



WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY!

For Our Staff, Volunteers, and Placement Students

Welcome to the Uppertunity community!

This pack introduces you to our values, the way we work, and how we support one another. Inside, you'll find guidance on supporting our members, understanding our culture, staying safe, and making the most of your time with us.





Uppertunity is a Dundee-based charity dedicated to empowering individuals to lead fuller, more meaningful lives.

We work with people aged 16 and over with additional support needs, learning disabilities, autism, and mental health barriers.

Our mission

Our mission is to create safe, supportive and creative spaces that foster growth, equality, and togetherness. We want people to explore their potential, build confidence, and develop life skills that promote independence and connection.

Why we're needed

People with learning disabilities are among the most marginalised groups, yet opportunities for growth and development remain limited. This can affect families, increase pressure on services, and create further separation in society. Uppertunity exists to bridge this gap.

What we do

Through a range of activities, we support: personal development; confidence and resilience; social connection; and transferable life skills.

Contact us

 **Location:** Ground Floor Left, The Circle at Dudhope Castle, Barrack Road, DD3 6HF

 **Phone:** 07931 560936

 **Email:** info@uppertunity.co.uk

 **Website:** uppertunity.org.uk

 **Follow us:** Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn

Get involved

Join us in creating a more inclusive community! Visit our website or reach out to learn how you can support or participate in our programmes.



OVERVIEW OF 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, 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 listen to your ideas and create opportunities to socialise, have fun and explore new places.

UppLift

Develop your skills, confidence and experience through learning, training and volunteering.

UppLift includes volunteer roles, student placements, staff development, and internal and external training. We also offer workshops to explore healthy relationships, friendships, communication and identity.



Power of Diversity

Celebrate what makes each person unique and help us challenge stereotypes. Our members create merchandise and exhibitions that share important messages about diversity and inclusion. You can help promote our Proud to Be Me and Proud Diversity ranges, or take part in exhibitions and creative projects.

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 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 when we act 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.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Creating a safe, respectful, and positive environment for everyone
At Uppertunity, we believe in leading with kindness, professionalism, and curiosity. Our Code of Conduct helps us maintain a safe, supportive space where everyone – staff, volunteers, placements, and members – can thrive.

Respect and Inclusion	• Treat everyone with kindness, dignity, and respect. • Celebrate differences, we all bring unique experiences, skills, and perspectives. • Use inclusive language and behaviour at all times. • Never use offensive, discriminatory, or intimidating language or actions.
Confidentiality and Boundaries	• Keep all personal information about members, staff, and volunteers private. • Never share photos, stories, or information outside of work unless you have permission. • Avoid discussing members or internal matters in public or on social media. • Maintain professional boundaries – friendships are encouraged, but roles and responsibilities come first.
Dress and Presentation	• Dress comfortably, appropriately, and in a way that reflects respect for the people you work with. • For workshops and catering: wear practical clothing and closed shoes for safety. • Avoid clothing with offensive images or slogans. • No low-cut tops, short skirts or shorts, and midriffs showing. • When representing Uppertunity externally, aim for smart-casual or as directed for the event.
Professionalism and Responsibility	• Be punctual, reliable, and communicate if you're running late or can't attend. • Follow instructions, health and safety procedures, and safeguarding guidance. • Be proactive – if something doesn't feel right or you're unsure, ask. • Take care of equipment, materials, and shared spaces. • Be mindful of confidentiality and data protection when handling any paperwork or digital information.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Photography and Social Media	• All members must give consent before any photos or videos are taken. • Only staff are permitted to take photos of members and share them within the staff group chat for internal use. • Photos must never be shared on personal social media, messaging apps, or with anyone outside of the team. • You are welcome – and encouraged – to share Uppertunity's posts from our official social media pages to help promote our work. • Always be professional, positive, and respectful when posting or talking about Uppertunity online. • If you're ever unsure whether a photo or post is appropriate, check with a manager before sharing.
Attitude and Mindset	• Approach every day with curiosity, compassion, and a willingness to learn. • Be open to feedback and reflection – we all grow together. • Support others and ask for help when you need it. • Be part of building a positive and nurturing culture for everyone.
Safeguarding	• If you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment, or safeguarding concerns, speak up. • Report concerns to your line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Danielle du Plooy). • Everyone will be treated fairly, confidentially, and with respect during any follow-up.
Safety and Common Sense	• Everyone has a role in keeping Uppertunity safe – for yourself, our members, and each other. • Always follow health and safety guidance, listen to staff instructions, and use equipment safely. • If something feels unsafe or you're unsure how to do something, stop and ask – never take risks or "just wing it." • Report accidents, hazards, or near misses straight away so we can prevent future issues. • Respect personal space and be mindful of others' needs – physical and emotional safety both matter here.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING WITH US

At Uppertunity, we value and appreciate every member of our team—whether you are a paid staff member, volunteer, or placement (paid and unpaid). We strive to create a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued. As part of our commitment to your wellbeing and experience, we offer the following benefits:

Complimentary Beverages & Fruit	All staff, volunteers and placements have access to tea, coffee, juice and fruit throughout the day.
Nourishing Meals	Soup & Bread - Volunteers and placements (unpaid) receive a complimentary soup and bread on the days they are volunteering. 50% Off Menu Items - All staff, volunteers, and placements receive 50% off food from our menu on the days they are working/volunteering.
Wellbeing & Emotional Support	We believe in fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive space for all. If you ever need to talk about anything you're struggling with, we offer confidential wellbeing check-ins. Management (and the board, if appropriate) will provide guidance, support, and signposting to further resources if needed.
Personal & Professional Development	We are committed to growth and learning. Volunteers and staff may have access to skill-building opportunities, training sessions, or workshops that align with their roles and interests.
Community & Connection	Being part of Uppertunity means joining a welcoming community. We encourage social interactions, peer support, and the chance to collaborate on creative and meaningful projects. We will share any projects and opportunities that we come across or take part in.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM US

We believe in teamwork and mutual growth. When you join Uppertunity, you become part of a supportive community that values kindness, creativity, and progress over perfection. As a valued member of our team, here's what you can expect from us: encouragement, guidance, and opportunities to learn, connect, and thrive.

	A warm welcome	When you join, we'll ask you to complete a referral form so that we can understand your goals and needs. You'll also be added to our community wall with a Polaroid photo and an "About Me" postcard, helping us all get to know each other better.
	Staying in the loop	You'll receive our monthly newsletter, keeping you informed about all upcoming activities, opportunities, and updates. Everyone is encouraged to participate in our visual check-in wheel, helping us all share how we're feeling in a simple and inclusive way. We also have a WhatsApp group for volunteers, where you can stay connected and receive additional support. Let us know if you'd like to join!
	A supportive environment	We're here to support you. If you have any worries or need assistance, our staff are always available to listen and help. Where needed, we'll guide you to other resources or support networks.
	A safe space	Your wellbeing is our priority. All staff are PVG checked and trained in safeguarding and other support measures. We'll regularly check in with you to see how you're doing.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM US



Your voice matters

At Uppertunity, we value your input. You'll be kept updated about new services and changes, and we'll regularly ask for your feedback to ensure your voice is heard.



Recognition and encouragement

You'll be safeguarded, supported, and encouraged every step of the way. Your contributions are important, and we'll celebrate your achievements as part of our community.

We host bi-annual volunteer celebrations and invite you to special events where we celebrate milestones and strengthen connections.



Commitment to safety and best practices

We have Employers and Public Liability insurance to protect everyone. Additionally, our external health and safety advisor ensures we're maintaining excellent practices at all times.



Opportunities to grow

We offer opportunities for skill development and training, such as workshops or mentoring, to help you grow in your role. We'll keep you updated and encourage you to let us know if you need additional support.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

Teamwork comes from all sides. We each play a role in creating the safe, positive, and inspiring environment that Uppertunity is known for. Here's what we ask from you: reliability, respect, openness, and a willingness to grow together as part of our team and community.

	Commitment	Attend your agreed volunteering activities with dedication and consistency.
	Reliability and punctuality	Be reliable and arrive on time for your scheduled activities. If you're unable to attend, please give reasonable notice so we can make alternative arrangements.
	Respect and teamwork	Treat all team members, members, and customers with kindness, fairness, and respect. Value the unique strengths and contributions of everyone.
	Communication	Let us know if you encounter any challenges, have concerns, or need support. We're here to help you succeed.
	Safety	Take responsibility for keeping yourself and others safe by following our health and safety guidelines.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

	Positive attitude	Bring enthusiasm and positivity to your volunteering role. Your energy helps create a welcoming and empowering space for everyone.
	Confidentiality	Respect the privacy of members and team discussions by keeping sensitive information confidential.
	Flexibility	Be adaptable to changing needs and tasks as we work to meet the evolving requirements of our members and community.
	Be a role model	Lead by example by embodying Uppertunity's values, including creativity, empowerment, and togetherness.
	Feedback	Share your thoughts and ideas with us to help improve our services and community.

RUNNING A GROUP - GUIDELINES

Our shared goal is to create a welcoming, creative & supportive space for everyone

ROLE OF UPPERTUNITY STAFF

- Usually lead and plan the session.
- Ensure activities connect to wider Uppertunity projects where relevant.
- Communicate the session plan to volunteers.
 - Escalate any safeguarding concerns.
- Ask anyone not joining the session to leave the room 15 minutes before start (20 minutes for Wednesday sewing group).



ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

- Support members during the activity.
- Encourage participation, conversation and confidence.
 - Offer help when needed.
- Share ideas and support the staff member running the group.
- Report any safeguarding concerns to staff.



SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Staff and volunteers both help to:

- Encourage creativity and experimentation.
- Support members with tasks when needed.
 - Be friendly and patient.
- Help members socialise with each other.
- Move around the room so everyone feels included.
- Kneel or crouch beside someone rather than standing over them.



FACILITATING A SESSION

- Guide what's happening without taking over.
- Encourage choice, independence and trying new things.
 - Activities may take longer – that's okay.
 - Support members when they're ready to move onto the next step, but also encourage when tasks need to be completed to move on.



RUNNING A SESSION

- Arrive 15 minutes before the session to set up and communicate with each other.
 - Groups should be ready by 10am/1pm.
- Tea break is usually 11am / 2pm (around 15 minutes).
- Encourage members to help make and serve drinks.
- We take monthly payments at the start of the month. Some members pay weekly due to how often they receive benefits. Staff usually manage this.



END OF SESSION

- Ask members to help tidy 10 minutes before the session ends.
 - Everyone helps with tidying up
- Aim to finish clearing within 15 minutes after the group ends.





THE CULTURE OF UPPERTUNITY

HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER

At Uppertunity, we strive to create a positive, inclusive, and empowering environment for all staff, members, volunteers, board members, support staff, and visitors. Our culture is shaped by the following principles:

Appreciation and celebration	Value everyone's contributions equally. Acknowledge achievements and celebrate successes, big or small. Verbally recognise and celebrate each person's efforts, regularly.
Non-judgemental support	Assume the best in each other and create a safe space to ask for help. Avoid judgment and negativity; instead, foster kindness and encouragement. See the best in everyone, respecting their journey and abilities.
Respect and fairness	Respect and value diverse backgrounds, abilities, and identities. Treat everyone with fairness. No favouritism, only equity.
Playfulness and creativity	Encourage humour, curiosity, and experimentation. Provide opportunities for creative expression and new ideas. Foster a safe space where individuals can showcase their talents.
Growth mindset and learning	Embrace progress over perfection. Use mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow. Support safe risk-taking and encourage stepping outside comfort zones.



THE CULTURE OF OPPORTUNITY

HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER

Communication and honesty	Communicate openly. Share knowledge, ask for help, and clarify expectations. Check in regularly and give constructive feedback. Listen actively and with empathy, asking follow-up questions to show care.
Collaboration and teamwork	Promote teamwork and inclusivity over competition. Share ideas, support each other, and work together to achieve common goals. Build a calm and fun environment where everyone feels they belong.
Accountability and trust	Take ownership of actions and be honest about successes and mistakes. Assume good intentions and practice authenticity in every interaction. Follow through on commitments and encourage continuous learning.
Empowerment	Guide and support rather than doing things for others. Believe in everyone's potential and create opportunities for independence.
Adaptability	Be open to new ideas and willing to adjust for the benefit of everyone. Check in regularly to ensure processes are working effectively.



BEING A GREAT FACILITATOR

HOW WE BEHAVE AS INDIVIDUALS



To effectively support adults with additional support needs and empower them, facilitators at Uppertunity embody the following behaviours:

Be a role model	Demonstrate positive behaviour in attitude, language, and actions. Show respect, kindness, and healthy habits to inspire confidence and trust. Is the behaviour you show or what you're talking about helpful to you, or helpful to the person? It should be helpful to the person.
Show initiative	Be proactive, offer help and stay engaged during activities. Check in with members and join in creatively when possible. See where things can improve, and share ideas.
Build confidence and empower	Provide specific, meaningful compliments that highlight individual strengths. Empower individuals to take ownership of their learning and experiences. Focus on personal growth, not perfection.
Foster fun and balance	Create a safe and engaging atmosphere with enthusiasm and positivity. Balance fun with purpose. Focus on the journey, not just the destination.
Ensure safety and professionalism	Be aware of safeguarding responsibilities and report concerns. Maintain professional boundaries, keeping physical contact to a minimum and no private communication outside of the workspace with members. Share updates with the team to keep everyone informed.
Be prepared and on time	Know your responsibilities for workshops, events, and activities. Stay informed about Uppertunity's plans and ensure readiness.
Practise kindness and boundaries	Be nurturing yet professional. Balance kindness with clear boundaries. Respect others' needs, and create space for learning and growth.
Share and collaborate	Share knowledge, resources, and skills with others. Teach and learn from team members and volunteers.
Create a positive team environment	Support colleagues and volunteers by noticing and addressing struggles. Practice gratitude and show appreciation for others' efforts. Make space for individuals to be themselves and feel valued.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

At Uppertunity, we're committed to maintaining a safe, supportive, and positive environment where everyone can thrive. Health and safety is a shared responsibility, and each of us plays a vital role in keeping our spaces safe for ourselves, our members, and one another.

This section gives an overview of our health and safety practices and where to find further information. We receive professional Health & Safety support from our external advisor, Citation, who reviews our documents and procedures to ensure they meet current regulations and best practice.

Key Handbooks and Policies

This overview should be read alongside the relevant full documents, including:

- Health and Safety Policy and Handbook
- Organisational Handbook
- Employee Handbook
- Staff and Volunteer Welcome Pack
- Risk Assessments
- Citation Fire Risk Assessment
- Uppertunity Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Plan
- COSHH assessments and Safety Data Sheets
- CookSafe Food Safety Management System
- Safeguarding procedures
- Incident-reporting procedures
- Individual support arrangements and PEEPs

Staff and volunteers should speak to management if they are unsure which procedure or risk assessment applies.

When You First Join

As part of your induction, you'll be shown the layout of our space, first aid boxes, fire exits and evacuation routes, and any safety information specific to your role.

The following pages include our Emergency Evacuation Plan, Green/Amber/Red Evacuation Support Guide and Health & Safety Overview. Please familiarise yourself with these and ask a manager if anything is unclear.

Why This Matters

A safe environment helps everyone feel confident, comfortable, and able to focus on what matters most: developing skills, nurturing connections, and inspiring mindsets for thriving communities.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFEGUARDING

Keeping everyone safe, respected, and supported.

At Uppertunity, everyone has the right to feel safe and valued. Safeguarding means protecting people from harm, abuse, or neglect, and creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

What safeguarding means

Safeguarding is about:

- Treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- Recognising when someone might need help or support.
- Speaking up quickly if you're worried about someone's safety or wellbeing.
- Making sure all staff and volunteers are suitable for their roles (through the PVG Scheme).

Who it's for

Safeguarding applies to everyone – staff, volunteers, placements, and members. Most of our work involves adults with additional support needs, but safeguarding also protects anyone under 18 or any adult who may be at risk of harm.

What to look out for

Harm can take many forms – physical, emotional, financial, neglect, or discrimination. If something doesn't feel right, it's always better to share your concern. Trust your instincts.

What to do if you're worried

If you see or hear something that concerns you:

1. Stay calm and listen.
2. Don't investigate, just note what you see or hear.
3. Report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Danielle du Plooy

 danielledp@uppertunity.co.uk

 If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Our shared responsibility

Everyone plays a part in keeping Uppertunity safe. That means:

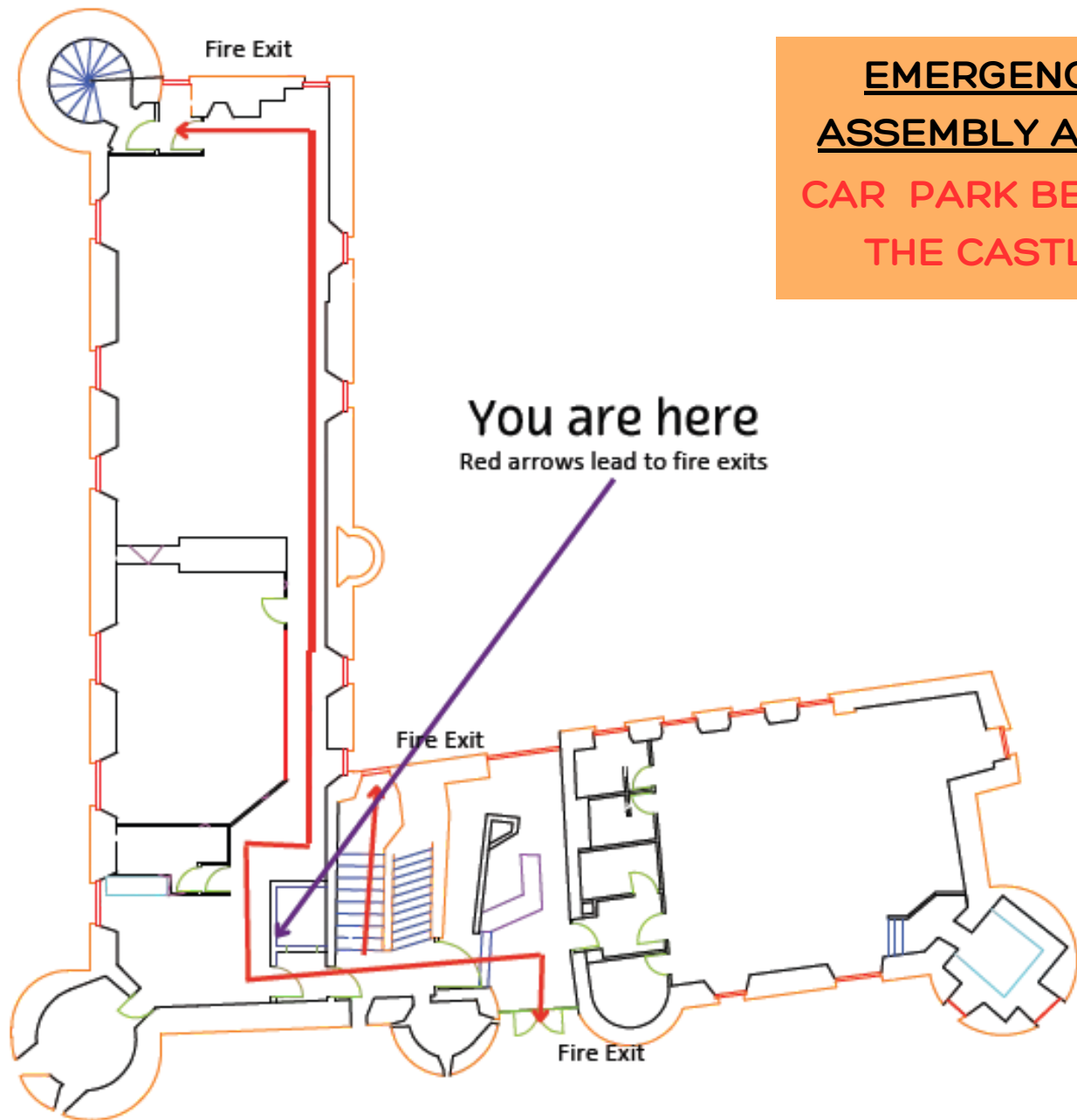
- Following our Code of Conduct and safeguarding policy.
- Respecting boundaries and confidentiality.
- Speaking up if you're ever unsure or concerned.

Together we are developing skills, nurturing connections, and inspiring mindsets for thriving communities - safely.

Full policy and more info

You can find our full policy on our website: <https://uppertunity.org.uk/policies-%26-documents>

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN



EMERGENCY
ASSEMBLY AREA
CAR PARK BEHIND
THE CASTLE

IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE	WHEN THE ALARM SOUNDS
• Raise the alarm. • Call 999. • Tell an Uppertunity manager or Fire Marshal. • Leave by the safest available exit. People come first. Never put yourself at risk.	• Stop what you are doing and leave immediately. • Use the main entrance where safe and available. • If the main entrance cannot be used, follow staff/Fire Marshal instructions. • Do not stop for belongings. • Do not use the lift. • Go straight to the assembly point: car park behind Dudhope Castle. • Do not re-enter unless specifically involved in the planned trained-staff Red evacuation procedure, or until told it is safe.

FIRE ROLES & SUPPORTED EVACUATION

GROUP LEADER - TO DO	FIRE MARSHAL - TO DO
- Check the workshop register. - Know which members are Green, Amber or Red. - Make sure Amber members have the support they need. - Allocate staff support where required. - Follow the Red evacuation procedure where necessary. - Check the immediate workshop area while leaving, if safe to do so. - Tell the Fire Marshal immediately if anyone is unaccounted for.	- Take the attendance folder to the assembly point. - Check Uppertunity registers and The Circle sign-in information. - Confirm everyone is accounted for. - Liaise with The Circle and confirm 999 has been called. - Confirm any Red members remaining in a protected holding area and the support in place. - Prevent re-entry. - Meet the Fire & Rescue Service.

GREEN, AMBER AND RED EVACUATION SUPPORT GUIDE

GREEN General guidance	AMBER Additional support	RED Cannot use rear stairs
Can use both exits and leave independently or with normal group guidance.	Can physically use the rear stairs but may need reassurance, prompting, communication support, supervision or physical guidance.	Cannot safely use the rear stairs due to mobility needs.
Procedure - Uppertunity staff will tell you which exit to use. - Leave the building with the group you are attending. - Use the level main entrance wherever it is safe to do so. - If the main entrance cannot be used, leave by the rear exit using the spiral staircase. - Go directly to the assembly point with your group.	Procedure - Uppertunity staff will tell you which exit to use. - If you have your own carer or supporter with you, they will support you to leave the building. - If you do not have your own supporter, an Uppertunity staff member, manager or Fire Marshal will support you. - They will stay with you and help you leave safely with your group. - Use the level main entrance wherever it is safe to do so. - If the main entrance cannot be used, leave by the rear exit using the spiral staircase. - Go directly to the assembly point.	Procedure - Uppertunity staff will tell you which exit to use. - Use the level main entrance wherever it is safe to do so. - If the main entrance cannot be used, you will be supported to the protected holding area. Art Room 2 is the primary holding area. The smaller protected area beside the rear staircase is used if Art Room 2 is not safe. - If the rear stairs are required, two trained people will support your evacuation using the evacuation sledge/SKI-PAD. - Your individual PEEP and the agreed Red evacuation procedure will be followed throughout your evacuation.

H&S OVERVIEW

At Uppertunity, we are committed to providing a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where everyone can thrive. Health and safety is a shared responsibility. Staff, volunteers, members, carers and visitors all have a role in helping to keep themselves and others safe.

We take a realistic and balanced approach to health and safety. Risks cannot always be removed completely, but hazards should be identified and controlled as far as reasonably practicable.

This document provides an overview of the key health and safety arrangements at Uppertunity. It does not replace the full Health and Safety Policy, Citation Fire Risk Assessment, Uppertunity Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Plan, activity-specific risk assessments, CookSafe procedures, COSHH information, safeguarding procedures or individual support arrangements. Uppertunity receives external health and safety advice from Citation.

1. EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone working or volunteering at Uppertunity should:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others.
- Follow health and safety instructions, training, procedures and relevant risk assessments.
- Report hazards, damaged equipment, accidents, incidents and near misses promptly.
- Stop an activity or use of equipment if they believe it is unsafe.
- Never use equipment they have not been trained, instructed or authorised to use.
- Ask for help rather than attempting a task beyond their ability, experience or training.
- Make management aware of any support or reasonable adjustments needed to work safely.
- Work collaboratively and communicate any concerns or changes that may affect safety.

Staff planning activities must consider the environment, equipment, individual support needs and level of supervision required before the activity begins.

2. RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Citation Fire Risk Assessment, Uppertunity Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Plan, CookSafe, COSHH, safeguarding, allergen, incident-reporting and individual support procedures must also be followed where relevant.

Current assessments include:

- General and Office
- Kitchen-Based Activities
- Art, Craft and Creative Activities
- Community Gardening
- External Outings
- Working with People Under 18
- Woodwork Activities
- Community Pop-Up Events
- Catering Pop-Ups
- Lone Working
- Bowling League
- Driving for Work
- Homeworking
- Display Screen Equipment

H&S OVERVIEW

A separate or additional assessment must be completed where an activity introduces significant risks not adequately covered by an existing assessment.

3. STAFFING AND SUPERVISION

For members attending without their own support worker or carer:

- The standard maximum ratio is five members to one Uppertunity staff member.
- A session may exceed five only where another Uppertunity staff member is onsite, aware of the arrangement and immediately available to support if required.
- Where one suitable, inducted volunteer is actively supporting the session, up to four additional members may attend, giving a maximum of nine members to one staff member and one volunteer.
- These are maximum ratios, not automatic staffing levels. Ratios must be reduced or additional support provided where individual needs, mobility, medical needs, behaviour, safeguarding concerns, the activity or the environment require closer supervision.
- Volunteers support staff but do not replace the responsibility of the Uppertunity staff member.
- Where a volunteer facilitates or leads a session, an Uppertunity staff member must remain onsite, be available and retain overall responsibility.
- Members attending with their own carer or support worker are supported in line with their individual arrangements.

At least two staff members should normally be present when Uppertunity services are running. Lone working is minimised but may take place where the person, activity, environment and emergency arrangements can be safely managed by one staff member in accordance with the Lone Working Risk Assessment.

Staff must not work alone with a Red-category member or anyone whose support or evacuation needs require more than one person. Where a staff member works alone with a member at Uppertunity, that staff member must be a trained Fire Marshal.

4. GENERAL PREMISES SAFETY

Everyone should help keep the premises safe and accessible.

- Keep walkways, stairs, doors and fire exits clear.
- Store bags, boxes and equipment safely and away from routes.
- Clean and dry spillages promptly. Isolate or clearly identify an area if it cannot immediately be made safe.
- Report damaged flooring, furniture, lighting, sockets or equipment.
- Do not use damaged electrical equipment.
- Do not overload sockets or extension leads.
- Keep liquids away from electrical equipment.
- Keep rooms tidy and remove waste regularly.
- Report building defects or hazards to management so they can be raised with The Circle or venue management where appropriate.

Stepladders

Only Uppertunity-provided, purpose-made stepladders may be used.

H&S OVERVIEW

- Chairs, tables and improvised platforms must never be used as ladders.
- No ladder or stepladder higher than three steps may be used for routine tasks.
- Only staff who have received appropriate ladder-safety instruction may use a stepladder.
- Check the ladder before every use.
- Use it only on firm, level and dry ground.
- Maintain three points of contact and do not overreach.
- Another staff member must be nearby while the stepladder is being used.
- Stepladders must not be used while lone working.
- Stop if the task cannot be completed safely from the permitted height.

5. MANUAL HANDLING

Before lifting or moving anything:

- Assess the item, route and destination.
- Reduce heavy loads into smaller amounts where possible.
- Use a trolley or wheeled equipment where available.
- Use two people for heavy, long, bulky or awkward items.
- Keep the load close to the body and avoid twisting.
- Clear the route before moving the item.
- Never lift or move something beyond your own capability.

6. FIRE, EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATION

All staff must know:

- How to raise the fire alarm.
- The relevant escape routes and exits.
- The assembly point.
- How to contact the emergency services.
- The evacuation arrangements relevant to the people they are supporting.

Fire exits, escape routes and firefighting equipment must remain unobstructed. Members, volunteers and visitors must be supported to evacuate where required.

Uppertunity uses a Green, Amber and Red evacuation-support system. All Red-category members must have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) completed before attending. A PEEP may also be used for Green or Amber members where the standard evacuation arrangements do not fully meet their individual needs.

At least one trained Fire Marshal must be onsite whenever members are attending.

If a fire or evacuation alarm occurs, follow Uppertunity's current Fire Safety Policy and Emergency Evacuation Plan. The level main entrance is used wherever safe and available. If it cannot be used, follow the alternative evacuation arrangements and Fire Marshal instructions.

Do not re-enter the building unless specifically involved in the planned trained-staff Red evacuation procedure, or until authorised to do so.

The fire alarm is routinely tested on Tuesday mornings. Call 999 where there is a serious injury, fire, choking, anaphylaxis or other immediate danger.

H&S OVERVIEW

7. FIRST AID, ACCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES

At least one trained first aider and a stocked first aid kit must be available during operating hours and activities. If an accident or illness occurs:

- Make the area safe where possible.
- Provide appropriate first aid.
- Call emergency services where required.
- Inform management.
- Record accidents, incidents and near misses through Uppertunity's reporting process.

Incidents and near misses should be reviewed so that risk assessments, support arrangements or working practices can be updated where necessary.

8. ACTIVITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Activities must be led by a competent staff member or approved facilitator.

- Match activities, tools and equipment to the person's ability, understanding and support needs.
- Give clear instructions and appropriate supervision.
- Check equipment before use.
- Remove damaged or faulty equipment from use immediately.
- Stop horseplay, unsafe behaviour or misuse of equipment.
- Adapt or stop an activity where safe participation cannot be maintained.
- Higher-risk, unfamiliar or specialist activities may require an additional risk assessment.

The chop saw is restricted to a specifically trained and authorised operator. Members must not use the chop saw, and it must never be operated while lone working.

9. KITCHEN AND FOOD SAFETY

Kitchen-based activities must follow the Kitchen-Based Activities Risk Assessment and Uppertunity's CookSafe Food Safety Management System. Key controls include:

- Wash hands thoroughly before preparing or handling food.
- Do not prepare food when unwell.
- Anyone who has had vomiting or diarrhoea must remain away from food preparation for at least 48 hours after symptoms stop.
- Check ingredients, allergies and intolerances before food is prepared or served.
- Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate.
- Follow cleaning, temperature-control and food-storage requirements.
- Knives, hot equipment and electrical appliances must only be used with appropriate instruction and supervision.
- Stop any task where the participant, ingredient or equipment cannot be managed safely.
- Keep required food safety and temperature records.

Additional supervision limits within the Kitchen-Based Activities Risk Assessment must be followed.

10. CHEMICALS AND COSHH

Staff and volunteers must follow Uppertunity's COSHH assessments, product labels and relevant Safety Data Sheets.

H&S OVERVIEW

- Keep substances in their original, labelled containers.
- Store chemicals securely and away from food.
- Never mix chemicals unless specifically authorised by the product instructions and COSHH assessment.
- Never transfer chemicals into food or drink containers.
- Use gloves, eye protection, ventilation or other PPE where required.
- Report spills, exposure, damaged containers or reactions promptly.
- Lower-hazard products should be used where practical.

Flammable and hazardous substances must be stored according to the relevant COSHH assessment and designated storage arrangements. Uppertunity has a designated metal COSHH unit.

11. OUTINGS, EVENTS AND DRIVING

Before an outing or event:

- Check the venue, journey, accessibility, expected environment, weather and emergency arrangements.
- Consider individual support, mobility, medical and sensory needs.
- Agree staff and carer responsibilities.
- Establish meeting points and headcount arrangements.
- Carry a charged phone, first aid supplies and necessary emergency information.
- Identify any venue-specific hazards and add additional controls where required.

Only authorised drivers may drive for Uppertunity work. Drivers using their own vehicle for work must have:

- The correct driving licence.
- Appropriate business-use insurance.
- A valid MOT and road tax where required.
- A roadworthy vehicle.

Drivers must not drive when tired, unwell or impaired by alcohol, drugs or medication. Handheld mobile phones must never be used while driving.

12. LONE WORKING

Lone working is minimised and is not the normal arrangement while services are operating. However, lone working may take place where the person, activity, location and emergency arrangements can be safely managed by one staff member.

Staff lone working must:

- Tell a manager or use the agreed staff communication system before starting.
- State where they are, what they are doing and their expected finishing/check-out time.
- Keep a charged phone accessible.
- Confirm when they have finished or left safely.

A staff member may work alone with a member only where the member's support and evacuation needs can be safely managed by one person, the member is not Red, the activity is suitable for lone working and the staff member is a trained Fire Marshal where the work takes place at Uppertunity.

H&S OVERVIEW

Lone working must not take place with a Red member. Staff must not undertake higher-risk activities while alone, including:

- ladder or work-at-height tasks;
- restricted machinery;
- hazardous substances;
- heavy or awkward manual handling;
- hot-food production;
- powered cutting equipment; or
- other activities assessed as requiring another person.

Staff have authority to stop, leave or rearrange lone work if they feel unsafe.

13. HOMEWORKING AND SCREEN USE

Homeworking is occasional or hybrid rather than a full-time arrangement. Staff must maintain regular contact with their manager and team. A suitable workstation should include:

- A stable desk or table.
- A supportive chair.
- A laptop stand where required.
- A separate keyboard and mouse for regular laptop work.
- Suitable lighting and sufficient space.

Staff beginning a homeworking arrangement must send a photograph of their workstation to their manager and send an updated photograph if the setup changes.

14. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

Staff and regular volunteers who use a laptop or other display screen equipment for one hour or more per week are considered DSE users. DSE users must follow Uppertunity's DSE guidance and will receive an annual DSE assessment. They should also complete annual eye testing in line with Uppertunity's arrangements.

DSE users should:

- Use an appropriate workstation setup.
- Take short, frequent screen and movement breaks.
- Change position regularly.
- Review their workstation if their setup, equipment or needs change.
- Report pain, discomfort, headaches, eyesight concerns, equipment problems or adjustment needs promptly to their manager.

15. SAFEGUARDING AND SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries and work within their role, competence and training.

- Report safeguarding concerns immediately through Uppertunity's safeguarding procedure.
- Do not investigate safeguarding concerns yourself.
- Respond to any immediate safety or welfare need.
- Record concerns accurately.
- Seek management or emergency support where there is immediate risk.

H&S OVERVIEW

Relevant member support information, emergency contacts and individual arrangements must be accessible to authorised staff. Staff should familiarise themselves with information relevant to the members they are supporting and communicate significant updates through the agreed management and team processes.

16. TRAINING AND COMPETENCE

Staff and volunteers must only undertake tasks they are competent, trained or authorised to carry out. Uppertunity provides mandatory and role-specific training, which may include:

- Health and safety
- Risk assessment
- Manual handling
- Fire safety
- Safeguarding
- First aid
- Food safety
- Equipment-specific training
- DSE and workstation guidance
- Driver safety requirements

Additional training should be completed where a role or activity requires greater competence.

17. WELLBEING

Uppertunity aims to support a healthy and sustainable working environment. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to:

- Raise workload, stress or wellbeing concerns early.
- Take appropriate breaks and annual leave.
- Ask for reasonable adjustments where required.
- Seek support from their manager or team.
- Step away from situations where they feel unsafe.

Staff also have access to Wellbeing 360, a wellbeing programme offering additional support and resources, including online access to a therapist and a range of wellbeing-related discounts and benefits. Concerns should be discussed and working arrangements reviewed where health, wellbeing or changing circumstances affect someone's ability to work safely.

CONTACT US

We have an open-door policy and are always here to help, please reach out at any time if you need support, guidance, or just a chat.

We believe communication is key to everything we do. Keep us in the loop, share your ideas, and let us know if something isn't working. We grow stronger together through openness and teamwork.

Thank you for being part of Uppertunity, a place where we're all developing skills, nurturing connections, and inspiring mindsets for thriving communities.

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