



# Dance to health

A falls prevention dance programme



**Participant & Volunteer  
Newsletter**

September 2018

## Any questions?

Get in touch with your local Dance to Health coordinator

### Birmingham

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### Oxfordshire & Kent

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[dancetohealth.org](https://dancetohealth.org)

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## Our funders

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## Our dance partners

Birmingham Royal Ballet, Cheshire Dance, DanceEast, National Dance Company Wales, South East Dance, Take Art and Yorkshire Dance.

## Our health partners

ABM University Health Board (Swansea), Cheshire East Council, Active Norfolk/ Norfolk County Council/NHS Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group, Modality Vanguard (in Birmingham), NHS Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group and the Royal British Legion.

  
Arts Enterprise with  
a Social Purpose

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Charity No. 1134572. Company No. 6998306

Dance to Health is a programme managed by Aesop, a charity and social enterprise.

## Ideas for the next newsletter

This is your newsletter; what would you like to see included in future issues? Have you got an idea for a feature or news to share?

Please email us on [info@ae-sop.org](mailto:info@ae-sop.org) with your ideas or let your Local Coordinator know.



# Welcome

**Welcome to Dance to Health!**

**We are delighted to have you as part of our nationwide community.**

## Introduction to Dance to Health

Dance to Health is a nationwide, pioneering community dance programme for older people.

It combines evidence-based falls prevention principles with the creativity, expression and energy of dance. The sessions are led by professional dance artists from leading dance companies, who have been fully trained and qualified in falls prevention exercise methods.

Dance to Health was devised and is managed by arts and health charity and social enterprise, Aesop. Sessions take place across England and Wales in Norfolk, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Birmingham, Oxfordshire, South Wales and Kent.

## Taking your next steps

By now, many of our participants have completed the improvement programme – a big congratulations to everyone! A few of our groups started a little later, but we hear positive news and hope that everyone is enjoying improved health and well-being.

From September we launch Dance to Health maintenance groups, so you can keep dancing and moving with your friends. Your Local Coordinator will be able to give you further details about maintenance groups in your region – we hope to see you there!

## Dance to Health – it really works!

Mother and son Milly and Jim Darnill attend sessions in Sheffield. Milly is 91 and had hip replacement surgery 10 years ago. They both enjoy dance and have a lot of fun together at their sessions. Jim tells us "I've noticed a big improvement in my sense of balance but it's more obvious in my mother - after the class she'll sometimes forget that she walks with a Zimmer or walking stick and she'll just set off walking normally - something she was told she wouldn't be able to do after her hip replacement 10 years ago!"

## Your news

Members of the **Birmingham** group got together recently to see Birmingham Royal Ballet's superb production of *Sleeping Beauty*.

Our **Sheffield** team have started a women-only Dance to Health group.

Our Dance to Health groups in **Cheshire** will be featured on *BBC Inside Out North West* very soon. You will be able to watch on BBC iPlayer.

## Volunteering Opportunities

As Dance to Health grows and develops we are recruiting volunteers to help run local groups. Could you be the person we're looking for? Or why not pass on the information to someone you know who would be a great asset to the Dance to Health family?

## Champions

We need **Dance to Health Champions** to help to run the groups, manage finances, make decisions, fundraise and help to spread the word. You can be a Champion whether or not you take part in the dance sessions, but you need to have time to commit to volunteering.

## Peer Motivators

**Peer Motivators** participate in the dance sessions, offering encouragement and support to other group members. You will receive full training and do need to be fit enough to take part.

## Buddies

Everyone needs a friend, to encourage and support. As a **Buddy** you will be matched with someone in the class to offer encouragement and regular contact. You don't need to attend the classes yourself but just be there as a friendly ear to take a keen interest.

## Ready to help?

If you like what you read and want to find out more speak to your Local Coordinator or email us at [info@ae-sop.org](mailto:info@ae-sop.org).



## Award-winning volunteers!

Volunteers are vital to the success of Dance to Health and we're very happy to share that the work of Oxford volunteer Pat Axtell was recently recognised at the OCVA Oxfordshire Charity and Volunteer Awards 2018.

Pat started attending classes with his wife Jan and has gone on to become a Dance to Health Peer Motivator. Pat's role includes setting up the refreshments each week, as well as tracking down local grant funding to help keep the group afloat - for example, he has recently put the group's name down to become the local supermarket's charity of the month to receive a donation.

Oxford Dance Artist Angela told us "It's great having Pat around as he has encouraged more men to join, as well as doing all sorts of things off this own back including setting up a bank account and arranging social activities such as a Christmas dinner and forthcoming picnic."

Great work Pat and congratulations on your award!