



2023 Impact Report

A review of our year and an update on our mission to reduce reoffending



Executive summary

Welcome to the 2023 Clink Charity Funders Update. I would like to start simply by saying thank you for your support and your belief in our work. The dedication of our supporters, staff and partners makes our mission possible – and means we are making a real difference to people’s lives.

In 2023, we trained 830 students in prisons around the UK, we delivered around 550 NVQ qualifications and we placed 52% of our students into employment. Given the clear challenges the Prison Estate is facing, I hope you will agree that these are phenomenal outcomes achieved by our wonderful staff.

At a recent staff conference, I was reminded of the impact small differences can make when our Support and Mentoring team were presenting to the rest of the charity. Their role is to work with our graduates, to understand the challenges they are facing and to provide practical solutions to help them rebuild their lives.

Quite often the smallest gesture can have the biggest impact, whether that is access to a bank account, arranging travel to see family members at Christmas or simply taking time to work through a problem over a cup of coffee.

It is these small touches that make The Clink Charity unique and, ultimately, successful in our mission to reduce reoffending.

This year is set to be a very exciting one for The Clink Charity as we commission a second events training and delivery kitchen located outside of a prison. Being outside the gate will allow us to train more people released on temporary license (ROTL), employ our own graduates, and offer apprenticeships to people at risk of entering prison, or who have left prison without access to training.

Once again, thank you for being a part of our journey. With your help, we look forward to another year of supporting people to make better choices and sharing many more positive stories with you.



Yvonne Thomas
Chief Executive

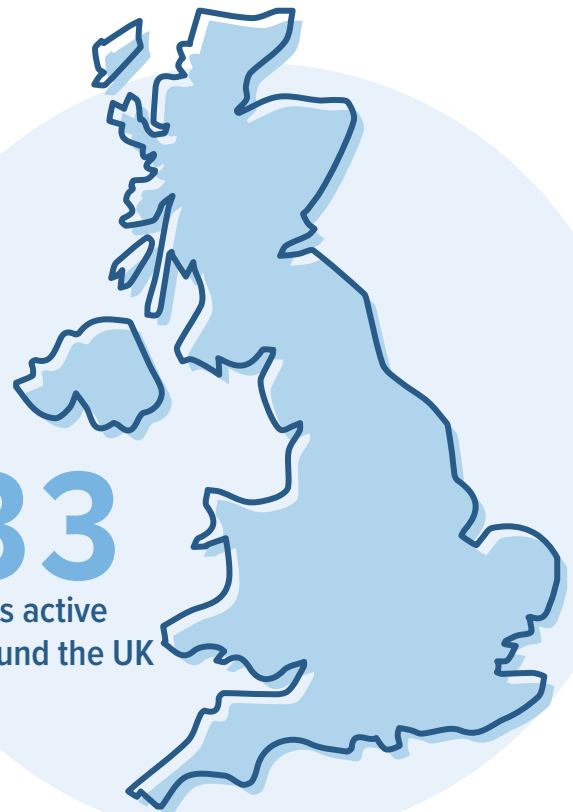
The Clink in numbers - 2023



830
students trained



550
qualifications delivered



33
sites active
around the UK



CLINK KITCHENS

500
students
trained



CLINK GARDENS

64
students
trained



CLINK RESTAURANTS

165
students
trained



CLINK BAKERY

20
students
trained

CLINK EVENTS



30,000
guests served



200
events catered for



170
students released



71%
of events prepared and
delivered by our graduates



23,182
training hours
delivered

52%

of students into
employment, with a
further **24%** working
towards employment



Clink Events

Clink Events enjoyed its best-ever year, serving approximately 30,000 guests across 200 events in 2023. We now also have a steady stream of graduates who work for Clink Events following a successful period of ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence) employment.

All food for these prestigious events was prepared by women in HMP Downview studying for their City & Guilds Level 2 and 3 qualifications under the supervision of our Chef Trainers.

Excitingly, as Clink Events' reputation is quickly growing as a high-end social enterprise caterer, we were named as an accredited supplier at some fantastic new venues including Battersea Arts Centre, The Design Museum, Westminster Abbey and The Roundhouse.

The focus for 2024 will be on opening the additional events kitchen at Herne Hill, which will allow us to train more students and also work closely with more young adults in the community who could be at risk of offending.

As part of this, we will be launching a 'Clink Foundation Certificate for Front of House Services in Events' in partnership with the Institute of Hospitality as an entry level to our apprenticeship and NVQ career pathways.



Support and Mentoring

Our Support and Mentoring Team performed brilliantly in 2023, especially given the well-publicised challenges the Prison Estate has been facing. Paired with reduced resources, overcrowding in prisons can lead to a number of issues including, but not limited to, poor mental health and increased risk of violence. As such, it would be difficult to describe the environment we are operating in as anything less than extremely challenging.

With that said, we are proud to say that in 2023 we managed the release of 170 graduates, over half of which are now in employment. A further 24% are actively working towards securing employment.

It remains our firm belief that time spent in prison must be used to prepare for a better life and The Clink Charity offers opportunities to those seeking them. Employment is proven to create stability and reduce reoffending, while providing prison leavers with a sense of empowerment and independence.

Our support workers work tirelessly to understand our graduates' needs and help them prepare for release in the best possible way. Often the smallest gesture can make the biggest impact and it is these small details that are the difference makers.



Clink Restaurants

Our Clink Charity Restaurants in HMPs Brixon, High Down and Styal performed well in 2023, despite the dual challenge presented by the cost-of-living crisis and the pressures the Prison Estate itself is under.

Excitingly, all of our restaurants were named in the top 10% of restaurants worldwide by TripAdvisor, which is an incredible testament to our staff and students.

We trained 165 students within our restaurants last year, many of whom are now preparing for a career in hospitality, having benefited from working alongside our Chef Trainers and serving the public throughout the year.

Contact with the outside world is crucial in enabling our students to gain hands on experience within the sector – and to reassure them that the public are willing to listen to their individual stories and circumstances.

In October, Michelin-starred chef Glynn Purnell, as seen on Great British Menu, Saturday Kitchen, Great British Food Revival, The Secret Chef and My Kitchen Rules UK cooked and served alongside the women training in our Styal kitchen and restaurant to produce a bespoke four-course dinner for guests on the evening.

In November, The Clink's chef ambassador Cyrus Todiwala OBE DL cooked a delicious menu with our students for an evening with 70 guests at HMP Brixton. Guests were treated to a Portuguese-Goan inspired menu which included dishes like spiced prawn croquettes for their starter, Vindaloo of pork and Crioula sausages for main course and a delicious pastel de nata for dessert.

Events like these offer an opportunity for our students to learn from some of the best in the industry and further develop their skills.

Finally, we also took part in our second Unlocking Hospitality campaign in partnership with New Futures Network. As well as supporting 8 regional HMPPS-led events at HMPPS sites around the UK, we ran three dedicated employer networking events at our three restaurants.

We were joined by 40 representatives from some of the biggest names in the UK hospitality industry. Many of our students proactively approached employers to find out more about their businesses and it was fantastic to witness verbal offers of employment being made.

Clink Kitchens

Our Clink Kitchens project expanded this year, thanks to the dedication of our team and philanthropic funders. In 2023, we trained just over 500 students across our Clink Kitchens projects, which is more than double the number we trained in 2022.

Now operational in 30 prisons around the UK, Clink Kitchens trains people in prison kitchens to NVQ Levels 1 and 2 in Food Preparation and Cookery. We increased our teaching sites for this programme by 10% during 2023 and increased occupancy of training places to an average of 70% which compares very favourably with similar vocational training schemes in prisons.

As Clink Kitchens matured, we were able to realise the ambition of ensuring that students could complete qualifications if they were moved mid-sentence. Because of our near-national coverage, we qualified and supported many prisoners to complete NVQs despite short-notice moves, often to prisons a long way from their original training site. We believe this to be a first in the prison estate.

These achievements are despite the well-documented external pressures faced both by the Prison Estate and the hospitality sector as a whole and, as such, are a further testament to our fantastic team.

We will continue to refine the project through 2024 to optimise the maximum number of trainees in prisons that hold men and women who can most benefit from our training and support.



Clink Gardens

Our Clink Gardens at HMP Send and HMP High Down had a brilliant year, training 64 students across both sites. We awarded 19 NVQ qualifications relating to horticulture and a further 20 have been signed off, awaiting certification.

In addition, our Head Trainer, Steve Head, was recognised in the Inspire Justice Awards, receiving a national award for his work in helping our students turn their lives around.

The award entry cited:

“Steve’s naturally calm and encouraging manner has helped dozens of prisoners adjust to life in the prison by giving the opportunity to take part in purposeful activity outside in the fresh air.

“So much so that two prisoners with a history of self-harm were receiving less frequent observations having worked with Steve.”

Finally, we continued our innovative “Plot to Plate” programme for women with multiple challenges who struggle to engage with education or activities in prison. Through the therapeutic benefits of horticulture, we will help these women reconnect and start their rehabilitation journey.



The Clink Bakery

The Clink Bakery in Brixton enjoyed a brilliant year in 2023, supplying Clink sites with fantastic baked goods, including many Clink Events clients, too. In much the same way as our other projects, it supports students to train, qualify, find accommodation and secure employment opportunities once they are released from prison.

We successfully trained 20 students in the Clink Bakery in 2023 and delivered 8 qualifications: 4 in Level 2 Patisserie and a further 4 in Level 2 Nutrition.

Excitingly, we were thrilled to be named Social Enterprise Bakery of the Year in 2023 – the first award the Bakery has received since opening in 2022.

The Bakery Team attended several markets across London last year, which helped to raise awareness of our work, while also supplying some delicious baked goods to customers.

Perhaps most impressively, during the festive period, the Clink Bakery students prepared over 200 Christmas hampers, 5000 mince pies and 150 Christmas puddings.

The Clink Bakery continues to operate as a highly successful training project producing talented bakers for the industry.



Clare's story

👉👉 *I started work with Clink Kitchens in August 2022 whilst in custody. I was then transferred to open conditions and The Clink supported my transfer and my continued learning plan.*

I found the transfer to open conditions a little overwhelming, but the support received from my resettlement worker was exceptional. She has gone above and beyond to help me transfer from one prison to the other and encouraged me to keep going when things looked bleak.

Working with The Clink has given me confidence and new skills which I have taken with me and able to understand food on another level. My tutor was fabulous and extremely knowledgeable. She made me feel at ease and if I was unsure or struggling she would be patient and guide me through the process.

I believe that if prisoners are given the chance to work with The Clink, then they should definitely take the opportunity. The Clink has been my lifeline whilst in custody, it gave me focus, and a goal to work towards that is a transferable skill on the other side of the wall. The Clink made my custodial sentence a little easier to cope with and gave me hope. 🗨️



Looking to the future

2024 will be a very exciting year for the students, graduates and staff at The Clink Charity. Here is a brief snapshot of some of the key projects we will undertake.

- Our **Clink Events expansion** means we will be commissioning a second events training and delivery kitchen, our first located outside of a prison. Being outside the gate will allow us to train more people released on temporary license (ROTL), employ our own graduates, and offer apprenticeships to people at risk of entering prison, or who have left prison without access to training.
- Paired with the Clink Events expansion project, we will be able to work more closely with the local communities in which we are already embedded and focus not only on reducing reoffending, but on **prevention**. We will achieve this by continuing to work with organisations such as Centrepoint to reach young people who may be at risk.
- The launch of our **Clink Charity Apprenticeship Scheme** provides the opportunity for our students to embark on an exciting apprenticeship with some of the UK's largest employers and secure a guaranteed job on release. We are pleased to announce that HMPPS has selected us exclusively to pilot apprenticeships in the closed prison estate adding to our existing apprenticeship scheme.

The Clink Charity continues to operate in a challenging environment in which external factors play a significant part. The Prison Estate has been placed firmly under the spotlight in 2023 and will continue to be so this year and the hospitality sector has been hit by the dual cost of living crisis and faces a skills shortage.

We remain grateful to our philanthropic funders and donors for believing in our work, for engaging with our students and, most of all, for helping us give them the second chance we know they deserve.

Now more than ever, society needs good, talented people to overcome the challenges we all face. Your support means we can continue to develop and nurture those people, so that they can rebuild their lives.

Thank you.

www.theclinkcharity.org

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CHARITY


THE
CLINK
EVENTS


THE
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RESTAURANT


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