

# Benefits & Policies for you



2022

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# Introduction

Welcome to your Blakemore Benefits and Policies booklet, highlighting some of the great benefits and discounts you can enjoy as an employee of the company.

Whether it's helping to extend your disposable income through discounts or salary sacrifice arrangements for big purchase items such as bikes or even cars (so you save on income tax and NI contributions!), there is something in our benefits booklet for everyone.

The importance of time off for life events is also something we recognise as a family business, as well as providing wellbeing and retirement benefits to support you through every stage of your employment with the company.

Maintaining friendly colleague relations has always been something the company has prided itself on, and this booklet highlights some of the key policies we have in place to support you as well as providing clear and consistent guidance to help you throughout your career with us, whilst promoting one of our core values: 'We are one inclusive team'.

Full copies of all our employment policies can be found on MyHR, by going to the 'Self Service Directory', then 'Documents' and 'Policies and Procedures'.

I hope you enjoy reading the booklet and please get in touch if you have any queries or suggestions as to how we can make our benefits offer even better as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

Ian Diment  
Group HR & Strategy Director

# Celebrating our teams



One inclusive team

Our teams are what make us successful and so we believe that celebrating them should be part of our culture.

## Blakemore GEMS

Each month we highlight and thank those who have gone the extra mile (sometimes literally!) to deliver fantastic service and live our values. Nominated by peers, anyone can get involved by either thanking a colleague or being nominated themselves.

## Long Service Awards

When you reach key service milestones at 3 and 5 years, a 'service pin' and certificate are issued. A voucher or monetary award will be made to thank you for your contribution to the company at 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45 and 50 years of service. When you achieve 25 years' service, the company will recognise this achievement with an additional four weeks of paid sabbatical leave that may be taken that year or within the following 2 years.

Service Years	30hrs+ Award (£)	-29.75hrs Award (£)
10	100	50
15	250	125
20	400	200
	Option of vouchers	
25	500	250
	Option of vouchers + 4 weeks' sabbatical leave	
30	600	300
35	700	350
40	800	400
45	900	450
50	1,000	500

## Retirement Gift

One of the most important events in your life is retirement. We will mark this event by way of a gift based on your length of service. Either a cash payment payable through wages, which is liable for tax and National Insurance, or gift vouchers are available.

The amount is calculated as £10.00 per year for the first 10 years' service, £20.00 per year for the next 10 years' service and £30.00 per year for all service over 20 years.

# Making our workplace inclusive for all

One of our core values is 'We are one inclusive team'. We want all colleagues to feel safe, included, empowered and part of the team, regardless of their personal background. As stated in the Blakemore Way:



**We are One Inclusive Team:** Our people are our strength, everyone is a key part of the team. We listen and support. We treat each other with kindness, fairness, empathy and respect, and celebrate not just what we have in common, but our differences too.

## Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

We aim to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect, within a culture that promotes equal opportunities for everyone, underpinned by our values and principles of The Blakemore Way.

We appreciate and celebrate that everyone is different and has something unique to offer. We have an increasingly diverse workforce, which is vital to ensure we represent the communities that we serve. We want to respect and understand these differences and to make the most of everyone's culture, talent and experience.

We believe greater diversity will make our workplaces richer and our business stronger.

Equality is when people have access to the same opportunities and tools. Equity however takes into consideration that the starting point isn't the same for everyone and that equality alone isn't always enough. Our policies and strategies take this into consideration.

## Dignity at Work Policy

Our policy is set out to ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect whilst at work, and recognises that we all have a part to play in achieving this. We want you to be able, and encouraged, to be yourself and therefore able to meet your full potential. We believe this is achieved by working in a supportive, non-threatening environment, that is free from harassment and/or bullying of any kind. This policy helps create an understanding of how our words and behaviour affect others. We can ensure that we all contribute towards an enjoyable, healthy working environment.

We should remember that 'banter' in the workplace can become hurtful or offensive. Harassment and bullying behaviour may not always be intentional or obvious, but it is never acceptable.

We take all instances of harassment and/or bullying seriously and will take steps to ensure that such behaviour is treated as a disciplinary offence.

## Domestic Abuse and Stalking Policy

Domestic abuse impacts roughly 2.3m people every year.

To support this policy in its application, all managers will be trained on how to recognise abuse and support a colleague if needed.

## Gender Identity Policy

We are committed to equality of opportunity for transgender or non-binary colleagues throughout recruitment and employment.

We seek to provide a supportive environment for all colleagues and to create a culture and environment where colleagues are able to thrive, are treated with dignity and respect and are well supported during any process of transition.

The purpose of this policy is to assist managers and colleagues with practical information on workplace support and guidance.



## Menopause Policy

We understand that the menopause is part of the natural ageing process for women and recognise that colleagues will be working through and well beyond the menopause. The menopause affects all women, and it can often indirectly affect their partners, friends, families and colleagues as well.

The purpose of this policy is to inform managers about the menopause and how symptoms can affect a colleague's comfort, performance and confidence at work, as well as how we can provide a safe, comfortable, supportive and dignified working environment.

This policy also sets out the rights of colleagues experiencing menopausal symptoms and the support available to them.

Often small changes, or even just a better level of understanding can make a world of difference to colleagues experiencing the menopause and therefore our policy and awareness sessions aim to normalise and create better understanding within our teams. This can be a sensitive and personal subject for some colleagues and therefore conversations will be dealt with empathetically and in confidence.

## Religion, Belief and Non-Belief Policy

Our Religion, Belief and Non-Belief Policy recognises that we have a diverse collective of colleagues, many of whom have different religious beliefs and practices, or no beliefs. In line with our strategic objective on equality, inclusion and diversity, our policy demonstrates our commitment to promoting a culture that recognises the importance of all colleagues being treated with dignity, fairness, tolerance and respect. This includes respect for colleagues' religion, beliefs and non-religious beliefs.

Also in line with our value that we are 'one inclusive team', we expect colleagues to respect the freedom of others to express their convictions, religious beliefs or non-belief, on their own terms and without judgement.

We support colleagues in their commitment to their faith and will reasonably consider any requests to accommodate this where we can.

# Time for you

Life isn't about just working; that's why this section of policies and benefits aims to give you time for yourself and your family when you need it.

## Annual Holiday Leave

Holiday leave is a really important benefit that helps our overall mental and physical health.

Taking regular leave can also help in our work too, as even just a small period of holiday leave can reduce stress and improve our productivity through a change of environment or routine, which can fuel creativity and help us see challenges or tackle problems in a different way.

For this reason all colleagues are in a scheme that awards holiday in excess of statutory entitlement.

Our holiday year runs from 1st May to 30th April each year. Your entitlement and booking of regular holiday leave is managed by you through MyHR.

It may also be possible to request extended holiday leave in exceptional circumstances.

## Holiday Purchase

You might want to take additional holiday, and to do this the company gives you the opportunity to purchase up to five additional days of holiday each year. You can do this by completing a 'Holiday Purchase Application Form' between 1st and 20th April, which provides flexible options as to how to finance the additional leave purchased.

## Long Service Sabbatical

As a family business we celebrate long service, recognising colleagues who have dedicated their careers to growing the business sustainably for the benefit of colleagues, customers and the community.

Upon reaching the milestone of 25 years' service, we celebrate this by awarding you an additional four weeks of paid holiday leave, to be taken over two years. This additional leave is both recognition and a thank you from the company for your loyal and dedicated service and can be used to go on the holiday of a lifetime, to visit family or friends or to take more time away from work to do whatever you want to do.





# Time for when you need it

There are occasions when having more flexibility in your working life could mean that you are better able to plan for the important things in your home life, such as having a family, taking extended leave to travel or undertaking further education.

There are also occasions when you may have to deal with unexpected events, such as illnesses and family emergencies, which our benefits and policies will hopefully support you with.

## Compassionate (Including Bereavement) Leave Policy

We understand that when something upsetting or traumatic happens unexpectedly in life, we need to take time away from work. Our Compassionate (Including Bereavement) Leave Policy provides information about requesting time off work and also outlines all of the support available to you should you need it.

You may be able to take unpaid compassionate leave for up to 12 weeks, should a member of your immediate family (i.e. spouse, partner, parent, child or sibling) become seriously ill.

Bereavement leave and pay is available to you upon the death of a family member or loved one.

Bereavement	Leave and Pay Entitlement
Death of a child	4 weeks' leave and pay, which includes the day of the funeral
Miscarriage in weeks 12-24	1 weeks' leave and pay for the mother and 2 days' leave and pay for the partner
Death of a spouse/partner	2 weeks' leave and pay, which includes the day of the funeral
Death of a parent or sibling	1 weeks' leave and pay, plus 1 day for the funeral
Death of a grandparent	3 days' leave and pay, which includes the day of the funeral
Death of a parent-in-law	2 days' leave and pay, which includes the day of the funeral
Death of another close relative	1 days' leave for the funeral (50% paid and 50% holiday leave or unpaid leave)

## Time Off for Dependants (Family Emergency Leave) Policy

This policy explains the right for you to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with emergencies that involve a dependant and to make any necessary longer term arrangements.

Dependants include close relatives, someone who lives in the same household as you, or someone not in your household but who 'reasonably relies on you for assistance', if you are their primary carer or if you are the only person who can help in an emergency.

## Carers Leave Policy

We recognise that there are many colleagues who will also be responsible for the care and support of disabled, elderly or sick partners, relatives, children or friends who are unable to care for themselves.

Our Carers Leave Policy sets out how the company may be able to assist carers through temporary or permanent flexible working arrangements.

The varied range of potential working arrangements available is intended to offer colleagues options, either long term or short term, where there is a sudden increase in the level of care required, or where a colleague suddenly becomes a carer with no advance notice.

## Grandparent Leave

We know that either attending the birth of your grandchild or being present to help out following the birth of a grandchild is important to you and your family. You can request up to five days' leave, either paid (out of holiday entitlement) or unpaid, to be taken up to one year following the birth of your grandchild.

## Flexible Working Policy

We recognise and appreciate that flexible working arrangements can help us all balance our work and home responsibilities better.

There are several ways that flexible working can do this, such as job sharing, part-time working, reducing working hours, reducing working days, flexible start and finish times, requesting temporary/permanent changes to shifts, split shifts or occasionally working from home/other locations.

Our Flexible Working Policy sets out the options for flexible working as well as the process you should follow to request flexible working.

## Sick Leave

It is important that colleagues have time off work to look after their health and wellbeing when they need to. Our sick leave and company sick pay benefit ensures that every colleague is in a scheme that pays sick pay in excess of statutory entitlement.

We also offer you access to our in-house **Occupational Health Service** in confidence to help with any physical or mental health issue that you would like advice or support on.

# Family-friendly policies

Adding to your family is an exciting time, but it can also be a little overwhelming. The support we offer to new parents aims to remove some of these worries, provide financial peace of mind and support you in navigating through pregnancy, adoption or fertility treatment, new parenthood and the transition back to work.

## Maternity Leave and Pay Policy

We are committed to supporting best practice in relation to maternity, recognising the value of achieving a gender-diverse workforce and retaining and promoting talent. In support of this, the company provides maternity benefits, including pay that is above the statutory minimum.

Our policy sets out the statutory rights and support for colleagues who are planning to extend their family and gives details of the arrangements for maternity leave and pay, whilst outlining the benefits available to you, should you qualify.

Good antenatal care is essential in maintaining the health and wellbeing of both you and your baby during your pregnancy. As such, the company supports your right to take reasonable time off work with pay to receive antenatal care. This includes antenatal classes and hospital or doctors appointments.

While you are on ordinary or extended leave, you may work up to 10 keeping-in-touch days (KIT days) with pay without bringing your maternity leave to an end or losing your entitlement to statutory maternity pay. These days must be agreed between you and your manager, and we recommend that you try to work at least two KIT days during your leave.

We also provide the following Occupational Maternity Pay benefit:

All Colleagues: (Note: Where Occupational Maternity Pay is paid it includes the entitlement to SMP)			
First 12 weeks	Second 12 weeks	Next 15 weeks	Last 13 weeks
12 weeks' full pay	12 weeks' of 50% pay or SMP (whichever is most)	15 weeks' SMP or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is less)	13 weeks' unpaid (if taken)



## Adoption Leave and Pay Policy

Our policy aims to promote a consistent and supportive approach to adoption across the business and to increase awareness of the provisions available for adoptors. It also sets out the statutory rights and responsibilities of colleagues who are planning to adopt a child (or have a child through a surrogacy arrangement) and gives details of the arrangements for adoption leave and pay, whilst outlining the benefits available to you, should you qualify.

If you are the main adopter, we support you in taking paid time off for up to five adoption appointments. A secondary adopter will be entitled to take unpaid time off for up to two appointments. A surrogacy parent (the main adopter) will be allowed paid time off for a reasonable number of antenatal visits.

While you are on adoption leave, you may work for up to 10 keeping-in-touch days (KIT days) with pay without bringing your leave to an end or losing your entitlement to statutory adoption pay. These days must be agreed between you and your manager, and we recommend that you try to work at least two KIT days during your leave.

We also provide the following Occupational Adoption Pay benefit:

All Colleagues: (Note: Where Occupational Adoption Pay is paid it includes the entitlement to SAP)			
First 12 weeks	Second 12 weeks	Next 15 weeks	Last 13 weeks
12 weeks full pay	12 weeks of 50% pay or SAP (whichever is most)	15 weeks SAP or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is less)	13 weeks unpaid (if taken)

## Paternity Leave and Pay Policy

Our policy recognises the importance of parents spending time together following the birth of a baby or the adoption of a child, and as such provides financial support above the statutory minimum. The policy also sets out the statutory rights and support for colleagues who are planning to extend their family and gives details of the arrangements for paternity leave and pay, whilst outlining the benefits available to you, should you qualify.

You will receive four weeks' full company paternity pay based on an average of all hours worked within the previous 12 weeks at the time of the birth of a child or the adoption of a child.

Should the baby be required to spend four days or more in hospital, an additional week paternity leave will be paid.

The company also supports your right to take reasonable time off work with pay to attend antenatal care and appointments with your spouse/partner. This includes attending antenatal classes and hospital or doctors appointments.



## Parental Leave

Parental leave is unpaid time off that you can take to spend with your child up until their 18th birthday. You may take up to eighteen weeks of unpaid leave per child, with a limit of 4 weeks per year unless otherwise agreed.

You may wish to take parental leave to stay with a child who is in hospital, to spend more time with a child or to make school/childcare arrangements and to help them settle in. In order to qualify for parental leave you must have been employed by us for at least 12 months.

## Breastfeeding Support Policy

We acknowledge the health benefits to both mother and child that breastfeeding provides and the recommendation that whenever possible infants receive exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. As such, we adopt the following policy in support of colleagues who are breastfeeding:

- Take positive and supportive attitudes to colleagues returning to work who are breastfeeding.
- Wherever possible, allow appropriate flexibility in working hours, including regular breaks for colleagues who wish to breastfeed or express milk.
- Wherever possible and as necessary, make rest areas, storage space and refrigeration available for use by breastfeeding colleagues.



## Fertility Support Policy

This policy aims to support colleagues who are undergoing fertility treatment and clarifies the support and leave that is available. We recognise the emotional and physical challenges that may arise from undergoing fertility treatments, and our aim is to support colleagues wherever possible who wish to undertake fertility treatment.

If you have worked for the company for 12 months or more and are personally undergoing fertility treatment, you are entitled to up to three working days of paid IVF leave. This might be used, for example, to allow you some time to deal with the physical or emotional effects of fertility investigations or for rest following interventions or implantation.

The company also supports you to take reasonable time off work with pay to attend appointments, including scans.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that counselling should be considered before, during and after IVF treatment, regardless of the outcome. Below are some national networks you may find useful:

NHS IVF Support – [www.nhs.uk/conditions/ivf/support/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ivf/support/)

Fertility Network UK – [fertilitynetworkuk.org/](http://fertilitynetworkuk.org/)

The company also provides colleagues with the following support:

A.F. Blakemore Human Resources – [Sharedservices@afblakemore.co.uk](mailto:Sharedservices@afblakemore.co.uk)  
or 0121-568-2905

Mental Health First Aider – [reachout@afblakemore.co.uk](mailto:reachout@afblakemore.co.uk)

GroceryAid Confidential Counselling – [www.groceryaid.org.uk/](http://www.groceryaid.org.uk/)  
– or 08088 021 122

## Shared Parental Leave Policy

Our Shared Parental Leave (SPL) Policy supports your choice to care for a new arrival in your family in a way that suits your family best. The policy will help you decide whether shared parental leave will work for you, if you are eligible, and how it could be used alongside you and your partner's maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

The policy also outlines how you can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay between you. You need to share the pay and leave in the first year after your child is born or placed with your family. You can use SPL to take leave in blocks separated by periods of work, or take it all in one go. You can also choose to be off work together or to stagger the leave and pay.



# Your Health & wellbeing

The company has developed a Health & Wellbeing programme to support you in living a healthier and happier life. It is made up of five key pillars as illustrated below, which, through a number of initiatives, aim to develop a culture of trust and empathy to ensure you have access to both physical and mental health support that makes a positive difference.



## Physical Health

- Health Check Equipment
- Smoking Cessation Programme
- Flu Jabs
- Occupational Health
- Weight-Loss Step Challenge Programme
- Yulife App
- Health Challenges



## Mental Health

- First Aiders
- Training For Managers
- Occupational Health Nurse Appointments
- Healthy Food Recipes
- Mindfulness Meetings
- Grocery Aid Assistance Programme
- Personal Development Programme
- 'Leading the Blakemore Way' Tools and Techniques



## Social Interaction

- Volunteering Activity
- Community Activity
- Charity Events / Fundraising Activity
- Company Events / Focus Groups
- Social Event Programme



## Work/Life Balance

- Supporting Hybrid Working
- Supporting Flexible Working
- Email Policy
- Blakemore Benefits



## Financial Support/ Education

- SPAR Benevolent Fund
- Barclays Finance Support Programme
- Aviva Pension Webinars



# Your Health & wellbeing

Within the **Mental Health Pillar**, the company has trained a number of colleagues across the business to become **Mental Health First Aiders**. Their role is to provide confidential support and guidance, offering a one-to-one conversation to enable you to discuss your thoughts and feelings, or signposting you to the appropriate support services.



Simply scan the QR code for their contact details, or email [reachout@afblakemore.co.uk](mailto:reachout@afblakemore.co.uk) with your name and contact details for them to get in touch.



Colleagues also have access to an **Employee Assistance Programme** through the national charity GroceryAid.

GroceryAid provides a confidential 24/7 Helpline, 365 days a year for anyone who is working or has worked within the grocery trade, regardless of length of service. This free service provides emotional and practical support to help at difficult times. Call **08088 021 122** or speak to someone over Live Chat.



The **Physical Health Pillar** of the company's Health & Wellbeing Programme covers a number of benefits and initiatives, including **free sanitary products**, in recognition of the fact that small, simple changes can have a significant impact in contributing to a more inclusive workplace.

**Virtual GP** is another great benefit the company is able to provide all colleagues through YuLife, our life insurance provider. This service offers 24/7 access to phone, video or messaging consultations, as well as private prescriptions and fit notes. If you find it difficult to book a GP appointment locally at a time that suits you, please contact the HR Department on 0121 568 2905 to utilise the service.

The company also offers all employees access to our in-house **Occupational Health Service**. Please contact 0121 568 2937 if you would like to speak to or message our Occupational Health Advisor in confidence regarding any physical or mental health issue that you would like advice or support on.

**Income Protection Insurance** is a benefit provided to some salaried colleagues who are active members of the A.F. Blakemore section of the Aviva Master Trust Scheme, depending upon their contract of employment.

**Life Assurance** is provided to all colleagues, subject to a qualifying period of one year for hourly paid colleagues. If you are an active member of the A.F. Blakemore section of the Aviva Master Trust Scheme (Company Pension Scheme – not NEST), you will be entitled to six times your basic annual salary in the event of your death and one times your basic salary if you are not a member of the scheme in the event of your death whilst employed by the company.

If you develop your career within the company or join us in a senior management or director role, you will be entitled to **Private Medical Insurance** for yourself, with the option to purchase additional insurance for your family.

**Health Cash Plans** are available for all colleagues to purchase at a discounted rate negotiated by the company with BHSF. At a small cost per week, health cash plans can help you budget for everyday healthcare including optical and dental bills, and therapy treatments. For further details on purchasing a health cash plan, please contact HR Shared Services on 0121 568 2905.



# Financial benefits for you

To extend our benefits to you, we've got a range of fantastic financial savings available. It's an area we're looking at developing further, so keep an eye out for new benefits.

## Green Travel Benefits

Not only do these provide you with fantastic savings, but they allow you to get to and from work in an environmentally sustainable way.

### Cycle 2 Work Scheme

In partnership with Halfords, this is open twice a year and allows you to save money on the purchase of a bike(s) as the money is taken directly from your wage prior to tax. The scheme also allows you to spread the cost over a period of time.

The Cycle 2 Work scheme is a government-approved salary sacrifice scheme that allows you to hire/purchase a brand new bike up to the value of £2,000 from the company and save on tax and national insurance contributions through salary sacrificing.

Repayments are made over an 18-month period directly from your gross pay, with you making savings of either 33.25% or 43.25% depending on whether you are a standard rate or higher rate tax payer. Visit this web page to find out more:

[www.afblakemore.com/staff-zone/cycle-to-work-scheme](http://www.afblakemore.com/staff-zone/cycle-to-work-scheme)

### Discounted Public Transport

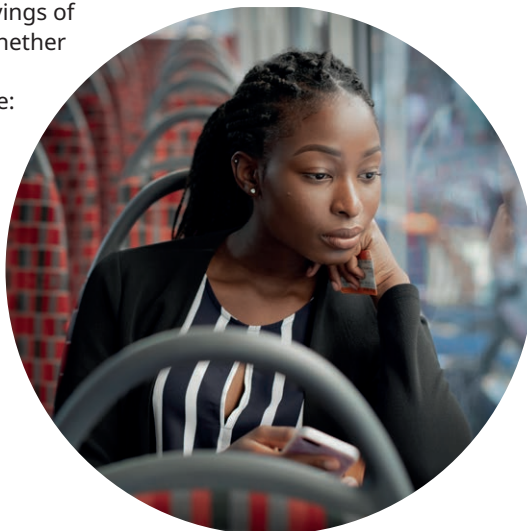
Brand new for 2022, we're piloting two schemes in the Midlands and South Wales giving you great savings on public transport. Watch out for more information coming soon!

## Car Purchase Scheme (Salary Sacrifice)

Our company car providers Pendragon have partnered up with us to create a scheme that allows you to purchase a car for either yourself or a family member at our negotiated prices, which will come out of your pre-tax salary. You'll have to pay Benefit in Kind tax, but this will be less than your income tax. Covered in this benefit is roadside assistance, insurance, tyres and maintenance costs.

## Staff Discount

You are eligible for up to 10% discount (5% discount on alcohol) when shopping in one of our company-owned SPAR or Philpotts stores. Simply select your shopping, provide the till operator with an acceptable form of identification (i.e. recent payslip or company-issued ID card) and the operator will authorise your discount. N.B. Discount will not be available for Lottery, Scratch Cards, Electricity/ Gas Tokens, Fuel, Phone Top-Ups and Tobacco. Please also look out for double discounts throughout the year.



# Company pension scheme

The Company Pension Scheme is one of the most important and valuable benefits that the company offers you. To join the scheme you must have two years' service and contribute a minimum of 5% of your pensionable earnings. Pension contributions are deducted from your earnings before tax, so you get tax relief at the highest rate that you pay. The company will match your contributions of 5% through an 'employer contribution'.

The Company Pension Scheme is part of a master trust arrangement provided by Aviva, which in brief is an occupational pension scheme set up under trust, with a default investment option or the ability for members to select from a wide range of investment funds to meet their retirement goals. The trust also provides members with both ethical and Sharia-compliant investment opportunities.

The scheme is part of a salary sacrifice arrangement, which applies to scheme members earning on or above a set limit. In brief, your contractual pay will be reduced by the amount of your contribution (the 'employee contribution') and the company will then pay this amount as an additional employer contribution into the Pension Scheme. By doing so, you save on your National Insurance contributions.



## Government Workplace Pension Scheme (NEST)

This auto-enrolment workplace pension scheme is operated to meet our statutory employer duties and to help you put money aside for your retirement. If you are not yet eligible to join the Company Pension Scheme you may be auto-enrolled into this scheme, depending on your age and earnings. Once you are enrolled, the company will deduct any contributions that you are required to pay from your wages or salary, and then pay this into the pension scheme on your behalf. We also contribute into your scheme.



# Your progression

## Learning and Development

The company is committed to ensuring that all colleagues have access to coaching, learning, development and training opportunities which enable them to have the confidence, knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to carry out their role within the business, and to develop their talents in ways that fit with the company's culture, values and strategic objectives.

The company regularly reviews its level of investment in colleague training and development to ensure not only that adequate resources are being provided but also that training and development activity is delivering a benefit to both colleagues and the business.

The company has developed its own mentoring programme, which you can apply to join by contacting the Learning and Development team. Following a simple application and training programme, you will be matched with a suitable mentor from within the company, providing you with the opportunity to form a trusting and professional relationship and learn new skills, attitudes and behaviours to develop greater confidence and new capabilities.

Mentoring and mental health go hand in hand, with studies highlighting the benefits mentoring has on both professional and personal development for the mentor and mentee.

## Study Leave

The company recognises the benefits of colleague development for individuals and the business as a whole and is therefore committed to supporting colleagues who wish to undertake personal and professional development as part of their career progression plans.

Colleagues may receive payment for attendance at an exam, should this day fall on a normal working day. Colleagues will be expected to attend work as normal should the exam be completed part way through the working day.

Colleagues may be permitted to be paid for one revision day, the day immediately prior to an exam, should this day fall on a normal working day.

For more information, please call HR Shared Services on 0121 568 2905.





# Building a better future together

## Our Responsible Business Programme and Events Calendar

Our Responsible Business department looks after People, Planet and Community and ensures we are meeting our company purpose of being profitable and sustainable for the benefit of our colleagues, customers and the communities in which we trade. We've got a dedicated team who look after these three pillars and create measured and targeted strategies to deliver the vision of each.

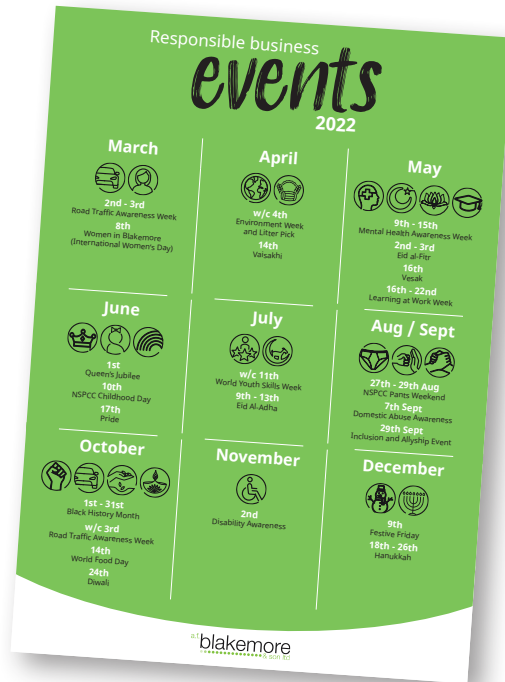
Feeding into these strategies and events, we have engagement groups that all colleagues are welcome to join. We also make sure that we're regularly keeping you up to date and holding focus groups to gain a better understanding of your views.

To support and deliver our programme strategies, we've got an exciting calendar of events lined up – these will give you the opportunity to volunteer, fundraise, learn and inject a bit of fun into the workplace.

For more information about upcoming events, please contact the Responsible Business Team at [RBP@afblakemore.co.uk](mailto:RBP@afblakemore.co.uk)

### Community Volunteering

The company's award-winning community volunteering programme encourages you to make a significant, positive contribution in the communities where you live and work. You have the opportunity to get involved in a whole host of activities in the community including practical regeneration projects, mentoring, study tours of our sites and employability-based workshops for students.



## Blakemore Foundation

The Blakemore Foundation is a charitable trust established by the Blakemore family to help local good causes within the company's trading area. If you are aware of a local good cause in need of support or have undertaken a sponsored activity, then the Blakemore Foundation may be able to help. Visit this web page to find out more:

[www.afblakemore.com/our-community/the-blakemore-foundation](http://www.afblakemore.com/our-community/the-blakemore-foundation)

## Payroll Giving

Payroll giving is a simple, tax-effective way to give to charity from your pay. Once authorised, the Payroll department will deduct regular charitable donations from your pay. Your donation is then sent to the Charities Trust, which is approved by HM Revenue and Customs as a charity agency. The agency distributes the money to the charity or charities of your choice. Visit this web page to find out more:

[www.afblakemore.com/staff-zone/payroll-giving](http://www.afblakemore.com/staff-zone/payroll-giving)





