

COOKING CHAMPIONS

A COOK FOR CHANGE CASE STUDY

I'm Clare Donovan, Founder and CEO of Cooking Champions. We are a charity providing food support, education and training from our community kitchen in Ponders End, North London. We support between 300 and 350 people per week via our food bank, community lunches and free-to-access cooking lessons.

Since taking part in the Cook for Change bootcamp, we've focused on strengthening the sustainability of our charity, by increasing revenue from our private and corporate catering services. As this income grows, we'll be able to reinvest profits back into our core charitable programmes – allowing us to expand our impact while reducing reliance on grants.

We've reviewed our current offering, learning to be a lot more precise with costings and starting to adapt our menus. We have had two staff training sessions with more planned. I have also freed up some of my key time by appointing a member of staff to deal with enquiries and bookings.

As someone who started a charity with minimal experience, the journey has often felt like a rollercoaster. The Cook for Change programme has given me something I hadn't had in a long time – space to pause, reflect, and reassess priorities.

It has helped me find clarity, confidence, and fresh motivation. Hearing from experts working in similar spaces was incredibly reassuring, and the chance to network with other founders at a similar stage has been invaluable.

It's no exaggeration to say that being part of Cook for Change has had a significant impact on guiding me – and the entire organisation – through the biggest period of change we've experienced since we began five years ago.



COOK
FOR GOOD