
CAFÉ COOK & SUPERVISOR (Chef)

Job Title: Café Cook & Supervisor (Chef)

Location: Whistles Café, Norchard Station, Forest Road, Lydney, GL15 4ET

Employment Type: Part Time – 25.5 hours per week, Permanent
8.5 hours Wednesdays, Saturdays & Sundays (8.30am – 5pm)
All Bank holidays, the Christmas period and occasional other events must be covered as part of the role as required.

Start Date: As soon as possible — ideally early to mid-September 2025

About Us:

Dean Forest Railway is a volunteer-led heritage railway nestled in the picturesque Forest of Dean. We operate Whistles Café at our Norchard Station, offering quality food and refreshments to visitors.

We're looking for an experienced chef-level cook to take charge of our heritage railway café. This is a hands-on role, responsible not only for preparing and cooking food but also for managing stock and suppliers, placing orders, keeping the café and kitchen spotless, and supervising our Café Assistant. You'll ensure the café is fully prepared for service, well-stocked for events, and kept to our 5-star hygiene standard at all times.

Job Description:

As Café Cook & Supervisor (Chef), you will be responsible for preparing and cooking food, overseeing the day-to-day running of the café, and supervising the front-of-house Café Assistant (your direct report). You'll manage stock and suppliers, maintain food safety and hygiene standards, and ensure the café is well-prepared for both busy periods and special events.

This is a hands-on role where you will lead in the kitchen, take full responsibility for ordering, stock control, and cleaning, and maintain the highest hygiene standards to retain our 5-star rating. You will also contribute to developing the café's offer, suggest new menu ideas, and support the café's involvement in railway events. The role is ideal for someone confident in the kitchen, highly organised, and proactive in leading a small team.

Key Responsibilities:

Food Preparation & Kitchen Duties

- Prepare and cook a variety of menu items, including sandwiches, toasties, bacon rolls, pasties, sausage rolls, and baked goods
- Prepare pre-ordered items such as cream teas and afternoon teas
- Maintain kitchen cleanliness and organisation to retain our 5-star hygiene rating
- Correctly date, store, and rotate stock
- Maintain and care for kitchen equipment

Ordering, Stock & Supplier Management

- Manage all stock ordering, monitoring usage and upcoming events
- Maintain good relationships with suppliers, ensuring competitive pricing and reliable deliveries
- Keep storerooms and fridges tidy, organised, and well-stocked

Supervisory & Administrative Duties

- Supervise the Café Assistant to ensure the front-of-house is clean, stocked, and welcoming
- Keep accurate records, including fridge temperatures, allergen information, and cleaning logs

- Train and support the assistant and any volunteers working in the café

Development & Contribution

- Suggest and trial new food items, specials, and seasonal offerings
- Take pride in the appearance and reputation of the café

Skills & Experience:

- Experience in a café or kitchen-based role, ideally with supervisory responsibility
- Strong cooking and food prep skills, including sandwich making and baking
- Organised, reliable, and able to work under pressure
- Good understanding of stock control and supplier management
- **Essential:** Level 1 Food Hygiene Certificate (must be willing to obtain Level 2 if offered the role)
- **Desirable:** Level 1 General Cookery Certificate

Job Details:

- Hours: 25.5 hours per week, typically Wednesdays, Saturdays & Sundays (8.30am – 5.00pm), plus occasional evenings and additional days for events
- You will be required to work all Bank Holidays and Tuesdays during the Summer holidays
- Start date: As soon as possible – ideally early to mid-September 2025
- Annualised hours: You will work a minimum of 130 days per year (mainly March to early November, plus December for Christmas service). All annual leave must be taken during the café's closed season (primarily January, February, and the final two weeks of November)
- Salary: £13.30/hour – annualised and paid in equal monthly instalments. This equates to approximately £14,697/year or £1,225/month, depending on start date
- Overtime paid at the standard hourly rate
- Statutory annual leave entitlement (must be taken during the closed season as above)
- Company pension scheme

What We Offer:

- A dynamic and relaxed work environment in a historical setting
- Opportunities for professional development and growth
- Staff discounts and access to special events
- The opportunity to shape and grow the café's offer.

How to Apply:

Interested candidates are invited to complete the application form ensuring they outline their demonstrable relevant experience and why they would be a great fit for this role.

Candidates who do not complete the application form in full will not be considered.

Please send your application via email to Peggy Römer, General Manager, at jobs@deanforestrailway.co.uk.

Due to the high volume of applications we receive, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an interview. If you do not hear from us within four weeks of the application deadline, please consider your application unsuccessful.

*Dean Forest Railway is an equal opportunity employer.
We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.*