

# WANNA DANCE?

JULY 24 UPDATE

## How might we dance together...?

We can't believe that the Wanna Dance? Artist in Residence programme is coming to the end of its second year! This year has seen us continue to develop dances with people who use **Canal Street** and **Lightfoot Lodge's** services, whilst working for the first time with ten new dancers from **Coronation Centre**.

Wanna Dance? is about creating dancing opportunities with people with Profound Intellectual & Multiple Disabilities (PIMD). Led by dance artists, Ruth Spencer and Jane McLean (Cheshire Dance) the project asks IF participants would like to dance and if so, how that dance might be? Practice in this field opens a myriad of questions, many ethically charged concerning inclusion, access, consent and ownership in relation to methods, policy and practice.

People with PIMD are non-verbal, sensory specialists with idiosyncratic communication styles and, as dancers, we have much to learn from them on sensory being, intention and communication. Wanna Dance? explores this and seeks to create care environments that are sensitive to lived body experience.

Through 1:1 co-created movement sessions, this project is founded upon a commitment to involve people with PIMD in decisions about their engagement in dance, providing opportunities for their preferences to impact upon their experience.

## What else have we been up to?

- **January-Feb** - Wanna Dance? Film presented as part of The PMLD Conference IV (by [Joanna Grace, Sensory Projects](#)) - the film received over 1000 views and lots of positive feedback about its beauty, importance and impact.
- **14th March** - presented Wanna Dance and shared the Wanna Dance film at the Cheshire West PIMD Subgroup meeting
- **16th April** - Dance and PMLD Practice Sharing network meeting with special guest speaker Sheridan Forster - creator of the [Hanging Out Programme](#)
- **19th April** - Ruth invited to take part in Joanna Grace's event, "Insights, Inspire, Impact for and with people with Profound Disabilities" at University of Southampton
- **24th April** - continued conversations with [People Dancing](#) (the UK development organisation for community and participatory dance) to discuss the sharing of the Wanna Dance programme and training for dance artists nationally
- **13th May** - Northern Chamber Orchestra String Quartet at Storyhouse - 1:1 sessions with John, Patrick, Stephen, Johnny, Alex, Leon and Dylan accompanied by live music
- **18th June** - Wanna Dance film shared as part of UCLan 'Choreographies of Care' symposium
- **5th July** - Wanna Dance film screening as part of University of Chester's 'Crossing Borders' event at Storyhouse
- **16th and 17th July** - Preparation for and filming for the next Wanna Dance film with Sam Ryley of Canteen Create at the University of Chester
- **Plus...** planning for the Arts and Music Festival at Lightfoot Lodge on 20th August and lots of conversations with, and support for, other artists and professionals wanting to develop their Dance and PIMD work.

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## Northern Chamber Orchestra visit to Storyhouse



"I found the whole experience with Northern Chamber music very moving, at the time and now, thinking about it! The music was so powerful."  
Staff member



On 13th May we had the opportunity for some of the dancers to dance with live music played by a string quartet from **Northern Chamber Orchestra!**

**John, Patrick, Stephen, Dylan, Leon, Alex and Johnny** took part in the sessions which were hosted at the Garrett Theatre at Storyhouse.

The musicians selected music that they felt might respond to some of the preferences of the dancers and were responsive in trying lots of different ideas out. John even became the conductor as the musicians responded to the speed and rhythms he set, starting and stopping with his non-verbal instructions.

The dancers appeared to really engage with and enjoy the live music and lots of us discovered new music that we are now using in our regular 1:1 dancing sessions together in the centres.

Staff commented on the impact of the sessions both on the dancers with PIMD and on themselves - for many this was their first experience of live, classical music.

The Northern Chamber Orchestra musicians commented on it being a wonderful experience and they are very keen to try and do more together in the future.



**“He looks forward to the sessions, I tell him we’re going to dance and his arms and legs shoot out showing he’s excited.”**

**Staff member**



**“Ruth takes her time at building a connection and trust. Movements start small and in one area, and slowly progress to the other arm, face.”**

**Staff member**





Beth and Jane dance together on the Creative Project filming day at University of Chester Kingsway campus.

*“Beth is interacting with Jane, and has a real relationship with her”*  
Staff Member

*“I’ve never seen Beth do that movement before - I think this is new for her”*  
Staff Member





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“I’ve heard so much about Wanna Dance? from other staff - I was so excited to see it. Stephen is so happy and excited. He’s mesmerised by Jane.”

Staff Member



“It looked like you had choreographed it with him...I thought he was about to do the salsa!”

Staff member



**“John has started to use more of his body within movements and is starting to use his voice more. He knows that he is setting the pace for the music now...” Staff Member**

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## Coming up next

### Coronation Centre, Canal Street and Lightfoot Lodge

Since October 2023 Jane and Ruth have worked with **19 dancers with PIMD and over 30 staff, delivering over 300 one to one sessions**. The one to one sessions at Coronation Centre, Canal Street and Lightfoot Lodge have now finished for this round of the programme. However, Jane and Ruth continue to work on the Creative Project, evaluation, planning for 2024-25, the Dance and PMLD network and organising staff training.

### Creative Project

On 16th July we had a rich and exciting filming day with Johnny, Leon, Beth, Dylan and Vicky - film maker Sam Ryley is now in the editing process and we hope to be able to premiere the new film in Autumn 2024. We can't wait to share it with you all!

## Funding Update

The **2023-24** Wanna Dance programme has been possible thanks to funding from the Anne Duchess of Westminster Fund, The Marjory Boddy Trust and the Postcode Lottery alongside ongoing support from Vivo Care Choices and Cheshire Dance.

Cheshire Dance have now secured funding from the following for the continuation of the Wanna Dance programme in Chester and Ellesmere Port in **2024-2025**:

- National Lottery Awards for All
- Bailey Thomas Charitable Fund
- Schroder Charitable Trust
- Sport England Movement Fund

Subject to continuing investment from Vivo Care Choices, this funding helps us continue to develop dancing opportunities with people with PMLD who use Vivo Care Choice's services in Chester and Ellesmere Port - including the continuation of the Dance Artists in residence, staff training and a Creative Project in summer 2025.



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DANCE & PEOPLE WITH PIMD

## KEY DATES:

### WHAT

23-24 Programme  
Evaluation

Planning for 24-25  
Programme

Music and Arts  
Festival at Lightfoot  
Lodge

Wanna Dance 2  
Film Premiere

Provisonal date for  
re-starting 1:1  
sessions in centres

Next steps:

### WHEN

July and August 2024

August and September 2024

Tuesday 20th August 2024 - Wanna Dance exhibition  
and session

Autumn 2024 - exact date and venue TBC

October 2024

August:

- Confirm Vivo Funding for 24-25
- Plan staff training
- Plan for 24-25 with Vivo staff team and centres





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DANCE & PEOPLE WITH PIMD

## FURTHER INFORMATION

The Wanna Dance Programme is a partnership between Cheshire Dance, Vivo Care Choices and University of Central Lancashire.

### July 2024 Update

For more information on Wanna Dance, please contact:

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