

## Inspirational Women in Franchising

At our 2017 NatWest Encouraging Women into Franchising (EWIF) Awards, Fiona Williams was the recipient of our Inspirational Woman in Franchising Award sponsored by Darwin Gray. This award was introduced new for 2017 and recognises the most inspirational women involved in the franchising industry.

Fiona was nominated for this incredible award by Alex Cavell at Bluebird Care HQ, where he shared “experiencing Fiona’s immense energy, compassion and credibility inspires 89 women and 40% of the network to successfully operate a Bluebird Care franchise”. Fiona enables Bluebird Care to provide the very best home care and support services across the UK. Quality of care for customers is her top priority and she is responsible for regulatory compliance, quality and business development of the Bluebird Care network.

Throughout 2016, Fiona spent her time mentoring and coaching women in business to inspire, advise and support their vision for their business and their lives helping them to lead their businesses to the next level.

Moreover, Fiona met with MPs at the House of Commons and with Baroness Sally Greengross to discuss national legislation and regulation projects and providing guidance to HMRC on new initiatives implemented by government. Her involvement with the government in 2016 led to Fiona creating a self-audit tool for franchisees for the national minimum wage and living wage.

“Winning this award felt amazing, exciting and humbling all at once. It felt really nice to be recognised for my dedication over the years. I believe that I won this award because of my passion for people, the sector, and for everything that I do outside of my role at Bluebird Care to influence change and champion the good in everything that we do” says Fiona.

“Winning this award has given our franchisees confidence and inspiration in their roles as business leaders, and it has sparked a powerful reaction that further galvanises my relationship with our network. I also hope that when anyone is considering purchasing a franchise they see my award and feel because of what it means that having a conversation with Bluebird Care is a conversation worthwhile” adds Fiona.

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.