

# HELLO!

A happy memory from pre-Covid times.  
We'll be back together again soon...



Wow, that was intense. The year from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 was, of course, extraordinary for everyone. As each of us coped with the personal challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, we came together collectively at COOK to steer our business through the crisis with a degree of care and commitment that was quite simply mind-boggling.

It means this Purpose Progress Report is **bursting with achievements** to celebrate and could easily have been double the size without doing justice to the contributions of every team across COOK.

Not only did we respond with inspiring agility and speed to the curve balls thrown our way by Covid, but we continued to progress with many longer-term projects and plans we could have easily let slip. Our shift to higher-welfare chicken; installing solar panels on our COOK Classics kitchen roof; developing a new format shop and new stock system; refurbishments to the COOK Kitchen...

The past year has seen COOK being re-shaped, accelerating some big changes we saw coming and introducing some we didn't.

We are **immensely fortunate** to find ourselves perfectly placed to take advantage of the big trends driving customer behaviour: the surge in ecommerce and home delivery; the increasing traction of purpose-driven brands with strong ethical and sustainable credentials; the need for time-saving meal solutions that don't compromise on taste or nutrition; even frozen food is coming back into fashion.

Our job is to ensure we grasp the commercial opportunity while also **holding on ever-more tightly to the driving purpose and values that are at the heart of our brand and business success.**

Last year, our driving purpose of Nourishing Relationships shone through brightly. From the way we kept each other's spirits up during the most challenging time we've ever experienced, to the impact made by our Kindness Fund on our local communities, our commitment to fighting the climate crisis, and simply the way our meals and puddings fed not just the bodies but the souls of customers during the pandemic.

The year ended with two bits of headline news that encapsulate why, 24 years in, the COOK adventure remains so thrilling.

First, Best Companies named us the **#1 Food & Drink Company To Work For in the UK** proving, yet again, that culture is the secret ingredient in COOK's success. As our community grows, with more than 1,500 people now being part of COOK, we all share the responsibility of making sure our culture becomes deeper and richer.

Second, we re-certified as a B Corp with a score of **104.1, up 19%** from last time. It puts us firmly in the top tier of the 500+ certified B Corps in the UK and is a long way from our first certification in 2013 when we scored 80.5 points and were just the fifth B Corp in the country.

It shows that as COOK's business grows we also have the opportunity and responsibility to grow our positive social and environmental impact, too. Being a pioneer of using business as a force for good in society means there's a lot resting on our success, because where we lead others will surely follow.

Whether you are reading this as a colleague, relative, customer, shareholder, supplier or business partner, our heartfelt thanks for your support last year – **we couldn't have done it without you.**

Certified



Corporation





**£83M  
SALES  
(+16%)**

**£7.5M  
PROFIT  
(+7%)**


\*Unaudited figure after giving back £235k furlough payment. Profit is our earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization.

**+18.2%  
LFL**

Like-for-like sales in shops open at least 12m and online

**£770K  
TAX**

\*Unaudited figure. We believe every business should pay its fair share of tax and are in line with the UK corporate tax rate of 19%.



# 2020 TO DO LIST



In April 2018 we published our 2020 To-Do list: 15 actions to complete over the following three years to make sure we're living our purpose of nourishing relationships. The deadline for completing our to-dos was the end of March this year. So how did we do?

We have completed 13 of the 15 tasks we set ourselves, a performance to be proud of.

The framework provided by our to-do list has definitely helped us turn our driving purpose into positive impact. Measure what matters, as we say in the B Corp community, and having some public measures helps us hold ourselves to account.

We are in the process of deciding a new set of goals for the next few years. We're aiming for them to be both smarter and more ambitious than our initial list, pushing us to have an even bigger positive impact on people and planet.

# NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR PEOPLE & THEIR WORK



**Continue to offer jobs to people needing help into work following prison, homelessness or other challenges through our RAW Talent Programme**  
 Done. We've now welcomed more than 100 RAW Talents to COOK. In the 2020 Best Companies survey, we ranked #1 for helping people from disadvantaged backgrounds (see p14).



**Provide 100 more opportunities through our Dream Academy**  
 Not done. Since April 2018 we've had 75 people (including customers and suppliers) take advantage of our Dream Academy life coaching initiative. We've realised that we need to be constantly banging the drum for this incredible learning opportunity, not assuming people will sign-up without prompting. (see p16).



**Keep the difference between the highest and lowest paid people at COOK within 15x and support the financial well-being of all our staff, by paying the Living Wage and sharing 5% of profits annually**  
 Done. In fact, our profit share has increased to 6% (see p22-23).

# NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS & COMMUNITIES



**Support 1,500 people who need a helping hand in the kitchen with a Care card.**

Done. Since April 2018, we estimate 1,583 people have used a Care card giving them 30% off our food because they're going through a particularly difficult time, such as chronic or terminal illness. Care cards have been used in more than 19,000 transactions and the total discount given amounts to £187,424.



**Support 1,500 community events to bring people together with our 30% discount.**

Done-ish. We were on track before the Covid-19 pandemic halted all community events, supporting 1030 events in the two years to April 2020.



**Provide a further 1 million free meals to school children in Malawi through our partnership with One Feeds Two.** Done. 1,542,864 meals donated since April 2018 and more than 2.5 million in total (see p40).

# NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOOD & WHERE IT COMES FROM



**Source 100% of our chicken from UK higher welfare farms**

Done. All our chicken is raised in the UK to higher welfare standards and this year we also received a Good Turkey Award for welfare (see p48).



**Double the number of healthier, Okay Every Day recipes in our core range to 20 (a third of the range)**

Done. We averaged 20.4 recipes in our core range over the three years and have just launched a new range of healthy dinners, Wholebowls (see p50).



**Halve food waste from our central kitchen and warehouse**

Not done. The disruption caused by the pandemic at our kitchen sent us way off-target in 2020-21 with our end-of-line waste the equivalent of 1.75% of the total ingredients we use, compared to our goal of 1%, having previously been on track. We're now refocussing our efforts.



**Grow meat-free sales to 10% of our savoury sales total**

Done. Meat-free sales accounted for 17.3% in 2020-21.



**Introduce a more sustainable alternative to our plastic food trays**

Done. 98% of our trays can be widely recycled and we have also introduced reusable bags fully across the business.

# NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BUSINESS & SOCIETY



**Engage more people in a better way of doing business through our digital platforms, print and store communications e.g. through our Annual General Munching.**

Done. In hindsight, a rather woolly to-do. This year the proportion of customers aware of our B Corp status increased to a high of 17%, according to our annual survey. We kept up a steady flow of content focused on business as a force for good in all our customers communications.



**Invest 3,000 hours collectively in supporting or inspiring other organisations through volunteering our time and expertise.**

Done. We invested 3,235 hours collectively through 1,935 hours of volunteering and sharing our expertise and 1,300 hours dedicated to the Kindness Fund in the past year (see p26).



**Maintain 100% renewable electricity at our shops and in our Kitchens.**

Done. We are now carbon neutral in our direct operations thanks to offsetting and in 2020-21 achieved our lowest ever carbon intensity (see p64).



**Recertify as a B Corporation in 2020 with an improved score.**

Done. With bells on. Our score of 104.1 was 19% higher than our previous assessment (see p58).



**NOURISHING  
RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH OUR PEOPLE AND THEIR  
PEOPLE WORK**



**WE BELIEVE**

**PEOPLE ARE AMAZING**



**AND THAT ENERGIZED INDIVIDUALS  
WITH A PURPOSE CAN**

**ACCOMPLISH REMARKABLE THINGS**

**WE WANT TO CREATE A**

**THRIVING WORKPLACE COMMUNITY**

**WHERE PEOPLE CAN**

**DISCOVER & REALISE THEIR POTENTIAL**

**CREATING RIPPLES THAT BENEFIT**

**OUR FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES**



Who doesn't like to win an award?

We don't focus on our culture to win the gongs but that doesn't mean we're not hugely chuffed when we get the recognition.

# GROCCER GOLD AWARD EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR



COOK "really cares about its employees"

Grocer Award judges



# BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR 2021



# 100 RAW TALENTS AND COUNTING

Our RAW Talent programme helps people into work who've spent time homeless, in prison or battling mental ill health.

More than 100 people and counting have become RAW Talents since 2014. This year, 21 people joined the business through the scheme, about 10% of new recruits. There were 34 RAW Talents working with us at the start of April, making up more than 3.8% of our workforce..

## 21

### RAW TALENT RECRUITS THIS YEAR



Callum & Lee

So who are our RAW Talents? Here are just a few from the first training course of 2021: A woman who lost her job and family after spending time in prison. Young adults struggling with low confidence and self-esteem having been bullied or abused when growing up. Two fathers from Syria, who've made a treacherous trip across Europe with their families to escape war and persecution. A man who has battled addiction and spent time living on the streets...

They all stood up and told their stories at the end of the course. It took **real courage** and for many would have been unthinkable when they began their training the previous week. For all of them, being part of our RAW Talent scheme helped them **move from a place of darkness to somewhere they can see glimmers of light**. As one of them put it: "Before this, the future just looked barren. Now I can see blue sky, sunshine and people who care."

Hats off to the RAW Talent team and everyone else involved across COOK: you're genuinely changing lives.



# 3.8%

## OF OUR WORKFORCE ARE RAW TALENTS



Scan here to see our Raw Talent video

If you're interested in finding out more about any aspect of RAW Talent, drop us a line at [rawtalent@cookfood.net](mailto:rawtalent@cookfood.net)



**DREAM IT.  
PLAN IT.  
DO IT.**

**“I didn’t start off with a big dream but the Dream Academy still helped me change in a big way.”**

Shelley, Dream Academy graduate 2021

The Dream Academy has a genuinely remarkable record of improving people’s sense of fulfilment, happiness and optimism about the future. Every single person who has experienced this one-to-one coaching programme would recommend it to others. This year, 39 more people benefited from sessions with our Dream Manager, Al, including some customers and somebody from one of our suppliers.

Our challenge is helping people understand that the Dream Academy is for them, whoever they are, whatever they do and however big or small their dreams might seem. We wonder whether the word “dream” might even be a bit too intimidating? What we know for sure is that the Dream Academy has a big impact on anyone brave enough to sign up.



Our Dream Manager, Al

So dream big, dream small, but don't daydream your life away... Sign up NOW by emailing [learning@cookfood.net](mailto:learning@cookfood.net)

**DREAM ACADEMY**



Scan here to watch the video



The Dream Academy featured this year on the TEDx London Women stage in a talk by our friends Sarah Ellis and Helen Tupper on Squiggly Careers. They said: “In this academy [COOK] colleagues can explore any career they’re intrigued by... and even rediscover abandoned ambitions... Nothing is off the table”.



# LOCKDOWN LEARNING



We believe we're all works in progress... which means lockdowns were no excuse to pause Learning & Development opportunities for people across COOK.

In fact, learning together proved an amazing way for our office teams to stay connected during lockdowns with lunchtime workshops, COOK-alongs (with plenty of kids in attendance, too), virtual fitness and yoga sessions... And adapting to the virtual world meant we were able to offer new, bitesize learning opportunities to everyone regardless of where they're based.

1,750  
leadership  
development  
hours



90  
people took  
part in Wisdom  
& Well-being  
courses



422  
PEOPLE ENJOYED  
PROFESSIONAL  
OR PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

154  
people took part  
in our January  
well-being  
programme

4,171  
TOTAL LEARNING  
HOURS



Graduates at the end of one of last year's four COOK Academy programmes

THE WAY OF THE

JEDI!



JUSTICE • EQUITY • DIVERSITY • INCLUSION

Be Part Of Our Family is one of our five Essential Ingredients: it means doing whatever we can to make sure everyone feels like they belong at COOK, regardless of race, gender, background, age, disabilities.... With this in mind we're following the way of the JEDI, pursuing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion right across COOK. We now have a company-wide diversity and inclusion group; have carried out a belonging survey; and run five focus groups to find out what people from minority groups feel about Being Part Of The Family.

There was plenty of praise for the genuine sense of family we share and initiatives such as RAW Talent and our focus on mental health. In our company-wide survey, 85% of people said they felt they belonged at COOK.

At the same time, there was feedback that we weren't clear enough about our stance on the Black Lives Matter movement; that those from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds felt under-represented, among leadership in particular; and that we need to make sure that age isn't seen as a barrier to career progression.

It's most definitely work in progress but we are committed to doing whatever we can to further justice, equity, diversity and inclusion at COOK – including giving all leaders a grounding in the Way of the JEDI at our virtual Culture Collective this June.

For the office virtual Spring Defrost, we paired everyone up for a morning walk with one simple request: over the course of their ramble to chat at some point about what they love most about COOK Culture, take a selfie and send it in. Here are a few...



“Everyone is treated equally no matter what their background or life experience”

“To see the journeys people have taken as a result of the support from the culture has been a privilege that I will never forget.”

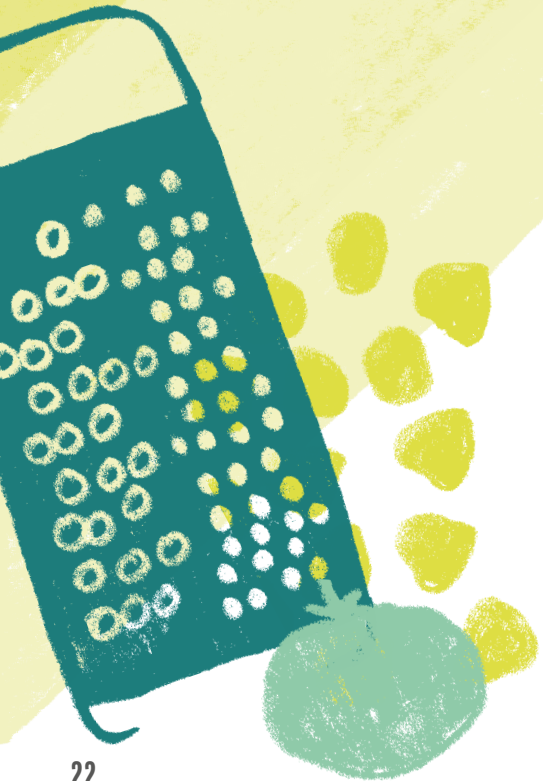


“People are at the front of everything we do both internally and externally, it’s pretty amazing.”



“Even though everyone has a job title there is no hierarchy, you can approach anyone at any time.”

# GOOD BUSINESS = GOOD PAY



## GOOD BUSINESS PAYS PEOPLE ENOUGH TO LIVE ON.

So we're independently certified by the Living Wage Foundation.



## GOOD BUSINESS SHARES SUCCESS WITH THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED CREATE IT.

So we share 6% of pre-tax profits with everyone who worked with us for the full financial year (1,019 people this year, up 256 on last year).

## PROFIT SHARED WITH 1019 PEOPLE THIS YEAR



## GOOD BUSINESS MINDS THE GAP BETWEEN ITS HIGHEST AND LOWEST PAID PEOPLE.

So we make sure the best-paid person at COOK earns no more than 15x the salary of the lowest paid person. The average for the FTSE100 is 109x, according to The High Pay Centre.

Difference between highest  
and lowest paid person

FTSE100 = 109X MORE

COOK = 15X MORE



# NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS AND WITH CUSTOMERS COMMUNITIES

**WE BELIEVE  
THE REAL RICHES OF LIFE**

**COME FROM HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS**

**FOOD HELPS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER  
AND BY COOKING FOR OTHERS**

**WE GIVE THEM MORE TIME  
FOR WHAT MATTERS**

**EVERY INTERACTION WITH COOK IS**

**AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO  
BUILD A RELATIONSHIP**



# THE KINDNESS FUND 200,000 MEALS AND COUNTING

## WE STARTED HERE...



COOK Tonbridge

Delivery to  
Pembury Hospital



COOK Bury St Edmunds

Free lunches for local  
community nurses

60K

meals donated

May 14<sup>th</sup> 2020



COOK East Sheen

Feeding the team at Chelsea  
& Westminster Hospital



Meals Behind The Wire

150 meals for a young  
offenders institute

91K

meals donated

June 4<sup>th</sup> 2020



COOK Marlborough

Working with volunteers  
from Devides Dinners

100K

meals donated

June 26<sup>th</sup> 2020



COOK Bromley

Volunteers helping  
vulnerable people locally



COOK Cranleigh

Meals for Linden Home  
for autistic young adults

150K

meals donated

Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

200K

meals donated

April 6<sup>th</sup> 2021

In April 2021, the COOK Kindness Fund passed the milestone of 200,000 meals donated to people in need during the pandemic. What started in March 2020 with our shop teams giving a few free meals to customers looking out for vulnerable neighbours became an emblem for our commitment to nourish relationships with our customers and communities.

We passed our initial goal of giving away 100,000 meals and treats at the end of June. But as the pandemic dragged into the autumn it was clear that vulnerable people would still be in need of our nourishing, home-cooked meals. So, in the run up to Christmas, we set ourselves a **new target of giving away a further 50,000 meals** working with volunteers and charities local to our shops. With a new lockdown announced just before Christmas, we kept the giving going in the New Year with the goal of reaching 200,000 meals.

We've now committed to keeping the Kindness Fund going through 2021, with every COOK shop able to work with a local partner to give up to 30 free meals to people in need every week, amounting to 140,000 more meals to be given during the year.

It's only possible thanks to our amazing local community partners and a phenomenal effort from everyone in the team. **Thank you!**



**"From the bottom of our hearts we say a huge thank you... for being such a caring company!"**

Linden Farm care home for severely autistic young adults near COOK Cranleigh



**"One of the families, a single mum, wanted to tell you how grateful they are... they were so low eating pasta with just salt and pepper on it, or toast, that when they had the first COOK meal it felt like they were at The Ritz... I wanted to bring to life how important and valued it has been."**

The Churn Project near COOK Cirencester

**"No words can thank you enough for today's delivery to NHS staff in Chelsea & Westminster Hospital... how you responded with your kindness to our NHS story has personally move me a lot."**

Chelsea & Westminster Hospital to COOK East Sheen



**"What you are doing is absolutely incredible and I can't thank you enough."**

Trudy, CEO of charity Warming Up The Homeless



**"This week the meals have gone out to some very special people. One in particular is a young mum who has cancer, she gave birth just two months ago. Some days after chemo she can't even get out of bed. She has a toddler, too. Her husband is her carer and they are just so grateful for the food... There are so many other stories of disconnect during this strange time, but food brings us all together and it's a joy to be able to be part of what you do."**

Rev Deborah Pereau who, working with COOK Puddings in Somerset, distributed thousands of meals to people in need in the local community



**"Thank you so much for this! We are a small charity serving lots of homeless and vulnerable people each day and donations such as this make a huge difference."**

Sanctus near COOK Billerica

# A KINDER NATION

Great Britain became a kinder nation during the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a national survey we ran for Random Acts Of Kindness Day on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Two thirds of people (65%) felt Britain had become a kinder during the pandemic and 92% said they had done more random acts of kindness themselves.

Keeping in touch with family and friends (62%), showing support for key workers (61%), acts of volunteering (32%) and 'doorstep drops' of food (23%) were some of the top ways Britons noticed growing kindness.



Write a POSITIVE POST-IT NOTE and leave it as a SURPRISE for someone in your household.

START A CONVERSATION WITH SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW



Take in parcels for neighbours

# 100 RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

To inspire people to keep spreading kindness we published a list of **100 Random Acts Of Kindness**, gathered from customers and COOK team members. We challenged everyone to do as many acts as they could during the week of February 17<sup>th</sup> with the crew at **Logistics in Gillingham** being named unofficially the **Kindest Team in COOK**, ticking off 34 of the 100 acts during the week.

## KINDEST TEAM IN COOK LOGISTICS



## NOURISHING COMMUNITIES



Week in, week out, charity FoodCycle nourishes the hungry and lonely in our communities with delicious meals and great conversation, using food that would otherwise go to waste. We continued to support their work with £16,558 raised from sales of bags in our shops. It helped them adapt to the pandemic by switching from their usual, freshly-cooked communal lunch to delivering food parcels and then offering a cook and collect service. Anyone, from any walk of life, is welcome, no questions asked.

FoodCycle does amazing work nourishing communities and we're thrilled to be partnering with them to launch the first FoodCycle community project in Kent this year. We can't wait...



# FIVE STAR FOOD



In April 2020 our Trustpilot rating officially hit a full-on five stars. The lovely comments from customers kept on coming through the year. If you ever want to lift your spirits, just take a glance at our Trustpilot reviews page...

**“Fantastic food!!! A life saver for new parents!”**

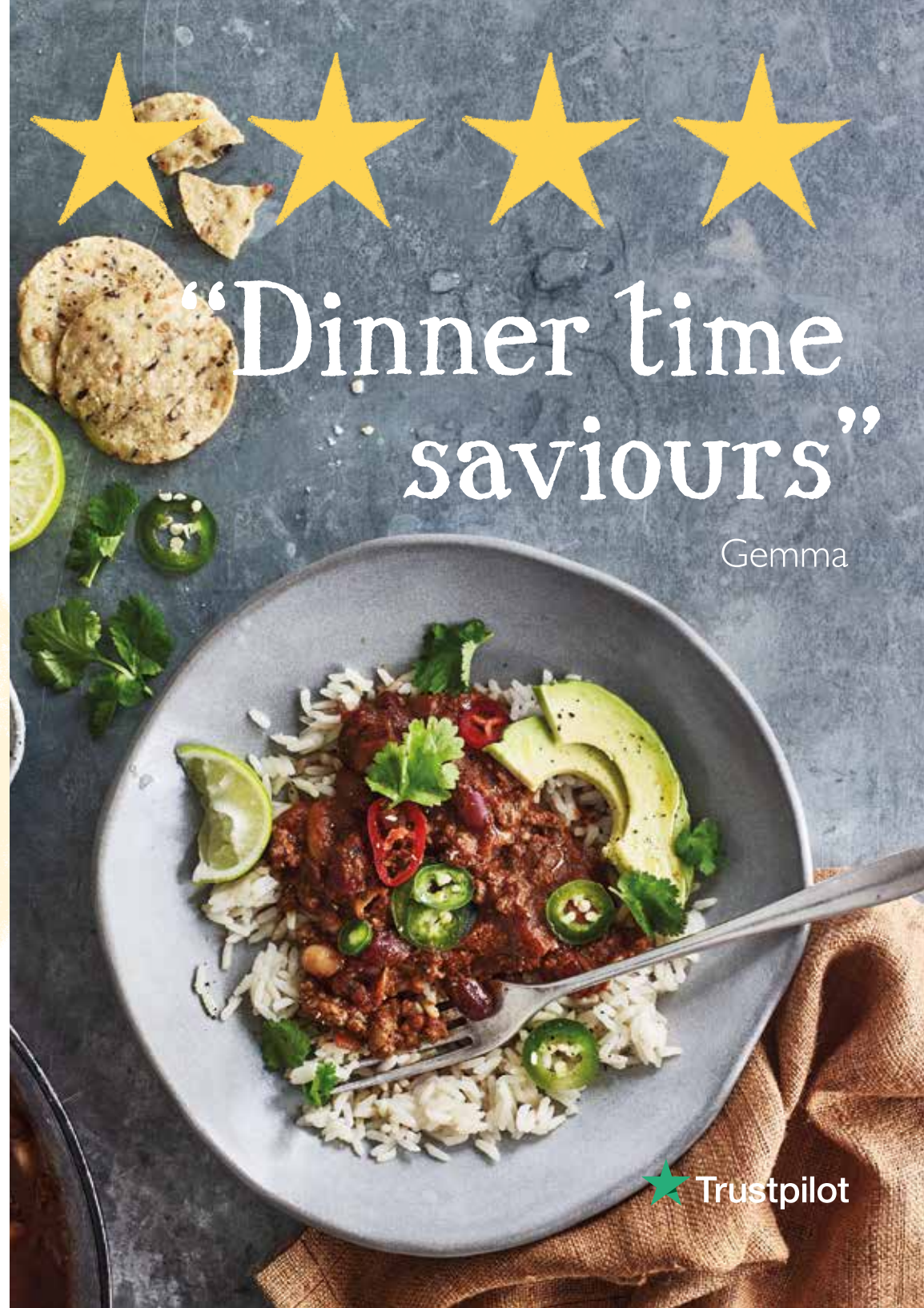
Rachael

**“It really is like cooked at home with love and care.”**

Antonina

**“We love Cook, their products and their ethos.”**

Pam



**“Dinner time saviours”**

Gemma





# GREAT COMMUNITIES NEED GREAT SHOPS

Our Teddington shop upcycled these bears from old COOK bags...



Has there ever been a tougher time to be shopkeepers than 2020-21?

If keeping everyone safe was our number one priority then close behind came our determination to get our nourishing, comforting, soul-sustaining food to people during a time of real need.

Our shop teams were simply magnificent. Whatever the pandemic threw at them, they took it in their stride, never losing sight of the golden rule of COOK shopkeeping: the customer is more important than anything else.

From moving to counter service in a matter of days, to embracing the shift to local delivery and ecommerce and radical changes to ways of working, our shop teams did it all.

On top of everything, they made the Kindness Fund happen, forging new relationships with customers, local volunteer groups and charities. So many people went above and beyond to get our food to the people who needed it most: delivering on foot, making trips out of hours, doing drop offs at hospitals and food banks, shopping for extras for the elderly and vulnerable ...

When people talk about the death of the high street we beg to differ. The pandemic has reminded us all that great shops should be at the heart of every community.



# RECORD BREAKERS

COOK Concessions have become a powerhouse driving our growth and spreading our brand to all corners of the UK and not even the pandemic could knock us off course. We notched up record gross sales of £38m, up 20% on the year before, despite one-in-five of our partner retailers being shut for three months during the first lockdown.

The team worked most of the year from their kitchens and sitting rooms, still managing to launch 614 new freezers, equivalent to 34 standalone COOK shops (another record), and delivered their biggest sales week EVER at £1.1m.

On top of everything, as part of our Kindness Fund they organized deliveries of free meals to 13 food banks and supplied six hospital canteens with half-priced meals for their staff. Basically, they rocked big time.

**AS PART OF OUR KINDNESS FUND, CONCESSIONS ORGANISED FREE MEALS FOR 13 FOOD BANKS**

## WHERE'S HOLLIE?

A game invented by Hollie and Ash, the dynamic duo who criss-cross the country launching new concessions customers, in which Hollie hides amongst the shelves of a food hall or garden centre and you have to find her smiley little face. Go on, have a go...



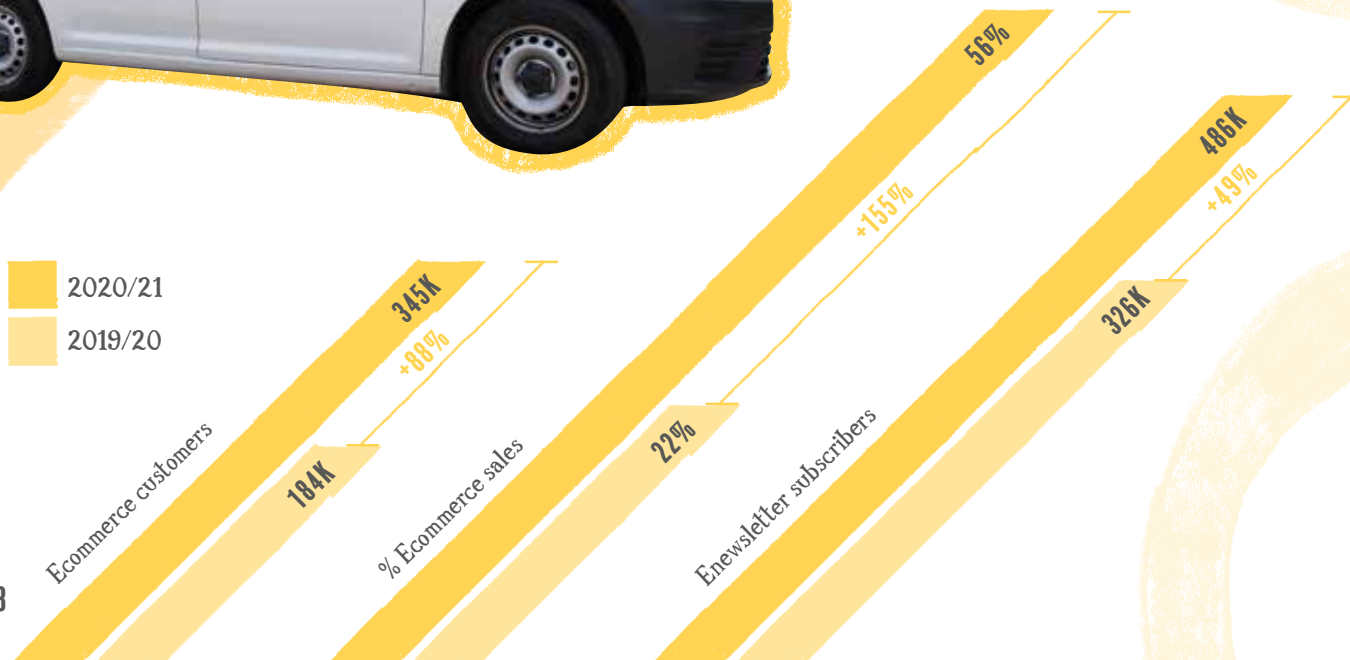
Where's Hollie?



# RETAIL REINVENTED

At the tail end of 2019 when we were putting together the strategic plan for the next chapter of COOK's growth, we predicted that if, in four or five years' time, our ecommerce sales weren't at least 50% of our total then we would have been left behind. What we expected to take years effectively happened over night as a result of the pandemic. In fact, at the peak of lockdown-induced panic buying, sales through cookfood.net accounted for two thirds of our retail total.

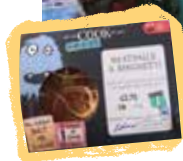
The sales percentage only tells part of the story. To fulfil the huge surge in online orders our shop teams had to reinvent the way they work; we had to **get delivery vans out to as many shops as we could as quickly as possible**; we needed to transform our approach to logistics and online retailing; and to rethink our marketing and customer communications. All this in a matter of months not years. This warp speed acceleration of our plans **demanding huge agility and commitment from teams right across COOK**. As lockdown has been eased in 2021, the proportion of online sales has settled at around the 50% level we expected to reach by 2025. **It's no exaggeration to say our business has been transformed.**



**“IT’S NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY OUR BUSINESS HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED.”**

# 2.5 MILLION FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND COUNTING

More than 2.5 million free school meals have now been enjoyed in Malawi thanks to our partnership with One Feeds Two. Last year, we added a further 491,846 meals to our total with every COOK for Kids meal sold delivering a free meal to a child at school in Malawi through One Feeds Two and its local feeding partners. Overall, the charity has now passed more than 10m meals given since we became its first national brand partner in 2014.



## ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS

This year we had a record 841 peer-to-peer nominations for putting our values into practice. Here are a few...

### HAVE FUN CARE

No matter what is happening John will make us all laugh... he is one of those people that you can joke around with and have so much fun with but then have a deep conversation with and it's not weird at all and he helps you.

John Redding by Victoria Gye



### THE PART OF OUR FAMILY

### Be Remarkable

She started a completely new job whilst we were all in lockdown and immediately became part of our little family and has seized every opportunity and challenge.

Arta Valdmane by Sarah Canning



### CHURCHILL'S PIG

Tijana is a fantastic leader, she is kind, funny and a good friend. She knows how to cheer you up on a bad day. She respects us and knows how to make a group of strangers into a team and friends.

Tijana Dacosta by Kayleigh Hamilton



### CARE

Zonie took our 'Random Acts of Kindness' to a whole other level during these troubling times by giving out free face masks and gloves to as many of our local bus drivers as she could after hearing about how badly they were being affected by Covid-19.

Zonie Ash by Laura Hutson & Debbie Slaughter




### THE PART OF OUR FAMILY

Reece is always trying to help out. I distinctly remember when this Covid 19 situation started he was concerned about his parents and his nan. He went out of his way to make sure they were provided for. I cannot forget the love in his eyes when he was talking about them.

Reece Lumsdon by Marius Fleican





# NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOOD & WHERE IT COMES FROM

WE BELIEVE  
FOOD SHOULD BE

**COOKED NOT PROCESSED**

AND ARE GUIDED BY OUR FOUNDING  
STATEMENT: TO COOK USING THE

**SAME INGREDIENTS & TECHNIQUES**

**A GOOD COOK WOULD USE AT HOME.**

COOKING CONNECTS FOOD AND  
FARMS, PEOPLE AND PLANET

**AND WE WANT OUR COOKING TO  
HELP FIX THE BROKEN FOOD SYSTEM**



# BRITAIN'S BEST KITCHENS

For anybody not involved directly it's hard to appreciate the challenges that Covid-19 presented for our three kitchens: the COOK Kitchen and COOK Classics in Sittingbourne, Kent and COOK Puddings in Ilton, Somerset.

The only way to make food that looks and tastes homemade is to have lots of people working closely together in kitchens that recreate home cooking at scale. So when "working closely together" is no longer allowed, there's a big challenge. When a positive Covid-19 test in a team means everybody has to immediately go home, get tested and isolate, there's an even bigger challenge. And when you need to find an **additional 200 people** in order to make enough food to keep up with demand, there's another huge challenge.

Of course, our **truly remarkable kitchen teams rose to each and every challenge they faced.** And never has our work in cooking nourishing food with real love and care been **more needed, nor more appreciated,** by hundreds of thousands of people up and down the land.

And amidst these gargantuan challenges, they even managed to scoop another **20 Great Taste Awards.** This was the year when we proved, beyond doubt, we have **Britain's Best Kitchens.**



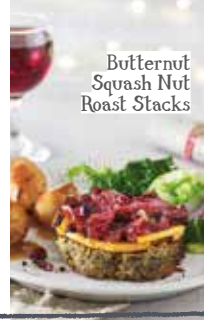
## GREAT TASTE AWARD JUDGES COMMENTS

"Decadent, rich, quality dark chocolate... so naughty but totally delicious."



Chocolate Almond Torte

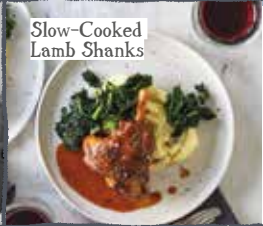
"What an attractive dish... Lovely smell... a great main course"



Butternut Squash Nut Roast Stacks



Slow-Cooked Lamb Shanks



"Fabulous looking lamb shank with a spectacularly rich savoury aroma. The wonderfully soft, moist meat falls off the bone leaving sweet, luscious lamb."



Spanish Bean Stew

"A delightful, vibrant looking stew with a gorgeous note of smoked paprika - so enticing!"



Chilli Con Carne



"There is the boldness of chilli, which we found hugely satisfying... We love that lingering heat - this tastes like a good, home cooked meal."



Sarah Brister & Danni Partridge, COOK Puddings



"The proof is in the pudding, so there you have it: great taste, great team."



Beef Stroganoff

"Gorgeously rich, creamy sauce, with a lovely warming aroma from the paprika and hint of spice from the brandy."

Apple & Blackberry Crumble



"Looked utterly homemade and begged for spoons to dig in with dollops of cream or ice cream!"

"The layers of flavour come through from all the different aromatics... authentic... delicious... one of the best Thai curry sauces we've encountered... a delight to eat."



Red Thai Chicken Curry



"The pride the teams have around the food we produce is what makes it look and taste so good. Each sticker is like a badge of honour for us all."



Alan Martin, COOK Classics

# 20 MORE GREAT TASTE AWARDS



# HIGHER WELFARE CHICKEN & TURKEY

A year ahead of schedule we completed our move to 100% higher welfare, British chicken. We've invested more than £1m over the past three years, working closely with farmers, to make sure the chicken in our meals is cared for in a way we're happy with.



We were also recognized with a **Good Turkey Award** from Compassion In World Farming having worked with renowned turkey farmer Paul Kelly to create bespoke standards for our birds, and a **Good Dairy Commendation**.

In addition, our cheese supplier, AJ Barber, and our milk supplier, Pensworth Dairy, both received Good Dairy Awards.



COOK "continually looks for ways to improve the welfare of farm animals involved in its supply chain"

Compassion In World Farming

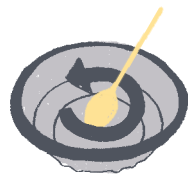
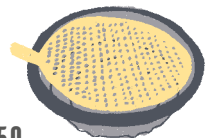


# SAY HELLO TO WHOLEBOWLS

In a year when we were faced with the biggest national crisis in a generation, we might have forgiven ourselves for pausing on developing new dishes. Not a bit of it. In fact, this year we created our most exciting new range for years.

Step forward our Love Eating Well Wholebowls: **healthy dinners in minutes** with six deliciously balanced meals to choose from. Thanks to an innovative new tray that separates the veg and protein from the sauce with a recyclable trivet, the ingredients are effectively **steam-cooked in the microwave**.

Why Wholebowls? Well, they're **whole meals, made from wholesome ingredients with a whole load of flavour**. To coincide with their launch in June 2021, we revamped the branding and packaging for our Love Eating Well Pots to create a compelling healthy meal offering of Pots for lunch and Wholebowls for dinner. **Healthy never tasted so good.**



# BE MORE HERBIVORE

Butternut Squash & Red Onion Galette



Eating less and better meat is one of the main ways we can all contribute to fighting climate change. It was encouraging that **sales of our veggie and vegan meals held firm despite the pandemic** reversing the trend of people shifting to more plant-based or meat-free diets, according to market research firm Mintel. COOK customers continue to **embrace a flexitarian diet** with two-thirds saying they're trying to eat less meat, according to our annual customer survey.

Through the year we continued to develop new, exciting meat-free meals, supported the Meat Free Mondays campaign and updated our packaging, all with the goal of being the destination for anyone who wants delicious, veggie and vegan food.



Wild Mushroom & Aubergine Lasagne

Mexican Three Bean Chili



Butternut Squash Nut Roast Stacks



Shepherdless Pie



# ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS

This year we had a record 841 peer-to-peer nominations for putting our values into practice. Here are a few...

## THE PART OF OUR FAMILY

For keeping in touch with me throughout the pandemic. While we can't see each other we still manage to have fun and keep in contact by sending memes through Teams and cheering each other up.

Jen Tunbridge & Mohamed Reda by Leanne Cox



## CARE

Danni cares so deeply for her job... so she is juggling her keeping-in-touch days with little Otto by her side to keep the show on the road! Thank you Danni for everything you're doing and for officially making our catch ups the cutest ones I get to have when I get to see Otto's happy little face.

Danni Partridge by Caila Fritter



## CARE

Moving to Classics was big challenge. I was standing by window when Jo walked passed asked if I was OK? I got emotional and Jo took the time to reassure me that everything was going to be OK, which is what I needed to hear. Thank you for the support.

Jo Webster by Janet Sayer



## Be Remarkable

What a guy, I love this lad! ... I'm very proud of Anis making the decisions over the last year to try new things and it's really working out for him. On top of that, he is genuinely a great guy to have around. He makes me smile every time I see him as it impossible not to return his massive grin with one of your own.

Anis Mnari by Alan Martin



## THE PART OF OUR FAMILY

Such a bright happy person full of sunshine. We have had lots of calls from customers thanking us for the customer service Titus has provided them and the smiles he has given them.

Titus Auta by Tracey King



## Be Remarkable

In the most testing year ever in Prep they were simply outstanding.

James Stevens, Allie & Gosha by Robin McIntosh



## THE PART OF OUR FAMILY

Friday quiz legend and always quietly getting on with what needs to be done in an understated but effective way.

Darryn Benford by Ed Perry



## HAVE FUN

Steph joined us a month before lockdown and has embraced HAVE FUN at one of the toughest times for us all in the shop. She always lift us all up when we are feeling down.

Steph Cook by Vanessa Radford



## HAVE FUN

It is always a pleasure to work with Bijal. Hard working and doing the jobs that free me up to do what I need to do on busy Saturdays.

Bijal Nichshil by Oliver Strange



## CARE

Patricia is always making sure everyone is topped up and checks in on other team members. She always lends a listening ear and genuinely cares, not only about her team but the product being dished.

Patricia Paneu by Tanisha Bell



“APPRECIATION IS A WONDERFUL THING: IT MAKES WHAT IS EXCELLENT IN OTHERS BELONG TO US AS WELL”  
VOLTAIRE

**NOURISHING  
RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH  
BUSINESS &  
SOCIETY**

**WE BELIEVE  
BUSINESS IS THE MOST POTENT  
INSTRUMENT OF POSITIVE CHANGE  
IN THE WORLD TODAY**

**WE SEEK TO SHOW HOW BUSINESS CAN  
CREATE SHARED AND DURABLE  
PROSPERITY FOR ALL**

**RATHER THAN JUST MAXIMISE THE  
RETURNS FOR SHAREHOLDERS**

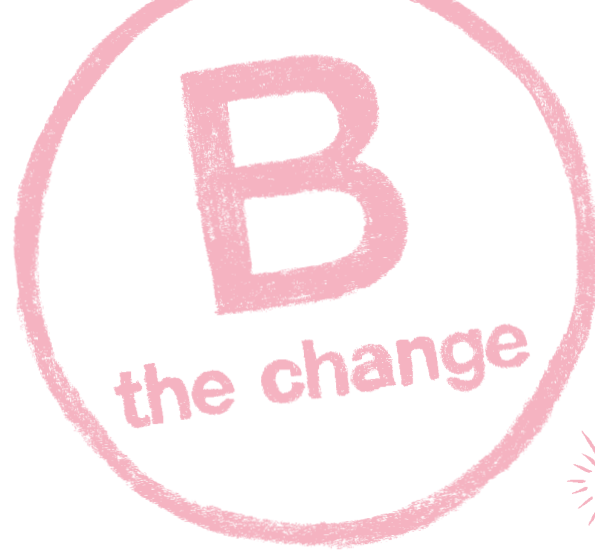
**Certified**



**Corporation**



# BETTER FOR THE WORLD

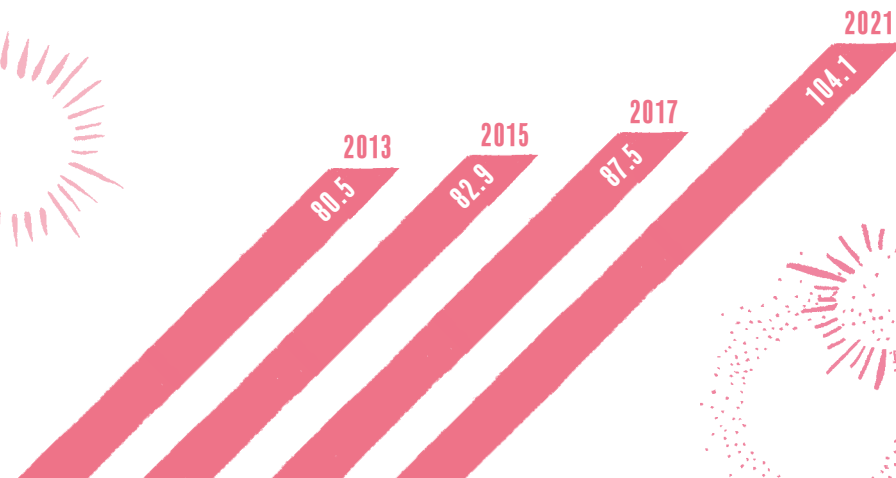


When we joined the B Corp movement back in 2013 they had a saying that we thought was rather cheesy and American: imagine if businesses competed not to be the best in the world but to be the best for the world. Eight years on and we don't need to imagine it. We're genuinely competing with more than 500 certified B Corps in the UK to be ever-better for the world.

To get a B Corp score **above 100 is considered outstanding** so to certify for the fourth time with a score of 104.1 is a huge achievement. Our last certification in 2017 highlighted how we needed to raise our game when it came to our environmental impact. Thanks to a new approach to carbon reporting and reduction targets, more sustainable packaging, a new environmental management system and numerous other smaller projects **we have nearly doubled our environment score.**

# 104.1 POINTS

OUR BCORP SCORE IMPROVED BY **19%**



**A B CORP SCORE ABOVE 100 IS CONSIDERED OUTSTANDING**

Back in 2013, when we were just the **fifth certified B Corp UK in the UK**, getting to 100 points seemed all-but-impossible (first time round, we scraped over the hurdle of 80). We've got there thanks to gargantuan efforts across COOK.

Of the 66 UK certified B Corps in the food and drinks sector, only five others are in the 100 Club. It's a milestone to be proud of, for sure. But we won't be resting on our laurels. There are so many areas where we can get better and the long road to our next recertification begins here. The competition to be best for the world is only just getting started...



# OUR BSCORE SCORE: 104.1

AREAS	SCORE	% OF POINTS AVAILABLE
GOVERNANCE	17.7	88%
WORKERS	32.9	79%
COMMUNITY	24.5	61%
ENVIRONMENT	25.2	56%
CUSTOMERS	3.8	76%

In a world obsessed with quick wins and shiny, headline-grabbing initiatives, the B Impact Assessment is all about the unglamorous, hard grind of doing business. It's focused on processes, policies, spreadsheets, accounts, legals... **all adding up to actually making a difference** not just making some noise. It is the best independent measure we know of for gauging a company's all-round performance when it comes to operating ethically (we sometimes say the B in B Corp stands for "no bull\*\*\*\*").

Companies are scored in five categories: governance, workers, community, environment and customers. To be certified as a B Corp you have to get **80 points or more** (most companies taking the BIA score about 50). B Corps need to recertify every three years.



# FEEL-GOOD BRANDS 2021

In January we made the Feel-Good Brands List for 2021

The selection panel said: "These are the ones to watch in 2021, purpose-driven brands on a mission to make a difference."

We were in good company, alongside friends (and B Corps) including Elvis & Kresse, Finisterre, Riverford and Toast Ale. Chuffed.

## What makes a feel-good brand?

- ✓ Positive brand purpose, using business as a force for good.
- ✓ Strives to make a positive social or environmental impact.
- ✓ Consciously conducts its business according to its purpose.

"Put simply, it's good cooking that's doing good."

Feel Good Brands panel

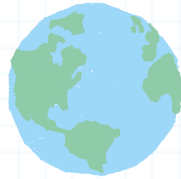
The Feel-Good Brands list is published annually, curated by votes from an independent panel of industry experts and a survey of conscious consumers. Brands do not pay or apply to be considered.



FEEL-GOOD BRANDS™

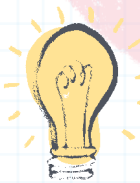


# OUR CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



When it comes to our environmental impact, celebrating our progress must always come with a commitment to redouble our efforts. Cheering our successes when faced with the enormity of the climate crisis can seem hollow. Yet we must draw confidence and resolve from the steps we have taken as evidence that meaningful action is, indeed, possible. The path to meeting the challenge of global warming is likely to be complex, costly and involve many wrong turns but we are committed to staying the course.

**CARBON FOOTPRINT  
REDUCED BY 28%  
COMPARED TO LAST YEAR**



**BUYING  
100% RENEWABLE  
ELECTRICITY FOR  
KITCHENS, SHOPS  
& OFFICES**

## SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED ON THE ROOF AT COOK CLASSICS



**CARBON  
NEUTRAL IN  
OUR DIRECT  
OPERATIONS  
THROUGH  
OFFSETTING**

We believe urgent and appropriate actions are needed to address climate change. We have signed up to Business Declares a Climate Emergency and through our climate action plan have committed to:

- Reduce our direct carbon emissions in line with what is needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels, even as we grow as a business;
- Take responsibility for direct emissions from our operations through carbon offsetting.

Actions we have taken so far include:

Purchasing 100% renewable electricity for our shops, kitchens, and offices

Putting solar panels on the roof of the new COOK Classics kitchen

Installing CO2 freezers at COOK Classics which are significantly better for the planet;

Installing a heat recovery system at the COOK Kitchen, reducing the amount of gas we use

Setting a Science Based Target and committing to Net Zero by 2030 for our scope 1 and 2 emissions

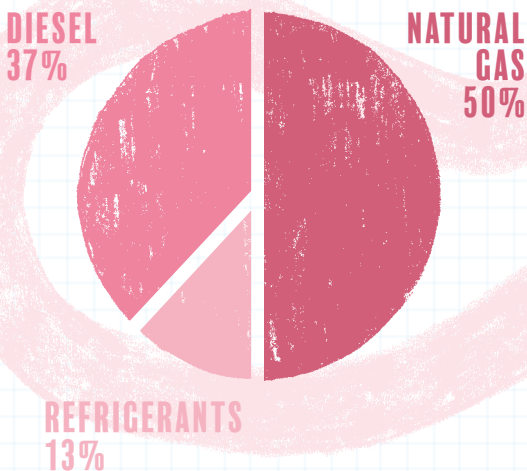




As a result, this year we achieved our **lowest carbon intensity ever** of 26 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (referred to simply as “tonnes” from now on) per million pounds of sales. Carbon intensity is a useful measure as COOK grows. Our Net Zero commitment means **reducing our carbon intensity to zero tonnes per million pounds of sales.**

This year, we successfully reduced the total carbon footprint\* of our operations by **nearly a third** to 2,201 tonnes from 3,056 tonnes. However, we still have a long way to go to hit our 2025 target of a 29% reduction from our 2018 level of 2,190 tonnes.

### Main contributors to our carbon footprint



### Other environmental KPIs:

- Water use increased 13% at the COOK Kitchen due, we believe, to additional cleaning required during the pandemic.
- Food waste increased by 7% per kg of food produced. The operational challenges we faced during the pandemic meant we lost focus on tighter control of food waste.
- Waste going to recycling improved by 4%.

### The priorities for the year ahead are:

- Investing in less environmentally harmful freezers at the COOK Kitchen;
- Exploring how we can start using vans and lorries powered by renewables, with lower carbon emissions;
- Switching 30% of the gas we use to renewable “Green Gas”, which should reduce our emissions by 350 tonnes (roughly 15%);
- Working with suppliers to understand how we can cut carbon emissions in our supply chain.

**WE ACHIEVED  
OUR LOWEST  
CARBON  
INTENSITY  
EVER**