

Outside the Box

Inclusive Evaluation and Magic Moments



Outside the Box began in 2004, to help people in communities create changes they wanted to see. We are a small, independent charity, working as a social enterprise. We support people to influence how things work, shape policies and services, and develop their own services and activities.

From individuals with good ideas and tiny community groups to big services and policy systems, we support anyone wanting to create positive, practical solutions to shared challenges.



Evaluations can be simple, meaningful, and empowering. They are a good way to show the difference your work is making and the impact for communities and people. We can do robust, inclusive evaluations for your programme, project or community group. Whether in person or online, we use creative methods to involve everyone and share the outcomes and learning.

We use our Magic Moments evaluation approach to organise information and highlight the positive impacts across several outcome themes. This approach enables us to understand what's important to people and what is making things work well for the people involved.

Too often we can rely only on quantitative data to learn from our work. But numbers can never tell the whole story, sometimes one short story can make a big difference.

Magic Moments is an evaluation tool we use to collect, organise and share key moments that reflect participants' views and experiences, and observations from evaluation activities. We use it to highlight small but significant changes in people's lives in a way that is easily recognised and understood by a range of audiences.



We explore ways of using stories to give the whole picture when it comes to evaluating projects and carrying out research – demonstrating how stories can be used front and centre, not just using anecdotes or case studies as afterthoughts.



We have a successful track record of carrying out independent evaluations of community-based projects and services across Scotland. Examples of our work include:

Moments of Freedom

Moments of Freedom is an activity-based peer support group for Syrian refugee women in Clydebank. In 2022 we used the Magic Moments approach to assess the impact of the group on their lives, their families and wider impact in the community.

Lend a Hand service evaluation

Lend a Hand is a benefits and welfare advice service for people with learning disabilities in Fraserburgh. Lend a hand is part of People First Fraserburgh. In 2021 we carried out an evaluation of the impact of the service for people and their families.



Neighbourhood Networks

Neighbourhood Networks supports vulnerable adults, many with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health issues, to live active, healthy, and independent lives and to be fully involved within their local communities.



We have conducted independent evaluations of their peer support networks in North Lanarkshire, East Kilbride and Lanarkshire, Falkirk and North Ayrshire.

“The magic moments approach used by OTB offers a richness of experiences and stories from members in our peer support networks. OTB staff spend time with network members, making sure they are comfortable, taking part in activities and finding out gently about what is important for

them in their lives. And this information allows us to tailor the development of each network and provide evidence of its continued impact for funders and commissioners” Heather Calvo, Chief Executive Officer, Neighbourhood Networks.

Evaluating dementia-friendly outdoor projects

In 2020 we completed an evaluation of 6 projects from across Scotland and the Life Changes Trust funded Get Outdoors programme, focused on encouraging people with dementia and their unpaid carers to be active and spend time outside.

We got outdoors, had great conversations, played bowls, and got muddy taking part alongside people in the programme.



The projects involved people living with dementia, unpaid carers and health professionals, building accessible social spaces and enjoying the outdoors.

We used 'Magic Moments' to evaluate outdoor inclusion and connection, getting to the heart of what mattered to the people involved.

To find out more about the Life Changes Trust Magic Moments and evaluation, take a look at the full [Get Outdoors evaluation report](#) and watch the video below:



Here are a few Magic Moments from the **Get Outdoors evaluation**:

“For some people it is a welcome relief to talk openly about living with dementia and not be afraid to use the word.”

“This is the only place I’ve seen where people don’t hide from their condition. It’s so much better this way.”

Moments of Freedom graphic facilitation Magic Moments:



We offer bespoke independent evaluations developed to meet the scope of the work and your budget.

Please get in touch to talk about what you would like, email louise@otbds.org or phone Louise on 07706 433938



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