



## Woman Franchisee of the Year

With our 2017 Annual NatWest EWIF awards over, we'd like to congratulate our winners and help them celebrate their success further with their very own spotlight blog. Claire Slorach was the winner of our 2017 Woman Franchisee of the Year award sponsored by McDonald's and scooped our new award as Overall Women in Franchising, beating the seven other 2017 award winners.

Claire first took over the Stockton Heath franchise in 2010 and since then the business has grown in many ways with staff members increasing from 7 to 22 and turnover growth rising by 22% in 2016. Despite Claire entering the award as the franchisee she has openly said "the business has only achieved what it is has with the team having the positive attitude towards learning that they do". 2016 has been a year of achievements for the Stockton Heath franchise with them having the second biggest growth out of 257 Toni & Guy salons in the UK. Moreover, all three of the Stockton Heath assistants not only passed on their NVQ but also came in the top 5 out of over 100 students with one assistant having the highest mark overall.

"It's exciting to see more and more women coming forward to recognise and celebrate their own achievements. I am delighted to have been a finalist, let alone win. Every year we see more women attend and enter these awards so this recognition has floored me. In December 2009, I started my journey and I have never looked back, I love helping the others alongside me. I am dedicated to education for my teams- the foundation of our franchise has always been education and encouragements to always be learning and growing and I feel this is a strong attribute that helped win this award" explains Claire.

Claire and the Stockton Heath franchise have also taken pride in charity fundraising and raised £5,000 in the Great North Run alongside organising client charity evenings where the team would donate their time. The friendly and welcoming atmosphere at the Stockton Heath branch is what Claire believes keeps the clients coming back and generates such amazing feedback. In 2016 Claire's franchise took the UK top spot in awards by review company [www.salonspy.com](http://www.salonspy.com).

"September 2016 saw myself and my two previous business partners, re-franchise Altrincham TONI&GUY. This was where I started 15 years ago, amazing new opportunities for growth for us all. All this was achieved with the support and help from the team. Excited beyond belief for the future, the award will help me encourage other women in my salons and also show support outside TONI&GUY.

EWIF's primary focus is to support women who are looking for a route into the franchise industry. Our remit is threefold; to encourage women to consider buying a franchise, to encourage business women to franchise their existing operations and to help franchisors attract more women to their networks. We are a not-for-profit organisation run entirely by volunteers, providing advice and guidance to anyone looking at trying to break into the franchise industry.