



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

**SCOTTISH
BALLET**



Evaluating Dance for Parkinson's Scotland (DfPS)

National Expansion of the Programme, 2018-2021

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Dance for Parkinson's Scotland (DfPS) partnership, led by Dance Base, Scotland's National Centre for Dance and Scottish Ballet, Scotland's national dance company, commissioned the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to carry out a mixed-methods evaluation of the national expansion of the DfPS programme¹.

Phase One (September 2018-March 2020) involved seven hubs: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, Inverness, and Kilmarnock. During the original Phase Two (September 2019-March 2021), online programmes were developed by four of a total of ten hubs: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Aims

Stage One of the evaluation (Phase One of the programme) examines a) the perceived cultural, social, and physical effects on the dancers involved and b) the development of the satellite hubs in relation to themes of community, identity, and sustainability.

Stage Two of the evaluation (in place of the original Phase Two of the programme) explores the online programmes run by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet during the COVID-19 pandemic: specifically, the development of online delivery and models of best practice, and the experiences of dancers, practitioners, and musicians involved.

The evaluation concludes with the following findings:

Stage one findings

Dancers

Relationship to dance: Dancers feel part of a greater 'glocal' DfPS and DfP movement. Through engaging with movement and music, the programme increases self-efficacy with regards to living well with Parkinson's. Dancers enjoy the creativity within dance.

Community and collaboration: Dancers reported increased self-confidence in social situations and shared the benefits of group activity, and connections with the practitioners.

¹ Following an evaluation of the pilot Dance for Parkinson's Scotland programme, 2016/2017 (Whiteside, 2017).

Perceived physical impact: Dancers perceive an improvement in functional mobility with DfPS having a distinct role within the daily lives of dancers.

Practitioners and partners

The programme of training and support was characterised by a tailored approach and an appropriate balance of theory and practice. Practitioners shared the importance of peer learning and the necessary move in mindset from freelancer to a member of a team.

Although not specialists in neurological dance health practice, many practitioners, musicians, support artists, and volunteers were highly experienced before involvement with DfPS. This calibre supported the turnover of staff, within the context of a long-term programme, allowing others to step in. Practitioners welcomed the opportunity to further develop their own practice through involvement with DfPS.

Individual programmes at satellite hubs developed their own communities and sense of identity through wider involvement with partner venues and organisations, the existence of core groups of dancers, connections with support groups, and through the specific content devised and delivered.

Stage two findings

Dancers shared some of the challenges in participating in an online experience; the impact on concentration and the lack of a (physical and mental) transitional space to prepare oneself to dance. Dancers also shared some of the unexpected benefits including the opportunity to draw in spouses, a sense of autonomy and anonymity in how one moves and, lastly, more control with medication and the convenience of not travelling.

Practitioners similarly shared some of their challenges, which included developing digital literacy and practical considerations ranging from use of the camera to implementing new health and safety protocols. Practitioners also spoke of the opportunity to develop one's own creative practice and the increased accessibility to internal and external training.

The DfPS online classes were an important space to be 'seen and heard'; dancers and practitioners had a means to stay in touch, to feel a sense of dancing together, and to acknowledge sadness and grief. A set routine of classes and existing (or growing) familiarity with movement, music, and people emerged as central to a positive experience and continued attendance and adherence. Dancers spoke of the importance of this class to their week amid COVID-19 restrictions and a nervousness about the world opening up once more.

Dancers expressed deep gratitude for the existence of the online DfPS programmes.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Aims of the evaluation

The key aims of the programme (as agreed with core funder, Paul Hamlyn Foundation) guided the evaluation framework:

Aim 1 (Impact on dancers with Parkinson's): 'Increase participation; decrease isolation; improve wellbeing; improve creative development/appreciation of dance from the perception of individuals involved.'

This aim aligns with an evaluation focus on the perceived cultural, social, and physical effects of the DfPS programme from the perspectives of dancers, across all seven hubs, involved in Phase One². New Phase Two hubs were not involved owing to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (see 2.1. Narrative).

Aim 2 (Impact on DfPS and 'hubs' involved): 'Improve joint working; Improve national leadership roles including increased profile in new regions and ability to deliver similar programmes in future; Improve sustainability via more effective use of resources and ability to leverage investment by working together.'

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, a more micro approach is taken here with the focus on the experiences of dance practitioners³ and musicians based at the five Phase One satellite hubs⁴ and the development of a DfPS practice and community.

Aim 3 (Impact on the wider dance and health sector): 'Get better at learning from each other; dance health sector becomes more robust and confident; Benefit from enhanced evidence base for Dance for Parkinson's.'

Data pertaining to the third aim would have been collected towards the end of the evaluation and activity period but was superseded by a necessary focus on the move to online programmes with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (explored further below under 2.1. Narrative).

² Throughout this report, 'Stage One' refers to evaluation of the original Phase One DfPS programme (September 2018-March 2020).

³ Referred to henceforth as 'practitioners.'

⁴ Throughout this report, 'satellite hubs' refers to Phase One hubs, Aberdeen, Dundee, Greenock, Inverness and Kilmarnock.

The evaluation focus here during Stage Two⁵ was on a) the development of online delivery and models of best practice by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet and b) the experiences, perceived benefits and challenges, for the practitioners, musicians, and dancers involved.

1.2. Context

1.2.1. Parkinson's

Parkinson's is a complex, progressive neurodegenerative condition, affecting one in 500 people, mostly in older age groups. It is the second most common neurodegenerative condition after Alzheimer's (Parkinson's UK, 2019). The condition affects all aspects of daily living, including talking, walking, swallowing, and writing, as well as other issues such as tiredness, pain, depression, anxiety, dementia, and compulsive behaviours (Parkinson's UK, 2019). Symptoms affect individuals to different degrees and in different ways. The fundamental physical effects include dyskinesia (resting tremor), slowness of movement (bradykinesia), stiffness of muscles, 'freezing' while moving, lack of coordination and a posture that becomes stooped. Facial expressions can be affected resulting in a 'mask'-like face suppressing expression of emotions, and the voice may also become quieter. Non-motor symptoms, linked to these physical affects in part, include depression and anxiety, which can lead to, and result from, a sense of loneliness and isolation.

Parkinson's is a neurodegenerative disease caused by the loss of dopaminergic neurons in the basal ganglia in the brain and the accumulation of α -synuclein, found throughout the nervous system (Bar et al, 2021). This lack of dopamine interferes with the body's ability to voluntarily initiate, continue, or to stop movement, causing many people with Parkinson's to lose balance and experience tremors and neuromuscular pain (Houston and McGill, 2015). Internationally, a 2.4 increase in diagnoses was reported between 1990-2016, with 6.1 million people diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2016. There is currently no cure (Armstrong and Okun, 2020). Approximately 12,400 people in Scotland had a Parkinson's diagnosis in 2019, and that number is predicted to increase by 40% within the next 20 years (Parkinson's UK, 2019).

The condition is treated by a range of medications which are designed to ease symptoms, many of which need to be taken several times each day and can become unreliable with continued use (Houston and McGill, 2015). There is evidence to support that regular exercise is beneficial to physical functioning, quality of life, strength, balance, and gait speed for people with Parkinson's (Goodwin et al, 2008). Earhart (2009) suggests that exercise programmes for people with Parkinson's need to specifically address cueing strategies for

⁵ Throughout this report, 'Stage Two' relates to evaluation of the online DfPS programmes run by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. 'Stage Two' in a sense replaces 'Phase Two' and the original planned involvement of new hubs, Peebles, Perth, and Stirling.

gait, cognitive movement strategies, exercises to improve balance, and train joint mobility and muscle power. Dance is identified as an appropriate activity which can not only successfully address each of these components but can also be enjoyable and engaging, supporting motivation and retention in dancers (Earhart, 2009; Heiberger et al, 2011).

1.2.2. Dance for Parkinson's (DfP)

There is evidence to indicate that exercise can slow the progression of Parkinson's symptoms, while artistic, creative, and social activities are found to be beneficial to developing self-efficacy, improving mood, and reducing feelings of isolation. There is a growing body of research exploring the effects of participating in dance for people living with Parkinson's. Dance, as an inherently physical, artistic, and social activity, is uniquely placed to address the condition's multifaceted symptoms.

The Dance for PD[®] programme was created in 2001 through a partnership between the Brooklyn Parkinson Group (BPG) and the Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG), instigated by Olie Westheimer, founder and Executive Director of the former organisation. David Leventhal, one of the founding Dance for PD[®] teachers, is the current Program Director of Dance for PD[®] and plays an active role in the programme's research and development. The MMDG model of Dance for PD[®] has since been disseminated and delivered internationally, with classes and organisations worldwide retaining the original shared ethos:

'[T]hat professionally-trained dancers are movement experts whose knowledge about balance, sequencing, rhythm and aesthetic awareness is useful to persons with PD; that all classes welcome and include people of all abilities, as well as families, friends and caregivers; and that the class is about the art, technique, and fun of dancing' (Dance for PD[®], online).

The Dance for Parkinson's Partnership UK began in 2011, building upon and inspired by the work of the MMDG, bringing together independent initiatives which were developing across the UK into a larger network. The programme at English National Ballet (ENB) saw the first robust exploration of the Dance for Parkinson's methodology in the UK (Houston and McGill, 2011; 2014). The programme has since been expanded further to run from 2020-2024 (People Dancing, 2022). Within Scotland, the movement is led by Dance for Parkinson's Scotland (DfPS) comprised of a partnership between Dance Base, Scotland's National Centre for Dance and Scottish Ballet, Scotland's national dance company, first through a pilot programme run in Edinburgh and Glasgow (2016/2017), and further through a national expansion involving a further eight locations (2018-2021).

1.3. Dance for Parkinson's literature

1.3.1. Dance for Parkinson's: In-person activity

There is a concrete body of research exploring the distinct benefits of dance activity for people with Parkinson's. Studies have focussed on interventions using specific dance styles, such as tango and partner dances (Duncan and Earhart, 2012; Hackney and Earhart, 2009; Koch et al, 2016), ballet (Houston and McGill, 2015; Whiteside, 2017), modern dance (Westeimer, 2015), contemporary dance (Bar et al, 2021; Marchant et al, 2010) and Greek traditional dance (Elpidoforou et al, 2021). In comparative studies, dance is consistently found to have a more profound physical impact on participants than non-dance control groups, with sustained interventions showing a reduction in risk of falls, and improved gait and balance (Hackney and Earhart, 2009). Duncan and Earhart's (2012) randomised control trial into tango dancing for people with Parkinson's, which examined physical functions like gait, freezing, and balance, suggests that long-term participation may modify the progression of Parkinson's related disability. The use of music in dance classes is often cited as a significant contributing factor to cueing movement, supporting improvement of gait, and reducing freezing (Earhart, 2009; Koch et al, 2016; Pereira et al, 2019; Westeimer et al, 2015).

Further studies acknowledge the multifaceted experience of dance, with impact extending to psychological, emotional, and social realms (Houston, 2019; Whiteside, 2017). Kalyani et al (2019) found that a dance for Parkinson's intervention brought about improvements in selected cognitive skills, including executive function and episodic memory, psychological symptoms, such as anxiety and depression, as well as Quality of Life (QoL). That the majority of dance interventions have taken place in group settings highlights the potential for the social benefits of such activities, where the opportunity to socialise and be part of a community is meaningful and motivating for participants (Emmanouilidis et al, 2021; Marchant et al, 2010). The format of dance classes which utilise free movement or improvisation, has recently been suggested to support creative self-efficacy, psychological flexibility (the ability to adapt to different situations) and improvements in QoL, which link to lower levels of anxiety and depression (Bar et al, 2021).

'[Participants] described a sense of liberation, being filled with confidence and belief in abilities, greater flexibility, self-acceptance and a sense of joy and happiness. Most participants addressed the improved QoL, and most described positive, physical and/or social, emotional changes' (Bar et al, 2021).

The notion of aesthetics and embodiment in dance has also gained traction in Dance for Parkinson's studies, introducing a developed philosophical thinking. While the majority of Parkinson's research aligns with a restitution narrative (focused on the potential of dance to

meaningfully alleviate symptoms, decrease disability, reverse or slow the disease), adoption of a quest narrative perspective considers how dance might be a means to enrichment; feeling worthwhile, beautiful, dignified, and in control (Houston, 2019). Dance yields different outcomes through its intrinsic artistic elements and, through the experience of beauty in movement, imagery, music, and social interactions, a person with Parkinson's may reclaim a sense of agency (Fontanesi and DeSouza, 2021; Houston, 2015).

Phenomenological, ethnographic, differentiated approaches to research in this field are therefore identified as being crucial to capturing the ephemeral, holistic, multifaceted nature of dance engagement, giving value to the potential emotional, mental, and social benefits alongside the physical impact (Houston et al, 2014).

1.3.2. Dance for Parkinson's: Digital activity and impact (amid COVID-19)

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns and restrictions on in-person activity had a significant impact on communities around the world. For people with Parkinson's, challenges included extended periods of social isolation, reduced access to therapies and support, and activities being replaced by online provision.

Home-based exercise programmes, particularly multicomponent programmes using music, like dance, were found to be crucial for older adults during extended periods of confinement (Chtourou et al, 2020). The increase of symptom progression in people with Parkinson's has been directly linked to the discontinuation of exercise-based therapies and a lack of socialising (Ineichen et al, 2021) and increased sedentary behaviour to increased risk of falls, increased frailty and decreased QoL (Langer et al, 2021; Song et al, 2020). Certain pre-existing Dance for Parkinson's activities moved online, including those delivered by Dance for PD®. Dancers valued the convenience and flexibility of digital participation but noted limitations including reductions in social interaction, support, and motivation (Bek et al, 2021). Kelly and Leventhal (2021) found that online sessions were regularly attended, more frequently than in-person, engagement dramatically increased, and Dance for PD® was able to expand its offering, for example, delivering new sessions in Spanish. Some of the benefits of in-person dance activities were replicated in the digital environment, including improvements to sensorimotor, functional, and cognitive areas, as well as in fatigue levels and sleep (Bek et al, 2021). However, Kelly and Leventhal (2021) note that,

'[T]he online experience falls short. From a pedagogical perspective, critical elements of spatial awareness, focus, touch, partnering, and spontaneous interaction are difficult if not impossible to replicate in a digital format.'

Despite the challenges and limitations involved in delivering quality Dance for Parkinson's experiences online, research found that these programmes were safe, feasible, and

perceived to be of benefit, and were a viable form of structured physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic (Morris et al, 2021). For participants engaged in the Dance for PD® sessions there was a strong preference for digital delivery to be continued in the future alongside, rather than instead of, in-person delivery (Bek et al, 2021).

2. Dance for Parkinson's Scotland (DfPS) Programme

2.1. Narrative

The Dance for Parkinson's Scotland (DfPS) programme is inspired by and builds upon the work of the Mark Morris Dance Group's Dance for PD® programme and contributes to the greater Dance for Parkinson's movement. This joint initiative is managed by Dance Base (based in Edinburgh) Scottish Ballet (headquarters in Glasgow) working closely with Parkinson's UK.

Pilot

Dance Base has been running Dance for Parkinson's classes since 2010. Scottish Ballet had previously (in 2015) visited the MMDG and undertaken training in this area. Owing to the cultural and geographical positionality of the two organisations within Scotland, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet felt there was potential to collaborate on a larger programme of activity. Following a period of research and development with Parkinson's UK and Parkinson's specialists, intensive training with MMDG and People Dancing, the partnership secured funding to deliver an 18-month pilot (2016/2017). The partnership was built upon a shared ethos between the two organisations, based on facilitating and nurturing accessible, inclusive, high-quality dance experiences. The pilot was evaluated in 2017 (Whiteside, 2017).

National expansion of the DfPS programme

Phase One (September 2018-March 2020)

In 2018, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet expanded the programme nationally, aiming to increase provision of DfPS activity across widespread geographical locations in Scotland, by developing a further eight DfPS hubs across the country. As part of the first phase of this three-year expansion project, five DfPS hubs were established, in addition to the continuation of the Edinburgh and Glasgow settings. Partnerships were formed with dance and arts organisations in Inverness (Eden Court), Aberdeen (Citymoves Dance Agency⁶; Aberdeen Performing Arts), Dundee (Shaper/Caper; The Space and Dundee and Angus College), Greenock (Beacon Arts Centre), and Kilmarnock (CentreStage). Phase One hubs were coordinated and supported by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet, with the intention that they take over the management of their own classes from March 2020 onwards.

⁶ Abbreviated to Citymoves throughout.

Phase Two (initially September 2019-March 2021)

In September 2019, the final three hubs were launched as part of the second phase of the expansion project, with Dance Base and Scottish Ballet supporting new DfPS partnerships with arts organisations in Peebles (Eastgate Theatre), Stirling (Macrobert Arts Centre) and Perth (Horsecross Arts).

However, Phase Two was severely disrupted by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the evaluation diverges at this point to focus on the online programmes run by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet.

Move to working online (March 2020 onwards)

The COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on the DfPS programme. In response to the national lockdown in March 2020, DfPS activity was moved online as a means to continue offering provision and support for dancers. From April 2020, digital activity was delivered through a combination of pre-recorded videos and 'live' online classes via Facebook and then Zoom. Dance Base and Scottish Ballet invited practitioners from across the DfPS network to deliver classes as part of their new digital programme, as well as offering additional support across the network. Online classes were delivered by hubs in Edinburgh (Dance Base), Glasgow (Scottish Ballet), Aberdeen (Citymoves), and Dundee (Shaper/Caper) from April 2020, with Perth and Inverness beginning to deliver digitally in 2021. Kilmarnock, Greenock, Stirling, and Peebles did not deliver any digital content throughout this period; however, their dancers were directed towards the activity offered online by other hubs in the network.

Some satellite hubs were unable to continue delivery through this period due to staff being furloughed and other financial and/or logistical challenges. Emergency financial support was sought from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) to extend the project for one year in order to meet the original aims of the expansion project, including completing the developmental work with the Phase Two hubs which had been disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In-person delivery was gradually re-introduced from September 2021 onwards. Satellite hubs were supported to resume activity, with outstanding planned handovers taking place by the end of June 2022.

2.2. Structure

Phase One hubs delivered DfPS classes which were designed specifically for those with Parkinson's and their families and carers. Programmes aligned with the greater global Dance for Parkinson's movement through being dance and dancer-centred and each satellite hub

was coordinated and mentored by either Dance Base or Scottish Ballet. The classes included:

- Live music
- Visualisation and a 'Settle', easing dancers into the class by bringing awareness into breath and posture.
- Sun salutations, aiming to facilitate greater range of movement and extension in the arms, torso, and spine.
- Chair-based exercises
- Vocal exercises and exercises for the facial muscles
- Creative responses or tasks
- A combination of set and improvised activities
- A standing section, focusing on travel, transfer of weight, strong rhythms, and whole body movement.
- A reverence and thank you with, and to all, in the space.

The classes also involved dedicated social time (either before and/or after) where dancers, practitioners, musicians, and volunteers shared refreshments (when in-person) and conversation.

2.3. Training

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet coordinated support and management for the satellite hubs throughout the project, which included a programme of regular training and development for practitioners, musicians, volunteers, and organisational staff. Practitioner experiences of engaging in training is explored later on in the evaluation (4.5. Training and support and 5.4.5. Role and accessibility of external training). However, the following denotes key training opportunities (received or delivered).

Phase One:

- Weekend intensive course with David Leventhal (Dance for PD®)
- People Dancing online course
- Specialist awareness-raising training with Parkinson's UK
- People Dancing two-day summer school DfP intensive
- Falls training
- Advanced 1-day training with David Leventhal (Dance for PD®)
- Emergency evacuation training
- Emergency First Aid training
- Child protection and vulnerable adult training
- Volunteer training
- Network-wide creative planning days
- Hub inductions

From April 2021, a series of training sessions for all DfPS practitioners, some of which were programmed in direct response to feedback from individuals on their perceived knowledge gaps, was offered. Network/training sessions that took place include:

- Online refresher sessions with David Leventhal (Dance for PD®); Parkinson's UK
- Presentation from Dr Sara Houston, University of Roehampton (prominent DfP researcher)
- Practical sessions with Heidi Wilson, Cardiff Metropolitan University (DfP practitioner), Dr Sophia Hulbert (DfP practitioner and clinical physiotherapist) and Hannah McIlveen (Registered Psychiatric Nurse and Dance Movement Psychotherapist)
- Network sessions
- Musician's network session and peer mentoring
- Fundraising sessions
- DfPS Network Day - final celebratory and future-looking meeting for all DfPS hubs

3. Summary of Methods

3.1. Stage one data collection (in-person)

The first two programme aims (stated in 1.1. *Aims of evaluation*) were explored during Phase One through an intensive period of data collection (March to July 2019) at each of the seven hubs involved. Mixed methods (comprised of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and the McRae Leventhal Questionnaire) facilitated evaluation of DfPS in-person activity.

Each hub was visited for three consecutive weeks. In-depth field notes were recorded each time with an average of four interviews taking place with dancers, and an average of three interviews taking place with practitioners and musicians. A focus group also took place with practitioners and musicians from Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness and Kilmarnock satellite hubs in December 2018, before the intensive period of data collection at each hub began.

The table below details the return of the McRae Leventhal Questionnaire for each location in relation to the total number of questionnaires returned. The response rate from across hubs was 76%⁷, based on the registers of active dancers.

Table 1: McRae Leventhal Questionnaire (rank order)

<i>Location</i>	<i>Percentage of Respondents (contributing to total received)</i>	<i>(n=69)</i>
Glasgow	36%	25
Aberdeen	16%	11
Edinburgh	16%	11
Dundee	10%	7
Greenock	10%	7
Inverness	7%	5
Kilmarnock	4%	3

⁷ Throughout this report, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

3.2. Stage two data collection (online)

The original brief would have seen the same approach and methods adopted during Stage One (Phase One) apply to Phase Two of the DfPS programme, working with new satellite hubs, Perth, Peebles, and Stirling from April to June 2020. However, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing restrictions in Scotland, DfPS activity moved online. Dance Base and Scottish Ballet worked together and separately and consulted with David Leventhal to develop an online model of best practice, progressing through several iterations, with the culmination of a weekly online class delivered via Zoom from November 2020 (initially in the form of trial sessions) for new and continuing dancers. Phase One hubs, Aberdeen and Dundee also launched their own online programmes in April 2020.

Following discussion with the DfPS Steering Group in October 2020, the decision was made to diverge from the original evaluation aims and approach to explicitly focus on individual and organisational experiences and perceptions of participating in or leading the DfPS programme online (focused on Dance Base and Scottish Ballet classes). An opportunity existed to inform and shape development of best practice, when working online, with dancers with Parkinson's.

Following a revised Application for Ethical Approval to the Royal Conservatoire's Ethics Committee, the data collection for the second stage of the evaluation took place from February to August 2021.

Three interviews and focus groups took place with practitioners, musicians, and one venue staff member from the Aberdeen, Dundee, Greenock, Inverness and Kilmarnock satellite hubs during February 2021. This data informs understanding of hub narratives during this time, rather than feeding into the data gathered from the Dance Base and Scottish Ballet online classes. From March to May 2021, five consecutive online classes were observed each with Dance Base and Scottish Ballet leading to detailed sets of field notes. Five interviews with dancers from each online programme took place (April to May 2021) and five interviews with Dance Base and Scottish Ballet practitioners and musicians were held (April to August 2021).

3.3. Explanation of methods

Semi-structured and ethnographic interviews

Semi-structured interviews allow rich detail and narrative to be gained, personal to the interviewee, and constitute a flexible model that allows new and significant topics and themes to arise. Across both stages of the evaluation, 36 interviews took place with dancers and 21 interviews with practitioners and musicians. **Semi-structured** interviews lasted between 20 minutes and two hours. Interviews during Stage One focused on the perceived cultural, social and physical effects of participating (on the part of the dancers) and the development of a satellite hub practice and community (on the part of practitioners and musicians). Interviews during Stage Two focused on the experience of participating in (dancers), or leading (practitioners and musicians), DfPS online classes.

As has been observed previously (Whiteside, 2017; 2019, Whiteside and Ruckert 2019) ethnographic interviews (conversations taking place in the moment) have an important place within the SB Health evaluations. Its use is facilitated by the method of participant observation drawn upon (i.e., dancing together and participating in all elements of class) and the investment made by the dancers to the activity and evaluation. It is important to note that this method could not be drawn upon during Stage Two of the evaluation. The necessary changes in evaluation approach are further discussed in 3.6. **Limitations and challenges**.

Participant Observation

As was the case with the pilot evaluation (Whiteside, 2017), participant observation saw the lead researcher (Dr Bethany Whiteside) and Research Assistant (Emma Smith, Stage One (only)), as the external evaluators joining in (dancing) all of the relevant classes over the data collection period. The observation frameworks for Stages One and Two similarly focused on content, conversation, guidance and instruction, and responses. However, the in-person nature of Stage One data collection allowed for additional focus on atmosphere, inter-class interaction, use of space, and response to venue. Necessarily, the experience of participant observation during Stage Two was very different with all participation taking place via Zoom. Further details of this experience are discussed under 3.6. **Limitations and challenges**.

McRae Leventhal Questionnaire

Following discussion with Professor Cynthia McRae, University of Denver, and feedback from dancers involved in the evaluation of the pilot (Whiteside, 2017), the McRae Leventhal questionnaire was amended, shortened, and drawn on once more. The questionnaire

focuses on the perceived benefits of dancing for people with Parkinson's on life outside of the studio as well as on the experience of in-studio dance participation. The questionnaire is designed for dancers to complete following circa six months' of participation and the data collection period was timed accordingly (hence, the intended timepoint to begin data collection with the Phase Two satellite hubs in April 2020).

Once again, this approach of intensive data gathering 'on site', and the investment of many of the dancers with Parkinson's in the evaluation, accounts for the high response rate – as noted above, 76% across the seven Phase One hubs – based on the registers of active attendees.

3.4. Ethics

Ethical approval for both stages of data collection was granted by the Ethics Committee of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS). Informed consent was gained from all involved with staff at Dance Base and Scottish Ballet acting as a conduit for sharing the relevant paperwork and gaining consent for Stage Two of the evaluation.

With Stage Two of data collection taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic, all discussion, means, and mechanisms for gaining consent and undertaking observations, focus groups and interviews took place online or via the telephone. The approach necessitated additional considerations around safe storage of data, the explaining of consent, design of forms and support with Abode, Word, and emails for some dancers.

Dancers remain anonymous throughout the report where individual experiences and opinions are cited. Practitioners and musicians are credited as appropriate given their involvement in a professional capacity.

3.5. Analysis

All interviews undertaken during both stages of the evaluation were recorded (with those undertaken during the second stage recorded via the Zoom platform) and transcribed. Thematic analysis was undertaken through the creation of a grounded coding frame, identifying key themes and patterns arising from the data. Stage One and Two interviews were analysed separately, and data is presented thus in the report. The presentation of numerical data from the McRae Leventhal Questionnaire combines data from across the seven Phase One hubs.

3.6. Limitations and challenges

General

There are a number of limitations inherent to this evaluation which reflect the complexity of geographical locations, populations, changing personnel, and the additional unexpected challenge of a pandemic shaping subsequent delivery of the programme. Thus, findings from both stages of data collection should be viewed as indicative rather than representative. Further considerations relating to the two stages of the evaluation are detailed below.

Stage one

The approach taken of intensively gathering data over three weeks in each of the seven locations represents a key limitation. This relatively short period of time not only limited the data (particularly qualitative) that could be collected but also necessitates that findings presented are read within the bounded timeframe of March to July 2019, rather than over the full-time span of Phase One (September 2018 to March 2020). Additionally, respondents understood that they did not need to complete every question of the McRae Leventhal questionnaire if they did not wish to. This accounts for the varying number of respondents across and within certain questions.

Satellite hubs began at different time points and needed to find their own way forward in terms of recruitment of dancers and building a skillset and a collective identity. Some hubs were characterised by a larger and more dedicated cohort of dancers; others faced greater geographical and logistical challenges affecting recruitment. Similarly, some hubs remained relatively stable with the same lead practitioners and core venue, or organisational staff, present throughout; others experienced a higher turnover, indicative both of the nature of freelance work and the length of the DfPS programme. Other variables included changes of venue and the varying amount of direct input required by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet during Phase One.

Stage two

Challenges (rather than limitations) characterising Stage Two relate to the online mode of data collection necessary. Joining in, observing, and recording field notes from online classes was affected by shared similar challenges faced by the dancers, practitioners, and musicians, namely responding to audio and visual limitations in place. Of greater concern was the loss of opportunity to build trust and rapport with the dancers, to sense atmosphere, respond to physical touch, and build further connections during an in-person social time. Interviews

also took place on Zoom affecting the ability to 'read' body language and facial expressions.

The lead researcher was also very aware that at this time point (April and May 2021), many dancers had regularly been using online platforms for a year, as a means for communication, with digital fatigue a possibility. It is also likely that interviews were taking place with dancers who found it easier to communicate online and were comfortable using technology, resulting in potential sampling bias.

4. Presentation of Findings: Stage One (In-person)

To reiterate, findings in this section pertain to Phase One of the Dance for Parkinson’s Scotland (DfPS) programme. The first part of this section explores the cultural, social, and physical impact of the programme on dancers involved in the relevant hubs: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, Inverness, Kilmarnock. The second part focuses on the experiences of the satellite hubs (the above locations with the exception of Edinburgh and Glasgow) from the perceptions of the practitioners and musicians involved.

PART 1 (All Hubs: The Dancers)

4.1. The dancers

4.1.1. Age, gender, education, quality of life (QoL)

The mean average age of respondents⁸ was 73, with an age range from 54 to 90 (n=64). The majority of respondents were male (63%, n=44), with female respondents forming 37% (n=23) of the respondent group.

Concerning the highest level of education undertaken, out of a total of 67 respondents:

- 46% (n=31) completed university/HE education⁹
- 24% (n=16) completed college/FE
- 25% (n=17) completed secondary education

The majority of respondents perceived their Quality of Life to be ‘very good’ or ‘good’ (80%, 56 out of 70).

Table 1: Quality of Life (QoL) responses

<i>Answer choices</i>	<i>Percentage of Respondents</i>	<i>(n=70)</i>
Excellent	1%	1
Very Good	39%	27
Good	41%	29

⁸ ‘Respondents’ refers to dancers who completed the McRae Leventhal questionnaire. ‘Dancers’ refers to the greater group of participants involved, with the term employed when drawing on interviews and observations.

⁹ Interestingly, this figure is very similar to that cited in the evaluation of the pilot DfPS programme (45% of respondents (19 out of 42) had undertaken university or Higher Education, Whiteside, 2017).

Fair	16%	11
Poor	3%	2

4.1.2. Recruitment and motivations

Discovering DfPS

Respondents discovered the DfPS programme in a number of different ways. The most frequently mentioned were local Parkinson’s branches or Parkinson’s UK (38%, 29 out of 76); media, including newspapers and television (16%, 12 out of 76); and medical specialists (13%, 10 out of 76). Word-of-mouth recommendations were also reported, suggesting a certain level of advocacy from those already involved (14%, 11 out of 76). Dancers from at least two of the satellite hubs (Aberdeen and Dundee) also sat on the committees of Parkinson’s support groups. Several dancers across the satellite hubs were also aware of other DfPS classes and DfP classes in England and further afield, had benefited from DfPS tasters in their local area, and shared in interviews their initial hope that a long-term opportunity to dance might arise.

Motivation to join

Within the interviews, dancers most frequently discussed their hope or assumption that the classes might mitigate their physical symptoms. The words or sentiment ‘use it or lose it’ were uttered by more than one interviewee. For those recommended to come by a medical professional, this advice strengthened individual motivation and belief that the programme may bring about positive physical effect. For other dancers, participation seemed like a way to undertake exercise, without the focus being solely on keeping fit or physical outcomes.

‘I felt I wanted to try some way to manage my condition and I thought [the class] sounded like an enjoyable way of getting exercise and it’s turned out to be the case’ (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019).

Some dancers expressed an interest and desire to dance as their main motivation for joining the class, particularly those individuals who were aware of the greater global movement. For others the activity as a social entity was of primary importance, particularly when personal friends were already attending.

Echoing the sentiment cited above, dancers from multiple satellite hubs also shared their sense that Parkinson’s-specific activity should be supported when offered: *‘If we don’t use them, we lose them’* (Dancer (f), Inverness, 2019).

Prior expectations

While some dancers discussed their pre-existing connection to dance and the arts as being part of their interest or curiosity in the programme, relatively few interviewees cited 'dance' as a significant attractor, rather finding it an initial barrier to taking part. Many assumed that the classes would include more classical or what some interviewees termed as 'pure' dancing. Some would have liked to see more of this approach in the class, others were relieved that this was not the case, having a negative association and reticence towards ballet. These interviewees often felt that the term 'dance' could be off-putting for new people potentially joining.

'[I felt] a lot of trepidation. I didn't know whether it was going to be so airy fairy... it is ballet after all' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

'When you think of Scottish Ballet you think of all the tutus and that, but it wasn't as bad as all that!' (Dancer (m), Glasgow, 2019).

The majority of respondents (63%, 45 out of 71) had never taken a dance lesson of any kind at an earlier time in their life before DfPS, although within interviews some discussed their previous experiences of attending social dances (for example Scottish traditional or ballroom or swing dance). This lack of experience with formal or community dance education may account for many explaining that they had no expectations of DfPS at all.

'It was a total mystery for me' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

'I couldn't imagine it; what it would look like and how it would work. I had no preconceptions' (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

4.1.3. Curiosity of dancers

Interest

During interviews and observations, dancers showed a keen interest in both the programme and the research underpinning the activity (including the current evaluation). Several dancers had undertaken their own research *into* the research with some dancers citing the evaluation of the pilot programme (Whiteside, 2017) as helping them understand what the experience of participating may be like. One dancer described the activity as *'tried and tested'* ((f), Inverness, 2019). There were frequent examples of dancers asking about the other classes in the DfPS network and about the experiences and training of the practitioners and musicians. In particular, male dancers from different satellite hubs asked if many male dancers attended other classes.

Investment

When asked how long they had been attending DfPS classes, respondents (n=69) answered as follows:

- Less than 6 months: 12% (n=8)
- 6 months to 1 year: 26% (n=18)
- 1 - 2 years: 29% (n=20)
- More than 2 years: 33% (n=23)

Only the Glasgow and Edinburgh hubs had been active for more than two years prior to this evaluation, indicating that many respondents based at the satellite hubs had been attending since their class began.

99% (70 out of 71) of respondents said that they attend DfPS classes every week, on average. 97% (68 out of 70) of respondents said that they are able to attend the class as frequently as they would like, although this finding is somewhat at odds with interview data (from Inverness and Greenock) highlighting the logistical challenges of travelling long distances to class. Findings suggest a significant level of investment from some dancers. Many interviewees spoke about how they 'protect' their class time.

'I make room for the dance group because I hate to miss [it]. It's very helpful and very enjoyable... yes, I make the dance class a priority in my life. I try to make sure I don't have any commitments that conflict with that' (Dancer (m), Edinburgh, 2019).

100% (n=70) of respondents said that they would, or already have, recommended DfPS to others.

4.2. Relationship to dance

Although the perceived physical and social benefits were cited as key by many of the dancers, in deciding to join the class, the artistic nature of the programme emerged as crucial for long-term motivation and engagement. As is also highlighted in Whiteside (2017), a key theme in the data indicates that 'DfPS is different' in comparison to other exercise-based activities, which may be an important attraction for enjoyment and continued attendance. Dancers described DfPS as being a 'more holistic' multifaceted experience, rooted in the doing of the dancing and the cultural values developed through relationships with artists and dance organisations.

While some dancers described an existing connection to, or interest in, dance and the arts, many individuals had never considered taking part themselves. The experience of taking part in DfPS and seeing live performance with Scottish Ballet as part of the programme, changed perceptions of dance for some individuals.

'I would never have thought about buying a ticket to go to the ballet... I thoroughly enjoyed it. It has changed my perception of the performing arts; it's opened my eyes to a stream of dance that I may not necessarily have chosen to go and look at' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

Some dancers also appreciated learning distinct movements or steps from ballet repertoire, discussing the connection between productions such as 'Cinderella' (2019/2020, choreographed by Christopher Hampson, CEO/Artistic Director of Scottish Ballet) and the work they were learning in the studio, as well as utilising dance terminology. However, as discussed in 4.7.1. *Venues and organisations* many dancers at the satellite hubs often felt a closer connection to their particular venue, practitioners and musicians, and organisation than to either Dance Base or Scottish Ballet as distinct hub communities, a central aim of the DfPS programme, were developed.

4.2.1. Creativity

Table 2: Parts of the DfPS classes that are most valuable (rank order)

<i>Which parts of the class are most valuable to you?</i>	<i>Percentage responding to each statement</i>	<i>(n=71)</i>
Social interactions with other class members	94%	67
Moving and getting some exercise	92%	65
Doing something fun	87%	62
Live music	85%	60
Participating in a group activity with others	79%	56
Connections with the teacher(s); knowing someone is interested and cares	76%	54

Being out of the house for a while and having someplace to go and something meaningful to do	45%	32
Doing something creative	44%	31
Feeling physically 'free' for a while	37%	26

When asked which parts of the class were most valuable, 44% (31 out of 71) of respondents cited 'Doing something creative'. Dancers who engaged in interviews discussed the importance of being involved in arts-based activities, use of imagination, freedom of movement and expression, and the creative approaches used by practitioners (including imagery, narrative, music).

'It's how you express yourself. It's a way of dealing with it [Parkinson's]' (Dancer (f), Greenock, 2019).

'It just puts you into a different frame of mind, a different sense of your being. For me, it means I can internalise how I'm feeling and how I can express myself' (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

Some dancers described how dance has become more integrated into their lives; after class they may continue to dance at home alone, or with family, with half of respondents (50%, 33 out of 66) (see Table 7: Impact of DfPS on daily activities outside of the studio) agreeing that they now integrate music and rhythm more fully into their daily lives to help complete everyday tasks.

'When I go home, I'll do some of the yoga exercises. It just gives me the inspiration to keep moving, just dancing round the house which is what I do! I put on music, and I try to replicate what I've done... When I'm dancing, I could be the person I think I am in that piece of music' (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

Yet, the performative nature of dance and creativity has been a challenging factor for some dancers, who experienced difficulties in overcoming their inhibitions.

'...The other side of the challenge that I've not mentioned is being outrageous. I think in dance there are some outrageous movements, extravagant movements... I am at nature quite a shy person so to be flamboyant is something that doesn't come naturally to me' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

4.2.2. Emotion

100% (n=68) of respondents said that DfPS helps them to feel better. When asked which parts of the class are most valuable to them, 87% (62 out of 71) said ‘doing something fun’. Gaining a sense of freedom and respite from daily living was also important for respondents, with 82% (56 out of 68) agreeing that DfPS ‘helps me to focus on something other than Parkinson’s for a while’. Findings indicate that engagement in the programme provides emotional support.

Table 3: Impact of DfPS on physical and psychosocial functioning (rank order)

<i>How much do you think DfPS helps with each of the following?</i>	<i>Percentage of respondents who answered ‘4’ (‘a great deal’)¹⁰</i>	<i>(n=64-70)</i>
Helps me feel less isolated for a while	55%	35 (n=64)
Improves mood	51%	36 (n=70)
Increases a sense of well-being	51%	36 (n=70)
Helps me focus on something other than Parkinson's for a while	46%	31 (n=68)
Improves motor symptoms	33%	23 (n=69)
Increases a sense of accomplishment	31%	22 (n=70)
Gives me a sense of freedom	27%	18 (n=67)
Helps me feel like my pre-Parkinson's self for a while	24%	16 (n=68)

Within certain interviews, dancers shared how the act of dancing provided a means for safely accessing emotions:

‘I find it quite emotional, it opened up a lot of emotions that I think I was keeping inside. Internally there was a lot of frustration and depression. I’m not a depressive person. I’ve

¹⁰ 4-point Likert scale employed.

never been depressed; I get fed up that's the way I see it. I'm very positive and I've felt that was lacking in my life and this has given me back positivity in my life' (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

During interviews, dancers frequently described the strong positive emotional responses felt upon leaving the class, compared to when they arrived, with terms used denoting a sense of release or increased energy.

- *'Buoyant'*
- *'Energised'*
- *'Floating on air'*
- *'Refreshed'*
- *'A boost'*
- *'Lighter and brighter'*
- *'Uplifting'*

Dancers frequently discussed the importance of the class in their lives as an activity that they looked forward to. The long-term and regular nature of the activity was significant.

'It's a countdown for him and it makes him happy, and that makes me happy because he's looking forward to it' (Spouse of dancer, Greenock, 2019).

Table 5: Self-efficacy items (rank order)

<i>Since you started taking the class, how certain are you that you can:</i>	<i>Percentage of respondents who answered 'Somewhat certain', 'Certain' or 'Very certain.'</i> ¹¹	<i>(n=64-70)</i>
Develop a sense of community with others?	81%	57 (n=70)
Have fun and make new friends?	80%	55 (n=69)
Have a sense of achievement?	78%	53 (n=68)

¹¹ 7-point Likert scale employed, ranging from 1 (Not at all certain) to 7 (Very certain). Table 5 presents responses to points 5-7 (Somewhat certain (5), Certain (6), Very certain (7)).

Enjoy learning new things?	77%	54 (n=70)
Manage your situation so you can continue to do things you enjoy?	58%	37 (n=64)
Make positive changes in your life?	58%	38 (n=66)
Develop more confidence?	57%	37 (n=65)
Have hope for the future?	54%	35 (n=65)

Higher scores indicate greater self-efficacy. The two highest ranking scores relating to ‘Develop a sense of community with others’ and ‘Have fun and make new friends’ are significant in light of a number of dancers sharing within interviews their nervousness in encountering a new situation and a loss of social confidence experienced with the onset of Parkinson’s.

A number of dancers linked an increase in self-confidence to attending a DfPS class, recounting new and other activities engaged in since, for example, eating out with friends and family or attending another exercise-based activity.

‘I was always a very confident person, could lecture to 200-300 people, not a problem. But my confidence was really knocked when I realised that my coordination, my eating skills, things that were always really important to me [were affected]. But I would say that this class has given me confidence to be myself again’ (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

4.2.3. Live music

85% (60 out of 71) of respondents said that ‘live music’ was one of the most valuable parts of the DfPS class and this element was consistently discussed as being particularly meaningful within interviews. Music provides inspiration and impetus for movement, with the focus on using the beat, rhythm, or quality within the music to support and encourage physical movements and an emotional response.

‘I really like the music. When we’re up on our feet the beat helps an awful lot.... I think the music is a really important part of it’ (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019).

‘I came down today and I wasn’t walking very well, and I know that as soon as we start moving and the music starts, I know my movement will become more fluid’ (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

'It has a feel-good factor to it. When Emma's¹² playing all these wonderful tunes, you feel you want to sing and move' (Dancer (f), Inverness, 2019).

For dancers, having a live 'intuitive' musician enhanced their experience, and they appreciated the responsiveness and enjoyment that live music can bring.

'...If you played a recorded piece of music, I don't think the class would be as spontaneous, it wouldn't work' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

4.2.4. Other physical and cultural activities undertaken

70% (50 out of 71) of respondents said they currently go to other exercise classes or groups, with 65% answering that they attend other classes or groups once a week, and 33% attending other classes or groups more than once per week. The majority of respondents are active and engaged with a range of activities which they perceive to be beneficial, including:

- Tai Chi
- Pilates
- Gym/ exercise classes
- Physiotherapy
- Boxing
- Swimming

Some respondents also detailed other cultural groups they attend, such as singing groups, tango dance classes, and book groups, as well as more wellbeing focused group activities such as mindfulness and yoga. Through interviews held, those who did not attend other classes or groups discussed daily activities or hobbies which form part of their weekly schedules, such as gardening and walking. However, the above finding suggests that for almost a third of respondents (30%), their DfPS class was the only formal physical activity engaged in.

What makes DfPS 'special'?

97% (58 out of 60) of respondents said they think that DfPS is different from other

¹² Emma Holderness, Musician at the Inverness hub (Eden Court Theatre).

exercise classes they have taken. Key themes which emerged across the qualitative data suggest that DfPS is different due to the appropriateness of the activity for people living with Parkinson's, the expertise and commitment of practitioners and musicians, and the significance and impact of live music, making it more effective and enjoyable than other classes. When asked which parts of the class are most valuable to them, respondents selected a range of factors, spanning across social, emotional, physical, and cultural domains, reinforcing the assertion that it is precisely this diversity which sets DfPS apart (as detailed in Table 3: Parts of the DfPS classes that are most valuable).

'It's not just a dance class and it's not just an exercise class and it's not just a music appreciation class, it's so many things all together and with the personal care in it as well. It's absolutely wonderful' (Spouse of dancer, Glasgow, 2019).

'I think it gives you confidence that you can still move. Maybe without the dance classes, your repertoire of movements would be much more limited' (Dancer (m), Edinburgh, 2019).

4.3. Community and collaboration

4.3.1. Strengthening social relationships

Dancers spoke of their enjoyment in participating in an activity that involved their peers, friends, carers, spouses, volunteers, practitioners, and the wider DfPS community. 94% (67 out of 71) respondents selected 'Social interactions with other class members' and 79% (56 out of 71 respondents) selected 'Participating in a group activity with others' (Table 3: Parts of the DfPS class that are most valuable).

Peer support

Just over half of respondents (55%, 35 out of 64) agreed 'A great deal' that DfPS helps them to 'Feel less isolated for a while' (Table 4: Impact of DfPS on physical and psychosocial functioning), with one respondent further explaining that it 'Gives a sense of belonging to a community'. The finding that 45% (32 out of 71) of respondents felt there was particular value attached to 'Being out of the house for a while and having someplace to go and something meaningful to do' is also pertinent in the context of mitigating loneliness and isolation.

Through engaging with a community of people with shared experiences and challenges, dancers spoke of feeling more confident, comfortable, and supported. Dancers discussed 'sharing notes' on their experiences with Parkinson's and feelings of camaraderie created through a supportive atmosphere.

'I just find the support of the people in the group is wonderful and meeting all of these wonderful people is superb' (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

'It feels very happy and very friendly. I would say in a way it's quite loving, we all have sympathy for each other because we know that we're in the same boat' (Dancer (m), Edinburgh, 2019).

For some, friendships began in other local Parkinson's groups and continued through the relevant DfPS class, while for others, friendships grew through relationships initiated within the class.

'You feel so at nature with these people, it's as if you've been friends for ever' (Dancer (f), Greenock, 2019).

Impact on carers and spouses

The majority of dancers attended class with their partner, a family member, or friend. Spouses (who often had a caring role) explained that DfPS was an enjoyable activity to do together, and in some cases, allowed spouses to see their partners in a new light.

'I actually found it very moving going along the first few times and seeing my husband doing things like reaching and joining in with things...' (Spouse of dancer, Glasgow, 2019).

Spouses and carers also appreciated the autonomy facilitated through the high levels of staff support provided, which provided a certain feeling of respite. One dancer described the impact she saw on her friend, who attends the class together with her husband who has Parkinson's:

'She enjoys it because when she's here, the volunteers look after him and she gets the chance to just get a bit of exercise and a wee chat. That's really good for her' (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019 (talking about her friend)).

4.3.2. Creative team

Practitioners, musicians, and volunteers were also perceived to have greatly contributed to this sense of community and a supportive environment. 76% (54 out of 71) of respondents identified 'Connections with the teacher(s); knowing someone is interested and cares' (Table 3: Parts of the DfPS class that are most valuable) as being of central importance. Dancers frequently discussed their appreciation for how welcome they were made to feel within the group.

'There were many, in the first week or two, points when I could have wobbled and thought "this isn't for me" but they [the staff] were so supportive and very, very positive and encouraged me to come back the next week' (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

Crucially, however, is the sense of a two-way exchange taking place *with* the practitioners: *'There is a feeling of being in a really good team all sharing the same buzz'* (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

Dancers expressed appreciation and respect for the practitioners delivering DfPS, noting their inclusive and warm approach.

'These people [DfPS practitioners] are there to help you, they're not there to instruct you. It's not just "do this movement, it will help you so you should do it", it's just a natural progression making it into a dance, and they do it for your benefit because they care about you' (Dancer (m), Glasgow, 2019).

'Quite often if they see that we're getting a bit lost they will say that "we need to slow this down" or "is that too much" and they just adjust' (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019).

Some dancers noted the ongoing development and refinement of delivery and content throughout the lifespan of the class and appreciated that practitioners continually strove to improve the offering.

'Right from the early days when we did the taster sessions last year to now, there has been quite a growth in the thinking and the development in the classes' content... You can see the growth in understanding, the growth of the approach, the alignment [to research]' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

4.4. Perceived physical impact

4.4.1. Functional mobility

Coordination

Dance creates unique opportunities for developing coordination, often requiring multiple movements in different parts of the body at once. Interviewees frequently discussed the beneficial effect of this approach.

'When we're doing the feet and then we have to add the arms, I find that really difficult and then you move from one thing to the other and it takes a couple of moves to get going again. That's good, that's very good for you' (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019).

Coordination also has a significant role in the physical challenges perceived (4.4.2. Challenges and concerns).

Fluidity and flexibility

DfPS included exercises which focused on range of motion, stretching, and continuous, whole-body movements, which dancers perceived to be particularly beneficial, and distinct from other activities they do.

'I just feel loosened off, more mobile' (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019).

'It gets you moving in areas that you wouldn't normally move the body' (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

As discussed above (in [Live Music](#)), dancers perceived the use of music and imagery to be key factors in promoting fluidity of movement.

Posture

For dancers, posture played a key role in realising and responding to physical symptoms, through practitioners' use of imagery.

'I think about posture; we're always told to have the line going up from our heads and keep our posture so that goes in through the week I think, yes' (Dancer (m), Edinburgh, 2019).

While dancers may not necessarily have perceived major improvements to their own posture, taking note of this learning over the life cycle of the class (across terms) was a recurring theme in interviews with practitioners.

Gait and Balance

The effects of Parkinson's can have a considerable impact on gait and balance, leading people with Parkinson's to lose confidence in their physical capabilities. Some dancers shared perceptions of improvements to their walking both within and outwith the studio.

'I have quite a lot of rigidity and... it is affecting, my walking and I feel that has improved at the end of the session; I always feel more mobile' (Dancer (f), Dundee, 2019).

'I always find that I can walk much better after the class than before it... after the class I usually find I can walk up to the bus stop up on George IV Bridge quite easily and get on the bus quite easily and then get off the bus again... I'm sure that if I didn't come to the dance classes, over the week in general, I wouldn't be able to move so well' (Dancer (m), Edinburgh, 2019).

Practitioners from across the hubs (more noticeably within the satellite hubs) observed an increased number of dancers choosing to stand rather than sit during the class, suggesting improvements to balance and dancer confidence in physicality.

4.4.2. Challenges and concerns

When asked what they find particularly challenging about participating in DfPS, respondents noted challenges in both the physical and cognitive domains of the classes, suggesting challenges are most distinctly tied to 'doing' the dancing. Many dancers spoke to the greater class challenge of finding an appropriate balance with content and pace in responding to various needs. Some interviewees shared that they, personally, would like a more vigorous class; others spoke of their fear of holding others back or feeling more negative when they left. All interviewees spoke of their understanding that the class was inclusive and must remain so.

Table 6: Challenges faced within DfPS classes (rank order)

<i>What, if anything, do you find particularly challenging about DfPS?</i>	<i>Percentage responding to each statement</i>	<i>(n=70)</i>
Remembering the sequences of movements	66%	46
Following sequences of movements	57%	40
Keeping my balance	47%	33
Being spontaneous during improvised exercises	44%	31
Doing a series of different movements in a set amount of time	43%	30

Doing the exercises at the same speed as the instructor	43%	30
Moving across the floor	40%	28
The dance steps themselves	39%	27
Other (please specify)	13%	9

'Other' included:

- *'Hard to reproduce the same movement as the teacher'*
- *'Certain hand and foot movement (e.g. wrist twisting)'*
- *'Coordination'*
- *'Only have challenges when having an off time'*
- *'Avoiding aggravating old injuries'*

Pace and sequencing

Interviews reinforce the numerical findings above. Dancers discussed the ways in which the pace, speed, and sequencing in the classes posed specific challenges.

'There are some moves that I found difficult to replicate in the time that we're doing them' (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

Dancers often discussed coordination as the most challenging aspect of sequencing within the DfPS class.

'There is a particular challenge in the coordinative aspect of the movements. They are not insurmountable but when you're supposed to do it, it's a little tricky sometimes' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

'I quite often get confused about which direction I'm going in' (Dancer (f), Kilmarnock, 2019).

In addition, dancers discussed the distinct challenges of learning new exercises, suggesting that sequencing and coordination were most challenging with the onset of a new movement experience, and that repetition was a useful tool for practitioners to use within these classes.

'When you've seen exercises displayed to you a few times and you've taken part in it then you know what to do, but when you see new ones and you're trying to get the brain to work.... But once you get into a rhythm and routine of it you settle down after the second or third week but initially it's a bit challenging' (Dancer (m), Glasgow, 2019).

As discussed below, however, certain experiences of challenges were strongly linked to feelings of accomplishment, when undertaken within a supportive environment.

Achievement and challenge

The majority of respondents noted that, since starting the class, they feel positive about their ability to 'Have a sense of achievement' (78%, 53 out of 68) and 'Enjoy learning new things' (77%, 54 out of 70) (Table 5: Self-efficacy items).

'I find it very rewarding' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

Dancers frequently discussed the enjoyment of challenges they experienced in the class, with one dancer linking this experience to positively mitigating physical symptoms:

'I enjoy the challenge of some parts... I like the fact that it's a challenge and I'm assuming that that must be helping if it's challenging, if I'm succeeding at doing it' (Dancer (m), Dundee, 2019).

For some, this feeling of achievement was facilitated by the positive, supportive environment created within the studio, which allowed dancers to feel safe and secure.

'It was so beneficial, so uplifting and encouraging and helpful and made you more able to do things just because you feel the... it's an atmospheric thing about it, you feel imbued with something positive and pleasant' (Spouse of dancer, Glasgow, 2019).

Health deterioration

Some dancers perceived their health to be deteriorating over time and discussed the challenges of participating in class.

'I do notice going down a slippery slope where I'm becoming less able to meet the needs' (Dancer (m), Glasgow, 2019).

While the inclusive nature of DfPS is broadly very positive for dancers, some discussed the worry they felt in seeing other people with Parkinson's who are at a later stage of the

condition or are less able. For some individuals, it served as a reminder that their health may deteriorate in a similar way or made them unsure if the class was appropriate for them.

'...What I'm trying to do is to think about how things might progress. I may stay like this forever but there may be a situation where I just become rigid or whatever, who knows. So the emotional side of it took place [in the class] and it did bring tears to my eyes, literally... There is something very touching about people taking care of people like me with Parkinson's...' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

4.4.3. Impact outside of the studio

For many respondents, the positive feeling fostered through participating in DfPS was perceived to continue for some time after class. 34% respondents (23 out of 67) felt that the benefits last 'For a few hours' with a similar number, 30% (20 out of 67), feeling that the benefits last 'A few days.' Several dancers commented that attending the class when having an 'off day' helped to alleviate symptoms, sharing their belief that it was always worth attending, if possible.

When looking at the effect DfPS had on the daily lives of dancers, a range of perceived impacts were reported (see Table 7 below). 24% (16 out of 65) of respondents said that they 'Don't see much effect on daily activities', suggesting that **76% do see an effect on their daily activities.**

Table 7: Impact of DfPS on daily activities outside of the studio (rank order)

<i>Rate the following statements based on how you think DfPS has affected activities that occur outside of the studio.</i>	<i>Percentage of respondents who 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'¹³</i>	<i>(n=64-69)</i>
I find myself thinking during the day about things my teachers say about posture.	67%	45 (n=67)
I'm able to move more fluidly.	61%	42 (n=69)
I perform at least one activity of daily living with more ease.	61%	40 (n=66)
I find it easier to get around the house.	57%	37 (n=65)

¹³ 5-point Likert scale employed, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Table 7 includes responses to points 4 and 5 (Agree (4) and Strongly agree (5)).

I have more confidence going about my daily activities.	55%	37 (n=67)
I'm able to think about movement more logically.	55%	35 (n=64)
I integrate music and rhythm more fully into my daily life to help me get things done.	50%	33 (n=66)
I trust my balance more when I'm out and about.	42%	28 (n=66)
I find myself thinking during the day about images my teachers use in class to describe dance steps or movements.	41%	27 (n=66)
I perform several activities of daily living with more ease.	37%	24 (n=65)
I find myself thinking during the day about things my teachers say about different qualities of movement (soft, sharp, floating).	36%	24 (n=66)
I don't see much effect on daily activities.	24%	16 (n=65)

Interviewees gave illustrative examples of how DfPS played a role in aiding daily living, recounting specific exercises from the class that they brought into their home. One dancer described how he practices distinct movements, like *pliés* and rises, at home whilst brushing his teeth or washing the dishes. This dancer practises *chassés* as he moves around his home, 'You can see me gliding up the hall' (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

'I do find sometimes getting up from a low seated position can be really difficult, so the gradual moving forwards and the momentum from the inertia helps me get up; that's one good example of what I take from the class' (Dancer (m), Greenock, 2019).

A significant number of respondents (67%, 45 out of 67) 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that they find themselves thinking throughout the day about the things their teacher says about posture, suggesting that these experiences make a positive impact on dancers outside of the studio.

'My posture is awful, and I do try every so often to breathe and pull up... I can hear Ruth's¹⁴ voice. I think that's important' (Dancer (f), Aberdeen, 2019).

¹⁴ Ruth Kent, Lead Practitioner at the Aberdeen hub (Citymoves).

'If you're standing well, you can walk better. I often find at home or throughout the week I think I'm not walking very well, but then I think "well, no wonder, you're hunching up and your neck is thrust forwards!" You straighten up and you raise your head and that helps you to walk' (Dancer (m), Edinburgh, 2019).

Some dancers also described a certain enhanced perception in body awareness, suggesting that the experience of dancing may develop proprioception and kinaesthetic awareness. This body/space awareness feeds into other physical elements such as posture, gait, and balance.

'I'm much more conscious of what I'm doing when I'm doing movements away from this class...if I'm moving around a room in my house that's got boxes in the corner, I'm much more careful about... my foot placement and so on. Before I would just crash on through and trip and think "oh, that just happens" and now I think, "that doesn't need to happen"' (Dancer (m), Kilmarnock, 2019).

PART 2 (Satellite Hubs: Practitioners and Partners)

4.5. Training and support

4.5.1. Approach and content

As highlighted in 2.3. *Training*, support implemented by the partnership included a balance of internal and external provision from, for example, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet practitioners, David Leventhal, English National Ballet (ENB), People Dancing¹⁵ and Parkinson's UK. Each satellite hub was mentored by either Dance Base or Scottish Ballet, through a designated point of contact, with greater support being provided by the DfPS partnership across locations.

Usefulness and applicability

Here, we explore those elements that practitioners and musicians shared as being particularly useful to informing their developing DfPS practice: better understanding the condition that is Parkinson's; situating that knowledge within a dance activity context; how to respond to collective and individual dancer needs; working with a dance practitioner or live musician (as applicable); sharing knowledge and learning with other colleagues; and gaining tailored feedback and support from DfPS mentors. Two reoccurring themes within the interview data include: experiencing the necessary balance of practice and theory (as

¹⁵ Dance for Parkinson's Online Learning Programme: <https://www.communitydance.org.uk/developing-practice/live-well-and-dance-iwith-parkinsons-i/online-learning-programme-2>

entities that synergise and inform one another) that allowed for consolidation and growth, and moving from the mindset of a freelancer to being part of a greater team.

Tailored mentoring

Training and mentorship run by the DfPS partnership took the form of initial in-house training sessions (including an introduction to DfPS methodology), two to three DfPS network-wide Creative Planning Days a term (focusing on planning for the term to come), mentoring in the form of a DfPS point of contact and regular (initially, weekly) visits and external training. To inform the design and delivery of programmes for dancers with Parkinson's, Scottish Ballet's 2018/2019 winter repertoire and resources were offered across the whole network at the Creative Planning Days. All hubs learned repertoire and were invited and encouraged to build this into their winter term planning should they wish to. The Glasgow hub used Scottish Ballet repertoire throughout the programme in its entirety. Practitioners explained that it was clear how the partnership envisaged the programme strands running, the level of planning and standard required, and the guidance, support and resources that were in place.

DfPS mentors (practitioners and musicians from Dance Base and Scottish Ballet) were part of the pre- and post-session briefs taking place at each satellite hub and, crucially, also built up a relationship with the dancers at each location. Satellite hub practitioners spoke of the importance of observing and supporting DfPS practitioners in supporting the shift to delivering the classes themselves and being mentored. Alex McCrossan (Shaper/Caper, Dundee, 2019) described the training and mentoring as '*finding the space for your practice within an existing practice*' (emphasis added).

One practitioner described DfPS as the '*best supported project*' they had been involved in during their lengthy career. Practitioners recognised the high level of collective and individualised support that was provided with individuals speaking of the 'luxury' of being supported to develop and experiment when the 'norm' for many was a need to be reactive and self-sufficient within a freelance context. Some practitioners had less experience of teaching as part of a team, working with a musician, support dance artist, and volunteers and while this could feel overwhelming initially, the comparison between being part of a team and teaching amid doing 'everything else as well' was a positive one. Practitioners were passionate about delivering and felt that being and feeling well-supported to do so, directly translated to, and shaped, the experience had by the dancers.

4.5.2. Working with a dance practitioner/musician

A core theme throughout interviews was a concern from dance practitioners about working with a live musician and vice versa from the perspective of musicians.

Working with a live musician is a scenario (or ‘luxury’ (to use that word once more)) that many practitioners do not experience on a regular basis. Similarly, some musicians may be more involved in teaching and performing than playing for dance, a niche role, and one that is even more so within DfPS where the role of accompanist was an expanded one. Within the programme, musicians were involved as artists, and participants, rather than solely as accompanists. Similarly, practitioners were dance artists, rather than teachers. An important distinction and one that resonates with the core ethos of DfPS and the greater DfP movement.

Some of the concerns shared by practitioners included communicating with the musician during the class, worrying that this communication was not ‘seamless’, and conversely, split focus and attention during class (worrying about ignoring the musician!). Some musicians shared that they had been classically trained and had limited experience with improvising. Additional concerns from musicians included worrying about music ‘distracting’ the dancers, learning to focus on rhythm rather than the tune, and how to ‘finish off’ an exercise.

4.5.3. Challenge of logistics

The importance of opportunities to learn from, and share with, DfPS colleagues and peers based at other hubs was strongly emphasised.

‘I think to be able to bring all those other career paths into one room... I found that really inspiring’ (Marie Williamson, Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock, 2019).

However, bringing everyone together for training events, particularly the Creative Planning Days, was an ongoing challenge owing to the travel distance involved for certain practitioners and musicians, availability (particularly of freelancers), turnover of staff and different hub start points. While recognising these challenges, and the need to utilise time for content and connection, troubleshooting and sharing, there was a desire, expressed by some interviewees, for more social time and discussion. Practitioners from across satellite hubs talked about wanting to visit, join in, and observe other hubs but again, recognised the challenges in being able to do so. Participation by all, including musicians, was felt to be particularly important both for learning and interaction and because in-person training sessions were not recorded (pre-COVID-19 pandemic).

4.6. Calibre and learning of practitioners

4.6.1. Sense of responsibility

For the satellite hub practitioners, involvement with DfPS was an opportunity to learn and

expand one's practice; to work with a new group of dancers in a new way. Within a field characterised by high levels of burnout and tenuous stability, practitioners spoke of the need to continually invest in one's development. Practitioners shared their excitement and passion but also their nervousness and the sense of responsibility felt in working with dancers with Parkinson's.

Practitioners shared their initial concerns about finding the 'right' balance in approach concerning pace, creativity, and content. Individuals shared that they felt better able to plan, lead, and support owing to the long-term nature of the programme, which enabled individual dancer needs and personalities to be understood. Through both the training and practical delivery (getting to know one's dancers), practitioners could better understand how to tailor and develop classes and develop their confidence and expertise.

Several practitioners shared their concern about appropriately understanding dancer capabilities. Julia McGhee (Eden Court, Inverness, 2019) talked about '*letting go of the anxiety of responsibility*' and following the dancers' lead. Some practitioners had more extensive experience working with children and young people rather than older adults; one practitioner was more experienced with music and acting rather than dancing. Marie Williamson (Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock, 2019) commented '*There's a nice meeting ground*' in the sense that both practitioners and dancers were sharing a sense of vulnerability and learning together.

4.6.2. Previous experience

Satellite hub practitioners, in all cases, had significant and often very long-term experience in working within a community and/or inclusive dance setting, including with various arts and health partnerships. In many cases, experience included a professional performing practice. This sense of 'calibre' also extended to musicians and volunteers. For example, one musician had extensive experience working with dancers; another was the resident musician at a performing arts organisation; another had an interdisciplinary PhD. Concerning the latter group, it is significant that several support dance artists were initially involved, through personal interest, as volunteers before undergoing further training and stepping up to a formalised practitioner role. Volunteers involved at satellite hubs which were led by a dance agency or company (namely, Aberdeen and Dundee), also included dancers from Citymoves Performance Group and undergraduate vocational dance students from The Space (Angus and Dundee College).

Some practitioners were at a later stage of their career and shared their particular and growing interest in the holistic and ageing body. Practitioners and musicians also shared how their involvement with DfPS was informing and strengthening their teaching practice outside of this space. Several practitioners also defined as dance artists and performers and

shared how taking part in DfPS informed another element of their professional practice. For example, Éowyn Barrett (Citymoves, Aberdeen and Artistic Director of Éowyn Emerald and Dancers) shared how her last and current residencies (at the time) created pieces of work shaped by her experience working with dancers with Parkinson's.

4.6.3. How DfPS is 'different'

There were a number of shared responses when practitioners and musicians spoke about the 'different' experience of delivering as part of the greater DfP movement.

Understanding that many of the practitioners involved were, or had previously worked as, freelancers, some individuals emphasised the complex nature of the partnership and networks in place with one practitioner succinctly referring to the *'layers and layers of people involved.'* The additional preparation and planning needed, in part owing to the additional people (support artists, musicians, and volunteers) involved, was cited as something specific to this project. The importance of communication and collaboration were central for the practitioners leading at the respective hubs.

Practitioners also spoke about the need to have a 'peripheral vision' and a greater investment in dancers' lives to the level of understanding individual symptoms and medication cycles. The heightened importance of 'reading the room' (learning also shared by musicians) and the need to be flexible during delivery was emphasised.

Interestingly, several practitioners alluded to the structure of a DfPS class mirroring the structure of a ballet class in the sense that all in the space have a sense of 'what comes next.' For example, *pliés* (often the first exercise performed at the barre) can be considered as the 'twin' of the 'Settle' which links body and mind together. Many of the practitioners spoke about their own creative practice being developed in opposition to, or in response to, the doctrine and lexicon of classical ballet. However, as one practitioner explained, here within DfPS *'technique and freedom can come together.'*

The need for musicians to establish atmosphere, energy, and rhythm in 'the right way' was stressed, as was the need for more fluidity and a dialogical approach. Musicians shared some of the very practical learning taken on board, for example, remembering week to week what is working well and having fun with the music. Matt Allison (Kilmarnock, 2021) shared that the mentoring focused on *'what to expect, how to adapt, and how to translate.'* The mentor in this case, freelance musician, David Farrell shared in turn the delight of having another musician to work closely with.

4.6.4. Turnover and flexibility

Owing to the long-term nature of the programme, the complexities of employment within the creative industries, and the number of sites and partners involved, DfPS experienced a certain turnover among its practitioners. Significantly, all satellite hub practitioners (lead and support) participated in the DfPS training, and this approach was particularly significant given the progression of several Support Artists into Lead Artist positions and where, for one satellite hub, this needed to happen with relatively short notice. In light of logistical issues that could impact on attendance (discussed in 4.5.3. *Challenge of logistics*), it was also important that the responsibility for engaging in training was shared.

In particular, practitioners from satellite hubs spoke of their concern in finding musicians with the necessary availability, expertise, and interest. However, there were instances of DfPS (Dance Base and Scottish Ballet) practitioners and musicians stepping in to lead, where necessary, and practitioners from satellite hubs (when necessary) stepping away from and then returning to DfPS activity. Dancers and volunteers based at satellite hubs which had experienced greater change, shared how initial concern turned into a realisation and acceptance that *'all [are] excellent'* (Volunteer (f), Greenock, 2019). Practitioner, Elaine Convery (CentreStage, Kilmarnock, 2019) also shared:

'I think, as well, the participants enjoy different styles and the different methods of delivery. I think that's really good because different people learn in different ways... I think the variety and exposure to different practitioners is really important.'

4.7. A community developing

4.7.1. Venues and organisations

The developing relationship between dancers and the respective venues and organisations (satellite hubs) was a core thread throughout the qualitative data. Connections were also established with Scottish Ballet through performing company repertoire, the company's touring schedule, and invitations to company headquarters.

Developing connections with Scottish Ballet

Certain hubs developed particularly strong relationships with Scottish Ballet. The company tours to Aberdeen and Inverness and dancers at those hubs had the opportunity to both learn repertoire within the studio and see the movements on their local stage.

Other satellite hubs had the opportunity to visit Scottish Ballet headquarters. For example,

during December 2018, dancers from the satellite hubs were invited to the dress rehearsal of 'Cinderella'. One volunteer from Greenock (2019) explained, *'It's about being involved, it's about being invited... It gave me a sense of belonging to a group of people that were growing in friendship and knowing each other.'* On another occasion, a DfPS 'mega class' was held in Scottish Ballet's Peter Darrell Studio, led by Heidi Wilson and Sophie Younger (Dance Base), an event described by one dancer as *'A very special day!'*

Connecting with Dance Base and Scottish Ballet, gave those based at the satellite hubs *'The sense that there's not just us'* (Volunteer (f), Greenock, 2019). As noted in 4.1.2. [Recruitment and motivations](#), dancers interviewed from across satellite hubs, spoke of knowing about the classes in Edinburgh and Glasgow, paving the way to feel part of a bigger movement.

Developing connections with satellite hubs

Although all dancers were part of the greater DfPS partnership, understandably some dancers within satellite hubs identified more strongly with the local organisation than with either Scottish Ballet or Dance Base, and developing these connections was, of course, a central aim. Scottish Ballet do not tour to all the satellite hub locations and some practitioners explained dancer confusion over learning company repertoire. Satellite hub practitioners took the creative impetus and worked with their dancers to respond in their own way, supporting the latter group to have agency and ownership of the movement.

Satellite hubs also welcomed dancers into their wider community. Contemporary dance company, Shaper/Caper (Dundee), folded the DfPS class into wider company activities. For example, dancers were invited to take part in a Scottish Dance Theatre production in November 2019 at the Dundee Rep Theatre. Dundee Dance Partnership also visited the hub biannually and dancers were invited to Shaper/Caper shows and events. Practitioners explained that several dancers had shared that, for them, entering a theatre was a new or rare opportunity.

Dancers at CentreStage (Kilmarnock) had the opportunity to discover the greater organisational community. Elaine Convery (2019) explained:

'[W]hat's exciting for us is that these people come to a Dance for Parkinson's class... they then start to realise, and I love watching this happen, that CentreStage is a huge community they can feel a part of, and I think that is a very special part of CentreStage and quite a unique thing.'

Practitioners from two satellite hubs – Dundee and Kilmarnock – spoke explicitly of the DfPS movement and their own organisational ethos and values as aligning with regards to autonomy, humour, respect, and trust.

'Dancers have a direct voice' (Yolanda Aguilar, Shaper/Caper, Dundee, 2019).

4.7.2. Existence of a core group of dancers

Both practitioners and dancers from satellite hubs spoke of the existence of a core group of dancers who had been present in class from the very start (through taster sessions). These groups of dancers acted both as an ongoing source of feedback and support for practitioners and were instrumental in shaping the classes, developing a sense of community and identity, and recruiting through word of mouth. Dancers across the individual hubs spoke about feeling a sense of pride at being one of the 'originals.'

Several satellite hubs included dancers who chaired or were members of relevant Parkinson's committees and support groups and, similarly, these individuals spread the word further and invited practitioners to give sample classes. Certain localities were spoken of as having particularly strong Parkinson's communities and dancers attending these satellite hubs were more likely to know each other in advance of the class. Conversely, other dancers spoke of not knowing any or many people before attending class and then being introduced to Parkinson's support groups by other dancers.

4.7.3. Role of feedback

The role played by feedback, particularly between dancers and practitioners, within members of the hub creative team, and between practitioners and DfPS (Dance Base and Scottish Ballet) mentors, guided the development of the individual satellite hubs.

Feedback from dancers was gained through ongoing conversation during the social time, and more formal approaches such as the use of surveys. Satellite hubs also had notebooks for dancers to record their thoughts. Debriefs, incorporating feedback between hub team members, also took place at the end of classes with some hubs completing post-sessions forms each week. Feedback from dancers often took the form of opinions on content planned and delivered and related directly to dancer likes and dislikes. However, practitioners stressed the importance of first experimenting together and there were examples of dancers subsequently embracing a movement sequence or style.

4.7.4. Identity through movement and music

As the partnership progressed, the various creative directions taken by the satellite hubs emerged, responding to the Creative Planning Sessions, mentoring, feedback from dancers, and the creativity of practitioners and organisations. For example, at the point of data collection (Spring/Summer 2019), Aberdeen (Citymoves) looked to draw on the tap genre, drawing on the expertise of one of the support artists. Dundee (Shaper/Caper) drew on

company repertoire and the playfulness and fun inherent to movement embodied by the company. The Inverness (Eden Court) dancers liked jive, swing, rock n roll, musicals, and ballroom dancing. Elaine Convery (Kilmarnock, 2019) explained how CentreStage was able to draw on the venue's prop and costume department:

'We're going to get our top hats out today... at Halloween, we encourage them to come dressed up and my goodness they come dressed up!'

There were also instances of very personal interests developing into a theme within a satellite hub class. For example, one dancer and one volunteer at the Aberdeen class had links to the Royal Air Force (RAF), leading to a flying sequence being devised. The Dundee hub saw dancers contribute their interests and updates through a 'Good News of the Day' exercise which began each class. The Inverness class drew on a particular poem about gardening for a creative task and the walls of the studio were decorated with photos of one dancer's beautiful garden.

A link was established between the movement that happened within the studio and the hub-specific identity developing. The specific music played within each satellite hub, particularly those pieces that were repeated each week for certain sections or exercises was also integral. The following sentiment shared by Ruth Kent (Citymoves, Aberdeen, 2019) resonated across satellite hubs: *'What we want is for it to be the Aberdeen class.'*

5. Presentation of Narrative and Findings: Stage Two (Online)

PART 1 (Hub Themes and Narratives)

5.1. Hub themes: online DfPS programmes

The themes below are drawn from interviews and focus groups with Phase One hub practitioners and organisational staff in the spring of 2021.

Concerning the transition from mentored hub to one operating independently, the following themes emerged: a good lead-in time in preparing to deliver independently; support with fundraising from Scottish Ballet; an increase in mentoring to consolidate and develop own delivery within the studio; a sense of a handover *not* completing (owing to the timing of the first lockdown in March 2020); and the importance of mentoring practitioners (Dance Base and Scottish Ballet) understanding the needs of satellite hub dancers.

Certain hubs – Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow – were in a position to react quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic and the onset of lockdown with an online offering. Although these hubs all necessarily developed their own way of working online, within the data some commonalities can be seen across organisations:

Practicalities

- An initial or subsequent move to Zoom
- Use of music (live or recorded)
- Shorter class time
- New risk assessments and health and safety protocols
- Less standing work and very limited (if any) travelling
- A need for trial and error and understanding
- Less involvement from volunteers
- A need for a transitional period before returning to in-person classes
- Engaging with a broader base of new and continuing dancers
- Involvement of a host or moderator
- Inclusion of social time or separate social events

Creative strategies and use of technology

- Drawing on other creative means of engaging (e.g. film)
- Breaking out of the 'Zoom frame' (e.g. directing gaze elsewhere)
- Use of gallery mode and a split screen
- Recognising the need to really 'perform' on screen

Support

- Engaging internally and externally in further training
- Shared learning experience with dancers
- A wider network of support for dancers through phone, email, and in-person visits
- Two-way gratitude between dancers and practitioners and musicians
- Each hub responding as *they* needed to respond
- Celebrating and remembering dancers who sadly passed away or were unable to attend class

Many of the above points resonate with the wider data collection undertaken with Dance Base and Scottish Ballet (February-August 2021) explored in the next section.

Additional themes that resonated across tentative discussions (during early spring 2021) with practitioners at the satellite hubs, concerning a future return to the studio, revolved around the following. The need to:

- Build up creative teams (where staff had been furloughed or had moved on)
- Understand the needs and concerns of dancers
- Support creative team members to transition back to the studio
- Understand the role for online delivery moving forward
- Undertake risk assessments for venues reopening
- Engage with volunteers again

- Engage with new dancers

5.2. Hub narratives: online DfPS programmes

As explained previously, practitioners, musicians, and organisational staff from the Phase Two hubs – Peebles (Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre), Perth (Horsecross Arts), and Stirling (MacRobert Arts Centre) – were not involved in this evaluation and, at the time of this second stage of data collection (February-August 2021), were not running their own programmes of online activity (Dance Base managed an online programme for the Perth class from May 2021). Dancers at these hubs and certain Phase One hubs (Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock; Eden Court, Inverness; CentreStage, Kilmarnock) were invited to participate in the online programmes run by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet. Inverness subsequently launched an online programme in May 2021.

The below text briefly details the narrative for each hub running an online DfPS programme during the lockdown and evaluation period (March 2020-Spring 2021).

Aberdeen (Citymoves)

Similar to the other hubs explored here, Citymoves in Aberdeen reacted quickly to lockdown being announced in March 2020 and, in common, with other hubs had paused their in-person classes with dancers with Parkinson's as events unfolded. Practitioners co-taught via Zoom using recorded rather than live music. A core of 8/9 dancers attended the online classes and the vast majority of these dancers had attended in-person classes. Social time took place at the start, rather than at the end of class, with separate socials taking place at other time points. Live classes were recorded and could be accessed via the organisation's website.

Three years' match funding was secured from The Robertson Trust to continue classes at Citymoves, Aberdeen.

Dundee (Shaper/Caper)

Shaper/Caper also offered online classes via Zoom for the Dundee dancers and ran a weekly online class for dancers with Parkinson's in Fife. During this period, dancers remained part of the wider Shaper/Caper community and were invited to other online company events. Content for the online Parkinson's programme was drawn from other classes and projects, giving dancers an opportunity to understand wider activities.

The Northwood Charitable Trust provided funding for the online programme and for the company to run a befriending service for dancers. Funding was also secured from Share Care Scotland to work with Dundee Carers to create a programme for spouses and carers.

15 dancers, on average, attended the online Dundee class each week with 5-12 dancers

attending the fortnightly social café. 15-25 dancers, on average, attended the online Fife class each week.

Edinburgh (Dance Base) and Glasgow (Scottish Ballet)

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet collaborated to offer a network-wide programme of 30-minute seated Facebook classes between April and July 2020, supporting Phase Two hubs (Peebles (Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre), Perth (Horsecross Arts), and Stirling (MacRobert Arts Centre)) to have visibility and output. Each Phase Two hub was aired on a specific day, Monday to Friday. Lead artists from each hub recorded (or delivered) the session for their hub on their respective day of the week. Jen Cunningham mentored the Dance Base and Perth and Peebles hub artists; Tiffany Stott mentored Scottish Ballet and Stirling hub artists to develop the skills required. Each organisation was supported by their respective marketing teams and all classes were also uploaded onto a shared DfPS Facebook page (administered by Dance Base).

'Glasgow' on a Monday was live (to align with Scottish Ballet's wider digital engagement programme); all other DfPS classes were pre-recorded. As lockdown extended, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet asked DfPS dancers to complete a questionnaire, seeking feedback on the existing Facebook offer. This led to the curation of a new Facebook weekly programme from August to December 2020, comprising 2 x 30-min intensity levels (1 - seated and 2 - advanced with standing options) and a general themed classes which changed every three weeks, such as 'face and voice', 'outdoors in nature', 'mindful movement', 'creativity and improvisation' and 'Scottish Ballet repertoire' (the latter delivered by Scottish Ballet Principal dancer, Bethany Kingsley-Garner).

Hubs from across the network were engaged to create content for this programme. Beyond this, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet felt that Facebook classes could not offer the necessary level of dancer interaction and creativity. After consulting with the DfPS Steering Group, conducting a further small survey with the DfPS dancers, and seeking guidance from David Leventhal, the decision was made to transition to Zoom, firstly offering trial sessions in November 2020 (one per week delivered by Dance Base; one by Scottish Ballet) before launching these fully in January 2021 (explored in [PART 2](#) below).

[PART 2 \(Online DfPS programmes: Dance Base and Scottish Ballet\)](#)

5.3. Operating in an online space: dancer perspectives

5.3.1. Lack of concentration

A theme that emerged from the interviews with dancers, which contrasts with both the Stage One data (current evaluation) and evaluation of the DfPS pilot programme (Whiteside, 2017) through its absence, is difficulty with maintaining concentration. Dancers linked this

challenge to the act of looking at a screen, a sense of repetition among the content and structure, and concerns with following and responding to instruction.

One dancer ((f), Scottish Ballet, 2021) explained: *'I sometimes like it banked up a little bit but if it's too quick I can't keep up. Depends if I'm on or off.'* Another dancer ((m), Scottish Ballet, 2021) felt that the classes were *'very similar every week... I felt in the studio every week, you didn't know what was going to happen.'* This particular dancer explained that he does not have the same concentration that he has in the studio: *'It's so easy to switch off, peering at a tiny screen. Doesn't hold you the same, sitting, staring at a wee screen.'* However, more than one dancer explained that they felt this same concern, regarding concentration, with online classes attended elsewhere (and some had subsequently stopped participating).

Another dancer, interestingly, talked about the cognitive benefit of needing to concentrate:

'I find I have to concentrate on what [Elaine's¹⁶] saying, I have this extra hour of thinking, "Which way are we going?"... Online-ness, concentration of a different kind, that's very good too' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

5.3.2. Lack of a transitional stage and space

Linked to the above theme, and the need to engage a certain mindset, was the lack of a mental and physical 'transitional stage and space' for dancer (and creative team members) to inhabit before participating. One dancer ((m), Scottish Ballet, 2021) explained how he missed hearing the musician already playing ('Let's Face the Music and Dance' was referenced) as he left the changing room to walk up the short corridor into the studio: *'There are no preliminaries.'*

Another dancer ((f), Scottish Ballet, 2021) explained that for her that stage was all about relaxation and that you see and feel 'it' within the studio and *'You don't see people relaxing on Zoom.'* Both online programmes welcomed people in gently and there was time to get settled before beginning, however, distractions recounted by dancers included the window cleaner arriving, the phone ringing, needing to move the car for a neighbour, and a cat taking umbrage that the chair has been occupied.

The practitioners were aware of the difficulty in adopting another mindset (in part because they faced the same scenario) and practitioner Elaine Convery (Scottish Ballet) explained the importance of the 'Settle' in establishing mindfulness and giving this element its due place in the slightly shorter class. One dancer ((f), Scottish Ballet, 2021) explained how she *'really quite like[d] the slow start, rubbing and stretching out. [Elaine] takes you through all your body and really gets you moving.'*

¹⁶ Elaine Convery, Dance Health Officer at Scottish Ballet (formerly Lead Practitioner at CentreStage, Kilmarnock).

5.3.3. Benefits of a home environment

Social connections

The below quotes from one dancer, illustrate sentiments shared across interviews: the opportunity to enjoy something of a shared experience with a spouse who did not attend in-person classes; tweaking the home environment to best suit the dance activity; and enjoying an insight into the social relations of others.

'My husband yesterday, he is always around, and he looked in the window and started dancing with me and smiled and walked away' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

'I always have the computer turned a little bit, so you can't see the door, so if [husband] wants to come in, he walks along here. I have a bird feeder here, looking across to see the birds' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

'There have been times here when two people [gives names], you can see them dance together and I must admit, that's lovely to see' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

A sense of autonomy and safety

Use of Zoom was also viewed as creating a safe space. One dancer ((f), Dance Base, 2021) explained that she: *'Run(s) away when a camera appears'* and *'That's what so nice about doing it in speaker view, you are too tiny to see yourself, so hopefully no-one else can. I suppose that's quite important to me.'*

This feeling of safety, and the resulting increased confidence, encouraged this dancer to move more fully:

'I am more carefree, I'm not so conscious about people being around me, I have to admit. I move more freely. I'm a bit self-conscious when I'm in the studio... Actually probably work a bit harder [at home]' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

Similarly, two new (Scottish Ballet) dancers explained that they felt nervous in social situations and the distance provided by an online format helped them navigate this:

'[I] Quite like the sense of anonymity, being able to wave around in my own house, wonder what it would be like if I did it with everybody. Will have to practise a lot more, before going into the studio' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

'If people could see me, I'd be much more embarrassed and self-conscious about my movements' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

Dancers shared how they decided what was right for them in terms of cameras on or off,

the camera angle, sitting or standing during the class, participating in the breakout rooms, and how to dance.

Medication and travel

Other important considerations shared by many dancers included not worrying as much about timing with medication as people cannot clearly see your 'off' periods on a screen and there were no travel considerations to consider. On the subject of travel, two of the interviewees were not based in Scotland and two other interviewees faced long return journeys to attend class in the studio. All shared that it would be impossible or very difficult to attend weekly in person.

Dancers and spouses of dancers who had previously attended classes in-person and were looking forward to doing so again, also shared their nervousness about emerging out of lockdown and responding to the lifting of restrictions.

'Our problem is that we've been afraid the last year. Afraid of catching Covid, afraid of what the consequences would be for people in our age group' (Spouse of dancer, Dance Base, 2021).

5.4. Operating in an online space: practitioner perspectives

5.4.1. Utilising different platforms

Challenges faced by the practitioners were varied, ranging from technical practicalities to a lack of or 'different' atmosphere and feedback to respond to 'in the moment', health and safety concerns, certain artistic and creative challenges, and meeting the sense of responsibility felt, particularly for classes that were publicly accessible via Facebook.

Facebook Live and pre-recorded classes

As Jen Cunningham (Dance Base, 2021) explained, practitioners were *'missing what you gain from another human being when you share a space.'* There was a sense of *'Sending all that energy into a screen but nothing immediate really coming back to you. It's very... relying on [the] self to give into the camera.'*

There was the need to keep creativity and energy alive amid isolating circumstances. Elaine Convery (Scottish Ballet, 2021) explained the challenge was *'keeping it [the offering] real'*. Scottish Ballet were aware that some dancers were going back, and repeating classes and it was important but challenging to keep developing and recording new material. There could not be the same sense of linear progression (concerning content and building on a theme), as can be supported in the studio, owing to the drop-in nature of the Facebook classes.

The approach of pre-recording classes to be accessed via Facebook (Dance Base) afforded

an element of control to the practitioner but practitioners were also very aware of the public platform and public reach, creating a feeling of needing to re-record if all was not 'perfect.' There existed the potential to get fixated on the presentation. Knowing you were about to go 'live' on Facebook (relevant Scottish Ballet classes) also caused a certain sense of responsibility to be felt.

One challenge of offering these classes (whether live or pre-recorded) was to do so without receiving any immediate feedback from dancers via a shared space. Both dancers and practitioners also spoke of the 'in-between' spaces afforded by a live encounter, for example, moments of eye contact, touch, and humour. However, moving to Zoom allowed a greater sense of porousness to be felt. In contrast to the Zoom classes where a sense of continuity and progression was more possible within a shared interactional space, the Facebook classes were going out into the ether.

Zoom

Referring to a later heading in this report, practitioners explained 'the importance of being seen and heard' by the dancers. Practical considerations for online delivery included clearing the area around the delivery space, ensuring there was enough light in the room, and checking the positioning of chair and camera. Some practitioners chose to wear brightly coloured socks to help the dancer focus in on the movement and placement of the feet.

To begin with, the Scottish Ballet classes pinned both the lead practitioner and support artist on the screen but, following feedback from organisational staff, only the lead practitioner was shown when acting as the sole deliverer. This amendment also responded to a key concern shared by dancers within the interviews that the screen size they were using, and the visual impairment experienced by some, affected their enjoyment and participation in the activity. When it came to both seated and standing sections being offered, dancers interviewed were often choosing to opt for speaker view only: *'It's too small otherwise'* (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

This difficulty with 'seeing' and 'hearing' was also experienced by the lead practitioner, who was responsible for delivering the class, and fully performed the movements. The roles of support artist and moderator was necessary in noting and responding to any dance or technology related issues that arose.

Moving between iterations

Throughout 2020 and 2021, practitioners and organisations (and dancers) were 'playing the waiting game' in terms of restrictions and guidance changing. The length of this period of time, and an ongoing response to feedback and learning, meant that more than one iteration of online delivery took place, with the most obvious being the move from Facebook to Zoom. The last stage would be a return to in-person delivery with, as discussed at the time of data collection, a possible parallel or hybrid digital offering. Practitioners

worked in different ways (for example, being back in the studio with a musician for a short period of time or leading and recording sessions outside) using different platforms with dancers responding and participating accordingly, leading to a sense of needing to learn again as change was introduced.

5.4.2. Communication and cueing

Elaine Convery (Scottish Ballet, 2021) talked about how the online mode of working saw the practitioner:

'Really having to hone [their] craft. You've got to be so clear on what you are doing, the intentions [and] making it work within a time limit. You don't get the banter in between sections, so need to be on point all the time.'

When delivering online, the practitioner can find themselves saying less, partly because of interaction with the music, less feedback to respond to in the moment, and time constraints, meaning that it is necessary to be very particular about what is said.

Both practitioners and musicians paid greater attention to cueing with the online classes. Noting that some dancers were standing for the whole class, extra cues were added to support. Musician Robert Briggs, Dance Base, talked of the increased importance of playing the cues and being more explicit with verbal counting. One dancer ((m), Dance Base, 2021) commented: *'Robert is terrific, absolutely wonderful in the way that he's in contact with the group. He's very sensitive with what's coming next.'*

5.4.3. Expanding creative practice

The DfPS practitioners shared the various practical lessons they had learnt through offering online delivery (explored further in 5.4.1. [Utilising different platforms](#)). More creative responses included playing with the camera, playing with gestures and imagery (promoting a closer mind-body connection), and drawing on mirroring and echoing to support interaction.

Practitioners also shared how they drew on other elements of their practice to expand their online offering. For example, during the summer of 2020, Jen Cunningham (Dance Base, 2021) recorded a series of sessions outside, for example on a beach and in a forest, drawing directly on her professional performing practice and created in response to different environments and nature.

'I wanted to offer the dancers a gateway to be able to dance outside when everyone was indoors so much and just offer a really sensory experience.'

These recorded classes were shorter and had a different feeling, reflecting on responses in the body informed by the environment. Dancers also literally saw places in Edinburgh that

might be new to them. There was a sense of an exchange as the practitioner was also out of their comfort zone, working in a way that was new and different, contending with weather and tides. Significantly, information about these sessions was first shared by one of the Dance Base interviewees:

'[Jen] did a journey, she went into a wood, she went on a beach, and that's amazing as well. You could hear the sounds, you could hear the oystercatchers in the background, you could see the wind' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

5.4.4. The importance of live music

The importance of live music was a consistent theme in dancer interviews, as contributing to a greater sense of enjoyment when experiencing the Zoom classes, in particular. Here, the focus is on some of the lessons learnt and shared by musicians for online delivery.

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet musicians similarly composed music for the live and recorded classes being shared via Facebook. For the Dance Base recorded Facebook classes, Robert Briggs created music which adhered to copyright restrictions, and the practitioners subsequently created classes; a different experience from when the dance (and thus, practitioner) would normally lead. Following discussion of ideas and tempo etc. the practitioner then recorded live with the music playing through Soundcloud app. With the move to Zoom, came a learning curve to mitigate against the sound delay that can occur. Practitioner and musician worked and experimented together to get the 'right' balance of voice and piano. 'Enable original sound' on Zoom helped pick up the piano and an acoustic piano seemed to work better than an electric piano. Greater use of the soft pedal also helped the practitioner's voice to be better heard. Robert Briggs felt that the long-standing working relationship between musician and practitioner played a significant role in successfully navigating sound in a Zoom setting (i.e. understanding when and when not to play/speak).

Interestingly, several Dance Base dancers felt that the musician's role was more present on Zoom. The voice exercises (led by Robert Briggs):

'[W]ere always there [in the studio] but on Zoom because he has to come on screen, it does more in the sense of getting us to do these voice exercises, which are so wonderful. He has a more prominent part. Imparting some of his musical knowledge to us' (Dancer (m), Dance Base, 2021).

However, unsurprisingly, the music experience was not quite the same as when being in the studio: *'I think it works as best as it can [but] doesn't always quite connect'* (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

Scottish Ballet took a slightly different approach with the approach to presenting live music during the Zoom classes with musician, David Farrell, researching and instigating a process

by which a radio station was set up, the music came straight to the dance practitioner's iPad and was then picked up by a non-directional mic. The musician experienced a short delay but, crucially, the practitioner and dancers did not.

5.4.5. Role and accessibility of external training

As explored in 4.5. [Training and support](#), a key challenge for realising training with the satellite hubs before the COVID-19 pandemic was bringing people together amid time and travel logistics. In contrast, the necessary online mode of delivery for CPD and training opportunities during COVID-19 meant that practitioners and musicians were able to both respond, and contribute to, opportunities offered by organisations including People Dancing, Voluntary Arts and Dance for PD®. For example, Elaine Convery (Scottish Ballet) led a session on Dance for Parkinson's as part of Voluntary Arts – Creative Network (May 2020). Jen Cunningham (Dance Base) and Julie Symmonds (Scottish Ballet) led a session (June 2021) as part of People Dancing's 'Perspective in Practice' titled 'Online Adventures' reflecting on delivering dance sessions out of doors.¹⁷

David Leventhal led a session in April 2020, requested by the DfPS partnership, as an opportunity for the practitioners themselves to dance and engage with the intricacies of the self. A second session in January 2021 focused on online delivery and the insights Leventhal had gained from working in this way since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, promoting close connections with and for the dancers. Elements focused on included: the practicalities of interacting with the camera; co-creation; and, creative tools for promoting dancer confidence and agency.

Jen Cunningham (Dance Base, 2021) spoke of the importance for practitioners to feel '*fulfilled creatively*' themselves in delivering sessions that would benefit dancers. Practitioners and musicians were, of course, also isolated to different degrees and in different ways for much of 2020 and 2021 and received valuable support and affirmation from engaging with their peers.

During this time, practitioners could more easily contribute their learning as well continue to benefit from participating themselves. The different frequency and pace of learning was easier to digest and put into practice.

5.4.6. Role and accessibility of internal training

The DfPS partnership were mindful of the need to be sympathetic with time and energy. Despite the shared experience of a pandemic, satellite hubs, practitioners, musicians, and dancers were in very different circumstances. As explained in 5.2. [Hub Narratives: online DfPS programmes](#) some hubs were in a position to offer their own online classes; others

¹⁷ <https://www.communitydance.org.uk/developing-practice/perspectives-on-practice/perspectives-on-practice-event-archive>

were directing their dancers to those other opportunities. However, the COVID-19 pandemic struck at a time point where practitioners across the network were able draw on their own and other's expertise. Training sessions focused on creating online material; practitioner wellbeing; training the trainer to train volunteers; and emotional resilience. Social 'check ins' also took place.

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet practitioners supported each other with the generation of content, particularly during the first few months of delivery via Facebook (summer 2020), through watching each other's classes and sharing feedback. Regardless of a practitioner's individual approach and journey, there was a sense of online teaching being new to everyone. Additional support and feedback were provided by senior DfPS staff.

Training was also planned later on with all hub practitioners to help prepare for a return to in-person delivery. Recognising that not all colleagues had been able to lead classes during the periods of lockdown, practitioners were asked what would be useful for them, with refresher training delivered by Dr Sophia Hulbert, Prof. Sara Houston, and Heidi Wilson and a focus on resilience and trauma delivered by Hannah McIlveen (detailed further in [2.3. Training](#)).

5.5. The importance of being seen and heard

5.5.1. Feedback from dancers and shared learning

Within interviews, dancers talked about being asked for feedback and valued their opinions being sought.

Feedback from dancers for both online programmes, facilitated by a number of touch points, was crucial. Following lockdown and an initial move to Facebook (from April 2020), feedback was often given via comments left on the respective Dance Base and Scottish Ballet pages and on the DfPS Facebook page. As previously mentioned ([5.2. Hub narratives: online DfPS programmes](#)), a questionnaire was subsequently circulated in July 2020 to understand dancer views and opinions regarding the daily 30-minute seated classes via Facebook, delivered by Dance Base, Scottish Ballet and Phase Two artists. Findings informed a shift towards a weekly curated programme, again via Facebook, with different levels and class foci (e.g. 'face and voice', 'outdoors in nature') introduced. A second questionnaire in autumn 2020 and discussion with the DfPS Steering Group informed the move to Zoom. Dancers wanted to feel a closer connection to the creative teams, and to their fellow dancers; a sentiment shared by the practitioners and musicians themselves.

With the onset of the regular Zoom programme (from January 2021), social cafes and breakout rooms became important spaces for the informal giving of feedback. In particular, practitioners were keen to understand if they could be seen and heard clearly and how the (now live) music was being experienced. More individualised contact helped practitioners better understand the impact that lockdown might be having and how they could best

respond and support, building on pre-existing knowledge of individual needs and personalities.

There was a sense of digital literacy developing on the part of practitioner, musician, and dancer over the course of 2020 and into 2021. One dancer reminds us that this was, to a degree, a shared learning experience and the benefit in this:

'It was fun learning with them, the different aspects... More of a learning curve for them than for us, of course [but] I think doing it together, working it out together, I felt part of something again' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

5.5.2. Socialising together

Both Dance Base and Scottish Ballet drew on social cafes (as standalone Zoom events) during the Facebook programming period and breakout rooms to facilitate social opportunities once the shift to Zoom had been made.

While dancers recognised their usefulness, and appreciated those opportunities being arranged, a theme throughout the interviews was the limitations of this mode of interaction.¹⁸ Various factors and scenarios were shared illustrating the difficulty for conversations to unfold. These included: some dancers being reticent in conversing; dancers not always having a pre-existing relationship with others in the space; feeling that one does not have much to say and share; feeling there may be too many people in the 'room'; and a lack of set conversation topic(s). Dancers also missed friends who had chosen not to participate in the online programmes.

'It can be a bit hard going if people don't want to speak' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

'You've got nothing to say. Same as I did last week, same as I did yesterday! I've forgotten anyway!' (Dancer (m), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

The most common refrain was not knowing who you would be in a breakout room with: dancers explained that where a prior relationship existed, conversation flowed more easily. However, more than one dancer shared the following sentiment:

'After four years, we'd got into a comfortable routine of talking to people we liked in the break... One of the good things about being Zoom was the haphazard nature of the breakout rooms and... you [met] up with people from the Perth group or people you didn't know, and I think that was a really good thing' (Spouse of a dancer, Dance Base, 2021).

¹⁸ In due course, from observing particular challenges, Scottish Ballet started to structure the social time. For example, the team played company footage of the repertoire the group had been working on in class and asked company dancers to record vlogs and behind-the-scenes rehearsal footage plus trailers for upcoming shows.

Dancers also sympathised with the difficulties presented by the format and understood that, for some individuals, this may be a key or the only point of interaction for certain individuals that week. One dancer ((f), Dance Base, 2021) made the following key point:

'Without that [the online DfPS social opportunities], we'd have lost a lot of what we had.'

The social cafes, previously held separately, garnered a more positive response as people were attending to *be sociable* and a wider invitation was issued.

'They invite the volunteers to it. Not only us, so that's great, because you hear from everyone. Why I'd rather keep up with those social times, than the ones after class. It's the variety of people' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

However, one spouse of a dancer with Parkinson's thought that the breakout rooms were easier for dancers with Parkinson's to engage in than the larger, separate social cafés. Dancers also explained that, of course, they were not socialising in person with friends from the classes, meaning that online socialising was the only possibility with the following sentiments expressed:

'Relationship is at a distance now. You see the silhouettes on the screen' (Dancer (m), Dance Base, 2021).

'This virtual life has taken over' (Spouse of a dancer, Scottish Ballet, 2021).

5.5.3. Dancing together

Dancers talked about the importance of still feeling like they are dancing together.

'[I]t's lovely when we come together at the end, and we all go back into gallery view... I think it's really important to go back to gallery view at the end, I feel like I'm connected with everyone. We put our hands out and I am holding someone's hand' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

There was a sense of dancers, both established and new, harking to a particular feeling of being together in the studio: *'I like that bit at the end, coming together, hold up your hands and bow. That must be nice in the real class'* (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

The below quotes further testify to the significance of *feeling* the dancing through *doing* the dancing: *'It's joyful, being able to move about and dance, it's just joyful'* (Dancer (m), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

'[I]t's a lovely feeling that I'm getting. Towards being more freeing about my body' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

Another dancer explained:

'When I finish Zoom and people have gone, for an hour afterwards, I think they're still there. There is a presence they have left' (Dancer (m), Dance Base, 2021).

5.5.4 Gratitude and understanding

A key sentiment that arose from interviews with dancers was that although online participation did not provide the same experience as being together in-person, the format had some unexpected benefits and dancers expressed their gratitude for the experience.

One spouse of a dancer (Dance Base, 2021) shared a thought, particularly reminiscent of the 'ghost light' left on in unoccupied theatres, when she explained that she saw online delivery as:

'An interlude, we did it before, and we will go back, and it's not an unsuccessful interlude, just a slightly different interlude. It means we don't lose touch with Jen and Robert and the dancers as well. We're really grateful it continues.'

'I do feel as if when it does go back into Dance Base, I don't think the dance has, it's not lost anything' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

'I think it's been absolutely amazing, absolutely amazing' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

'Looking back, I don't know what the last year and a bit would have been like, without people coming into my home like this' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

'It's the highlight of our week, really. We don't have such a great social life these days and even worse with lockdown' (Spouse of dancer, Scottish Ballet, 2021).

'The ballet has been a life saver for us, it really has' (Spouse of dancer, Scottish Ballet, 2021).

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet dancers shared how the practitioners generated a particular energy and atmosphere, welcoming everyone to class and bringing people together.

'Jen [Cunningham] makes it easy for us all to be part of a group together. I think that's her magic in the way she teaches' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

'[Elaine Convery's] very good, very calm and sympathetic' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

For some dancers interviewed, DfPS was *'the only thing we do together'* (Spouse of dancer, Scottish Ballet, 2021), owing to a lack of motivation or enjoyment for other activities or because they found these opportunities inappropriate for their particular needs. *'It's difficult to keep motivated while the dance is quite enjoyable'* (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

‘Mentally, I just like the fact that I can do something. Mentally, I thought I was finished, and my Parkinson’s was getting worse and worse and worse. I thought that’s it and I’ve actually found something I can do’ (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

5.5.5. Acknowledging grief

The years 2020 and 2021, the key COVID-19 pandemic years, saw a multitude of global, national, and individual narratives and experiences intersecting. During this period, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet dancers and creative team members sadly lost a number of friends and here it feels important to acknowledge how the dance activity became a shared space to celebrate and remember those who had passed away.

As detailed previously, David Leventhal and Hannah McIlveen (as part of training delivered) advised on how to support dancers and each other when loss occurred; how the space can best be held for dancers and all to process, remember, and understand. Depending on the particular circumstances, and with the blessing of close family members, dancers and volunteers were contacted by email and offered the details of the service (as appropriate) and invited to light a candle in remembrance. Many responded to that initial communication, sharing their memories with practitioners.

Social cafés provided a space for collective sharing, but it felt important to initially communicate via email rather than during a live class on Zoom so people could process in their own way. Personal gestures were drawn on, where appropriate. For example, sharing a reading that one dancer had previously given which captured their sense of spirit and character and, following permission, drawing on a poem from an order of service to use in class, to move together and remember.

Practitioners have stayed in touch with spouses and family members affected who, in some cases, continue to attend class as members of the community and have close connections with the dance and dancers.

5.6. Importance of familiarity and routine

5.6.1. Importance of routine

Dancers spoke about wanting to do the online classes to mitigate the negative effects of living through a pandemic with Parkinson’s: to engage in exercise, feel the dancing, see each other, and combat loneliness and isolation. The dancers emphasised the importance of routine – a set date and time for the classes – in following through on that motivation.

Dancers from both Dance Base and Scottish Ballet explained that pre-pandemic, especially, their weeks had been constructed in very particular ways, owing in part to being retired and benefiting from another structure being in place. One spouse of a dancer with Parkinson’s

(Dance Base, 2021) explained:

'[We] did certain things on certain days, or we met people... Covid takes your structure away and replaces it with a pervading fear of everything.'

'What I miss, think I need, is organisation and I didn't feel that just me going to Facebook and deciding whether or not we would dance that day [was enough]. Much better to have a regular time and day and put a structure on our day.'

The benefit of a regular class has *'provided a little sanity to it all'* (Spouse of a dancer, Dance Base, 2021).

Another dancer ((f), Scottish Ballet, 2021) expressed a similar sentiment: *'[T]hat's why I kept signing up to classes. I can't on my own do exercise.'* Being led *'makes you do the exercises that you wouldn't do.... no way I would be doing any exercise if I wasn't sitting in front of the wee screen with the ballet'* (Dancer (m), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

'[Friday] is ballet day.... I would certainly miss my Friday anchor' (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021). However, other Scottish Ballet dancers shared that the move from in-person on a Monday to online on a Friday impacted on a pre-existing routine such as housework or grocery shopping. There was also the psychological impact of a class held at the end of, rather than the beginning of, a week: *'Monday started your week, gave you a good lift for the rest of the week... [W]eekend would come, oh it's the ballet soon!'* (Dancer (m), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

For some dancers, the online DfPS class was part of their weekly schedule of activities. Other activities cited included movement classes for Parkinson's (that were not accompanied by music, or by live music), Pilates, swimming club online, Tai Chi, Parkinson's to Music, and activities through Parkinson's Care Org, PD Warriors and Parkinson's UK branches: *'If not careful, every day could be a Parkinson's day. I've only got one day left and that's mine!'* (Dancer (m), Dance Base, 2021).

5.6.2. Familiarity of movement and music

Although slightly shorter in length with less focus on standing and travelling, the online classes still followed the structure of a Dance for Parkinson's class. From observing and participating in the class, and speaking with practitioners, musicians, and dancers, it was clear where specific music, movement, and exercises and individualised greetings and gestures had transitioned from a studio setting. For example, Dance Base dancers have long performed the Sun Salutation to 'People Get Ready' (Eva Cassidy) on the piano, and this familiarity continued in the online classes.

For the Scottish Ballet dancers, continuing to perform and engage with the repertoire provided a link to the wider company. Practitioners understood this importance, given that

classes were not taking place in the studio with company staff and dancers walking past, and theatres remained closed. Dancers continued to hear about and perform the latest or current work, its creation and development. Some of the Scottish Ballet dancers talked about their particular enjoyment of learning and being inspired by repertoire from Peter Darrell's 'The Nutcracker' and Derek Dawson's 'Swan Lake'. Dancers cleared the mist away, looked for swans, and *'put their wings up and flew away. It was a story... [Y]ou feel like you're in the ballet'* (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

The 'signature style' of both classes was retained.

5.6.3. Familiarity of people

For the dancers who had been part of the classes before the move to an online programme, it felt important that it was the same practitioners, musicians, and support artists delivering. One dancer ((f), Dance Base, 2021) was beaming as she explained, *'It's just so lovely to have you [practitioners] in our home... this was our Wednesday again.'* Dancers spoke of Jen Cunningham, Sophie Younger, and Robert Briggs at Dance Base and Elaine Convery, Joanna Daskalou and David Farrell at Scottish Ballet.

Dancers spoke of feeling cared for by the practitioners and the strength of the personalities of the practitioners as *'strong enough to carry through the medium of Zoom'* (Dancer (m), Dance Base, 2021). Support Dance Artist, Joanna Daskalou (Scottish Ballet), has been a long-standing member of the class and one dancer missed her more visible and hands-on role from the studio but was grateful she continued to be part of the online class:

'[S]he has the knack of helping people in an easy way... What you miss is Jo coming over and taking your hand... putting feet and hands together being difficult. Joanna would come and hold my hands' (Dancer (m), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

For the dancers who had attended in-person classes previously, that sense of *knowing* practitioners and friends was an impetus for engaging:

'Watching everyone, doing it, being part of it. I love it. Because I have known these people and danced with them in real time. I remember them coming in, and us hugging and kissing, "oh, how are you?" That feeling of people looking out for each other, and I think you [still] get that feeling with the Zoom' (Dancer (f), Dance Base, 2021).

As the online classes continued, one new dancer interviewed explained, *'I'm beginning to recognise faces and think 'the gang's all here!'* (Dancer (f), Scottish Ballet, 2021).

6. Future Plans

July 2021-March 2022

The evaluation data collection period ended in August 2021, in the midst of ongoing challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the programme's intended delivery had been delayed throughout the course of the pandemic, leading the DfPS partners, Dance Base and Scottish Ballet, to extend the fourth year of the project, with additional funding secured to extend the programme to March 2022.

Between August 2021 and March 2022, with the easing of some restrictions, the partnership intended for some classes to begin returning to the studios, in consultation with the participants. However, online classes remained an integral part of the DfPS offer, with the partners implementing the learning and development that has been undertaken to make these activities accessible and effective. Hybrid delivery models (where small numbers participate in-person together with others taking part remotely via digital platforms) are also being considered, with successful examples cited from Dance for Parkinson's groups in Australia.

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet used this extended funding period to support all hubs to re-establish their regular activity and reconnect with their communities, before the ownership of the programme passed from the lead partners to the hubs. In this time, they supported the hubs to become self-sustaining and strengthen the project's legacy. All hubs, apart from Kilmarnock, have currently made commitments to continue to deliver local provision.

March 2022 and beyond

Dance Base and Scottish Ballet met regularly to manage their 'exit strategy' as they reached the end of the project period in March 2022 and established a model for their working relationship after this joint initiative was complete, with each organisation committing to continuing their own classes. A planned symposium (new timeframe to be confirmed) will allow time to embed and disseminate the learning gained. The partners aim to embed long-term sustainability into the DfPS network and classes, empowering the Phase Two hubs to fundraise for and coordinate their own classes, and to support the DfPS Steering Group to agree its scope and purpose longer-term.

'We envisage a DfPS network that is thriving and healthy, with dance classes for people living with Parkinson's and their families/carers, accessible in many places around Scotland, led by experienced, well-trained and supported dance artists and musicians, facilitated by engaged arts/community organisations who deliver these classes as part of their wider engagement work' (Dance Base and Scottish Ballet, 2021).

7. Concluding Remarks

Participating in, and delivering, the Dance for Parkinson's Scotland (DfPS) programme was a rich and rewarding experience.

DfPS, and this evaluation, developed during the most difficult of times. The handover completing Phase One (September 2018-March 2020), and launch of Phase Two (September 2019), were affected by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns and restrictions. The evaluation aims and approach subsequently changed to focus on the online DfPS programmes delivered by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet.

During *Stage One* of the evaluation, dancers shared their perceptions of the cultural, emotional, social and physical benefits of engaging, emphasising the distinctive nature of a programme rooted in dancing together and tailored to the Parkinson's condition. During this same data stage, practitioners and musicians shared their experiences of taking part in rigorous and supportive training, developing their own creative practices, and the long-term opportunity of working as part of a greater team and movement. The evaluation considers how distinct hub identities were nurtured in each location: the personalised and tailored content devised with dancers; the connections established with and within the local venue and organisational communities; the existence of core dancers involved from the very start; and close connections with local Parkinson's support groups.

Stage Two of the evaluation, with the focus on the online DfPS programmes delivered by Dance Base and Scottish Ballet, explores the models of practice developed (through more than one iteration of delivery) and the experience of dancers, practitioners, and musicians involved. In addition to understanding the more practical individual and collective considerations that facilitated engagement, dancers shared their concerns around concentration and the repercussions of a lack of transitional physical and mental space. Dancers also shared the benefits of dancing within their home environment and reiterated, and emphasised, their gratitude for the DfPS online offering.

Although this evaluation is not a comparative study between Stages One and Two, or with the previous evaluation of the DfPS pilot programme (Whiteside, 2017), it is helpful to consider certain core themes that resonate through and across these studies.

Role in daily life and living

Stage One data cites the high rate of attendance of respondents with 99% (n=71) attending, on average, their DfPS class each week. Mixed methods data suggests the impact of this participation on daily living, impacting positively on social and movement confidence and functional mobility. This significance develops further through the emphasis on a regular

and set online DfPS class, as a fixed and welcoming point of the week, during the COVID-19 pandemic. During lockdowns characterised by physical restrictions, realised for many through social isolation, the shared responsibility of engaging formed something of a social contract for all involved. Dancers spoke about DfPS in terms of being a *'life saver.'*

The 'specialness' of DfPS activity

Linked to the previous theme is a need to understand the motivations that lie behind continued (and in many cases very long-term) commitment. As was the case with the evaluation of the pilot (Whiteside, 2017), many dancers in 2019 and 2020/2021 were regularly attending other cultural and social activities. However, Stage One data suggests that for 30% (20 out of 67) of respondents, a significant number, DfPS was the only regular activity attended. Dancers spoke of dance and dancing, building social connections and self-confidence, fun and humour, increased self-efficacy, and feeling part of a distinct class identity. Some dancers interviewed during Stage Two shared that they had disengaged from other online organised activities but continued to participate in DfPS because they wanted to maintain existing longstanding friendships (for continuing dancers), welcomed the care and instruction given by practitioners and musicians, and held concerns about the potential negative impact of living through a pandemic with Parkinson's.

Feeling part of 'something bigger'

One theme that contrasts with the earlier DfPS evaluation (Whiteside, 2017) is the existence of a sentiment shared by both dancers and practitioners at the satellite hubs that they were part of a 'glocal' activity. That is, participation was both local, characterised by immediate concerns of people, space, and interactions, and contributed to and part of a greater national (DfPS) and international (DfP) movement.

Scotland's highest population density and, consequently, much of its infrastructure and cultural and recreational activity, is based in the Central Belt (located broadly between Edinburgh and Glasgow). Dancers and practitioners based at satellite hubs, shared their enthusiasm that locations further north, east, and west were part of DfPS. Taster sessions had taken place at hubs previously and interviewees spoke of that initial interest being sparked, and the relief when funding had been secured to sustain a longer-term programme. Numerous dancers shared their knowledge of the wider DfP movement as an impetus for joining, explaining both their knowledge of the evidence base and that research, and media footage, acted as a kind of familiarisation exercise to aid with signing up.

Dancers are the heart of DfPS. Thus, this evaluation appropriately concludes with the words of one dancer (Dance Base (f)), (2021): *'Of all the activities I do, there's something about it. I think it's the laughter, the fun that we have. It is special.'*

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9. Appendix: Hub Contacts

Key evaluation contacts of the DfPS programme

The below is not an exhaustive list of all key personnel involved, but notes those staff, practitioners and musicians significantly involved in the evaluation during Stage One (Phase One, in-person) and Stage Two online (replacing Phase Two, in-person). Contacts, therefore, are not given for the Peebles, Perth, and Stirling hubs.

Aberdeen (Citymoves)

Ruth Kent, (former) Lead Practitioner
Eowyn Barrett, (former) Lead Practitioner
Amy Park, Practitioner
Imogene Newland, Musician

Dundee (Shaper/Caper)

Yolanda Aguilar, Lead Practitioner
Sarah Greene, Practitioner (later Lead Practitioner)
Alex McCrossan, Practitioner
Andy McLaren, Musician

Edinburgh (Dance Base)

Jenny Langlands, former Chief Executive
Emma Stewart-Jones, former Chief Executive (formerly, Partnerships Manager)
Emili Åström, Head of Dance for Health and Wellbeing
Meghan Bidwell, (former) Dance Health Manager
Allan Irvine, (former) Participation Manager
Jen Cunningham, Lead DfPS Practitioner
Christina Liddell, Practitioner
Sophie Younger, Practitioner
Robert Briggs, Musician

Glasgow (Scottish Ballet)

Catherine Cassidy, Director of Engagement
Lisa Sinclair, Senior Dance Health Manager
Tiffany Stott, Dance Health Programme Manager
Miriam Early (former Dance Health Coordinator)
Elaine Convery, Dance Health Officer
Louise Hunter (former Dance Health Officer)
Tiffany Broadfoot, (former Dance Health Coordinator)

Hayley Earlam, Practitioner
Joanna Daskalou, Dance Support Worker
David Farrell, Musician
Derek Baron, Musician

Greenock (Beacon Arts Centre)
Marie Williamson, Practitioner

Inverness (Eden Court)
Louise Marshall, Lead Practitioner
Laura MacLennan, Practitioner (later Lead Practitioner)
Julia McGhee, Practitioner
Emma Holderness, Musician

Kilmarnock (CentreStage)
Elaine Convery, Lead Practitioner
Orla Watts, Practitioner
Matt Allison, Musician

Phase One satellite hubs

Phase One satellite hubs (supported and mentored by Dance Base)

Aberdeen, Citymoves, Aberdeen Performing Arts

Citymoves is the regional dance agency for Aberdeen and North East Scotland. The organisation's activity takes three forms: programmes of dance classes from their city-centre studios; education and outreach work; support for professional dance artists. Phase One classes took place at His Majesty's Theatre (Aberdeen Performing Arts).

Dundee, Shaper/Caper, The Space and Dundee and Angus College

Shaper/Caper is a Dundee-based contemporary dance company and has a close working relationship with The Space (Dundee and Angus College) which hosts the Scottish School of Contemporary Dance. The Space was the venue for Phase One classes.

Phase One satellite hubs (supported and mentored by Scottish Ballet)

Greenock, Beacon Arts Centre

Beacon Arts Centre is a contemporary theatre and arts venue based in Greenock, Inverclyde, offering performances and a range of participatory programmes, both in their venue and across the local community.

Kilmarnock, CentreStage

CentreStage is Ayrshire's Arts Academy, which offers community arts education and performing opportunities for all ages. Classes took place in the James Little Street premises.

Phase One satellite hub, shared support and mentorship (Dance Base and Scottish Ballet)

Inverness, Eden Court

Eden Court is a theatre, cinema, and venue which hosts touring productions and runs engagement programmes, both in the building and across the Highlands.

Phase Two satellite hubs

Please note, these three hubs were not included in the evaluation as originally planned, due to pandemic-related delays in setting up classes.

Phase Two satellite hubs (supported and mentored by Dance Base)

Peebles, Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre

The Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre is a community arts venue in the Scottish Borders, staging more than 200 events a year in the theatre – ranging across music, theatre, talks, mainstream and arts cinema and comedy. A community café and participatory activities are also part of their programming.

Perth, Horsecross Arts - Perth Concert Hall and Perth Theatre

Horsecross Arts runs the Concert Hall and Theatre and present live music, theatre, dance, art and events as well as offering participatory activities to local communities and schools.

Phase Two satellite hubs (supported and mentored by Scottish Ballet)

Stirling, Macrobert Arts Centre

Macrobert Arts Centre is a multi-arts venue located within the campus of the University of Stirling. The Centre offers a varied programme of events across cinema, comedy, dance, exhibitions, music, opera and theatre – catering for audiences from across Stirling and the Forth Valley.

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