



D&A Community Kitchen Case Study

The D&A Community Kitchen, funded by **Angus Local Employability Partnership** and **NHS Tayside Charitable Foundation**, operated from March 2024 to November 2025 with 5 groups across Angus & Dundee.

The project was launched to address food insecurity, social isolation, and barriers to employment. With support from two key funding partners, the project delivered a transformative model of learning for unemployed and inactive individuals, using food as a catalyst for personal growth, community connection, and employability.

Summary



Sparking food joy...

The project was developed in response to:

- Food insecurity and limited cooking knowledge
- Poor mental health and social isolation
- Barriers to employment and education
- Support needs for disengaged youth and vulnerable families

We:

- Established and embedded the D&A Community Kitchen model
- Equipped learners with lifelong cooking and food-budgeting skills
- Delivered soft employability skills e.g. teamwork, communication, reliability
- Delivered core employability skills e.g. First Aid, Food Health & Hygiene
- Supported progression into education, training, or employment



Key People

1

Angus Local Employability Partnership

Funded the first 2 kitchens in Angus, delivered in our Arbroath campus kitchens.

Referring Community Partners

Angus Parental Employability Team
Angus Resettlement Team
Tayside Council on Alcohol
DWP
Homestart Arbroath

2

NHS Charitable Foundation

Funded 3 kitchens in Dundee, delivered in our Kingsway kitchens.

Referring Community Partners

CLD
Tayside Council on Alcohol
Linlathen Works/ Brooksbank
Women's Aid
The Change Centre
Barnardos
One Parent Families
CLD Greenfield Academy



RHET Partnership

Our partnership with the Royal Highland Education Trust gave our learners first-hand experience of food production through farm visits, butter and bread making, and direct engagement with farmers and butchers. This sparked curiosity, built confidence, and deepened their understanding of food systems - beyond the supermarket shelf.



MTK Partnership

Our partnership with the Mobile Teaching Kitchen and NNedPro sparked a culinary adventure that pushed our learners beyond their comfort zones. They discovered how to cook nutrient-packed meals, rich in both micro and macro goodness, on a shoestring budget. Using food templates from India, the Mediterranean, and Mexico, they explored how simple ingredients can unlock a world of flavour and health benefits.

Five of our learners have now become MTK Ambassadors for the social enterprise, sharing their skills across Tayside and empowering other families to cook nutritious meals.

The highlight? Selling their food at the Dundee Food Festival and presenting their work to food and health specialists at the Bonar Hall—a proud moment that showcased their growth, confidence, and community leadership.



61 learners

61 households

- Unemployed parents
- Low income households
- Homeless Accommodation
- Young people in NEET
- School disengagers
- YUAS



"The kitchen gave me more than just food...
it gave me a sense of belonging and purpose."



"I've loved being in the kitchen with great women, who will now be my friends for life."



"I didn't think I could do anything well, but now I can cook and work well in a professional kitchen. It feels great."

Impact

Cohort 1

- 3 transitioned to D&A
- 5 have become MTK Ambassadors for the social enterprise project
- 1 engaging in D&A Touchpoints
- 1 engaging with other services
- 1 transitioned to employment
- 1 full time parent

Cohort 2

- 5 transitioned to D&A
- 1 transitioned to employment
- 4 engaging with other services
- 2 full time parents

Cohort 3

- 5 transitioned to D&A
- 4 transitioned to employment
- 4 engaging with other services
- 2 engaging in D&A Touchpoints
- 3 staying at school under CLD



Impact

Cohort 4

- 1 transitioning to D&A in August
- 2 transitioned to D&A
- 2 engaging with other services
- 1 engaging in D&A Touchpoints
- 1 transitioned to employment
- 2 full time parents

Cohort 5

- 3 transitioning to college in August
- 8 staying at school but excited to apply to D&A in the future

100% retention

100% engagement & increase in skills & confidence

100% mindset shift on college as an option for them or their children

32% transition to college

18% transition to work



What we achieved

- Delivered 5 cohorts of inclusive, skills-based learning
- Created a safe, welcoming space for young people and adults who wanted to grow in confidence and skills
- Built confidence, routine, and social connection with people from all corners of Tayside and Angus, using the project as a platform to nurture positive relationships across age, life stage, gender, locality, and with those seeking sanctuary in our communities.
- Promoted healthy eating, batch cooking and affordability.
- Supported transitions into education, employment, and support services



**61 households
have been positively
impacted by the
D&A Community
Kitchen project**