

Sodexo partners with Combat2Coffee to open roastery and café at HMP Altcourse

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[Sodexo UK & Ireland](#) and social enterprise [Combat2Coffee](#) has extended their partnership with the opening of a new roastery and staff café at HMP Altcourse in Liverpool which will provide prisoners with the opportunity to gain qualifications to boost their employability on release.

Sodexo is committed to breaking down barriers to employment for prison-leavers and working closely with its supply partner, the social enterprise Combat2Coffee, on the new Clean Slate Café initiative at HMP Altcourse.

The initiative includes the opening of a roastery and packaging facility within the prison, where up to ten prisoners will be employed to grind, roast and package Combat2Coffee's unique blend using fairtrade and sustainable premium coffee beans sourced by Combat2Coffee's founder, Nigel Seaman, from two family farms in Brazil. This will provide prisoners with the chance to build real-world skills that prepare them for life beyond the gate.

The Clean Slate initiative also includes the opening of a new café, staffed by prisoners and supported by Sodexo staff, providing food and drink for prison staff and visitors. Prisoners working in the café are able to gain qualifications through accredited training courses in areas including cookery, barista skills, food safety and customer service.

Training for prisoners working in the roastery or café will be tailored to the individual prisoner and their length of sentence with each provided with an Individual Learning Plan to ensure their personal needs are met and progress is tracked. Sodexo is looking to have up to 40 individuals gain around 100 qualifications collectively, which will equip them with practical skills, confidence, and a smoother route into employment

after release.

Initially the coffee roasted will be sold in the prison to prisoners, staff and visitors with plans to distribute the coffee to other Sodexo sites within its Government and Energy & Resources business including other prisons and military sites.

Tony Simpson, Chief Operating Officer for Sodexo – Justice said: “This is an exciting initiative for everyone at HMP Altcourse. We have seen the impact Combat2Coffee has had within our defence business and are pleased to be able to expand it into our prisons. By introducing a coffee roastery and packaging facility within the prison as well as the opening of a new café, we are supporting our [Starting Fresh programme](#) which aims to provide prison leavers with the skills and confidence to secure employment upon release. Also, in a busy prison work environment, the new Clean Slate café supports our commitment to ensuring the wellbeing of our people with the provision of a great space where they can refresh and connect with colleagues.”

Nigel Seaman, Founder and CEO of Combat2Coffee said: “This partnership with Sodexo marks a powerful step forward for Combat2Coffee and for rehabilitation through purposeful work. This innovative project will provide hands-on training in coffee roasting, grinding, and packaging, equipping participants with valuable skills and real work experience. The aim is simple: to create meaningful employment and rehabilitation opportunities, particularly for veterans in custody. This is a chance for people to rebuild their confidence, gain real qualifications, and prepare for meaningful employment after release. It’s about more than coffee; it’s about wellbeing, second chances, and showing how business and social impact can go hand in hand.”

Combat2Coffee is a not-for-profit community interest company (CIC) founded by Royal Anglian Regiment veteran Nigel Seaman. Its mission is to use coffee as a catalyst for conversation and mental health support for veterans. Combat2Coffee operates community hubs and mobile coffee vans where military personnel and veterans can connect, share experiences, and receive critical support. Through its barista and coffee roasting training programmes, the organisation also provides valuable employment skills to veterans, prisoners, and ex-offenders, helping them transition back into civilian life.

Sodexo’s partnership with Combat2Coffee began in April 2024 after the CIC participated in Sodexo’s supplier inclusion programme which helps break down barriers which historically may have put off SMEs and VCSEs from pitching for supply contracts with large organisations like Sodexo.

Sodexo’s Government and Energy & Resources business has partnered with Combat2Coffee with the opening of cafés at a number of military sites where Sodexo provides food and FM services, these include the Gunner’s Café at Larkhill Garrison and the Ramillies & Blenheim Cafés at Andover.