



elmwood

# The Breakfast Club

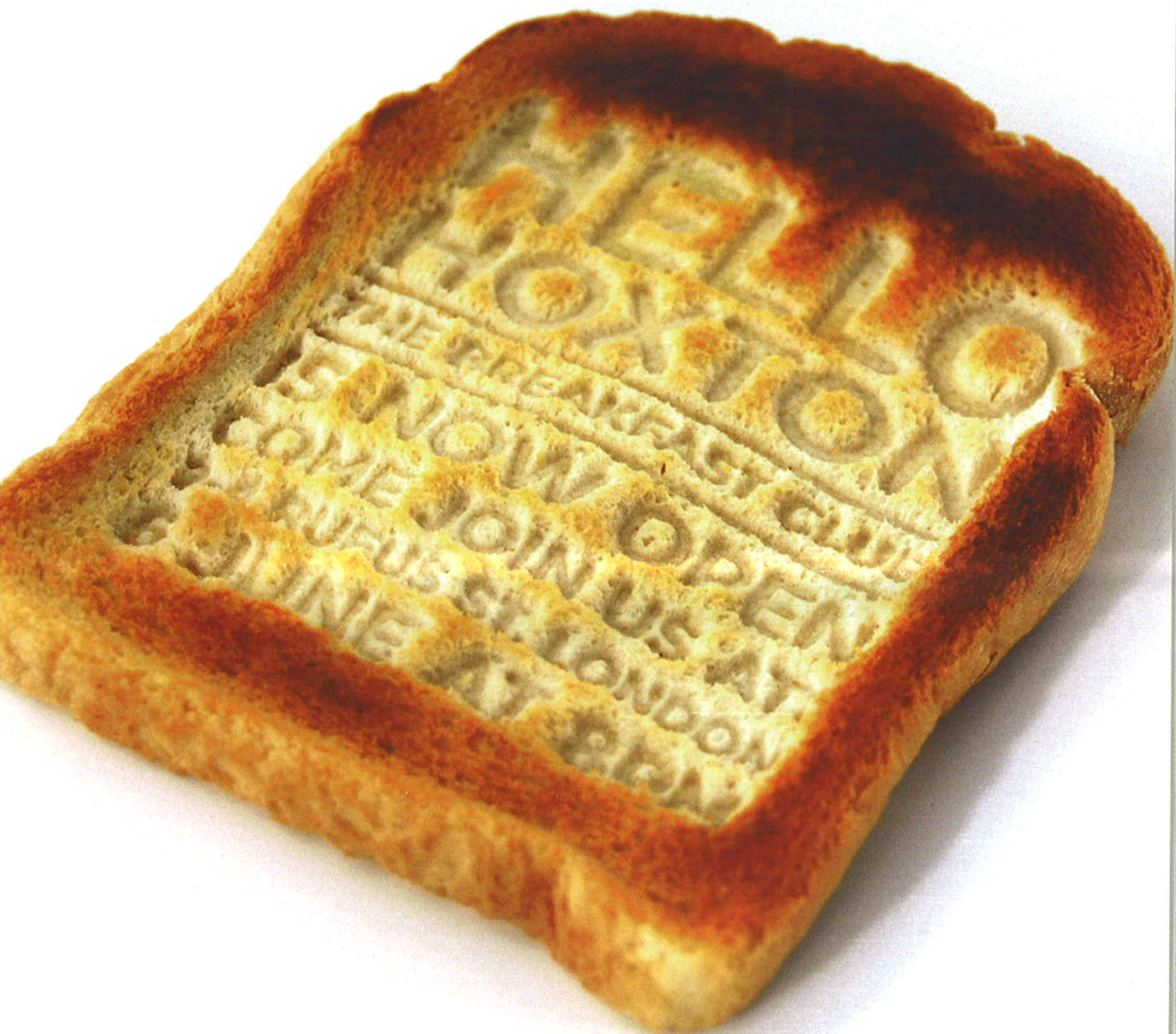
Category  
1 Corporate/Brand Identity

Sub Category  
1.2 Design and  
implementation costs  
under £100,000

Client  
The Breakfast Club

Design Consultancy  
Elmwood

Date  
June 2012



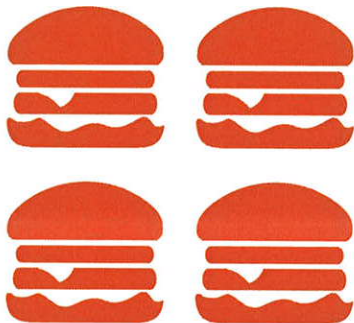


## 2. Executive summary



£0-£5m

in six years



4 London  
locations

in six years

**Breakfast in London is a fast-food affair and the franchise is king. We found a way to serve up some 'unique' personality and generate smiles along the way!**

Jonathan Arana-Morton and Alison Rooney had spotted a café up for grabs in Soho, London. They decided it was time to make their shared childhood dream of opening their own café come true. They called on us to help them stand out from the crowd.

We created a sunny-side-up identity for The Breakfast Club, complete with 80s styling. A few years on, and the story is more delicious than ever.

### **Seriously tasty figures**

Turnover on Day 1: £26.50

Turnover in 2011: £5,150,000

Our clients had zero experience in the catering industry so building a booming business in just a few years is a real result.

### **Growing when others are closing**

4 branches in six years

Each branch has its own vibe, but all focus firmly on that all-important ritual of breakfast.

### **Why have one brand when two are more fun?**

*A speakeasy for Spitalfields*

Following the success of the Breakfast Club brand our client decided to open a 'secret' bar at the Spitalfields branch. We developed a speakeasy-style identity that would generate intrigue and create a real buzz – it's already picked up recognition at three design awards.

### 3. Project overview

*The Breakfast Club*



*Breakfast Club stationery*



*Flexible pin badge identity*

#### Outline of brief

*The Breakfast Club* originally tasked us with a brand identity for their first branch in Soho that would:

- Stand out from ubiquitous chains and give them the foundation for a successful business
- Be somewhere people wanted to work
- Get noticed and generate PR without trying

And later, the brief for the invitation to their Hoxton branch was to:

- Create a breakfast-themed invitation that stood out without being too lavish
- Get a great turn-out for their launch party

Later still, the brief for the *Breakfast Club* speakeasy spin-off, *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town*, asked us to create a brand identity that:

- Is intriguing but makes people feel 'in the know' when they understand it
- Suggests Spitalfields as an 'early 'til late' venue

#### Description

##### **A taste of 80s nostalgia**

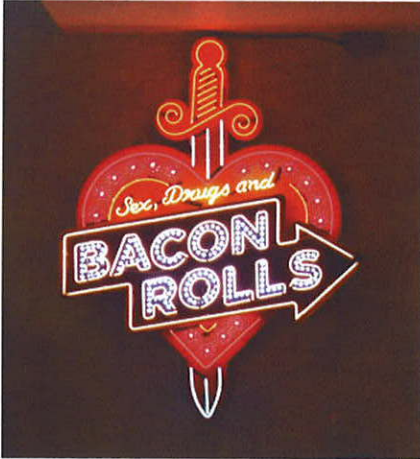
In these austere and pressured times, people are nostalgic for the days when sitting down to breakfast was an everyday occurrence. It made sense for us to hark back a few decades for inspiration. *The Breakfast Club* is named after the 80s cult film. The exterior is egg-yolk yellow while inside, you'll find the contents of Arana-Morton's childhood bedroom, with authentic artefacts like Lucky Trolls and a Knight Rider remote control car. There's a welcoming, home-from-home feeling at all four cafes that they've now opened, but each one has its own personality.

Pancakes and 'eggulars' are the most popular morning dishes for a clientele that runs the gamut from skinny-jeaned hipsters (they must have good metabolisms on them, we'll say that much), through to celebs like Keira Knightley, Hugh Grant, Liz Hurley and David Hasselhoff. Yes, the Hoff!



### 3. Project overview continued

*The Breakfast Club*



*Spitalfields by day*



*Spitalfields by night through the Smeg fridge*



*The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town:  
additional revenue stream*

#### Day and night

Jonathan and Alison's newest opening, the branch in Spitalfields, does double duty as a speakeasy-style cocktail den known as *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town*. Thirsty would-be hedonists must ask at the counter to see the Mayor, and only then will they be ushered through an entranceway that's cunningly concealed as a Smeg fridge. Seeing as Jonathan and Alison were so pleased with the original identity they came back for more and we worked together to create the identity for this illicit spin-off. Humour is another great antidote to austere times so we were keen to make use of it.

#### Overview of market

We're not short of cafes in the UK, and especially not in Soho, where *The Breakfast Club* began. Big chains like Starbucks and Pret are well represented and there's also a highly competitive independent scene. Nevertheless, Jonathan and Alison were determined to succeed, and ploughed **£140,000** of savings into getting to opening day. As you'll see from the results section, they're now doing well. We should, of course, remember that not all such businesses are succeeding. The current climate means that, according to accountants Wilkins Kennedy, 2011 saw a **19%** rise in insolvencies amongst eateries.

It's a similar story for *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* as the area around Spitalfields is full of interesting places to sip a drink or two. But the identity, and the feeling that you have to be in on a secret to get in, has helped to draw the customers in.

#### Project launch date

*The Breakfast Club*, Soho – 2005

*The Breakfast Club*, Angel – 2007

*The Breakfast Club*, Hoxton – 2009

*The Breakfast Club*, Spitalfields – 2011

*The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* – 2011

*The Breakfast Club*, Bus – 2012

#### Size of design budget

*The Breakfast Club* identity £3,320

Spitalfields, *Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* identity & Key invitation £6,410

*Breakfast Club* Bus identity £4,900

*Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* branded cat food tins £790



### 3. Project overview continued

*The Breakfast Club*



*Breakfast Club, Soho – the original*



*Hoxton branch invitation*



*The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town invitation*

#### Outline of design solution

'The Breakfast Club' name was perfect for this project – it communicates the brand's focus on the breakfast ritual while being inspired by that 80s nostalgia to create a community with a real sense of belonging.

#### Pinning down, or up, the idea

Our first step was to create the brand identity itself. The brand colour of yellow hinted at bright, sunny mornings and egg yolks, of course. We also looked to a stalwart accessory of the decade – the pin badge – in a choice of colours and designs. Each café gives away pin-badges to spread the brand London-wide and beyond.

#### More than a logo

We wanted everything we made for the Soho café to say 'breakfast' and have that 'spirit of the 80s' feel. We created signage, menus, stationery, launch invitations, flyers and loyalty cards. The brand's tone of voice was crucial too, and included engaging copy and more than a pinch of film dialogue and song lyrics to make a visit something genuinely memorable.

#### Toast 'n' post

The next task was to design the invite for the opening to the Hoxton branch. We landed on the idea of die-stamping the party information on a piece of toast and sending out 100 in the post, safely stowed in bespoke boxes. It was easier said than done, mind, and we experimented with 15 types of bread, 3 die stamps and even a blow torch stencil – but a good old standard toaster worked the best in the end. There were 5 mishaps for every legible invite we managed, so it was a real labour of love. A hungry bunch, our designers didn't mind eating up at least some of the rejects. 100 were sent out, securing a great crowd for the launch.

#### I'd like to see the mayor!

Named after a famous piece of dialogue from a 'Cheers' episode, *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* was another joy to work on. The identity and logo take inspiration from the tradition of Keys to the City, an honour bestowed by a city mayor upon esteemed visitors, residents or cool kids. The golden key provided the perfect icon to communicate the secret in-the-know nature of the bar. It also features a little hidden twist in the form of cats ears, craftily cut out of the tooth of the key.

The speakeasy drinking den was a big hit and we created business cards, menus and comic cat food tins to house rolled up menus. The signage needed to be suitably subtle, so we hung the shaped key from the *Breakfast Club* signage outside. The key theme continued for the launch invite, which saw us create oversized gold keys which were mailed out in mysterious black envelopes sealed with gold wax with the *Breakfast Club* logo embossed into it.



## 4. Summary of results

*The Breakfast Club*



in six years

Four new cafés  
in six years

‘A queue of hungry  
Londoners forms  
outside a little yellow  
café. By mid-morning  
the line is 50m long.’

By Ginny Light – The Times,  
Tuesday 15 February 2011



Press coverage

### The Breakfast Club

A successful business

#### Increased turnover

Turnover on the first day in Soho was **£26.50**. 7 years on, turnover across the 4 branches last year was **£5,150,000**. A whopping **£20,000** a week of that is from the original Soho branch.

#### Increase in market share

Opening a new café every 2 years represents a genuine increase in market share. This is especially impressive considering the fact we mentioned earlier, that insolvencies among eateries were up 19% in 2011.

#### A good place to work

Eateries have a notoriously high staff turnover but *The Breakfast Club* has been shortlisted for a Caterer.com Best Employer in Hospitality Award. The 120 *Breakfast Club* staff seem happy to work there. The Urban Junkies site says ‘the staff treat the place like it’s their baby’, while The Rough Guide review mentions ‘cheery staff’ and The Evening Standard declares ‘clearly the kitchen staff enjoy cooking’.

#### Fame

*The Breakfast Club* has certainly been getting itself noticed. We’ve spotted everything from formal press coverage through to plenty of social media action. Here are just a few of our favourites:

‘Every Saturday morning, when the rest of Soho is rubbing its eyes from the night’s excesses, a queue of hungry Londoners forms outside a little yellow café. By mid-morning the line is 50m long, but the customers are happy to wait for *The Breakfast Club*’s eggs Benedict and chorizo hash browns.’

By Ginny Light – The Times, Tuesday 15 February 2011  
[www.mueslilover.com/2011/02/muesli-lover-in-times.html](http://www.mueslilover.com/2011/02/muesli-lover-in-times.html)

## 4. Summary of results continued

*The Breakfast Club*



*Festival bus*

'The name is inspired by the 1980s Hollywood film, but it isn't just at breakfast that this excellent split-level Soho café excels.'

*The Guardian Guide to Britain's Best Independent Cafés*  
[www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2008/feb/25/foodanddrink.travelfoodanddrink](http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2008/feb/25/foodanddrink.travelfoodanddrink)

*The Breakfast Club* as a whole is one of the most checked-in to independent cafés on Foursquare. As of May 14 2012, there'd been this many check-ins:

Soho 1,997

Angel 1,743

Hoxton 3,672

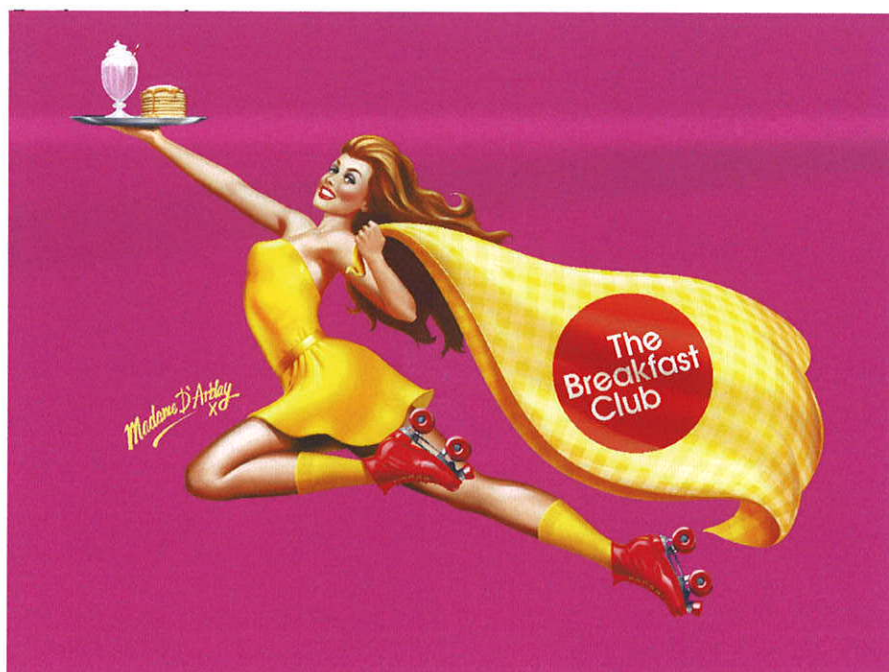
Spitalfields 1,069

[www.foursquare.com/v/the-breakfast-club/4ac5bda6f964a5206cb220e3](http://www.foursquare.com/v/the-breakfast-club/4ac5bda6f964a5206cb220e3)

*The Breakfast Club* has also notched up over 4,000 followers on Twitter.  
[www.twitter.com/#!/thebrekkyclub](http://www.twitter.com/#!/thebrekkyclub)

### Looking to the future

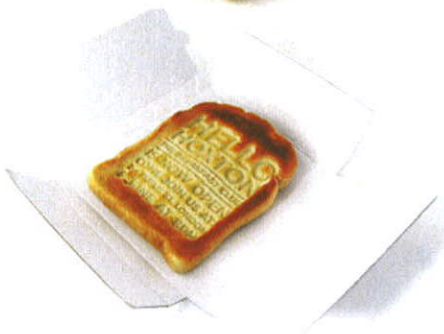
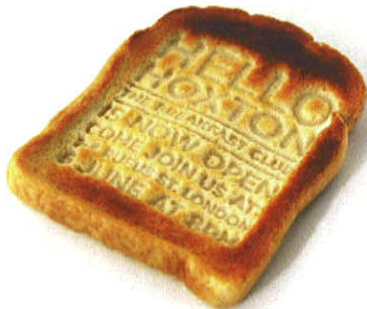
If you're visiting any UK festivals this summer, keep a hungry eye out for the new *Breakfast Club* bus. We looked to the iconic 'Bomber Belle' livery designs of American warplanes for inspiration – something that would capture the new venture's pioneering spirit and remain true to the vintage, tongue-in-cheek approach of the *Breakfast Club*. Flying the tablecloth is 'Madame D'Arblay', named after the Soho street in London where the Breakfast Club's first café was opened.





## 4. Summary of results continued

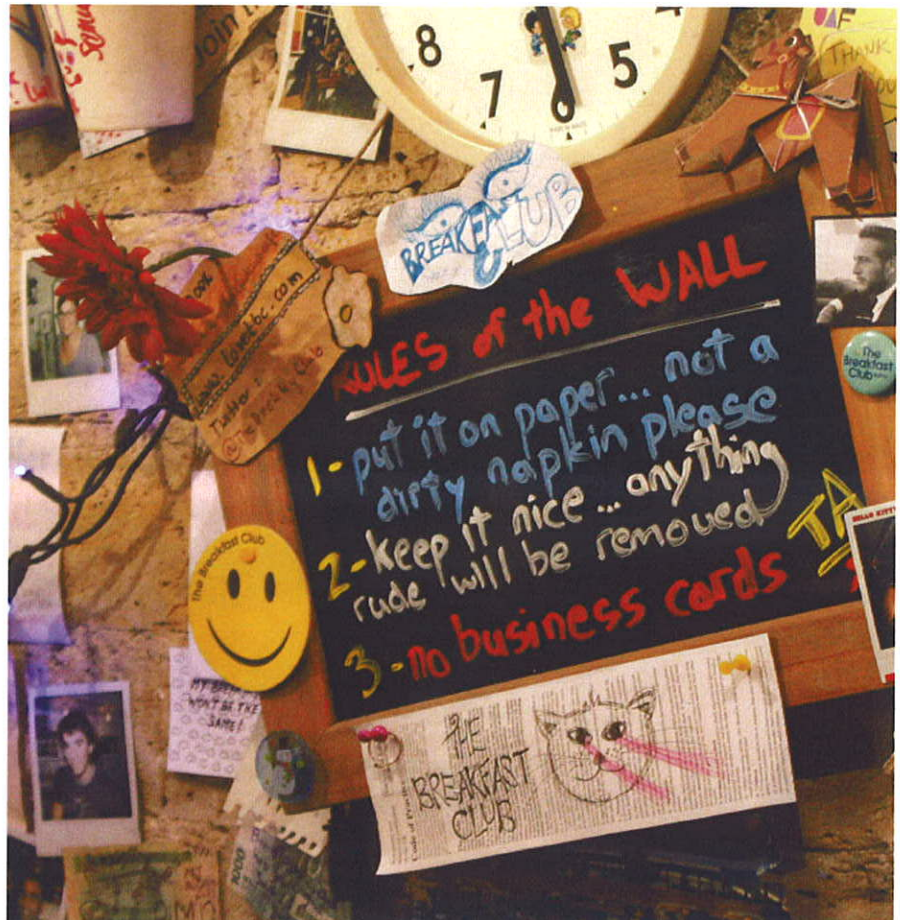
*The Breakfast Club*



*Hoxton branch invitation*

Our Toast invite for the launch of the Hoxton branch did more than drum up fabulous attendance. It also turned the heads of design judges around the world.

- New York Festivals Awards: Finalist – Announcements/Invitation Cards Collateral (2010)
- Mobius Awards: 1st Place Statuette – Food, Beverages: Restaurants, Fast Food (2009)
- Mobius Best in Show 2009
- Cream Yorkshire Awards: Award – Direct Mail (2009)

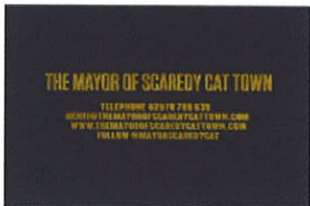
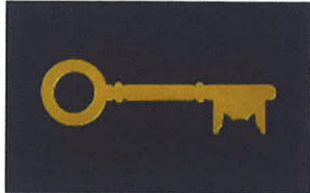


*Café-goers love to pin fun stuff on the walls!!*



## 4. Summary of results continued

*The Breakfast Club*



*Opening invitation*



*Opening invitation*

### The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town

#### Make people feel 'in the know'

As Jonathan Arana-Morton says, '*The Breakfast Club* brand has always been about fun and not taking ourselves too seriously. *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* was a challenge. How do you carry on that slightly tongue-in-cheek, fun approach to your brand whilst also conveying an air of exclusivity? The key/cat logo works brilliantly on so many levels'.

#### Creating an 'early 'til late' venue

The launch of *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* means that customers can visit the Spitalfields branch not only for morning and daytime dining but also to drink the night away. Jonathan Arana-Morton points out that 'having a site that works both day and night has been key to that business's success'.

#### Design awards

Our work on the identity for *The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town* did well too.

- Roses Design Awards: Finalist – Identity (2011)
- Cream Yorkshire Awards: Award – Corporate Identity (2011)
- New York Festivals: Finalist – Company Identity – Brand Identity/ Logos/Stationery (2012)



## 5. Other influencing factors

*The Breakfast Club*

### Other influencing factors

The only other factors are word of mouth and PR, but these have happened quite naturally, inspired by the brand's design and individuality.

### Research resources

**Client** data

**Growth Capital:** Serving up the most important meal.  
How London's entrepreneurs are bucking the economic gloom.  
By Lucy Tobin, London Evening Standard, 19 March 2012

**Breakfast like a king**, by Ginny Light, The Times, 15 February 2011

**The Guardian**, Guide to Britain's Best Independent Cafés

**Wilkins Kennedy, Accountants**, [www.wilkinskennedy.com](http://www.wilkinskennedy.com)

