

# Made in Doncaster

## Dance Development Strategy

July 2011

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## **Foreword**

### **Rachel Gibson and Jeanette Siddall**

Developing this strategy for developing dance in Doncaster has been an exciting, enjoyable and dynamic process because of the people involved.

It is a rare and golden opportunity to have in place such a group of individuals. Between them they cover the range of specialisms needed for the strategic development of dance – dance in and beyond schools, in further and higher education, with and by community groups, professional dance artists, and expertise in commissioning and programming.

As importantly they have the ability to work together effectively and have demonstrated a shared vision for dance and what it could do for Doncaster. Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council is to be congratulated on identifying this unique and very special opportunity.

Without the people, there can be no strategy and no plan can make a difference. With the right people in the right places then the potential is unbounded. This strategy has been developed by the right people with the right aspirations to engage more local people in making dance in Doncaster and to make Doncaster a place that is known for its dance energy. Having worked with them over recent months, we are convinced that with a little investment and support they can achieve their shared ambition.

We expect the process of development to continue being dynamic and strategically significant as the individuals are all creative, practical and active in their communities. They are well-placed to spot new opportunities and find new ways of working to surprise and inspire the people of Doncaster and to make them proud. Any success that this strategy achieves will be theirs, and we are proud of them already.

Thanks are due to everyone involved for their generosity, ingenuity and enthusiasm. Special thanks go to Janet Sisson and her colleagues at Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and Arts Council England for commissioning the strategy. We wish them all every possible success.

# 1 The value of developing dance in Doncaster

Dance is central to contemporary culture, a diverse art form, a popular social activity and a means of promoting health and well-being.

Everyone can dance regardless of age, background or ability. It has a special appeal for young people and is the most popular physical activity for girls<sup>1</sup>. Professional artists, young people and communities create new dance work that may reflect, illuminate or resonate with the contemporary world, and regularly do so together. Dance engages people as creators, participants and audiences, and promotes relationships across communities, generations, cultures and abilities. Dance is essentially collaborative; it brings people, artistic disciplines and cultures together. It builds human capacity, animates public space, and can surprise, entertain and inspire.

**Doncaster's Borough Strategy 2010-15** aims to realise the following vision:

*"Doncaster aims to be one of the most successful boroughs in England by being a gateway to opportunity locally, nationally and worldwide. A strong local economy will support progressive, healthy, safe and vibrant communities. All residents will feel valued and should be able to achieve their full potential in employment, education, care and life chances. Pride in Doncaster will have increased further."*

The strategic development of dance across the Borough can contribute to realising this vision. There is the potential to build on existing strengths to create new, progressive opportunities with the capacity to support people to realise their potential, build their skills and enhance their pride in Doncaster. Developing dance can raise and widen aspiration, and contribute to building progressive, healthy and vibrant communities in which more people feel valued and experience a sense of achievement.

**Doncaster's new performance venue** will open in March 2013 and will be a step-change for the performing arts in Doncaster, providing a range of high quality spaces and a beacon for participation, the creation of new work and new opportunities for developing skills through projects, workshops and classes. In the run-up to the opening, the strategy for **Public Art through Creative Engagement** will ensure that when the venue opens *"people will understand it, have a sense of ownership of it and what it wants to achieve, welcome it and, importantly, be welcomed to it in the knowledge that Doncaster people have been an integral part of its development"*. The aim of Public Art through Creative Engagement is:

*"To create a range of innovative, exciting and original high quality pieces of work that are integrated into the fabric of the building and are developed through, and emanate from, engagement with different groups and individuals from Doncaster communities."*

Dance is most frequently original. It often collaborates with music, design and film; regularly integrates professional and community creators and performers, and can be made for traditional performance stages and to animate public spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> Dance UK's Dance Manifesto, quoting a Physical Education and Sport School Club Links survey

**Doncaster Together's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy** aims to realise the following vision for improvement:

*"The partnership has a clear commitment to support residents to access a range of sport and physical activity opportunities, to enable the Borough to lead a healthier lifestyle."*

The Strategy has priorities for active living, active travel, active recreation, and active sport. Dance can contribute to increasing awareness and promoting the benefits of being active, particularly among groups and individuals less inclined to participate in organised, competitive sport such as girls, women and older people. Dance unites creativity and physical activity in a social context that can promote well-being through enhancing fitness, encouraging new friendships and having fun.

## **2 Dance in Doncaster 2011**

Dance in Doncaster is something of a hidden gem. It is a popular activity with over 50 private dance schools operating across the Borough. The Doncaster HotHouse programme is building audiences for dance, darts (Doncaster Community Arts) provides a range of dance programmes and initiatives, and residencies and projects are organised by schools and Doncaster College which also provides dance at Further and Higher Education levels. The first Youth Dance Platform was held as part of HotHouse in March 2010 and involved a performance by 55 young men from 8 schools involved in a collaborative project with Get Active Schools Sports Partnership and Wayne Sables Project. In 2010 a total of 14 youth dance groups took part involving 150 young people, a year later there were 16 groups involving 170 young people.

Clearly there is a lot of dance in Doncaster, but its breadth and creativity is not always visible and activity is often fragmented and low in profile. Doncaster has a range of spaces for dance participation and performance, but no evident 'home' although the opening of the new venue provides a focus for dance in Doncaster, and a means of sustaining development beyond 2013.

What Doncaster does have is a unique group of creative and committed dance professionals. They are Doncaster's greatest dance asset, and together they possess a broad range of expertise and interests, and have the capacity to drive and deliver the strategic development of dance for the Borough. Collectively, this group embraces the artistic innovation of Wayne Sables Projects and the Boys Dancing initiative, the person-centred work of DARTS with their dance projects being led by Hayley Beecher, Sarah Belk's new role from September 2011 as Dance Development Officer for the Academies and the community. Together with dance staff at Doncaster College, and key staff from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, Hothouse and the new performance venue they formed the steering group that contributed, guided and agreed this strategy and the application to Arts Council England's Grants for the arts programme that was the group's first practical collaborative initiative. This application provides the first stage in realising the strategic development of dance in Doncaster.

The group has come together to form the Alliance for Doncaster Dance development (ADD). Working with dance consultants Rachel Gibson and Jeanette Siddall, ADD has developed this Dance Strategy for Doncaster which aims to capitalise on the commitment and energy of the ADD members, the growing interest in dance in the borough and the opportunities presented by the opening of the New Venue to better serve dance and raise its profile as part of substantially enhanced cultural offer in Doncaster.

### **3 The vision: Dance in Doncaster 2018**

The vision for this strategy is that by 2018 (five years from the opening of the new venue) dance is, and is known as being, integral to the lives of people in Doncaster, something they are proud of and for which Doncaster is famous.

The new performance venue will be acknowledged as the home for dance 'Made in Doncaster'. It will have dance artists in residence making new work, pushing the boundaries of the art form, making connections with other art forms and with local communities. There will be regular classes and workshops in a range of dance styles for professional and community dancers, for toddlers, families, students, workers, older people and bringing generations together. There will be premieres of new work commissioned by the venue, made in Doncaster and that go on to be performed in theatres across and beyond the UK, and the venue will provide performances of the best dance from around the world for the people of Doncaster.

The communities of Doncaster, in both the town and the surrounding villages, will have increased opportunities to engage with dance within their own locality. Many will view the new venue as a beacon for excellent dance and will travel to see work there while also enjoying opportunities to see and participate in dance nearer to their homes.

There will be a larger pool of professional dance practitioners in Doncaster with a range of specialisms in terms of dance styles and practice including choreography, teaching professional class, and in working with young people, older people and people with disabilities

Doncaster's schools will enable young people to excel and achieve in dance. There will be youth dance groups within, across and outside schools that build skills, promote healthy life-style choices, encourage creativity and that perform locally and in settings such as care homes, hospitals and feeder schools. The achievements of young dancers will be celebrated in regular youth dance platforms at the new performance venue and elsewhere, and the Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble will enable young people with the strongest commitment and potential to work with their peers and be role-models for other young people. Doncaster will be famous for its achievements in enabling young men to excel in dance and to act as dance ambassadors with their families and friends, enabling older generations of men to inspire through dance. Doncaster will be seen as a centre of excellence for men in dance holding performances, events and conferences that attract visitors from across and beyond the country.

Students will be attracted to Doncaster College because of Doncaster's reputation for dance – as an art form and as a means of building vibrant communities. Young people will develop their employment skills through placements, and be supported to develop careers by using the social and organisational skills they acquire through their involvement in dance. As demand for dance activity grows, Doncaster will be at the forefront of professional development by pioneering ways of enabling home-grown talent to gain the experience and qualifications they need to forge successful careers and new businesses.

People across Doncaster will make dance for special celebrations and events that animate public spaces throughout the Borough, and that attract visitors and media interest.

## **4 Principles and priorities for development**

**The principles that guide the strategy for the development of dance in Doncaster are:**

- building on existing strengths, and the special qualities of key artists / practitioners
- being distinctive to Doncaster, highlighting the creativity and innovation of the Borough and enhancing the profile of Doncaster as a major player in dance regionally, nationally and internationally
- staying live and flexible, being responsive to changing circumstances, new opportunities and unexpected events and outcomes
- providing an art form specific exemplar capable of informing wider arts development

**The strategy will:**

- Celebrate excellence and achievement, raise expectations and demand for best practice in all contexts and build pride in the dance made in Doncaster
- Celebrate the breadth, diversity and specialism of dance in Doncaster, increase its visibility and profile
- Challenge assumptions and preconceptions about what dance is, who dances, where dance can happen and what dance can do
- Connect people, communities, practice to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts
- Create a dance offer for Doncaster that enables, supports and promotes opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to engage with dance as dancers, dance-makers, performers and audiences

**The strategic priorities for 2011-2018 are:**

- Increase and diversify the pool of professional practitioners and ensure that professional skills are developed and shared
- Improve and expand the dance offer in Doncaster's schools, for young people in general and boys in particular
- Ensure that opportunities to watch and take part in dance are taken up by local communities
- Establish the new venue as a home for dance
- Raise the profile of dance in Doncaster and raise the profile of Doncaster as a place where exciting dance happens regionally, nationally and internationally

## 5 ADD: Alliance for Dance in Doncaster

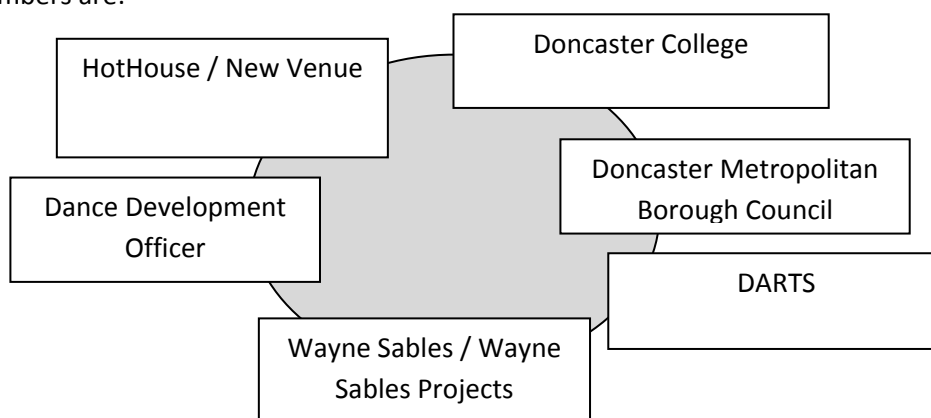
The principles and priorities provide goals for development while enabling flexibility in the means by which the goals may be achieved. The nature of development is dynamic; the impact of a single development creates new opportunities and reveals needs that could not have been predicted. Working strategically means making the most of those opportunities, being responsive to emerging needs and sensitive to the changing economic, demographic and political climate while continually moving towards the long-term goals. A strategy needs a plan, but working strategically means being prepared to refine and adjust the plan in order to better achieve the plan's goals.

Any strategy is, therefore, only as useful as the people who are passionate about driving and delivering it. Doncaster is fortunate in having the right people in the right place at the right time.

Doncaster's greatest dance asset is a small but creative and committed group of dance professionals who between them cover artistic practice, dance programming, individual-centred arts practice, dance in schools in the state and private sectors, and education and training. They are the right people to make a strategic difference to dance in Doncaster that has the value of being wide in reach, specialism and artistic concern. They are also the right people as they have demonstrated their ability to work together in forming the Alliance for Dance in Doncaster, developing this strategy, planning the initial development phase of activity and uniting in making an application to Arts Council England. As a result, the strategy has been made in Doncaster, for Doncaster.

Each partner has a wealth of connections, partnerships and specific expertise. Collectively they are able to reflect a diversity of practice, purposes and communities that offers the best chance of the strategy remaining relevant and distinctive to Doncaster. This group of individuals / agencies represents a very special opportunity in terms of the breadth of their expertise and practice, their passion, and their commitment to dance in Doncaster. It is an opportunity that would not be found in many other places.

The ADD members are:



This small but virtuous circle of strategic partners has a collective duty of care to hold and nurture the strategy and individual responsibilities to enliven it. The close involvement of these key partners in the development, implementation and monitoring of the strategy is a particular strength and one which will help to ensure that the strategy remains creative, relevant and responsive.

Collectively, ADD will:

- Act as the guardian of the strategy, ensuring it remains live, distinctive and relevant
- Pool information, experience and expertise to feed into the continuing development of the strategy
- Monitor the strategic effectiveness of projects and developments, including the connections they make, the people they include, and the profile they achieve
- Identify priorities as they change over time and in response to other developments

Individually, each partner is well placed to lead on particular aspects of the strategy and able to deliver and/or contribute to a range of projects. 'Leading' in this context means enabling and encouraging partnerships between and beyond the strategic partners and taking responsibility for the inclusion and contribution made by particular groups, communities, and areas of practice. Terms of reference for ADD are appended to the strategy.

## 6 Strategic working

The formation of ADD marks the first strategic step in developing dance in Doncaster.

The initial programme of activity is ***Dance Whispers***. This title reflects ideas about whispers being intriguing and inviting, about dance being one of Doncaster's best kept secrets, about the capacity of dance to be passed on like a whisper between people, and about passing on the whisper until it becomes a shout.

***Dance Whispers*** is the start of realising Doncaster's dance potential and provides a practical foundation on which to build the strategic capacity of the ADD partners.

***Dance Whispers*** forms the basis of an application to Arts Council England's Grants for the arts programme and begins to put the strategy into practice by engaging local people across Doncaster, increasing the provision of youth dance activity and developing routes for progression, and building on the success of the Boys Dancing project and extending it to reach older men. The main strands of ***Dance Whispers*** are:

**The Journey** – starting with projects based in communities across Doncaster and ending with a large-scale celebration to mark the opening of the new venue, reflecting the significance of journeys and transport in the making of Doncaster, the journey leading to the creation of the new venue and its future role as both a destination and a starting point for individual journeys of inspiration, engagement and growth.

**Young People Dancing** – developing dance in and outside schools and building on the success of the Youth Dance Platform and Boys Dancing Project to increase opportunities for young people to dance, raise their aspirations and realise their potential through developing new youth dance groups leading to the establishment of a Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble to show case the excellence that young people in Doncaster can achieve.

**Men Behaving Badly** – the Boys Dancing project will be the catalyst for engaging older generations of men, initially through friends and families. The project will challenge and poke fun at ideas about dance being only for women. The ambition is that Doncaster lays claim to being a nationally recognised centre of excellence in engaging men with dance.

These strands will be underpinned by workforce development through for example, re-launching the Dance Network as a focus for debate and continuing professional development for dance practitioners. Additional activity such as commissions and residences through the HotHouse programme and the ADD partners will support and enhance **Dance Whispers**, and once open the new venue will become the 'shout', the recognised home for dance in Doncaster.

Working strategically will involve continually seeking to build impact through building partnerships, connecting partners and activities, creating new dance ambassadors, and raising profile in and beyond Doncaster.

## **7 Making it happen**

**Dance Whispers**, associated and subsequent activity will be developed by the ADD partners working together in partnership. Regular meetings will involve developing ideas, identifying new opportunities and needs, monitoring the progress of specific projects and the strategy as a whole, and re-tuning the strategy as appropriate. It will be a dynamic and changing process driven by the expertise, experience and creative responsiveness of the ADD partners.

Individual partners will take responsibility for specific projects and/or aspects of projects. This will build on the strengths and expertise of the partners which, in turn, will provide an in-built quality assurance method. Working in partnership will allow projects to extend their reach further than any partner working alone could achieve alone, and enable the impact of projects to be maximised through making the widest range of connections across and beyond Doncaster.

Making the strategy happen will involve all partners in contributing effort, contacts and resources to all projects, not just those they are responsible for leading or delivering. Through the sharing of ideas, expertise and experience, and through the dynamic processes of discussing and working together, ADD can make a real difference and be greater than the sum of its parts.

This approach offers the greatest potential for effectiveness and efficiency. It also places a significant level of responsibility on the ADD partners and on the dance artists, practitioners and delivery organisations in particular. For this reason, it is essential that they are supported financially, practically and politically.

## **8 Strategic action plan**

The following Strategic Action Plan runs from 2011 to 2018, which takes it five years beyond the opening of the new venue. The first phase, **Dance Whispers**, runs from late 2011 to the end of 2013, a period that includes the excitement created by the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Big Dance in 2012, and the opening of the new venue in 2013. **Dance Whispers** will be delivered by ADD who will also review progress on a regular basis, looking for new opportunities for developmental activity and for securing the necessary resources for beyond 2013.

The Strategic Action Plan identifies the key events over this time-scale, the strategic priorities and the activities that will deliver on each priority over time. The years 2011 to 2014 are detailed annually, followed by columns for the two year periods, 2014/16 and 2016/18.

ADD will review the Strategic Action Plan periodically in order to recognise and celebrate success, to identify new opportunities and needs and to refine the Plan in response to changing circumstances and priorities. Key moments for review and forward scoping are:

- Nov 2012            Approx midpoint of Dance Whispers, scoping for work beyond December 2013 needs to commence
- July 2013            New venue open, applications for supporting work beyond December 2013 submitted
- March 2014          Evaluation of Dance Whispers complete, New venue open 12 months, programme planning for Oct 14-Oct 16 in progress
- October 2015        Mid-point of 2014-16 programme, New venue open approx. 18 months, scoping for work beyond 2016 needs to commence
- July 2016            Applications for supporting work beyond 2018 submitted
- Oct 2016            Programme for 2016-18 commences, review of last four years
- Oct 2017            Mid-point of 2016-18 programme, scoping for work beyond 2018 needs to commence.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/16	2016/18
<b>Key events</b>	Formation of ADD, GFA application New performance venue ground-breaking <i>Dance Whispers</i>	Big Dance 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games <i>Dance Whispers</i>	Opening of the new performance venue <i>Dance Whispers</i>	Doncaster Dance Festival	Doncaster International Dance Festival
<b>Strategic priorities</b>					
<b>Increase and diversify the pool of professional practitioners and ensure that professional skills are developed and shared</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-launch Dance Network</li> <li>• Explore needs and opportunities to build skills and experience</li> <li>• Pilot placement / apprentice opportunities for Big Dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance professional development offered by Dance Network</li> <li>• Review placement pilots, identify further needs and opportunities in run-up to opening of new performance venue</li> <li>• Develop programmes to build skills in teaching and working with young people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Dance Network, invite 'guests' from beyond Doncaster</li> <li>• Provide placement / apprentice opportunities with new performance venue opening</li> <li>• Explore potential to formalise placement / apprentice programmes, offer qualifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate Dance Network within new performance venue</li> <li>• Develop links with professional training schools to encourage graduates to 'think' Doncaster</li> <li>• Establish Dance Graduate Programme</li> <li>• Establish Doncaster providers of professional dance qualifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain vibrancy of Dance Network through programme of diverse activities, work with visiting artists etc</li> <li>• Celebrate Doncaster's achievements in professional dance development through event / publication</li> <li>• Formalise professional development programmes and locate with venue / college / other building-based organisation</li> </ul>

	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/16</b>	<b>2016/18</b>
<b>Improve and expand the dance offer in Doncaster's schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Dance Development Officer for Academies and the wider community</li> <li>• Develop clusters of schools</li> <li>• Explore potential to develop dance skills of teachers</li> <li>• Explore ways of raising profile of value of dance in education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance artists working with clusters / in schools</li> <li>• Provide CPD for teachers</li> <li>• Establish out of school groups within 2/3 school clusters</li> <li>• Develop schools dance festival / platforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance artists working in schools and with teachers</li> <li>• Maintain CPD for teachers</li> <li>• Performances by school groups in feeder and other schools</li> <li>• Performances by out of school cluster groups</li> <li>• Establish additional out of school cluster groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain CPD for teachers</li> <li>• Maintain performances in schools and increase out of school groups</li> <li>• Aim to increase take up and achievement in school dance examinations</li> <li>• Make links with teacher training institutions / agencies to encourage teaching graduates to 'think' Doncaster</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major dance in schools festival including work commissioned from artists</li> <li>• Establish gifted and talented programme</li> <li>• Encourage teachers to take higher level qualifications</li> </ul>
<b>Improve and increase the dance offer for young people in general and boys in particular</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Dance Development Officer for Academies and the wider community</li> <li>• Boys Dancing programme</li> <li>• Youth Dance Platform</li> <li>• Doncaster becomes Youth Dance Hub for S. Yorks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and develop Boys Dancing</li> <li>• Establish Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble for young people with most potential</li> <li>• Develop links with Centre for Advanced training, including workshops and auditions</li> <li>• Increase number of groups taking part in Youth Dance Platform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and develop Boys Dancing</li> <li>• Celebrate excellence of Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble through high-profile performances in new venue</li> <li>• Increase number of groups taking part in Youth Dance Platform, consider options for selection processes to raise standards / quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and develop Boys Dancing, including opportunities for progression to dance career</li> <li>• Maintain and develop Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble</li> <li>• Commission new work by artists for Youth Dance Platform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and develop Boys Dancing, including opportunities for progression to dance career</li> <li>• Maintain and develop Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble</li> <li>• Host international youth dance festival incorporating Youth Dance Platform</li> </ul>

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/16	2016/18
<b>Ensure that opportunities to watch and take part in dance are offered in and taken up by local communities; increase the diversity of audiences and participants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation activities for <i>The Journey</i></li> <li>• Preparation for <i>Men Behaving Badly</i></li> <li>• Planning for Big Dance</li> <li>• Planning for video booth, films and exhibitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop activities for <i>The Journey</i></li> <li>• Development of <i>Men Behaving Badly</i></li> <li>• Big Dance takes place</li> <li>• Video booth, films, exhibitions</li> <li>• Encourage local dance ambassadors, providing training / incentives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Journey</i> takes place as part of opening of new performance venue</li> <li>• <i>Men Behaving Badly</i> performances / events</li> <li>• ADD reviews groups included in Dance Whispers to identify potential for development / targeting activity to involve excluded groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain groups developed through <i>The Journey</i></li> <li>• Maintain <i>Men Behaving Badly</i> group / activity</li> <li>• Host major national / international festival focused on men dancing / comedy in dance</li> <li>• Plans made to include local communities in festivals / major events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include <i>The Journey</i> and <i>Men Behaving Badly</i> groups in platforms, festivals, events</li> <li>• Include local communities in festivals / major events</li> </ul>
<b>Establish the new performance venue as a home for dance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HotHouse programming prepares for move to new venue, including dance commissions, performances, residences and hosting Youth Dance Platforms</li> <li>• Plans for audience engagement strategy to include dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans for high-profile dance events as part of opening season</li> <li>• Plans for professional work to connect with schools / youth / community dance programmes</li> <li>• Plans for artists in residence / associates, hosting of dance information and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular programme of classes and workshops</li> <li>• Programme of commissions / performances, include local group Curtain Raiser in association with professional performances</li> <li>• Locate Boys Dancing and Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble at new venue</li> <li>• Establish dance support and information services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and build programme of classes and workshops, commissions, performances</li> <li>• Locate Dance Network at new venue</li> <li>• Main venue for Doncaster Dance Festival</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and build programme of classes and workshops, commissions, performances</li> <li>• Main venue for Doncaster International Dance Festival</li> </ul>

	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/16</b>	<b>2016/18</b>
<b>Raise the profile of dance in Doncaster, and as Doncaster as a place where exciting dance happens - regionally, nationally and internationally</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop links with regional organisations, eg Yorkshire Dance and the Regional Dance Development Network</li> <li>• Develop communications strategy for <i>Dance Whispers</i></li> <li>• Explore developing key dance champions eg local politicians, head teachers etc</li> <li>• Develop links with press / media to run dance stories / features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Big Dance as opportunity to build interest / profile</li> <li>• Launch <i>Dance Whispers</i></li> <li>• Explore developing dance ambassadors for key groups, eg youth, professional, local</li> <li>• Provide media training for local artists, potential ambassadors</li> <li>• Increase media coverage of dance in Doncaster</li> <li>• New venue website to highlight dance achievements and hold dance information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use major events as opportunity to build interest / profile</li> <li>• Produce show-reel, images etc</li> <li>• Identify local people to act as spokes-people with media and decision-makers</li> <li>• Maintain and build on communications strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use major events as opportunity to build interest / profile</li> <li>• Maintain and build on communications strategy, with focus on national profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use major events as opportunity to build interest / profile</li> <li>• Maintain and build on communications strategy, with focus on international profile</li> </ul>

## 9 Judging success

The success of the dance development strategy will be seen in various ways, some will be quantitative but many more indications of success will be qualitative. ADD will identify the particular indicators of success in line with the particular objectives for particular areas of activity and projects. The following indicators provide an overview of the potential impact of the strategy as a whole.

### Professional artists

- A bigger and more diverse pool of dance practitioners
- Clearer progression routes
- More opportunities for CPD
- More work created and shown by local artists in Doncaster and elsewhere
- Increased employment for dance practitioners

### Venues/programming

- High profile for dance in programme of new venue
- Bigger audiences for dance
- Site-specific/outdoor/celebratory activity a regular feature of dance programming in Doncaster
- Increased dance commissions from local and visiting artists in Hothouse and the new venue which is seen as a key player nationally in commissioning and supporting the creation of work
- Regular programme of participatory and education activity at new venue
- New venue recognised as the home for dance in Doncaster and a major force for dance regionally and nationally
- Strong connections between visiting artists and work in schools, colleges and universities, with communities and with young people

### Young people

- More youth dance companies and an increased number of young people taking part in dance
- Growing numbers of youth dance groups performing in the Youth Dance Platform
- Progression routes for young people and for boys in particular
- Better linkage between private dance schools and youth dance
- Establishment of Doncaster Youth Dance Ensemble
- Groups from Doncaster appearing regularly at regional youth dance platforms
- Groups from Doncaster representing the region at national dance platforms
- More opportunities for engagement with professional dance artists and companies
- Increased use of social networking and web-based communications to build communities of interest

### Schools

- More young people taking dance as a curriculum option
- More after schools clubs
- More opportunities for sharings between schools
- More opportunities for engagement with professional dance artists and companies

### Further and Higher Education

- More aspiring dance students applying to Doncaster College
- Raised attainment levels by dance students in Doncaster

- More young people from Doncaster progressing to further and higher education as a result of their engagement in dance
- Students at Doncaster College regularly engaging with professional artists, more artistic and community dance activities taking place within and in association with Doncaster College
- Students at Doncaster College participating in professional dance activity in community and artistic contexts

#### Communities

- Increased opportunities to engage with dance locally
- Greater diversity evident across all areas of activity
- Dance increasingly recognised as a successful vehicle for community focused creative activity, community celebration and civic pride
- Contribution to Doncaster's "Say Yes to arts" campaign

#### Profile

- Increased media coverage for dance
- Pop-up/flashmob type dance events regular feature of Doncaster's cultural offer
- Consistent, high-profile web-presence for dance with active blogging
- A group of high-profile, famous and/or influential champions promoting dance in Doncaster

#### Partnerships

- Strong relations established and maintained with borough partnerships such as Doncaster Together
- Strong relationships established and maintained with regional and national partners such as Yorkshire Dance, Youth Dance England, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, professional training institutions, Centres for Advanced Training, professional dance companies.

The success of the dance strategy will lie not only in the success of jointly programmed work, but also in the ongoing programmes of the individual members of ADD.

Engaging an independent evaluator for *Dance Whispers* provides an opportunity to develop systems for data collection and analysis that can be used to track progress and measure the success of the strategy in the longer term. This is likely to include a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence including:

#### *Qualitative:*

- Feedback forms
- Vox pops
- Focus group discussions
- Press coverage

#### *Quantitative:*

- Participant group numbers/retention rates/demographics
- Audience numbers/retention rates/demographics
- Quantity of press coverage
- Numbers of hours employment for artists
- Number of hours CPD for artists
- Destinations of people who have engaged with dance in Doncaster

## **10 Conclusions**

Dance in Doncaster is a gem; it is precious, valuable and has huge potential. Dance can contribute to a range of wider strategies including for civic engagement and pride, for health and well-being, for the regeneration of communities and increasing life-chances for people across Doncaster.

Doncaster now has a unique opportunity to extend, expand and amplify its dance offer and reputation.

It is fortunate in having a small but diverse, created and committed group of dance professionals and supporters who have demonstrated a shared passion and vision, and the willingness and capacity to work together effectively.

As a result of their efforts, Doncaster now has the means for delivering a strategic action plan that has been made in Doncaster, for Doncaster.

Over the next three years there are unprecedented opportunities to integrate dance development into wider local, regional and national events, in particular the opening of the new venue.

The first steps have been taken with the formation of ADD. The next steps need relatively modest investment in order to fuel the momentum that is already building and to create new, strategic opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and interests across Doncaster.

The potential benefits are wide-ranging. They include benefits for individuals and communities, for dance, and for Doncaster.

## Alliance for Dance in Doncaster

### Terms of Reference

The Alliance for Dance in Doncaster (ADD) brings together key individuals and organisations with shared ambitions for increasing the diversity, quality and visibility of dance across Doncaster, and for enhancing the profile of dance made in and made by Doncaster regionally, nationally and internationally. ADD comprises:

Sarah Belk; Dance Development Officer  
Matt Clowes; HotHouse programmer  
Denise Cook; Doncaster College  
Elaine Hirst / Hayley Beecher; DARTS  
Mary Nash; Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council  
Wayne Sables; artist  
Janet Sisson; new performance venue

#### **Objectives**

Collectively, the members of ADD work together to:

- Develop, agree and act as guardian of a relevant and distinctive strategy for dance development across Doncaster
- Share information, experience and expertise to feed into and guide the strategic development of dance across Doncaster
- Raise the visibility and profile of dance in Doncaster locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Support and challenge partners across and beyond ADD responsible for delivering strategic projects
- Maintain an overview of the artistic quality and diversity of aesthetics represented by strategic programmes, encouraging raised aspirations and identifying and finding ways of addressing gaps
- Monitor the strategic effectiveness of projects and developments, including the connections they make, the people they include and the profile they achieve
- Identify priorities as they change over time and in response to other developments

## **Strategy**

The strategic principles for programmes of activity are to:

- Challenge assumptions about what dance is, who dances, where dance can happen and what dance can do
- Increase the visibility and profile of dance, and make people proud of dance in Doncaster
- Connect people, communities and practices
- Celebrate diversity and specialism, in dance practice and in people engaging with dance
- Raise aspiration, quality and demand for good dance practice in all contexts, creating opportunities and pathways for progression
- Celebrate excellence across the breadth of dance provision and achievement
- Create a dance offer for Doncaster that enables, supports and promotes opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to engage with dance as dancers, dance-makers, performers and audiences
- Contribute to the development of dance programming and audiences for the new venue, striving to ensure diversity of product and wide appeal

## **Collective responsibilities**

Members of ADD agree to:

- Commit to prioritise support, promote and positively advocate for dance development, both individually within their own workplace and as an active member of ADD
- Commit to attending ADD meetings, doing any work required as preparation for meetings and taking any action agreed as a result of meetings
- Rotate meetings around different spaces and at different times to maximise the participation of all members
- Rotate the chairing and servicing of meetings (including the sending out of notification and agendas in advance, taking notes and providing refreshments)
- Take collective responsibility for decisions agreed by ADD
- Contribute to the development of a programme of strategic activity in collaboration with the consultants to be submitted as an application to the Arts Council's Grants for the arts programme in early 2011. This may include contributing information, reading and commenting on drafts and being named as partners in the application.
- Lead on particular projects and programmes in partnership with others and on behalf of the Alliance
- Support developments and programmes resulting from the work of the alliance and/or that promotes its objectives

- Work to ensure coherence between the dance development strategy and the strategies / programmes of the new venue
- Regularly review the terms of reference to update and refresh them as required

#### **Powers**

- Decisions are made by discussion and negotiation, and with the agreement of the majority of members
- Any member has the right to withdraw from ADD. Members wishing to withdraw will provide good reason and adequate notice
- Any member who does not attend 3 sequential meetings without providing good reason and adequate notice may be asked to withdraw from ADD by the agreement of all the other members
- Any member who fails to fulfil their responsibilities may be asked to withdraw from ADD by the agreement of all the other members
- Members are representative of their organisation and attend meetings in an individual capacity. They may not send deputies to ADD meetings without the prior agreement of all other members
- ADD may invite other individuals and/or representatives of organisations as guests or members by agreement of all members
- ADD may take an overview of setting and monitoring budgets and contribute to raising funds for ADD activities as appropriate

#### **Individual roles and responsibilities**

Each member brings particular expertise to ADD that forms the basis for individual roles and responsibilities within and on behalf of the alliance, including leading through enabling and encouraging partnerships between and beyond the alliance and taking responsibility for raising aspiration and visibility, and ensuring best practice in particular areas of work.

#### **Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council**

- Lead on ensuring good communications with politicians, policy-makers and the wider community
- Ensure clearances, permissions etc are provided for work in public spaces

#### **DARTS**

- Lead on the client-centred approach to dance practice with hard to reach groups, in terms of delivery, workforce development and in sharing expertise / best practice
- Collaborate with the new venue's inclusion and outreach activity
- Lead on dance and health partnerships
- Lead on the development of dance and disability / integrated dance
- Lead on promoting / delivering Arts Award

### **Wayne Sables**

- Lead on artistic solutions to strategic issues
- Lead as creative producer, dance champion and artistic ambassador for Doncaster, nurturing relationships with other artists in and beyond Doncaster
- Collaborate with the Dance Development Officer and the new venue the Boys Dance Project
- Collaborate with the Dance Development Officer and the new venue on the development of youth dance
- Collaborate with the new venue on dance programming and 'exploiting' associated opportunities

### **Dance Development Officer**

- Lead on dance in schools and with young people
- Collaborate with Wayne Sables and the new venue on developing progression opportunities for young people including through hosting the South Yorkshire Hub for Youth Dance England
- Enable skills development through the Dance Leaders programme for young people, and building a team of practitioners equipped to work in schools, generating new and sustainable employment opportunities
- Collaborate with DARTS on delivering Arts Awards

### **New venue**

- Being Doncaster's 'home' for dance (and other art forms as relevant), holding good quality information; signposting, advising, supporting; providing regular classes, performances, residencies, projects; the Dance Network and ADD
- Lead on programme and audience development for dance performance, residencies and associated projects

### **Doncaster College**

- Lead on progression to further and higher education in dance
- Providing space and other resources for particular programmes
- Ensure connections between visiting artists, students and relevant College initiatives with wider dance developments
- Collaborate with the venue for the public performance of student and college generated dance work
- Collaborate with the venue on joint dance programming and residencies

April 2011