

—COOK—



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2015

A rectangular pie with a golden-brown, flaky crust is presented in a white ceramic dish. The words "ANNUAL REPORT 2015" are embossed in a dark, serif font across the center of the pie's surface. The pie is set against a background of a white and brown striped cloth, which is placed on a rustic, weathered wooden surface.



Hello



Edward & Dale,  
Founders

Annual reports are usually dull, detailed documents full of figures and jargon that get read by very few people. I hope ours is different.

If you work for COOK, I hope you read this and feel justifiably proud about everything we achieved together last year. I hope it brings back fond memories, raises the odd chuckle and makes you feel part of a remarkable company.

If you are a shareholder, I hope you read this and feel your capital is in safe hands, not only increasing in monetary value but in the positive impact it can have on society.

If you are a supplier, I hope you recognise your contribution to our success (we couldn't have done it without you) and have the desire to build an even stronger working relationship with us.

Most importantly, if you are a customer (and I would love more customers to read this), I hope you feel that spending your money at COOK means not only getting the best-tasting, prepared food you can buy but also supporting a business that is about much more than making money. We know your pound is both precious and powerful and I can promise you we won't forget it.

Of course, this report is mostly about celebrating the huge amount we achieved last year. But it is also important we remain true to our Churchill's Pig value and are clear about what didn't go to plan – although I'm happy to say there's far more of the former than the latter.

## One COOK

The theme we chose for last year was One COOK. We wanted to generate a greater sense of unity across the business and get people working more closely together, regardless of their department or role. We introduced the idea of Big Relationships as the foundation of an appreciative, “we” culture at COOK and slightly amended a famous quote from Mother Theresa: “I can do what you cannot do; you can do what I cannot do; together we can do remarkable things.”

Our success can be judged by the contents of this report and also by the fact that “One COOK” has become part of our language, an abbreviation for working together, putting ourselves in each other's shoes and seeking the best outcome not for ourselves as individuals but for us all collectively.



## Our Purpose

I guess the headline as I look back at last year would be: COOK keeps rocking. This was true in the straightforward business sense (record sales and profit). But more importantly, it was true with regards to the bigger purpose of COOK: to use our business as a force for good in society.

This is a phrase we adopted from the B Corporation movement. There is no doubt that our certification as a B Corp 18 months ago has been the catalyst to clarifying our purpose and really starting to pursue it. The official launch of B Corporations in the UK this autumn is hugely exciting both for us as a company and for the movement to put business at the heart of positive social change. Inside you'll find, for the first time, a dedicated section reporting on our social impact – part of our commitment as a B Corp to measure what matters.

In terms of clarity of purpose, we still have work to do in terms of defining what we mean by “a force for good in society”. This is a broad phrase and can be interpreted in many different ways. We need to figure out exactly what it means for COOK. To borrow another B Corp phrase: what is the change that we seek?

Where I am clear is regarding the means by which we will pursue that purpose: through conducting Good Business; making Good Food; and building Good Relationships.

This is what we mean when we talk about COOK For

Good. It's not just the charity and community initiatives, important and rewarding though they are, COOK For Good is about these three areas working in harmony: business, food and relationships. It is a genuine, virtuous circle and the strategic lens through which we will continue to make big decisions.

Of course, we are far from perfect. And one of the challenges and risks of being public about our purpose and beliefs is that we leave ourselves open to criticism from the cynics. We must take it in our stride and be open and honest about our failings (Churchill's Pig again).

“There is no doubt that our certification as a B Corp 18 months ago has been the catalyst to clarifying our purpose and really starting to pursue it.”

There remains a lot of stuff about COOK that frankly isn't good (nor good enough). But we have charted our course and have a clear destination in mind. We have left the safe harbour and the seas will no doubt get rough at times. Last year the wind was in our sails and we made great progress. I'm truly grateful to have you all on board.



# Good BUSINESS

“Just when you think you’ve got the rat race licked... boom, faster rats.”

As a business, COOK gets stronger every year. We don’t measure our success purely in terms of sales and profit, but by growing these numbers we can reinvest in the business, provide new opportunities for our people and share out financial rewards.

We increased our annual sales to just shy of £50m, up 15% on the year before and over-achieved our profit target with earnings of £4.1m, up 30% on last year; a great financial performance. After the start of the financial year, the shareholders agreed that 5% of profit for the year should be shared among staff, assuming we hit our profit target. At the same time we moved to a “no bonus” culture across the business and put in place plans to become an official Living Wage employer from July 2015. Based on the previous year’s profit, we paid our first ever dividend to shareholders of £400,000.

At the start of the year we established a link with Eat Local, a business remarkably similar to ours with five shops in and around Seattle in the US. The owner, Greg, is a lovely guy and we’ll see what comes of it. For now we’re focused on helping them with their cooking and range development.

The crucial like-for-like sales figure for stores open for a full, trading year was +2.7% - decent enough but not quite where we wanted to be. We had a superb Christmas trading period but outside of that sales were slightly below our expectations. There’s no doubt the grocery market generally was tough but in hindsight we

made a big mistake by delisting too many lines, expecting our customers to switch to other, similar products. They didn’t. Lesson learned.

Our entertaining business (4 portion meals, party food and puddings) is increasingly robust but our everyday business (1 and 2 portion meals) is more challenging. This is no surprise, given it is where the competition is most fierce. We will continue to look at how we can offer better quality (the never ending quest to improve....) while also delivering more obvious value. We will be trialling various initiatives this year.

Our Concessions business, supplying farm shops and independent retailers via branded COOK freezers, continues to thrive, with like-for-like growth ahead of our own COOK shops. The fact we have multiple sales channels and can dial up, or down, the emphasis on each is one of the strengths of our business. We have moved the dial up on Concessions in the past year or two and are likely to keep it there for now.

Within Concessions, the new shop-in-a-shop (SIAS) format, with 14 freezers in an independent retailer in a town which otherwise wouldn’t support a standalone COOK shop, required some fine tuning. As a result, it didn’t achieve the growth we had foreseen. However, the improvements made are already bearing fruit and it is gaining momentum fast.

We made meaningful progress in our Multi-Channel business – a horrible phrase that covers e-commerce



Click & collect



and home delivery. We successfully launched a Click & Collect service from all our shops and extended our local delivery service using shop hubs to cover three or four store areas. These new services played a big role in our strong Christmas performance and our e-commerce sales were up 50% for the year.

Within retail, the franchise business performed slightly better than our company-owned stores. In part, this reflected us getting a better grip on franchising after five years and building stronger relationships – both commercially and personally – with our franchisees. Shopkeeping standards generally improved and we saw the benefit of working together as One COOK on promotions. Franchisees’ more-established local delivery business also contributed to their out performance.

As a business unit, the COOK Kitchen in Sittingbourne had another remarkable year. It made far more food than we budgeted (more than £1m above budget at cost price), thanks to a tremendous effort from every one of the 300 people who work there. In the process it proved our long-held belief that as a fixed asset, working efficiently at capacity, the Kitchen can enable us to generate significant profit.

It doesn’t require any great insight to see that the food retail landscape continues to change at an extraordinary pace. The rise of the discounters (Aldi and Lidl); the acute pain being felt by the big supermarkets; and the exponential growth in online shopping are the big trends.

Good business is all about successful reinvention and we need to keep up the pace of innovation at COOK. Business wisdom can come from unlikely places, none more so than rock singer David Lee Roth, who once said: ‘Just when you think you’ve got the rat race licked... boom, faster rats’. Wise words, Mr Lee Roth, we won’t ignore them.







“Just because we have made a recipe 1,000 times we never assume it will be perfect; it has to be proved.”

The simple fact is that COOK only exists because our food tastes better than the competition's. If we can't win in taste then we won't win, period.

The outstanding performance at Christmas showed that on those occasions when people want to make 100% sure they have remarkable food for a special occasion, they trust us to deliver. Our Christmas result is therefore something that should give us all immense satisfaction and encouragement.

But doing what we do is hard. If it wasn't, everyone else would be doing it too. Having a founding statement that promises to COOK using the same ingredients and techniques you would at home, becomes challenging as we get bigger. Delivering a homemade look and taste at scale, using natural ingredients, and people rather than machines, is a very tall order. Things can and will go wrong and we therefore remain in a state of healthy paranoia about the quality and consistency of our food.

Our Daily Sign Off meeting remains the most important meeting that we have in COOK. It is where we taste every single batch of food we made in the Kitchen the previous day. Just because we have made a recipe 1,000 times we never assume it will be perfect; it has to be proved.

I have recently moved back into this part of the business leading our food development agenda. Last year we developed some remarkable new products. Standout successes were our range of Oh My Goodness, lower calorie meals; some "lighter" style, summer meals such as Marinated Halloumi with Roasted Peppers; our expanded range of canapes at Christmas, made for the first time at our main Kitchen; and some great new puddings, not least the best-selling Salted Caramel Pavlova.

Credit for the puddings goes squarely to Liz Dove and her team down in Somerset. Last year we made Liz's business our first ever acquisition. We have been her only customer for 15 years and Liz has effectively been part of the family all that time. Our relationship is built on the same values and total trust (we never had a contract for anything!)

Liz needed a bigger kitchen and suggested this was the moment for us to make it 'formal' so Liz got some shares in COOK and Liz Dove Desserts has become COOK Puddings. We have built what is the Willy Wonka of pudding-making kitchens in the Somerset countryside and it will provide the base to continue making our remarkable puddings for many years to come.



# Good RELATIONSHIPS



*Caring Hands.*

“Beyond our everyday business, we continued to use our food to help bring people closer together.”

Far and away the most important number at COOK is our score in the annual Best Companies to Work For survey. As I've said before, and will no doubt say many times again: if I was cast away on a desert island and could see only one annual statistic about this company I love, it would be our Best Companies' score. I know that if our people are telling us that COOK is improving as a place to work then all the other numbers will take care of themselves.

So it proved last year. Our strong financial performance was accompanied by a big jump in our score. It meant we were ranked 44th in the country as a company to work for and were the highest-placed food manufacturer and the 3rd highest-placed high-street retailer.

Perhaps best of all, in terms of our ambition to pioneer good relationships, was the fact that we won a special award for Employee Wellbeing. It was a complete surprise on the night and prompted much over-exuberant celebration (the awards host, Ben Shepherd, is probably still recovering from his close encounter with some of the excited ladies of COOK). The award citation read: "COOK... has set out to build a culture where relationships can flourish and people feel connected to each other." Hurrah!

In terms of helping people realise their potential, we saw 70 internal promotions and devoted an incredible 10,458 of working hours to training and development. Groundbreaking initiatives like our Dream Academy programme enable some of our people to experience life-changing personal coaching.

The revival of our scheme offering work placements at the Kitchen to prison inmates has seen 11 people join our team successfully. We are trialling various other

schemes to help us offer opportunities to people who would otherwise struggle to find jobs.

Beyond our everyday business, we continued to use our food to help bring people closer together. The relationship between our main Kitchen and the Caring Hands centre in Rochester has flourished. We continue to send them our leftover, frozen ingredients that would otherwise go to waste and have set up a weekly volunteering programme to enable people to experience the amazing work Caring Hands does with local people in need. Dale led a team that cooked lunch for them on Christmas Day.

Through sales of our Christmas range we provided 210,000 meals to school children in Malawi, through a partnership with One Feeds Two. While this was, in many respects, a straightforward bit of cause-related marketing the important difference was that our involvement helped launch One Feeds Two on the national stage. This start-up movement is based on a "buy one, give one" model, so every meal or portion of food you buy means a school meal is given to a child in need, helping encourage school attendance. It has the potential to make a huge, positive impact but somebody needed to back the untested idea to give it a chance of succeeding. That was our role.

Underlying all of this are the COOK Values (we call them our Essential Ingredients) that are the foundation of our company culture. They guide our behaviour and provide a reference point for decision-making at every level. As it says in the Essential Ingredients guide we give every team member: 'Values apply to everyone. They don't change. Ever. They can be difficult and expensive to uphold – but that's the point.' Amen.



## A little note from Dale:

So we are now officially grown-up! Yes, COOK turned 18 in March (I, on the other hand, am a year off 60 and still awaiting adulthood).

While I may be slowing down a bit, it seems that COOK is continually gathering pace. I have experienced a lot that life has to offer and nothing much surprises me anymore, but our ability to reinvent COOK each year is a source of continuing wonder.

When I think about last year's highlights and the things that make me most excited, here's my shortlist:

- It's great to see the big strides we're making with our sourcing policy, with provenance and the welfare of the animals at the top of the agenda. There is still plenty of work to do but we're definitely up and running.

- I'm looking forward to massive building improvements at the kitchen, including a new roof, which will allow us to increase production by 50% (without getting wet).

- Our new COOK Puddings kitchen in Somerset gives us triple the capacity of the old kitchen, all in a fantastic

So there's my rather long-winded summary of 2014-15, another landmark year in COOK's history.

As an independent business with committed, long-term shareholders (mostly family), we have a rare opportunity to go out and achieve something truly remarkable. We all need to keep pushing each other to raise our game, while keeping focused on Good Business, Good Food and Good Relationships, with a clear purpose in mind – to be a force for good in society.

I have a quote that hangs above my desk to remind me how we will deliver on our purpose. No, it's not from David Lee Roth, but from Walter Elliot, a prominent Scottish politician in the first half of the 20th century. He said: "Perseverance is not a long race, it is many short races one after the other."

You can contact me at [edwardanddale@cookfood.net](mailto:edwardanddale@cookfood.net) if you would like to discuss anything.

All the best,

*Edward*

Edward, Co-founder

working environment (and it's great to have Liz as officially part of the COOK family).

- The launch of Click & Collect and the sublime new website show the huge potential there is for online sales.

- Not forgetting our stunning new Chinese range and some great new products for Christmas – our recipe development gets better and better.

When I look around COOK these days I see a fast-moving workplace for everyone to embrace and enjoy. And that is so important to me, because our people are what makes COOK so special. I urge all of you to speak up if you feel something could be improved, or changed, to enhance your working life or our business.

We can only be as good as all of you make us. And you can be truly proud of the part you've played in shaping this amazing company.

I can't wait to see what the next year brings.

*Dale*

Dale, Co-founder



# NUMBERS THAT MAKE US HAPPY

**LFL**  
**+2.7%**

Like-for-like sales in  
retail stores open at  
least 12 months:

**Ebitda**

**£2.6 million**  
in 2013

**£3.1 million**  
in 2014

**£4.1 million**  
in 2015



**9.2 million**  
Portions dished  
in 2013

**13.4 million**  
Portions dished  
in 2015



**1.1 million**  
Cases picked at  
Logistics in 2015

**880k**  
Cases picked at  
Logistics in 2014



**SALES**



**CHRISTMAS LFL**

**+9.6%**

**11.3 million**  
Portions dished  
in 2014

**230,000**

meals provided to  
people in need

One Feeds Two:  
210,000 meals provided  
Caring Hands:  
20,000 meals provided

**44th**  
THE SUNDAY TIMES  
**100**  
BEST COMPANIES  
TO WORK FOR  
2015

**70**  
internal  
promotions

**83**  
SHOPS

NEW 6

yay!



# OUR CUNNING PLAN

## Remarkable Retail

Driving LFL through faultless execution of commercial plan, community connection and better brand standards.

## New Space

Accelerated opening of company-owned shops and shop-in-a-shops that beat targets.

## Multi-Channel

Creating, trialling and rolling out profitable models.

## Brand Pride

Feeling proud wherever and whenever we have a COOK experience.

## Britain's Best Kitchen

Scaled, homemade manufacturing delivering the best taste, every time.

## COOK Culture

Never forgetting its our people and values that make us remarkable.



GROWTH DRIVERS

ENABLERS

## Platforms for Growth

Invest in kitchen capacity; Project Lightyear; developing digital; office space; Lenham...

Anyone of a certain age will find it virtually impossible to utter the word "plan" without inserting "cunning" before it, thanks to Baldrick from TV's Blackadder (and if you're not of a certain age, you may need to resort to Google).

This year, for the first time, we created a clear-and-cunning, five-year plan for COOK based on our strategic priorities rather than just a bunch of numbers. Having, since the recession, been forced to plan and manage the business based mostly on "Jeff's wiggly line", also known as the amount of cash we had in the bank, we have finally got to a place where we can plan and prioritise for the medium-term based on more than just financial survival. The plan doesn't mention numbers at all. Rather, it defines the areas we believe we should focus on in

order to create a remarkable company we can all be proud of. If we succeed in doing so, the numbers should look after themselves.

At its heart lies our purpose: to COOK For Good, creating a remarkable food company that's a force for good in society through good business, good food and good relationships.

There are still some numbers behind it (big sigh of relief from finance), the most important being the ambition to double our sales by 2019 to about £75m. This means growing at roughly 15% a year. These financial targets aren't set in stone but they give a clear sense of direction and ambition.

# HEADLINES

## 2014/15 HEADLINES

COOK will have a remarkable 2014/15 when...

- We hit our targets for opening new space (seven shops, four SIAS, 26 concessions)
- We work together as One COOK to be proud of our shops, our concessions, and our shared spaces thanks to new designs, refurbishments and brilliant execution of our marketing campaigns
- We keep striving to be Britain's Best Kitchen while growing capacity by 7% and building a new Puddings Kitchen with Liz Dove
- We work together as One COOK to deliver our ambitious food and commercial calendar while improving product margins and achieving +4.5% LFL
- We successfully implement the next two phases of Project Lightyear
- We successfully launch a Click & Collect service and new delivery hubs in North London, Berkshire/Surrey and (possibly) North Kent
- We launch B Corp to the business, map our impact, and give everyone the opportunity to participate in a Community Kitchen initiative, so everyone can understand our purpose
- We regularly celebrate our remarkable culture and recognise our Essential Ingredients in action
- We nurture talent, develop potential and achieve an improved Best Companies score as a result

...if we do all this we'll achieve record sales of £49.6m and ebitda of £3.5m

## "Milestone Projects"

This year, we defined nine big headlines by which to judge our success. Achieving these nine, big initiatives would, we felt, result in us delivering our financial targets. Having a concise list would also keep us focused and on track. And so it proved. At the end of the year, our traffic light status-check showed seven of our headlines on "green" and two on "amber". And the numbers? They were nicely ahead of our targets. Oh, we love it when a plan comes together.

Each of the headlines was made up of numerous "milestone" projects. In total there were 70 projects defined at the start of the year. These projects were regarded as being above-and-beyond the day job or involved significant change or innovation of some kind. They touched virtually everyone at COOK and went across teams and departments, requiring us to work together as One COOK in new and sometimes challenging ways.

Unsurprisingly, some projects fell by the wayside during the subsequent 12 months – priorities change through time and some things we thought would be important before the year started turned out not to be so. Of the 70 projects still relevant at the end of the year, 52 had been completed successfully; 12 were partially complete or deemed a partial success; and only 6 were unsuccessful.

Unsuccessful - RED

6

Partially Completed - AMBER

12

Successfully Completed - GREEN

52

yay!



# REMARKABLE RETAIL

## HEADLINE

We work together as One COOK to deliver our ambitious food and commercial calendar while improving product margins and achieving +4.5% LFL **AMBER**

“I am from the US and have been here for more than five years and have in that time never had customer service that I would consider the same as in the US. Today was the first time. I'll definitely recommend shopping at COOK...”

Our aim of growing like-for-like sales by 4.5% proved over ambitious. We managed same store sales growth of 2.7% - a decent enough performance in the context of incredibly tough trading conditions but still short of where we wanted to be. For this reason, we've given ourselves an 'amber' for this headline. But beyond the big like-for-like number, there was plenty to celebrate: another record-breaking Christmas; a big improvement in product margins; and the usual remarkable service from our shop teams up and down the country.

The Concessions Team played a stormer. A review of our range and a new design for our point of sale materials helped sales grow to £8m, 19% up on the year before and 5% ahead of budget. Estimated like-for-like sales in concessions open for a year or more was an impressive 5%. (See Brand Pride, p22, for more details.)

Summer trading was a bit of a damp squib. In retrospect, we gave too much space to seasonal lines which hurt us elsewhere. That said, we still had some great new products.

## CHRISTMAS CRACKER

+9.6%  
LFL



Puddings  
+11%

Christmas  
Lunch  
+22%

Canapés  
+75%

## ★ STAR SUMMER PRODUCTS ★



Marinated Halloumi  
with Roasted Peppers

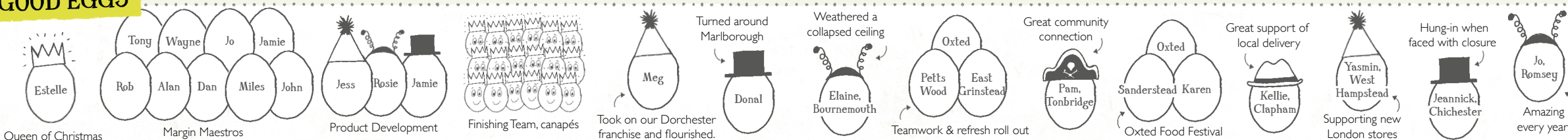


Tiger Prawns with  
Paprika & Lemon



Ice Kitchen Lollies

## GOOD EGGS





# NEW SPACE

## HEADLINE

We hit our targets for opening new space (seven shops, four SIAS, 26 concessions) 

Company owned: 7 new openings

Franchise: 2 new openings

Concessions: 27 new openings / 1004 freezers (70 new)

Concessions: £12m sales (+18%)



New Space and Concessions Team



Woodford Green



West Wickham



Islington



Eastbourne



Solihull



Southgate



Southfields



Maida Vale



Don't worry, be happy.

We opened nine new shops and added 27 new concessions, beating our targets. Importantly, we also opened shop sites earlier than planned meaning we got a nice little bonus in additional sales. The new shop-in-a-shop format (SIAS), with a dozen or more freezers installed in a branded COOK area within a thriving independent retailer; needed some fine-tuning during the course of the year. As a result, we opened three rather than four new SIAS sites and overall sales were

behind where we forecast at the start of the year (we made up the shortfall through concessions). However, the result is a much more robust SIAS model for the future, with the potential to take us into those areas where there are plenty of COOK customers but no obvious, central town to support a new store opening. SIAS may still be the world's worst acronym but it's full steam ahead in 2015.



REMARKABLE WORK

Dave and the Shop Opening A-Team, Property Team & People Team



# MULTI-CHANNEL

## HEADLINE

We successfully launch a Click & Collect service and new delivery hubs in North London, Berkshire/Surrey and (possibly) North Kent

*Happy Delivery Team*



*Click & collect*



*Tony and Lee*



*Local Delivery Grows*



Our multi-channel business took a huge leap forward with the launch of Click & Collect from all our shops and the extension of local delivery to new areas of London and the South East. Our national delivery service also enjoyed a record Christmas thanks to increasing the capacity of the Lenham "pod" by 50%. It meant we could despatch more than 300 deliveries a day during the peak

Christmas weeks. A re-design of cookfood.net helped the website to achieve £2.9m for the year, +59% on the year before and more than double the sales of two years ago. Overall, e-commerce accounted for 5.8% of sales and website traffic was up by 48% on the year before.

CONVERSION RATE\*

**2.82%**

E-COMMERCE

**£2.9m**  
(5.8% of sales)  
**+59%**

TRAFFIC

**1.5m sessions**  
**(+48%)**

*New website*



\*this is an important figure, indicating the number of people who went onto the website and then shopped online, rather than just browsing. The conversion rate was higher than the previous year despite the massive increase in traffic, a great result.



## REMARKABLE WORK

Jemima, Alex, James, Richard, Tony, Louise, Dave, Maidenhead and N.London Managers. All shops for Click & Collect.



# BRITAIN'S BEST KITCHEN S

## HEADLINE

We keep striving to be Britain's Best Kitchen while growing production by 7% and building a new Puddings Kitchen with Liz Dove GREEN



With the acquisition of Liz Dove's puddings business we've had to add an "s" to the end of Britain's Best Kitchen. Our two kitchens more than lived up to their billing last year. At Sittingbourne, we ended the year producing a whopping £1.2m more than we budgeted. Having expected to lose about £50k on production variances (unforeseen ingredient price increases or extra labour required) we actually made a gain of £330k,

which was a big contributor to the company beating its profit target. £2.2m production value, up 29% on the previous year and £400k ahead of budget. This was even more remarkable given we had initially planned to be operating in a spacious, new kitchen in time for the Christmas boost in production. In the event, we didn't move in until March.

## REMARKABLE WORK



TEAM OF THE YEAR FINISHING

GOOD EGGS



MOST CONSISTENT PASTRY



MOST IMPROVED CHEFS

## BRITAIN'S BEST LOGISTICS



When a roof panel collapsed in the height of summer (pretty much worst-case scenario for a big freezer), there was a truly remarkable response from the whole team, led by Richard and Daryl. It meant we were back up and running in a just a few days. (It also injected new urgency to our search for a new logistics centre.)

*Daryl to the rescue!*



1.1m cases were picked up 20% on the previous year.



# BRAND PRIDE

## HEADLINE

We work together as ONE COOK to be proud of our shops, our concessions and our shared spaces thanks to new designs, refurbishments and brilliant execution of our marketing campaigns. **AMBER**



Christmas



OMG



Chinese

At last, we have back labels which are actually legible! What might seem straightforward was actually a hugely laborious project. We also had to update our labels to meet new rules. Great teamwork by the wizards of Technical – Jade, Ben, Jenny – and Kendall in Brand.



## BEFORE



## AFTER



Horsham

## BEFORE



## AFTER



Epping



Budgens, Mortimer (SIAS) Chops wall.

## BEFORE



## AFTER



Gibson's Farm Shop



West Wickham pudding wall.

First the good news. The transformation of our dedicated areas in Booths stores in the North West was a huge success. While we had initially planned to refit eight shops by the end of the year, we ended up refitting our space in all 27 Booths. The result was sales growth of +32%, a truly remarkable job from the team headed by Angela Dearlove. One area that didn't always go according to plan was the execution of our marketing campaigns. There were a few occasions when point of sale and other materials arrived late at stores – hence the amber traffic light. In company-owned shops we trialled a new design for our "Chef's Wall", the five freezers containing all our permanent one and two portion recipes. We also came up with a new look for the puddings area in new and re-fitted shops, making it much more of a destination in store.

## REMARKABLE WORK



Angela (Booths), Mary P (Chef's Wall), Fiona, Carly & Mary H (Shop Refits), Kendall (Brand Guidelines), FIR project team



# PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH

*Sir Basil is so arrogant  
that if you ask him,  
he won't even give  
you the thyme of day.*

## HEADLINE

We successfully implement the next two phases of Project Lightyear 

Project Lightyear is the biggest, most expensive project we've ever run (other than building new kitchens), installing an Enterprise Resource Planning System across the business. This year we completed phases two and three of the project. There were challenges aplenty but everyone involved met them head on. Team Lightyear we salute you.

This year was all about bringing barcode technology to the business. Phase 1b saw barcode scanning introduced to the warehouse at the Kitchen in Sittingbourne, so everything is scanned in and out bringing us much greater visibility of ingredients and finished goods.

Phase 2a introduced scanning to the Lenham cold store so all stock coming in and out of the warehouse is scanned. Finally we know where everything is!

Onward and upward team Lightyear. To ERP and beyond!

*Hannah ready  
for action*



*...come in Star command*



## REMARKABLE WORK

Sittingbourne Warehouse Team,  
Kitchen Packing Team, Lenham  
Coldstore Team, Operations Admin,  
Lightyear Project Team



# COOK CULTURE



*Oxsted Curry for Change*



*Dandelion Time*

## HEADLINE

We all have the opportunity to participate in a Community Kitchen initiative, bringing COOK for GOOD to life so everyone can understand our purpose GREEN

Our Community Kitchen is the umbrella under which we group all the community activities through which we feed people. There were three big initiatives to help everyone at COOK understand our purpose: the first was our partnership with Caring Hands, a Church-run drop-in centre for people in need in Rochester, close to our main Kitchen. We continued to send our leftover ingredients to Caring Hands, helping feed up to 120 people every day and enabling them to expand their services. We also started weekly volunteering, with two people going to help cook and serve lunch every Friday. The second big initiative was the launch of our Community Discount Scheme, offering local community groups 30% off our food if they're catering for a group of 20 people or more. We started with a trial in six

shops during the summer and extended it to 10 more in the New Year. We'll be rolling it out across all shops this autumn. The third big initiative was our partnership with One Feeds Two at Christmas. We became the first national brand to back this start-up movement to connect food companies and consumers with school children in Africa. For every portion of our Christmas recipes sold, we provided a school meal for a child in need in Malawi. We ended up providing 210,000 meals. In the process, we also enabled One Feeds Two to get off the ground. As well as these three big projects, there were numerous other Community Kitchen initiatives bringing to life our purpose to use business as a force for good.

## HEADLINE

We regularly celebrate our remarkable culture, build big relationships and recognise our Essential Ingredients in action

We've realised that a remarkable culture is built not only on shared values (our Essential Ingredients) but also on shared experiences. Getting people together as often as possible builds relationships, creates common understanding and generates real energy and buzz. Most important of all, it's fun. Last year we held more internal events than ever before and tried to make them the biggest and best yet. We also introduced the idea of Big Relationships and that the strength of relationships can be a competitive advantage in business. Big relationships depend on creating an appreciative culture. Sharing our appreciation of each other for bringing to life our Essential Ingredients has become the grand finale to nearly all our big events.



*10 years service celebration at The Shard*



*Liz Dove opening COOK Puddings*



Oxonhoath: In the past this has been a process kept within the senior team. By opening it up to a bigger group, we hoped to generate new ideas and cultivate a sense of shared ownership for our performance: together, we can do remarkable things.



*Christmas Retail Launch*



*Franchise Conference*



Big Relationships require lots of cake. Finance & IT decided they should get to know other teams a bit better by inviting them to tea.





# GOOD EGGS

## HEADLINE

We nurture talent, develop potential and achieve an improved Best Companies score as a result GREEN

70

Internal Promotions

OPS ACADEMY  
24

(going first is always hardest)

GRADUATES



THE LOGISTICS  
the most improved team according to our Best Companies scorecard thanks to a lot of hard work from everyone.

TEAM

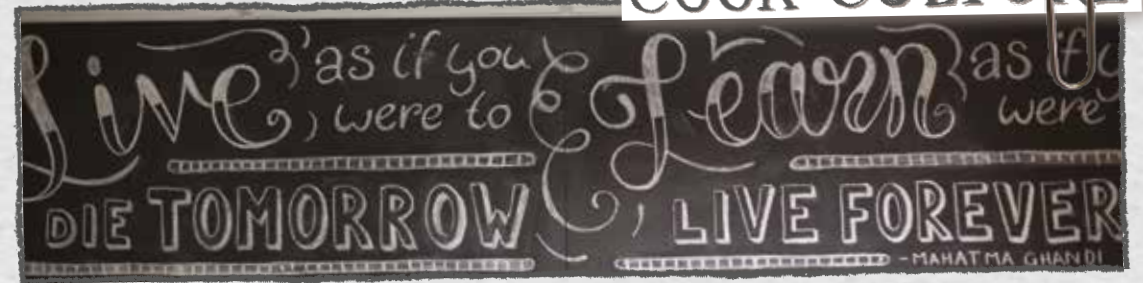
485

People went on training courses

THE TECHNICAL  
According to Best Companies, if they were a business of their own, they would be the number one place to work in the entire land.

TEAM

## COOK CULTURE



The Kitchen "Learning Wall" saw us putting on lunchtime workshops for each other. From understanding finance, to chopping like a chef to how to have difficult conversations.



Technical Team

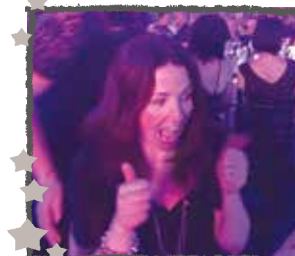
Logistics



Ops away day



Ops Academy Graduates



THE SUNDAY TIMES  
44th  
BEST COMPANIES  
TO WORK FOR  
2015



## REMARKABLE WORK

Sian - Ops Academy  
and the People Team

Nailed it. With bells on. Not only did our Best Companies engagement score improve for the fourth year in succession (from 703 to 727), but we rose to 44th in The SundayTimes 100 Best Companies To Work For, from 65th place last year. We were the highest-placed manufacturing business and the third-highest retailer. Our score for Giving Something Back was the 16th highest of all companies. And to top it all off, we received a special Wellbeing Award for our work on big relationships. Across the business, there were 70 internal promotions and 485 people went on a training course of some kind.



# CHARITY HIGHLIGHTS



Jen & Terry,  
Romsey



Well done to Liam Frankham  
for organising the Demelza  
House football tournament



Kitchen football  
fun day for  
Demelza House



Wear Red  
for Ruby



Walk for  
Blackthorne Trust



Sian completed  
the Shine walk



Sittingbourne Colour Run



Maidstone's  
Race for Life



Jayne & Angela,  
Henley



Spitfire Pie,  
Royal Airforce  
Benevolent Fund



COOK Maidenhead,  
collecting for  
Harry's Foundation



Oxtd,  
Curry for Change

# Dream ACADEMY 2014

The second year of our Dream Academy saw 34 people experience life-changing coaching with our Dream Manager, Al Hill. It helped some people advance their careers at COOK and it helped others towards living happier, more fulfilled lives. We should all feel proud that this programme is part of COOK (and we should all be itching to take advantage).

"Dream Academy made me re-evaluate my work / life balance and made me realise that there's no such thing, in fact work is a massive part of my life so it was simply looking at everything as a collective life balance instead and not feeling resentful about the amount of time I spent working."

"The biggest thing I learnt from the Dream Academy was that by breaking the big things down, the little things become very achievable."

"I've learnt more about myself and what makes me truly happy. It's made me think how I achieve what it is I want to make me feel happy in my personal life."

"The Dream Academy has opened my mind on a personal level to a problem which had been snowballing for some time. Al made me realise that I actually had the answers and once the can of worms was opened I was able to work through a step-by-step solution and plan of action to succeed making the situation I was in so much better"

BE PART OF OUR  
FAMILY

"Dream Academy has helped me get it into gear and just go for it. I stopped worrying whether I would fail or not. It allowed me to take my moment."

The Dream Academy is a 4 month programme, in confidence with Al Hill (a professional Life Coach), to help people achieve their personal dreams and goals which may or may not be work related. Recent dreams people have shared have included: buying a house, losing weight, a better relationship with a stepson, improved work/ life balance, doing more for others, overcoming fears. Anything goes and it is all confidential.





# ANNUAL PORT

BE PART OF OUR  
FAMILY

CHURCHILL'S PIG

CARE HAVE  
FUN

Be Remarkable