



# A.F. BLAKEMORE

Providing brilliant service and great solutions are a priority for Blakemore alongside its newly launched e-commerce platform

## **Q What are your plans/priorities for foodservice this year?**

We will continue our focus on providing brilliant service and great solutions to our partners. Our attention is on servicing our existing customers and building an offer to existing and new customers within the pub and cafe channels.

## **Q How do you plan to bring these ideas to life?**

Blakemore Foodservice launched a new e-commerce platform in 2021, which helps us to service our customers better and offers them a faster, more user-friendly way to shop. We've got loads of great solutions for our partners, particularly through our Voice of the Chef programme. We think that digital is not only an effective way of getting our message across but also a great way to engage in two-way dialogue, so watch this space.

## **Q After a tumultuous two years, how has the market changed?**

In every way. Wages, shortages of staff and skills, and supply chain disruption, but we are also seeing a boom in leisure and restaurant bookings, which are translating to a growth in sales above 2019 levels.

Key changes we are seeing are a drive for simplicity and reduction in complexity – our customers want reduced menus, core

**“**Key changes we are seeing are a drive for simplicity”

ingredients with multiple uses and reduced-skill menus to reflect the reduction in chef availability. We're also seeing emerging new trends and solutions at a time when things are tougher – a sign that this industry is both vibrant and working well together.

## **Q How has Natasha's Law affected the way the sector operates?**

Put simply, it has highlighted the need for every step in the supply chain to have robust data. It has also highlighted the opportunities for greater integration between supplier, distributor and outlet.

## **Q Is sustainability a key focus for your business in the next 12 months?**

Yes. Last year A.F. Blakemore established a new responsible business team and earlier this year it welcomed a new environmental sustainability manager to help drive the company's environmental sustainability strategy forward. These roles will be key in supporting the delivery of our Responsible Business programme, which seeks to make a difference in the community, workplace and environment.