



UPPERTUNITY'S ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

07/2024 - 06/2025



WELCOME MESSAGES

A message from our founder and manager, Danielle

I can hardly believe that Uppertunity is turning 10 years old. What an incredible journey it has been so far. It all started with just an idea, the belief that positive change was needed. From one small art group in a community centre with just one member attending, we have grown into a thriving community where over 100 people come through our doors each week, filling our permanent space with creativity, connection, and purpose.

Over this past decade, I've had the privilege to work alongside so many amazing individuals: our members, staff, volunteers, board, families, carers, funders, partners, and organisations. Each and every one of you has been instrumental in where we are today. Together, we've built something that is far more than a service. We've built a community where everyone can feel valued, included, and empowered to grow.

Our impact isn't just one way. We influence each other, and are shaped by each interaction every single day. Imagine what is possible when we become aware of this, and choose to support each other to send out hope, kindness, and possibility.

This report is a celebration of that impact, both the small moments and the mighty achievements. It captures some of the highlights from this past year, and shows how, together, we continue to build a world where everyone has the chance to thrive.

Thank you to every single person who believed in this idea and supported that first ripple. Thank you for being part of this journey.



A message from our Chairman, Graeme

As I reflect on Uppertunity's remarkable 10th year, I'm genuinely amazed by what we've accomplished together. From our humble beginnings with one art group and a single member, we've grown into a thriving community supporting over 100 people weekly, and that growth continues to inspire me every day.

This year's achievements have been extraordinary. Watching our Bowling Stones league bring different support groups together through friendly competition has been brilliant, while our Mix it Upp book, created by and for our community, perfectly captures the collaborative spirit that makes Uppertunity special. The launch of our Dudhope Castle History & Nature Trail shows how we're constantly finding new ways to connect people with their environment and each other.

What strikes me most is how our Power of Diversity campaign has sparked genuine conversations about inclusion. We've discovered that fear is often the biggest barrier to inclusivity, but we're replacing that fear with curiosity and understanding.

Behind every statistic in this report is a person whose life has been enriched, whose confidence has grown, or who's discovered new possibilities. Our 40+ volunteers contributing over 2,500 hours, our climate-conscious catering preventing 30 tonnes of food waste, and our 56 social events welcoming 900+ attendees, these numbers represent real human connections and positive change.

I'm proud of how we've stayed true to our values while continuing to innovate and grow.



ABOUT UPPERTUNITY

Uppertunity is a charity and social enterprise based in Dundee, Scotland. We empower individuals aged 16 and over with additional support needs, learning disabilities, and neurodiverse needs to lead fuller, more meaningful lives.

Founded in 2015, we are now proudly in our 10th year of supporting individuals across Dundee and the surrounding areas. Each week, over 100 people (our members) take part in our programmes, and to date, we have supported more than 500 individuals to grow in confidence, skills, and community connection.

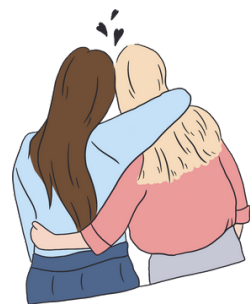
Most of our members journey with us long term (some have been with us since the beginning!), and some members have used us as a stepping stone.



We believe contribution and purpose are not just found in work but in personal growth, connection, and belonging. Our wider aim is to reimagine what it means to contribute to society in an inclusive, equitable, and empowering way.

Our mission is to create a fairer, more inclusive society by providing opportunities for individuals with additional support needs to thrive through skill-building, connection, and personal growth.

Our vision is a world where difference is celebrated, communities are inclusive, and every person has the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to society.



OUR MISSION

WHAT WE AIM TO DO

Foster Empowerment and Belonging

Support individuals with additional support needs and those who feel marginalised to feel empowered, valued, and connected to their community.



Promote Growth and Resilience

Encourage individuals to develop thriving mindsets, transferable life skills, confidence, and resilience through curiosity, playfulness, and exploration.

Challenge Perceptions

Shift negative perceptions of self and others, fostering open-mindedness and breaking down barriers of misunderstanding.

Build Sustainable Communities

Create social, economic, and environmental sustainability by engaging communities in partnership, education, and practical action.



Encourage Connection and Collaboration

Develop meaningful partnerships and connections to overcome isolation, learn from one another, and cultivate togetherness.

OUR VALUES

HOW WE WORK

Creativity

Creativity engages the mind, enables broader thinking, and connects us to hidden parts of ourselves. We explore creativity through art, cooking, gardening, and playful activities that inspire new ideas and problem-solving.

Empowerment

We work with individuals, not for them. By fostering mutual respect and encouraging ownership, we help individuals build confidence and lead fulfilling lives.

Mindset

We advocate for progress, not perfection. It's about the journey. Through exploration, learning, and curiosity, we help individuals develop resilience and shift their focus to possibilities, not limitations.

Togetherness

True change happens collectively. We inspire community action, partnership, and collaboration to build stronger, more inclusive connections.

Sustainability

We aim to create a sustainable future through social, economic, and environmental practices, including creative waste reduction, awareness raising, and partnership working.

OUR SERVICES

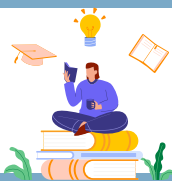
Weekly Warriors

Get involved in our programme of fun and friendly workshops every week, running morning and afternoon! From art and drama to gardening, sports, sewing, and life skills, there's something for everyone here. These groups are a great way to build confidence, try new things, and be part of a creative, supportive community.



UppLift

Explore your potential! Join Real Talk, a group for asking and answering questions and learning what support is available. Try out volunteering roles like cooking, baking, gardening, helping to run groups, or supporting events. We celebrate everyone's progress and love to recognise your achievements.



Power of Diversity

Help us challenge stereotypes and celebrate uniqueness. Get involved in creating and promoting our campaign to help spark conversations, or help develop resources that can be shared with others to help promote inclusivity and diversity.



Social Butterflies

Take part in social activities, including group outings, themed events, our inclusive Bowling Stones League and our daily lunch club (Tues-Fri 12-1pm at Uppertunity). Come along to our Community Connections group to meet new people and discover other exciting services and opportunities across Dundee.



Serendipities Enterprise

Be part of our inclusive kitchen and catering team! Learn new cooking, baking, food handling and service skills while helping us prepare food for our community and events. Serendipities is our climate-friendly project using food to promote connection, confidence & care.



History and Nature Trail

Take time to slow down, explore and connect with nature through our creative trail at Dudhope Castle. Spot hidden objects, learn about local history, enjoy musical play, and use our mindfulness prompts to support your wellbeing. You can also help us look after the trail and use it as part of events!



WHY ARE WE NEEDED?

Who do we support?

We work with adults aged 16+ with learning disabilities, additional support needs, and neurodiverse needs, including many who have not been able to access mainstream education, employment, or social opportunities. Many face low confidence, social isolation, and limited spaces where they feel they truly belong. Our services break these barriers through meaningful engagement, development programmes, and supportive community spaces that celebrate difference and nurture growth.



- 📈 40.5% of school children in Scotland have an identified Additional Support Need (ASN). That's a 102.4% increase in just a decade (Scottish Government, 2024).
- 🚩 Dundee has one of the highest rates of learning disability in Scotland, with 9.5 per 1,000 adults affected. Two-thirds live in the most deprived areas.
- 💔 Only 4.1% of adults with a learning disability known to Scottish local authorities are in employment (SCLD, 2023).
- 💬 People with learning disabilities are seven times more likely to feel lonely than those without disabilities (Mencap, 2022).
- 🧠 Around 40% of people with learning disabilities experience mental health difficulties (NES, 2021).
- 💰 Disabled people in Scotland face an 18.5% pay gap compared to non-disabled people (Scottish Government, 2023).
- 👤 Social isolation increases mortality risk by 29% (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015).
- ❤️ Having a sense of purpose reduces cardiovascular mortality and supports healthy ageing (Kim et al., 2017).
- 🌱 Community-based activities improve wellbeing, reduce anxiety, and build resilience in individuals with disabilities (Scope, 2021).



At Uppertunity, we exist to bridge the growing gap between need and access. By incorporating creativity, connection, and skill-building into our services, we support mental and physical wellbeing, reduce isolation and anxiety, and help participants develop a sense of purpose and belonging. We empower individuals to build the confidence and resilience they need to thrive, building a more inclusive society for all.

OUR IMPACT SINCE 2015

Since launching in 2015 with just one member in one art group, Uppertunity has grown into a thriving community working with over 100 individuals every week. Over the past 10 years, we've supported more than 500 members, some attending since the very beginning, others using Uppertunity as a stepping stone to new opportunities, while many continue to join us for monthly and community activities.



We've created 57 paid job opportunities, with 70% of our current paid staff overcoming barriers to employment. Many of our staff first joined as volunteers and are now role models, showing what's possible with the right support and belief.



Through our partnerships with universities, colleges, schools, and career mentoring programmes, we've supported 60 student placements, building confidence and inclusive practice for the next generation.



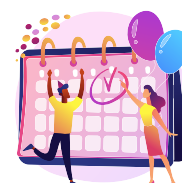
Our community of volunteers has given over 25,000 hours, equivalent to £252,000 in living wage contributions, or the workload of 13 full-time staff members, a powerful testament to the generosity, commitment, and energy of our community.



In our commitment to climate action, we run a climate-conscious catering enterprise, maintain biodiverse gardens, and use recycled and rescued materials in our activities. Since September 2019, we've prevented 30,000kg of food from going to waste, saving thousands of kg of CO₂ emissions, equivalent to taking almost 10 cars off the road each year.



We have run over 100 events, engaged with more than 4,000 people, and collaborated with over 50 different partners, strengthening connections within and beyond our community



We ran a successful café, Serendipities, for 4 years, where we supported over 50 volunteers, created 25 paid jobs, and offered a safe space for the community. We also ran an upcycle shop for a year and half, ReBoutique, supporting over 30 volunteers, created 8 jobs, supported local creatives, and met so many wonderful people. We made the difficult decision to close both outlets in August 2023.



We have created initiatives that spark positive change, including Mix it Upp, our wellbeing and recipe book co-designed by our community; the Dudhope Castle History & Nature Trail, which blends history, mindfulness, and nature; and the Power of Diversity project, where we investigated what helps and hinders inclusion and are now using these insights to guide our next steps.



2024–2025 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



OUR 10TH YEAR!

WE ARE CELEBRATING
A DECADE OF
UPPERTUNITY! WE
HAVE BLOSSOMED INTO
A VIBRANT COMMUNITY
OF LEARNING AND
INCLUSION.



27 WEEKLY WORKSHOPS

OFFERING 174 SPACES
FOR SKILL-BUILDING,
CREATIVITY,
WELLBEING, AND
SOCIAL CONNECTION.



30-50 HEALTHY LUNCHES PREPARED WEEKLY

USING RESCUED,
CLIMATE-CONSCIOUS
FOOD TO CREATE
DELICIOUS AND
NOURISHING MEALS.



56 SOCIAL EVENTS HELD

INCLUDING OUR MINI
FESTIVAL, CARERS' DAY,
WELLBEING DAY, BAKE
OFF, AND MORE!
WELCOMING 900+
ATTENDEES.



BOWLING STONES LAUNCHED

OUR INCLUSIVE
BOWLING LEAGUE,
CONNECTING MEMBERS
AND ORGANISATIONS
ACROSS DUNDEE
THROUGH FUN.



MIX IT UPP BOOK PUBLISHED

A WELLBEING AND
RECIPE BOOK CO-
CREATED WITH AND
FOR OUR COMMUNITY.



DUDHOPE CASTLE TRAIL CREATED

COMBINING HISTORY,
NATURE, POETRY, AND
ACCESSIBILITY TO
INSPIRE CONNECTION
WITH PLACE AND SELF.



40+ VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED 2,500+ HOURS

SUPPORTING CATERING,
EVENTS, GARDENING,
ART GROUPS, AND
UPCYCLING WHILE
LEARNING SKILLS.



30+ LEARNING BADGES AWARDED

CELEBRATING SKILLS
GAINED IN A FUN AND
INCLUSIVE WAY.



POWER OF DIVERSITY CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

A YEAR LONG
INVESTIGATION INTO
WHAT HELPS AND
HINDERS INCLUSIVITY.



SERENDIPITIES CATERING SERVICE GROWING

PROVIDING DELICIOUS
PLANT-BASED FOOD
WHILE CREATING REAL
SOCIAL CHANGE



OVERGATE GRATITUDE BIRD BOXES

DESIGNED AND
CREATED BY MEMBERS,
FEATURING UPLIFTING
ARTWORK TO ENRICH
A PUBLIC SPACES.

IMPACT STORIES: LIFE SKILLS

LEARNING FOR LIFE, TOGETHER

At Uppertunity, we believe life skills are the foundations for confidence, independence, and wellbeing. That's why we started Wise Upp, our weekly life skills group designed to build confidence and encourage independence through interactive, discussion-based workshops.

Each week, our members explore important everyday topics such as:

- ✓ Healthy living
 - ✓ Active travel
 - ✓ Keeping safe online
 - ✓ Healthy relationships
 - ✓ Money management
 - ✓ Mental health and wellbeing
- ...and so much more!



WHAT MAKES WISE UPP SPECIAL?

It is our focus on partnership. We believe in learning with and from others. This year, we've worked with amazing local organisations to bring fresh voices, real-life expertise, and meaningful connection into every session, including:

- 🎉 Adult Literacies Team - running a 4-week money management series
- 🎉 Enable - delivering travel training and confidence building
- 🎉 Lead Scotland - providing monthly online safety workshops
- 🎉 Feeling Strong - leading breathing and relaxation sessions
- 🎉 Penumbra - facilitating mental health and sleep workshops
- 🎉 International Women's Aid - exploring culture, diversity, and hate crime awareness

"I like Wise Upp because I learn something different every week. It makes me feel more confident and ready for the world."

IMPACT STORIES: HEALTH & WELLBEING

STRONG ROUTINES, STRONGER MINDS

Our Weekly Warriors programme has grown from one small art group to a full timetable of 27 weekly activities, supporting the physical and mental health of our members. Ranging from cooking sessions, art, drama, and music, to sport, learning and more, we're proving that being active can be fun, social, and confidence-building.

This year, our members have:

- 🎉 Tried swimming for the first time
- 🎉 Joined group walks around local parks
- 🎉 Joined in different ball games with Tennis Scotland
- 🎉 Played games where they "forgot they were exercising"
- 🎉 Explored different ways to support expression and find calm



ROUTINE ACTIVITIES SUPPORT:

- ✓ Lower stress levels
- ✓ Build healthy daily habits
- ✓ Reduce isolation
- ✓ Improve focus and productivity
- ✓ Support emotional wellbeing

Research shows social isolation increases mortality risk by 29%. People with learning disabilities and autism can experience high levels of anxiety, and our programmes directly tackle this through creativity, connection, and consistency.

Our Weekly Warriors programme is one of Uppertunity's core services, empowering individuals to build confidence and find belonging. Today, it runs 4 days a week, with at least 4 workshops happening each day, helping individuals discover their strengths and live healthier, happier lives.

IMPACT STORIES: A BOOK FOR CHANGE

MIX IT UPP - MORE THAN A RECIPE BOOK

This year, we launched Mix it Upp, a 67-page wellbeing and recipe book created by and for adults with additional needs. It's packed with easy recipes, wellbeing tips, creative ideas, and beautiful illustrations.

Why did we make it?

Many of our members told us they wanted to learn to cook, but felt overwhelmed. Mix it Upp helps build kitchen confidence, promotes healthy living, and celebrates creativity in the kitchen. We designed it to be fun and accessible.

Mix it Upp was developed by Uppertunity members, staff, and partners over the past year. Our community shared their favourite dishes, tested recipes, and contributed tips from lived experience. Every illustration was drawn by Dulcie Robertson, capturing the playful, inclusive spirit of the book.

Funded by NHS Tayside Charitable Foundation, Mix it Upp tackles wider health inequalities faced by people with learning disabilities and additional needs.



COMMENTS FROM READERS

"This is just the right length for me to read on my own." - Victoria

"The pictures help me know what the dish is and how to make it." - Liam

"I like that the words are spaced out so it's not overwhelming." - Mary

"This book is a great way to independent cooking, with tips that can be used to increase confidence." - Carer

"What a fabulous, accessible, beautifully presented recipe book. Cannot wait to use it with my family. Love the seasonal fruit & veg ideas." - Parent

"This book is beautiful. I will enjoy using it to cook with my family." - Parent

Mix it Upp isn't just a recipe book - it's a celebration of community, learning, and doing things together. Proceeds support Uppertunity's wider work. Find out how to buy one at uppertunity.org.uk/mix-it-upp-book

IMPACT STORIES: FOOD FOR CHANGE

CHANGING THE WORLD ONE MEAL AT A TIME: OUR SERENDIPITIES CATERING ENTERPRISE

Our food-based social enterprise, Serendipities, brings community, social, and environmental change through delicious, inclusive, plant-based catering. This impact was recognised when we were awarded the Dundee Social Enterprise Sustainability Champion award in 2024.

DID YOU KNOW...

- 🌍 Over 1 million tonnes of food and drink are wasted in Scotland each year, with 59% of this waste coming from households
- 🌍 The rise of ready meals and convenience foods has led to widespread deficiencies in key nutrients, with fewer than a third of Britons familiar with the government's Eatwell Guide.
- 🌍 Only 26.7% of working-age people with learning disabilities are in employment (Mencap, 2022).



SERENDIPITIES ADDRESSES THESE CHALLENGES BY:

- ✓ Providing inclusive volunteering and training opportunities
 - ✓ Promoting climate-conscious catering
 - ✓ Rescuing surplus food to create nourishing meals
- ✓ Building confidence and transferable skills in catering, hospitality, and teamwork

This year, we also ran World Lunches in our lunch groups, exploring healthy global flavours including Chinese, American, Mexican, and German meals, bringing people together through food. We plan to expand this, and make them bigger! Watch this space.

Every order with Serendipities supports inclusion, skills development, and climate action. Find out more at www.serendipities.co.uk

IMPACT STORIES: COMMUNITY WORKING

WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER

Community working is at the heart of everything we do. Here is just a snippet of some of the community work we did the past year:

- 🎳 Launched Bowling Stones, Dundee's first inclusive bowling league for adults with additional support needs. We are just over half way into our first league year, and have 11 teams on the league board, worked with 40+ players, and countless smiles each month. This league brings different support groups together.
- 🐦 Designed and painted 10 bird boxes for Overgate's Garden of Gratitude, featuring symbols to represent nature, unity, peace and community.
- 🎓 Supported 5 university placements, providing students with inclusive placement opportunities lasting from 30 days to 6 months, shaping the future of accessible services.
- 🤝 Led as a founding partner of Changemakers Hub, a city-wide collaboration creating social and environmental change through community action. We are now in our third year of running this initiative.
- 🌳 We launched a history and nature trail, working with 10 local organisations to make it happen. A particular big thank you to ScrapAntics, who really helped make the the trail come to life. The trail is open to the public at all times, and we encourage community groups to use it for learning and connection.



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Research shows businesses prioritising disability inclusion report 28% higher revenue and 30% higher profit margins. But beyond economics, community working creates connection, understanding, and a fairer world for all. Working with others helps us learn, grow, and do more than we could alone.

IMPACT STORIES: POWER OF DIVERSITY

INCLUSION ISN'T A CHECKBOX. IT'S A CONVERSATION.

This year, we launched Power of Diversity, a year-long study and campaign with Porphura exploring what helps and hinders inclusion. What we found was powerful:

- 💡 The biggest barrier to inclusion? Fear. Fear of saying the wrong thing, fear of not being “inclusive enough”, fear of the unknown.

Key findings

- ◆ Social isolation and loneliness remain major barriers
 - ◆ Inaccessible transport limits opportunities
 - ◆ Lack of clear post-education pathways
- ◆ Over-complicated support systems exhaust people
- ◆ Inclusion boosts economies: exclusion costs countries up to 7% of GDP



WHAT'S NEXT?

Fear can be replaced with curiosity. That's why Power of Diversity is sparking change through:

- ◆ Unique merchandise with our 'Plant a Conversation' campaign
 - ◆ Creative public workshops
 - ◆ Business inclusion labs
 - ◆ Digital storytelling

We're using our learning as a foundation for further change, and have some big plans.

Inclusion isn't an afterthought. It's an opportunity.
Join the movement. Let's make inclusion the norm.

IMPACT STORIES: A LITTLE ECOSYSTEM

NATURE IS OUR TEACHER

This year we launched the Dudhope Castle History & Nature Trail, a self-guided journey around Dudhope Castle, with 15 interactive stops blending history, mindfulness, play, and nature.

We believe nature and play are powerful for wellbeing, and that we don't need to go far to connect with them. Dudhope Castle's grounds offer the perfect space to reimagine how we see green spaces, inviting everyone to explore, reflect, and create.

This trail was designed to:

- 🌳 Encourage mindfulness and wellbeing
- 🌳 Inspire creativity through art and play
- 🌳 Connect people of all ages and abilities with nature
- 🌳 Make being active fun and accessible
- 🌳 Spark curiosity about local history



BUT IT'S MORE THAN A TRAIL. IT'S A REMINDER OF THE POWER OF ECOSYSTEMS.

In just 9,000 square metres, life thrives around Dudhope Castle

:

- 🐦 Buzzards, robins, chaffinches, blue tits, magpies
- 🦋 Butterflies - orange tip, peacock, tortoiseshell
- 🐝 Bumblebees - red-tailed, buff-tailed, tree, mining
- 🌳 Walnut, hornbeam, cherry, tulip, holly, rowan trees
- 🌼 Wildflowers, ragwort, brambles, wild strawberries, lavender, thistles

Like any ecosystem, every person and species plays a role. From bees pollinating flowers to members volunteering in our café, each a chain reaction that strengthens the whole. We didn't create the ecosystem. We just amplified it. That's the magic of nature, and community.

IMPACT STORIES: MAKING CLIMATE TALK FUN

LITTLE ACTS, BIG IMPACT

In March, we hosted Little Acts, Big Impact, a fun, hands-on event exploring everyday ways to help ourselves, our community, and the planet. From food to fashion, we showed that climate action isn't scary or boring, it's practical, simple, and fun.

We asked:

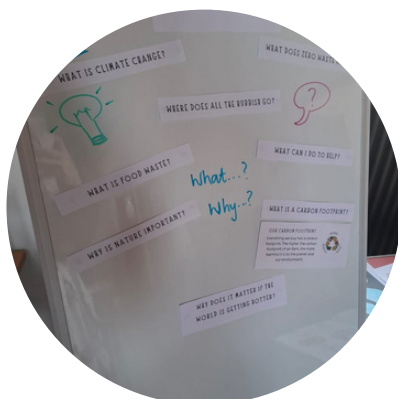
What do you feel when you hear the words climate change?
What do you think it means? What do you feel you can do?
What helps you understand it better?

What we heard:

Many people shared that climate change feels: Big and out of reach; Overwhelming
Confusing; Something "only big companies or governments can fix"; Something
people feel silly or lost talking about; Often just associated with recycling

But we also heard:

"We need to make it fun!"; "It's something to do with oil, petrol and electricity."; "I think of trees, we need them to breathe."; "Games and easy words would help."; "Make it more kid-friendly!"



WHAT'S NEXT?

- ✓ Keep climate conversations simple, kind, and playful
- ✓ Focus on what people can do, not what they can't
 - ✓ Create more inclusive resources and games
- ✓ Work together to build a caring, sustainable world for everyone

"I think of trees. We need them to breathe."

IMPACT STORIES: WORKING DIFFERENTLY TOGETHER

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SUPPORT OTHERS

At Uppertunity, we know that when our team feels supported, everyone thrives. We believe the way we work is just as important as what we do. We are committed to creating a workplace culture rooted in mutual respect, inclusivity, and empowerment, where everyone's voice is heard, and every role is valued.

We don't believe in rigid hierarchies. Instead, we prioritise person-centred, relationship-based working, ensuring our members, volunteers, and staff feel supported, trusted, and included in decision-making. Our team culture encourages curiosity, creativity, and honest conversations - because real change only happens when we're willing to learn and grow together.

How do we support wellbeing?

- ♥ Hold regular reflective check-ins and team bonding days
- ♥ Team visioning days taking time to pause, reflect, and dream together
 - ♥ Facilitated open discussions and playful brainstorming
 - ♥ Prioritised lived experience, creativity, and mutual respect
 - ♥ Provide consistent external supervision for management
 - ♥ Celebrated volunteers with 30+ learning badges



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Traditional ways of working often overlook the value of lived experience, creativity, and kindness. Research shows that workplaces prioritising wellbeing have 41% lower absenteeism and 17% higher productivity. But for us, it's about more than numbers.

It's about creating a culture where people feel safe, respected, and able to thrive, because when staff and volunteers feel supported, they have space to create impact for our members and community. It's not always easy to create spaces like this, but by working together and having difficult conversations, we can.

COMMENTS FROM OUR MEMBERS

"I LIKE THE STAFF. THEY ARE FUNNY, NICE, KIND, RESPECTFUL AND LISTEN TO YOU."

"I LIKE COMING AND HANGING OUT WITH PEOPLE, TALKING ABOUT NEW THINGS, HOBBIES ETC. I LIKE LEARNING ABOUT OTHERS."

"UPPERTUNITY HELPS ME STAY OUT OF TROUBLE. IT HELPS MY MIND."

"YOU ARE UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPT PEOPLE. YOU ARE HELPFUL WHEN DISABILITIES ARE BARRIERS. YOU HELP WITH WORDS AND HELP PEOPLE TO BE THEMSELVES."

"I'VE TRIED OTHER SERVICES SINCE STARTING AT UPPERTUNITY."

"UPPERTUNITY HAS CHANGED MY LIFE. I USED TO BE OFF THE RAILS, BUT I'M GOOD NOW."

"I HAVE MET NEW FRIENDS AT UPPERTUNITY, AND WE GO FOR COFFEES SOMETIMES AFTER GROUPS."

"I LIKE ALL OF THE DIFFERENT PROJECTS, SEEING PEOPLE AND HAVING FUN."

"I HAVE MADE MORE FRIENDS, AND HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE TO HELP/SUPPORT OTHERS, AND REASSURE THEM."

"COMING HERE TO UPPERTUTNITY IS GOOD AND I ACTUALLY HAVE SOMETHING THAT I LOOK FORWARD TO AT THE END OF THE WEEK BY COMING TO MY CLASS HERE."

"I AM MORE CONFIDENT SINCE COMING TO UPPERTUNITY. I VOLUNTEER NOW AND HAVE LEARNED HOW TO USE THE COFFEE MACHINE. I MAKE HOT CHOCOLATES FOR PEOPLE BY MYSELF!"

"I'VE LEARNED LOTS ABOUT MONEY, RELATIONSHIPS, INTERNET SAFETY, TECHNOLOGY SAFETY, LIFE SKILLS AT UPPERTUNITY."

OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

FROM ONE SMALL ART GROUP IN A COMMUNITY CENTRE TO A THRIVING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY, UPPERTUNITY'S JOURNEY HAS BEEN ROOTED IN CREATIVITY, COURAGE, AND CONNECTION. EACH YEAR HAS BROUGHT NEW GROWTH, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES OF IMPACT, ALL MADE POSSIBLE BY THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVED IN OUR VISION AND SHAPED IT ALONGSIDE US.

LOOKING BACK ON OUR FIRST DECADE, ONE THING IS CLEAR: WHEN PEOPLE ARE GIVEN SPACE, BELIEF, AND OPPORTUNITY TO GROW, THEY CREATE RIPPLES THAT TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES. AND THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

2015 – PLANTING THE SEED

Uppertunity began on 15th September 2015, set up as a Community Interest Company by our founders, Danielle and Darryl. That October, we ran our very first therapeutic art group, Scribbles, at Douglas Community Centre. Danielle started the group with no funding, just an idea, passion, and a "let's go for it" attitude. Armed with creativity and determination, she carried art materials in her car to each session. Our numbers grew as word spread, and we began forming connections with Dundee's wider community.

2016 – GROWING CONNECTIONS

January saw our first social event, Oor Burns Lunch, bringing people together to celebrate Scottish culture. Later that year, we launched our second art group, Doodles, at Ardler Community Centre. Danielle ran groups unpaid for the first year and a half, determined to understand what the community truly needed. 2016 was also the year we welcomed our first volunteers, starting the movement of skill sharing, confidence building, and community support that defines Uppertunity today.

2017 – ROOTS TAKE HOLD

We expanded our creative branches by launching Totally Stitched, our textiles art group at Menzieshill Community Centre, and Growing Places, our first garden project at Tayview Community Gardens. A huge milestone arrived when we secured funding to pay Danielle and lease a permanent space at The Circle in July. This allowed us to start our Daring for Development Programme, a 12-week journey into cooking, socialising, and life skills, supporting 12 individuals across three blocks. Recognising the power of consistency, we integrated life skills into our weekly timetable. We also created a new garden space at The Circle and hosted our first Arts & Crafts Fair in December.

OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

2018 – FLOURISHING FURTHER

With new funding, we welcomed our second paid staff member, expanding workshops and events. We held Two's Company, a social lunch, our first Bake Off, and took members camping in Fife for the first time. We continued hosting inclusive events like craft fairs and games nights, and conducted 'Have Your Say' consultations to ensure our services met the community's needs. This year, Uppertunity was named Runner-Up for Growth at the Dundee Social Enterprise Awards, recognising our expanding impact.

2019 – BRANCHING OUT

We opened our very own café, Serendipities, on Union Street, offering inclusive volunteering opportunities and sustainable vegan food. We launched Energising the Everyday, our hospitality skills programme, ran public evening workshops, supported local artists with busker nights and pop-up galleries, and took members on their first fully accessible cottage holiday. We also expanded our catering services, paving the way for future social enterprise growth.

2020 – WEATHERING THE STORM

The Covid-19 pandemic challenged us all, but also reminded us of the vital importance of connection. We received funding to launch online activities, helping members and the wider community stay connected. Union Street became pedestrianised, allowing Serendipities to host outdoor seating and street events. We launched UppMakes, our upcycling and refurbishing project to teach practical skills while tackling waste.

2021 – STRENGTHENING THE TRUNK

Through Community Job Scotland and the Government Kickstart scheme, we created six new supported jobs, offering vital work experience. We expanded at The Circle, opening a dedicated sewing room, drama space, and woodworking area. Freestyle groups were launched to explore creativity without limits, and Unique Beats drama group performed their first play at our end-of-year celebration. We even catered our first wedding, proving our catering service's growing reach.

2022 – TRANSPLANTING & TRANSFORMING

We moved from Staffa Place to the historic Dudhope Castle, bringing our garden project with us. We opened ReBoutique, an upcycle shop on Castle Street, promoting sustainable shopping and offering creative volunteering opportunities. Members performed "The Greatest Show," and Unique Beats began filming their long-form production starring Gio the alien. We deepened our connection to nature, renewing the castle gardens and holding more outdoor workshops.

OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

2023 – SEEDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Our garden project flourished, and we took part in Big Garden Open Day, partnering with Art Night to showcase Dundee's gardens. We celebrated with a potluck garden party alongside Fighting for Fairness, premiering Unique Beats' first short film. Uppertunity became a charity this year, marking a big milestone, though we also faced challenges, closing Serendipities and ReBoutique due to rising costs. Before closing, Serendipities was featured in National Geographic's top places to eat in Dundee, a proud recognition of our work. Attendance grew, monthly themed events became part of our calendar, and we became a founding member of Dundee Changemakers Hub.

2024 – CULTIVATING NEW GROWTH

2024 was a year of innovation and reflection. We launched our award recognition programme, as well as our Bowling Stones league, Dundee's first inclusive bowling league. Our catering social enterprise, Serendipities, was redeveloped to strengthen its climate-conscious mission while providing inclusive volunteering. We also created a pop-up garden with Changemakers, showcasing the power of outdoor spaces for wellbeing. Throughout the year, our Power of Diversity investigation gathered insights to challenge stigma and design new ways to spark inclusive conversations across the community.

2025 – A DECADE OF RIPPLES

This year, we celebrate 10 years of Uppertunity, a journey of championing inclusion, creativity, and empowerment. We launched the Dudhope Castle History & Nature Trail, blending history, mindfulness, and nature, and completed the Power of Diversity campaign. We published Mix it Upp, our co-created wellbeing and recipe book celebrating independence and healthy living. Our gardens flourished, honouring the ecosystem we're part of and creating spaces where biodiversity and learning thrive side by side.



GETTING INVOLVED

YOUR VOICE...SHARE YOUR OPINION

At Uppertunity, our activities are shaped by the voices of our members. Every group, workshop, and event has been inspired by their ideas, feedback, and dreams for the future.

We believe that true empowerment comes from listening first.

We gather opinions informally during groups, lunches, and check-ins, as well as formally through questionnaires and visioning events. We also have an anonymous feedback and ideas box available at all times.



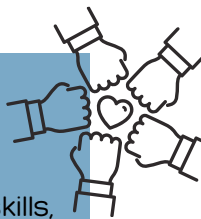
Have an idea for a new group, workshop, or event?
We want to hear it. Share your thoughts and help shape what we do next!

TIME...VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering at Uppertunity is meaningful, fun, and creates real impact.

There are two ways to get involved:

- ☀ Inclusive volunteering opportunities for our members, designed to build confidence, skills, and independence in a supportive environment.
- 💛 Supportive volunteer roles for anyone who wants to help, from delivering activities, preparing food, and running events, to helping create welcoming, inclusive spaces.



Want to get involved? Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, learn new skills, and give back to your community.

RESOURCES...DONATE MATERIALS

We gratefully accept donations of materials to support our workshops & events.

We're currently looking for:

- 🎨 Art & craft supplies (paper, paint, brushes, glue, etc.)
- 🎭 Fun props, costumes, and musical equipment for drama and music groups
- 🌱 Gardening tools, plants, seeds, and wood
- 🔧 Workshop tools and materials
- 🎁 Raffle and tombola prizes for fundraising events

Got something else you think we could use? Get in touch!



MONEY...DONATE TO HELP FUND OUR SERVICES

Every donation, big or small, helps keep Uppertunity thriving. Your support goes directly towards:

- ✓ Running weekly workshops and social activities
- ✓ Maintaining our inclusive community space
- ✓ Offering personal development and skill-building opportunities

💛 Make a one-off or regular donation securely via our PayPal page:
<https://shorturl.at/9uJCo>







CREATING OPPORTUNITIES. BUILDING COMMUNITIES.

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