



Dancing My Way – Well-being sessions for people aged 50+ in Seaham, Newton Aycliffe and Pallion, Sunderland.

Request for financial support on behalf of Sacred Sounds CIC to Kans and Kandy Charitable Trust.

Proposal for financial support for ‘Dancing my way’ sessions

Sacred Sounds CIC is requesting financial support for our project *Dancing My Way* who deliver weekly sessions for older adults (aged 50+) at Woodham Community Centre in Newton Aycliffe (since 2018), St Luke’s Centre in Pallion (2019) and Eastlea Community Centre in Seaham (2022).

Each group has between 10-15 people attending per week. Many participants face challenges related to aging—such as social isolation, reduced mobility, cognitive decline, and a lack of creative outlets. Our project offers a holistic, inclusive response to these needs.

Comments from our participants include “dancing makes me feel alive”, “I never thought I would perform on stage at Dance City in front of a paying audience” and “they are a friendly bunch and I look forward to dancing and catching up”

Sacred Sounds CIC

Sacred Sounds CIC (www.sacredsounds.cic.co.uk) is a community-focused organisation based in the North East of England. We use sound healing, music, movement, and nature-based creativity to enhance health, well-being, and social inclusion—especially for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, older adults, and those who may face barriers to engagement due to age, ability, or cultural background.

Sessions are designed to be inclusive, affordable, and accessible to all.

Our Aims

- Improve individual and community well-being through immersive, inclusive programmes rooted in creativity, sound, movement, and connection to nature.
- Empower people—particularly from disadvantaged communities—through experiences that nurture confidence, health, personal expression, and belonging.
- Promote social inclusion by breaking down barriers to participation and celebrating diversity through creative community-led activities.

Our Objectives

- Deliver holistic arts and well-being sessions that blend live sound healing, movement, and nature-based inspiration.
- Offer accessible opportunities to explore mindfulness, relaxation, and emotional resilience.

- Promote physical well-being through movement practices that build strength, stamina, mobility, and coordination.
- Provide safe, supportive spaces that encourage personal growth and creativity for all participants.
- Celebrate community achievements through seasonal sound healing performances and cultural events
- Encourage volunteering and shared ownership through co-creation and inclusive service design.
- Strengthen collaborations with local organisations and community partners to enhance reach and sustainability.
- Incorporate natural materials, themes, and sensory elements (e.g, rhythm of the seasons, organic textures, soundscapes from nature) to deepen the therapeutic impact and connection to the environment.

Sacred Sounds Directors and Session leaders

Tracey West artist statement and Mark Barfoot artist statement have over 50 years of experience of working with communities using arts and well-being activities. We bring a wide range of skills and activities and tailor our sessions to meet the needs of our participants. What we offer is unique in the North East. We create vibrant spaces where movement, live music, and social interaction come together to promote physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Dancing My Way

Sessions feature a tailored mix of seated and standing activities, making them accessible for all levels of ability. Live music—including African drums, handpans, gongs, and crystal singing bowls—creates dynamic, responsive soundscapes that support both energising movement and deep relaxation. Participants co-create choreography, explore nature-inspired themes like seasonality and renewal, and even take sessions outdoors when possible.

Benefits

These activities address common social issues such as the cost-of-living crisis, bereavement, trauma, mental health issues and isolation.

- Support self-expression, skills development and creativity.
- strengthen community connections.
- boost confidence and self-esteem.
- improve mental by reducing stress and promoting relaxation.

- building physical health through activities which improve mobility, coordination, strength and stamina.
- nurturing creativity, confidence, and a sense of purpose and community.
- Celebrating the achievements of the community through sound healing events and performances which will boost confidence and inspire the groups and audiences.

Social support and friendship

There is a core of friendship and welcome at the heart of each group. They share lifts and communicate over WhatsApp and phone calls outside of the sessions.

At Eastlea, participants share a lunch after the dance -a simple but powerful way to reduce loneliness and nurture community spirit. We supply the ingredients for a buffet which is prepared and served by centre volunteers which reduces costs and provides an enjoyable meal. All the birthdays are celebrated with candles and cake and 4 women are now aged 90.

The participants feel heard, respected, and valued. Dancing My Way strengthens the wider community. Our approach supports healthier, happier neighbourhoods and promotes inclusion through accessible, low-cost services. music and movement heal and are passionate about the power of arts and well-being activities to transform lives.

Budget

Session costs

Artist fees 2 artists @£125 each = £250 per session

Ingredients costs for Eastlea for shared lunch (prepared by centre volunteers) £25 per week

Room hire fees are covered by contributions by participants.

Total requested for 10 sessions per group

Woodham (Newton Aycliffe) £2500

St Lukes (Sunderland) £2500

East Lea (Seaham) £2750

total £7750

We appreciate any contribution that you can make towards these costs to support these 3 communities of elder dancers. Thank you.

Warmest wishes, Mark and Tracey,

Directors Sacred Sounds CIC