

10 YEARS OF TURTLE DOVE

We are so proud of the last 10 years. Turtle Dove Cambridge has empowered young women to gain confidence, skills, and networks through real responsibility in a safe, women-only team.

2013- 2014 THE PILOT

Before we became a CIC, we ran pilots averaging 20 events a year and working with around 17 young women annually. These early years proved the model could work: when given responsibility in real-world settings, young women's confidence grew rapidly.

2015 - THE TURNING POINT

Joining the Social Incubator East provided vital support to put in place the systems and foundations needed for long-term sustainability. This is why 2015 marks the true beginning of Turtle Dove's 10-year journey. To date Kate had managed all aspects of the business, with huge thanks to the sessional staff who made it all possible!

2019 - EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

22 young women gained experience through 25 events. Turtle Dove provided its first Business and Enterprise placement and hired an Emotional Support Worker. We also developed a pilot Alternative Education programme, in response to demand from the Cambridgeshire County Council.

2018 - BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS

30 young women engaged with Turtle Dove, contributing to 28 community events and 6 intergenerational projects. A fundraising and campaigning group gave 13 young women the chance to plan and deliver events while learning about global issues affecting women, such as human trafficking. Stakeholder feedback highlighted the need for more 1:1 and peer support as well as an Alternative Education strand.

2020 - ADAPTING - RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

Between May 2019 and March 2020, we supported 31 young women, delivering 30 events and 5 fundraising initiatives. Then the pandemic hit. Events were cancelled, schools closed, and staff were furloughed. At one point closure was imminent. Yet Turtle Dove kept going: developing the Friends network, hired out our van, and explored new education collaborations. We also gained Quality Assurance for our Alternative Education Programme from the County Council, laying the groundwork for recovery.

2021 - REOPENING!

In June 2021 we re-opened with restrictions in place - working a 30 people wedding. By the end of 2021, the pieces were in place to reopen fully.

2022 - REBUILDING IMPACT

30 young women engaged in programmes, with a mere 10 events hosted, 200 hours of emotional support delivered, and new training in Food Safety, Customer Service, and Barista Skills was delivered.

2023 - DEEPENING SUPPORT

In May 2023, we launched an accredited online platform (CPL Learning), endorsed by the Institute of Hospitality, offering access to over 80 certified courses. For the first time, young women could gain formal certificates for training. The record so far belongs to an Alternative Education student, aged just 14, achieving 17 certificates. 20 young women engaged through 27 events and 54 Alternative Education sessions, gaining qualifications in Food Safety, Allergen Awareness, Resilience in the Workplace and more.

2024-2025 - STRENGTHENING THE MODEL

Our work has reached new heights - from September 2024 - 2025 we registered as a food business, employed a Chef and Apprentice Youth Worker, worked 38 event/catering bookings, now have a structured Young Women's Development Programme including embedded partnerships for the community events, hosted a Young Women's Conference "getting into the workplace and business" and have a new weekly pop up café!