

TAKE FLIGHT DANCE AMBASSADOR TRAINING REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Dance offers potential wellbeing and health benefits for young people from different genders, ages, socioeconomic histories, ethnicities, and disabilities in diverse places and spaces. This report examines the recruitment, training, impact and legacy of Regional Dance Ambassadors in the New Adventures Swan Lake *Take Flight* outreach programme. It explores the role of Regional Dance Ambassadors (RDAs) in supporting and enhancing a culture of wellbeing in the programme.



EVALUATION METHODS

The data was collected in-person at the dance training using dance-along research methods, observations and informal conversations. Three days of RDA training, totalling 21 hours, with additional insight drawn from a Dance Artist preparation day (7 hours) were evaluated.

KEY FINDINGS

Thematic analysis of data identified seven key processes in the design, delivery and experiences of RDA training at New Adventures that are likely to enhance wellbeing in those who take part.

- Self-expression, interpretation and immersion in dance movements
- Negotiating wellbeing emotions through practices and processes of dance
- Autonomy, experimentation and personal growth in the New Adventures method
- Meaning-making, positive social relationships and movement practices
- Professional movement facilitation
- Inclusive movement spaces and dance practices (including a participant-centred approach, empathetic facilitation, fluidity and dynamic processes, cocreation, and a focus on diversity and inclusion)
- Dance Ambassador reflective practice and reflexivity



CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Participants are likely to experience a range of wellbeing outcomes including joy and pleasure, confidence, self-esteem, and personal achievement. The approach also has potential for transformative change at a personal, community and societal level. This includes strategies reflecting a public pedagogy approach and supporting participants to develop a critical self-awareness. The methods of delivering dance movement activities demystify established ideas of the inaccessibility of professional dance through movement practices that can be more self-determined.

Next steps within the *Take Flight* project include site visits to workshops in Southampton, Norwich, Newcastle, Canterbury, and Bradford. Data collection for Plymouth occurred in October and November 2024. Also upcoming are interviews with RDAs, Strategic Decision Makers at New Adventures, and Placemaking Venue Stakeholders.



Images by Dom North.