



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Case Study: Young@Heart

Dance4 first developed the Young@heart project in the Nottinghamshire village of Newstead in 2003 in conjunction with the Healthy Living Centres Initiative with funding from the New Opportunities Fund (now Big Lottery). The group for older residents was established after it was identified that there were few opportunities for older people in the village to socialise, leading to a risk of them becoming increasingly isolated. The project has now run at various venues in both Gedling and Broxtowe boroughs. It provides creative opportunities for physical activity and emotional expression. Although, Dance4 no longer directly support the Young@Heart programme, it is anticipated that participants will continue to meet and plan activities.

Project venues:

The Miners Welfare Centre, Newstead Village, Gedling
Park House Health and Social Care Centre, Carlton, Gedling
Stapleford Care Centre, Broxtowe
Brinsley Parish Hall, Broxtowe

Art forms: Movement and dance

Participant Group Size: Varies from 8-25

Ratio of Participants to Workers: 1-2 workers present

Frequency: Weekly

Duration: Various projects between 10 weeks and 40 weeks

Project Outcomes:

Participants reported improvements in –

- Physical health: balance, co-ordination, posture, flexibility, general fitness levels, mobility, energy levels, weight
- Dance skills: musicality, self-expression, creativity, knowledge of dance styles and their vocabularies
- Mental health: social interaction, confidence, relaxation, memory, general wellbeing

Participant Comments:

‘I really feel the benefits of coming regularly to the sessions. At the start of each class I’m really stiff from my arthritis. But the movements allow me to ease my joints and I can really get involved’. Brinsley participant

Artist feedback / quotes:

‘I think the main difference that dance provides is human touch. Some of the women now live alone and can therefore be quite isolated, particularly physically. During a dance class, there is a lot of physical contact, for example they may have to hold hands to perform a specific movement. I also include a gentle massage at the end of my sessions to cool them down. They really enjoy this opportunity as it helps them to relax and gives them a sense of wellbeing and connection to others.’ (Lead Dance Artist)

Project Partners: Dance4 has a long history of partnering with local authorities and so has established relationships. Health partners were approached within the community and at PCT level for support. Current programme of activity: Dance4, Broxtowe Choosing Health, Broxtowe District council Arts Development and Exercise referral.

Cost of project (approx): 40 weeks, £10,000

Funding: various grants throughout lifetime of project. Now unfunded.

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