

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 350 people per week via our food bank, community lunches and free-to-access cooking lessons.

Since taking part in Cook for Change, we've focused on strengthening our sustainability, 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.

Highlights from the last few months include:

- Continuing to work on tighter costings, which has enabled the business to be more efficient and profitable.
- Catering the Cook for Good graduation, which was a great way to showcase our range of food.
- Employing two members of staff in our kitchen, and planning a new community garden, opening soon.
- Holding our first corporate volunteering day, which was a massive success.
- And developing a much clearer strategy about what needs to be done in the next six months.

As someone who started a charity with minimal experience, the journey has often felt like a rollercoaster. Cook for Change 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.

Being part of Cook for Change has had a significant impact on guiding me, and the organisation, through the biggest period of change we've experienced since we began.



COOK
FOR GOOD