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Impact Report

We have published our first impact report, it is available to download on our website's impact page. The report details what we have achieved over the past two years, who we have supported, and the evidence of our work.

www.oswinproject.org.uk/impact

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www.oswinproject.org.uk/newsletter



A New Chapter

Baking Out

Our prison bakery in HMP Northumberland has reached capacity so we needed more space to meet demand. Sodexo, who run the prison, have offered us a disused kitchen, which has been refurbished into a production bakery.

We will start work with 15 prisoners, led by an experienced baker. Employment is the strongest predictor of desistance from crime, and food production offers realistic career pathways. The prisoners learn commercial baking skills: bread production, patisserie, food safety, and stock management. They are not just passing time; they are building futures.

The bakery will supply our wholesale customers and will increase production capacity for our outlets like Cafe 16 in Newcastle Cathedral.

It creates a clear progression route: prisoners can move from roles in Cafe 16 to skilled baker positions in Baking Out, then potentially into community employment through our network.

The refurbishment involved substantial work: new equipment, repairing the ventilation, health and safety compliance, food hygiene systems, and painting. Sodexo's support made this possible, enabling the use of a space that would otherwise be empty. It demonstrates what can be achieved when prison, charities, and employers work together effectively.

This investment was made possible by the generous donations from The Scottish Power Foundation and the Conby Trust which is held at the North East Community Foundation.



Self Employment Training

Inside & Out

As people with criminal records face barriers to mainstream employment, self-employment can offer an alternative route to sustainable income and independence. In the Autumn, a group of Oswinners completed an introduction to self-employment, developing skills in business planning, financial management, marketing, and tax obligations. The course enabled the exploration of ideas and gave participants the confidence to explore further.



Volunteer Achievement

Changing the Cycle

Dale became the first volunteer in the bike shop to pass Cytech Tech 2, a significant milestone for our shop at HMP Northumberland. This qualification means he can support Oswinners in their learning, and can service customers bikes, and perform pre-delivery safety inspections. His achievement improves the team's capacity and demonstrates the value of investing in the skills development of our volunteers.



New Cold Storage

Farm Shop

A new commercial fridge arrived in the farm shop this summer, thanks to a local funder. It has significantly expanded our capacity to stock fresh goods, being twice the size of the previous one. We can now offer many more dairy products, fresh produce, and other temperature-sensitive items. The upgrade means customers have access to a wider range of quality food products.



Changing Lives Xmas Event

Cafe 16 Newcastle Cathedral

Café 16 in Newcastle Cathedral once again catered for the Changing Lives' event, providing a Christmas dinner for homeless people in Newcastle. Lunch was served in a festive atmosphere. Crucially, companionship and connection to support services was offered to some of the city's most vulnerable residents.

'I keep building on my independence and self-confidence and I am getting used to working around the public when the shop gets busy.'

An Oswinner who works in Growing Out farm shop



Local Crafters

Growing Out

We now sell greetings cards in the farm shop, made by prisoners at HMP Northumberland, offering customers unique, handcrafted cards.



Building Skills

Inside & Out

John, Manager of Inside & Out, recently completed a dry-stone walling course in Cumbria. He thoroughly enjoyed the experience, gaining valuable traditional skills and knowledge that blend craftsmanship with practical outdoor work. Now back at work, John has enthusiastically begun sharing these techniques with his team, strengthening their capabilities and fostering a culture of continuous learning and development.

“I learnt valuable skills that I did not expect to use again but it prepared me for a job that I could walk straight into... I am loving my new job and I have also started an apprenticeship with Greene King”

An Oswinner who worked in Cafe 16 at HMP Northumberland



Letters Patent Ceremony

Cafe 16 in Newcastle Cathedral

In October the Letters Patent was held at Newcastle Cathedral, an annual civic event which marks the start of the new legal year. It is hosted by the High Sheriffs of Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. It is a high-profile event and gives the opportunity for the team in café 16 to demonstrate their professionalism.



Wholesale Growth

Baking Out

Our wholesale customer base continues to grow: Lesbury Shop, Foxton Golf Club, The Harbour Inn, Ethos, Kyloe House and Alnwick Gardens now buy from us regularly. These businesses trust our quality and reliability, ordering baked goods and prepared foods for their own operations. The wholesale work gives us a reliable revenue stream and provides prisoners with production experience at commercial scale.



Rural Infrastructure

Inside & Out

The Inside & Out team has been repairing stone walls for several local landowners across Northumberland. These historic boundary walls are characteristic features of the county's landscape. Repairing rather than replacing them preserves traditional craftsmanship and saves landowners money. The work requires careful skills, attention to detail and understanding of agricultural needs. John the manager of the Inside & Out team recently completed a dry-stone walling course and is enjoying passing his skills on to the team.



Event Catering

Cafe 16 in HMP Northumberland

Café 16 in HMP Northumberland catered numerous events this year: staff buffets, “Bacon Butty” events for veterans and a number of formal occasions. The catering work provides prisoners with commercial experience in a controlled environment, developing skills that can be transferred to employment.



Community Outreach

Changing the Cycle

The bike shop team has delivered its first community outreach event: a bike repair day at Lesbury shop on the first weekend of December. This expanded our reach beyond the prison. We are also offering discounted servicing to Wansbeck Wheelers members, a local inclusive cycling club that supports people to stay active. Both initiatives build connections with the local community.



Growing Volunteers

Growing Out

Ten people now volunteer with us at the farm shop, including some on placement programmes. They are gaining retail and customer service experience, learning stock management, cash handling and customer skills. For Oswinners with gaps in employment history or facing barriers to work, the farm shop provides a supportive environment to develop confidence and practical skills.



Pegswood Site Clearance

Inside & Out

Over the summer, the Inside & Out team cleared and made safe the burnt-out Joiners House in Pegswood for the Welbeck Estate, a complex and very dirty demolition project. The work demonstrated the team's capacity for sensitive work on heritage estates. The fire-damaged building posed risks to the public and neighbouring properties. Our team systematically dismantled the structure, removed hazardous materials and left the site safe and ready for future development.



Candlelit Concerts

Cafe 16 in Newcastle Cathedral

Throughout the year we've been catering for Newcastle Cathedral's candlelight concerts, providing hospitality to people who attend and feel in need of a hot drink and a scone. The concerts attract diverse audiences who are delighted to be introduced to the charity and learn about the work we do.



New Cafe Opens

Cafe 16 at Kier

Kier is building new houseblocks at HMP Northumberland, a major construction project to increase the prison's capacity.

In December we opened an onsite café for the construction workers. The café is staffed by an Oswinner who gains valuable customer service and catering experience.



Training Support

Cafe 16 HMP Northumberland

We're supporting Novus, who deliver training inside HMP Northumberland by providing our kitchen facilities for the delivery of Level 2 Catering, thus enabling prisoners to access nationally recognised qualifications. This partnership means prisoners can complete practical assessments in a professional kitchen environment.

"Working for Baking Out in HMP Northumberland gave me structure and a normality of life, it felt like I was not in prison and an escape from everyday prison wing politics"

An Oswinner Describing his time in our Bakery in HMP Northumberland