

# CITYMOVES

DANCE AGENCY SCIO



Annual Report and Highlights  
**2023/24**

# CITYMOVES

DANCE AGENCY SCIO

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ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

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# Foreword

'We strive to support people of all ages and abilities to access dance. Our participants engage for enjoyment and social reasons, to improve physical and emotional wellbeing or to further their career in dance. In Aberdeen, Citymoves and its cultural partners are often the reason participants and audience members journey into the city centre.



Hayley Durward, CEO.  
Photography by Michelle Soto

Cultural activity in our city centre is key to maintaining the ecology of cities. Not only in the buildings we inhabit and open to the public, but the fabric of the city we walk around.'

-Hayley Durward, CEO of Citymoves Dance Agency.

## CITYMOVES DANCE AGENCY'S AIMS

1. Encourage dance participation for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
2. Promote the physical, mental, and social benefits of dance within our communities.
3. Nurture professional dance artists and support their creativity.
4. Create opportunities for audiences to explore the art form.
5. Develop dance projects that respond to local needs and national priorities.
6. Collaborate with partners Locally, Nationally, and Internationally.



**6,901**

Studio Programme  
Participants

**18,194**

Visits to our  
Venues

Delivered **1,072** Sessions

with **10,252** Participants

Highlights of 2023/24

Presented **110** performances

with **8,268** audience members

**24** Venue Hires

with **1,621** Attendees

Supported **21**  
Dance Artist/  
Company Residencies

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# Annual Report



# Summer Camp 2023

During Summer 2023, we ran our Summer Camp for **primary school-aged children** over the course of **2 weeks**. Our camps offer crafts, singing and other fun activities, alongside dance sessions run by our tutors. The 2023 youth summer camp welcomed **29 participants** and produced **2 family showcases**.



Spring Camp  
at Citymoves Anatomy Rooms Studio.  
Photography by Lauren Smith

## Inclusive Summer Camps 2023

Alongside our Summer Camp 2023, we also ran **2 Inclusive Summer Camps**. The Inclusive Camp is designed for **participants with additional support needs**, who learn at their own pace. Our workshops and activities were designed to be fun, encouraging the development of both physical strength and social development.

Our **Horizons Camp** is free of charge and aimed at youth aged **12-19**. It is also open to non-company members.

Our Adult Inclusive Camp is open to those aged **18+** and allows for flexible booking, for a full week or a single day.

Horizons Summer Camp had **9 participants**. The Adult Inclusive Camp had **8 participants**, and we held **2 showcases** for participant families.



Horizons Performance Group at Spring Show.  
Photography by Newsline Media.

# Spring Show 2024

Citymoves runs the Spring Showcase annually. It showcases our own performance groups and invites other dance groups and schools from across the North East.

The 2024 Spring Show, was held at Aberdeen Art Centre for **2 performances** in March. **154 participants performed**, and we were joined by **4 visiting groups**: Gordon School of Dancing [Montrose], Ballroom Dance Studio [Aberdeen], Move Orkney [Orkney], and Flashdance Performance Groups [Aberdeen].



## Spring SHOW



**2 Performances** | **154 Participants** | **389 Audience Attendees**

Performance at Spring showcase.  
Photography by Newsline Media  
Top Photos taken by the Staff Back Stage at the Spring Show

# DANCELIVE

The aim of the festival is to fully immerse the local community within the dance sphere by offering performances, workshops and classes in a range of indoor and outdoor locations across the city. The festival not only engages local community dancers but also provides professional artist opportunities. In 2023, we supported artists such as Fleur Darkin, Rob Heaslip, Elisabeth Schilling and many more. Rob Heaslip worked with **3 Citymoves Internship Alumni** to create **Black and Wood** as the annual **DanceLive commission**. DanceLive 2023 attracted an audience attendance total of **1,263**. However, Aberdeen was hit with Storm Babet throughout the duration of the festival, which resulted in unexpected programme changes and adjustments, and limited the number of attendees to the festival due to red and amber weather alerts recommending people in the region shelter at home. Two productions were unable to attend the festival and were rescheduled for DanceLive 2024.

**'First time at the venue and I couldn't ask for a better experience from the staff, venue and the performance was outstanding!!'**

DanceLive 2023, Festival Feedback Submission



**16 Performances | 816 Tickets Sold | 1,263 Audience Members**  
**5 City Centre Performance Locations**



# Residency Programme

The Residency Programme is a way for Citymoves to support other artists in creating new work or developing pre-existing work. In 2023/24, we had **21 completed residencies**.

**7 Residency Sharings | 17 Participants | 33 Attendances**



2023 Residency, Valeria Levi, **Listen to the Forest**  
Photography by Federica Della Negra

## 'Fast and Dirty' Residency

The 'Fast and Dirty' Residency is facilitated by **Citymoves in collaboration with Sound Festival**. The residency is a development opportunity, in which **6 early career choreographers and composers** (specifically of Contemporary Classical music) are afforded the space to create new work.

**First developed by Ian Spink** when he was the Director of Citymoves in **2005**, the goal of the residency is to learn about the process of cross-art collaboration and to develop the connections between dance and contemporary classical music.

In Partnership With:



Photo to the right:  
'Fast and Dirty' Residency 2022 meeting at our Schoolhill Studio.

# Internship Programme

Citymoves worked with **Graduate Career Advantage Scotland (GCAS)** from its conception in 2021 until its conclusion in 2023. During 2023, we welcomed a **Dance Artist Intern and Marketing Intern** through the scheme for a six-month term. The aim of these internships was to **bridge the gap** between graduates with relevant qualifications and employers.

Through the Internship Programme, **graduates have completed a number of invaluable projects to broaden their professional skills**. In addition, interns are given the opportunity to **help shape our policy development** by joining either the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) or Environmental & Sustainability internal working groups with Trustees and core staff members.



**'The past seven weeks have provided me with an immeasurable insight into the cultural sector. Observing how cultural organisations can come together to facilitate both crucial work in communities, and events for those within and outwith the sector is uplifting and has shown me how exciting the future of the arts and cultural sector is.'**

**Katie MacPhail, ABDN Intern 2024**

# 2 Core Activities



# SQA Higher Dance

We have been running our SQA Accredited Qualification for **over a decade**. Through the duration of the qualification candidates cover three dance styles - **Jazz, Ballet and Contemporary**. Candidates then use the skills they have learned to create their own piece of choreography and teach it to their peers to be performed in their final examination.

Alongside the physical classes, candidates study a professional choreography piece, learn about safe dance practice, the history and origin of a selected dance style as well as influential choreographers and much more.

**'Higher dance made me a lot happier knowing I was able to gain a qualification whilst still getting exercise and doing what I loved- dancing. It also pushed me out my comfort zone and allowed me to meet new friends'**

**Higher Dance participant, aged 17**



Higher Dance, performance at Citymoves Spring Show.  
Photography by Newsline Media

# Dance in Communities

We at Citymoves believe that Dance Education within Communities is an important way for young people to express themselves physically, emotionally and creatively. It enhances their enjoyment of participation and their ability to cooperate with others and builds confidence for those who would not normally participate in dance outside of school. We strive to achieve a rounded experience, tailoring our sessions to appeal to visual, auditory and tactile learning needs. In 2023/24, we brought dance into STEM lessons at schools, and libraries through **Maths in Motion** and **Science Week** 914 children and young people aged 0-26 participated in Citymoves' 122 learning and outreach sessions in 2023-2024

**'The pupils usually find it hard to retain information in other subjects but they are successfully remembering their spaces, their movements and are fully engaged.'**

**P3 Teacher Hazelhead**



**122 Sessions | 819 Participants aged 0-18 | 18 Locations**

Child playing dance games as part of 2023 Summer Camp.  
Photography by Lynn Shaw.

# Dance For Parkinsons (DforP)



Dance for Parkinson's class, being led by Amy Park and Teegan Kollmann.

**'Dance effects me both spiritually and emotionally through the whole range, and always gladdens my heart and my spirits'**

**DforP Participant**

Citymoves is delighted to host a weekly class designed especially for people living with Parkinson's, their families, and their carers. The classes are suitable for those with no dance experience and will develop confidence and creativity, whilst addressing Parkinson's specific concerns such as: balance, flexibility, coordination, gait and social isolation. Sessions are followed by social time with tea/coffee, cake and a chance for everyone to chat.

With funding support from ACVO (Aberdeen's 3rd Sector Interface) and from the local Aberdeen, Parkinson's UK branch, we have managed to continue our regular class during 2023/24. The support has also enabled us to re-engage with a musician who accompanies the class.

A highlight of 2024 was partnering with Aberdeen Jazz Festival in March. Our class welcomed a Jazz saxophonist to accompany the class alongside our regular musician who then continued with a mini-performance during the social time.

# Strive

Strive aims to provide creative activity and positive destinations, using dance as an alternative form of engagement, for young people aged 10-24.

Citymoves are delighted to offer **free classes within local Aberdeen regeneration areas**. Through dance, transferable skills will be developed, such as teamwork, communication, coordination, problem-solving, creativity, leadership, awareness of physical health and fitness, decision making and positive behaviour. By providing a safe and supportive environment, creativity and self-expression will be encouraged, increasing self-esteem and confidence in participants.

Strive has been running across **3 Aberdeen City locations**; Rosemount, Middlefield and Tillydrone. In 2023, Strive groups were provided the **opportunity to perform** at Citymoves Spring Show and Light the Blue (Aberdeen Performing Art's Youth Festival).

**3 Weekly Sessions | 30 Participants aged 5-12 | 4 Performances**



Strive group, performing at Citymoves Spring Show.  
Photography by Newsline Media.

# Horizons

Horizons is a free inclusive youth dance company for **dancers aged 12-19** with and without disabilities. Dancers develop their technical skills and take part in choreographic workshops, with multiple public performances throughout the year.

The group was **initially instigated and ran in partnership with YDance** and was **funded by The Robertson Trust, the Scottish Children's Lottery and Active Aberdeen Partnership**. In 2023/24, Citymoves secured funding from the William Syson Foundation to support Horizons.

During 2023/24, Horizons had **6 performance opportunities**. These included: Light the Blue (Aberdeen Performing Art's Youth Festival), The Summer Camp Showcase, and Citymoves Spring Show.

**'Dance has helped me to express myself without words.**

**It's how I process feelings that sometimes can be  
overwhelming or complex'**

**Horizons Performance Group**



**9 Participants | 1 Outreach Session | 6 Performances**



# Step Forward

Step Forward is Citymoves Dance Agency's inclusive performance company for adults. Step Forward brings together **disabled and non-disabled dancers** who work together to develop their movement and performance skills. Participants are welcome to explore their creativity in a supported and elevated environment.

During 2023/24, Step Forward performed a **crowd favourite** routine at the Spring Show to a medley of ABBA's Greatest Hits.

The group continue to offer **hybrid working options (in-person and online)** to ensure accessibility for all participants.



15 Participants | 1 Community Volunteer | 2 Performances

## Creative Movement

Our creative movement sessions are full of fun and are **suited for adults who learn at their own pace or who require additional support with learning.** The classes are designed to be upbeat, creative and accessible to all, using improvisation tasks and imagery to develop physical expansion and strength. **Carers and supporters are encouraged to actively participate in the class to support facilitation.**

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# Moving Forward



# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

A quarterly EDI working group was established in 2022 and continues to hold regular meetings. The group consists of a Board Member, the CEO, a core staff member and an intern. The group has reviewed Citymoves' current EDI policy and has created **an action plan for 2025-2028**.

In 2023/24, applications, submissions and interviews were conducted digitally to **remove barriers to access**. This includes application and submission flexibility, allowing for submissions via a traditional application pack with a CV and cover letter and alternative packs, including video and voice note submission. Interviewees were also provided with questions in advance to allow candidates time to prepare.

The DanceLive 2023 programme represented diversity in terms of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and sex. We also expanded the DanceLive Outdoor and Pop-Up Programme to allow non-paying audiences to experience the DanceLive festival regardless of their ability to pay.

Citymoves Spring Show in 2024 included our **largest** involvement of people with high complex needs to date.



# Health and Wellbeing

Citymoves is committed to improving Health and Wellbeing and leading positive impacts through dance for the community of Aberdeen/North East Scotland. Citymoves have continued to provide opportunities for movement to enhance **marginalised societal groups**, specifically through programmes such as: Dance for Parkinsons, Horizon's integrated youth group, Step Forward and STRIVE. Further to this, Citymoves offer numerous **Dance Fitness classes for adults** and have hosted a number of **Yoga Weekends** with invited specialists taking the lead on practices to promote health and wellbeing to all.

Citymoves are **seeking funding** to expand our Dance Health programme into other health specific areas; such as Dementia, MS and Stroke.

With **community at the heart**, Citymoves believes that dance is for everyone and it has the power to nurture physical and mental health, promote social interaction and build friendships.

**'I cannot stress enough how important this weekly class is for people living with Parkinson's. The class consists of gentle exercise which helps not only the body but also the soul. The cup of tea at the end is a very important social time for us all, as we have all met as strangers and have become friends. '**

DforP Participant



Yoga weekend 2023 led by Eddie Stern.  
Photography by Julia Angelika Photography.

# Environmental & Sustainability

Citymoves are very committed to increasing sustainability in order to strive towards the Scottish **target of Net Zero for Carbon emissions by 2045**. This is done through a **quarterly Environment and Sustainability working group**, in order for us to continually review integral frameworks within the organisation in order to sustain current practices and enforce new ideas.

As part of our green journey, we created a Marketing Department Sustainability Statement. Citymoves recognises the environmental impact of a Marketing and Communications department within a third-sector performing arts organisation and strives to **minimise the environmental impact** of the organisation's marketing and communications activities while maximising sustainability efforts within the scope of the department.

In **April 2023**, we also supported a residency for '**The Grounding Project**', an environmentally focused dance collective. This is as part of our commitment to **support 2 residencies a year focused on Environmental & Sustainability issues**.

During DanceLive festival 2023, we implemented a **change to our contracts**, which ensures that artists/freelancers consider **environmentally sustainable costuming and travel** as part of their own practices.



Quicksilver Performance Group at the Spring Show.  
Photography by Newsline Media

# 4 Financial Highlights



# Income 2023/24

Trusts/Sponsorships/Donations/Other  
13.6%

Aberdeen City Council  
31.6%

Total Income:  
303,909

Creative Scotland (CS)  
32.8%

Education  
3.8%

Venue Hire  
2.6%

Community Classes  
15.6%



Venue Hire  
£7,864.00

Ticket Sales and Income  
£30,745.00

Total Non-Public  
Sector Funding:  
107,434

Community Classes  
£47,512.00

Corporate Sponsorships & Donations  
£1,959.00

Other Trusts/Foundations  
£7,718.00

Education  
£11,636.00

# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

## Core Funders:



## Project Funders:

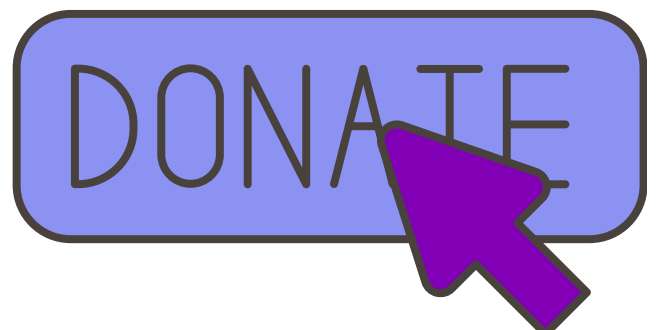


Funded by  
UK Government



As a registered charity, we rely on funding to keep our classes and projects going. With reductions in our core funding and the rising costs, every donation helps us sustain the work we deliver here at Citymoves.

Want to support us?







ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Location:

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