



Cheshire Dance

Board Report

18th June 2024



Company Carpi perform '*In This Place Upon This Earth*' at The Plaza as part of Now Northwich
Image by Canteen Create

Contents and Keys

Board Report 18th June 2024

Creative People	pg.4
Cultural Communities	pg.9
Cultural Country	pg.11
Other News	pg.15

Key to ACE Outcome Elements

(shown as 'ACE Outcome elements A-R in document)

Creative People

“Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life”

A – supporting people at all stages of their lives to design, develop and increase their participation in high quality creative activities

B – promoting creative opportunities in the local community to people at all stages of their lives

C – providing high quality early years activities that reaches families from a wide range of backgrounds

D – Widening and improving opportunities for children and young people to take part in creative activities inside schools

E – Widening and improving opportunities for children and young people to take part in creative activities outside schools

F – improving teaching for creativity in schools

G – Supporting Children and young people to develop their creative skills and potential

H – Developing and improving pathways towards careers in the creative industries

Cultural Communities

“Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture”

I – Improving access to a full range of cultural opportunities wherever people live

J – Working with communities to better understand and respond to their needs and interests, resulting in increased cultural engagement and the wide range of social benefits it brings

K – Working collaboratively through place-based partnerships to support and involve communities in high quality culture, improve creative and cultural education for children and young people, improve health and wellbeing through creative and cultural activity, build skills and capacity in the cultural sector and grow it's economic impact

L – Connecting people and places, including diaspora communities and nationally and internationally

Cultural Country

“England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international”

M – Supporting new types of creative practice, new forms of cultural content and new ways of reaching new and existing audiences and participants

N – Collaborating with other cultural organisations and/or with the commercial creative industries and/or with further and higher education that focuses on innovation, research and development and training, especially in relation to the use of new technologies

O – Strengthening the international connections of cultural organisations and creative practitioners, including co-production and touring

P – Bringing world class culture to audiences in England

Q – Giving more opportunities to people to start a professional career in the creative industries, especially those who are currently under-represented

R – Ensuring people have opportunities to sustain their careers and fulfil their potential in the creative industries, especially those who are currently under-represented

Key to Cheshire West and Chester Council Missions

(shown as 'CWaC Mission 1/2/3/4/5/6' in document)

CWaC Borough Plan – 6 missions

1. **Starting well:** The best start for our children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed..
2. **Resilient people living their best lives:** Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.
3. **Tackling hardship and poverty:** More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.
4. **Neighbourhood pride:** Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes
5. **Opportunity in a fair local economy:** Local people and businesses contribute to and benefit from a strong and fair local economy
6. **Greener Communities:** Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

1. Creative People

“Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life”

1.a Regular Programme update

ACE Outcome Elements A

CWaC Mission 2

Our regular programme continues to develop with our key partners, responding to local and community need, priorities and participant feedback.

As of April 2024, 21 regular sessions are running across the Cheshire Dance programme of which:

- 7 older adults (inc 1 D2H Crewe supported)
- 3 adult disability
- 3 youth disability
- 5 youth
- 2 adult capoeira
- 1 open adult professionals and mixed community

These are joined by a range of other project based sessions which we are developing through commissions and/or in partnership with organisations such as The Neuromuscular Centre (Winsford), Live! (Chester) and Proud and Loud Arts (Manchester)

1.b Dance and PIMD – Vivo Care Choices Dance Artist in Residence / Wanna Dance? Project

Postcode Lottery - £14k, Marjory Boddy -£5K, Anne Duchess of Westminster Trust - £5k, Vivo Care Choices £5k plus Cheshire Dance in-kind

NEW: Funding secured from Bailey Thomas Trust - £3k and Awards for All - £17k

ACE Outcome Elements A, B, G, E

CWaC Mission 1,2

Coronation Centre and Chester (Canal Street and Lightfoot Lodge) Dance Artists in Residence



Ruth Spencer and Jane continue their residencies at Coronation Centre, Canal Street and Lightfoot Lodge where they work 1:1 with up to 14 people per week along with 15 staff who support them. Sessions are set to continue until June when attention turns to this year's Creative Project.

Following the success of the Wanna Dance film last year, we are delighted to be working once again with film maker **Sam Ryley** (Canteen Create) and composer **Gary Lloyd** (Company Carpi) to create a film

which highlights the creative expression of our dancers with PIMD. **University of Chester** will support the project offering space in kind at their Kingsway campus.



Beth (left) and **Adam** (right) dance with Jane at Lightfoot Lodge

Northern Chamber Orchestra



Dylan (left), Alex (right) and Ruth dance with a string quartet from Northern Chamber Orchestra

On 13th May 7 of our dancers from Vivo Care Choices PIMD came together with a string quartet from Northern Chamber Orchestra for a beautiful session hosted at Storyhouse. It was an incredible opportunity for all involved to experience and experiment with how movement and music might influence and inspire one another in the context of 1:1 dancing with people with PIMD. Canteen Create captured some stunning moments on film during the day. After a really rich day there is appetite from both sides for more collaborations between Wanna Dance and Northern Chamber Orchestra.

Wanna Dance Presentations

Ruth and Jane presented the Wanna Dance film and programme at the **Cheshire and Wirral partnership PIMD sub group** meeting online on 14th March and have been invited to share at the **University of Chester's Crossing Borders** event at Storyhouse on 5th July.

Choreographies of Care Symposium: University of Central Lancashire

On the 18th June '24 Wanna Dance? will be part of a symposium exploring how embodied practices support and challenge us as dance artists to care for ourselves, for each other and for those who we work with.

People Dancing

We are also in conversation with People Dancing about how we might develop a series of opportunities to share our dance and PIMD practice nationally over the course of the next 12-18 months. First up Ruth and Jane will share the Wanna Dance film and learning so far at the Inclusion in Dance Network event on 8th October 2024 which focuses on research and shared learning. We are working on other elements with People Dancing which may include delivery of CPD, delivering specialist sessions as part of the summer school, publishing an article and more...

A reminder that more information and updates about Wanna Dance (including the film) can be seen on the website here: <https://pimd-dance.org/wanna-dance>

1.c Young Producers

ACE Outcome Elements E,G,H

CWaC Mission 1,3

Cheshire Dance Core funded (with additional funds from Without Walls Audience Development)



For Now Northwich 2024, our Young Producers took on the challenge of designing their very own element of the festival – and went on to execute it with enthusiasm and professionalism. Together, they came up with the idea of running an interactive family trail to help all ages immerse themselves in creativity.

From participatory workshops and crafty activities to a feel-good installation and more, these young people immersed around 240 families in their 'Connecting Routes' experience. What's more, they even brought together 5 community groups for a very special performance.

1.d Dance in Education

ACE Outcome Elements D, F, G

CWaC Mission 1

- Our partnership with Edsential continues with several sessions being booked at the Tattenhall Centre this term.
- Ancora House school at the Countess of Chester hospital have once again requested a capoeira session this term with **Rafael Braga Araujo**

1.e Young Creatives (Formerly Project #2 – Queer Histories)

ACE Outcome Elements A, B, E, G

CWaC Mission 1, 4

Funding from Chester Pride (via UKSPF) of £4.1k

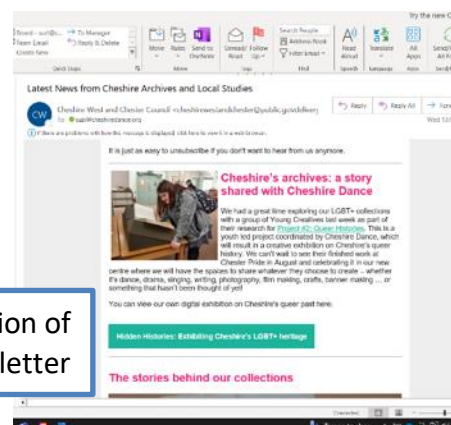
45 Young people who identify as LGBTQ+ engaged with the 7 sessions that were delivered between January 2024, to April 2024.

From January 2024 to April 2024, the young creatives team focused on moving back to creative sessions that offered space for 'streams of consciousness.' These tasks had direct links to queer histories, and opened dialogue between the young people to discover and share things about themselves.

During sessions, the group were visited by project friend and Visual Artist Willzy and took a trip to the Cheshire Archives to see items in their collection which had queer histories. We delivered a banner making workshop for Storyhouse Queer, engaging and recruiting new young people to the young creatives team. 'Local heroes' visited other sessions which developed conversation and mutual understanding between different generations.

In July 2024, three sessions will be delivered in collaboration with Cheshire Archives. These will focus on collecting Oral Histories from local heroes, and the young creatives, focusing on stories from the ages of 16-25 and growing up LGBTQ+. This intergenerational project will result in oral histories being captured, as well as a creative spoken word session.

Young Creatives featured in the March edition of Cheshire Archives and Local Studies Newsletter



Project Lead **Connor Elliman** is now working with Chester Pride independently to develop the future of the project and integrate it into Chester Pride's Youth programme – we're excited to see where they can take it together and thank Connor for his inspiration, dedication and care in developing the work over the last 3 years. It has been a rich process for Cheshire Dance to support, develop and engage with. Cheshire Dance will still offer support, training and mentoring to the project and the facilitators, with Chester Pride taking responsibility for fundraising for the group and overseeing the running of it.

1.f The Spotlight Project

ACE Outcome Elements A, B, E, G, H, I

CWac Mission 1, 4

NEW: Funded by Winsford Youth and Community Forum via Million Hours Fund and additional local grant – total circa £30k over 2 years (May 2024-Apr 2026)

Partnership with Winsford youth and Community Forum (WYCF), Winsford NHS Care Community, Youth Fed and Mind Body Balance Academy.

The Spotlight Project (for 11-18 year olds in Winsford, particularly those experiencing mental health challenges or other barriers to participation) continues to be as important as ever for young people in Winsford.

Winsford youth and Community Forum have been successful in a Million Hours funding bid and have received an additional grant from another local organisation. This funding will enable The Spotlight Project regular sessions to run from May 2024-April 2026. The partners have agreed a plan for this delivery and it will be led by Cheshire Dance freelance Project Manager **Josie Hepplewhite**.

Cheshire West Voluntary Arts Awards 2024

Cheshire West's annual Voluntary Arts Awards took place on 26th March 2024 to celebrate the



great work many groups and individuals are doing using arts in their local community.

The Spotlight dancers took to the stage to perform, and the Spotlight Project was nominated for and subsequently scooped the 'Special Award' prize in recognition of outstanding practice.

Read more in this Cheshire West and Chester press release [here](#).

The Spotlight Dancers also performed to a huge crowd at Now Northwich 2024!

Cheshire Dance could not be prouder of this group of young people who are continually displaying confidence, resilience and versatility in all they do.



1.g Westminster Foundation – The Nexus Programme

ACE Outcome Elements A, B, E, G, H, I, M, K, Q

CWaC Mission 1, 2

NEW: Funded by The Westminster Foundation through a 5 year partnership grant at circa £100k per year

Over the next 5 years, the Westminster Foundation will be supporting Cheshire Dance's work with young people in and around Chester, Ellesmere Port and surrounding villages.

The Nexus Programme will focus on developing dance opportunities with and for children and young people who face barriers to accessing mainstream arts and cultural activities due to experiences relating to poor mental health, neurodiversity, learning disability, social circumstances, financial circumstances. The Nexus Programme responds to the need for activities which support the building of confidence, aspirations, positive self-expression and wellbeing.

Emma Thomas will lead The Nexus Programme for Cheshire Dance and we are currently in planning stages focusing on embedding evaluation and setting year 1 outcomes.

On 7th May, whilst visiting some of the charities that the Foundation supports, The Duke of Westminster and Miss Oliva Henson came along to our 'Step Into Capoeira' session that took place at Storyhouse led by **Rafael Braga Araujo**. To read more about their visit, see [this article](#) in the Chester Standard.



2. Cultural Communities

“Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture”

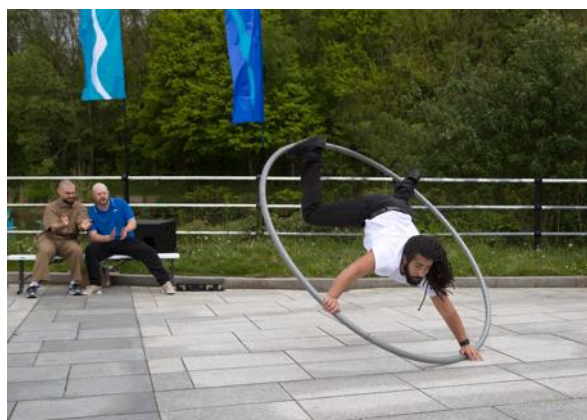
2.a Now Northwich Festival

ACE Outcome Elements I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R

CWaC Mission 2, 3, 4

Funded by UKSPF £45k, ACE Project Grant £86k (via Groundwork), Northwich Town Council £4k, Northwich BID £4k, CWaC Members budgets £1.6k

Now Northwich returned on 27th April to delight audiences with 18 professional shows by 9 companies, a bespoke performance by professional company, **Company Carpi** in collaboration with the Northwich community and complemented by an Interactive Trail from the Now Northwich Young Producers comprising different creative activities, 2 participatory workshops and an additional show of 5 dance performances showcased by local community groups.



Artists were overjoyed to have been involved in the event with many citing their thanks for being ‘invited’ to take part in the festival.

Company Carpi (In this Place Upon this Earth) collaboration with Northwich Community said:

“Thank you to Cheshire Dance and Now Northwich for making such extraordinary, amazing and transformative projects happen!”

with **Damae Dance** (Irma-Sister) commenting:

“The event was impeccably organised, and every member of the team was exceptional. We

couldn’t be happier with how everything turned out.”

Overall, the event was described as ‘*amazing*’, ‘*brilliant*’, ‘*utterly entrancing*’ ‘*breathtaking*’ and ‘*fabulous*’ with ‘*such talent*’ filling the streets of the town. Audience members shared their views on social media stating: “*Now that’s what you call fantastic organising!*” and “*an amazing event for the town, Northwich needed it so much.*” Others have added: how they’ve “*Loved how the outdoor performances naturally draw crowds at @nownorthwich*” and how they are “*Ready and waiting to mark our diaries for NN2025!*”.

Audience figures have not yet been shared; however, digital figures have been extremely positive. The Now Northwich Facebook page achieved a reach of 84K with NN24 posts on the Cheshire Dance page achieving an additional reach of 27K. On the actual day of Now Northwich – and with a live running commentary directing audiences where to go – the Now Northwich Page experienced a reach of 39.9K.





Full evaluation reports and documentary film will follow shortly.

Images by Danielle Paul, David Sejrur, Ray Girling and Canteen Create

Other Interesting Now Northwich Links:

Press Release 1 – Event Launch: <https://www.northwichguardian.co.uk/news/24106627.now-northwich-returns-kick-off-towns-2024-events-calendar/>

Press Release 2 – Volunteer Call Out: <https://www.northwichguardian.co.uk/news/24145553.now-northwich-dance-arts-festival-calls-volunteers/>

Press Release 3 – Event Guide: <https://www.northwichguardian.co.uk/news/24273184.now-northwich-2024-guide-cheshires-premier-dance-festival/>

Press Release 4 – Post-Event Report: <https://www.northwichguardian.co.uk/news/24289201.now-northwich-pictures-town-transformed-dance/>

For more on this year's festival, please see: www.nownorthwich.co.uk



2.b Creative Health Placements with University of Chester Nursing Students

ACE Outcome Elements I, J,K, N

CWaC Mission 2, 3, 4

Between January and April 2024 dance artists Jody Morgan and Bettina Carpi delivered 12 'dance and health taster days' as part of the University of Chester's Creative Health placement which involves all 500 first year nursing students across four sites.

Feedback so far from dance artists, students and staff is incredibly positive with students seeing connections between their learning and what dance can offer in a health care setting.

Two additional days have been booked for Warrington Campus nursing students in June and July. Following this we will be working with the University to plan for placements in 2025.

3. Cultural Country

“England’s cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international”

3.a TIN Arts Talent Development

ACE Outcome Elements N,Q,R

CWaC Mission 2, 3

Funded by TIN Arts NPO Talent Development Programme £7.5k + £4k artist budget per year with in kind support from Cheshire Dance

The Talent Development Programme is a peer-to-peer programme of enquiry with organisations and artists working collaboratively to identify, develop and embed working practices that enable professional Learning Disabled and Autistic dance artists to create and make great art, changing perceptions and inspiring others. The partners are TIN Arts, Yorkshire Dance and Cheshire Dance.

At Cheshire Dance our Associate Artist is **Ben Wilson**

Ben has now been working with Cheshire Dance for 1 year and is already beginning his programme for year 2.



Associate Artist **Ben Wilson** performing in his first choreographic work *'The Superpower of Personality'* at Now Northwich with dancers **Dina Robinson** and **Jack Evans**
Images by Danielle Paul.

In his first year as Associate artist Ben has engaged in a programme of regular development sessions focusing on hip hop, capoeira and choreography and has been working with artists **Emma Thomas, Josie Hepplewhite, Dina Robinson, Jack Evans, Rafael Braga Araujo, Max Ashbrook and Alex McCarrick.**

Ben has created his first performance piece, *'The Superpower of Personality'* – a trio which premiered at Now Northwich and has now been commissioned for Kaleidoscope on 9th July where Ben will also lead a workshop connected to the piece.

Ben will feature in a film about the Talent Development Programme where he will share some of his experiences of this first year.

Ben has lots of plans already for Year 2 – including developing schools' workshops and creating a hip hop music video – we can't wait to see more from him!

3.b Support for Freelancers and Artistic Community

ACE Outcome Elements M,Q,R

CWaC Mission 3

Cheshire Dance team members facilitated **8 Artist surgeries** between January and March 2024.

Meanwhile, **Mathew Rawcliffe** was supported in an ACE Project Grant application to develop performance work for people with PIMD and **Josh**, who is a regular participant of our DS Dance group, joined us for some work experience to discover what it's like to work for a dance organisation. Josh joined us from Oaklands School and had the opportunity to take part in hip hop, capoeira, choreography and teaching workshops with **Ben Wilson, Rafael Braga Araujo, Josie Hepplewhite** and **Emma Thomas**.

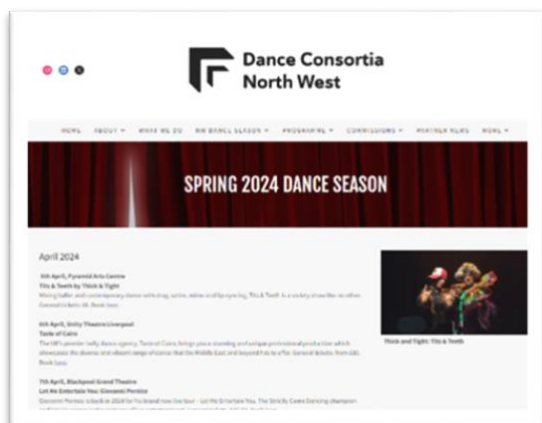


3.e DCNW Updates

ACE Outcome Elements M,N, Q, R

CWaC Mission 3

DCNW New Dance Season Campaign – (Spring/Summer) W/C: 1st April



As with each season, Cheshire Dance/Dance Consortia North West led the region's Spring 2024 Dance Season launch with a communications campaign that encouraged dance lovers to go and see more dance performances at number of venues across the north west.

For the campaign, DCNW hosted a webpage that collated all the performances that were taking place from a variety of artists and companies, showcasing the talent and range of dance on offer in the north west. This was complemented by two email campaigns and a collaborative social media marketing campaign with GIF

across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with DCNW partners all taking part together for one week starting 1st April.

Whilst it is not possible to track the marketing efforts of the partners, Cheshire Dance and DCNW alone achieved the following: 3K reach across Cheshire Dance and DCNW social media platforms with 55 individuals and organisations taking part or interacting. (NB: this figure does not include the partner's recorded reach so the total will be much, much higher). Plus, direct mailers to 866 recipients that received an open rate of 38%. In addition, there were 187 website views during the campaign week with the [landing page](#) being the most visited page.

Research Programme Updates

Round 2 Project Moving With (Update) – Extended film released March 2024



In March, DCNW Research Programme recipients Lucy Nicholson and Jonny Randall released the extended version of 'Moving With' - a beautiful film that captures the experience of moving with and in response to our natural environment with the aim of nurturing a care for it. This extended version includes footage of workshops in local schools and community centres. To find out more about this Round Two

Research Programme Project, please click [here](#). To watch the film, please click [here](#).

Round 3 Project Complete – Ten Conversations (May 2024)

In the final round of the DCNW Research Programme, practitioners Dr Melanie Brierley and Penny Collinson brought together a group of experienced dance, health and wellbeing artists living and/or working in Cumbria and Lancashire for 'Ten Conversations'.



Coming together to spark strategic dialogue to ensure quality work is more visible, accessible and clearly communicated, the project explored effective ways to communicate practices and approaches and considered how to form stronger partnerships so that work in the region can be grown and sustained.

You can now read more about this project including Penny and Melanie's final report at: <https://danceconsortianorthwest.org/f/research-programme-update-ten-conversations>

More information about the Research Programme can be found at: <https://danceconsortianorthwest.org/about-research-programme>.

Turn 2024 – 22nd March

[Turn](#), produced by hÅb, returned on Friday 22 March 2024 at Company Chameleon Studios with a night of new dance. A total of 8 short works were presented over one intensive evening, featuring: **Chris Brown, Fabiola Santana, Isaac Glenister, Jake Evans, Just_Ina, Lily Antonia, Lisa Chearles and Louiseanne Wong**. A great success, the event was 'sold out' and the artists produced very high quality work.



This eleventh edition of this annual platform for North West dancers and dance-makers, included a Turn Prize for the development of new work shown at the event. On 30th April it was announced that **Fabíola Santana** (above right) and **Louiseanne Wong** (above left) were this year's award winners.

Turn Prize 2024 was supported by Dance Consortia North West using public funding by Arts Council England, and by Company Chameleon, hÅb, and Project Auske.

Liverpool Prize (Leap Dance Festival) – 2nd May



As part of the Leap Dance Festival 2024, on 2nd May some of North West's emerging artists and choreographers shared new work in a chance to win a development fund. Leap Dance Festival teamed up with Dance Consortia North West and Liverpool Hope University to provide £500 bursaries for 5 emerging artists to create and perform new work. An additional opportunity was available for one artists to win a development fund of £1000.

Works by artists **Porcelain Delaney**, **Tiegan Doyle**, **Jack Evans**, **Rachel Li**, **Chloe Robinson** and **Mohan Welstand-Keryk** were performed at Capstone Theatre with **Jack Evans** (pictured above) taking the 'dance prize'.

DCNW Recruitment:

DCNW is delighted to bring on board **Natasha Wolffe** who is taking on the freelance role of 'Programme Manager' to bring together the final phase of the Research Programme. Natasha has created and managed programmes in dance, music and creative arts for students, young people and organisations including ShivaNova, 4Children and the Campaign for Drawing, and she consults for heritage organisations keen to incorporate creative and performing arts practice into their programmes.

She is very excited to be working on DCNW's Research Programme and is looking forward to helping to shine a light on how dance artists are practising, questioning, and developing their work

across the evolving NW dance sector. Together with the Cheshire Dance team, she'll be collating the creative and research outcomes from the programme and will be exploring what the potential could be for developmental impact across the region and beyond.

Natasha will be accompanied by **Nicola Mullen** (who also works with Company Chameleon among other organisations) to help advocate for the Research Programme in a Communications capacity.

Dance Consortia North West continues to support artists and organisations from all Three Rounds of the Research Programme and continues to share any news/updates from partner organisations that are relevant to the wider North West sector. In fact, partners many now look to DCNW as a vehicle to get their news out and reach greater audiences in the north west and beyond. Key news and updates can be found on the website's blog at: <https://danceconsortianorthwest.org/partner-news>

4. Other News

Buckingham Palace Royal Garden Party



On 15th May, Adam Holloway (Director) and Jane McLean (Creative Director) attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, which honoured and celebrated the creative industries. They stumbled upon quite a few familiar faces and made quite a lot of new acquaintances!