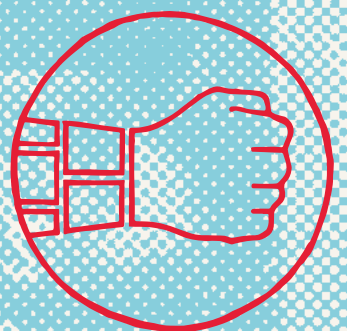
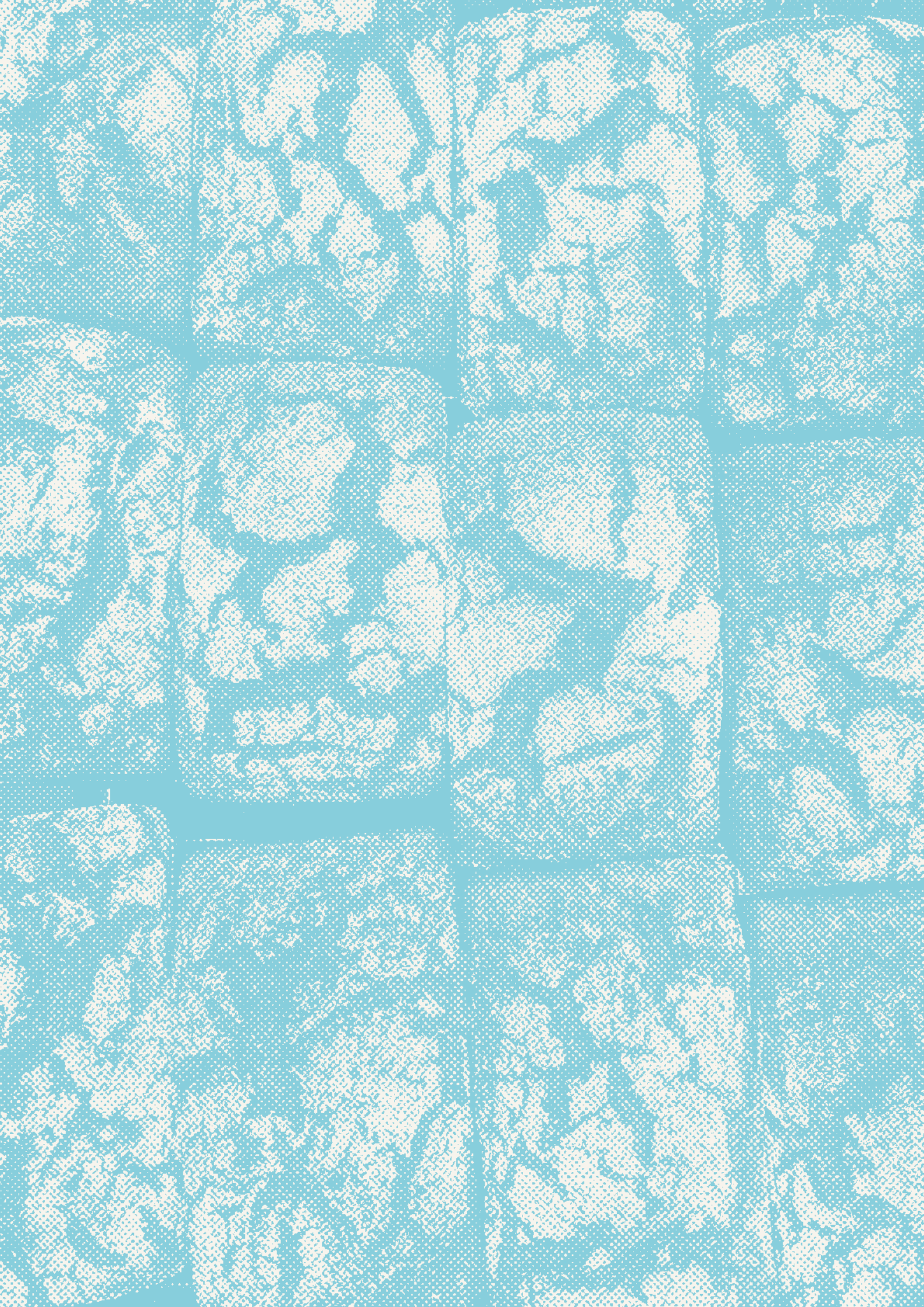


**THE
DUSTY
KNUCKLE
TRAINING
PROGRAM
IMPACT
REPORT
2023**







**WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE
ARE EXCITED ABOUT
THEIR FUTURE**

**THEY WILL CHOOSE
TO INVEST IN
THEIR PRESENT**





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FOUNDERS**
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1 INTRODUCTION



A WORD FROM ABID TDK FOH SUPERVISOR

The fact that this report starts with me, and my words tells you a lot about The Dusty Knuckle and the way they work.

When the idea of The Dusty Knuckle was suggested to me soon after [my release from prison], I said no for 3 months. I just didn't think it was for me. Then I came and saw it for myself, and everything changed the second I walked in.

The people were so friendly and obviously this place treated people well. 18 months on, it's been life changing. I now train new members of the program which has encouraged me to do better with myself and showed me that I'm actually a good teacher. Now I'm able to show people who've been through hard times that people and the program here are good and genuinely want to help and the world isn't against them.

My role as supervisor here has allowed me to connect with different people. I've never seen an environment where 'trainees' and the public get along harmoniously and put smiles on each other's faces and forget the prejudices they might have towards each other.

Teaching other people who've walked in my shoes has given me a self-belief and pride I didn't know was possible. It's made me feel better about myself in knowing that I have helped changed some lives for the better.

It's also really clarified for me that prevention is better than cure, and I'm now absolutely driven to help young people before they face prison, using my experience to inspire them and show them that another way is possible.

And that, to me, is really exciting.





2 A WORD FROM THE FOUNDERS



We still can't quite believe that 2024 is going to mean ten years of Dusty Knuckle.

One of the beautiful things about getting older and more mature as people and as an organisation is the clarity that comes with it (sometimes).

This feels more pertinent inside the training program than it does anywhere else inside the business.

One of the most significant, penny drop moments we have had in our experience of DK to date was when we realised that our staff/HR policy and our trainee/impact policy were essentially the same thing: Use the resources that you have to do the best that you can by people, in the fairest way that you can figure out.

Whilst, as a 'social enterprise' (in all honesty we are still a bit unsure about that term) we must ultimately think commercially with one hand and socially with the other ... we really try to manage DK as one single entity with one set of goals and one overriding purpose:

To create exceptional food, in well-loved vibey spaces – where hard-grafting teams enable young people to move towards financial independence and happiness.

The beauty of this model is that **YOU THE CUSTOMER** are as big a part of this as anyone else is. All you gotta do is have a sandwich and smile at us.

2023 has been all about getting the house in order. A post-pandemic spring clean if you like. We've woken up and we've had a stretch. We're strengthening our foundations and we're limbering up for what's next.

We don't have a moonshot goal or shiny, succinct mission statement. We don't particularly have a grand vision either, but we do know that we have something special - something that works - which we want to protect, understand better, and invite you to be a part of.

2024 is going to be about moving the magic outside our walls and harnessing the power of diverse and like-minded others in the communities that can support this process of change we are trying to drive.

At the very heart of a community are their foods. The most elemental of which is their bread. So we believe that puts us in a good place to start the work - and we thank you for reading more about our efforts.





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2015

In July 2015 we open a take-away hatch in the side of the container and begin serving the public a simple daily menu: coffee, a meat sandwich, a veg sandwich.

2012

We begin selling bread in Summer 2012. For two years, the bakery operates from Max's flat, 1 day per week whilst we all go about our day jobs.

2019

In 2019 we launch a partnership with 'Switchback,' a prison rehabilitation charity, and begin to receive referrals for young offenders leaving custody and wishing to find legitimate work. That year, we also convert our old container into a purpose built bakery school for the public.

2014

In Autumn 2014 we occupy a 40 ft shipping container and begin producing bread 5 days per week in a Hackney carpark. In our first year we train 4 young people from local youth club and pupil referral units but it's difficult. They tell us the working environment is a "shit'ole."

2017

In Autumn 2017 thanks to our lovely landlords at the Bootstrap Charity, we move out of the carpark and into the building. We get indoor seats, and make our first croissant. Yes please.

THE 10 YE

2020

During 2020 we repurpose a milk-float into a mobile shop and take DK to the empty London streets. We also deliver weekly bread and pastry care packages to NHS staff at 5 London hospitals and a crowd-funding campaign for £90,000.

2022

In Jun 2022 we win by public vote the award for London's most loved café in the Time Out Love Local Awards.

Later in 2022 we release a cookbook. "The Dusty Knuckle: Seriously good bread, knock-out sandwiches and everything in between" – published by Quadrille. This leads to our first live TV appearance on Sunday Brunch, Channel 4.

OUR STORY

2021

The crowdfunding campaign doubles the Dalston space and we open our second neighbourhood bakery on Green Lanes in 2021.

2023

In 2023 we incorporate a new Community Interest Company – The Dusty Knuckle Training CIC – with the goal of deepening and broadening our impact on young people, and securing it for the long term. We hold a fundraising event to celebrate – The Dusty Knuckle Youth Fundraiser – and feed 300 people!

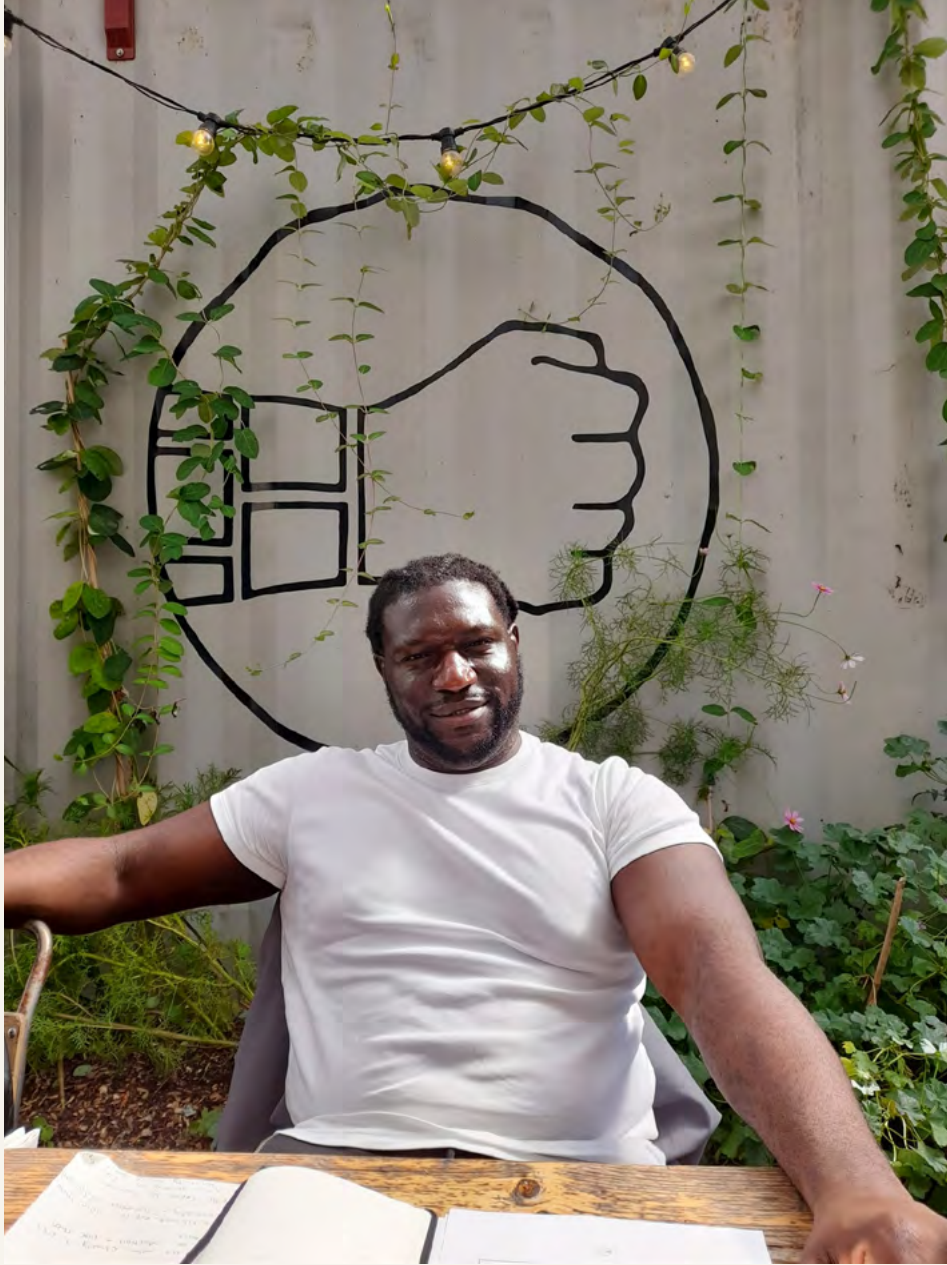
We also run our second crowdfunding campaign. The combined funds raised by these two initiatives, alongside the donors we manage to get behind the event, makes £127,000 for the youth training program.



PHOTO: TOM RUSSELL



4 WHAT DO WE DO?



We work with **young people facing barriers** to becoming independent adults. Typically this means **young offenders**, those **leaving the care system**, those with **insecure housing** and those **leaving custody**.

Trainees come to Dusty Knuckle in order to **grow their skills**, confidence and **vision for the future**. They experience a unique combination of **on-the-job training** and **mentorship** in a real successful business.

In our much-loved neighbourhood spaces, trainees move towards **'work-readiness'** and recalibrate their ideas of what the future might hold for them.

We believe that our organisational culture of **hard work**, **good humour** and **togetherness** holds a magic ingredient in engaging this typically labelled 'hard-to-reach' group - and equipping them with the resilience they require to navigate the **transition into adulthood**.

THE THEORY OF CHANGE

We are often told by trainees, referrers, and supporters that what we offer is unique and we really wanted to understand why.

So this year we took a deep dive into our program to look at the change we illicit, why it happens, and what the longer term impact is for the individual and for society at large. We interviewed several ex-trainees as part of this piece of work, alongside some of our closest referral partners.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Young people who experience social exclusion are effectively shut out from the jobs market.

Most want to secure decent work, but don't have the right support network, or know how.



We deliver immersive training in a real-life commercial environment to foster work-readiness and professional belonging.

We provide tailored support to improve confidence, self-management and employability skills.

We find and support other employers to create more onward opportunities for Dusty Knuckle graduates

WHAT'S OUR SOLUTION?



SO WHAT HAPPENS?

Young people gain the attitude, experience and expertise to blossom in the workplace and move towards independence

Employers are ready and able to provide supported employment positions



More young people who have faced social exclusion become fulfilled, independent adults, making a positive contribution to society, instead of becoming institutionalised in the prison or welfare system.

72% of all trainees progressed into paid work positions, further training or further education following their training at the Dusty Knuckle.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?





INTRODUCING THE DUSTY KNUCKLE TRAINING CIC

In 2022, we put 23 young people through the programme. In 2023, that number had been exceeded by April. Demand for the programme was beginning to outstrip what we could provide.

The many agencies that refer to us – from prisons to charities to families to mental health services – tell us that there is nothing else quite like us in London.

So we founded a Community Interest Company (CIC) in order to deal with that growing demand. Through it we hope to access funding from other sources. This will enable greater resources for trainees on our program and ultimately improve the offer that we are able to make them.

5

2023 IN NUMBERS

68

**REFERRALS
RECEIVED**

An increase of 195%
on last year

22

**DIFFERENT REFERRING
ORGANISATIONS**

An increase of 100%
on last year

62

**YOUNG PEOPLE ENROLLED
AND ASSESSED ON OUR
TRAINING PROGRAM**

Meaning 5 new starters
per month. (An increase
of 210% on last year)

82%

OF TDK TRAINEES

Come to TDK with past
custodial records

83%

**WITH SIGNIFICANTLY
IMPROVED
WORK READINESS***

As measured by self and
referrer assessment

A TOTAL OF

4179

**TRAINING HOURS
IN 2023**

An increase of 2900
hours or 231%

72%

OF ALL TRAINEES

progressed into paid work
positions, further training
or further education
following their training
at TDK

100%

**REPORTED THAT THEIR
CONFIDENCE AND
SELF-ESTEEM BOTH
SIGNIFICANTLY
IMPROVED**

During their time
with us

For those who
stayed with us for the
maximum possible
program duration,
this figure rose to

90%

* Meaning they had a written a CV, gained a reference, achieved 85-100% attendance and punctuality and either had a job, college or sustained volunteership secured or had one lined up in the next month.

6

**TRAINEES
INTO PERMANENT
CONTRACT
AT TDK**

85

**CORE INTERNAL DUSTY
KNUCKLE STAFF**

Have received CPD training inside our training program and have gone on to gain experience and skills in working with a hard-to-reach, disadvantaged client group.



100%

WOULD RECOMMEND

100% of Schools, Prison staff and Referral agencies said that they would highly recommend The Dusty Knuckle to other young people or the professionals that work with them

100%

Of them told us that having trainees in their section improved job satisfaction and happiness.

118

ADDITIONAL YOUNG PEOPLE

Were engaged in our programs outside of the bakery, in prison, specialist school provision or community settings. This brings the total number of young people directly engaged by our programs to 180.





6

TESTIMONIALS

The energy in the room was amazing and believe me when I say this continued throughout the week. I genuinely can't wait to get The Dusty Knuckle back to [HMP] Onley for another masterclass.

I was promised loads of things by everyone inside. The Dusty Knuckle are the only people who actually came through.



I'm so proud to be a part of this

It was the fastest 4 hours of my entire life : time flies when you're in a good place



**It makes a real
change to be putting
smiles on people's
faces, I'm not gunna
lie, it feels amazing**

**This place is it,
the real deal.**

**Thank you for
giving me the
chance to shine**





All I needed was a little bit of time to remind myself that I can do it, the world's not that bad and I've still got 'it'. Now I'm ready.

This is it! This feels like what I should have always been doing.

I'm pretty sure I dream of the kitchen every night.

Thank you for the opportunity, I always knew I could do good, I just needed someone to give me a chance.'



I had no idea what I wanted to do, but I knew for certain I wanted to change, and I've done that here, with all of you.

I've never felt so liked and welcome.

I've learnt from here that if you've got the right people around you, you can do anything.





I feel so much happier. I feel like a real person in the real world: like I actually exist, if you know what I mean?

The enthusiasm is contagious!

This has been truly transformative and life changing.

We have seen time and again trainees grow in confidence during their training at TDK. This partnership is so valuable.



PHOTO: TOM RUSSELL



POTATO SOUR 800g £4.2

POTATO SOUR 800g £4.2

POTATO SOUR 800g £4.2

POTATO SOUR 800g £4.2

7

**THE VIEW FROM INSIDE
THE DUSTY KNUCKLE**

We have invested significant time and training into our staff teams this year. They are the backbone of our operation.

We believe that they are equally important markers of positive societal impact to any outcome that we seek to observe in the trainees themselves.

They will leave Dusty Knuckle with a richer experience of the diversity in their city. They will count entirely new kinds of people as peers. They'll have gained important skills which will follow them into the future. Many will go on to forge careers in the service of trying to help others. We hope that above all, they will leave with reinforced beliefs about the power of togetherness and cooperation; and the ability to sit with uncomfortable cultural differences. These are big ideas that are difficult to measure. They are the things that we strive for in governing this organisation.

"It is very rewarding, and it is actually a great way of training our own teams in teamwork, empathy and precision. It has definitely brought my team out of their shells and seeing how they blossom to make someone else feel comfortable has been wonderful"

D, HEAD OF PASTRY

"It's a great and unique experience that really can shift the energy of a workplace to a more open and accepting place"

J, HEAD BARISTA, DALSTON

It added a new level to my manager position. Remembering that I had to direct my team and still be able to change my mind set to give the trainee attention and time and direction without being pushy or too direct.

I think I learned more through them, especially as each person is so different, so I had to adapt different teaching methods.

H, RETAIL MANAGER

My favourite thing was watching the trainees show excitement at their own improvement

M, FOH STAFF

L arrived at TDK following a referral from her Probation Officer at the age of 20 following a 54-month custodial sentence and history of poor mental health. During that time, L had lost contact with friends and family and other than the professionals involved in her case, she had effectively no social or support network at all. Having worked in the prison kitchens, she was keen to develop her learning and be 'part of something' to combat her feelings of loneliness and isolation. The bonds L had formed during custody were with much older women, and L was also excited (and nervous) to experience what it would be like to be part of a lively team of people her own age and of mixed genders.

It wasn't an easy road, L and TDK worked together to tweak shift times, learning styles and we also had lots of work to do around what it meant to be an adult in the outside world and how to balance the lifestyle of a young woman experiencing the world for the first time and a being a baker starting work at 5am. L was incredibly determined to make it work and progressed as far as dough mixing independently and was a superstar on the shaping table. The feedback from the team was always excellent, that she was growing in to a confident, caring and incredibly hard-working member of the team and that her energy and humour were infectious. This was her first ever experience of positive professional feedback.

During a mentoring session, it became clear that her self-image, goals and hopes for the future were not fully in line with that of being a baker. We worked together to look at her skills and goals and matched her with a job with one of our employment partners as a receptionist. She's doing exceptionally well and her confidence, people skills and sense of belonging are at an all-time high. Having passed her three month probation L is now well on her way towards a financially independent and happy future.

C came to DK after being told about us by his cousin who was currently in the program. At 21 having served a 3-year sentence and having had on and off contact with the care system and a strained family relationship C was ready to try living differently.

He began working with a mentor from Switchback, our brilliant partners, and it was soon clear that having a positive and supportive environment would be very beneficial for C.

Unstable and shifting housing meant punctuality and attendance were big difficulties but through consistency and mentoring he was able to improve and the team were highly impressed by the determination he displayed.

The biggest shift came in C's world view and self-image. His ability for self-reflection and building trust both massively improved; helped along by the fact that he now found himself surrounded by people who believed in him and his ability to do well. This contradicted his prior attitude which was that, generally speaking, he had not felt that people in the outside world- in wider society - really believed in him.

He found a real skill and flair in coffee which developed incredibly quickly in-house. This further improved with specialty training at a professional roastery.

After 12 further weeks of paid training and a vacancy which came up at Dalston, we have been delighted to offer C a permanent paid contract at DK. He now has some of the foundations for a more stable lifestyle, including looking at longer term options for his housing provision.

8 FUNDRAISER



In June 23 we threw a massive fundraising party on the roof of the Dalston Bakery, thanks to Dalston Roof Park.

We had never attempted to pull something like that off before. Turns out that feeding 300 people a three course meal is not straightforward.

The night featured a live trainee panel led by the inspirational and multi-talented Ashley Walters, a performance from the brilliantly talented Jessie Ware, and an auction chaired by the one and only, iconic Mr. Suggs himself.

It was incredible to see five of our very own trainees past and present step into the spotlight and speak with such power and truth about the change-journeys they have been on and the importance of support networks like Dusty Knuckle in their ongoing experiences.

We were immensely proud to raise £127,000 overall from the campaign, and can feel confident in the future of the DUSTY KNUCKLE TRAINING CIC with this incredible starting figure.

INITIATIVE	FUNDS RAISED
Ticket Sales	£17,000
Auction on the night	£16,000
Supporting crowd funder campaign	£39,000
Supply chain contributions	£4,500
Large donor contributions	£50,500
TOTAL	£127,000





9

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR KEY PARTNER, SWITCHBACK

We are extremely proud to have local charity Switchback as a key partner in our work with young people. Switchback work tirelessly to provide wraparound support to young men leaving prison. Their skilled, fulltime mentors form relationships inside prison with the Trainee concerned prior to their release. They then continue to provide their award-winning 1-to-1 service through the prison gate, and alongside The Dusty Knuckle as we deliver our work-based training.

Find out more about Switchback at switchback.org.uk.



Our partnership with The Dusty Knuckle is brilliant. I have all confidence in The Dusty Knuckle that when referring Trainees they will be looked after and treated with respect. The growth and development, both personally and professionally, I have seen in a number of my Trainees who have gone through the training at TDK has been brilliant. The approach is amazing, it understands each Trainee and their needs, as well as supporting them in developing their pre-existing skills and learning new ones. I couldn't be any more positive about the training programme — **Abbie, SwitchBack Mentor**

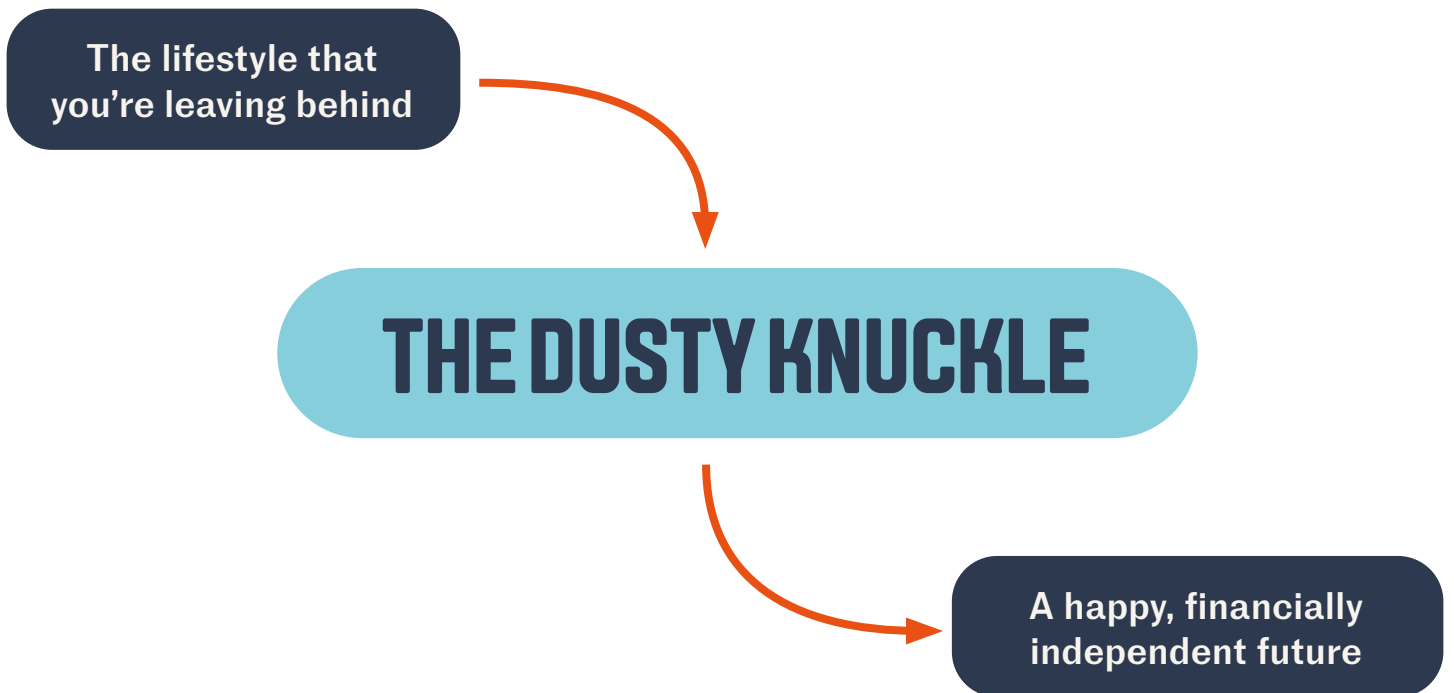
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**LIFE AFTER
THE DUSTY KNUCKLE**

In 2023 we were able to provide 6 trainees with permanent employment contracts at The Dusty Knuckle.

We do not intend this percentage to increase significantly in the future and there are multiple reasons for this. We aspire to operate a program that can have a positive impact on many young people regardless of whether or not there are active vacancies at The Dusty Knuckle Bakery.

We also need our program to be available to trainees at the point that they feel ready and wish to engage - not just when it suits us, or when there are permanent vacancies available.



Dusty Knuckle therefore acts as a bridge – between your old life and your new life. A key focus for 2024 is on building our network of partners who wish to partake in our program as onward trainers and employers; that way we can add to the growing list of young people who have left Dusty Knuckle and gone into promising trajectories towards long term independence and happiness. The more diversity we have in the mix of options available to them, the stronger our program becomes.





11

WHAT'S COMING NEXT?

- **We are getting new referrers contact us weekly.** With the social and economic landscape becoming more difficult/hostile/deprived, the call for our work has never been louder. We want to continue building our referral base to ensure that as many young people as possible have access to our services.
- **We are piloting new program structures,** aimed at slightly different beneficiary groups – including 15-17 yr olds and school groups.
- We are excited to be part of **the reintroduction of ROTL from HMP Brixton.** We hope to help young men find their feet in a lively environment ready for release.
- Having taken part in HMP Bronzefields ‘Prison Employment Board’ we are looking forward to **taking part in more in-prison workshops and master classes** to give people in prisons an idea of not just life at TDK, but the wider net of opportunity hospitality offers.
- If we find the right opportunity in the right community .. you never know, **TDK could be coming to a neighbourhood near you.**
- **Keep an eye on our socials** for news of some exciting new events we are planning to support this work over the next few months.

STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

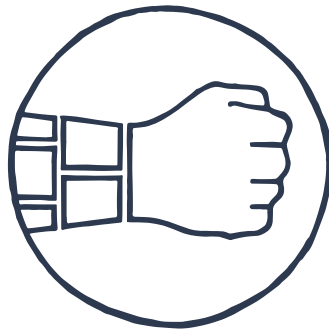
As the **DUSTY KNUCKLE TRAINING CIC** raises its profile and expands its reach, it is crucial that we keep the trainee voice bang at the heart of our decisions and choices. We have therefore formed a committee of trainees past and present to help steer our policies and direction. It will also provide paid work experience to those trainees interested in how governance works.

The committee will also help shape future paid work opportunities for young people in our network.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

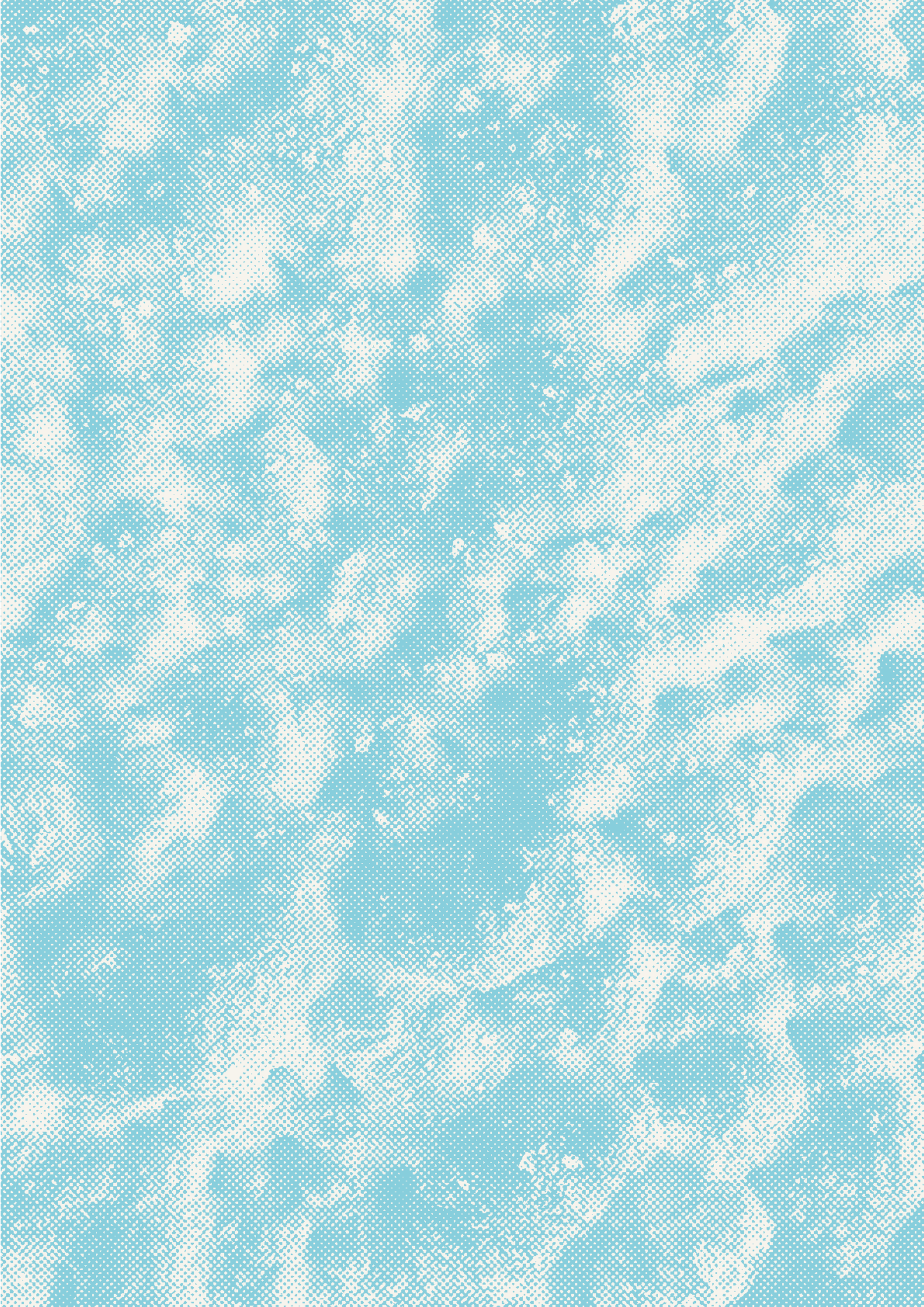
**If you want to support our work,
you can make a donation to the
DUSTY KNUCKLE TRAINING CIC at
www.thedustyknuckle.com**

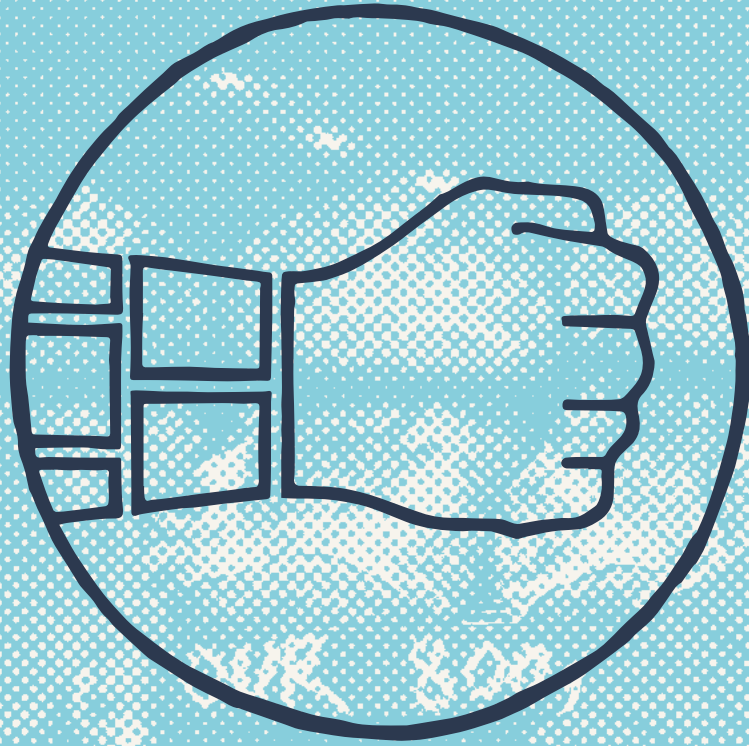
**If you think your organisation shares
our values, please get in touch,
enquiries@thedustyknuckle.com**



**Please follow
[@thedustyknuckle](https://twitter.com/thedustyknuckle)
for updates and events**

Or just come and have a pastry with us.





THE
**DUSTY
KNUCKLE**
BAKERY