

Scran opening a café in Stockbridge

Scran Academy, an Edinburgh social enterprise is to launch the new Scran Café later this year.

This will be a professionally run café within NHS Lothian's Comely Bank Centre, planned, launched and run by young people aged between 13 and 21 from all over the city.

The café's initial focus will be to create a welcoming, relaxing and safe haven for as many as 100 NHS workers and clinical trainees on a daily basis, offering freshly made meals, drinks and other refreshments.

With an innovative social business model involving a voluntary, private and public sector collaboration, this partnership between Scran Academy and NHS Lothian will involve more than 100 young people access dedicated employment experience and skills support over the coming three years.



Andrew – Scran Young Participant PHOTO Scran Academy
Through the charity's existing community-based Academy School and Scransitions, a new 16+ employability programme, this social venture will empower the young people with the skills and confidence to lead in the hospitality industry. At the same time the programme will address the poverty-related

barriers, life challenges and injustices they face on a daily basis – being care-experienced, disengaged from mainstream school, at risk of homelessness, unemployed or suffering from poor mental health.

Scransitions is supported by The National Lottery Fund's Young Start Project, the Edinburgh Thrive initiative and Walter Scott Giving Group, who have all enabled the £300,000 project to run for three years.

The Café will open to the public later in the year as restrictions are eased. There are already signs that the café might become an essential resource to the wider community, instrumental in joining up other Scran programmes and initiatives.

Through the charity's partnerships and intergenerational work including projects involving low-income family, elderly and homeless organisations, the charity says there are hundreds of individuals keen to access the café and get involved. The café will also provide a free community library, with support from Edinburgh International Book Festival and other bookstores.

Founder of Scran Academy, John Loughton BEM, said: "At Scran we do hand-ups, not just hand-outs. We must all respond and adapt to what is an oncoming crisis for today's generation that has resulted from education systems failures, a bleak employment context and the rising grip of poverty and mental health. It's brutal for young people and our work has never been more needed.

"What Scran's story shows is that if we support local community organisations that are run with passion and authenticity, we can develop creative solutions to social inequality. It also shows that unlike the stereotypes so often in the media, young people make a real and positive contribution to society and your post code does not have to be your destiny.

“I also want to take this opportunity to thank all our funders, schools and volunteers whose contribution to the operation of Scran has made a huge difference to the young people of Edinburgh.”



PHOTO courtesy of Scran Academy