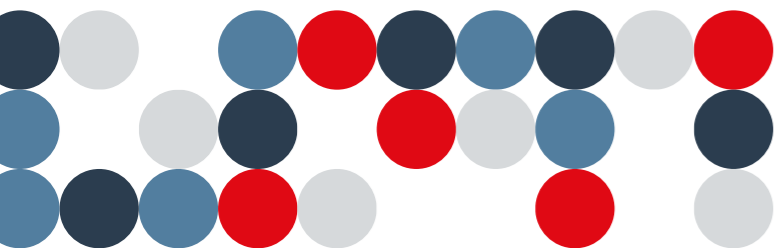
Joanne has been instrumental in bringing the company into the 21st century, launching Grommets on the internet which has seen the business grow significantly. With Joanne's strength and determination, she has built the business up to where it is today employing staff from within the local community and surrounding towns.

Joanne has been responsible for the expansion of the business, and most recently in November 2023, has seen the completion of a £550,000 investment in a new production and distribution centre, named Grommets House.

Demand from renewable sectors has increased, resulting in the manufacture of more products for use in solar panels and batteries for electric vehicles. To cope with increasing demand Joanne has increased the footprint of the business by nearly a third with the new facility being the culmination of three decades of hard work.

The purpose built facility sits alongside their existing manufacturing unit on a half acre site. Joanne thought tirelessly to get this dream off the ground facing many hurdles along the way but she never gave up. On 13th November 2023 Grommets held an opening party at their new facility 'Grommets House', the date that would have been Sid's 88th Birthday.

Everyone at Grommets is incredibly proud of all that Joanne has and continues to achieve and she is fully deserving of recognition for all her endeavours.



# CLAIRE WATKIN

CEO, THE FINE BEDDING COMPANY

**Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador**



The Fine Bedding Company are leaders in innovation and sustainability, offering high quality bedding that delivers a superior nights sleep, night after night. As a certified B Corporation they're committed to responsibly producing premium sleep solutions, designed for lasting comfort and longevity.

Claire has an unwavering commitment to using her business as a force for good. Her passion and knowledge for developing more innovative home textile solutions has led to The Fine Bedding Company gaining the reputation as the go to supplier and brand for category leading, sustainable bedding solutions.

She has nurtured customer relationships through her passion and expertise, some of which represent nearly 50 years of partnership. She's a powerful force in driving change and educating influential business decision makers. She never stands still. She has such a strong drive to find better ways of doing things, challenging the norm and tackling some of the most challenging textiles issues out there right now where nobody else dares to go.

For years Claire has led and inspired change within the bedding category where reducing environmental impact has traditionally not been a focus. Her passion for using manufacturing expertise to innovate for a better future flows through all departments as she embodies the underlying company values to be bold and brave, to drive a positive change. She has led the company's sustainability strategy, using initiatives such as Climate Fresk and Carbon Literacy training to focus and inspire teams, pioneered the use of next generation, biodegradable polyester within mass market products and is currently driving industry collaboration to find end of life solutions for polyester bedding.

Claire deserves recognition for the contribution made not just to the family business but as an ongoing agent of change within the broader industry sector in which they operate too.

# ANGELA FAN

FOUNDER, STUDY LINKS INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

**Unsung Hero, Lifetime Contribution**



Study Links takes care of international students studying in the UK providing guardianship for under 18s, facilitation of school exchange programmes internationally, arranging safe homestay-family accommodation and providing academic and pastoral advice to students.

Angela founded the business and has led it for over 30 years, whilst raising 3 mixed-race children who have gone on to have 6 of their own children with the same family values and disciplined work ethic.

She has entrusted the family business to her youngest daughter in more recent years, whilst continuing to be a role model for what it means to be a capable, honest and compassionate woman in business, and a reliable pillar of strength and knowledge.

She was the face of the business for many years, and was recognised for a high quality, professional service, with compassion at its core. Her family values are at the heart of Study Links to this day, and many clients from throughout those 30 years are still regularly in touch and grateful for the guidance and support they received from Angela and the Study Links team.

Angela started out helping family and friends, voluntarily for ten years. Her work was so well-regarded that she set up the business officially and it still continued to thrive. She led a capable team who supported her in her vision, and her legacy has passed down to the next generation. She now acts as a mentor for her daughter who runs the business. Thousands of students from over 90 countries have been supported by Study Links over the years and Angela continues to be an ambassador for British education, and is a role model to young people in terms of what a compassionate business leader can be.

She deserves recognition for the blood, sweat, tears and sacrifices she made to help others achieve their own goals. A lifetime of hard work, impacting thousands of students globally, aiming to build a better future for the world.

# ELLIE JOBES

**DIRECTOR & HR DIRECTOR,  
ALFRED BAGNALL & SONS LIMITED**

**Inspirational Leadership, Next Generation/Young Pioneer,  
Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion**



Bagnall is a specialist, national painting and decorating contractor that was established in 1875 and today employs around 630 people. They work within a range of sectors including industrial, commercial, rail, retail, healthcare and education applying paint and specialist protective coatings.

Ellie is the HR Director and fifth generation of the Bagnalls family. She joined the company in 2011 and became a Board Member in 2018. She has proven herself to be an inspiration in the leadership and management of the company's most important asset: their people. Ellie has embedded the company's commitment to people development, broadened their engagement with local communities and encouraged diversity across the business. Ellie has driven the company's commitment to employee health and wellbeing. She introduced an Employee Assistance Programme in 2015 and built on the company's good governance by leading Bagnalls to become a Living Wage Employer in 2022.

Ellie's ambitions to develop leadership skills across the business has resulted in CITB funding for two programmes, one for existing supervisors, and one for aspiring supervisors with a key focus on female progression. So far over 130 employees have attended these programmes.

Ellie is a passionate advocate of diversity. She has spoken at round-table events with paint manufacturer, Dulux, to encourage more women into the industry. In 2022, 20% of Bagnalls painting and decorating apprentices were female compared with a construction industry average of just 1% of site-based roles. Ellie is a proud promoter of apprenticeships and has expanded the numbers of apprenticeships offered to employees. 12% of Bagnalls employees are currently taking apprenticeships, meaning Bagnalls became a Platinum member of The 5% Club in 2023.

Bagnalls was named Number one Family Business Apprentice Employer in 2023 by Family Business United and was recognised as a Top 100 Apprenticeship Employer in 2022.

Ellie has drive and determination and as a fifth generation of the Bagnalls family she is at the helm of driving the company's future success.

# HELEN TONKS

**CO-FOUNDER, HYDRAULICS ONLINE**

**Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership,  
Digital Transformer, Industry Ambassador,  
Family Business Champion**



Hydraulics Online is an award-winning, ISO-9001-accredited hydraulic equipment and solutions provider offering a differentiated, customer-led service in a technical marketplace. Their product independence, expertise and brand-agnostic advice underpin their USP as a truly integrated hydraulics supplier. Working across a portfolio of over 150 hydraulic manufacturers and suppliers, Hydraulics Online has become a global name with a vision to be the World's leading provider of fluid power solutions; an independent and agile 'hub' connecting a fragmented, product-led marketplace.

Despite, or thanks to, being a non-technical woman in a traditional, technical, male-dominated industry, Helen is the vision and drive behind the growth of the multi-award-winning Hydraulics Online brand; from business start-up to the Department for Business and Trade Export Champion of today serving customers in 130 countries worldwide.

Helen co-founded the business with her husband in 2004. Mark provided the initial hydraulic expertise and industry contacts needed, meanwhile Helen's 'blue-chip' experience in strategic change management guaranteed the means to build the brand and business infrastructure that would allow the couple's vision to flourish. Helen always 'thinks big' - exhibiting the discipline, attention to detail and strategic-thinking inherent within much larger organisations. Her foresight in naming the company paved the way for a 'born global' strategy and, backed by hard-won credentials and an unwavering customer-centric positioning, has enabled the couple to establish a global brand with palpable potential for growth.

Helen is naturally restless; juggling life as an entrepreneur with being 'mum' to seven. Always championing family businesses, SMEs and start-ups, Helen encourages others through her ambassadorial roles, public speaking, and mentoring - her 'Passion Project'.

In her 'spare time' Helen is active in the wider business community and in local and regional education: providing careers support to high schools and business engagement opportunities to undergraduates and postgraduates. She firmly believes in 'being who you needed' and 'paying it forward' really matters to her. Her commitment to making a difference was recognised in 2022 on being selected to join the Northern Power Women Power List celebrating individuals who challenge the norm and use their influence and power for good as a body of influential trailblazers from across the North. Her contribution was further recognised when shortlisted for Mentor of the Year within the prestigious 2023 NPW Awards - a community of some 70,000 individuals.

Helen is an undoubted force for good within her own business, the broader family business community and the business world as a whole and well deserving of inclusion in this report.

# ELAINE THOM

TRADE ACCOUNT MANAGER, CARIBBEAN BLINDS UK LTD

Unsung Hero, Family Business Champion



Based in Sudbury in Suffolk, Caribbean Blinds are the UK's leading external shading manufacturer and from outdoor living to solar shading, they've got you covered, whatever the weather. Since 1987, Caribbean Blinds have been exclusively designing and manufacturing in the UK the very finest external shading systems for discerning homeowners and businesses across the country, that transform the use, functionality and enjoyment of all types of spaces.

In her role as trade account manager Elaine has been responsible for nurturing relationships and onboarding new trade installers, growing what was once a declining side of the business to in excess of £2 million this year.

Understanding the needs and wants of trade installers alongside commerciality of the business, she has developed a market leading offering in terms of service to this sector. In addition, her can do, go get attitude along with her ability to challenge ideas and processes with the business needs forefront in her mind has stood her in good stead to be a real force for good. Her endeavours, helping drive growth within the business have directly resulted in additional jobs being created to meet growing demand.

Elaine has been a member of the Caribbean Blinds team since 2017. Whilst not a family member, she embraces the family philosophy and vision along with the companies brand values and mission. She to many is like a 'mum' in the business. She has an uncanny ability to see things from all perspectives; business, consumer and

employee and provides considered and valuable ideas and advice to the directors.

But much more than that, Elaine is invested in the overarching goals of the business, always going out of her way to share ideas, views and make valuable inputs that continue to shape the business for the future. She acts as a spokesperson for many, with a wealth of wisdom understanding both business function and client or team member needs/wants. She is always providing constructive input and the directors use her to bounce ideas off because of this reason.

Not a 9-5 operative, Elaine is so invested in the business, brand and its success she, like the directors, will always be available outside of typical office hours and prides herself on responding even over weekends to client emails and questions to provide an unparalleled level of service that continues to help the company win more business.

If you could create a mould for what a non-family but family orientated member of a family business would be, Elaine would perfect for it. She has played a key and pivotal role in where the company is today and will continue to do so into the future. She truly deserves this recognition for her endeavours in helping to build a great and award-winning family business.

# HEIDI REEDER

DIRECTOR, ALLAN REEDER LTD

Inspirational Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Innovation

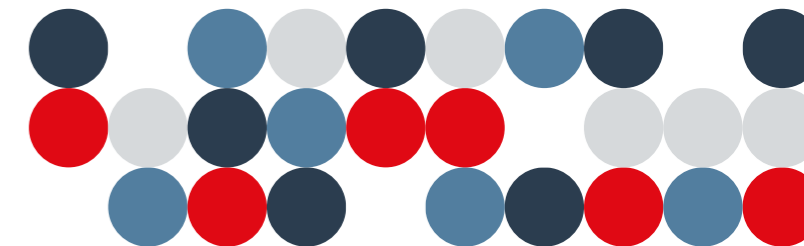


Allan Reeder Ltd was set up in 1971 and has become the leading wholesale dairy supplier in and around London, offering great quality and prompt, professional service. Whether you're a restaurant, coffee shop, gastro pub, hotel, bakery, delicatessen or contract caterer, they're here to make sure you have all the dairy products you need.

When Heidi's father Allan started the business, the focus was on delivering cream to bakeries but when 'celebrity chefs' became popular on TV, Heidi saw the opportunity to expand into restaurants which is now the bulk of the company's business. With the explosion in the popularity of coffee shops in recent years, Heidi again saw the opportunity and Allan Reeder Ltd is now recognised as a leading player in the supply of specialist barista milk to the coffee shop market.

Everyone who has worked closely with Heidi will know that she is an impressive businesswoman but it is her commitment to customer service that particularly impresses. She leads the office team whilst always managing to remain very much part of the team and many of the staff - some of whom have been with the company for over 15 years, some never having worked anywhere else since leaving school - feel a loyalty to Heidi herself perhaps even more than to the company.

She is fair, kind and approachable and liked and respected by everyone in the team and her inspirational leadership sets her apart as a great ambassador and role model for other female family business leaders too.



# SAMANTHA FERNANDO

DIRECTOR, KEELA

**Inspirational Leadership, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador, Unsung Hero, Family Business Champion**



Founded on the East Coast of Scotland, Keela is based in the perfect place to innovate and test outdoor garments for the changeable British weather. They continue to provide UK-led garment designs and strive to provide quality outdoor clothing packed with innovation and technology, and after over 25 years they continue to enhance their reputation based on these principles.

As a fierce advocate of small and medium sized businesses, of women's progress, and of equal opportunities for those with visual or hidden disabilities, Samantha Fernando is making a real impact across Scotland – and beyond.

For several years she has served as Sales Director for Keela, increasing sales while simultaneously providing leadership for the whole Scottish outdoor clothing sector. She was the founder of the ROKS Outdoor show in Kendal, now amalgamated into OTS. In response to the pandemic, she led an initiative with the NHS to manufacture wholly-made-in-UK NHS certified gowns, producing more than 750,000 gowns in 2 years. She leads numerous charitable endeavours seeing goods and equipment being donated to Nepal, Ukraine and Moroccan humanitarian appeals. She had a leading role in the sector achieving Supported Business Status in 2022, and more recently still, she launched the Keela Legacy Project leading to a sustainability award for best brand from TGO, 2023.

Samantha is having an immensely positive impact on family businesses across Scotland - and beyond. She is becoming a key leading figure in the coordination and management of the sector, for example serving as Vice Chair of the Outdoor Industry Association board, committee member for CBI Scotland with a focus on SME-scale activities, as well as serving on numerous targeted committees and boards devoted to advancing business such as Business Gateway Fife, the SME Council, the Outdoor Trade show and Women In Technology.

Her contributions to the outdoor clothing industry were recognised in 2021 by the Professional Clothing Industry Association Worldwide (Woman of the Year award), but further recognition of her immense contributions to SME and family businesses in general is richly deserved.

# HEATHER MATTHEWS

MANAGING DIRECTOR, LITTLE'S CHAUFFEUR DRIVE

**Inspirational Leadership, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Sustainability Driver, Family Business Champion**



For over 55 years, Little's Chauffeur Drive have been delivering the highest quality chauffeur service, globally. From touring, events, business travel, and airport transfers to roadshows and entertainment, they manage all transport needs.

Heather has profoundly impacted this family business through strategic decisions and effective leadership. Her bold move in 2020 to pause Little's during the pandemic was pivotal, securing its future and aligning with the reopening of borders. The adept management team, coupled with Heather's planning for COP26, became a turning point, presenting a crucial opportunity for the company.

Additionally, her involvement in supporting The Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice and joining its board in 2021 brings diverse perspectives, fostering innovation. Heather's leadership has fuelled innovation, doubling the team and expanding the fleet, strategically positioning Little's for ongoing success in a dynamic market.

Heather deserves recognition for her outstanding leadership in a predominantly male-dominated industry, serving as the Managing Director of one of the few female-owned chauffeur drive companies in the UK. Her inspirational journey demonstrates how strategic planning, resilience, and innovative thinking can transform a small family business into a global success.

Heather actively addresses crucial business issues through conference engagements, bringing topics like successful succession planning to the forefront. Her commitment to supporting working mothers within her team showcases a dedication to gender inclusivity, providing flexible arrangements for returning after maternity leave. The gender-diverse Little's Leadership team, with five women promoted by Heather, further attests to her commitment to equality and their substantial contributions to the company's success.

# ROBYN HOLMES

MANAGING DIRECTOR, PRIME APPOINTMENTS

**Inspirational Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Family Business Champion, Lifetime Contribution**



Prime Appointments is a family-owned and family-run local recruitment agency, who believe in doing things differently. They're committed to building long-term partnerships that boost their clients business and contribute to the growth of the economy in their local area, always aspiring to develop and evolve, ensuring the best recruitment experience possible.

Robyn founded Prime Appointments in 1992 and is incredibly proud of the personal and professional service Prime provides for both candidates and clients. A number of these client relationships span nearly 30 years, which is a testament to the strong foundation Robyn has built. There would be no Prime appointments without Robyn, and her hugely positive energy, dedication, and genuine interest in building relationships with local businesses. These things have meant she's been able to successfully establish Prime Appointments as a reliable and personal recruitment solution. Robyn consistently invests in her team's development and fosters a happy workplace that has fuelled the company's growth. Her decision to integrate her children into the business speaks volumes about her commitment to its continuity and family values.

Robyn deserves this recognition due to her determination as a woman in business to thrive in a predominantly male-dominated industry. Founding a business is never without its challenges and through perseverance, sticking to her personal values and fostering life-long relationships with her clients, she's successfully created a business that will be passed through her family for generations. Robyn not only uses her platform for business but to raise awareness and well-needed funds for the Alzheimer's Society. After her co-founder Margaret Locke was diagnosed with early onset dementia, Robyn made it her mission to raise as much money as possible for those suffering with the disease. The total amount raised currently stands at just over £200,000 which is incredible and should be celebrated.



# AMANDA CHAPLIN

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, GIBSONS GAMES LTD

**Inspirational Leadership**



Gibsons Games have come a long way since their founder, Harry Percy Gibson formed H.P Gibson & Sons in 1919. Now in the fourth generation with Harry's great-granddaughter, Kate leading the way, they're proud of their British heritage and challenges they have overcome.

Today they have a fabulous collection of family board games, hundreds of jigsaw puzzles ranging in piece counts and size and a great assortment of playing cards. There is something for everyone in their range and they are a business that is all about making memories!

Amanda joined Gibsons over 12 years ago as a Sales & Marketing Executive and is now Commercial Director. She is the commercial leader of the business, overseeing Product, Marketing and Direct to Consumer sales. As their resident visionary she constantly brings new ideas and champions innovation and as a leader she combines endless drive and passion with supporting her people.

Amanda is endlessly loyal, has an extremely strong work ethic and is guided by her humility and integrity; such important characteristics of a leader.

Running a business can be lonely at times and Amanda has been an incredible support. Her positivity is endless, which has been hugely comforting during the last few challenging years. She may not be a family member, but she has given so much to Gibsons over the years, some would assume she is. The company is extremely fortunate to have her on board.

# TRINA BEARE

MANAGING DIRECTOR, LAMBERTS

**Inspirational Leadership, Innovation, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador**



Lamberts is an independent family-run supplier and distributor of industrial equipment including pipes, valves, fittings, fasteners, tools, lubricants, workwear, and safety wear.

As an industry ambassador and inspirational leader, Trina is an active and passionate female Managing Director in a male-dominated field. She is a third-generation family director and contributes both inside her organisation and externally, as she is the first female Chair for REDG, the buying group that Lamberts is part of.

From a sustainability perspective, she's led the charge to add an electric vehicle charging point to the site and is now adding an additional charging point and solar array which should mean the site is self-sufficient in the summer. She has taken Lamberts from strength to strength since she took over the leadership, revolutionising systems and processes to take the business to the next level.

Trina deserves recognition for the amazing work that she does for Lamberts, but also the local community. She championed a charity of the year initiative and has got the entire team involved in raising money for the Priscilla Bacon Hospice in every way that they can think of. She leads the charge when it comes to growth and development, hosting public speaking courses and raising the profile of organisations and businesses that they work with. She is a truly inspirational leader and well deserving of this recognition.

# JODIE & PARIS WELTON

BUSINESS PARTNERS, CONNECTED PR

**Entrepreneurship**



Connected PR is a PR and social media management agency.

Sisters Jodie and Paris started the family business 17 years ago and employed both their father and brother to work in the business.

They are first generation family members who have successfully built their own business. From very humble beginnings the sisters put themselves through further education and worked in multiple employed positions before starting their own PR Agency. They have successfully worked through gender and class barriers and have run the successful business for 17 years.

Their entrepreneurial spirit, drive and determination sets them apart.



# JACKIE DUNNETT

GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR, SEVEN ASSET GROUP

**Inspirational Leadership, Unsung Hero, Lifetime Contribution**



Seven Asset Group provides contract hire of commercial vehicles and refrigerated containers alongside sister companies in the property sector and container haulage industry.

Jackie is an inspiration and throughout her career has pushed for change to enable women to be “sat at the table” with other senior personnel. Jackie has been at Seven since inception, and in several instances been the family business champion. Jackie has had many roles, and her expertise has been well utilised to turn poor performing sectors in the business around, and to analyse costs and processes to seek improvements.

Alongside this she led the formation of a forward thinking and progressive HR department which is key in current day businesses, embracing change and putting herself outside of her comfort zone.

Jackie has always done what is best for the business, even when that meant difficult conversations with senior board members, in a male dominated industry.

Inclusion in this report that celebrates women in family business is recognition of her inspired leadership over the years and the changes she has embraced and difficulties she has faced to drive change in their family business and prepare it for the next stages in the evolution of the business.

# JULIE ORNSBY

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, GOOD TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

**Unsung Hero**



Good Travel Management is part of the multi-generational family business, the John Good Group, and delivers business travel services to a range of companies across various sectors.

Embodying the spirit of reflected glory, Julie has been a cornerstone of Good Travel Management’s success for the past 15 years. Her passion for doing right by both her team and clients has been instrumental in shaping the company’s trajectory.

As Operations Director, Julie’s ability to galvanise and lead her team is unparalleled. Her egoless approach fosters an environment of confidence, empowering her team to deliver exceptional results whilst feeling psychologically safe. Julie’s relentless drive to improve and adapt the business ensures its sustainability. She embraces the challenge of transforming Good Travel Management into one of the country’s leading business travel companies. Her commitment to the company and its people is unwavering, and her influence is felt in every aspect of the business. Julie is not just a leader; she is a driving force that propels Good Travel Management towards excellence.

Julie deserves this accolade as she is an inspiration to her team. Her leadership has been instrumental in fostering a team that is not only knowledgeable and dedicated but also deeply invested in the well-being and development of both colleagues and clients. Her loyalty and determination, particularly during challenging times such as the recent pandemic, have been nothing short of exceptional. Her contributions undoubtedly make her a deserving candidate for recognition of her outstanding leadership and the positive culture she has cultivated within the company, whilst not looking for the limelight.

A true unsung hero.

# CHLOE HECTOR

INTERIORS CONSULTANT, SOURCE ONE CONSULTING LTD

Unsung Hero



Source One Consulting is a family business engaged in all aspects of office and commercial fit-out and refurbishment.

Chloe is a remarkable woman and in many respects embodies the very ethos of family in the way that she behaves within the family business. When Lisa Lewis, Managing Director, was diagnosed with Breast Cancer, Chloe (Lisa's daughter) who at the time was 23 stepped up to the plate and ran the business.

Chloe was selfless with her emotions when her Mum was diagnosed and underwent a massive operation. Chloe was invested in the business, in her family with her siblings and her Stepdad and single handily steered the ship at Source One for a few months which allowed Lisa to recover, her Stepdad to support Lisa and help her siblings.

At that time Source One had major projects on the go that clients, whilst understanding and supporting Source One, needed to continue and to move toward completion. Chloe's ability to compartmentalise the business and her personal feelings and emotions were that of someone of a much older head with the life experience to match. This was recognised and commented on by her peers, clients, suppliers and her mentor.

She is a truly remarkable young lady and deserving of recognition for all that she has done, and continues to do, to make Source One the business that it is today.

# NIKI FUCHS

CEO, OFFICE SPACE IN TOWN (OSIT)

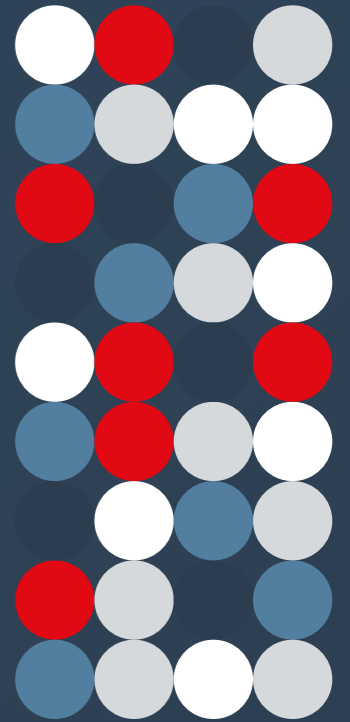
Inspirational Leadership, Industry Ambassador



Office Space in Town is an organisation that does just that, providing flexible office space in locations across the country.

Niki's passion is people and she has been fundamental in establishing the wonderful culture that OSiT has and over the years she has given staff the coaching, tools, and understanding to ensure that the culture lives on through them and everyone that they bring into the business.

Niki is not a self-promoter but is undoubtedly an inspirational leader. Part of her skill as a leader is that she stands out in front, driving everyone forward with energy and passion but everyone feels as if she is standing alongside them holding their hand, encouraging, listening and guiding them.



# ANNE MARIE CAIRNEY

OWNER, THE VICTOR PIZZA COMPANY

**Inspirational Leadership, Industry Ambassador, Unsung Hero, Family Business Champion**



Victor Pizza is a pizza manufacturing company, based in Glasgow. The bakery is in a deprived area of Glasgow and employs 35 members of the local community producing around 1000 pizza based products per hour.

Anne Marie's remarkable contributions to her family-owned business make her truly deserving of inclusion in this report. Anne Marie has been an integral part of Victor Pizza, demonstrating unparalleled commitment and leadership throughout her tenure.

Her impact is felt not only within the company but also in the lives of the 35 staff members she oversees. Anne Marie goes above and beyond in her role, exemplifying the values of a family-run business. One of Anne Marie's distinguishing qualities is her genuine concern for the well-being of her team. Each day, you will find her in the canteen, personally preparing nutritious and comforting soups for all staff members. This act of care extends beyond the professional realm, creating a familial atmosphere within the workplace.

As the owner of Victor Pizza, Anne Marie has shown exceptional leadership, navigating the challenges of running a family business with grace and resilience. Her ability to inspire and guide her team has been instrumental in the success and growth of Victor Pizza. Her story is one of inspiration and resilience, showcasing the vital role that women play in the success of family-owned enterprises.

Anne Marie has demonstrated unwavering dedication to Victor Pizza over the years, consistently putting in the time and effort required to ensure the success and growth of the family business. Anne Marie has been an inspirational leader, guiding her team with a vision and passion that goes beyond the ordinary. Her leadership style fosters a positive and motivated work environment.

Operating a family business comes with its unique set of challenges, and Anne Marie has navigated these challenges with resilience and grace. Her ability to overcome obstacles showcases her determination and problem-solving skills.

Anne Marie has created a real sense of community within the business which contributes not only to the well-being of the staff but also to the overall success of the business. Her commitment to excellence and dedication to her team serve as a shining example for other women in business too.

# HANNAH BARLOW

MANAGING DIRECTOR, DUNSTERS FARM

**Innovation, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion**



Dunsters Farm is a family-run foodservice business, supplying quality food and drink from depots in Bury and Oswestry, to customers throughout the North.

Leading from the front, Hannah has been an exceptional driver for change in the business, overseeing a period of positive transformation at Dunsters Farm since taking over as Managing Director. Some developments include the launch of sustainable initiatives such as new fuel management systems, food waste reduction projects, and energy efficient doors and lighting.

Dunsters Farm's acquisition of the Little Food Company in 2022 ignited a surge in sales, whilst the expanded product range and successful tender wins led to a broader customer base. This has been reflected in sales, with an impressive 95% year-on-year turnover growth last year and a forecasted £30 million turnover for 2023.

Hannah, alongside her brother, Tom Mathew, has helped create a real step change in the trajectory of Dunsters Farm. However she is particularly deserving of recognition because whilst commercially she's building a significant future for the business, she and Tom have also been passionate advocates for supporting the team and the wider community.

Hannah has been instrumental in developing staff wellbeing projects, spearheading wellbeing days for the team and in the business becoming an accredited Real Living Wage employer in the last couple of years.

Hannah continues to be a passionate and committed leader at Dunsters Farm, whilst staying true to the altruistic family values that Dunsters Farm was built on.

# RACHEL LOWE

CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER, JOHN GOOD GROUP

## Inspirational Leadership

John Good Group is a purpose-led group of service-led companies, which puts people, the planet and performance at the heart of its operations.

Rachel's tenure as Chief People Officer at John Good Group has been transformative. With a clear vision for a people-first culture, she has adeptly navigated the unique dynamics of a family-owned business, ensuring that stakeholders are aligned and engaged in the journey of change.

Rachel's dedication to achieving their objective to, "Provide the best opportunity for personal and professional development" has been inspirational. Her strategic implementation of a new HR system is set to revolutionise the group's operational efficiencies and enhance internal communication, a pivotal move which underscores her commitment to fostering a collaborative environment where every voice is heard and valued.

Moreover, her passion for helping employees develop personally, also sets her apart, with the introduction of the 'Live The Dream' initiative testament to her innovative approach to employee engagement. By empowering team members to fulfil personal aspirations, she has tangibly enriched the lives of employees, thereby strengthening their connection to the company. Her relentless drive for progress, indicates a leader whose influence in shaping the company's culture will be felt for years to come.



Rachel deserves recognition because she has shown tenacity, passion, and strength in the first 12 months of being Chief People Officer for John Good Group. These efforts have seen her build out a best-in-class People Team which is driving a new height of engagement in the John Good Group. She has delivered a step change in the culture which now rewards, inspires and will be attracting top talents from around the Yorkshire area to come and work within the business.

She is truly inspirational and a real asset to the family business.

# JANE WYLIE-ROBERTS

CEO, STAFFINDERS

## Inspirational Leadership, Innovation, Sustainability Driver, Family Business Champion

Stafffinders is the oldest and leading Scottish recruitment agency, handling recruitment for an impressive list of public and private, UK and international companies, including businesses such as Little's Chauffeur Drive, Loganair, NSPCC and Krispy Kreme, to name a few. Founded in 1971 with offices in Paisley and Edinburgh, they supply permanent, temporary and contract staff recruitment within 17 key sectors.

As the CEO, Jane has demonstrated exceptional leadership and vision in steering the company to new heights. Taking the reins from her father in 2006, she implemented innovative strategies that have not only sustained the legacy of the business but have driven growth in the ever-evolving marketplace. Jane's transformative approach prioritised efficiency, sustainability, and adaptability, integrating cutting-edge technologies to keep their services at the industry forefront.

Her entrepreneurial spirit is evident in strategic initiatives that solidify their market position, making them leaders in their sector. Beyond the boardroom, Jane's commitment extends to the broader community through charitable endeavours and corporate social responsibility initiatives, locally and internationally. Her multifaceted leadership has preserved the family business's legacy and propelled it forward with a progressive vision. Jane stands as



an exemplary ambassador for women in family firms, embodying the impactful contributions they can make. Jane exemplifies unwavering dedication and exceptional leadership within the business. Her commitment to gender equality is evident through her tireless efforts to empower women within the organisation and beyond. She has successfully shattered glass ceilings, inspiring the next generation of female leaders.

With a deep business acumen and a compassionate leadership style, Jane has transformed challenges into opportunities, uniting employees and steering the business towards sustained growth. Her passion for mentoring and empowering talent reflects her genuine belief in the power of diversity. Jane speaks regularly at events on topics about Women in Business and Family Businesses and also guest lectures at various schools and universities, showcasing her as an inspiring role model in the industry.

Jane was recognised by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as a "Pioneer to the Life of the Nation" for her services to business and charity at a reception at Buckingham Palace and she continues to be an inspiration to many.

# JACQUI POWER

MANAGING DIRECTOR, PERFECT HOMES LTD

**Inspirational Leadership**



Perfect Homes Ltd is a business undertaking construction projects for schools, public authorities and new build residential housing developments across London and the South East.

Operating in a tough industry, particularly for women, Jacqui leads the company quietly, competently and professionally treating not only the next generation (son Perry) as equals but the wider team too.

Construction is a hard enough industry to operate in at the best of times, and Jacqui is continually adapting and developing her approach and the company to remain fit for purpose and bring a different directive to the projects that the company undertakes.

She is an inspirational leader in so many ways and fully deserving of recognition within this report.

# TAMARA ROBERTS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, RIDGEVIEW WINE ESTATE

**Inspirational Leadership, Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion**



Since 1995, Ridgeview Wine Estate has been producing world-class English sparkling wine in Sussex, focusing on quality and sustainability from grape to glass.

In 2004 Tamara took the decision to join Ridgeview to grow the family business, originally as General Manager and then promoted to CEO within 10 years in 2014.

Tamara has overseen the growth of production in that time from 25,000 bottles per annum to 500,000 bottles, with plans to double production over the next 5 years. Tamara is responsible for the financial management of Ridgeview as well as setting and implementing the strategy across all other areas from grape to glass. Tamara's vision is to focus on quality and sustainability while increasing brand awareness for growth in sales, tourism and export which currently sits at 15 countries around the globe.

Under Tamara's guidance, Ridgeview has recently been accredited as a B Corp, at the time one of only 25 wineries around the world to receive this accreditation. Tamara is also passionate about creating a welcoming and ethical place to work with respect of client, customer and community relationships.

Highly active in the English wine industry, Tamara was previously a director of the national bodies Wines GB and the Wine & Spirits Trade Association and is now a Governor of Plumpton College which specialises in training for the English wine industry. She also sits on the Business Advisory Board of Sussex University. In 2020 she became the first English wine professional to become Honorary President of the prestigious International Wine & Spirit Competition. Tamara is very respected within the local Sussex business community too.

As a testament to Tamara's experience, professionalism, and reputation she was awarded 'Sussex Businessperson of the Year' in the 2018 Sussex Business Awards and the Dynamic Award in the Women in Business Dynamic Awards 2022. In December 2023, she won CEO of the Year at the Sussex Business Awards.

She is an inspirational leader of an award-winning and pioneering family business, leading with integrity focus and authenticity, and a great role model for others to follow.



# LAURA COLTON-SMITH

MANAGING DIRECTOR, COLTON PACKAGING

**Inspirational Leadership, Sustainability Driver,  
Family Business Champion**



Colton Packaging is a packing business that has been helping customers for over 150 years, with a flexible approach tailored to each client to supply and manage packaging in a way that works for them.

Packaging has been at the heart of the Colton family since the mid nineteenth century. The business is now in its fifth generation and with each passing year their industry knowledge, product range and customer care has grown consistently.

Laura has invested significant time and resources into making Colton Packaging more sustainable, while positioning the business as an employer of choice within its local community. Laura has taken the lead on the redevelopment of Colton's current premises, investing in green infrastructure such as solar panels, Tesla storage batteries and energy efficient LED lighting to ensure that the business takes the lead within its industry for carbon reduction. This redevelopment also included the creation of modern office spaces with peaceful breakout areas to make the workplace an enjoyable environment.

Laura understands that her people are her greatest asset and considers them an extension of the Colton family, with investments in the business and its culture built upon strong family values. The business also continues to support local charities and organisations in order to make a positive impact on its local communities - with Laura a driving force behind these initiatives.

Laura is a trailblazer within the packaging sector, possessing all of the skills and attributes required to position Colton Packaging as an industry leader. Laura successfully blends compassion with clear direction when managing her people.

She has a defined strategy for the future of the business and the ability to bring people with her on that journey thanks to her people skills and her ability to communicate clearly and bring her vision to life. Her values are aligned to those of her employees, with sustainability and wellbeing high on her agenda. She will not compromise these values and remains true to them in every decision she takes.

Colton Packaging has undergone significant change in recent years and Laura's ability to navigate any challenges that have presented themselves has placed the business in the perfect position to lead the charge within the packaging sector for many years to come.

# MARDI ROBERTS

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS,  
RIDGEVIEW WINE ESTATE

**Inspirational Leadership, Industry Ambassador,  
Family Business Champion**



Since 1995, Ridgeview Wine Estate has been producing world-class English sparkling wine in Sussex, focusing on quality and sustainability from grape to glass.

Mardi, a vital member of the founding family behind Ridgeview joined virtually from inception in 1994 and has supported almost every department of the business. Mardi is a creative-thinking people person and by currently overseeing PR, Brand Communications and Tourism, she brings a wealth of expertise, having started a wine career in her native Australia.

Known for her engaging communication style, Mardi embodies the essence of Ridgeview, seamlessly blending tradition with a forward-thinking approach. Her role as Director of Communications reflects a dedication to preserving the family legacy while ensuring Ridgeview thrives in a competitive market. Outside of her professional duties, Mardi is committed to cultivating a positive workplace. She not only serves as a Mental Health First Aider but also actively participates in the social committee, contributing to a harmonious team dynamic. Mardi's dedication to staff wellbeing, this harmoniously aligns with Ridgeview's guiding principle that 'Life is for Celebrating.'

As Ridgeview were one of the first English Sparkling Wines to be released in a burgeoning new wine category, Mardi has become a dynamic and influential figure in the industry with a keen understanding of its intricacies. She has helped promote not only the Ridgeview wine brand, but the English wine category and Sussex as a hub of quality & excellence to visitors.

Due to her reputation & industry knowledge, Mardi has been asked to sit on several sector committees including WineGB Marketing & Tourism, Vice Chair of the Sussex Visitor Economy Industry Group and representing English Wine & Tourism on the Sales & Marketing Advisory Board for Visit Britain.

As a Ridgeview brand ambassador, Mardi has been an active advocate in the local food scene and has supported the development of Ridgeview's wine presence in well-respected local and national restaurants.

# JOYCE ONUONGA

MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
JOHN WHITE & SON (WEIGHING MACHINES) LTD

**Innovation, Inspirational Leadership, Entrepreneurship,  
Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion,  
Lifetime Contribution**



John White & Son Ltd (JWS) believes in providing the best weighing solutions to their customers, whatever their needs. Founded in 1715, they are the oldest independent weighing company in Scotland and remain a leading UK supplier of weights and weighing solutions with a reputation for engineering and service excellence. With sites covering the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Africa and the Middle East they are well placed to use the knowledge gained over three centuries to provide the correct weighing solution.

After joining the business more than 25 years ago as a senior non-family member of staff to address the business needs, the first thing Joyce recommended was for the family members in the business to participate in the Centre for Family Enterprise programme at Glasgow Caledonian University.

After completing the programme, it was clear that the company needed a non-family senior staff member which led to Joyce becoming a director and shareholder and serving in a senior management role. She introduced new management practices, guided the transition into new technical areas through innovation and training, and established the business on a sound financial footing.

Turnover and profitability have increased dramatically and the firm has become a key player in its niche market. Joyce has been responsible for innovatively transforming the business and giving it new direction, including the achievement of Investors in People and ISO9001, getting into new markets and starting the net zero journey.

After the firm celebrated its 300th anniversary in 2015 as Scotland's oldest family business, Joyce worked with the original family members to develop a transition plan that would allow them to retire from the business. The plan was implemented in 2017 and Joyce became the new owner of the business. Having her two sons working with her, the firm continues as a multi-generational family business. With her wealth of experience in family business, Joyce advises and mentors others and encourages women into business and is well deserving of recognition in this report.

# VICTORIA GREEN

CO-OWNER & INTERIOR DESIGN AND HERITAGE  
REGENERATION CONSULTANT, SPENBECK

**Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership, Sustainability  
Driver, Industry Ambassador, Family Business Champion**



Spenbeck is a multi-award-winning, second generation micro-SME specialising in helping people flourish. Market leaders in Nottingham's heritage office rentals for over 40 years and with extensive knowledge of the heritage-built environment, Spenbeck also provides office and residential design services, alongside sustainability and building health client support with a national and global reach.

When Victoria joined the company, it was solely run day to day by Victoria and her Father. She had no formal training or experience in the industry. Despite this, she single-handedly ran the company for a number of years, managed the crash of 2008 when the company's occupancy dropped to 20% and re-built the business to 100% occupancy from that point through being in charge of the portfolio-wide refurbishment, management of contractors, facilitating viewings with potential tenants and negotiating all leases, sales, advertising and PR for the company.

She created their first website and gave the business a presence on social platforms which has increased visibility tenfold since then, maximising reach to all customers, eradicating the need for agency services and in turn maximising the profitability of the company.

Alongside all of this, she led the multi-award-winning Heritage Action Zone project of Spenbeck's historically significant Birkin Building which was called an 'Exemplar of Heritage-Led Regeneration' by Historic England.

Without any formal training or experience in the sector, Victoria has dedicated all of her working life to the family business and in doing so has contributed heavily to the multi award-winning status it has today. She joined the company straight out of university to assist her father as he was in ill-health at the time and in doing so, relinquished the opportunity to carve her own career path in an alternative direction. Achieving what she has in a male-dominated industry, learning from the bottom up through experience alone, is testament to the passion, drive and pride she has in the family business & it's role within the local community.

Her ability to easily form and maintain trusted partnerships and working relationships with all stakeholders has played a pivotal role in the success of the company over the past 20 years. Victoria has achieved so much from so little and the recognition of her impact on the business and local community as a result of her dedication to the business deserves to be acknowledged.

# ELIZABETH COLLERAN

SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR, DUVALAY

**Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Inspirational Leadership, Family Business Champion**



Since founding Duvalay two decades ago, Elizabeth has always been the visionary of the business, dedicated to delivering the best night's sleep for people, wherever they are – whether at home, or away in their leisure vehicle.

Behind the scenes she actively contributes to the development of new and innovative products, playing a pivotal role in growing the business into the industry leader that it is today. Passionate about keeping the family roots in the business, Elizabeth has brought younger generations of the family in and guided them in their respective roles, ensuring Duvalay remains a strong family business for years to come.

Elizabeth is proof that if you want something enough, you can absolutely make it happen! From starting the business from scratch sat at her kitchen table, her passion and determination have never wavered, building Duvalay into the successful and profitable family business we see today. In an industry that's mainly male-dominated,

Elizabeth proves that it's possible for women to pave their way if they have confidence in their ideas, a strong character and an entrepreneurial mindset. Even when faced with the adversities and challenges that come with running a business.

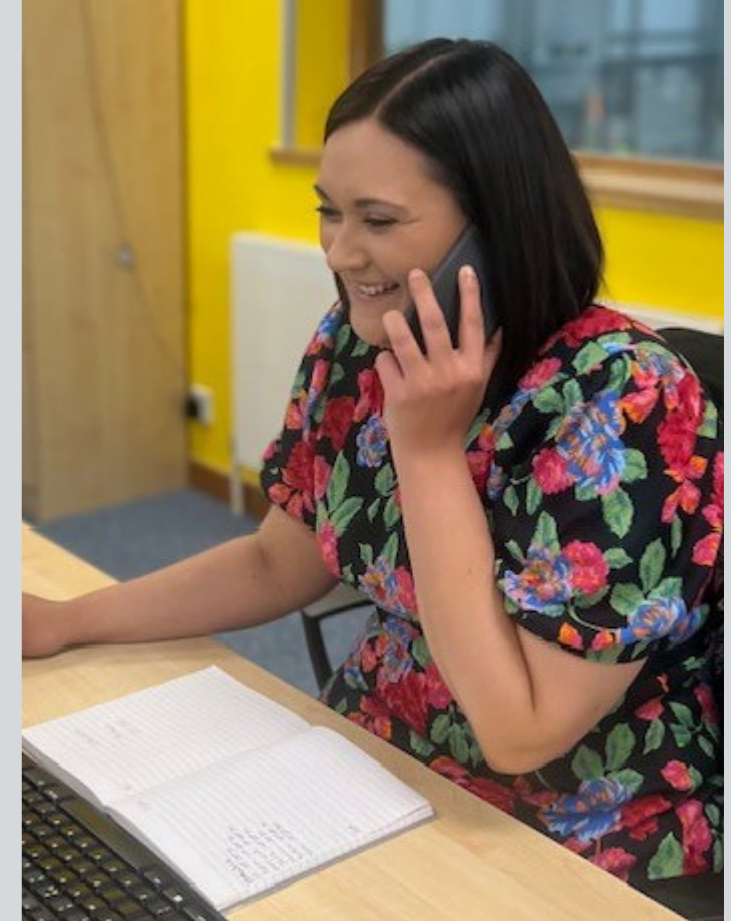
Elizabeth's strength and resilience always shine through which is something that many others find hugely inspiring.



# ABBY BAKER

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGER, FURNITURE VILLAGE

**Inspirational Leadership & Next Generation/Young Pioneer Making their Mark**



Furniture Village is the UK's largest independent furniture retailer with 55 stores and counting. Since opening their first store in Abingdon in 1989, they've been the nation's go-to destination for great quality furniture at great value prices. They were recently named the 4th best large company to work for in the UK by Best Companies and employ over 1200 people across the country.

Abby has been instrumental in improving the efficiency and productivity of the Furniture Village Customer Care Team. Not only has she transformed the day-to-day running of a vital team, but by implementing a series of effective changes as Customer Experience Manager, she has helped the business reduce the number of live customer service cases by half and reduced the average call waiting time by 85% - a huge achievement. Abby's passion for her job is infectious, as is her determination to ensure her team have the training and skills they need to deliver the customer experience Furniture Village customers expect.

Abby's personal growth and development have been a joy to witness. Since joining the business in 2013 at 21, Abby has developed her skillset, grown in confidence and become one of the business' key furniture aftercare experts. She is always pushing herself and her team to achieve, and very deservedly received one of The Furniture Makers' Company's '60 for 60 Awards' in 2023 which recognise future leaders in the furniture industry who make an outstanding contribution in their role.



# SAM FOSTER

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER, FURNITURE VILLAGE

**Inspirational Leadership & Next Generation/Young Pioneer  
Making their Mark**



Furniture Village is the UK's largest independent furniture retailer with 55 stores and counting. Since opening their first store in Abingdon in 1989, they've been the nation's go-to destination for great quality furniture at great value prices. They were recently named the 4th best large company to work for in the UK by Best Companies and employ over 1200 people across the country.

Sam started life at Furniture Village as an administrator, quickly gaining recognition for her impressive work ethic and drive. In just eight years, Sam has risen through the ranks to become the Distribution Manager of one of their biggest customer fulfilment sites, delivering over £70 million a year.

Not one to shy away from a challenge, she's steered her team through the COVID-19 pandemic, a cyber attack and some of the busiest years on record.

Notably, she played an integral part in helping the business deliver over £7 million of furniture in just five weeks over the busy Christmas period in 2023. This not only resulted in increased profits for the business, but Sam's personal efforts ensured hundreds of customers could enjoy their new furniture at Christmas.

Sam deservedly won one of The Furniture Makers' Company's '60 for 60 Awards' in 2023 which recognise future leaders in the furniture industry who make an outstanding contribution in their role.

# LENA BORTHWICK

HR BUSINESS PARTNER FOR FULFILMENT,  
FURNITURE VILLAGE

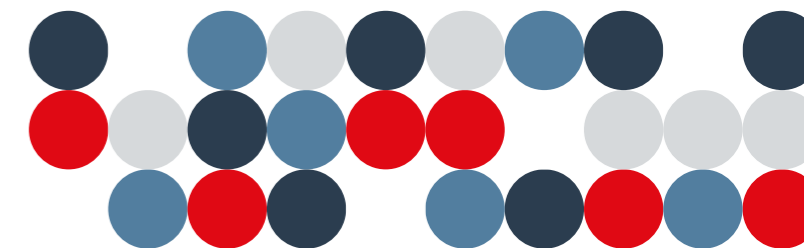
**Inspirational Leadership**



Furniture Village is the UK's largest independent furniture retailer with 55 stores and counting. Since opening their first store in Abingdon in 1989, they've been the nation's go-to destination for great quality furniture at great value prices. They were recently named the 4th best large company to work for in the UK by Best Companies and employ over 1200 people across the country.

Lena puts people at the heart of everything she does. As one of the HR Business Partners, she ensures everyone across the fulfilment team has a voice by conducting regular welfare calls and listening groups to help the business improve the employee experience.

In particular, Lena has been instrumental in reducing the dependency on agencies, bringing her years of experience and expertise to the Furniture Village HR team and transforming their in-house employee outreach programme as a result. Her unique knowledge of the fulfilment operation combined with her dedication and tenacity has seen her become one of the business' rising stars.



# ROWAN McCALL-SMITH

PARTNER, REDPATH BRUCE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LTD

**Inspirational Leadership, Industry Ambassador,  
Family Business Champion, Lifetime Contribution**



Redpath Bruce undertakes Residential and Commercial Property Management, Residential Lettings and Commercial Investment & Development Consultancy.

Rowan provides consistency in their approach to problem solving, expert knowledge in their field and she is also an excellent motivator and empathetic leader. She keeps the door 'wide open' to assist all levels of the business with any issues they may have in their specific field or department and indeed, all facets of business and at times, their personal lives.

Rowan deserves recognition for all of the reasons above, plus her unstinting devotion to integrity, transparency, fairness and quality of service in everything they do and consequently, in everything the business does. They are an epic role model for everyone within and without the firm. Dedicated and steadfast in all areas of her business and life, Rowan is totally committed to upholding and protecting the 117 year old business's reputation and leaving a healthy legacy to the next generation.

# DR POONAM GUPTA OBE

CEO, PG PAPER

**Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership,  
Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador,  
Family Business Champion, Lifetime Contribution**



PG Paper is a UK-based, global, award-winning paper, pulp and packaging merchandising company.

Since PG Paper was established at Poonam's kitchen table in 2003, her drive and determination, innovative thinking, thorough research, strategic decisions on key appointments and astute financial management have been fundamental to developing and extending the reach of PG Paper, now a recognised global leader in its sector. In the early stages of her career, Poonam faced challenges growing PG Paper in countries where women do not traditionally take charge of businesses. To counter these challenges, she would ensure that her knowledge and research were better than anyone else. Poonam fought hard to break stereotypes and prove that women are more than capable of growing and establishing a successful business, becoming a role model for all women striving for business success today.

Poonam has dedicated much of her career to encouraging, mentoring and challenging fellow business owners and colleagues to follow in her footsteps in the world of business and entrepreneurship. Her focus, drive and determination, alongside her fearless yet humble approach to expanding PG Paper continuously inspires the team.

Poonam is a very hands-on CEO and is the driving force behind the PG Paper business development team and responsible for the strategic management of the business. Poonam enthusiastically leads from the front and would not ask anything of her team that she would not do herself, driven by her inclusive leadership style. As she drives the business forward, Poonam passionately encourages every member of the PG Paper team to be the best they can be, as well as offering her support and guidance whenever the opportunity occurs. Her office door is always open, and she will do whatever she can to ensure everyone is on the same page and that strategy is a shared vision.

Poonam's resilience, alongside her ability to nurture individuals and instil a strong sense of collective responsibility, is what makes her such a successful and inspiring leader, and after 20 years of running PG Paper, Poonam remains driven, focused, and passionate about the opportunities that still lie ahead.



# BECKY VALENTINE

CO-OWNER & LEAD SUSTAINABILITY & BUILDING HEALTH CONSULTANT, SPENBECK

Entrepreneurship, Sustainability Driver, Industry Ambassador



Spenbeck is a Building Health and Interior Design Consultancy

Becky secured the legacy of Spenbeck's founding generation by recognising several years ago the crucial future role environmental sustainability and the wider ESG agenda would play in business continuity. Building on the Stevenson family values of stewardship, custodianship and proactivity, Becky put delivering sustainability and social value at the heart of Spenbeck's business model, proudly and explicitly aligning its symbiosis with the inherent values of the family business sector.

Thought leadership quickly delivered market leadership, and Spenbeck has become repeated regional award winners in recognition, not only for its expertise, but because it has clearly leveraged and built on the passion, tenacity and determination of its founding generation to support the environment, the local community and its industry sector in equal measure. Becky's foresight has ensured that Spenbeck is recognised as the go-to company for sustainability and sustainable interiors support.

Becky has enabled Spenbeck to successfully navigate the often tricky waters within family firms of combining the personal passions of subsequent generations with the family legacy started by its founders. Her passion for, and expertise in, supporting businesses, schools and charities with their sustainability and Net Zero ambitions has both strengthened Spenbeck's brand and reputation and significantly improved the sustainability of organisations nationwide. As a recognised early adopter and vocal advocate of the competitive advantage of sustainability, Becky's ability to empower, motivate and inspire sees her repeatedly sought after for keynote speeches, expert panellists and podcasts.

# ISSY HOWELL

HEAD OF PRODUCTION, HOWELL MEDIA AND DIRECTOR, HOWELL TRAINING

Next Generation, Entrepreneurship, Family Business Champion



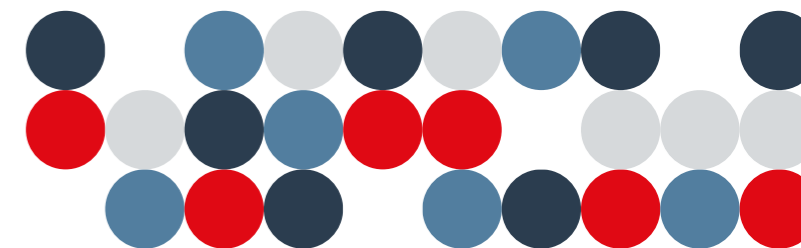
Howell Media and Training is a multi-award winning marketing agency based in the North of England, producing relevant and impactful content creation for their clients. They specialise in bringing ideas and messages to life through dynamic and creative storytelling powered by bold visual communication techniques.

Issy is a unique individual who was raised in the creative family business environment and has been exposed to the ups and downs of family business her whole life. Since joining the business over five years ago she has had a truly positive impact both in terms of her energy within the organisation and the way that she has contributed to the shaping of the future plans for the business. She has been instrumental in adding her next generation perspective to the media and training business, introducing live-streaming and live-broadcasting, and demonstrated her professionalism and competence working with a range of business owners and celebrities. She is also spearheading the new arm of the business, Howell Training, which continues to go from strength to strength.

Issy has an extremely strong work ethic and is dedicated to the success and growth of the business. A combination of natural talent, analytical thinking and core intuition makes Issy a valuable member of the team, embracing and living their core family values with a real passion, pride and authenticity.

Issy is an innovator with a willingness to embrace change which keeps the family business competitive in a rapidly evolving business landscape. Embracing innovation and leading with purpose, Issy shines as the beacon of the next generation in business. Her visionary approach and unwavering determination have helped redefine creative standards within the business and at the same time inspired a new business and a new era of possibilities.

Issy has a palpable energy, is driven to succeed and deserves recognition for her exceptional leadership, skill and commitment.



# GRACIENNE IKIN

DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER,  
HMG PAINTS

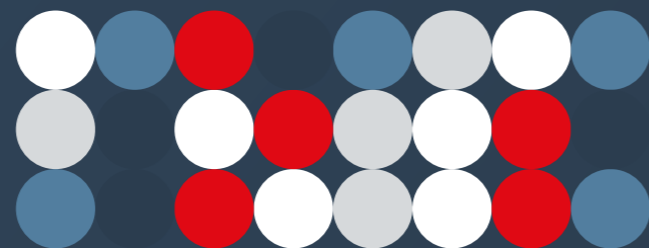
Entrepreneurship, Next Generation/  
Young Pioneer Making their Mark, Unsung Hero



HMG Paints is a specialist manufacturer of paints and coatings.

Grace has taken over the White Label and Brand Development side of the business and generated a number of new partnerships for HMG Paints which, importantly, have created good levels of financial return for the business.

This is a totally new business area for HMG Paints and Grace has driven the area and developed some great partnerships, both with established brands and also new entrepreneurial start-ups.



# REBECCA BRISTOW

COMPANY SECRETARY, HMG PAINTS

Inspirational Leadership, Next Generation/  
Young Pioneer Making their Mark, Industry Ambassador,  
Family Business Champion



HMG Paints is a specialist manufacturer of paints and coatings.

Rebecca has recently taken on the role of Company Secretary and is a key member of the HMG Paints Board. She is also a true champion of employees at HMG and is a key member in the Employee Forum.

Taking on a very senior role at a young age, Rebecca is well respected by colleagues throughout the business, thanks to working across numerous areas. This is down to her genuine passion for paint and people. Rebecca is also a champion for other businesses through roles as a Be the Business ambassador and CBI Regional Board chair.



# HELEN CLARK

HEAD OF PURCHASING, HMG PAINTS

**Unsung Hero, Lifetime Contribution**



HMG Paints is a specialist manufacturer of paints and coatings.

Helen has been a true leader within HMG over the last 25 years, constantly dealing with suppliers and negotiating the best possible deals for raw materials whilst ensuring production have exactly what they need to make the best paint possible.

Helen has been the beating heart of the HMG Paints purchasing team for over 20 years and has allowed HMG to be competitive in a tough industry thanks to building numerous outstanding relationships with suppliers and driving, tough but fair purchasing deals.

Helen goes under the radar but her actions on a daily basis make HMG a competitive player in the market and at the forefront of innovation. She is truly deserving of recognition for all of her efforts.

# SHANNON WILLIAMS

PRODUCT MANAGER, HMG PAINTS

**Next Generation/Young Pioneer Making their Mark**



HMG Paints is a specialist manufacturer of paints and coatings.

Shannon has taken on a huge new role within the business as Product Manager. Working alongside the marketing team Shannon is reshaping the companies portfolio allowing HMG to be competitive for the next generation.

She has recently completed her Degree Level Apprenticeship in Business Management (Chartered Manager) and achieved an Upper Second-Class Honours whilst taking on a new role and being a key role in the next generation of HMG Paints.

She is certainly making her presence felt and deserving of recognition for the impact that she is having at HMG Paints.

# MELISSA STROWBRIDGE

SENIOR HR ASSISTANT, HMG PAINTS

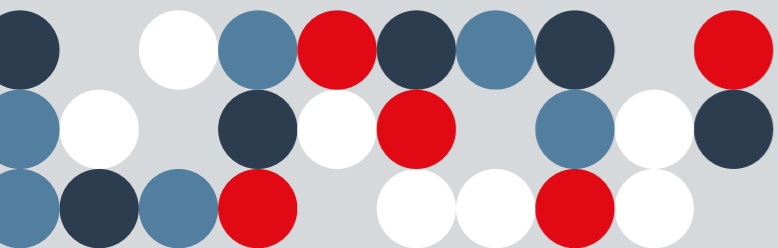
Next Generation/Young Pioneer Making their Mark



HMG Paints is a specialist manufacturer of paints and coatings.

Mel has become a go-to person within the HR Department at HMG Paints, even winning their Employee of the Year title in 2022. She is approachable, friendly and passionate about what she does and has recently completed her Degree Apprenticeship.

Mel is a great ambassador for HMG and a true people person, she is passionate about her role and has even attended Parliament to speak to The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Apprenticeships to advocate for their importance especially for SME's.



# MIREILLE HADDAD

HEAD OF FINANCE AND OFFICE MANAGER, DINA FOODS

Unsung Hero



Dina Foods is a family-run bakery, confectionery and savoury production business based in London which has been perfecting their craft since 1992 and has become a leading business in the industry.

Mireille is an unsung hero and someone who is deserving of recognition for her drive, growth and being a fabulous employee. Mireille is extremely motivated and customer focused and a highly valued member of the team.

As well as being a family member, Mireille has been working at Dina Foods for 25 years, she is an important pillar of the business and is involved in the day-to-day running of it. She has been a very devoted and committed member of the team and her passion is not often recognised. Mireille truly deserves this recognition for her hard work, loyalty and drive.



# NICOLA BIRD

DIRECTOR, K W BELL GROUP AND FOUNDER & CEO, ACCXEL

Entrepreneurship, Next Generation/  
Young Pioneer Making their Mark, Industry Ambassador



K W Bell Group is split into 4 main businesses; Bell Contracting which delivers groundwork and civil engineering services to the major house builders across the South West; Bell Homes which builds family homes across the South West; Bell Plant which is an in house, cross hire company providing innovating digital solutions for a more efficient workforce; AccXel Construction School, The UK's first industry-led construction school.

Nicola has proven entrepreneurship in every sense. Not only has she tackled an industry issue that has never been solved, she formulated a solution and business case so robust that she was awarded Government funding to build her vision and secure a future for K W Bell Group. Whilst COVID halted many businesses, Nicola secured employment for many, as AccXel was launched and built throughout the pandemic. From her industry experience and years of research, Nicola's visionary solution to a national problem has brought her to the attention of the whole construction industry, with global and national giants, including JCB, clamouring to be part of the movement she created.

AccXel is a UK first. Nicola has been so brave as to put her head above the parapet and embark on a business that will change the face of UK construction education. Despite labour problems being talked about for decades in the highest levels of Government, it was Nicola who finally threw down the gauntlet and did something about it. Not only has she found a solution to a national problem, but she was also so sure of the need for AccXel, that she applied for Government funding and was awarded funding of £1.96m, despite AccXel being the first of its kind and a completely revolutionary concept. Nicola is a visionary and a pioneer of change and deserving of recognition for everything that she achieved to date in helping create futures in construction.

# NATALIE KING

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR & VICE PRINCIPAL, ACCXEL LTD

Entrepreneurship, Inspirational Leadership,  
Industry Ambassador



AccXel is a construction school and training provider and the UK's first industry-led construction school.

Natalie has established and built AccXel, the UK's first industry-led construction school, with her sister Nicola. From idea on paper, and concept that was unknown and unproven, Natalie and Nicola opened the doors to the school in January 2022, and in less than 3 years have grown the business to an £850,000 turnover. Natalie and her sister have steered AccXel through opposition and adversity as they establish themselves as the elite of construction provision. Natalie's passion for the industry, and commitment to changing the status quo in sector education has pushed the business forward and enabled the brand to seek expansion opportunities and national recognition.

Natalie deserves recognition because of the tenacity with which she approaches the behemoth task of changing industry norms. Natalie is an advocate of change and together with her family, there is no challenge too difficult to tackle. AccXel is not just a family business to Natalie, it is a mission to revolutionise how the construction industry perceives and implements education and training.

Natalie is an ambassador for women in construction and ensuring that younger generations of females know the opportunities available in the sector. With a start-up business it is 'all hands to the pump', and from BD, to sales, strategy and teaching, there is nothing that Natalie won't do to ensure AccXel's success. Natalie is adamant that the sector will see an AccXel Construction School in all four corners of the country, and with the sisters' determination, passion and commitment, this huge goal is nothing short of a certainty.

# OUR FAMILY BUSINESS COMMUNITY

FBU continues to expand and has a growing membership base around the world. Recognised as THE family business champions we have also gained recognition in both of the Top 100 Global Family Business Influencers list compiled by Family Capital. We are also the VOICE of the family business community, celebrating their contribution throughout the UK and beyond.

We LOVE what we do and we are creating a truly innovative community that continues to represent family firms and the contribution that they make, be it in terms of income, wealth, community involvement or jobs.

Our members benefit from our support, promotion, national campaigns, research and a host of flagship events supported by an online programme and world class PR and social media support and engagement, plus a whole lot more member benefits besides.

Find out more about membership of our innovative family business community here:

[WWW.FAMILYBUSINESSUNITED.COM/MEMBERSHIP](http://WWW.FAMILYBUSINESSUNITED.COM/MEMBERSHIP)



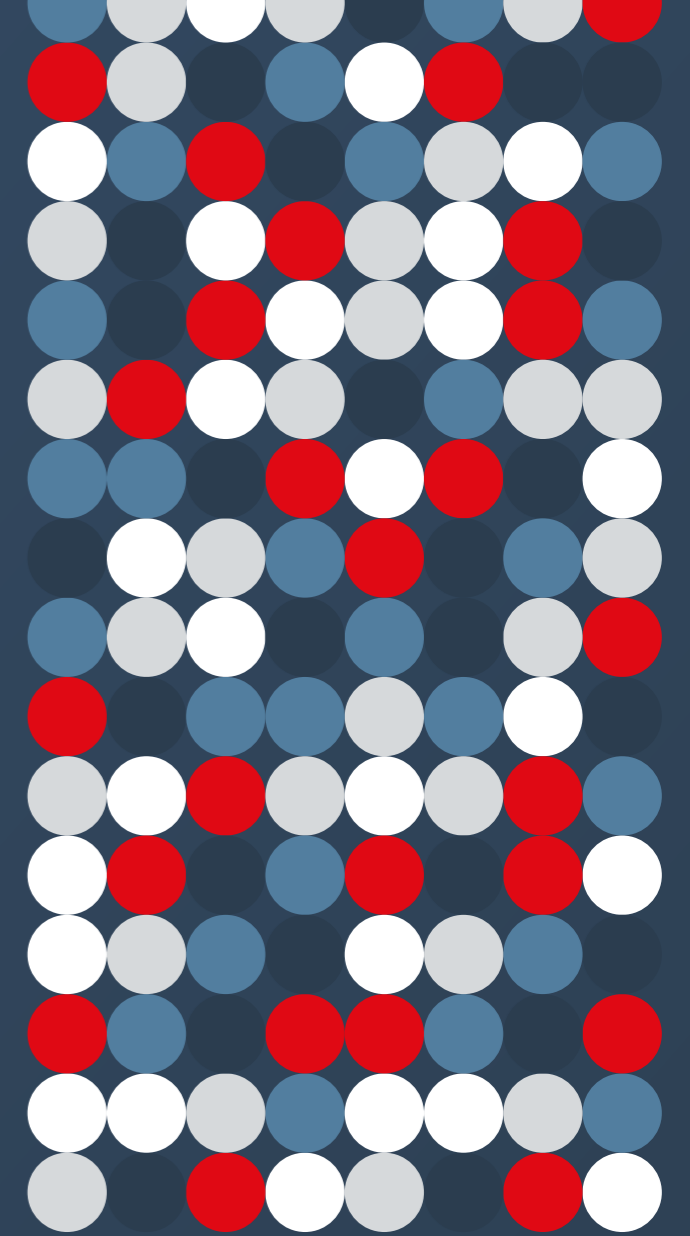
FAMILY BUSINESS UNITED **fbu**

## ABOUT FAMILY BUSINESS UNITED

Family businesses are the main contributors to national economies the world over through the jobs they provide, income they generate and the wealth they create, not forgetting the impact they have on the broader communities in which they operate too.

Family businesses intrinsically do, or want to do the right thing, acting as agents of change and taking responsibility for their actions. They care and with a shared purpose take long-term decisions and act as stewards for next generations. They want to do the right thing, creating sustainable businesses and recognise the urgency associated with the need to care for the world in which they live too. They take their responsibilities seriously. They have a story to tell, a passion and pride in what they do and continue to invest in their businesses, their people and their communities.

Family Business United has the family business community at our core. We are recognised globally as champions of family firms and seek to celebrate the contribution they make, ensure they obtain recognition for what they do on a daily basis and, to provide the necessary support and resources to enable them to continue to flourish for generations to come



[FAMILYBUSINESSUNITED.COM](http://FAMILYBUSINESSUNITED.COM)