



BOYSDANCING

Information for Press and Media

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About Boys Dancing

Boys Dancing is a dance participation project led by Warwick Arts Centre and Beingfrank Physical Theatre. The aim of the project is to prove to boys that dance is exciting, engaging, fun and challenging. We want to show that dance is a great mix of spontaneous physical and mental activity – it requires physical strength like in sport and it provides a great workout for the mind.

Warwick Arts Centre has been running boys dance activities since 1998. In 2005 we began our hugely productive working relationship with Beingfrank Physical Theatre whose Artistic Director, Dave McKenna, had begun to specialise in creating dance work with boys after very successful projects in Staffordshire and Warwickshire.

Boys Dancing has two simple aims:-

- To prove to boys and young men, who think that dance is just for girls, that through exciting, creative work that inspires and energises, dance could be something that is most definitely for them.
- To create dance opportunities for boys of all abilities, all backgrounds and from all communities thereby recognising, reflecting and celebrating the rich diversity of the West Midlands.

So far we have worked with over 2500 boys ranging from age 9 to 19 across 8 local authority areas in the West Midlands in schools, youth centres, after-school groups and prisons. The boys have performed on stage, on film, in an aircraft hangar, on a football pitch, in office space and on an historic working farm.

West Midlands Boys Dancing Alliance

The Boys Dancing Alliance was formed in 2009 in response to the decision that the West Midlands would focus on dance as part of the cultural programme that accompanied the London 2012 Olympic Games. As a region, we were tasked with producing projects that would inspire as many local people from across the West Midlands as possible to dance.

Working with partners in the Alliance from across the region has meant that the work of Boys Dancing is now bigger and broader in scope, more truly reflecting the diversity and talent within this region.

The members of the Boys Dance Alliance are:

Brian Bishop, Carly Mee, Clare Mitchell (Warwick Arts Centre)
Dave McKenna (Beingfrank Physical Theatre)
Alexa Pugh (Shropshire Council Arts Development Service)
Gill Callaghan (Music and Performing Arts Service, Staffordshire County Council)
Maggie Lewis (Black Country Dance Hub)
Sarah Jassal (Independent consultant)
Rose Beeston (Dancefest)
Steve Wilson (Worcester County Arts Service)

Who's Who

Partners & Funders

The West Midlands Boys Dancing Alliance is led by:

Beingfrank Physical Theatre
www.beingfrank.co.uk

Warwick Arts Centre – Education Department
www.warwickartscentre.co.uk/education

Our project partners and funders are:

- Arts Council England
www.artscouncil.org.uk
- Coventry Integrated Youth Support Service
www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200104/youth_support
- Worcestershire County Arts Service
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/arts.aspx
- DanceFest
www.dancefest.co.uk
- Shropshire Council Community Arts and Festivals Service
shropshire.gov.uk/arts-and-festivals
- Black Country Dance Hub
www.blackcountrydance.com
- Entrust: Music and Performing Arts Service, Staffordshire
www.education.staffordshire.gov.uk/Curriculum/Services/StaffordshirePerformingArts

Boys Dance Alliance Members

Brian Bishop, Carly Mee, Clare Mitchell (Warwick Arts Centre)
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Maggie Lewis (Black Country Dance Hub)
Sarah Jassal (Independent consultant)
Rose Beeston (Dancefest)
Steve Wilson (Worcester County Arts Service)

Lead Dance Artists

Adam Rutherford
Mark Anderson
Dave McKenna

Mark Worth
Nick Smith
Oliver Scott
Luke Sheppard
Ben Morley
Chris Bradley

Dance Apprentices

Thato Malebye
Cletus Chan
Frankie Hickman
Simon Ravenhill

Collaborators

Ashley Brown (Music)
Mathew Beckett (Film)
Liam Steel (Artistic Mentor)

Schools/Groups participating in Boys Dancing 2013–2014

Coventry/ Solihull/ Warwickshire

Alderbrook School, Solihull
Alice Stevens School, Coventry
Arc School, Ansley, Nuneaton
Arc School, Church End, Nuneaton
Arc School, Napton, Warwickshire
Cardinal Wiseman School and Languages College, Coventry
Ernesford Grange YPC, Coventry
Foxford School and Community Arts College, Coventry
Frederick Bird Primary School, Coventry
Henley-in-Arden School, Warwickshire
Hillfields YPC, Coventry
Holbrook Primary School, Coventry
John Henry Newman Catholic College, Solihull
Lyndon School, Solihull
North Warwickshire & Hinckley College
President Kennedy School, Coventry
The Avon Valley School, Rugby
The Coleshill School, Warwickshire
The Nuneaton Academy
Woodlands School, Warwickshire
Wyken Croft Primary School, Coventry

Shropshire

Abraham Darby Academy
Alveley Primary School
Bishop's Castle Community College
Blessed Robert Johnson Catholic College
Clunbury Primary School
Cheswardine Primary School
Coleham Primary School
Greenacres Primary School
St. George's Primary School, Clunbury

Whixhall Primary School

Worcestershire

Bishop Perowne CE College
Nunnery Wood High School
Hagley High School
The University of Worcester

Black Country

Brockmoor Primary School
St Margarets Primary School
Queen Victoria Primary School
Halesowen CE Primary School
Coseley High School
Holly Hall Academy
Oldbury Academy
Phoenix Collegiate
Wodensborough Ormiston Academy
Old Hill Primary School

Staffordshire

Youth Dance Group
St Michael's C.E. Primary School
Pye Green Valley Primary School
Wilnecote High School
Sherbrook Primary School
Ridgeway Primary



Key Biographies

David McKenna – Artistic Director, Beingfrank Physical Theatre

David McKenna has worked professionally in dance for over 16 years, creating new work and performing nationally and internationally with companies such as Janet Smith and Dancers, Earthfall and Motionhouse where he also held the role of Rehearsal Director. David is currently the Artistic Director of Beingfrank Physical Theatre, a company he founded in 2004 to facilitate projects that would inspire young men into dance. The company has gained a national reputation for innovative work particularly with hard to reach and vulnerable young men. In 2010 through a partnership with Warwick Arts Centre, David founded the West Midlands Boys Dance Alliance.

In April 2004 as member of Motionhouse David taught contact improvisation over 18 months to a group of adult residents in the Therapeutic Community unit of HMP Dovegate on a project funded by Arts Council England called Dancing Inside. Since then he has continued to work on several social inclusion dance projects with vulnerable groups in various settings alongside numerous organisations, creating live theatre performances, site-specific performances and dance films.

Projects include:

'Release Date' (2013): A dance film project in partnership with Boys Dancing and Shropshire Council working with 8 young men from HMP Stoke Heath, a young offenders prison in Shropshire.

'Inside Wyre' (2013): A dance, music, film and photography project with year 5 and year 8 students with severe learning difficulties from Wyre Forest Special School in Worcestershire to create a film entitled 'Never Stop Dreaming'.

'Bricks' (2011): A Cultural Olympiad project for the Olympics 2012, working with 8 young men from HMP Stoke Heath to create a dance film project in partnership with Boys Dancing.

Snap Dance Project (2010): A contemporary dance, photography and wellbeing project in partnership with DanceXchange and Youth Dance England working with young men dealing with mental health issues which concluded with a performance at the Patrick Centre.

'Brick by Brick' (2009): A dance, music and film project in partnership with filmmaker Chris Bradley and composer Andy Garby working with teenagers and young adults in care.

'Shift' (2008): A project in partnership with DanceXchange and Birmingham Royal Ballet, working with young men with mental health issues creating a dance film entitled 'Jojo'.

'Switchin' (2007): A dance film project in partnership with Creative Partnerships Birmingham, Lindsworth South School and filmmaker Dom Breadmore.

Adam Rutherford – Dance Artist

Adam is Artistic Director of RDC: Rutherford Dance Company and RDCYouth Dance Company. He trained at The Laban Centre for Movement and Dance. After graduating with a BA (Hons) in Dance Theatre he became a member of Transition Dance Company, performing works by Henri Oguike, Ben Wright and Luca Silvestrini. Since Transitions he has worked with many high-profile choreographers including Matthew Bourne, Wayne Sables, Helen Parlor and Tamsin Fitzgerald, amongst others. He has ten years teaching and performing experience including teaching ballet and contemporary technique on the

Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) scheme at DanceXchange.
www.rdcyouth.com

Ben Morley – Dance Artist

Ben was initially a participant in Boys Dancing projects. He graduated in Dance from Coventry University and is now working as a choreographer on Boys Dancing.

Chris Bradley – Dance Artist

Chris graduated from De Montfort University and has performed with Mercurial Dance, Springs Dance Company, Mobius Dance Theatre, KeiraDance, Parlor Dance and has also toured nationally with The Mission. Chris's work is based in Contemporary dance, but he is also trained in physical theatre and aerial work. Chris has also been teaching for over a decade, delivering classes and educational work to pupils and professionals alike.

Luke Sheppard – Dance Artist

Luke studied Dance, Theatre and Professional Practice at Coventry University, and was recently awarded a BBC Dance Fellowship to work as a Choreographer at Warwick Arts Centre.

Mark Anderson – Dance Artist

A professional dancer, teacher and choreographer, Mark Anderson co-directs infuseDANCE Company, working in Contemporary and Physical Theatre techniques and extensively with dance for film and photography. He works with a broad spectrum of participants in both mainstream and special education.
www.infusedance.co.uk

Mark Worth – Dance Artist

Mark is Co-Artistic Director of Highly Sprung Performance Company, which produces innovative and original projects that engage children and young people as performers. He is also a trained actor.
www.highlysprungperformance.co.uk

Nick Smith – Dance Artist

Nick Smith studied Dance at De Montfort University. Since graduating he has performed in his own work and with professional contemporary companies, including AR=Men in the UK and Tutu Reloaded in France. He teaches on a freelance basis with Coventry Performing Arts Service.

Oliver Scott – Dance Artist

Oliver Scott is the Artistic Director of Mercurial Dance. He is also guest lectures in Performing Arts at De Montfort University and Coventry University, combining this with the youth and educational work of his company. He has choreographed and directed a number of films and shows with young people.
www.mercurialdance.co.uk

Key Facts and Figures

- Warwick Arts Centre has been running boys dance activities since **1998**
- Beingfrank Physical Theatre partnered with Warwick Arts Centre to create Boys Dancing in **2005**
- Boys Dancing has worked with over **2,500 boys and young men** from across the West Midlands
- The Boys Dance Alliance currently cover **8 local authority areas** across the West Midlands, in **5 regions: Worcestershire/ Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire/ Black Country/ Shropshire/ Staffordshire.**
- Dance artists have worked with young men in **schools, youth centres, after-school clubs** and **prisons.**
- Live dance performances and dance films have taken place in **Warwick Arts Centre, Theatre Severn, Fort Dunlop, Touchwood Shopping Centre**, in an **aircraft hangar**, on a **football pitch**, on a **farm**, in a **swimming pool**, in a **school** and in a **church** – to name but a few!
- Boys Dancing 2013–2014 will employ **9 male dance artists** and **4 dance apprentices.** The apprentices will receive training and a qualification from **Laban Guild** as part of their apprenticeship.



Project Areas

Boys Dancing will cover 5 regions in the West Midlands for project work 2013–2014:



Worcestershire

Dancefest is managing the Boys Dancing project in Worcestershire for the first time this year, in partnership with Worcestershire Dance Teachers. More and more boys are taking part in community classes and projects and DanceFest welcomes this opportunity to further develop their work with boys.

Groups involved:

Bishop Perowne CE College
Nunnery Wood High School
Hagley High School
The University of Worcester

Lead artist:

Dave McKenna

Performance:

Worcestershire's performance in 2014 will be themed to tie in with Britain's First World War Centenary Commemorations.

Rehearsals: February – April 2014
Performance: 5th April 2014
Venue: College Hall, College Green, Worcester

boysdancing.org/projects/worcestershire



Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire

Warwick Arts Centre and Beingfrank Physical Theatre have been working with boys and young men in schools and youth centres since 2006, creating live performances and dance films. In February 2014, 20 groups of dancers joined together to make one giant performance in the concert hall at Warwick Arts Centre. Over 200 boys danced to a live DJ with music composed for the show.

Groups involved:

Alderbrook School, Solihull
Alice Stevens School, Coventry
Arc School, Ansley, Nuneaton
Arc School, Church End, Nuneaton
Arc School, Napton, Warwickshire
Cardinal Wiseman School and Languages College, Coventry
Ernesford Grange YPC, Coventry

Foxford School and Community Arts College, Coventry
Frederick Bird Primary School, Coventry
Henley-in-Arden School, Warwickshire
Hillfields YPC, Coventry
Holbrook Primary School, Coventry
John Henry Newman Catholic College, Solihull
Lyndon School, Solihull
North Warwickshire & Hinckley College
President Kennedy School, Coventry
The Avon Valley School, Rugby
The Coleshill School, Warwickshire
The Nuneaton Academy
Woodlands School, Warwickshire
Wyken Croft Primary School, Coventry

Lead artists:

Dave McKenna
Adam Rutherford
Mark Anderson
Luke Sheppard

Apprentices:

Thato Malebye
Simon Ravenhill
Cletus Chan

Performance:

‘Artful Dodgers’ explored the topic of avoidance:

“Avoidance: the act of avoiding or shunning; keeping clear of, keep away from, steer clear of, pass up; evading and preventing. It is the art of the dodge, a side step, to tiptoe or dance around the truth. The alternative to avoiding is to tackle head on, challenge, confront, undertake, engage in or deal with.”

Rehearsals: October 2013 – February 2014
Performance: 11 February 2014
Venue: Butterworth Hall, Warwick Arts Centre

boysdancing.org/projects/coventry-solihull-and-warwickshire



Black Country

The Black Country has been involved with Boys Dancing since 2009, with regional artists creating some amazing work in theatres and site-specific locations including Fort Dunlop in Birmingham – the location for one of the Quiet Man Suite dance films. For the first time, 2013–2014 activity brings together Sandwell and Dudley under the umbrella of the Black Country Dance Hub (BCDH).

Groups involved:

Brockmoor Primary School
St Margarets Primary School
Queen Victoria Primary School

Halesowen CE Primary School
Coseley High School
Holly Hall Academy
Oldbury Academy
Phoenix Collegiate
Wodensborough Ormiston Academy
Old Hill Primary School

Lead artists:

Chris Bradley
Oliver Scott
Ben Morley

Performance:

Black Country Boys Dancing are exploring individuality – what makes each of us unique. Should we celebrate our differences or hide them away? Should we avoid standing out from the crowd or shout out loud about what each of us can offer? The importance and impact of individuals is examined and judged!

Rehearsals: January 2014 – March 2014
Performance: 17 March (Sandwell), 27 March (Dudley)
Venue: Wednesbury Town Hall (Sandwell), Dudley Town Hall (Dudley)

boysdancing.org/projects/black-country



Shropshire

On Saturday 6th July 2013, young men and boys performed together at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, as part of the fourth year of Boys Dancing in Shropshire. Featuring over 100 participants, Manitou was choreographed by professional dance artists in partnership with the participating boys. Although Manitou has already been performed, Boys Dancing activity is still continuing in Shropshire. Current projects include work with young men from Stoke Heath prison.

Groups involved:

Abraham Darby Academy
Alveley Primary School
Bishop's Castle Community College
Blessed Robert Johnson Catholic College
Clunbury Primary School
Cheswardine Primary School
Coleham Primary School
Greenacres Primary School
St. George's Primary School, Clunbury
Whixhall Primary School

Lead artists:

Adam Rutherford

Mark Anderson

Performance:

'Manitou' was performed by Shropshire schoolboys at Acton Scott, an historic working farm. It culminated with a performance by RDC Youth dance company from Birmingham. 'Manitou' is the name most widely given to large loaders used on farms, but is also a reference to a spirit within every living thing. The dance dealt with the concept of avoidance: should you dance around the truth or confront it? What would your manitou do?

Rehearsals: April 2013 – July 2013
Performance: 6 July 2013
Venue: Acton Scott, Historic Working Farm

Staffordshire



Staffordshire has enjoyed three years of partnership with Boys Dancing, giving opportunities to many boys around the county. Their piece 'Dark Water', one of six sections in The Quiet Man Suite, was a great success, involving four Staffordshire schools with 75 boys aged from 9 to 16. Entrust has worked alongside the choreographers to bring thought-provoking performances to new audiences, including Staffordshire's Performing Arts Service itself – which has inspired them to create the next project as a partnership of musicians and dancers.

Groups involved:

Youth Dance Group
St Michael's C.E. Primary School
Pye Green Valley Primary School
Wilnecote High School
Sherbrook Primary School
Ridgeway Primary

Lead artists:

Mark Worth
Nick Smith

Apprentice:

Frankie Hickman

Performance:

Like Worcestershire's performance, 'White Feathers' is explicitly linked to the First World War commemorations in 2014. During the war, women would hand out white feathers – which were seen as a symbol of cowardice – to men who had not joined up to fight. The dance piece will explore issues surrounding conscientious objection to the War.

Rehearsals: February 2014 – April 2014
Performance: 7 April 2014
Venue: Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

boysdancing.org/projects/staffordshire

Project Funding

Boys Dancing is currently funded by Arts Council England's Grants for the Arts programme.

Boys Dancing also receives funding and support in kind from partners in the West Midlands Boys Dance Alliance. These partners are:

- Coventry Integrated Youth Support Service
- Worcestershire County Arts Service
- DanceFest
- Shropshire Council Arts Development Service
- Black Country Dance Hub
- Entrust: Music and Performing Arts Service, Staffordshire



Case Studies

Dylan Davies

- Dylan is a schoolboy who has been a participant in Boys Dancing projects for the last three years.

"I was at primary school when I started dance for boys, I'm in secondary now. At school someone said there was this boys dancing club, and my mum encouraged me to go along to the taster session they had. So I went along to the taster session and I got gripped!

"Before I didn't think much about dance, really. We did theatre dancing in school plays, but not real physical dancing. Usually the dance clubs were for both boys and girls, and usually you'd think: "Oh, that's for girls" – but this was just boys doing it, so there's nothing to be embarrassed about. And there's a male teacher, so that helped as well. Now it feels like boys can dance, it's not just for girls, everyone can do it.

"To start with it was a big challenge because I didn't have any dance skills really – except the school plays when you learn the moves to words. So just dancing to music was new to me, I wasn't used to it. But Adam [the choreographer] got me into it – I think he could see through my head and saw: 'He can do this'.

"It's fun working with a professional male dancer – he's got me into doing other dance stuff too. He told me to do ballet to build up my strength in other places where I didn't have strength. He said that doing ballet would help me improve and to be able to do things like contemporary. So now I do ballet and street dance weekly, and contemporary dance clubs in the holidays.

"It's been fun performing in the different places too. It was interesting performing on the farm for [Manitou](#) – you don't really expect to do a performance outside, on a farm! The only problem was there was lots of ducks where we were dancing! Performing in the theatre is just as fun, although you only get one chance to get it right. We did our dance on the farm six times. And with dancing on a film, you can do it again and again.

"Dancing makes me feel great, and makes me do more exercise than just football. It's made me a bit more confident in class. It's made me put my hand up a bit more, because I got more confident in dancing. Because before, it was something that I wouldn't do, but I did do it and I got used to it. It's made me think differently and have more ideas in class as well. Like, in the dance lessons, you see how something can become something else – and that makes me think in different ways in class as well.

"When I leave school I want to be a dance choreographer. I'd love to choreograph a performance and be in it at the same time. And have a studio somewhere – or you could just practice in a field!"

Ben Morley

- Ben was initially involved in Boys Dancing as a schoolboy participant. He went on to study Dance at university and will be working as a choreographer on the Boys Dancing projects in the Black Country.

"When I was a kid at school I wasn't into dance, but I was very sporty. My older sister did loads of dance though – she went to a dance school and did ballet and tap etc. So because of her I was always dragged along to these dance festivals – but I never used to watch, I just used to be outside playing football!

“Then when I was in Year 7 or 8, the dance teacher in my school suggested that I got involved in a Boys Dancing project with Dave McKenna & Mark Worth [choreographers]. At first I just used to be really quiet and sit in the corner, because when I first started I had no confidence – I was always in my little shell. But Dave and the guys just kept knocking on that shell, trying to get it to crack – and they did it! I struggle with dyslexia, but when I started dancing I realised that I could perform what I wanted to express, rather than having to read or write it, so I found I was really comfortable with it. I did the project the following year again. From then I figured out that I probably quite liked dance! I started doing classes at school, then studied Dance for GCSE and A level, and trained outside of school as well with Coventry Youth Dance and BeingFrank Youth. Eventually I went on to get a scholarship to study Dance at Coventry University – which is amazing for someone who initially didn’t like dance!

“At first it was hard to tell my friends that dance was something I wanted to pursue as, when you’re that age, you automatically think that dance is for girls. Boys are meant to play football and get dirty and scruffy and the girls look pretty in tutus and tights! I did get a bit of grief every now and then but then once you show them what you can do, they get it. I performed some dances that I had created in school assemblies, and that kind of hit them in the face! When you start getting older and thinking about career paths, most of my friends were going off to study things like Business at university and I know they were thinking: “Ben’s going off into dance, so... good luck with that!” But I know that it’s just about being accepted for what I want to do, that this is who I am and this is how I want to live the rest of my life: performing, teaching and helping others do that too.

“I remember coming off stage after that very first Boys Dancing performance on such an adrenaline high and thinking “This is what I need to do now.” When you’re on stage there’s always uncertainty – you might have worked out all the choreography and have got all the moves, but you still don’t know what’s going to happen in the moment of performance. It’s like you’re walking on thin ice and I enjoy that sense of risk. And when you’re in the studio, coming up with these amazing lifts and jumps and wondering if you’re going to be able to pull it off on stage. As dancers, we’re always trying to push ourselves to the next level and I love that. So if anyone ever asks me: “Why are you doing dance? Why don’t you go off and work in business or management or something more normal?” I know that I won’t get that same sense of accomplishment, or challenge – or the adrenaline rush of performing. And I can’t sit down for longer than two minutes at a time anyway!

“I feel very lucky to have been given the opportunity of being a participant and performing with Boys Dancing from such a young age. I think I’d never be able to do some of things I now do if I hadn’t started when I was young. But after luck, then it’s hard work to get to where you want to be. You’ve got to make sacrifices and take risks and I took a lot of risks. But it’s certainly paid off. It’s been a great journey from being on a stage for the first time with all the other little participants to now being a professional dance artist. Now I can say to the lads that I’m teaching to dance: “If you put your back into it then you can be here as well” because that’s what happened to me. It’s been a privilege to have come on the journey with people like Dave and Mark as well: the choreographers I’ve met through Boys Dancing have been there every step of the way, helping me out with opportunities and development and performances.

“Boys Dancing, ultimately, helped me to realise what I wanted to do in life. I’d say it made me who I am today and gave me the opportunity to meet some remarkable people on the way. When I was younger I was very shy, very quiet, but now it’s opened the door for me and given me so many amazing opportunities. And I’ve learnt to really apply myself and go after something that I want – you can’t expect things to just fall into your lap.

"In the future, I'd just like to carry on performing until my body says 'No'. Until I deflate! I love teaching too – it's great to be able to change lads' perceptions about dance, because I understand where they're coming from."

Thomasina Carlyle

- Thomasina is a mum of two boys who have been involved in various Boys Dancing projects for the last three years.

"I had actually already tried to persuade my son Dylan to try dance before as I thought he'd like it. There was a club at the school but it was a mixed boys and girls club, and it was run by a woman and he wasn't having any of it! So when the letter came through about some dancing for boys happening, with a male teacher, I said: "Come on, have a go at this, it sounds really good." I didn't need to do any persuading after that because once he'd tried it, he was hooked!

"Being involved in Boys Dancing has influenced our whole family – it changed our family dynamic. It's brought a different energy into our family and as a result of it we enjoy going to see dance as well. We like watching different types of dance, and we enjoy discussing it afterwards. I find my boys are really informed and insightful in the way that they discuss dance, which I find quite stimulating. So their being involved has had a benefit on the whole family, really.

"Seeing their confidence grow through doing Boys Dancing has been really fantastic. And this has been in more ways than just about dance. Dylan really grew as a person because he was confident about dance and realised he had something special about him, so he realised then that he had potential in other things as well. That gave him a more 'can do' attitude in his more academic work too. So I think he blossomed in other subjects at school as a result of taking part in dance. I really believe that it is transformative.

"As well as growing in confidence, the skills they've learnt through the project are huge. They're more focussed. Before, they were quite into their sport generally, but now Dylan in particular really takes his fitness seriously – doing press-ups in his bedroom to build up his upper body strength and all sorts of things. Being involved in a creative process has helped them think more creatively in class, too. There's something about the way they learnt to think about movement creatively that transfers to problem-solving and thinking in different ways in class as well.

"The biggest challenge for me now is to continue to find opportunities for the boys to carry on with dancing, now they're so into it! We live nowhere near a city, so we're relatively deprived in terms of opportunities for things like this. So the Boys Dancing work across Shropshire has been very unique and very special in providing opportunities like this locally.

"I would absolutely love to continue getting involved in things like Boys Dancing again. I have really seen the value in it, not just for my boys, but all the boys that have taken part over the last three years, from diverse backgrounds. It's a really positive release for boys, being involved in that creative activity, and it being physical creative activity. I think that's something that boys really tap into."

Thato Malebye

- Thato has been involved in Boys Dancing for a number of years – initially as a participant, and now as a Boys Dancing apprentice.

"I grew up in South Africa and my first introduction to dance was doing South African Gumboot dancing when I was really young. Thinking about it now, that was the only thing that I felt really fitted me. I'm quite sporty and got good academic grades, but there was nothing that I really excelled in other than the Gumboot dancing. But in South Africa everything is about getting a good academic education and working hard to get a job, so doing dance wasn't ever really an option.

"Then I moved to the UK and had to get used to a different culture and being the new guy at school – a school where dance just wasn't cool. Being the new guy I didn't want to go against the grain and got involved in sports instead – which helped me make friends and settle in. So it wasn't that I didn't like dance, it just wasn't really on my radar as a career option, or any part of my life trajectory at that point.

"About five years ago, the Boys Dancing team came to Lillington Youth Centre, where I used to go to the youth club, and did a taster session of one of their performances. Up until that point, dance was never really a masculine thing to me. At my school, most people that did dance were girls. So that was the first time I saw guys my age, being masculine, doing incredible stuff. It was a new thing that I hadn't seen before: normal guys who just did things like I did, like listening to hip hop, into the whole skateboarding thing, playing a bit of guitar, so I was like "OK... Guys do this! Maybe this is my opportunity to give it a go?"

"So I got involved with the project as a participant and I really enjoyed it. It helped that Dave [choreographer] and the others saw something in me and said "You should try doing more of this, you're catching on really well". So from there I kept in touch with Dave and the rest of the group, and whenever they did workshops I'd get involved and have a go.

"I don't think I'd have got so involved in dance if it had all been female teachers. Particularly for young people, the inhibitions are much greater when there's someone of the opposite gender there. You don't want to look like an idiot in front of a girl. But once the bug has bitten you... Now I go to a ballet class when I'm the only guy with eleven girls!

"As well as workshops, I started learning to dance from the internet: I learnt street dance moves off YouTube! After that I started doing proper dance classes, worked some more with Dave, and then, sort of by chance, ended up being an apprentice on the Boys Dancing project a couple of years later. I'd decided to do some voluntary youth work back at Lillington Youth Centre, and the first day I turned up to volunteer was the first day of a Boys Dancing project with Chris Bradley as choreographer. I just asked Chris if I could help out, and I started working with him on choreography and teaching. Warwick Arts Centre suggested that I apply for a formal, funded position as an apprentice on the project, which I was successful in, so that's how I started teaching dance too.

"Being involved in Boys Dancing over a number of years as a participant and an apprentice has been scary, fun and life-changing! One of the biggest turning points for me was working on a piece with the other apprentices: being immersed in dance for three weeks with guys my age who were all passionate about dance and had all different kinds of training and styles completely changed everything. I went from a guy who just liked street dance to signing up for ballet classes, tap classes, modern jazz and lyrical classes – as well as a bit of capoeira!

"Although I was the least technically trained of all the apprentices (all the rest of them had just completed degrees in dance), I enjoyed it because it pushed me – I enjoyed the challenge of having to work a little harder with movement patterns, technique and

flexibility. Not only did I learn to dance but I also got to meet some great people, and I still have those links now with other dancers from all over the UK.

"The most difficult thing was realising that I loved dance at the age of nineteen or twenty, when everyone else had been dancing for so long. Knowing that there were gaps in my technique that I had to fill meant that I had to let go of my ego: the first ballet class I joined was full of little ten year old girls, but I knew I needed the training, so I had to get over that!

"In a lot of ways, Boys Dancing has helped me to stop taking myself too seriously. Because when you start dancing, or working on a new dance, at the beginning it all looks a bit silly. So once you've learned to let go and not worry about looking silly or awkward you start to feel more confident. And also more confident in how you present yourself in other situations as well, not just in dancing.

"I dance everywhere now! Even if there's just music playing in a shopping centre, now that I'm over feeling silly, I'll just start doing a little dance! But not even 'cool' dancing. My friends pretend they're not with me! Dance has a way of making people laugh or smile or feel other things – it's really engaging. Seeing how people respond or react to dance is great, whether I'm performing myself or helping other people learn as a teacher."

Angus Davies

- Angus is a schoolboy who has worked on Boys Dancing projects for three years.

"My brother Dylan was doing boys dance before me and he came back from school and he said it was real good so I thought 'Oh yeah, I'd better do this!' Then I did the taster session and I really liked it. I thought 'Wow, this thing is really good. Why haven't I done it before?' and I tried it again, and did the actual dancing lessons and I was like: 'Boom!'

"I kind of thought dance was just for girls, but then when I got into stuff like contemporary dance and hip hop and things like that, I thought: 'This is for boys as well' – and now I've gone and taken part.

"It's been fun doing all the dancing and working with Adam [the choreographer]. It's also challenging because it's the first time ever I've tried dance. So starting the project was the hardest bit because it was a whole new experience for me. But Adam makes you really jump into it and he helped me really enjoy it.

"All the different places I've performed have all had really different atmospheres. At Warwick Arts Centre it was like a proper performance, on a proper stage. In '[Hangar](#)' the aircraft hangar was something you're not going to go into every day! Dancing on a farm for '[Manitou](#)' was quite odd, but really fun at the same time. I really like watching back what I've done on the films.

"I've learnt loads of new things. I'd never really done dance before, so to begin with it was like a big wave of new things crashing down on me, but then easing out and now I find it really fun. Dancing makes me feel like I'm something special – it's a new thing that I'm good at. It's real fun stuff.

"When I'm older, I want to be a dancer – not necessarily a choreographer though. Contemporary dance is my favourite. I'd like to dance somewhere like the hangar or on a farm again – but do something completely different that hasn't been done before."

Kat Holwill

- Kat is a mum whose son has been involved in Boys Dancing projects for over three years. She also works at a school that is currently participating in Boys Dancing.

"My involvement with Boys Dancing was initially purely as a parent. I saw how much my son Sam enjoyed it and how much he got out of it. Sam was quite hesitant when he first started, although he had done some dance before. He'd always loved dance. But Boys Dancing was the first time he'd really thrown himself into a dance project. Now he's been involved for three years, he's really become so confident.

"In the dance classes that Sam has been to in the past, the vast majority were girls. I think that boys are self-conscious about dancing in front of girls. Sam lost interest in going to mixed dance classes as he didn't like to be in a huge group of girls, whereas with Boys Dancing there's none of that self-consciousness.

"As parents, the chance to see your child on stage is amazing. Seeing our children perform on big professional stages like Theatre Severn and Warwick Arts Centre just blew us away. So I feel that, as a parent, I also got a lot out of it as well as my son. All parents are proud of their children – it's natural. So seeing your child achieving something – especially something really different like dance – is fantastic. Even if they never do anything more with dance in their life, they've got that experience to draw on. And the filmed performance is something we can keep as a momento, forever.

"Everyone that was involved was so enthusiastic and Adam [choreographer] was fantastic with the children. He was quite strict, which is brilliant, but he was so enthusiastic and really encouraged them. Sam has definitely developed in his confidence, his focus and his enthusiasm for dance.

"So, having had such a fantastic first-hand experience of Boys Dancing as a parent, when the chance arose for new schools to get involved in 2013, I immediately approached the school where I work. Once I explained how great the project is they were all really enthused and up for it. You get emails to schools suggesting things all the time, but as soon as I saw the one about Boys Dancing, I instantly wanted to take up the offer as I knew all about it, so it was easy to sell it to everyone else at school.

"The challenge came when we first spoke to the boys at school about doing it. Some of their immediate reactions were "Well I don't want to do dance. I can't dance." But we persuaded them to just try the taster session and see what they think – and from that, in fact, the vast majority of them did go on to do the project. It's hard if you have inhibitions, but once they've had a go, everyone thoroughly enjoyed it!

"The project is so good as boys that potentially have talent in something like dance aren't usually encouraged much – the path tends to veer towards sports, more often than not. So this opportunity is invaluable – to be creative, to do physical activity that they really enjoy, and to have all those memories of what they've achieved. And to be honest, whether a boy is talented or not it doesn't really matter, because they get the opportunity to enjoy it and have fun. It's fantastic on so many levels.

"What's been particularly great to see is some of the boys that perhaps aren't the most athletic, or naturally gifted; how they have tried so hard and really achieved much more than we ever thought they would. Their concentration and focus has surprised us. They've been able to listen to Adam and follow instructions really well. And some of the moves they've been taught are really difficult, so it challenges them, but they do achieve it. So it's good for their physical and mental development, as well as the creative and social side of things.

"It's really special to have an opportunity to work with a professional dance artist – particularly at our smaller, more rural schools, who perhaps don't get the range of opportunities because we're just further away from things. Each year the project has been different – which I think is important. Quite how they're going to top it next year I don't know! But I'm sure that with all the imagination of everyone involved they'll think of something!"

Sam Newton

- Schoolboy Sam has participated in Boys Dancing projects for over three years.

"I liked dance even when I was really little. I danced in the middle of my Mum's wedding when I was only one year old! So I already enjoyed dancing; I did a dance club at school and I did street dance lessons at another school for a bit as well. I used to do gymnastics too, but I was eight years old, and in the under eight's class there were a few boys, but in the eights and over class there were none. So although I was eight I decided to move down. Then I stopped going.

"I didn't think that dance was just for girls though because I liked dancing anyway – but I do think that being involved in Boys Dancing projects has made me like it more. Before, all my dance teachers were female, so it was nice to have a change and have a man teacher. And now, I think I've actually done more dance sessions with a male teacher than female teachers!

"I learnt quite a bit from working with Adam [choreographer]. Before I just really knew about street dance, but now I really enjoy contemporary, more artistic dance too. I've done every single dance for boys that's come to the school!

"I thought dancing was quite hard when I first did a Boys Dancing performance, but now I've just grown into it. When I was eight we did a performance at Theatre Severn, on the stage, and I felt bit nervous. But I really like performing now.

"It is always fun working on the dance projects but sometimes there are other people messing around. When I'm dancing, I really concentrate a lot. When we did the [Manitou](#) performance at Acton Scott, I was at the front so all the other boys were looking at me for the timing, because I've been doing Boys Dancing for three years now.

"The performance on the farm was really tiring because we only had fifteen seconds break in between each dance. I enjoyed being on the farm though. It was different to being on a stage because there was loads of stuff all around where we were performing. We loved playing tag in the maze, which was right next to where we were performing. You can run around in the wings of a proper stage, but it's not the same. Warwick Arts Centre had a massive stage when we did our performance there. That was awesome, because we got some money to spend in Costcutters! We were allowed to go and buy some sweets and a drink. That performance at Warwick Arts Centre was quite difficult because we were performing in boiler suits and they're all stiff. But we got our own changing rooms, that was fun!

"I really hope that Boys Dancing is happening again – I don't do as much dance as I used to. I'd definitely like to do more dancing projects though. One thing I'd love to do is a dance in the trees! You could dance and be monkeys at the same time – dancing in monkey costumes! It would just be hard to practice in our hall at school. We'd have to get the ropes out, I suppose."

See boysdancing.org/stories for case studies online

Testimonials

From participants:

"They showed us something we've never done before... Our choreographer taught at the Royal Ballet. It made us feel proud and privileged." Year 5 boy

"It made me realise that if you go on having a go, you will get somewhere with a subject."

"I love dance for boys, I hope I can do it again next year!"

"I was bullied before, but dance has given me something positive in my life – hope of a brighter future."

"Being involved in Boys Dancing has given me the confidence to attend auditions at a local professional theatre. I wouldn't have done that without having been involved in the project."

"Before I didn't really think dance was for boys. But then I thought, this is really good actually!"

"I think that to be a part of a dance, and a film, is like the biggest opportunity you could have."

"I've learnt that doing dance, you bring drama, you bring all sorts of things to it. And it also helps with your confidence levels – in other subjects and other things in life as well."

"It's affected my confidence levels in class – I've been putting my hand up lots now"

"Before I just felt like a small person: literally, and my feelings as well. But now I feel like a big person, and big feelings as well."

"I like the way the choreographer treated us like we were members of his dance company. Like we were professionals."

"I've got fitter! It pushes you to the limits"

"Dancing is my passion. It's the best thing that's happened to me. Being a lad, there's not enough opportunities for dancing. But with this project, all different styles and all different types of boys can come together and start dancing together, and meet new friends."

"It's been a phenomenal experience, just being with so many different people. I think I'm definitely going to take on a lot of skills."

"Just to do a dance with over a hundred people is unforgettable. But to do it on film is even more unforgettable."

"With dancing I can show people what I really am. And what I really love."

"It's been an amazing experience. I don't think I'll ever forget it."

“This project has just been a dream come true. It’s been absolutely phenomenal. It shows other people how I’m feeling, so I sort of express myself through dance.”

From parents:

“When he started, he wouldn’t go for school plays. He wouldn’t go for speaking parts. He would cry and have to be taken out. Now he will do speaking parts, and actively puts himself forward.”

“The whole process, from workshops to final performance was brilliant and we would love the opportunity to be involved again”

“We have loved being part of the project, the whole thing has been such a positive experience for our boys and the performance on Saturday was outstanding!”

“Thank you so much for another spectacular project. It was really quite exceptional; a really inspiring project.”

“Thank you so much for creating this opportunity for so many boys not just giving them the opportunity to discover and develop talent and skills but for the opportunity to be empowered & gain confidence on such a large scale professional platform.”

“I know how difficult it is to set up projects like this in schools but the standard of what the boys were able to produce with the incredibly skilled teaching in short concentrated time was exceptional.”

“The project has had a major influence on our lives. It’s been really transformative for my boys. It’s awakened something in them and we’re really appreciative that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

From teachers:

“It needed a male role model for the close physical work he did with the boys: it would not have worked with a female dancer. He showed a masculinity they could relate to, without being macho. It was not intimidating. He was not an Alpha Male, but he was not feminine either.”

“His approach as a man to teaching the boys dance was completely different. He let them be boys. I saw boys in a different light. He showed me how different a creative man can be with boys: what an importantly different approach that is.”

“He inspired the boys, had new ideas and concepts they had not encountered before.”

“One boy, who is severely autistic, has been completely changed by boys dance. Other boys now respect him for what he can do, and he has gained the confidence to go up on stage. He has asked to attend outside groups, which he would not do before, and has joined a local breakdance crew. He has been able to develop a social circle he did not have before.”

“A boy who was disengaged at school has become very focussed on dance, but also more motivated in his school work. He has taken up ballet and wants to pursue a career in dance, seeing the dance artist he worked with as a real role model. “

“A lot of boys who get involved do have discipline issues stuck behind a desk. This suits them more and gives them a sense of discipline... They developed patience and control, and we can see that in other performing arts lessons: they are more focussed.”

“They practice and practice and practice. At After School Club they have asked for a practice space: the other kids sit and watch. The staff join in and the children teach the staff the moves.”

“The boys and parents have all been full of wonder and praise.”

“The choreographer was amazing with the boys and they have gained massively from working with him, in terms of performance skills, discipline and team work.”

“I just wanted to thank you for your amazing project yet again this year. The boys got a fantastic experience.”

From local authority partners:

“The dance performance was a tangible achievement for the boys. When we had the shows, they were so excited. These boys don’t get many achievements... they still talk about it now.”

“It had a massive impact. Some schools are now running After School dance classes with boys. In one centre, the boys started rehearsals as they were asked to perform in a residential home. At one school boys have now decided to do A Level dance. Two boys from one rural primary are now doing ballet lessons.”

“It was important to show we could do it. To show we can work across services and the real impact that arts can have on people’s lives.”

“Over the past two years, more money has gone into this project from our service than anything else. Everyone in our team saw the value in it.”

“Some staff were quite sceptical at the start, but Boys Dancing has changed their perceptions and attitudes. They now see the value of dance and the changes in the boys. They have the confidence to bring dance in and to work with dance artists as they have had a good experience.”

“Boys Dance Alliance has been a support network. It’s proved we can work as a team to take an idea forward. It’s refreshing to be part of something like that.”

From dance artists and apprentices:

“It upped my teaching: I learned how to control a group”

“Before I got involved with this project, dance was never really an option for me. This opportunity has reignited my interest.”

“I’ve always been taught by women. To work with a man who is very powerful has helped me and informed the way I work. He challenged me, and was good at asking ‘Why?’”

“It’s helped me to grow, given me ideas how to move myself forward as a dance film maker. I want to put more energy into working with film and dance photography: it’s still creatively stretching me.”

“It gave me the opportunity to work in settings I had not worked in before, and with a wide range of ages and abilities. It helped me fine-tune my teaching methods.”

“Lots of things have changed already in my practice. I’m having new artistic ideas. I will script things in advance and be more detailed, even if I have to change it. I will push for good locations and costumes.”

“The choreographer’s provocation took my understanding of how to approach creating physical theatre to a whole different level that I never thought possible. He opened up so many conceptual choreographic methods to me.”

“When the boys realise how much they can be pushed and how much they’re capable of, they then start to take that approach into other areas of their lives.”



Media Enquiries

Contact

For all press and media enquiries relating to Boys Dancing please contact:

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PRESS RELEASE



22 January 2014

Once In A Lifetime Opportunity for Warwickshire's Artful Dodgers

- **Boys Dancing project showcase performance Artful Dodgers at Warwick Arts Centre 11 February 2014 at 7pm.**
- **Boys Dancing is a project led by Warwick Arts Centre which aims to get boys and young men into dance.**
- **Over 200 boys from schools and youth groups across Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire will dance together in the Butterworth Hall accompanied by a live DJ.**

On February 11 2014, over 200 local lads will transform Warwick Art's Centre's Butterworth Hall into an extraordinary dance hall for their unique showcase performance of Artful Dodgers.

Artful Dodgers is the result of five months' Boys Dancing work with 21 schools and youth groups across Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire, where professional male dance artists have worked with boys and young men – most of whom have never danced before – to devise the show.

Each group has been working separately over the last few months, however, the 11th of February will see them all come together on one night only for a unique performance at Warwick Arts Centre.

David McKenna, Artistic Director of Beingfrank Physical Theatre and Creative Director of the Boys Dancing project explains how the performance has come together:

“The process this year has been particularly challenging! Myself and four other male dance artists have choreographed over 200 lads, of different ages & abilities, all working in separate groups, creating dance material that will be pieced together like a jigsaw in the final performance.

“The theme that ties the piece together is ‘avoidance’ – hence the title Artful Dodgers. I wanted to explore the kind of techniques young men employ when avoiding difficult situations. Investigating this theme has enabled them to discuss openly things that they avoid, like confrontation, touch, showing their feelings in public and facing up to responsibility or bad news.

“Artful Dodgers will blend different movement styles from contemporary to breakdancing and street dance, from parkour to martial arts techniques. It will consist of moments of

intense physical theatre and fluid contemporary dance all knitted together to present the boys' creative expression on what avoidance means to them.”

For many of the lads this will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform on a reputed professional stage, and it looks set to be an unforgettable night. The stalls seats of the concert hall will be removed so the boys will be dancing their grand finale to an audience watching from the balconies above. They will also be dancing along to a live DJ/ Sound Artist, Ashley Brown, who has produced music uniquely for the performance. The soundtrack features a specially commissioned rap 'Avoidance' from performance poet Ali Gadema, where the prose revolves around the relationship between a father and son.

-Ends-

For further information about Boys Dancing please contact:

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Notes to editors

Boys Dancing

Boys Dancing is led by Warwick Arts Centre and Beingfrank Physical Theatre and has two simple aims:

- To prove to boys and young men, who think that dance is just for girls, that through exciting, creative work that inspires and energises, dance could be something that is most definitely for them.
- To create dance opportunities for boys of all abilities, all backgrounds and from all communities thereby recognising, reflecting and celebrating the rich diversity of the West Midlands.

The project is funded by Arts Council England and partners in the Boys Dancing Alliance.

www.boysdancing.org

Warwick Arts Centre

Based in Coventry in the West Midlands and sitting on the campus of the University of Warwick, Warwick Arts Centre is one of the most significant presenters and co-producers of contemporary performing and visual arts in the UK, with a programme including theatre, classical music, live art, dance, music, literature, comedy, family events and visual art. Warwick Arts Centre's work is avowedly contemporary and international in scope and dimension.

www.warwickartscentre.co.uk

Beingfrank Physical Theatre

Beingfrank Physical Theatre creates breathtaking expressive and intensely physical performance often in collaboration with other artists and art forms. Set up in 2004 to inspire young men to dance, Beingfrank continues to stimulate and engage audiences of all ages with its distinctive raw physicality.

www.beingfrank.co.uk

Schools and Youth Groups performing in Artful Dodgers:

Alderbrook School, Solihull
Alice Stevens School, Coventry
Arc School, Ansley, Nuneaton
Arc School, Church End, Nuneaton
Arc School, Napton, Warwickshire
Cardinal Wiseman School and Languages College, Coventry
Ernesford Grange YPC, Coventry
Foxford School and Community Arts College, Coventry
Frederick Bird Primary School, Coventry
Henley-in-Arden School, Warwickshire
Hillfields YPC, Coventry
Holbrook Primary School, Coventry
John Henry Newman Catholic College, Solihull
Lyndon School, Solihull
North Warwickshire & Hinckley College
President Kennedy School, Coventry
The Avon Valley School, Rugby
The Coleshill School, Warwickshire
The Nuneaton Academy
Woodlands School, Warwickshire
Wyken Croft Primary School, Coventry

Ashley Brown

Ashley Brown is a digital artist based in Coventry, whose work has spanned music and sound production, film scores, interactive and digital art installations, iOS/Android development, mobile and locative based augmented experiences, custom electronic interfaces and electronic instrument creation. He has a strong international relationship with digital artists in Poland, France, Germany and USA and is Director of Ludic Rooms – a digital arts organisation.

Ali Gadema

Ali Gadema has been working as an established rapper, poet, hip hop theatre practitioner and educator nationally for many years. He has received national and international recognition performing in Jamaica, Washington DC and other places around the globe.



PRESS RELEASE



Boys Dancing: Live, Online and in Digital

- New website www.boysdancing.org launches 4 November 2013 12:00 a.m.

Warwick Arts Centre are pleased to announce the launch of boysdancing.org, the stunning new website that showcases the work of Boys Dancing – an ongoing project from their Education Department.

Since 2007, Boys Dancing has worked with over 2,500 boys and young men from across the West Midlands, enabling them to participate in live and filmed dance performances. The project aims to show young men that dance is not just for girls and create dance opportunities for boys of all abilities and all backgrounds.

For the first time, the new website will allow all the work of the project, both past and current, to sit together in one eye-catching hub. Designed to be a one-stop-shop for project developments, a record of past productions and a place for those involved or interested in Boys Dancing to be able to engage online, the new site has a number of lively new features. These include:

‘Just Dance’ www.boysdancing.org/just-dance

A digital space designed specifically for boys: those who are currently participating, have participated, or are just interested in dance. It features inspiration videos, playlists and space to comment and interact, and, eventually, the boys’ own images and videos.

‘Gallery’ www.boysdancing.org/gallery

A visual array of Boys Dancing activities past and present, displaying images and videos of project work and performances.

‘Stories’ www.boysdancing.org/stories

Here, in their own words, different people tell the story of their experience of Boys Dancing – as participants, parents, teachers and choreographers.

The site also contains an independently-commissioned [evaluation report](#) of 2012’s activity, which demonstrates the impact that the project has had on the lives of the boys involved, as well as their parents, teachers and others associated with the project.

The development of the new site has also incorporated a significant re-brand of the project that gives it a younger, edgier feel. Both brand and web development were carried out by design agency Supercool, who have made the most of the beautiful visual assets that the project has collected over the years.

Fiona Handscomb, Digital Content and PR Consultant for the project said: “There were three key things we wanted to achieve in developing the Boys Dancing website. Firstly, it had to more truly reflect and give voice to the participants; the boys. It needed to feel more youthful, more colourful and energetic. Secondly, it was really important to showcase all the gorgeous visuals that have come out of seven years of Boys Dancing work, so I’m really pleased with how they have been weaved into the design of the site. Thirdly, the site needed to function more interactively. The Just Dance section and the Blog allow for this, as will greater social media activity around the project. I think we’ve achieved all three key aspects of the development with this new site, so I’m really excited about finally being able to share it – and the fantastic work of this project – with everyone when it goes live on Monday.”

Various people involved with the project will be blogging as the current productions progress this year, so www.boysdancing.org will be an ever-changing landscape. Keep your eyes on it!

-Ends-

Date of release: 4 November 2013

For further information about Boys Dancing please contact:

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- To create dance opportunities for boys of all abilities, all backgrounds and from all communities thereby recognising, reflecting and celebrating the rich diversity of the West Midlands.

The project is funded by [Arts Council England](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk) and partners in the Boys Dancing Alliance.

www.boysdancing.org

Boys Dancing Alliance

The Boys Dancing Alliance was formed in 2009 in response to the decision that the West Midlands would focus on dance as part of the cultural programme that accompanied the London 2012 Olympic Games. Working with partners in the Alliance from across the

region has meant that the work of Boys Dancing is now bigger and broader in scope, more truly reflecting the diversity and talent within this region.

The members of the Boys Dancing Alliance are:

Brian Bishop, Carly Mee, Clare Mitchell ([Warwick Arts Centre](#))

Dave McKenna ([Beingfrank Physical Theatre](#))

Alexa Pugh ([Shropshire Council Arts Development Service](#))

Gill Callaghan ([Music and Performing Arts Service, Staffordshire County Council](#))

Maggie Lewis ([Black Country Dance Hub](#))

Sarah Jassal ([Independent consultant](#))

Rose Beeston ([Dancefest](#))

Steve Wilson ([Worcester County Arts Service](#))

www.boysdancing.org/about/partners

Supercool

Established in 2004, Supercool is an independent creative consultancy based in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter. Supercool work in [branding](#), [design for print](#) and [digital](#) communications, with significant experience in the arts and culture sector.

www.supercooldesign.co.uk

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Based in Coventry in the West Midlands and sitting on the campus of the University of Warwick, Warwick Arts Centre is one of the most significant presenters and co-producers of contemporary performing and visual arts in the UK, with a programme including theatre, classical music, live art, dance, music, literature, comedy, family events and visual art. Warwick Arts Centre's work is avowedly contemporary and international in scope and dimension.

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Further Information

Images and video

Please see separate download for Boys Dancing images and video at boysdancing.org/press/press-pack

Contact us

If you would like to find out more about Boys Dancing, please see the website: www.boysdancing.org or contact:

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Social media

You can also follow Boys Dancing on Twitter: [@BoysDancing](https://twitter.com/BoysDancing) and search Facebook for our open group: [Boys Dancing](https://www.facebook.com/BoysDancing). We use the hashtag #boysdancing2014 on Instagram.



BOYS DANCING