

The Employer's Guide to Financial Wellness

Helping Employees Save (and Stay)
Through Payroll Deductions

Discovery Credit Union



Discovery Credit Union

Who are we?

Since 2003, we have been serving the people who live or work within DD1 through to DD11 as a locally based not-for-profit financial co-operative, supporting the community of Angus, Dundee, and North East Fife.

Our Services

We provide fair and affordable financial services to the local community. When you join Discovery Credit Union, you also become a part-owner. Your savings are your shares, giving you an equal voice in how the credit union is run, regardless of how much you save.

Members can save as little or as much as they like, with complete flexibility. All savings are pooled to provide low-cost loans exclusively to members, helping money circulate within the community. Savings are protected by the FSCS up to £120,000 (Discovery's maximum savings limit is £30,000).

If you ever need to borrow, our simple online application lets you apply quickly and comfortably from home. Our loan rates are highly competitive, offering a far better deal than payday lenders, typical credit card or overdraft APRs.

Anyone who resides, or is employed, in the locality of Post Codes DD1 – DD11 can join.

Discovery Credit Union works with the following partners (and more) to bring Payroll Deduction to their employees:



Discovery Credit Union through the years



2003
Finmill Credit Union and Dundee West Credit Union merge to create Discovery Credit Union

2005

Save by the Bell is created by Lynn Cunningham to help kids in primary school save



discovery
credit union **2010**

Discovery Credit Union rebrands to avocado green and the counter is redeveloped
£1 million in accumulative loans advanced, with over 2,000 loans issued
Engage card launched to members

2012

2,000 Junior Savers Accounts through "Save by the Bell"
Membership reaches 3,000

£18k saved in Christmas accounts



Christmas Saver Accounts are launched to help people save for Christmas

2015

2014

Common bond extended to cover North Fife, Monifeith, and Carnoustie (DD1-DD7)

Reached £1 million in savings
UK Credit Unions celebrate 50 years



2017

Reached £100k in Junior Savers Accounts

2018

DCU accredited as a Living Wage Employer



First generation of digital app launched



2019

Payroll partnerships reach 20 employers



2020

Common Bond extended to cover DD1-DD11

2022

Reached £2.5 million in savings
£84k in Christmas Savers and £160k in SBTB Junior Savings
Same-Day withdrawals introduced



2023

Discovery rebrands ahead of 20th anniversary

Christmas Savers growth of nearly 5x since inception

Save by the Bell now operates in 30 primary schools across Dundee

Faster Payments introduced

2024

Members Area relaunch with 24/7 access to savings and loans

PAYIn/PAYOut via Post Office introduced and Automated Faster Payments

2025

Since the 2015 launch of Christmas Savings over £700k in savings achieved

Faster payment limit increased, over 90% of withdrawals processed within 2 hours

"The credit union has been a lifeline to me and I always encourage people to use it!"

Discovery, Credit Union for the Future.

5 Strategies to Protect Your Team's Wellbeing in 2026

1) Normalise money conversations

Financial stress thrives in silence. In many workplace cultures, talking about money is "taboo", yet it is one of the primary drivers of anxiety. To break this cycle, start by integrating financial health into your regular internal communications. Use your newsletters or meetings to share resources on budgeting and inflation trends. When leaders speak openly about the importance of financial stability, it reduces the stigma and encourages employees to seek help before a minor issue becomes a crisis.

2) Implement small, consistent practical actions

High morale isn't built through expensive, one-off gestures; it is sustained through small, everyday actions applied consistently. Recognising a job well done, encouraging proper breaks, and ensuring managers are visible and accessible create a "stabilising effect" on a team. These micro-actions build trust over time, making employees feel listened to and respected. When wellbeing is embedded into everyday practice rather than treated as a seasonal campaign, it creates a sense of belonging that salaries alone cannot buy.

3) Equip managers to spot "early warning" signs

Line managers are your organisation's early warning system. They are the first to notice when a high-performer begins to withdraw, shows signs of irritability, or experiences a drop in work quality; all of which are common indicators of underlying stress. Training your managers to respond with empathy rather than just "performance management" is crucial. When managers feel confident having supportive, authentic conversations, they can help navigate the balance between legal compliance and genuine compassion.

5 Strategies to Protect Your Team's Wellbeing in 2026


4) Provide tangible support via ethical tools

A "Culture of Care" requires practical mechanisms that move beyond advice. This is where your partnership with the Credit Union becomes a strategic advantage. By offering a payroll deduction scheme, you provide a way for staff to build a safety net, while access to ethical Credit Union loans ensures they aren't forced toward high-interest lenders during emergencies. This shift from offering "financial tips" to providing a direct mechanism for stability shows your team that you are actively invested in their long-term financial resilience.

5) Move from reactive to strategic wellbeing

The most resilient organisations will be those that view wellbeing as a long-term strategy rather than an emergency response. This means reviewing HR policies such as flexible working and absence management through a "wellbeing lens." Flexibility should be viewed as a tool for performance, not a concession. By aligning your organisational values with your operational policies, you create a safe workplace where employees feel empowered to stay and grow, even during challenging economic periods.

Financial stress is the number one killer of productivity. There is a no-cost way to fix it.



A financially healthy team is a happy, productive team.



Financial insecurity translates to the workplace: an estimated **16 million workdays are lost annually*** in the private sector due to absenteeism related to financial distress.

Money worries walk right through your office door:

- ✔ 8 in 10 UK employees take money worries to work;
- ✔ 77% say money worries impact them at work.

Discovery Credit Union is your local solution to tackle financial stress and boost wellbeing.

At NO COST, by becoming an Employer Partner you can:

- * Protect your cash flow
- * Boost staff resilience
- * Keep to your core business
- * Support the local community



Employers have a key role to play in supporting financial resilience and can do so through payroll savings.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has been running a payroll savings scheme for members of the Armed Forces' families since 2015. To date, 25,171 Service Personnel, Veterans and Civil Servants are members of Joining Forces, which is supported by Serve and Protect Credit Union, PlaneSaver Credit Union, and London Mutual Credit Union. Many NHS Trusts in England now also provide payroll savings schemes for their staff. Following a pilot with the Animal and Plant Health Agency, Rural Payments Agency, and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, a payroll savings scheme, alongside other employee benefits, has recently been launched for staff working at the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the Environment Agency, Natural England, and the Marine Management Organisation.

Encouraging Payroll Savings

Payroll savings schemes allow employees to save directly from their salary and are a proven way of helping people start and maintain a savings habit. This form of saving has been found to be particularly beneficial for people on lower incomes and those who have previously found it difficult to save. As a payroll savings user told the Money and Pensions Service:

“I finally managed to store away a small pot for any emergencies, it gives me peace of mind if I have any needs with the house or the car.”



Did you know that 1 in 2 people would struggle to pay an unexpected expense of £300?

We know that building a healthy savings habit is difficult. Between bills, groceries, and daily life, putting money aside often falls to the bottom of the to-do list.

Discovery Credit Union's ethos is to help people save regularly, borrow responsibly and strengthen the local community. Through our Payroll Deduction scheme, members can save directly from their wages. An easy, hands-off way to build financial security.

It's the "pay yourself first" principle.


The setup is simple: employees simply choose a savings amount, which is then automatically deducted from their salary before it reaches their bank account. This "pay yourself first" approach ensures that, because "what we don't see, we don't miss," their savings can grow quietly in the background without them ever having to lift a finger.

Why are we different

- ✔ No external shareholders;
- ✔ Profits are reinvested in services;
- ✔ We keep money in the community;
- ✔ We are regulated and insured;
- ✔ Personalised services by a real person.



The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is actively collaborating with the government to promote workplace savings schemes.

[Read more about the FCA statement on workplace savings schemes.](#) 



Why sign up?

Benefits of joining the Payroll Deduction

It's effortless	No standing orders to set up, no transfers to remember. It happens automatically every payday.
Keep it local	We are a not-for-profit co-operative serving Dundee, Angus, and North East Fife. We have no external shareholders. Our profits are reinvested into better services for our members.
Access to ethical and affordable loans	Members have access to affordable loans with low interest rates, helping you avoid high-interest lenders or salary advances.
Free Life Savings Protection	We provide free Life Insurance on savings, giving our members' families added peace of mind at no extra cost.*
Full banking services	Online banking, savings accounts, and PayIn/PayOut facilities at Post Offices nationwide.

Open your Payroll Deductions Account:
<https://www.discoverycu.co.uk/savings/payroll-deduction>



*T&C's apply. There is a 6-month no-claim period for members with certain health issues. Please get in touch with us for more information or access <https://www.discoverycu.co.uk/services/life-savings-insurance>



Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility works best when it is authentic. The goal is to be an organisation that clients trust and employees are proud to represent. Commit to ethical practices not because it looks good on paper, but because it improves the culture, supports the staff, and is fundamentally the right thing to do.

Being a good employer is always good for business! Discovery Credit Union is an ethical financial co-operative, with a membership of over 5400, run for the benefit of members, not external shareholders. The primary objective of the credit union is to promote sound financial management by encouraging people to save regularly and borrow responsibly. All of our loans allocate an agreed part of any repayment to the member's own savings account, so as the loan is paid off, the member accumulates savings. Over time, members build up savings and learn how to manage their finances.

It's not always easy to recognise the signs that financial worries are the cause of stress and low productivity. If you can identify this problem in your workforce, then providing access to payroll savings and loans with Discovery Credit Union can help reduce your staff turnover and absenteeism costs associated with financial stress in employees, as well as meet your corporate social responsibility objectives.

Angela's Story

Angela is a senior administrator at her local Council, but growing financial stress was starting to affect every part of her life. When her car failed its MOT and she couldn't afford the repairs, she was forced into a 3-hour daily commute by public transport. The long days left her exhausted, struggling at work, and taking the strain home to her family. Behind the scenes, Angela had maxed out £3,000 in credit cards, alongside a £700 loan and a £600 catalogue balance, leaving no room to deal with emergencies. After a back-to-work conversation, her manager suggested Discovery Credit Union. Discovery helped Angela repair her car and consolidate her debts into one manageable loan, with repayments taken directly from her wages. She also began saving regularly, building a safety net for the future.

"I am so glad that I joined Discovery Credit Union; it has been a lifesaver for me! They were really helpful!"



Why Partner with Discovery Credit Union?

Becoming an Employer Partner is free of charge (just a little admin is required to start) and directly supports your business and local community.

Benefit to Your Business	Benefit to the Community
Improve Workplace Wellbeing: Partnering with us makes your workforce financially healthy, happy, and productive.	Enhance CSR: Becoming an Employer Partner is a great way to enhance your Corporate Social Responsibility profile.
Boost Retention: Drive and support satisfaction and retention in your company.	Support Local: You will be helping your local community.
Reduce Stress: Encouraging saving can help alleviate stress and anxiety caused by money worries.	Change Lives: Together, we can bring an employee benefit that can change lives.
Promote Your Business: We'll promote your business as a valued partner.	Ethical Finance: Support a local and ethical way to save.



Credit Union Impact

Financial stress is currently a major factor harming workplaces across the UK. Building a healthy savings habit can be difficult. Data¹ shows that financial insecurity directly affects the workplace, where money worries impact productivity, not only influencing work performance but also increasing stress in people's lives. An estimated 16 million workdays are lost each year due to absenteeism related to financial distress.

To tackle this issue, partnerships with regulated, not-for-profit credit unions such as Discovery Credit Union offer a powerful and tax-efficient solution through payroll deduction. The strength of this method lies in setting money aside before payday. By removing the effort needed to start saving and reducing the psychological "sense of loss" linked to manual transfers, it supports financial self-discipline. The simplest way to start saving is often realising that "what we don't see, we don't miss."

The need for such interventions is urgent; currently, 1 in 4 adults in the UK¹ have less than £100 in savings, and 1 in 2 would struggle to cover an unexpected expense of £300.

- Payroll schemes significantly boost savings balances: Research² from trials found that the average savings balance for individuals in automatic payroll schemes was over 100 times higher than those in standard opt-in groups.
- Participation rates are drastically higher: The automatic nature of these schemes ensures support reaches people with lower financial confidence, showing 71% participation at month 4 compared to just 16% for opt-in groups.

Learn more about our Payroll Partnership:
<https://www.discoverycu.co.uk/services/employer-partners>



1) Close Brothers, The Financial Wellbeing Index (2019). 2) Results from the trial launched in November 2021, is a collaboration between Nest Insight, the employer SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK, and the credit union TransaveUK.

Other Savings Products

Regular Savings Account

We have more than 3,500 active savers. Our savings accounts offer eligibility for our annual dividend*, instant access (unless secured against a lending product), full protection through the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, and free** Life Insurance.

Christmas Savings Account

Christmas is often the most expensive time of the year. And many families feel the pressure if they haven't planned for it. Our members have saved over £112k in their Christmas Savings Account last year.

Junior Saver Account

For those who have children, grandchildren, nieces, or nephews, and want to give them the gift of a stable financial future, our Junior Saver Account is a simple and inspiring way for under-16s to start building good money habits. Junior Savers must live in postcodes DD1–DD11, or live in the same household as an active Discovery Credit Union member.

We proudly partner with Save by the Bell SCIO, a financial education project promoting regular saving in primary schools. With over 1000 current savers, pupils can open a Junior Saver Account and save through school collection points (Dundee only).

*Our savings accounts offer the prospect of an annual dividend if the Board of Directors recommend this if the Credit Union has turned a reasonable profit.
**T&C's apply. There is a 6-month no-claim period for members with certain health issues. Please get in touch with us for more information or access <https://www.discoverycu.co.uk/services/life-savings-insurance>

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs for Employers

Does it cost the employer anything? No. The credit union provides this service to your business without charge.

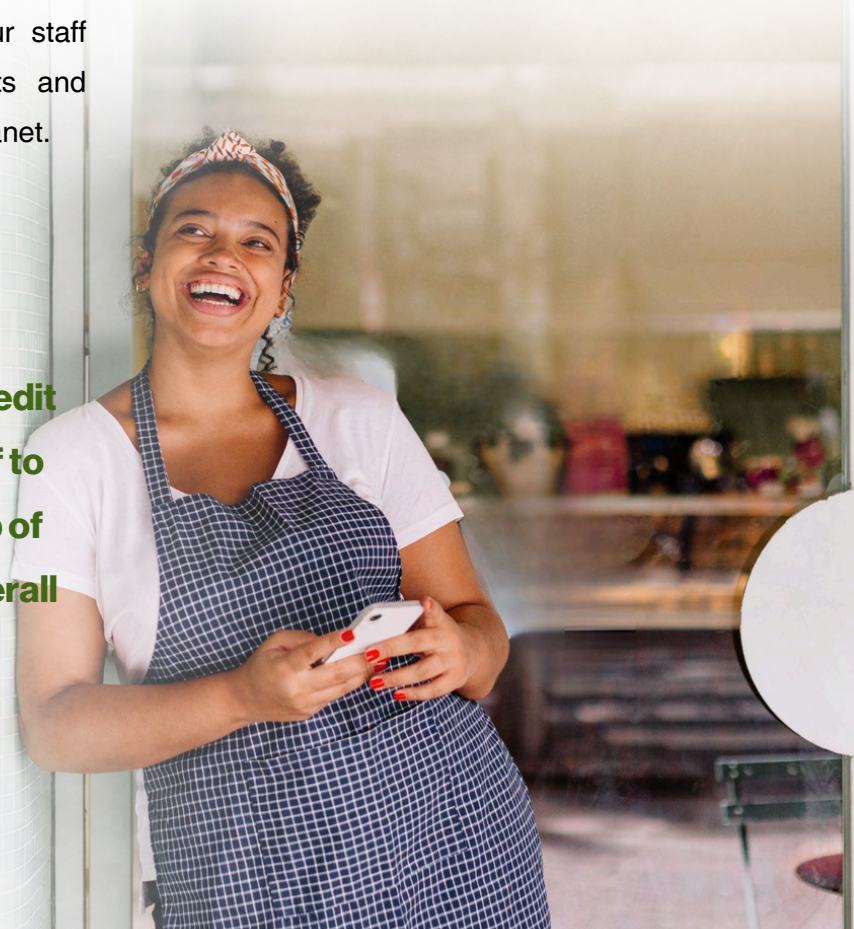
Is it a lot of work for our payroll staff? All enquiries are dealt with by the credit union office. The employer will not process any money or account transactions. All they have to do is process the authorised payroll deductions, exchange monthly data and make a BACS funds transfer. Discovery Credit Union staff will credit employees accounts with the correct amount.

How would we promote the credit union to our employees? Nominate a Workplace Champion to spot opportunities like staff events or meetings to promote the credit union. We can also present to your staff directly and supply posters, leaflets and content for your staff magazine or intranet.

Offering a payroll deduction scheme as a free employee benefit through Discovery Credit Union makes it easier for staff to save regularly and stay on top of their finances, supporting overall wellbeing in the workplace.

If an employee leaves and they have a loan with the Credit Union, is the employer liable for repayments? No. The contractual arrangement is between the credit union and the employee. It would be our responsibility to contact the member to make alternative payment arrangements.

Can we be accused of unlawful deduction of wages? No. An agreement would be signed by the employee and the credit union authorising deductions; similar to trade union subscriptions and payroll giving. Payroll saving with a credit union is a popular service amongst many employers; as with Unison, GMB, PSC and Unite members.



Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs for Employees

Does it cost our employees anything?

No, there are no charges to employees for payroll deduction. All credit union members pay a £2.50 joining fee and must keep a minimum of £5 in savings to remain an active member. We charge a yearly fee of £3.50 to maintain the account.

Can members access their account online? Yes. We also have an app available for download.

Is the money safe? Savings are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, currently up to £120,000 per person.

How to pay into the credit union savings accounts? Members can pay by standing order, benefits, cash or cheque. There is no minimum savings payment. Members can save up to a maximum of £30,000.

Do you pay interest on savings? As a co-operative, Discovery Credit Union pays a dividend rather than interest on savings. This is a share of the profit and is determined at the end of each financial year.

What if the employee wants to stop deductions? The employee would inform payroll if they wish to stop deductions. The employer is not liable for any overdue payments because payroll deduction has stopped. Discovery Credit Union will deal directly with the employee on anything to do with their account.

How much can a member borrow? Discovery Credit Union offers loans from £50 to £15,000.00, subject to qualification and T&Cs*, at an APR% starting from 8.2% on the reducing loan balance. For a lot of people, we are the cheapest and most affordable source of credit.

Do you use credit reference agencies? Yes. We do use Credit Reference Agencies to assess loans as well as to verify ID and address.

Do members have to give notice to withdraw money? Members can access their savings once registered to the Members Area. Withdrawals over £3000,00 will be manually cleared. Withdrawals are made via Faster Payments; for Same Day Request, a fee applies. No fee is charged for Next Working Day withdrawals. Members with loans may access the balance of their shares in excess of the loan balance.

*Loans are available only to members of Discovery Credit Union; to apply, you must first become a member via our "Join Us" process. Applicants must be aged 18 or over and will be required to save alongside their loan repayments through automatic savings. Secure Savers Loans and Standard Savers Loans require evidence of a regular saving pattern before a loan application can be considered. All loans are secured against your shares (savings), which will not be accessible while a loan is outstanding, except for any balance exceeding the loan amount. All loan applications may be subject to credit reference checks.



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Discovery Credit Union is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. FRN 218839.