



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

07/2025 - 06/2026



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WELCOME!

Uppertunity is what it is because of every single person who is part of it. I say this all the time, but truly, Uppertunity wouldn't be here without the people who helped, those who inspired us, and those who simply said yes when we asked for help.

We often think of ourselves as an ecosystem. Like a forest, every part is connected, and each person plays a role in helping the whole community to thrive, grow and regenerate.

Every year, I am in awe of that ecosystem, and incredibly grateful for the care, energy and love people put into it. To our staff team, who are dedicated and compassionate; our volunteers, who bring kindness and enthusiasm; our families and carers, who support and get involved; our members, who keep showing courage, creativity and willingness to try; and our partners, who bring openness, ideas and possibility...thank you.

A lot has changed since that first Scribbles group in 2015. The organisation is bigger, the opportunities are broader, and the way we work continues to evolve. What has not changed is our belief that everyone has something valuable to contribute. Relationships remain at the heart of what we do. So do curiosity, creativity, kindness and the willingness to try.

We will continue to review, question and adapt how we work. Not because we have lost our way, but because staying true to our purpose sometimes means being willing to change how we get there. And we do that together.

I cannot thank everyone enough, whether you have been involved in a small way or a huge way, your contribution matters. It is deeply appreciated, and together, you help make our community, and the world around us, a more beautiful place.



DANIELLE DU PLOOY, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER

It's such a worthwhile exercise, taking a step away from the day-to-day running of an organisation and looking back on our achievements over the previous year. And wow, what a lot we've done!

Seeing something develop from a quick suggestion or spark of inspiration into a real-life activity is an amazing thing. There have been trips, exhibitions, parties and performances. We've quizzed experts, learned new skills and been the experts for others. We've laughed, cried, jumped, danced and sung...sometimes all within the same hour!



Uppertunity continues to create and nurture an environment where people can thrive. I'm quite sure I speak for our members, volunteers, staff, visitors and board members when I say that we all benefit from being a part of this place, of this movement. I'm so fortunate to belong here.

Thanks to you for your contribution in helping to make Uppertunity what it is and what it will be.



CAROLINE BENTLEY, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LEAD

RAISE OUR VOICE

“WHEN WE FEEL CONFIDENT, WE CAN
HELP OTHER PEOPLE FEEL CONFIDENT”

SHAY - UPPERTUNITY MEMBER

DONATE TO HELP US RAISE OUR VOICE!

JUST £5 A MONTH COULD HELP US SUPPORT
HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING
DISABILITIES, AUTISM AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT
NEEDS TO LEARN, CONNECT, GROW AND THRIVE.

**DONATE OR FIND OUT
MORE ON OUR WEBSITE**



SUPPORTED BY
CANVAS

OUR IMPACT, 2025 TO 2026



WE SUPPORTED MORE THAN

100

PEOPLE EVERY WEEK!

1144

WEEKLY WARRIORS SESSIONS DELIVERED, DOING EVERYTHING FROM JEWELLERY TO DRAMA, FERMENTATION TO PHOTOGRAPHY.

81

UNIQUE SOCIAL BUTTERFLIES EVENTS INCLUDING FIELD TRIPS, VOLUNTEERING DAYS, FESTIVALS AND PARTIES.



115

CATERING EVENTS, PROVIDING FOOD SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO

30

VOLUNTEERS

WE SERVED OVER

500

PEOPLE AT OUR LARGEST CATERING EVENT

WE CREATED

3

MEMBER-LED EXTERNAL ART EXHIBITIONS:
DIFFERENT TOGETHER, FORMING CARE AND DREAMING BIG.



WORKSHOPS DELIVERED BY

25

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS,
SHARING THEIR UNIQUE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

94%

OF MEMBERS SAY THAT
UPPERTUNITY HELPS THEM
TO FEEL BETTER ABOUT
THEMSELVES.

96%

OF MEMBERS TOLD US THAT
UPPERTUNITY MAKES A
POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN
THEIR LIVES

ABOUT UPPERTUNITY

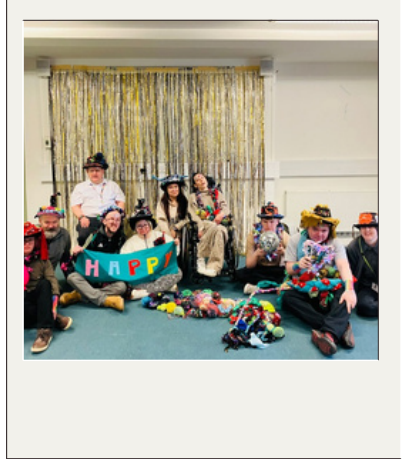
WHO WE ARE

Uppertunity is a Dundee-based charity and social enterprise creating opportunities for people to learn, connect, contribute and thrive. Founded in 2015, we have grown from one small art group into a vibrant and inclusive community. Today, more than 100 people take part in our programmes each week, supported by our staff, volunteers, board, families, carers and community partners.

We provide much more than activities. We create welcoming spaces where people can discover their strengths, express themselves, develop meaningful relationships and take an active role in their community.

WHO DO WE SUPPORT?

We support adults aged 16 and over with learning disabilities, autism, additional support needs and other barriers that may limit access to education, employment, social opportunities or community life. Many of the people who come to Uppertunity have experienced isolation, low confidence or a lack of spaces where they feel understood and accepted. Some join us to learn a particular skill or try something new. Others are looking for friendship, routine, purpose or opportunities to contribute.



Everyone's journey is different. We work alongside each person, recognising their strengths, interests, choices and individual ways of communicating and participating.

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

Everyone has something valuable to contribute. A meaningful life is not defined only by employment or formal achievement. It can also be found through friendship, creativity, learning, helping others, caring for the environment and feeling part of something. We believe people grow when they are given:

- Opportunities rather than limitations
- Encouragement rather than judgement
- Space to explore and make choices
- Relationships built on trust and mutual respect
- The right balance of safety, curiosity and challenge

At Uppertunity, we work with people, not for them. We listen, adapt and learn together, creating opportunities that reflect the ideas, strengths and aspirations of our community.

“IT'S SO MUCH FUN, IT'S VERY
STIMULATING, IT KEEPS ME IN MY
ROUTINE, I LIKE BEING WITH EVERYONE.”

OUR SERVICES

WEEKLY WARRIORS

Take part in more than 20 fun and friendly workshops every week! Our creative programme includes art, drama, music, sewing, gardening, movement, cooking, life skills and much more. These groups help you build confidence, learn new skills, express yourself and be part of a supportive community.



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). We also work with community partners and guest facilitators to bring new experiences and activities to our members.

UPPLIFT

Build confidence, develop skills and gain experience through learning and volunteering. UppLift includes volunteer opportunities, student placements, and staff development, alongside programmes that help people build healthy relationships and communication skills. We also provide support for carers



POWER OF DIVERSITY

Celebrate what makes each person unique and help us challenge stereotypes through creativity. Our community shape and create exhibitions and collaborative creative projects that share important messages about diversity, community and inclusion. We also create merchandise that helps spread these messages.

GREEN EXPLORERS

Explore nature, try new outdoor experiences and discover ways to care for our planet. Activities include gardening, nature walks, creative outdoor projects, environmental learning and exploring our History and Nature Trail at Dudhope Castle. Green Explorers helps people connect with nature and learn how we can look after our planet.



OUR STORY

WHERE WE STARTED

Uppertunity began on 15 September 2015, founded by Daniëlle du Plooy and Darryl du Plooy with a simple belief: people with additional support needs deserved more opportunities to be creative, connected, valued and part of their community.



We had no funding, but we had a drive to do something, so we just went for it. Our first group, Scribbles, took place at Douglas Community Centre, with just one member joining us at the beginning. As more people came along, the community grew. Volunteers joined us, new groups were created, and Uppertunity continued to evolve in response to what people told us they wanted and needed.

HOW WE GREW

Over the years, Uppertunity has never followed one fixed path. We have tried ideas, learned from them, changed direction when needed and continued building on what worked.

We opened our own permanent base at The Circle in 2017, giving our growing community somewhere to call home. Alongside creative and social activities, we began exploring social enterprise as another way to create meaningful opportunities.

Serendipities Café created real-life experience in cooking, hospitality and customer service, while ReBoutique explored reuse, retail and sustainable fashion. Both taught us a great deal, not only about what was possible, but also about the practical realities of running inclusive social enterprises.



The journey has not always been straightforward. Some ideas have flourished, others have needed to change, and some have come to an end. We see this as part of responsible growth. We are not afraid to ask whether something is still needed, whether it is working, and whether there might be a better way to achieve the same purpose.

OUR STORY

GROWING BEYOND OUR WALLS

As Uppertunity developed, our focus increasingly expanded beyond what happened inside our own building. The Bowling Stones League created a fun and inclusive way for people to socialise, meet others and build connections through friendly competition.

Creative work also began moving into public spaces. Through exhibitions, community events, parades and public art, our members have been able to share their ideas, creativity and perspectives with a much wider audience.

This work gradually developed into creating our own products, including a recipe book and T-shirts, giving members new ways to share their ideas, challenge stereotypes and promote positive messages about difference and inclusion.



WHERE WE ARE NOW

Today, Uppertunity supports more than 100 people every week from Dundee and surrounding areas. Our team now includes 8 staff and around 30 volunteers, alongside board members, students, families, carers and a growing network of community partners.

We deliver over 20 workshops each week and organise our work across 5 core areas: Weekly Warriors, Social Butterflies, UppLift, Power of Diversity, and Green Explorers.

Our focus is on creating meaningful opportunities that help people build confidence, develop skills, form relationships, contribute to their community and explore what a good life means for them.



OUR MISSION

From one member in one art group to a community of more than 100 people each week, the heart of Uppertunity remains the same: creating opportunities, building communities and helping people flourish. Our goal is to create a fairer and more inclusive society by providing opportunities for people with additional support needs, including learning disabilities and neurodivergence, to thrive through skill-building, connection, contribution and personal growth. Our mission is guided by five aims:

1. **Foster Empowerment and Belonging:** Creating welcoming spaces where people feel valued, listened to and part of a community.
2. **Promote Growth and Resilience:** Supporting people to learn skills, build confidence, explore new experiences and recognise their progress.
3. **Challenge Perceptions:** Celebrating difference and creating opportunities for members to share their creativity, ideas and contributions publicly.
4. **Build Sustainable Communities:** Connecting social, economic and environmental action through nature, enterprise, learning and practical participation.
5. **Encourage Connection and Collaboration:** Working with members, families, volunteers and partner organisations to create more opportunities together.

AIM 1: BELONGING AND EMPOWERMENT

96%

OF MEMBERS SAY THAT UPPERTUNITY HAS
MADE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN THEIR
LIVES!

BELONGING IS MORE THAN BEING WELCOMED THROUGH THE DOOR. IT IS FEELING VALUED, LISTENED TO AND ABLE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND YOU. THIS YEAR, WE CONTINUED TO EMPOWER OUR MEMBERS THROUGH TRIED-AND-TESTED ACTIVITIES, WHILST ALSO FINDING NEW WAYS TO HELP THEM FEEL CONFIDENT, VALUED AND PART OF SOMETHING GREAT.

MISSION AIM: SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS AND THOSE WHO FEEL MARGINALISED TO FEEL EMPOWERED, VALUED, AND CONNECTED TO THEIR COMMUNITY.

BELONGING

SOCIAL BUTTERFLIES

From festivals to fermentation workshops, exhibitions to explorations, our wide range of events and activities have brought excitement, fun and new skills into the lives of our members. In the past 12 months, we have held 81 unique events and social activities, separate from our weekly groups.



UPPERFEST

Having recognised a big appetite amongst members for activities involving singing, dancing and performance, we made this year's Upperfest the biggest and best yet. For the first time, members had the opportunity to perform themselves, and many did, bravely choosing to stand on stage and sing, dance or play an instrument. Everyone cheered each other on, creating a real sense of celebration and togetherness.

“

I BELONG HERE, I FEEL LIKE
PEOPLE KNOW ME.

LUNCH CLUB

We provided long-term support to approximately 80 people this year through our Lunch Club, which takes place Tuesday to Friday each week. Members can bring their own lunch or order tasty plant-based lunches from the kitchen. The club provides a casual, low-pressure environment for members to chat and make friends.

AIM 1: BELONGING AND EMPOWERMENT

CASE STUDY: BOWLING STONES

In autumn 2025, after a very successful first bowling league, we asked members to vote on whether they would like to keep bowling or try a new sport. An overwhelming majority of members wanted to continue bowling under the Bowling Stones league, so we started our second league in December.

Bowling Stones is one of our most popular groups and is always in high demand. The members who attend have come out of their shells massively in the last 12 months, and the lanes are always full of good conversation and laughter.



Members have had to learn patience and commitment; the games can often take a lot of setting up and organising before people get the chance to play. Despite this, our players are very committed, and we have around 30 members on average attending a month.

Alice was very quiet when she started at Bowling Stones and struggled to chat to people. She still finds it difficult to come out of her shell when attending regular groups, but at Bowling Stones she has grown in confidence and now enjoys chatting to her fellow team members.



Paul and Ian have become really good friends through Bowling Stones. Even though they are on different teams, they always cheer each other on when they get a strike.

AIM 1: BELONGING AND EMPOWERMENT

We believe no idea is silly or too small to share. Over the years, we have tried different ways of capturing people's voices. Some voices come easily and loudly. Others are quieter and need more time and support to be heard.

EMPOWERMENT

DREAMING BIG VISIONING DAY

In April, we held our first Dreaming Big Visioning Day, an event designed to share ideas and ensure that all voices could be heard. For this event, we invited people to step into 2028, to imagine what we want it to look like.



The feedback we received from this event was invaluable, and we have already taken action on some wonderful suggestions. Members told us they would like to see a wider variety of food skills workshops, and one person said they would like to learn how to make kombucha, so in July we ran our first fermentation workshop!

SUPPORT AND FEEDBACK

Over the year, our members have had consistent one-on-one sessions with our Community Engagement Lead. This has ensured that members are getting the wellbeing support they need and that their feedback, thoughts and suggestions are being heard.

We always want members to feel confident to share their thoughts and ideas with us, and many of our ideas have started in ordinary moments: while making art, sharing lunch, having a cup of tea, or chatting between activities.

HIGHLIGHT - COMIC CLUB

During our weekly art groups, one of our facilitators noticed that several members enjoyed creating their own characters and storylines. Seeing a common interest, we started a weekly comic club for people interested in exploring character creation in more depth. The club has been hugely popular, and after a four-week trial period and some great feedback from members, we've decided to keep the club as a regular weekly group.

“ I FEEL WELCOME AT UPPERTUNITY.
MY IDEAS ARE IMPORTANT HERE
AND I'M LISTENED TO. ”

AIM 1: BELONGING AND EMPOWERMENT

CASE STUDY: KYLE

Kyle started with Uppertunity in 2019. Having just graduated from college with a qualification in hospitality, he was keen to get some real-world experience and began volunteering at our Serendipities cafe in Dundee city centre.

Together with other members, Kyle began regularly volunteering, gaining experience in everything from baking to serving to doing the washing up. Kyle really loved the variety of volunteering at Serendipities, but most of all he appreciates the atmosphere at Uppertunity, which he says is just the right mixture of supportive and challenging.



After the cafe closed in 2021, Kyle continued to volunteer with our catering arm, going from strength to strength. A natural leader and confident communicator, Kyle often took a supporting role in leading volunteer groups. We have recently had the opportunity to offer Kyle a paid staff role at certain catering events, where he took a more active role in leading the volunteer team.

Now, Kyle regularly leads our volunteer group independently on a Friday, providing direction and support. He is returning to college this year to gain a qualification in hospitality management.

“THIS IS A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, BUT IT ALSO CHALLENGES YOU IN WAYS YOU’RE ABLE TO TAKE ON. TAKING ON THE ROLE OF GROUP LEADER HAS MADE ME MUCH MORE CONFIDENT.”

AIM 2: GROWTH AND RESILIENCE

94%

OF PARTICIPANTS SAY THAT UPPERTUNITY HAS HELPED THEM TO FEEL BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES.

MISSION AIM: ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO DEVELOP THRIVING MINDSETS, TRANSFERABLE LIFE SKILLS, CONFIDENCE, AND RESILIENCE THROUGH CURIOSITY, PLAYFULNESS, AND EXPLORATION.

GROWTH HAPPENS WHEN WE PUSH OURSELVES OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE. UPPERTUNITY PROVIDES A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR MEMBERS TO TRY NEW THINGS, ASK BIG QUESTIONS AND OCCASIONALLY FAIL, SO THAT THEY CAN LEARN AND TRY AGAIN.



UPPSKILLS AND WISE UPP

This year, we've supported members through weekly groups such as UppSkills, Wise Upp, and Upp and Oot, which have provided consistent, practical education in life skills. These groups build growth and resilience by consistently challenging our members to try new things and expand their understanding of their own capability.

Our rotating life skills programme included blocks on upcycling, photography, mental health and wellbeing, practical green living, jewellery making and many other topics.

“
I USED TO BE SHY BEFORE BUT NOW
I'M TALKATIVE. I LIKE TO TALK.
”

HIGHLIGHT: INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

We asked Enable to facilitate workshops around independent transport. Members learned how to access different modes of public transport, as well as other options such as cycling and walking. For the final session, Enable accompanied members on a real trip across the city, where members had to get from A to B independently. When things did not go as expected, members were able to adapt and find an alternative route. The experience helped members to feel more confident travelling on their own, and more able to cope with unexpected changes.



“I'VE ALWAYS COME HERE ON MY OWN. I FEEL INDEPENDENT”.

AIM 2: GROWTH AND RESILIENCE

FOOD SKILLS PROGRAMME

This year, our food skills programme has consistently supported volunteers to gain skills in prepping and serving food. The majority of our volunteers come in weekly and have been attending for many years. This regular support allows people to grow their skills and confidence slowly and steadily, leading to some fantastic results. Long-term support also allows our volunteers to really get to know each other, problem-solve together and make friends.

"I FEEL MORE FOCUSED BECAUSE I HAVE MY OWN WORK TO DO."



TAILORED EVENTS

A number of our events this past year have focused on building resilience and expanding comfort zones. Advocating Together delivered Real Talk workshops with members, creating opportunities to discuss issues that mattered to them, express their views and develop self-advocacy skills. A Community Connections activity was held with the National Involvement Network, supporting members to connect with wider networks and become involved in discussions affecting people with learning disabilities.

CASE STUDY: BLAKE, JOINED 2024

After leaving school, Blake tried further education in gardening, but felt excluded by the other students and struggled to fit in. He felt that Autism and ADHD made him the "class weirdo" and, although he enjoyed gardening, he left feeling disheartened. Blake would spend a lot of time indoors on his computer, and didn't get to see people very often. He struggled with his mental health during this period.

After learning about volunteer opportunities at Uppertunity, Blake started helping out in the garden. He quickly came to feel more comfortable and confident.

Since joining Blake has become a confident gardener and likes using his own initiative. He will often spot things in the garden that need a bit of work, and will get started on them without being asked. His mental health has improved, and things that used to make him anxious feel much more manageable. He has also made a good friend in Kieran, another Uppertunity member.



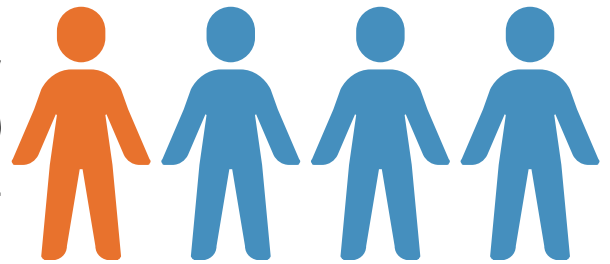
"PEOPLE ARE REALLY NICE HERE."

"I FEEL LIKE I HELP OUT, LIKE WHAT I DO HERE MAKES A DIFFERENCE. IT FEELS NICE SEEING A COMPLETED TASK THAT I'VE DONE." - BLAKE

AIM 3: CHALLENGE PERCEPTIONS

MISSION AIM: SHIFT NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF SELF AND OTHERS, FOSTERING OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS OF MISUNDERSTANDING.

A QUARTER OF DISABLED INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATORY ATTITUDES IN THEIR LIFETIME (SCOPE, 2022). THIS YEAR, WE HELPED TO BREAK DOWN NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES AND CHALLENGE HARMFUL PERCEPTIONS BY SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD.



OUR MEMBERS' EXHIBITIONS

This year, we created three member-led art exhibitions: Different Together, Forming Care and Dreaming Big. The exhibitions gave our members access to meaningful creative opportunities that are often unavailable to them, whilst also demonstrating the explosion of creative talent our members are capable of when presented with these opportunities.

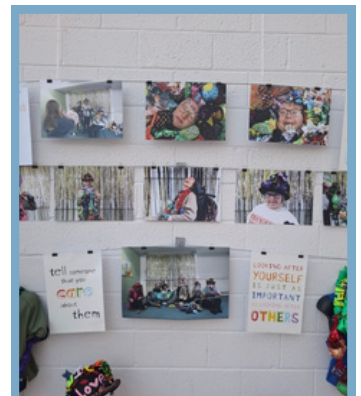


EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHT: DREAMING BIG

Our most recent exhibition, Dreaming Big, took place in June at CANVAS Dundee. The theme this time was imagining possibilities, stories and future selves, and asked members to share their dreams for their own future and for the future of their community.

I FEEL PART OF OPPORTUNITY AND
THAT I'M IMPORTANT HERE.

Our facilitator, Dulcie, said that the pride members took in their work, especially at the opening event, was a personal highlight. The members were also asked "What are your dreams for the future?", a question which brought up many wonderfully surprising answers, including "To see clowns at the circus" and "To get a goat".



AIM 3: CHALLENGE PERCEPTIONS

PROMOTING VISIBILITY

One of the first steps to breaking down barriers is to be consistently present and visible in our wider community. This year, we took part in several public events, walking proudly and sharing our voices. At Dundee Pride, we engaged with the public through colourful art. We proudly took part in Dundee's Hooley Parade, dressed in our handmade soft sculptures and soaking up the amazing atmosphere. At the Dundee Get Together, we marched in solidarity with many other wonderful, diverse communities, wearing handmade butterfly wings.



By taking part in these wider celebrations, we make sure that our members are seen, heard and feel like an important and valued part of the community. We challenge perceptions by creating opportunities for people to show who they are, what they care about and what they can contribute.

PROMOTING VISIBILITY HIGHLIGHT: PRIDE

Pride 2026 was celebrated across the organisation, and we encouraged everyone to take part. Members were invited to collaborate on a range of t-shirts, tote bags and postcards that reflected their unique perspective on identity and diversity.



“BEING IN GROUPS HAS HELPED ME FEEL LISTENED TO AS AN ADULT. AT SOME OTHER PLACES, THEY SPOKE TO ME LIKE A BABY.”

In groups, we explored what identity, diversity and belonging mean to us. Members created fantasy characters inspired by people, stories and colours they connected with. Reflecting the diversity seen in nature, we also made a rainbow of flowers out of painted paper and displayed it as a mural. Members could talk openly about their experiences, and ask questions that may be discouraged elsewhere. The designs were then made available for sale to the public at Dundee Pride 2026.

WE CHALLENGE PERCEPTIONS BY CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO SHOW WHO THEY ARE, WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT AND WHAT THEY CAN CONTRIBUTE.

AIM 4: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

MISSION AIM: CREATE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES IN PARTNERSHIP, EDUCATION, AND PRACTICAL ACTION.

THIS YEAR, WE MADE IT OUR MISSION TO ENSURE THAT OUR ORGANISATION, OUR COMMUNITY, AND OUR ECOSYSTEMS WILL BE HERE TO SUPPORT US LONG INTO THE FUTURE.

GROWTH THROUGH GARDENING

For years, our garden has provided a safe haven, not only for bees, birds and other wildlife, but also for our members and volunteers. This year, we built on the success of our history and nature trail and aimed to make our garden an even more relaxing and welcoming place. We built a second seating area in the back garden with wildflower patches and curved paths made from white stone, giving anyone who might need it a quiet, reflective area to spend time in. Thanks to these improvements and constant care and maintenance by our staff and volunteers, we have seen more people visiting the garden this year than ever before.

Through our Up and Oot group, members spend time in the garden every week, learning about and interacting with our natural environment. This year, we opened our garden to external volunteers, and have had a number of groups from different backgrounds visit to help out.



THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO
DO IN THE GARDEN!

AIM 4: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

OUT IN NATURE

Biodiversity and sustainability have been consistent themes throughout our Social Butterflies events programme this year. ScrapAntics delivered a workshop exploring greener living, reuse and practical ways to reduce waste, and our Practical Green Living block focused on accessible, hands-on changes people could use in everyday life. The King's Trust took part in a garden session with members, and Dundee Botanic Gardens hosted a number of lovely days out, where we had the opportunity to connect with nature and learn more about our environment.

Our staff incorporated sustainability into Weekly Warriors groups, focusing on community clean-ups, collective responsibility, and biodiversity. In August, we participated in the RPSB's community BioBlitz at The Friary, collaborating with citizen scientists to identify, catch, record, and release insects. This experience taught us about citizen science and how everyone can contribute to research by observing and creating habitats for local wildlife.

I THINK THE GARDENING WORK IS IMPORTANT. I'VE LEARNED ABOUT NOT KILLING WORMS AND INSECTS BECAUSE THEY'RE USEFUL.

HIGHLIGHT: TENTSMUIR VISIT, PARTNERSHIP WITH NATURESCOT

In October, we supported a group of our members in planning a trip to Tentsmuir Nature Reserve, in partnership with NatureScot to help clear a wildflower area in preparation for next year's growth. Having the opportunity to independently plan the trip, from the initial idea right up to the trip itself, with facilitation from us only where needed, left the group feeling empowered and with growing enthusiasm for nature.



ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is not only about the environment. It is also about building an organisation that can adapt, remain resilient and continue creating meaningful opportunities long into the future.

We are always exploring different ways to strengthen Uppertunity – through partnership working, new income streams, enterprise, fundraising and better use of our resources. At the same time, we keep the heart of what we do at the centre: creating opportunities that genuinely benefit our members and community. During this reporting year, Serendipities, our not-for-profit catering arm, generated income while also providing volunteering, skills development and real-world work experience. Since then, we have reviewed the model and made the decision to move away from catering so that our food work can focus more fully on cooking skills and personal development.

Member-designed merchandise and stalls at community events have created further opportunities to share members' ideas, challenge perceptions and support Uppertunity financially. For us, sustainability means being willing to try, learn and change direction when needed, while staying rooted in our purpose.

AIM 5: CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION

MISSION AIM: DEVELOP MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS TO OVERCOME ISOLATION, LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER, AND CULTIVATE TOGETHERNESS.

WE DO NOT NEED TO DO EVERYTHING OURSELVES. BY CONNECTING PEOPLE, SHARING SKILLS AND WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP, WE CREATE OPPORTUNITIES THAT NONE OF US COULD CREATE ALONE.



“

I HELP PEOPLE.

I'VE LEARNED NEW THINGS IN THE KITCHEN AND IN ART GROUPS.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Working together starts with our own team. This year, we've endeavoured to support and celebrate each other as often as we can. We've shown gratitude to our volunteers at our Volunteer BBQ, which prompted some heartwarming comments from attendees. We've overcome exciting challenges as a staff team, including completing the fiendish Elie chain walk at our most recent staff day. Most importantly, we've made sure to take time to listen to each other and share ideas.

FACILITATORS

This year we made a deliberate effort to invite more external facilitators to deliver workshops. This ensures our groups remain varied and interesting for members, who are keen to learn a wide range of skills. External facilitators this year included the NHS Screening Team, who visited to discuss health inequalities, screening and access to health services; Police Scotland, who spoke to members about personal and community safety; and Face the Music, who deliver regular, much-enjoyed drumming lessons.

We've had too many external facilitators to list here this year, and we're excited to have even more in the coming year!



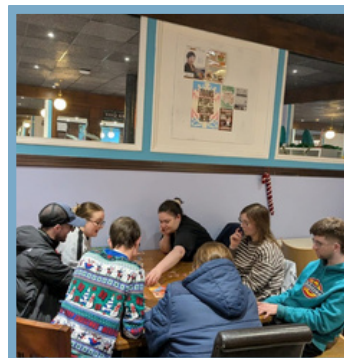
FACILITATOR HIGHLIGHT: UNIQUE RHYTHM

Our Face the Music facilitator, Ed, has been running drumming workshops on Fridays this year. Drumming has proven popular with members who don't often get the opportunity to express themselves through sound and want to be loud and let loose for an hour! Taking part in drumming has helped members come out of their shells and build the confidence to be heard.

AIM 5: CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION

TRIPS AND EVENTS

Our events programme wouldn't be what it is today without the organisations we work alongside. These partnerships have given our members opportunities they might not otherwise have had. This year, Cake or Dice delivered a board game workshop with members, supporting social interaction, communication, problem-solving and fun. The DCA invited members along for a tour and lunch, supporting access to art, culture and community spaces. The V&A invited members to the launch of their Design and Disability exhibition. Each of these opportunities was organised through Uppertunity, and supported members to feel more confident, more visible, and more a part of their community.



“ I LIKE COMIC CLUB BECAUSE I LIKE DRAWING MY CHARACTERS. I HAVE A SHARED INTEREST WITH PEOPLE THERE. ”

“ I LOVE MAKING FRIENDS AND WEDNESDAY UNIQUE BEATS WITH MARTIN - I LOVE THE GOSSIP AND THE DRAMA! ”

PLACEMENTS

As part of our commitment to working with the community, we have taken on a number of student placements this year. Placements have ranged from fitness to finance, from psychology to administration, and all of our student placements have provided a unique perspective and skill set.

PLACEMENT HIGHLIGHT: JADE

Jade, a psychology master's student, completed a month-long placement with us, in which she explored different ways in which we can support our community to safely explore identity and relationships. At the end of her placement, Jade collated her work into a booklet which our staff will use as a framework for future work on this topic.

Jade's work is part of a growing and vital effort to ensure people with learning disabilities can safely and comfortably explore parts of their identity which they might previously have not been able to.



AIM 5: CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION

CASE STUDY: EXPLORING WHAT MAKES A GOOD LIFE

This year, Uppertunity tested a different way of working through a four-week philosophy and creative thinking programme. Rather than beginning with a practical skill or a set outcome, members were invited to explore a much bigger question: what makes a good life?

Each week, the group considered different ideas, challenged assumptions and drew on their own experiences and perspectives. They considered maximising pleasure, mastering skills and doing the right thing. They concluded that a good life comes from connection with, care for and helping others. Their conversations were captured through collaborative painting, with members working side by side to turn their thinking into a series of large canvases known as the Good Life Mural.



The programme created space for curiosity, uncertainty and thoughtful challenge. It showed that, when people feel safe, respected and supported, they can engage meaningfully with complex ideas and questions that may not have simple answers. The experience had a strong impact on both members and the wider team, and has influenced plans to develop more reflective, discussion-based opportunities at Uppertunity. It has also contributed to the development of new training focused on creating flourishing spaces.



AIM 5: CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FACILITATOR



I am Dr Kathrine Cuccuru, founder and facilitator of Dundee-based community project a philosopher...walks...talks...makes. I had the recent privilege and pleasure of delivering a new philosophy course at Uppertunity. Throughout the course, we expressed our philosophical thinking on canvas. Each week, following our discussion, we designed and then painted our ideas together, side by side, on one large A0 canvas. Importantly, it was not about making a 'good' artwork, but about finding the best way to express our ideas. Our group of four canvases now forms the Good Life Mural.

As a result, I have been continually impressed by Uppertunity members' willingness and ability to handle the discomfort of not being sure or not knowing. They repeatedly rose to the challenge of being asked to think about and do things they had never been asked to do before, proving themselves to be true philosophers.

Most significantly, our experience revealed that members enjoy, excel at and benefit from taking part in activities that explore difficult and potentially uncomfortable questions and ideas.



WHAT WE LEARNED THIS YEAR

THIS YEAR, ONE OF OUR BIGGEST AREAS OF LEARNING HAS BEEN UNDERSTANDING MORE DEEPLY WHAT HELPS PEOPLE TO FLOURISH. OUR MEMBER FEEDBACK SHOWED THAT IMPACT DOES NOT COME FROM AN ACTIVITY ALONE, BUT FROM MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES, RELATIONSHIPS, CONSISTENCY, CHOICE, CHALLENGE AND FEELING THAT WHAT YOU DO MATTERS.

FLOURISHING SPACES TAKE ACTIVE WORK

Belonging does not happen automatically. Members value being listened to, respected and treated as individuals, while telling us when spaces feel noisy, crowded or overwhelming. We are learning to think more intentionally about communication, accessibility, sensory needs and creating enough safety for people to take risks, explore and grow.

PEOPLE WANT TO GROW

Learning and development came through strongly in member feedback, from gaining practical skills to travelling independently, volunteering and becoming more confident. Progress looks different for everyone, so our role is to create varied opportunities for people to discover their strengths and recognise their own development.



FAMILIARITY AND NEW EXPERIENCES BOTH MATTER

Members value regular groups, familiar people and routine, but they also want more trips, new skills and different experiences. We have learned that consistency can provide the secure foundation that makes trying something unfamiliar feel possible.



CONTRIBUTION CREATES MEANING

People particularly value opportunities where they can see the result of what they have done. Gardening, cooking, volunteering, exhibitions and community projects allow members not just to participate, but to make, help, share and contribute.

PARTNERSHIP EXPANDS POSSIBILITY

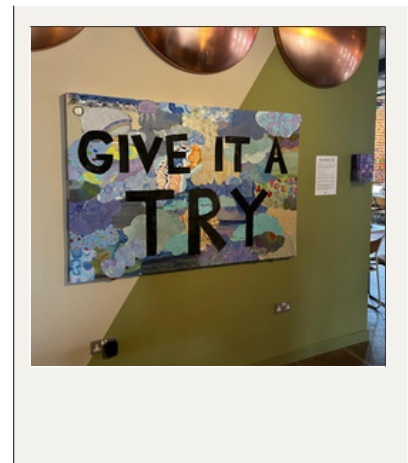
Members told us there are still gaps in accessible social and community opportunities beyond Uppertunity. We cannot, and should not, try to provide everything ourselves. Our role can also be to connect, collaborate and open doors, helping members discover other places and working with partners to make existing opportunities more inclusive. The goal is bigger worlds, stronger connections and more opportunities to flourish wherever people go.

LOOKING AHEAD

LAST YEAR WAS OUR 10TH BIRTHDAY, AND A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE HOW FAR WE HAVE COME. THIS YEAR, WE'VE TURNED OUR FOCUS TO THE FUTURE AND HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD BEHIND THE SCENES TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM PLANS. CONSEQUENTLY, THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WILL BE AN EXCITING PERIOD OF GROWTH FOR UPPERTUNITY, AS WE CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE IMPACT AND CONSISTENCY WE'VE WORKED SO HARD TO ACHIEVE. THIS YEAR, WE ARE TAKING OUR LEARNING FORWARD AND FOCUSING ON TWO KEY ELEMENTS OF OUR DELIVERY.

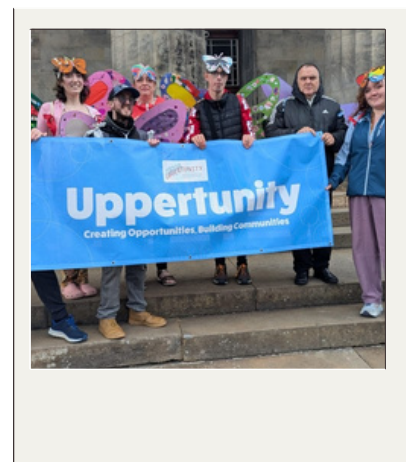
SUPPORTING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- We will sustainably grow our opportunities for adults with additional support needs, supporting more people and providing a wider range of activities
- We will develop new training opportunities, providing a wide range of internal and external training opportunities for staff, external support staff and volunteers
- We will develop our food skills programme, ensuring that support is tailored to the needs of each individual's goals and abilities



CREATING FLOURISHING SPACES

- Become more self-sustaining by developing the enterprise side of our organisation and diversifying our revenue streams.
- Continue to build our brilliant collection of partner organisations, to extend reach and share resources
- Build a strong foundation for growth by strengthening our internal systems and processes



THANK YOU & GET INVOLVED

THANK YOU

Opportunity is only possible because of the people around us.

Thank you to our members, who bring ideas, creativity and courage; our families and carers, who support and encourage; our staff, volunteers and board, who give so much care, time and energy; our partners, who help us open new doors; and our funders and supporters, whose generosity makes this work possible.

Whether you have contributed time, money, skills, ideas, encouragement or simply said yes when we needed help – thank you. Every contribution matters.

YOUR VOICE

Our activities are shaped by our members. Share your ideas, feedback and dreams with us and help shape what happens next.

YOUR TIME

Volunteer with us! Support activities, events, food skills, gardens and inclusive community spaces while meeting people and learning something new.

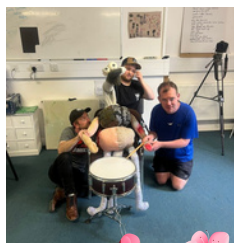
RESOURCES

We welcome useful donations including art materials, props, musical equipment, gardening supplies, tools and raffle prizes.

DONATIONS

Donations, big or small, help us provide workshops, social opportunities and skills development and keep our community thriving.

TOGETHER, WE CAN KEEP CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND BUILDING COMMUNITIES.





PROUD TO BE ME

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PHONE: 07931 560936

IN PERSON: GROUND FLOOR LEFT, THE CIRCLE AT DUDHOPE CASTLE, BARRACK ROAD, DUNDEE, DD3 6HF

