



Apprentices

‘Future in Action!’

NATIONAL
APPRENTICESHIP
WEEK 2026



Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week

'Future in Action'

The INSPIRED Academy Apprenticeships team is celebrating **National Apprenticeship Week** with our *'Future in Action'* initiative, highlighting the meaningful impact our apprentices are making across the business.

Their fresh ideas, projects, and commitment to learning are driving real positive change.

Thank you to all our **Cohort One** apprentices and the colleagues who support them, you're helping shape the future of our organisation.

Cohort Two incoming!

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We have grown our apprenticeship offering



8

Subjects

- Continuous Improvement
- Engineering
- Food & Drink Operator
- Food Industry Technologist
- Health & Safety Technician
- Hygiene
- Team Leader
- Warehouse Operator

13

Providers

- Claudius Consulting
- Coleg Cambria
- CQM Training Consultancy
- Darlington College
- GEM Partnership
- GLP Training Ltd
- Luminare Education Group
- MGTS
- Qualitrain
- QUDOS
- SR Apprenticeships
- Tresham College
- York College

39

Apprentices

- Crick x 15
- Kinmel x 5
- Logistics x 4
- Thirsk x 15

Arthur Van Benthem

Chief Executive Officer

At INSPIRED, our **people** are at the heart of our success — and our **future** as a **global leader** in **pet nutrition**.

We're **passionate** about helping our colleagues and new talent thrive, **grow**, and make a **difference**.

By **investing** in **development** and creating opportunities for everyone, we're not just building vital skills for our business — we're investing in **potential** and enabling lasting **impact**.

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Anthony Stones

Chief Operating Officer

INSPIRED Academy Apprenticeships are vital to building our future workforce and supporting long-term business success. They develop the skills needed to drive efficiency, innovation, and reliability across our operations.

By investing in apprentices, we strengthen safety, OEE, and quality, while bringing fresh thinking and new ideas.

These programmes also help bridge future skill gaps, reduce reliance on external hiring, and foster a culture of learning and growth.

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Sophie Winspear

Chief People Officer

I'm **incredibly proud** of the way we invest in our colleagues — and in the next generation of talent — through our **apprenticeships** and educational partnerships.

By **nurturing growth** from within and supporting social mobility, we're building not just a stronger business, but a more **inclusive** and **thriving** community for the **future**.

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Colin Richmond

Operations Director

As a former apprentice, I know **first-hand** the **value** of apprenticeships — not just for building skills, but for shaping who you become.

At INSPIRED we offer something **special**: the chance to **grow** your career while being supported, challenged, and **celebrated**.

I'm **proud** to have helped **develop** our apprenticeship programme in Engineering — and I'll **always** champion it.

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David Wilson

General Manager - Thirsk Dalton Mill

*“Apprenticeships play a **vital** role in shaping the future at INSPIRED, the various apprenticeship schemes we have in place allow us to foster the development of skilled, motivated colleagues who contribute to our growth, success and creating happiness.*

Through a structured blend of on-the-job training and learning, our apprentices build practical expertise whilst also gaining a deeper understanding our ambition, purpose and behaviours, to support our operational objectives.

This approach ensures our colleagues are aligned with the evolving needs of INSPIRED, for now and in the future.”

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Ewelina Dewerenda -Thirsk

Improvement Technician Level 3

Personal development

Improvement project on Fawema 4 leading to creating a centre of excellence, focused on safety, people, efficiency, and quality.

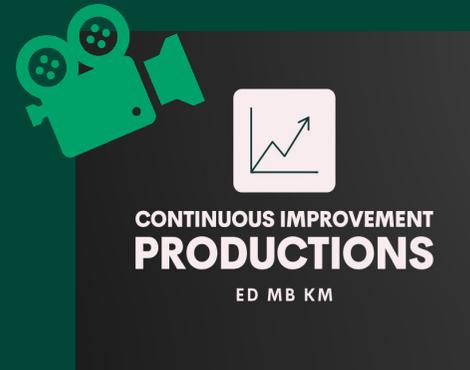
Ideas I have contributed to & how I supported my team

Prepared and implemented planned stops on Fawema 4 and developed a deployment plan that made the system suitable for use across all other factory lines.

Work I am proud of

Produced INSPIRED Sites Videos including the packing department, to support staff engagement and retention.

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Josh Baynes - Thirsk

Level 4 Engineering Manufacturing Technician

Personal development

Work done in the Extruder department, specifically where checks on the lines have furthered my knowledge and increased sustainability for the extruder department in general.

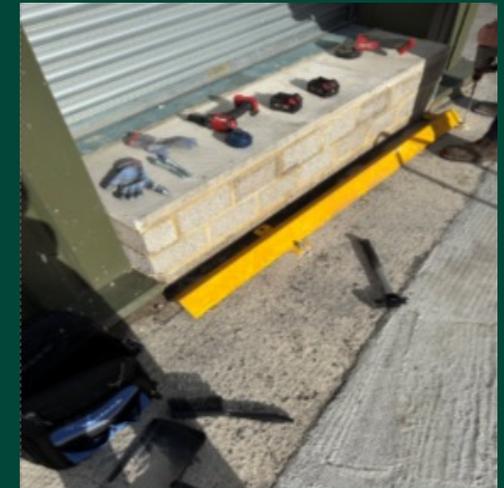
Work I am proud of

Increased overall site safety by installing new bump guards and pillars around the factory.

Future development

INSPIRED have given me opportunities to develop my skills by allowing me to take training courses in both electrical and mechanical processes.

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Tom Tickner

Head of Logistics

“It’s really pleasing to see the development of our colleagues within INSPIRED specifically for me across the Logistics function.

The apprenticeships offer a great opportunity for personal development in several areas including supply chain leadership and continuous improvement.

The investment in developing our colleagues supports our Logistics goals of delivering our ambition of delivering World Class Logistics to our customers, in addition to supporting our colleagues on their own growth journeys as we look to develop and upskill and create the next Logistics leaders.”

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Jordan Forbes - DC

Level 3 Improvement Technician

Projects I've delivered

I have supported the delivery of a project within our D2C function aimed at improving box quality, simplifying the supply chain, and increasing overall cost efficiency.

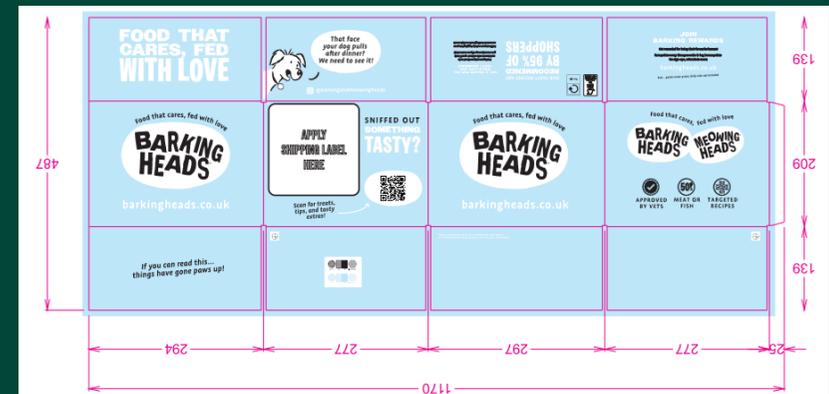
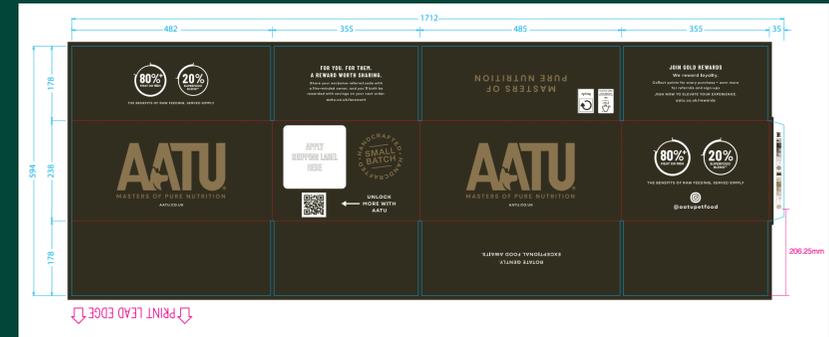
Improvements or ideas I've contributed to

I have overseen trials conducted with key stakeholders and day-to-day customers across three brands on our D2C website. In addition, I have worked closely with the new box supplier to ensure the new stock and service model operates effectively.

Work I'm proud of

I am very pleased with how this project has progressed, as we have successfully achieved all the targets set at the outset and are now seeing the resulting benefits and achievements come through.

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Dominic Whelan

General Manager - Kinmel

“Apprenticeships are something I am passionate to sponsor because it allows individuals to grow both personally and professionally whilst learning skills that will set them up with the tools and techniques to have a long, successful career in manufacturing.”

In a world where external recruitment is becoming harder, having a long-term strategy to nurture our own talent through apprenticeship programmes is essential to being competitive in the sector and in our local areas – a key enabler for us in becoming the global leader in pet nutrition.

I am super proud of our current apprentices at Kinmel and the progress I am seeing from them and will continue to support them on their journeys.”

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Amy Christopher – Kinmel

Level 2 Improving Operational Performance

OEE Project

- Successfully trialled reduced bake times on Waggs Peanut Butter, cutting one minute from the process while maintaining quality and increasing throughput.
- Multiple tests confirmed that two Waggs recipes can return to original bake times from when the oven was first installed, further improving throughput.
- Identified three recipes, BBQ Bangers, Bacon Bap and Fish Fingers - where performance can exceed current standards, reducing overall production time.
- Trials highlighted lessons learned from previous rollers, with replacements now showing fewer treats and less infill loss.
- Moulding roller restoration is progressing well; the first cob roller is now achieving 100% ejection, and CAPEX has been submitted for the next roller.
- The oven tray restoration project has begun, aiming to return all trays on site to base standard

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Short Interval Control											
Production Kg / Hour - Continuous Oven											
Variant	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
1112	1054	1060	1312	1038	1032	1047	1032	1364	1010	1026	1335
400											
800											
700											
600											
500											
400											
300											
200											
100											
0											

Actual Production: 13,404 kg
Shift Target: 6600
Production Time: 13:40:4

SIC Action Log				
Date	Time Used	Asset	Issue	Corrected Action Taken
2024/11/28				



Joshua Roberts – Kinmel

Level 2 Improving Operational Performance

Current Issue: Heavy bins must be manoeuvred onto ramps for weighing, causing strain, alignment delays, trip hazards, and inconsistent accuracy.

Proposed Change: Install a flush, heavy-duty stainless-steel floor scale beneath or beside the grinders, with a wall-mounted digital indicator.

Benefits:

- **Safety:** Roll bins straight on—no ramps, no strain.
- **Efficiency:** Saves 30–90 seconds per bin.
- **Accuracy:** Fixed platform improves repeatability.
- **Hygiene:** Easier cleaning and a clearer workspace.
- **Waste Reduction:** More accurate batches, fewer overfills.
- **Impact:** Estimated 10–30% faster handling.

Jorgenson – Waldner Access Improvement

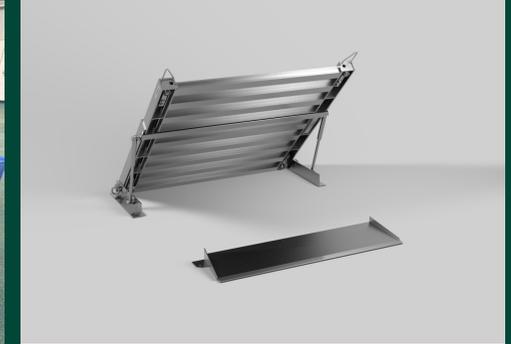
Current Issue: Small, unstable steps create unsafe access to upper machine levels, increasing slip/fall risk and failing to meet safe-access standards.

Proposed Change: Install a custom elevated gantry platform with handrails, non-slip flooring, stainless-steel construction, integrated lighting, and lockable access gates.

Benefits:

- **Safety:** Reduces fall risk by 80–90%.
- **Access:** Provides stable, compliant access for operation and maintenance.

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Oliver Williams – Kinmel

BTEC L3 Advanced Manufacture Engineering

Projects I've delivered

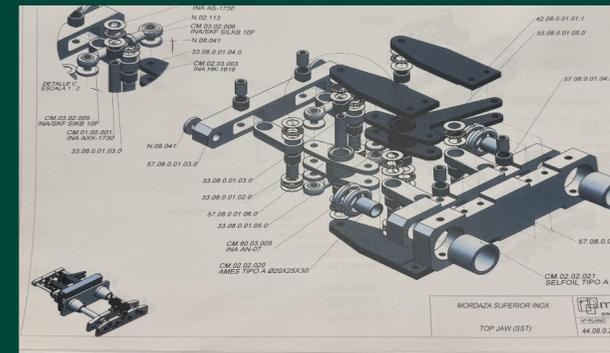
- Team member on MES2 Annual overhaul.
- Aim to maintain machine condition.

Improvements I've contributed to

- I assisted with the strip down, inspection and reassembly of machine.
- Chance to learn fail points.
- Improved use of hand tools and mechanical setting out.
- Enhanced my problem-solving skills.
- Pushed me to work to higher engineering standards.

My apprenticeship has greatly impacted my INSPIRED journey to becoming a maintenance engineer.

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Wade Kennerly – Kinmel

BTEC L3 Advanced Manufacture Engineering

Problem Statement

- Old system causing increasing downtime.
- Quality standards not being met. Mechanical failures.

New system removed mechanical failures. Achieving quality standards set. Increased OEE performance and productivity.

My role in the project

Mechanically removing old system. Installing new system. Assisting Consol with programming and incorporating SKU programmes unique to our brands at Kinmel site.

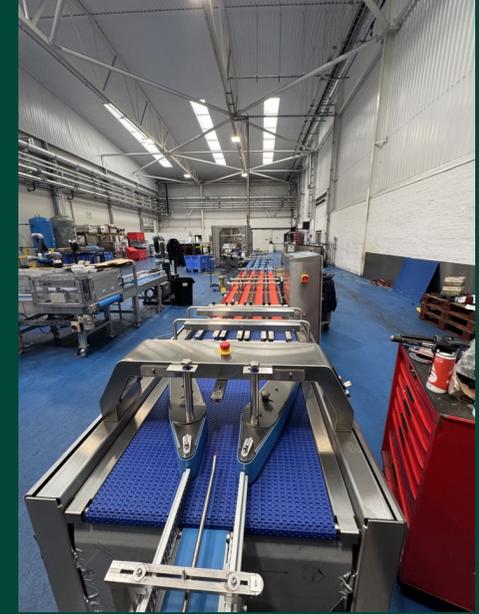
- OEE before install : 61%
- OEE after install: 63%
- CPMU of wrong flavours packed before/after install: 8/2 75% reduction.

What would I do differently? Involve operations in the project to give them a better understanding of the kit from the install.

My learnings

Programming/ reading electrical drawings/ calibrating product detection sensors.

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Kerry Hughes – Kinmel

BTEC L3 Advanced Manufacture Engineering

Eurobin Tipper Project

Project summary

Design, modification and installation cohesive with new wet production tipper stations.

Key features

- Light Barrier (prevention of access when in use).
- Inductive sensors (sense presence of Eurobins before equipment can be used).
- Stop/start/reset buttons (reset machine and safety circuit).

Skills taken from project

- Consciousness of budgeting.
- Ability to draw and interpret wiring diagrams.
- Communication and understanding of operator and site needs.

How it improved INSPIRED

- Improvement of safety in Wet production plant.
- Reduction of waste.
- Increased efficiency and output of product.

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Before



After



Mat Shore

General Manager – Crick

“I’ve seen the apprenticeship scheme thrive with members of our operational teams, giving them the chance to build on skills they’re already passionate about. Their hands-on knowledge of machines and processes gives them a head start, making new learning even more meaningful.”

The collaboration between Operations and Engineering creates a wonderful ripple effect: apprentices not only grow their own expertise but also share their insights with the engineering team, helping everyone learn and improve together. Opportunities like this don’t just build skills—they boost morale and engagement, helping colleagues feel proud, fulfilled, and excited about the work they do every day.”

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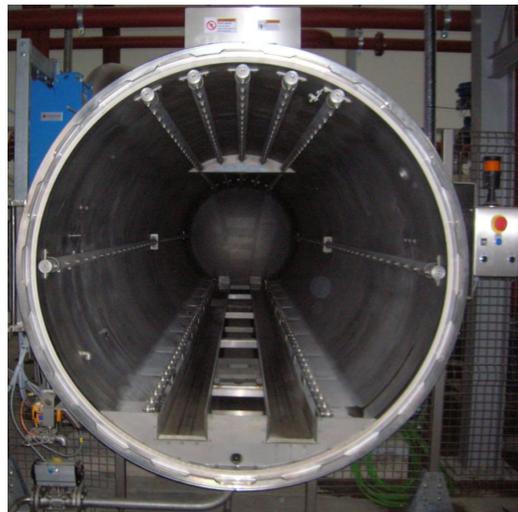


Alex Blackwell – Crick

BTEC L3 Advanced Manufacture Engineering

Retort Centre of Excellence Project

- Examined data to deliver to engineering and operational teams about retort performance and emerging problems.
- Delivered presentations describing data and improvements being made in the retort area.
- Worked with all departments to figure out root cause and solutions.



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- Deviation of retorts sat at 53%.
- After work with engineering, consulting with JBT, test cycles.
- Deviations got to 22%.
- With a view of getting them down further in the future.

Currently running a retort Rapid Action Team (RAT), to create long lasting fixes without taking up resources.

Deviation percentage

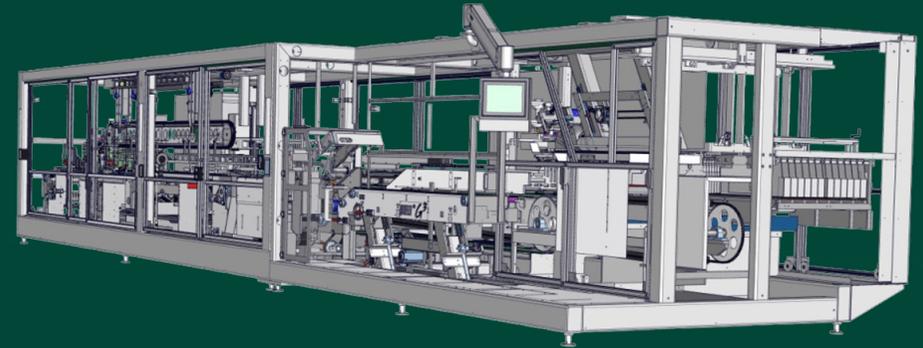


Ibrahim Najmuddin - Crick

EAL Level 3 NVQ Extended Diploma in Engineering Maintenance

- **Supported critical breakdown repair on the GPI high-speed packing machine** following a major crash.
- Used my operations background to explain machine behavior, identify key components affecting performance, and helped source correct OEM parts and part numbers using the 3D parts manual to speed up repairs.
- **Expanded experience into the mince/wet room areas**, which I had not previously worked in during operations.
- Observed and supported engineers during major breakdowns, learning how critical processing equipment differs from packing machinery.
- **Applied operational knowledge to engineering tasks**, bridging the gap between production and maintenance teams by providing practical insights into machine performance, downtime impacts, and process requirements.

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Thank you!

'Future in Action'

Well, done to our Cohort One Apprentices!

We're incredibly proud of the positive changes you are making, both in your roles now and for the future of INSPIRED.

Your energy, commitment and fresh thinking are making a real difference. Thank you for everything you're doing; we truly appreciate you and the impact you're creating.

Keep going, you're shaping something special!

*The Inspired Academy
Apprenticeships Team*

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Explore *Apprenticeships*

If you are interested in developing your career with an apprenticeship at INSPIRED, speak to your line manager as part of your [My INSPIRED Journey](#) check-in.

We can then look at how we can support you.

For more information on the apprenticeships available, please visit the [Institute for Apprenticeships website](#)

Scan here



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I develop myself
and others