



THE NORTH WEST YOUTH DANCE MOVEMENT

A STRATEGY

Commissioned by Youth Dance England
Autumn 2007

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1 Executive Summary

The North West is a diverse region composed of five distinct county areas: the urban counties of Greater Manchester and Merseyside, and the three shire counties of Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire. The region is the second largest after the South East and home to nearly seven million people (12 per cent of the UK's population) - plenty of potential for youth dance!

The region already has a strong Youth Dance scene and this strategic plan has been formulated to progress and develop the infrastructure for youth dance in order to achieve, what young people are calling, the North West Youth Dance Movement.

The vision is based on those organisations and people who are passionate about Youth Dance and have taken the time to contribute thoughts, opinions, ideas and aspirations, particularly young people themselves.

This has led to the development of ABBAS - a mission which strives to achieve the following;

ARTICULACY

BUILDING QUALITY

BREAKING BOUNDARIES

ACHIEVING KUDOS

SYNCHRONISATION

in order to reach the vision:

**THE CREATION OF A THRIVING NORTH WEST YOUTH DANCE
MOVEMENT!**

2 Background and Introduction.

- 2.1 The North West holds a long tradition of young people dancing:** the region hosts two dance development organisations which existed prior to the rise of the community dance movement in the mid 80's - Cheshire Dance & Ludus Dance. The last Independent Review of National Dance Agencies (2004) highlighted the North West as achieving both high participation figures and high employment opportunities for free-lance artists. The past year has seen an increase in recruitment for Dance development posts and a number of smaller, independent dance organisations are emerging as significant players in youth dance development and delivery.
- 2.2 A thirty year history of dance development means the North West is no stranger to dance activities in a wide range of contexts and the region still enjoys a thriving, participatory dance ecology.
- 2.3 Over the years, a strong infrastructure for dance emerged. Each sub-regional area of the North West established a dance development agency (or initiative). They collaborated in the late 90's to form Dance NorthWest (DNW) - the North West National Dance Agency. DNW linked local provision and enabled a centralised overview for dance development. It provided a conduit for information gathering and dissemination and was able to develop a number of significant initiatives which were beyond the remit of the individual component parts.
- 2.4 In 2007, the Arts Council took the decision to dis-invest Dance NorthWest and withdrew funding from April 2007. Even though DNW intends to continue to trade, the future of the organisation now remains uncertain.
- 2.5 In the same year, the Youth Dance England Regional Co-ordinator post for the North West (based in Lancaster at Ludus Dance) concluded prematurely leaving a hiatus of development and 'profile' activity for youth dance.
- 2.6 The region has lost two key centralised resources for youth dance development leaving a key challenge regarding the actualisation of a North West Youth Dance Strategy,

who or which organisation would 'hold' the strategy to ensure its delivery?

- 2.7 A key task of the Regional Co-ordinator was to work towards producing a Regional Development Plan and exit strategy based on a two year programme of activities and development. Although this plan has been informed, in part, by the previous NW YDE programme, it is neither a natural continuation, nor an exit strategy and therefore exists as a separate entity.

2.8 The key aims of this strategy are:

- To propose an action plan and philosophy for NW youth dance development from January 2008.
- To inspire momentum and re-galvanise collective commitment to youth dance in the North West.
- To illustrate young people's hopes and aspirations regarding the vision for youth dance in the North West.
- To bridge the gap between the original YDE North West programme and the future.

2.9 Central to the plan is the voice of the young people themselves.

It is critical that young people support and shape the future of youth dance in the North West. Throughout the consultancy, many young people have spoken up with conviction and passion demonstrating a willingness and desire to extend their involvement in youth dance beyond the immediacy of the group they belong to.

- 2.10 The moment is opportune. Young dancers in the North West are not short of dance-enthusiasm, commitment and energy. This bodes well in relation to a recently published government strategy for young people;

Giving young people genuine influence over local services is the most effective way of ensuring better access and increasing participation. All young people should feel able to make a positive contribution in their communities and to have their achievements celebrated, sending a strong signal about their rightful place in society. The Government will expand significantly young people's direct influence and control on the design, commissioning, and delivery of local services. By 2018 the aim is for young people to influence 25% of spending on youth activities and facilities.

The Government Department for Children, Schools & Families.
Aiming High for Young People, July 2007.

- 2.11 A key aspiration, for the next 3-5 years is to not just plan effectively for young people dancing but to begin to involve young people more and more in the planning. In the future, their voice could be 'louder' than ours.

How could we support youth dance articulacy?

3 Methodology for Producing the Strategy.

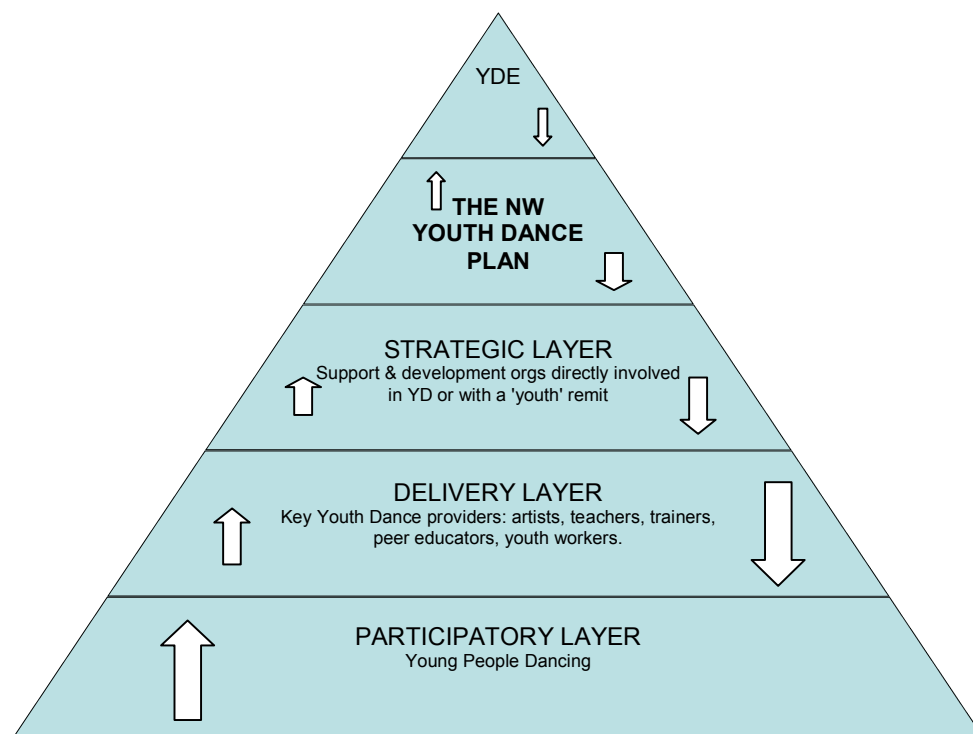
3.1 This strategy has been produced as part of a contingent consultancy which was established following the departure of the Regional Youth Dance Co-ordinator for the North West region. The consultancy commission was to

- raise the profile of youth dance activities in the north west
- complete the north west youth dance audit
- achieve the regional development plan

3.2 The author of the plan is new to the Youth Dance England North West programme and has not been involved in any previous co-ordination or delivery of either the Next Steps or Dance Links initiatives. Much of the information for this plan has been gathered throughout the term of the overall consultancy (May-Oct 07).

3.3 The Grassroots Momentum Model

3.3.1. The plan is based on a strategic amalgamation of vision and ideas from a range of people from three (not-exclusive to one another) distinct strata within the North West youth dance ecology. This has led to the development of the Grassroots Momentum Model in an attempt to generate a strategy which is influenced upwards in order to influence downwards.



- 3.3.2 As the North West does not have either a central person or organisation responsible for the overview of youth dance development, it has been important to develop a sense of vision and aspiration within the NW dance infrastructure itself. Representatives from each layer were invited to contribute to this plan by outlining their vision for youth dance in their region, organisation or group.
- 3.3.3 In essence, the strategy will be virtually distributed and 'held' by the key youth dance stakeholders in the North West; in particular, the sub-regional agencies (Dance Initiative Greater Manchester; Cheshire Dance; Ludus Dance; Cumbria Dance Initiative - Cumbria County Council & Merseyside Dance Initiative). For the purpose of this strategy, the 5 sub- regional agencies will be referred to as Dance5.
- 3.3.4 Dance5 all agreed to generate sub-regional strategic youth dance plans. The sub-regional plans combine to form this strategy with each plan being held in the 5 respective business or development plans.
- 3.3.5 The involvement of Dance5 and other significant youth dance providers are pivotal in any long-term, sustainable development for Youth Dance and to ensure that the combined strategy remains 'live and active' within the region. Equally, a close alliance with the Arts Council & Youth Dance England is crucial; both organisations hold a national perspective and can 'champion' youth dance.

3.4 Research & Consultation

- 3.4.1 Central to the exercise has been a series of Youth Dance Networking Days, managed and co-ordinated by each of the five dance agencies/initiatives in each of the sub-regions.

Sub-region	Date	Venue
Cumbria	4th Oct	Brewery Arts Centre
Merseyside	22 Oct	The Door & MDI
Lancashire	14th Nov	Media Factory, UCLAN
Cheshire	9th Nov	Floatel, Northwich
G. Manchester	30th Oct & 1st Nov	The Lowry

- 3.4.2 The days involved and brought together young dancers, young educators, parents, arts officers, freelance dance artists, local authorities, arts development organisations, youth organisations, education, venues, private dance sector and representatives from the Sports sector. Over 100 young people took part out of 200+ people in total.
- 3.4.3 Under debate, was the future of youth dance in the North West. Each of the days was designed to inform the creation of the sub-regional youth dance strategies.

3.4.4 In addition, this plan has also been informed by vision-focus groups with young people (from Cheshire and Greater Manchester), individual interviews, contextual intelligence gathering, and the completion of the NW Youth Dance Audit and the development of a web resource for young dancers.

3.5 The Law of the Few

3.5.1 This plan centres on where enthusiasm and commitment to youth dance remains constant and high; essentially, those people who have had the time and energy and inclination to make their voices, thoughts and ideas heard and who are keen to see Youth Dance 'take light' in the NW.

3.5.2 In this respect, the philosophy of the strategy is to work with Malcolm Gladwells theory of 'The Law of the Few' in an attempt to stimulate a NW Youth Dance 'epidemic'.

3.5.3 The Law of the Few contends that before widespread popularity can be attained (an epidemic), key types of people - Connectors, Mavens, Salesmen - must champion an idea or product. If individuals and organisations representing all three of these groups endorse and advocate the idea/product, it is much more likely that it will tip into experiential success.

*"What must underlie successful epidemics, in the end, is a bedrock belief that change is possible, that people can radically transform their behaviour or beliefs in the face of the right kind of impetus".
The Tipping Point - How Little Things Can Make A Big Difference'
Malcolm Gladwell.*

3.5.4 This approach has been taken as it was noted on several occasions during the research that behind each successful group or project there was at least one 'passionate and enthusiastic' individual generating the necessary growth fuel.

3.5.5 It was noted on Merseyside that their Youth dance hey-day in the 80's was predominantly driven by a handful of entrepreneurial dance people. Cheshire also bears testament to the significant work of Veronica Lewis & Julia Williams, as does Ludus Dance with their work in Wigan & Lancashire.

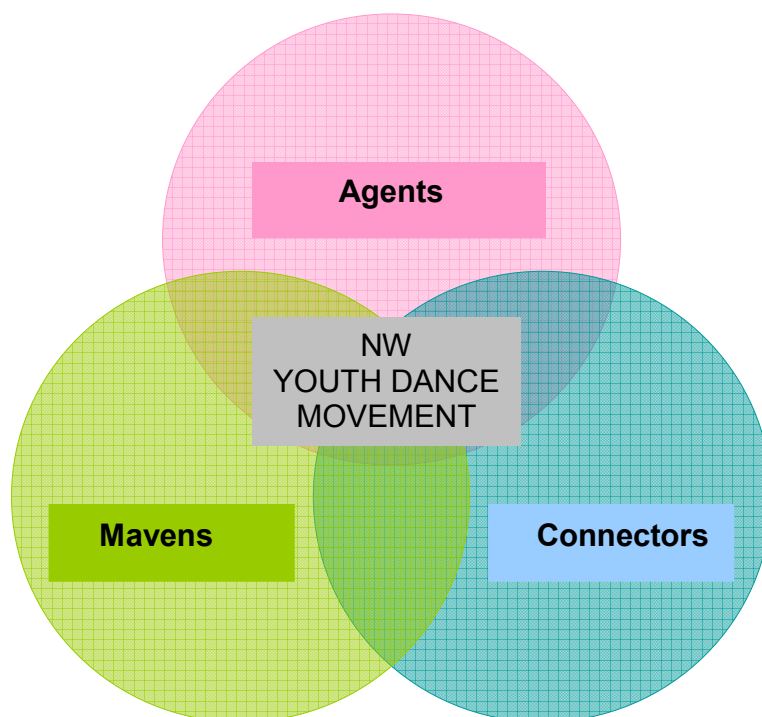
3.5.6 It was noticed, during the various consultancies with young people, that they often used the phrase 'youth dance movement' and were consistently keen to inspire others to take part.

3.5.7 This plan seeks to identify the following people (or organisations) in an attempt to work with an adaptation of Gladwells model - see below.

3.5.8 It must be noted, that the categories are not exclusive to one another; a connector may also be a maven and a maven an agent & a connector. Success depends on how well these types work together and communicate with each other.

"Agents are charismatic people skilled at persuasion often through 'role modelling' rather than 'sales technique'. They are usually passionate and enthusiastic about what they do and believe in". (Gladwell calls this type SALESMEN).

Role: Young People & key youth dance providers (artists/teachers)



"Mavens like to pass on knowledge and information and are an expert or 'in the know'".

Role: Arts Council, Youth Dance England, other umbrella organisations e.g. HE Dance Network, LAs & the internet.

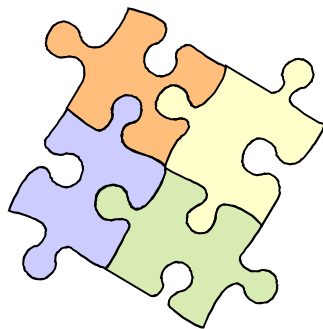
"Connectors bring people together and are well networked and operate across many social groups".

Role: Dance5

4. Overview of Youth Dance in the North West

- 4.1 Young people were asked to visualise how they saw their current youth dance scene. Whether from Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Lancashire or Cheshire clear common themes emerged, themes invariably re-iterated by the less youthful.
- 4.2 There was a confident feeling that the North West enjoyed many pockets of good quality youth dance provision yet the various elements seemed disjointed and dislocated from one another and weren't making best use of collective impact. There is a strong desire to link up to a bigger youth dance picture both in the North West and nationally. Images included;

Join up the jigsaw pieces

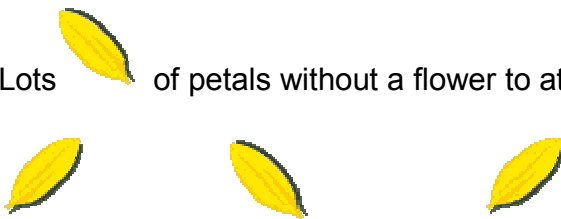


to make a bigger picture



A great car without an engine or wheels
We need an engine to get us moving.

Lots of petals without a flower to attach them.



We need to join up.

4.3 Young people were unambiguous regarding why they engaged in youth dance, some of the most notable quotes being;

- It's our version of robbing cars - we don't need to hang around on street corners causing trouble.
- Makes young people stronger and opens their eyes to new experiences and people. Thinking in different ways creates other opportunities.
- You don't get a better thrill. It's better than football and keeps you fit.
- Dance builds confidence and a team spirit.
- When you don't feel you're anyone in the world and then you are when you dance.

4.4 It is clear the North West is not short of a wide range of youth dance activities which manage to embrace both cultural diversity, cross socio-economic groups and work within a range of dance styles.

4.5 Greater Manchester & Cheshire seem to have the greatest density of activity followed by Lancashire, Cumbria & Merseyside. Nearly all the sub-regions reported that they were not fully aware of all the youth dance activity in their area.

4.6 Although the sheer weight of number suggests a thriving youth dance ecology many of the groups report finding it difficult to sustain financially following a successful outreach project which stimulated a group in the first instance.

4.7 Youth Dance Groups tend to be more viable when they are connected to the sub-regional dance agencies/initiatives or are embedded into Local Authority provision or maintain strong links with the education system or youth service. Throughout the North West, Dance Development posts have increased significantly in the last 24 months.

4.8 The North West is also developing a significant layer of independent youth dance providers which demonstrate clear models of good practice e.g. Wirral Youth Theatre, DARE Dance, The Brewery Arts Centre, Spiral Dance & The Lowry.

4.9 The youth dance audit was mailed out to over 400 people/groups. It is planned that this will form the basis of a centralised data-base for Youth Dance.

4.10 Plus, the invite lists for each of the networking days could also combine to form a Youth Dance Hot List for the North West.

4.11 Sub-regional Youth Dance Activities

The following pages outline what exists in each of the regions and highlights sub-regional current contexts and opportunities for development.

4.12 LANCASHIRE

WHAT EXISTS	CONTEXT & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Ludus Dance currently runs 7 youth dance groups. Most are active on a weekly basis during term times and are open access except for the Ludus YD Company which is by audition.</p> <p>Ludus Youth Dance Company –making and touring work for gifted and talented young people selected across the region. The group gain opportunities to work with national and international choreographers, perform in local, regional and sometimes national venues.</p> <p>Integr8 – integrated group based in Preston. 11 – 19yrs.</p> <p>Preston Youth Dance – aged 10 – 25yrs.</p> <p>Sole Traders – street dance Ludus class 12 – 17years.</p> <p>Youth Contemporary – contemporary Ludus 11 – 17yrs.</p> <p>Longridge Dance Group –based at Longridge Youth and Community Centre</p> <p>Bowland Dance Group –based at Bowland High School linked with Ribble Valley Youth and Community Service.</p> <p>Other non Ludus groups include: Blackburn with Darwin Youth Dance Group and a weekly extra curricular dance group based at Our Lady and St John High School in Blackburn.</p> <p>The Lancashire Youth Dance Showcase offers an annual youth dance platform of performance in celebration of the youth dance groups within Lancashire and beyond.</p> <p>The County enjoys a strong network of venues all of which support Youth dance performance: Nuffield Theatre, Burnley Mechanics, The Charter Theatre, The Rose Theatre, The Grand, The Dukes.</p> <p>There are hubs of good practice in schools and FE colleges including Bispham High in Blackpool, Cardinal Newman in Preston, Our Lady’s Catholic High School and Arts College in Blackburn, St Michaels High School in Chorley and Heysham High School in Morecambe.</p>	<p>Youth Arts Strategy for Lancashire due for publication in 2008.</p> <p>Budgets and responsibilities for the development for Youth Services in currently being devolved from Lancashire County to District level.</p> <p>Lancaster University have been awarded status as the excellence hub for gifted and talented for the North West and will begin to develop provision in this area from February 2008 in collaboration with Ludus Dance.</p> <p>UCLAN (Preston) have recently launched a Dance Performance and Education Degree and have recently developed new dance facilities at the ‘Media Factory’. They are keen to forge links with outside organisations to utilise and develop this new space.</p> <p>Edge Hill University in Ormskirk have recently developed a cross dance form degree and extensive new facilities such as purpose built dance studios and a studio theatre.</p> <p>Burnley Youth Theatre and the Dukes Youth Theatre have expressed a desire to develop dance with young people.</p> <p>PRESCAP based in Preston have been commissioned by Arts Council North West as leaders in the training of community arts practitioners including for example, project management.</p> <p>The South Asian dance company Sankalpam are re-locating to the North West and are seeking to develop participatory programmes providing progression routes to a Foundation Degree and have identified Preston and East Lancashire as potential priority areas for this work.</p> <p>Sport England in the North West has been commissioned to lead on the participatory legacy of the Olympics.</p>
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES	DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising standards in, and increasing, Youth Dance leadership • Improving access and diversity and achieving an equitable spread of activity • Improving information • Increased performance opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining and developing work for gifted and talented young dancers • Developing networks, hubs, and a peer led approach • Developing access to excellence • Appointment of Youth Dance Manager for Lancashire

4.13 GREATER MANCHESTER

WHAT EXISTS	CONTEXT & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Bolton: PT Local Authority Dance Development Officer. A range of community groups - Scottish dance, Irish dance and folk dance. Several local organisations offer dance activity - Bolton Lads & Girls, Phoenix Youth Theatre & Northwest Asian Arts. Dance & Movement Forum which meets quarterly.</p> <p>Bury: Through the Council Arts Unit, artist Ruth Tyson Jones delivers a wide range of youth activity. The youth service and older people's services also programme dance activity.</p> <p>Manchester: Afrocats and Company Fierce - professional youth performance companies. Other youth oriented companies in the district include Universal Connection, Free Expression, Dekoy Dance and Upasana. Participatory dance classes for young people at the Zion Arts Centre. Dance Advisor post based within education, offering a range of classes and CPD training through schools. Manchester City Council also delivers dance via Children's Services and the Youth Service.</p> <p>Oldham: Young Oldham Dance and Meninos do Morumbi providing weekly workshops in Brazilian dance. First Oldham Dance Network planned for March 2008</p> <p>Rochdale: Spiral Dance (Catherine Robinson) heads up a number of youth dance companies: Middleton YD Co, Heywood YD Co, Frantic Youth Dance Company & Diamante Dance. Three Performing Arts Colleges.</p> <p>Salford: Salford Community Leisure (SCL) employs a full-time Dance Development Officer offering 16 community dance sessions in street and creative dance to 6 to 16 year olds (including priority groups e.g. dance for disabled people) across the borough. Salford Commotions, a youth dance company comprising of young talented dancers who are auditioned annually.</p> <p>Stockport: Phil Nelson, a local freelance artist runs Stockport Youth Dance and A2B Boys, a creative group for boys between 8 and 12yrs old. Norris Bank community centre also run two community youth dance groups (juniors and seniors). Youth Arts Audit and Stockport Dance Network planned.</p> <p>Tameside: Tameside have a Dance Development Action Plan which incorporates the Sport & Physical Activity Strategy and the PESSCL Development Plan. A full time Community Dance Development Coach employed by Tameside MBC. Tameside Youth Dance (Juniors and Seniors). School dance festival. Ashton Indian Dance.</p> <p>Trafford: Touchdown Dance, an integrated dance company. Trafford Youth Dance Theatre has a 16 year history and its own Dance Advisory Teacher delivering work in schools across Trafford. Youth Services develop dance in a number of youth centres e.g. Gorse Hill Studios runs a peer led youth dance group (Cold Passion).</p> <p>Wigan: Wigan Culture and Leisure Trust (WLCT) provides an extensive YD programme delivered by a part-time dance project coordinator. WLCT Sports Development - physical activity programmes for young people including dance aerobics. Three specialist arts colleges.</p>	<p>There is a wide variety of youth dance activity happening and being developed across Greater Manchester, many of the boroughs benefiting from a dedicated individual responsible for direct co-ordination of groups, teaching and development. On the other hand, many groups and events are on a time limited and funding specific basis.</p> <p>Generally, the dance scene in Greater Manchester is fragmented and continually looking for ways of sustaining projects. There exists a wide variety of dance forms.</p> <p>Local Authorities are now starting to recognise that dance does fit with health and sports agendas and are looking at ways of turning links into partnerships which support their arts development programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a good spread of youth dance activity across the region but Local Authorities vary in their approach and level of coordination • There is a need for improved networking and a more structured approach to youth dance activity across Greater Manchester • DiGM supports a large variety of youth dance work and is well placed to support work at a strategic level • There is a need for improved access, marketing and information for young people • Further research needs to be undertaken to ensure equality of access and cultural diversity • There is a demand for more showcasing opportunities • Improved advocacy for youth dance is needed • School curricula should be more creative and reflective of the broad nature of dance <p>A regional youth dance strategic network needs to be developed involving key representatives from across Greater Manchester to address gaps and weaknesses in the infrastructure, build partnerships, raise the profile of youth dance and support fund raising.</p> <p>A youth dance strategic group could help to engage health, sports and education and look at possible cross borough working, funding partnerships and sharing of resources.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a YD Network for Greater Manchester • Achieve a YD Conference to investigate partnership working across sectors. • Involve young people at all levels of decision-making in dance. Young people will be invited to join the network group • Performance: showcasing events and opportunities to exchange work and see work of other groups • Develop a YD communications strategy - newsletter, web resource etc. • Support Youth Dance Leaders: Administration, technique development, advice re. fundraising. • Achieve further training for young people and leaders and strengthen visibility of progression routes

4.14 MERSEYSIDE

WHAT EXISTS	CONTEXT & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>There exists a strong sense that there is a great deal of youth dance activity with much of it occurring 'behind closed doors'. There was a strong 'visible' youth dance scene in the mid 80's which led to the formation of MYDF (Merseyside Youth Dance Forum) and the Knowsley Youth Dance Company (still exists), led by amateur Liz Bruen. It was noted that youth dance seems to have occurred in peaks and troughs of activity. It is felt that Merseyside is now well placed to achieve another youth dance 'peak'.</p> <p>John Moores University: a student company has been established providing professional work experience; Performance and touring, Administration & Project management, Teaching. The company are currently involved in the PATCH Project - a partnership with Liverpool Community College, which seeks to target hard to reach young people and run a comprehensive outreach programme working with 40 primary schools.</p> <p>African Peoples Youth Dance Company: The age range of young people is 3 - 19 years. The main performance group has enjoyed a growth in the number of performance opportunities, particularly during the last 2 years. 44 young people attended the summer school.</p> <p>WAC (Weekend Arts College) now runs from Hope University and provides training and 'tasters' for young people wishing to explore a career in the arts, including dance.</p> <p>Southport Arts Centre runs dance sessions for young people and Sefton hosts an annual day of dance</p> <p>Wirral Youth Theatre: The current programme for dance offers age range groups with many of the sessions being led by young people who have been in-house trained as dance workers (meeting the national standards for dance teaching). WYT is keen to offer clear career pathways for dance supported by training and work experience opportunities. WYT run a comprehensive dance outreach programme with peer educators and host a number of performance companies. The centre has a strong ethos of individual empowerment and is peer led. The membership base is large and loyal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDI currently runs two dance studios • Previous work in schools has seen a growth in dance activity e.g. MDI initiated a Boys Dance project in St. Mary's College - this led to the development of two dance studios, a team of three dance teachers and a thriving dance scene. • The established LEAP Festival can offer platforms and performance opportunities for young people • The Arts Council has identified Taking Part and young people priority areas for development • Rebound Dance in Knowsley work regularly in schools across Liverpool / Knowsley. • The government now acknowledges that dance can be useful as a form of social inclusion (PAT 10 report) • Creative Partnerships are continuing their successful work on Merseyside to capture the positive impact of creatives working within the education sector • MDI is developing a DIY Dance Pack specifically for teachers to assist in the delivery of dance (recent research showed many teachers still didn't feel 'confident' in teaching dance) • The Green House project has established a Festival for Young People and welcomes involvement from young dancers
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES	DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create stronger links between youth dance groups • Create more links with youth dance artists and providers • Establish a youth dance network. • Establish a group of young people to design and manage the network with MDI support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the profile of youth dance - consider a large scale carnival type event. • Establish a centralised point of information • Address ways to encourage more young people on Merseyside to join the youth dance movement • Work more closely with young dancers to design an advocacy campaign

4.15 CHESHIRE

WHAT EXISTS	CONTEXT & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Cheshire has a well-established history of youth dance development across community and statutory education sectors and regularly contributes to regional and national events.</p> <p>Providers, promoters and venues include the LEA, Cheshire Youth Dance Companies, Cheshire Dance, Local Authorities (5 of 8 have dedicated dance development posts), Specialist Arts College Schools (8 in Cheshire), School Sports Partnerships and After School Clubs, FE (all 6 deliver dance) and HE providers (all 2 deliver dance), a diverse range of private dance schools.</p> <p>Smaller voluntary organisations and initiatives developed by independent artists (e.g. More Dance!, IndepenDance, Vivrant and Arcane Dance Company).</p> <p>A strong infrastructure of schools with dance departments and youth companies.</p> <p>Cheshire Youth Dance Company, 53 members, Cheshire Boys' Dance Company (LEA), Cheshire Youth Dance Development Company (20 members), Cheshire Junior Youth Group.</p> <p>Regular youth groups/companies – Vale Royal, Crewe and Nantwich – (Cheshire Dance); Halton (Brindley), Warrington (Pyramid)</p> <p>Jam'd, The Funky Crewe and Urban Vibe, Nantwich Creative Movers, Creative Crewe and Crewe Youth Dance Company, Festive Footsteps (all Crewe and Nantwich)</p> <p>Winsford Juniors, Frodsham Street, Winsford Street, Integrated Youth Performance Group, Rotate. Dance with Wolves, Fusion Dance Team (Warrington Wolves and Warrington Council).</p> <p>Cheshire and National showcases (Youth Dance England)</p> <p>Youth Games – Annual event involving dance groups from across the county.</p> <p>Dance Leaders in the Community - Youth focus (Cheshire Dance accredited with Open College Network.)</p> <p>Dance course – (NSPCC / Positive Futures / Vale Royal School Sports Partnership)</p> <p>Confidance – training for Primary Teacher and After School Clubs (Cheshire Dance)</p> <p>Arts and Sports Engagement Team and Extended Services in Warrington – specialist delivery in schools</p> <p>Vale Royal Sports Partnership</p>	<p>There is a context of regional plans, strategies and agreements in Cheshire which impact on youth dance development.</p> <p>The new Cheshire Youth Arts Strategy Post and Steering Group (only just formed). Cheshire County Council's Children and Young People's Plan. Extended Schools and the Cheshire Local Area Agreement. Cheshire is currently undergoing a Local Government Reorganisation which is causing significant uncertainty and impacting upon the capacity for long-term planning within the District and Borough Authorities and the LEAs.</p> <p>The dance infrastructure in Cheshire is well connected nationally in the dance sector. Cheshire has an excellent reputation for its education, community and continuing professional development work.</p> <p>Practitioners often contribute to national agendas in partnership with Youth Dance England, the Foundation for Community Dance, Dance UK and the National Dance Teachers Association.</p> <hr/> <p>DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the understanding of the social, creative and community value of dance • Further establish YD network. Clearly identify the leadership role of young people and involve other groups including the private dance sector and non-arts sector • Achieve projects to assist transformation of loose networks into solid partnerships • Appoint a regional youth dance coordinator • Further develop the CPD offer for youth dance leaders and emerging artists • Identify connections and create and signpost quality pathways for young dancers, exposing different routes. • Every high school to have a good and effective link dance specialist and specialist dance teacher • Achieve strategic integration for youth dance with youth related regional plans

4.16 CUMBRIA

WHAT EXISTS	CONTEXT & OPPORTUNITIES
<p>There is currently high quality dance provision on offer to young people in all six of Cumbria's districts:-</p> <p>A full-time Community Dance Worker is now employed by Cumbria County Council to work across <i>Allerdale</i> and <i>Copeland</i> and runs <i>Vibe</i> (Allerdale Youth Dance Company), <i>Reach</i> (Copeland Youth Dance Company) and Copeland Junior Dance Company.</p> <p>The Community Dance Worker has undertaken Youth Arts Awards training and Dance Leaders Awards tutor training in readiness for offering accredited dance activity from January 2008.</p> <p>A P/T Community Dance Worker works across <i>Eden</i> and <i>Carlisle</i>. Established Eden and Carlisle Youth Dance Companies. Additionally, another part-time Community Dance Worker, specialising in breakdance, is contracted by Cumbria County Council to lead Eden and Carlisle district's breakdance projects.</p> <p>DARE Dance Ltd - <i>Barrow</i> - wide range of opportunities for young people including weekly classes for baby dance, infant dance, junior dance and youth dance. It also works regularly within schools and runs the Urban Moves Project led by UK breakdance champions. DARE also organises regular youth and community showcase events at Forum 28 Theatre and organises education workshops and masterclasses for young people. DARE runs an annual dance summer school for young people led by a professional dance company.</p> <p>The Brewery Arts Centre (complete with theatre and studios) runs a dance development programme headed up by Helen Moffit - to include programming touring dance with associated master classes, youth dance showcases (to include The Brewery Schools Dance Platform), outreach programmes and a variety of weekly dance classes for young people from baby dance to boyz moves, to youth dance groups.</p> <p>Rich cross-section of dance opportunities for young people through private dance schools, community clubs, schools, colleges, arts venues, rural touring schemes and freelance dance artists.</p>	<p>The community dance workers are funded posts until September 2009.</p> <p>In 2005 Cumbria County Council commissioned its first Dance Development Plan. The Plan set out a vision and a series of actions to improve the quantity and quality of dance provision across the county within a three year time-scale. This has substantially been achieved.</p> <p>The Dance Plan for 2008 onwards (to include model of delivery) is now in production and youth dance plays a significant part in future aspirations.</p> <p>Planning and communication regarding youth dance is now happening at a strategic level in Cumbria with all districts represented.</p> <p>There are currently three key national drivers for developing dance for young people at this moment in time.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The New Framework for Local Authorities & Local Authority Partnerships. Youth dance can be used by local authorities and their partner agencies as an activity that is contributing to national targets and, as a consequence, is able to more readily draw down funding. 2. Integrated Youth Support Services: The IYSS programme in Cumbria has already enabled key dance providers across the county to meet with youth providers and sow the seeds of joint working. There is significant potential for direct commissioning of DARE Dance Ltd, The Brewery Arts Centre and Cumbria County Council (Cultural Policy Unit) by youth work providers to deliver a major programme of youth dance across Cumbria. 3. HM Treasury & DCSF (Dept for Children, Schools and Families) Government Policy Review of Children & Young People: Significant opportunity within these recommendations for youth dance. If Cumbria's youth dance groups can position themselves strongly over the next three years, then the sustainability and continuation of these groups could ultimately be in the hands of young people themselves as the budget holders.
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES	DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Youth Dance Company for Cumbria (to represent the whole county). • An annual Youth Dance Festival in Cumbria and an annual North West Youth Dance Festival. • Increased opportunities to perform locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. • Greater links and exchanges with other North West youth dance groups. • Dedicated co-ordinator role for youth dance in Cumbria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic support and professional development for youth dance leaders. • A Dance Academy for Cumbria Youth Offending Service • Support from key venues to more regularly host/show/promote the work of youth dance groups • 'Youth' representation on the County's Steering Group for Dance Development

4.17 North West Youth Dance - Strengths, Weaknesses & Priorities.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History • Expertise • Plenty of activity and will • Passion and enthusiasm • Strong dance infrastructure - a dance lead in each sub-region • Local authority support in many places • Arts Council priority • Government priority • Models of good practice • Centres of excellence • Wide range of non-arts support and development organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision isolated • No centralised point for information • No central overview • Disinvestment of DNW • Climate of funding uncertainty • Low youth dance profile • Little engagement with young dancers re. decision making and planning • Poor networking and lack of joined-up provision • Lack of a dance dedicated flag-ship venue
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES SHARED BETWEEN SUB-REGIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising standards in Youth Dance leadership • Improving access and diversity • Increase opportunities to perform regionally nationally and internationally - sub-regional showcases and festivals. • Greater links and exchanges with other North West youth dance groups. • Develop sub-regional flagship YD companies e.g. Cumbria, Merseyside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain and develop work for gifted and talented young dancers • Develop networks, hubs, and a peer led approach which involves young people at all levels of decision-making. • Develop a YD communications and advocacy strategy • Achieve a youth dance lead or post in each of the sub-regions.

5 Linking In to the Bigger Youth Picture

- 5.1 It appears that young people have captured the zeitgeist and the North West would do well to ride this significant moment particularly in preparation for 2018 when it is hoped that young people will be influencing up to 25% of government 'youth' spend.

In this respect, the sooner the NW can involve young dancers in planning, co-ordination, sustainability, peer-education and decision-making the better.

- 5.2 The emphasis is moving away from the education system being the sole domain of the young person and is more actively filtering through communities, youth services and local government schemes. Equally, schools are being encouraged to play a more active role in their local communities. The Government is encouraging all schools to develop an extended schools 'core offer' by 2010 including community access. Schools will consult their communities on what the core offer should look like locally, and work with community organisations as well as other children's services to provide it.
- 5.3 Generally, within the public sector there is emphasis away from funding organisations or departments and towards funding providers from across the public, private and voluntary sectors who achieve outcomes. There is also more emphasis on evidence of need, evidence of impact, value for money, sustainability, user voice and diversity. This opens up opportunities for those dance initiatives that can engage with these agendas.

As one young dancer put it

"Youth Dance can satisfy everyone's agenda - we tick all the boxes. Why get hung up on whether it is for health, fun, fitness, social reasons, career progression or creativity - it is all those things - you can't separate them out. The important thing to do is get young people dancing!"

THE TIME FOR NW YOUTH DANCE DEVELOPMENT IS NOW!

- 5.4 A list of significant national and regional policies and organisations which augur well for local youth dance development can be in the next few pages. Relevant opportunities are in bold.

5.5 National Context - Organisations & Schemes relevant to Youth Dance.

The National Youth Agency: Has an excellent web site full of comprehensive resources pertinent to young people to include many recent, strategic national documents and papers, research, reports on national and international conferences etc. They are ahead of the game regarding the direct involvement of young people in shaping services and produced (with the Local Government Association) a tried and tested standards framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. <http://www.nya.org.uk>

As yet, there is little evidence of arts engagement profiled on the site.

The NYA Regional Advisor for the NW is based at the NW Regional Youth Work Unit on Merseyside and is responsible for co-ordinating the North West UK Young Parliament (UKYP) amongst a whole host of other initiatives. A clear partnership needs to be made with the aim of creating a strong dance voice within the activities.

Arts Council England (ACE) and Arts Council England North West (ACE:NW)

The current priorities for ACE include;

- Taking part in the arts
- Children and young people
- The creative economy
- Vibrant communities
- Internationalism
- Celebrating diversity

ACENW is in 'current consultation' with the aim of producing a Dance Strategy by March 2008 - Youth Dance will form a significant part. ACENW will nominate 'leads' on Centres for Advanced Training (CATS). The NW will host 'Big Dance' activities in 2008. ACE has recently launched a web site - www.youngpeoplesvoice.com - specifically for young people in the North West.

Music and Dance Scheme (MDS) and Centres for Advanced Training (CATS)

MDS aims to support gifted and talented dancers e.g. through sponsoring talented dancers for vocational training academies. MDS now includes contemporary dance as well as ballet and seeks to develop ways to support dancers development within their local areas. This is being achieved through the development of personalised training programmes, devised and managed by Centres for Advanced Training (CATS).

Higher Education (HE), Aim Higher, National Association of Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) - 'Aim Higher' initiative funded by Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) designed to widen access to HE.

'Aim Higher'. Government has developed the National Association of Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY), a programme managed by 'top' universities. Lancaster University has just been awarded 'lead' in the North West and with a focus on 'talented' including dance.

Schools

The Government want all schools to be organised around specialist colleges by 2008. It is anticipated that 35% of Britain's 25,000 schools will be organised around either a Sports Specialist or Performing Arts Specialist college. Sports specialist colleges employ Programme Development Managers and Schools Sports Co-ordinators to sign post and generate activities identified as priorities through audit and includes after school activities as part of Extended Schools. Dance is emerging as a priority area nationally with the development of the Dance Coach post.

Creative Partnerships

Pilot project funded jointly by DCSF and DCMS on the assumption that creativity is emerging as key to our economy but not embedded well in our education system.

Creative Partnerships was set up to test whether artists working with schools could have an impact. The project has now reached the legacy phase.

Local Government, Local Area Agreements (LAAs), Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

National objectives inform the Local Area Agreements. Objectives relevant to youth dance include;

- NI 11 Engagement in the arts (DCMS DSO)
- NI 57 Children and young people's participation in high quality physical education and sport (DCSF DSO)
- NI 110 Young people's participation in positive activities (PSA 14)

Youth Dance can help local authorities meet their targets and apply for funding as a consequence.

Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS)

A requirement on all local authorities is to establish integrated youth support services for all young people aged 13-19 to include;

- Services aligned with identified need
- An emphasis on the most vulnerable
- Positive activities and personal development opportunities
- Universal access to information, advice and guidance
- Targeted work with those at risk

Policy Review of Children & Young People

As mentioned in the introduction, HM Treasury and the DCSF launched the last strand of the Government's Policy Review of Children and Young People.

"Evidence shows that how young people spend their leisure-time really matters. Participation in constructive leisure-time activities, particularly those that are sustained through the teenage years, can have a significant impact on young people's resilience and outcomes in later life".

The strategy includes a series of recommendations around involving young people in decision making, access and quality.

- Local authorities will give young people influence over at least 25% of spending on youth activities and facilities by 2018 (eg, through youth councils, participative decision-making, etc). More immediately, Council's should devolve up to 5% of youth services budgets to young people's influence by 2010/11.
- Councils to develop integrated capital strategies with their partners to maximise use of community assets for young people; Government to allocate £60 million in unclaimed assets over the next 3 years that deliver youth facilities which are youth led and demonstrate local councils in partnership with the third sector.
- Primary Care Trusts to pool budgets for prevention of adolescent health problems with local authorities. Local Area Agreements will determine how this budget is targeted.

Underpinning the current review and development of both education and children's services is **Every Child Matters**, which aims to ensure that every child can be safe, stay healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well being.

5.6 North West Context - Organisations & Schemes relevant to Youth Dance.

HE Dance Network

A new initiative developed by Arts Council NW involves 9 higher education institutions (HEI's) - Liverpool John Moores, LIPA, Liverpool Hope, Edge Hill, University of Chester, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Salford, University of Cumbria & Central Lancashire - coming together to form a HE Dance Network.

The aims of the network are to build provision into a broader strategy for regional dance development and to address progression needs of dance graduates and develop clear pathways for young people into higher dance education. Pam Johnson is the lead officer at ACE for this initiative.

Sport England North West

www.sportengland.org/northwest_index/northwest_in_your_region.htm

Responsible for developing North West on the Move: The North West Plan for Sport & Physical Activity 2004-2008. It has been facilitated by Sport England under the guidance of the new North West Sports Board.

The plan has two main aims:

- To increase participation in sport and physical activity
- To widen access and reduce inequality in participation amongst priority group

Sport England NW has an excellent resource signposting funding opportunities for sport and physical activity. They have developed County Sports Partnerships in each of the sub regions. Dance can only be funded as a physical activity promoting health not creativity. However, they do flag up BIG DANCE 2008 on their website - which googled ahead of the Arts Council in terms of up to date information.

Government Office North West (GO-NW)

www.go-nw.gov.uk/

The role of the GO-NW is to work with regional partners and local people to maximise competitiveness and prosperity in the region and to support integrated policies for an inclusive society. They aim to maximise the contribution of the arts sector, and through this to improve the quality of life of all. The NW Corporate Plan 2007/2010 **outlines a number of schemes to support young people in the North West**. They also collate information to form evidence bases demonstrating 'added value' and are happy to share ideas and ways in which information might be gathered to provide an evidence base for youth dance.

North West Development Agency

www.nwda.co.uk

The Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) is the regional development agency (RDA) for the North West of England. Its remit is to co-ordinate the economic development and regeneration of the region; to promote relocation, inward investment and competitiveness; **enhance training and skills**; and contribute to sustainable development.

North West Cultural Consortium

www.culturenorthwest.co.uk

The Cultural Consortium is the strategic partnership for the development of culture in England's Northwest. Culture Northwest wants the region to be recognised as an international cultural powerhouse - "**we must invest in building key networks**, support a culture of leadership and pool resources to make big things happen".

North West Disability Arts Forum

http://www.nwdaf.com/young_people/

Engage with Disabled children and young people to improve participation, inclusion and access. Promoting a culture in which young people participate in decision making processes.

North West Training and Development Team

www.nwtdt.com

The NWTDT exists to facilitate the full inclusion of people with learning disabilities in community life. The mission of the Team incorporates working at the interface between the needs and aspirations of people with learning disabilities and their families and the **commissioning and delivery of services by responsible agencies**. This is achieved through:

- Developing local capacity for change through courses, mentoring, support and development projects.
- Linking people together (parents, self-advocates, commissioners and providers) and developing partnerships through interest networks.
- Providing leadership, developing groundbreaking projects, training, contributing to research and translating policy and research into local action.
- Sharing what is being learned through conferences and publications.

6 VISION & MISSION

6.1 This is what young people say they want and need to progress a NW youth dance movement.



6.2 This is what the sub-regions say they want and need to progress a NW youth dance movement.

<p>GREATER MANCHESTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Youth Dance Network for Greater Manchester & post. • A Youth Dance Conference to investigate partnership working across sectors. • Young people to be involved at all levels of decision-making in dance. • More performance: showcasing events and opportunities to exchange work and see work of other groups • A Youth Dance communications strategy - newsletter, web resource etc. • Support for Youth Dance Leaders: Administration, technique development, advice re. fundraising. • Further training for young people and leaders and strengthen visibility of progression routes 	
<p>LANCASHIRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised standards in Youth Dance leadership • Improved access and diversity and an equitable spread of activity • Improved information exchange • Increased performance opportunities • Sustained development work for gifted and talented young dancers • Youth dance networks, hubs, and a peer led approach • Access to excellence • A Youth Dance Manager for Lancashire 	<p>CUMBRIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Youth Dance Company for Cumbria (to represent the whole county). • An annual Youth Dance Festival in Cumbria and an annual North West Youth Dance Festival. • Increased opportunities to perform locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. • Greater links and exchanges with other North West youth dance groups. Strategic support and professional development for youth dance leaders. • A Dance Academy for Cumbria Youth Offending Service • Support from key venues to more regularly host/show/promote the work of youth dance groups • 'Youth Dance' representation on the County's Steering Group for Dance Development • Dedicated co-ordinator role for youth dance in Cumbria
<p>CHESHIRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of the social, creative and community value of dance • An embedded Youth Dance network. • Leadership roles for young people and involvement of other groups including the private dance sector and non-arts sector • Projects to assist transformation of loose networks into solid partnerships • A youth dance coordinator for Cheshire • Developed CPD offer for youth dance leaders and emerging artists • Identified connections and quality pathways for young dancers, exposing different routes. • Every high school to have a good and effective link dance specialist and specialist dance teacher • Strategic integration for youth dance with youth related regional plans 	<p>MERSEYSIDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger links between youth dance groups • More links with youth dance artists and providers • A youth dance network. • Young people to design and manage the network with MDI support • A raised profile for youth dance - consider a large scale carnival type event. • A centralised point for information • More young people on Merseyside joining the youth dance movement • Young dancers designing an advocacy campaign

6.3 This is what a selection of sub-regional dance providers say they want and need to progress a NW youth dance movement.

<p>SPIRAL DANCE - runs a comprehensive youth dance programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be able to continually support the four youth dance companies and to see youth dance becoming a part of the whole community • Recognition of the contribution of youth dance to young people's lives • Access to professional dance - raised aspirations. • Clear pathways for professional progression. • More partnerships and better advocacy • Greater links with dance in education-sport/P.E • Central person/ organisation to feed information into and a strong communications 	<p>DARE DANCE: runs a youth and community dance development programme in Barrow and works with local authorities across Cumbria to develop youth dance in their districts on a project basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To put youth dance at the heart of the community in Barrow as calendar events, traditions etc. • To sustain access to high quality creative dance activity and fulfil the cycle of training young people who reinvest their gifts back into the community. • Funding for continuity • Strong local partnerships • Funding for new initiatives
<p>THE LOWRY: Dance is a high priority throughout the Theatres, Community and Education Programme. The Lowry has strong national and international links in presenting dance and is part of Dance Touring Partners & the National Dance Consortium. As a development agency we provide space, and performance opportunities which service regional and national initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support a range of dance training and development opportunities alongside performance opportunities with a range of partnerships. • To place regional and international initiatives within the context of a national and international dance programme • To respond to the needs of the dance community • To develop more cross regional partnerships • To be included earlier in the planning stages for regional and national events and initiatives 	
<p>THE BREWERY ARTS: Has established a comprehensive dance programme for young people which has reached capacity and is in need of more YD Workers to meet demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities to work collaboratively across the NW • A Cumbria Youth Dance Co. • More performance opportunities • A professional, resident dance company • A Youth Dance coordinator for Cumbria • Strategic networking & clear communication exchange • A CPD programme for dance workers • Support for the development of a youth dance festival • Funding for growth • A centre for dance 	<p>WIRRAL YOUTH THEATRE: an established peer-led programme of youth dance.</p> <p>Highlights;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work with underprivileged and at risk young people • Integrated sessions with specialist resources • 2 or more full time youth dance posts on the Wirral • Dance leadership accreditation for young people • A youth professional peer education dance company • Greater access for young people across SE groups • Youth dance provision is quality bench marked • Break down dance-body-image stereotypes • A celebratory north west dance event • More youth dance networking & information sharing • Free CPD workshops for northwest dance facilitators <p>ASHTON INDIAN DANCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the dance classes at Ashton VI Form College in Bharatnaytam dance to become supported rather than achieved on a voluntary basis. <p>GORSE HILL STUDIOS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More performance opportunities and to increase the programme of peer-led dance.

6.4 The following section outlines, at best, a blue-sky future vision and mission inspired by the consultation process, research and plan submissions. It is based predominantly on the views and aspirations of young people which, unsurprisingly, mirror those of the NW dance sector in general.



6.5 It must be acknowledged; due to the production schedule of this strategy, there has not been a draft review stage. It is therefore accepted that the key stakeholders mentioned in this strategy will need to review and prioritise recommendations (based on Capacity and Capability) before implementation.

6.6 What Would Success Look Like?

6.6.1 A thriving NW Youth Dance movement would be:

ARTICULATE	Young people would have a clear voice in decision making and planning. Young people would be represented on networks and steering groups and play a clear leadership role within youth dance.
QUALITATIVE	<p>Artists and teachers and facilitators of youth dance (to include peer-educators) would be supported and developed through support networks and bespoke training opportunities.</p> <p>Young people would take part in complimentary skills training to include; fund-raising, project management, running a group, leadership etc. Not only dancers, they would also be arts social entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Pathways for Higher Education would be clear with post-graduate provision being accessible, affordable and progressive. The NW would be recognised nationally for standards in youth dance provision and delivery.</p>
BREAKING BOUNDARIES	The youth dance sector would be well networked and no longer exist in group-isolation. Young dancers would feel part of a greater whole, achieving and experiencing skills exchange, cultural dance diversity, and integration. There would be a marked increase in the number of peer-led groups which are self-sustaining and supported by their local communities. Youth dance will be visible out with theatres with performances occurring anywhere from the street to youth dance festivals in fields or on the beach with Anthony Gormley.
ACHIEVING KUDOS	Young dancers will link in to other key youth organisations - they will be champions and ambassadors for the youth dance movement. A series of flag-ship youth dance events will raise the profile in the North West. Stereotypes will be broken down with more young people wanting to take part - particularly boys and young men - from across all socio-economic groups.
SYNCHRONISED	Knowledge and resources for youth dance will be readily available and shared. Information will be up to date and relevant. Young people will be 'in the know' and more arts-politically aware. The NW will host one of the most comprehensively networked web resources for youth dance in the UK. It will be a user generated site and link groups, teachers, artists and key dance organisations.

The next generation of NW dancers will be creative, entrepreneurial, skilled and articulate.

7 Strategy

7.1 Central to the success of the NW Youth Dance Movement will be the accomplishment of the following roles and tasks as based on The Law of the Few outlined earlier in this plan.

Role	AGENTS
Who	Young dancers & key youth dance leaders (artists, teachers, coaches, trainers)
What	Play a strong advocacy role Provide positive role models for attracting more young people to take part Hold a clear leadership role in relation to needs and development Are the key networkers and spokespersons for youth dance Are the fuel in the engine - the passion and the enthusiasm!

Role	CONNECTORS
Who	Dance 5; M.D.I, D.I.G.M, Ludus, Cheshire Dance & C.D.I. in partnership with key, local YD providers e.g. Wirral Youth Theatre, John Moores, Julia Williams, The Brewery Arts & DARE Dance, The Lowry plus Local Authority Dance Officers.
What	Hold and execute the NW Strategy at 5 sub-regional levels Provide communication portals for youth dance activity and information which links up to inform the bigger NW picture Establish and co-ordinate the sub-regional youth dance networks Provide a connection portal for artists and teachers involved in youth dance delivery Oversee quality standards and provision Develop CPD opportunities for artists and young people Oversee the development of the web resource - 'Dance Face NW' Develop strong links to increase performance opportunities for young people

Role	MAVENS
Who	Youth Dance England, Arts Council NW, HE NW Dance Network and other umbrella organisations which support young people (see NW Context list).
What	Hold information and knowledge which supports youth dance Link the North West to the bigger picture nationally and internationally Provide a voice for youth dance in the North West Link activities to potential resources and funding Highlight progression routes and post-graduate support

7.2 Functioning Networks

- 7.2.1 Dance5 holds the potential to be the central hub around which youth dance activities orbit at both a sub-regional and collective regional level. The aim would be to develop a second layer of Connectors e.g. two key local youth dance providers from each sub-region which could form to create Dance5 plus Dance10. This could help ensure a continual flow of information and activity through the Grassroots Momentum Model.
- 7.2.2 This central Dance5+10 network could then extend (and splinter) to form function-networks: networks which are formed to achieve a specific purpose. It will be important at the outset, not just to form networks for the sake of a network. Successful networks continue to exist where the participating value exceeds the human need to belong to a group of people we believe are 'a bit like us' - in this case, involved in youth dance. The ideal would be to always strive for function-networks which are task specific. For example, a young person's network could devise and co-ordinate an advocacy campaign for youth dance within schools; Ludus Dance & Cheshire Dance could form a splinter network to progress BUILDING QUALITY another splinter network could lead on KUDOS.

7.3 The World Wide Web - DanceFace NW

- 7.3.1 Absolutely critical to a youth dance growth momentum, is the further development of a youth dance web resource for the North West. This is currently in development and is being headed up by James Wooldridge (Ludus Dance). The temporary, site can be found at www.nwyd.org.
- 7.3.2 Young people mentioned repeatedly that they have "no-where to go for youth dance on the web" and fully supported the development of a FaceBook, MySpace type resource for youth dance.
- 7.3.4 A recent study on young people's out-of-school activities published in the Sunday Times stated that
- 74% of young people have home access to the internet and 98% access 'somewhere'.
 - 94% surf the net for reasons other than 'homework'
 - 44% surf for careers advice
- 7.3.5 As one young dancer stated - "We're on the net all the time - why not create a youth dance buzz?"
- 7.3.6 The site will be user-generated and data-base driven. It will be up to the Mavens, Connecters and Agents to populate the site with up to date information, advice, general dance-chat, signpostings, listings, details of groups, podcasts, maybe pages

for upload of video/images, music exchange, contacts for performance production e.g. costume makers, lighting designers, musicians etc.

7.3.7 *DanceFace NW* (working title). The site is hoped to be launched in May 08.

8.4 Capacity Building & Support

8.4.1 It is all very well creating blue-sky visions for youth dance in the North West. To build upon what already exists and to achieve the 'extra' push for progression will require considerable, additional investment. Already four out of the five regions have identified the need to achieve a youth dance post or lead.

8.4.2 Achieving a thriving North West Youth Dance Movement has the potential to be an extensive project. It would simply not be feasible to expect Dance5+10 to carry the 'extra push' within their current portfolios.

8.4.3 **A New Role.** As part of this consultancy, a modest start-up investment has been identified from Youth Dance England & ACE. It is recommended that this be used to develop the role of the

NW Youth Dance Strategy Manager (YDSM).

The current investment, at best, could support the YDSM role for a period of two years on a part-time basis - possibly two days per week.

8.4.4 It is planned that the above will be achieved through a tender process launched by ACE & YDE in January 2008 with the post commencing late March, early April. The tender process should demonstrate the capacity of an organisation to embed the role rather than host the post.

8.4.5 **A Secondment.** It would be ideal if the role could be achieved 'in-house' rather than appointing someone new to the region to ensure a quick start and to avoid the need to 'orientate'. The North West is not short of strong players within the field of youth dance and dance development and it seems sensible to achieve a secondment for the role, using the new investment to buy in the necessary support so the person can be released.

Preferably, the role should be found within the workforce of Dance5+10 and the organisation concerned will be commissioned to achieve the tender. The YDSM will provide the direct link between the NW and Youth Dance England and could be managed by a designated team selected from Dance5.

8.4.6 **The Brief.** The main aim of the role will be to support the progression and realisation of the strategy through working alongside the Connectors, Mavens & Agents. There are some restrictions which come with the funding - the investment, in part, must be seen to support Youth Dance Performance within a festival or platform context.

8.4.7 **Funding.** Plus, the role will fund raise to support the development of the strategy - in the first instance, submitting a Grants for the Arts application to ACE:NW for a series of project initiatives. This has already been discussed with the Arts Council.

8.4.9 **Futures.** From that point, the aim would be to grow resources and the team supporting and developing NW Youth Dance with a view to achieving, at the very least, a full-time YDSM post with administrative support.

8.4.8 Functions of the post might include;

- I. Working with Dance5+10 to progress and prioritise the strategy and sub-regional needs.
- II. Fundraising - a Youth Dance fund to be generated and held centrally for distribution.
- III. Representing the NW Youth Dance ecology at decision making levels and with key organisations e.g. Youth Dance England, Sport England, ACE, etc.
- IV. Increasing performance and participation opportunities for young people.
- V. Leading on the development of a NW Youth Dance Festival and associated workshop programme.
- VI. Management/co-ordination support of NW networks.
- VII. Data base management and collation.
- VIII. Sourcing, collating and dissemination of information relevant to NW Youth Dance.
- IX. To research and develop a system to capture an 'evidence base' for NW Youth Dance (with the Regional Health and Physical Activity Coordinator, Regional Public Health Group, GONW)
- X. To work towards a Phase II Youth Dance Strategy from 2010

8.4.9 Again, it must be recognised that the above brief in its entirety is unlikely to be achieved on two days per week. A critical first task will be that of PRIORITISATION achieved in consultation and negotiation with Dance5.

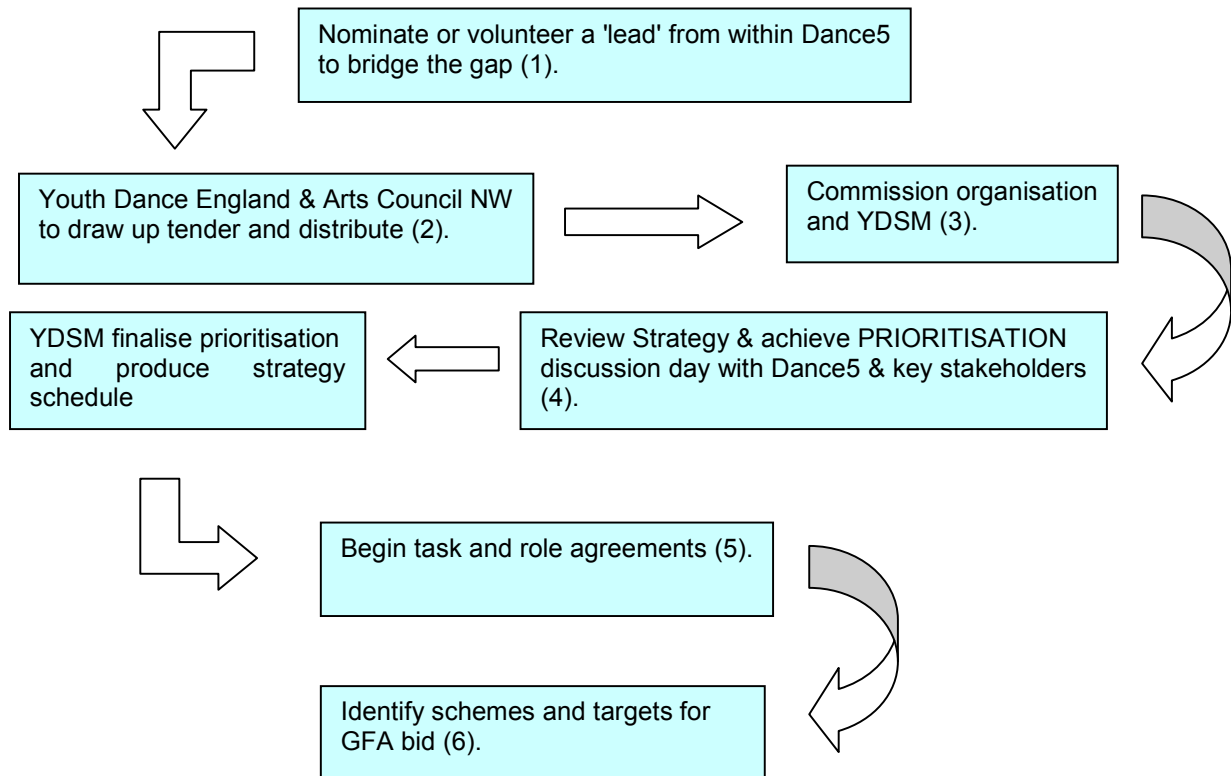
This could break down into three areas of agreement;

1. Priorities for YDSM
2. Priorities for fund-raising
3. Priorities for Dance5

The process will also be informed by Youth Dance England who are currently producing the national priorities for youth dance and developing a memorandum of understanding between the youth dance leads from the regions of England.

8. KEY STEPS

8.1 THE IMMEDIATE PATHWAY



- (1) Youth Dance England will need to continue to liaise with the North West. Prior to the appointment of the YDSM, it would be useful if Dance5 could volunteer a representative for Youth Dance meanwhile. Ideally, this could be achieved in December 07.
- (2) The fund for the initiative has arisen from a NW GFA under-spend. Youth Dance England holds the fund so therefore will be responsible for its distribution. At this stage, it is not known whether the tender will be 'open' or invite only. As mentioned, the ideal is to achieve a secondment, as the current resource is not hefty enough to support a 'senior' post. If a secondment is not possible, the package becomes much less attractive and the region is less likely to recruit the calibre needed for the position without considerable additional investment.

- (3) It is recommended that any contract/agreement for services is drawn up with the organisation providing the post rather than the individual. It is important the YDSM doesn't become a lone operator and feels fully supported within the context of Dance5 e.g can hot desk from organisation to organisation if need be and draw upon services to be found within Dance5 such as marketing.

The role, essentially, should be to support and represent Dance5+10 rather than be a hierarchical lead. However, the role should still have gravitas and be able to negotiate with key national and regional players on behalf of Dance5+10. Target: late Feb/Early March.

It is recommended a management team is established to support and monitor the role. This should be no more than three people who are prepared to be accessible to the YDSM and willing to meet on a monthly basis.

- (4) Prioritisation should be achieved as early as possible - preferably before the end of the financial year. It may be wise for the NW Representative for Youth Dance to begin to identify a date for prioritisation as soon as possible. Meanwhile, Dance5 should nominate a lead for youth dance from within their organisations. It does not need to be the Director. This would provide a good opportunity for other members of the team to be operating at a strategic NW level. For example, Rachel Rogers (MDI), Miriam Wild (DIGM) and Hannah Robertshaw (Ludus) have all been instrumental in achieving the strategies for their region.

The process of prioritisation should involve both Pam Johnson (ACE: NW) and Linda Jasper (YDE) and ideally should be externally facilitated to ensure a fruitful process which results in tangible agreements and actions. A simple format would be to follow the strategy Mission using ABBAS:

Articulacy, Building Quality, Breaking Boundaries, Achieving Kudos & Synchronisation.

- (5) Task & Role Agreements can happen on a number of levels;

What can we individually and collectively get on with now? That doesn't cost money or need additional people - rather, an in-house alignment of resources.

Identification of 'leads' on specific areas - again, working with ABBAS.

- (6) The GFA will need to be clearly negotiated with ACE at the outset. It may be possible to raise funds for additional person-power to achieve certain key functions such as the co-ordination of a North West Youth Dance Festival. It will be important to preserve the developmental and strategic functions of the YDSM role and not consume the role with hands-on project management. The GFA should be submitted by the end of March/early April.

8.2 In Conclusion.

The strategy began with a dilemma - Who or which organisation would 'hold' the strategy to ensure its delivery? It is hoped that the recommended approach has the potential to achieve what it is that the young people are requesting - joined up thinking and provision and the engine for the youth dance movement.

It is an approach that will require trust and co-operation between partners and a willingness and commitment to see youth dance reach new levels in the North West.

After all, we are talking about the future of dance in the long term. There is no reason why the North West cannot become a flagship region for youth dance initiatives.

9. Youth Dance England

Youth Dance England

Youth Dance England is the national organisation to support and promote opportunities for young people to participate in dance: connecting young people with dance. It was created by the Arts Council working with the DfES' (now Department for Children, Schools and Families) Music and Dance Scheme in order to address the many issues that restrict opportunities for young people to take part in high quality dance activity. It will receive its core funding (2008 – 2011) from the DCSF Music and Dance scheme and is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

Mission

We believe that dance changes and enriches young people's lives. We strive for every young person across the country to have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of high quality dance – whether for fun, to develop skills and understanding in dance, keep physically active or train to become a dance professional.

To do this we are creating partnerships between those providing and supporting dance activities for young people through working across the arts, community, dance, education, health, sport, youth and youth justice sectors.

Towards a national strategy

There is currently no national strategy for youth dance to provide a framework to bring together the various sectors that work with young people in and through dance. There is therefore a need for YDE, working in partnership with regional and national agencies, to produce a strategy that brings together policy makers, dance providers, young people and funders to create a vision and plan for youth dance development. An over view of the nine RDPs produced by YDE revealed many common priorities and activity areas which will form the basis of a national strategy to be produced by YDE for March 2008.

Impact of the Next Steps and Dance Links projects on YDE

Project funding was made available through ACE and DCMS (in 2005) to create nine Regional Co-ordinator posts to form the first national infrastructure to support and develop youth dance. The network has:

- made information available to young people, schools and parents/carers about dance opportunities
- offered professional development initiatives to raise standards in the youth dance work force
- initiated projects to increase opportunities for young people to participate in dance
- produced a 3 – 5 year (2008/9 and onwards) development plan for each region

- informed the creation of and delivered national initiatives, such as National Youth Dance Festivals, Y'D Screen (youth dance film project), Conference 2007, Fund Raising Tool Kit and the Guide to Careers in Dance.

Creating a national infrastructure has meant that many more young people have been able to access activity and progression routes, support systems have been put in place for practitioners to raise standards and the profile of the sector has been significantly raised. Channels to gather information on the size and scope of the sector have been created that are very important to making a case for future investment, as well as identifying areas for development. It has enabled YDE to reach out into the regions to increase the amount of activity available and helped make a much larger impact on the sector than would have been possible with a new and modestly funded organisation. In addition to project management of Next Steps and Dance Links, YDE has undertaken the important work of promoting the sector to government departments, arts, education and youth sectors.

The dance sector is relatively under resourced and the capacity of regional agencies to deliver the project has varied. Some host organisations have not been able to fully support this development, others have been able to embrace the project and make it an essential part of their work. The project has illustrated the energetic, hard working, skilled, but fragile nature of the dance infrastructure. The impact of the project on the sector and the regional organisations is being evaluated by an external Project Evaluator who has been employed for the full length of the project and has produced interim reports that have resulted in YDE changing aspects of delivery and responding to development needs as the projects have progressed. Overall the project is viewed as a success but it has not been without its challenges to deliver. YDE looks forward to the final evaluation report and its recommendations to guide future work. Regional organisations are fund raising to continue the work begun through the Next Steps and Dance Links projects and most are committed to continuing a regional co-ordination role.

Towards a national strategy:

When consulted, the Regional Hosts and Regional Coordinators agreed that the following areas should be provided by a national youth dance organisation.

Advocacy and promotion:

- Advocate for youth dance – progressing partnerships at national level with Arts Council England, Department for Children, Schools and Families; Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Department of Health; Sports England; Youth Sports Trust; Youth sector; Youth Arts Networks; National Association of Youth Theatres, National Youth Music etc.
- Forming working relationships with national dance, arts and sport organisations to collaborate on national projects and schemes. Attracting more resources into the youth dance sector.

- Developing web site and interactive database to become a more effective resource for the sector (remote access database entry and search, case studies, resource materials, news items, funding etc.)
- Profiling the work through marketing, placing articles in media and via Internet on the benefits of dance participation for young people.

Deliver national schemes to raise standards and increase access to high quality dance activity:

- **Annual National Youth Dance Festival:** expanded model in 2008 and further expansion from 2009 to include groups from schools as well as youth dance groups leading up to 2012 Olympics – for performance at Opening or Closing ceremonies (LOCOG permitting). International dimension to begin in 2008 with overseas practitioners, opinion formers and managers to be invited as guests to view the events. From 2009 and onwards overseas youth dance groups to be invited to perform and form partnerships with home groups.
- **Centres for Advanced Training:** Training schemes for practitioners run with Centres for Advanced Training (CATs) and Gifted and Talented schemes, YDE & regional lead agencies to disseminate learning/experience acquired by CATs to regions and sub regions where there is currently no CAT/G & T provision.
- **Dance Links 3:** Supporting regional agencies to work directly with specialist sport schools to link them with youth dance providers. Running training programmes for artists/practitioners to make better links with schools (this could become part of the national accreditation scheme). YDE would continue as Project Director and a tendering process advertised.
- **Y'D Screen (Youth Dance Film scheme):** Channel 4 is interested in commissioning another youth dance film project (first broadcast in November 2006). YDE plans to expand the project into more process-based work with young people on dance filmmaking. This project would be open for regions to work with YDE on the project.
- **Young Dance Entrepreneurs:** the scheme is to develop future leaders in and through dance. To broaden young people's horizons in terms of careers and support the youth dance infrastructure through providing more skilled young people to support delivery of dance programmes. Pilot will be run in March 2008 (with a Training the Trainers element) to be rolled out to other regions as from 2009.

Supporting and developing the youth dance infrastructure:

- **National accredited training scheme:** in recognition of the lack of a coherent accreditation structure for dance practitioners working with young people in out of school contexts, YDE is joint funder and project director of the DTAP (Dance Training and Accreditation Project) with LABAN and other dance organisations. Following an initial research period it is anticipated that YDE will be involved in

identifying agencies to become centres for delivering nationally accredited scheme (running courses, work placements, apprenticeship schemes etc)

- **Conference:** Producing a biennial conference to provide a forum for debate, sharing good practice and retaining an identity for the sector. (next planned for 2009)
- **CPD:** Continuing the identification of CPD needs for sector and delivering initiatives, if appropriate with other dance organisations – such as Foundation for Community Dance, and regional lead agencies to support practitioners
- **Action - Research:** YDE plans to develop a research arm to its core business. Discussions with The Paul Hamlyn Foundation have taken place and they are interested in principle of a national approach to identifying, delivering and disseminating research projects. A link could be made with a university department to provide cohesive research methodologies and monitoring. It is anticipated that funding is used to support 4 -5 projects – open to tender from 2008/9.
- **National Resource Bank:** YDE will identify good existing resources for practitioners, teachers and young people, commission new materials where there are gaps, and disseminate all the materials through web and/or print as required.

These areas will need to be revised and re-prioritised in light of discussions on the production of the national strategy and also in response to available funding.

Sustaining a national infrastructure:

In order to respond to and inform the national strategy for youth dance a means of retaining and expanding the national infrastructure, following the end of the projects, needs to be addressed. Discussions have taken place with the current Regional Coordinators and Regional Hosts (who together form the present national infrastructure for youth dance) to discuss how it could function following the end of project funding. The Regional Hosts are described as 'hosts' due to their role in the commissioning model for the projects. From 2008/9 they could be identified as lead regional agencies for youth dance development. YDE proposes that there are three main areas in which a national infrastructure could continue to work:

1. Intelligence and knowledge sharing: to inform regional and national strategies, encourage cross regional working and dissemination of best practice.
Proposed delivery: e-communications and 3 – 4 networking meetings each year.
2. Joint project delivery: between regions and across all regions on common activity areas as define in the RDPs and National Plan (e.g Work Force Development).
Proposed delivery: as agreed on a project by project basis between regions and between YDE and regions.
3. National project delivery: organisations to work directly with YDE on delivering funded initiatives (e.g. Dance Links 3)
Proposed delivery: projects open to tender and contracts agreed.

In order to identify organisations and clarify shared priorities and methods of communication, particularly in order to deliver 1. & 2. YDE has proposed that the national infrastructure is supported through the production of a Memorandum of Understanding that organisations agree to work to.

YDE will also continue to work with other established networks in arts, dance, education and youth arts etc. to promote youth dance practice, encourage further investment in the sector and to be in a position to make information available to the national infrastructure.

YDE will continue to seek out sources of funding to support programmes that address overarching issues affecting the development of the sector as identified in the national strategy that will be informed by RDPs.

YDE is committed to working with and through regional organisations to remain an effective national development agency, keeping policies and practice relevant to the sector so that young people can benefit from all our efforts.

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Appendices.

1. Sub-regional plans are available at the discretion of Dance5. Please contact your local dance development agency.
2. Submissions from key local youth dance providers have all been distributed to the relevant local dance development agency.