



Movement for Memory

Gentle dance-based classes for those living with cognitive impairment or memory loss



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1. Introduction

Imagination Dance CIC was founded in 2018 to provide dance opportunities for those who are rarely offered them.

We regularly work in the community, providing sessions for older people; those with long-term conditions such as Dementia and Parkinson's; children and adults with learning and/or physical disabilities; and many more! As well as hosting our own timetable of classes, we provide bespoke sessions within care homes; adult day services; schools; Dementia support groups; and other organisations.

Movement for Memory

Our Movement for Memory classes are aimed at those who have memory loss or cognitive impairment, and are perfect for those with **Parkinson's, Dementia or MS**. We focus on dance-based routines and exercises to **improve strength, balance, mobility and co-ordination**



2. Research

It is estimated there are over **130,000 people with MS** in the UK, and that nearly **7,000 people** are **newly diagnosed** each year

There are around **145,000 people** already living with **Parkinson's**, including an estimated **2520** in **Hertfordshire**

There are currently estimated to be **900,000 people with Dementia**. Locally, in **Hertfordshire** this number is around **16,000**.

As these conditions progress there is a big **impact on mobility** which means those living with Dementia, Parkinson's and MS are **more vulnerable to falls**.



Parkinson's can cause problems with **communication, including speech, facial expressions and writing**. This can make it harder for people express themselves, and it may make it more difficult for people to talk about their condition.

Research has show that **leading a physically active lifestyle can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of people with Dementia, Parkinson's and MS.** Regular, moderate physical activity can **improve mood, slows the progression of the conditions and prolongs independent mobility** (gait, balance, strength) - improving the overall quality of life.



A person living with Dementia should be **supported to be physically active.** Exercise has physical health benefits, can **boost mood** and often provides **vital social contact.**



For people with Dementia – even those who have lost their ability to communicate or are at the end of their life – music can be a powerful way to trigger positive feelings and connect with other people

Dementia UK website

What our classes involve:

Our sessions are filled with dance-based routines and exercises to **improve strength, balance mobility and co-ordination**, we also use **props to help engage with music and movement** in fun ways.

At the end of every session we have allocated **social time**, that includes a tea or coffee. Our social time is a great way for both carers and participants to be able to share stories and experiences that can be **beneficial for all**.

Benefits include:

- Improvements to **muscular strength and endurance**
- **Mental stimulation** through music & exercise
- Improvements to **co-ordination skills**
- **Social connections** to wider community through dedicated social time
- Improvements to **fine motor/dexterity skills**
- Improvements to **mental wellbeing** through movement and engagement

“Gets us moving our muscles in different ways”

“Good for the brain and co-ordination with the different movements”

4. Class Timetable

Movement for Memory

Gentle dance based sessions for those living with memory loss or cognitive impairment.

 Imagination Dance
Community Interest Company

Perfect for those living with Dementia, Parkinson's or MS.

Monday

Harpenden Trust Halls, Harpenden | 10.30am-12pm

Eco Hub, Gamlingay | 1-2.30pm

Tuesday

Coombes Community Centre, Royston | 1.30-3pm

St Nicholas Church Hall, Barton-le-Clay | 2-3.30pm*

**Runs fortnightly*

Wednesday

Hazel Grove Community Centre, Welwyn | 10.30am-12pm

United Reformed Church, Stevenage | 1.30-3pm*

**Runs fortnightly*

Thursday

Hertford Wellbeing Hub, Hertford | 1.30-3pm

£2pp including tea/coffee



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ENGLAND**



Register now: info.imaginationarts@yahoo.com | 07394 934911

Where are the classes based?

At the current moment we cover areas across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

Locations include:

- Hertford
- Welwyn Garden City
- Harpenden
- Stevenage
- Royston
- Barton-Le-Clay
- Gamlingay

We are always looking for further expansion to allow us to deliver our sessions to as many people that could benefit as possible.

Funders

Imagination Dance have been lucky enough to receive funding from various organisations to support our Movement for Memory programme over the past few years.



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Royston

Our Royston session runs weekly on **Tuesdays 1.30 - 3pm** at the **Coombes Community Centre**.

Those who attend this class are all living with Dementia attend or memory loss due to other medical conditions.

With the current attendees this class can be a mixture of seated and some gentle standing exercises. The session adapts to those that attend each week.

**100%
return
rate**

**6 participants
and carers
registered**

Barton-le-Clay

Barton-le-Clay runs **fortnightly on Tuesdays 2 - 3.30pm** at **St Nicholas' Church Hall**.

**21
participants
and carers
registered**

**100%
return
rate**

This session runs fortnightly in alignment with a local TIBBS group who run a group same time on alternate weeks, this group has supported us by sharing our information with their attendees.

With this class we have kept it consistent with a full seated session as this is best suited to all that attend the class. The majority of group are further along in their diagnosis and a slightly older age group than others.

Stevenage

Our Stevenage session runs **fortnightly on Wednesdays**
1.30 - 3pm at the **United Reformed Church**.

95%
return rate

8
participants
and carers
registered

This session runs fortnightly in alignment with another local activity service called Open Art Box, who runs on the opposing week. Working alongside Open Art Box allows our participants to attend both sessions, ensuring they have a full and varied timetable of activities!

This session is a mixture of seated and gentle standing exercises as this is what suits this specific group currently, however this can always be adapted to who is in attendance.

Hertford

The Hertford session runs weekly on **Thursdays**
1.30 - 3pm at the **Hertford Wellbeing Hub**.

This session is a fully seated session, this is best suited to those attending. The session involves lots of follow along routines focusing on props and sing-a-long songs to engage all those that attend.

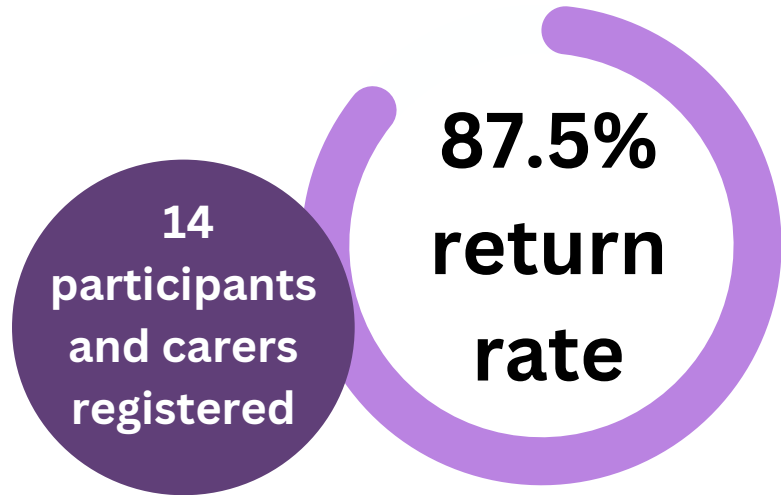
Social time for this group has been a huge part of the session as improving their social wellbeing is just as important as their physical wellbeing.

95%
return
rate

10
participants
and carers
registered

Gamlingay

Our Gamlingay session runs weekly on **Mondays 1 - 2.30pm** at the **Eco Hub**



This session is fully seated, using exercises such as co-ordination using props, seated leg exercises and follow along routines to build overall strength and stamina.

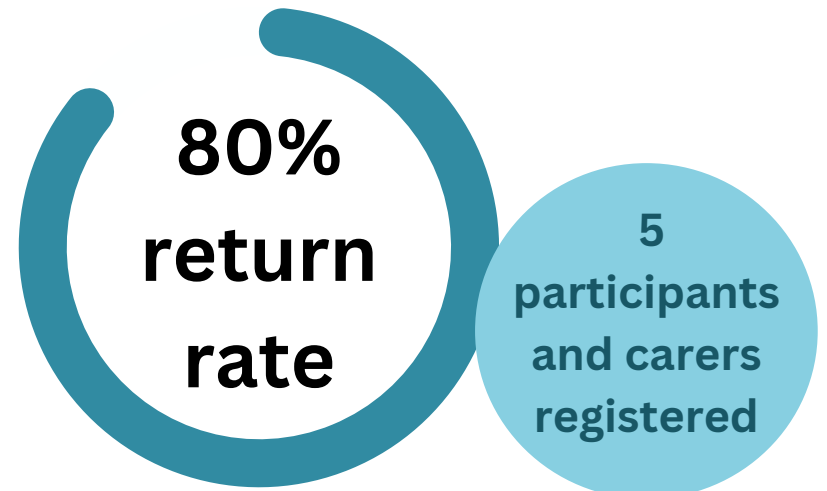
Our Gamlingay class consists of those mainly living with Dementia and their partners and carers

Harpenden

Our Harpenden session runs weekly on **Mondays 10 - 12.30pm** at the **Harpenden Trust Halls**

This is one of our newer sessions, added to the timetable in late 2023. The class is currently fully seated, where we use props and sing-a-long pieces of music to engage participants and spark their memories.

This class mainly consists of those living with Dementia, and we are working alongside the Harpenden Memory Cafe to promote our classes.



Welwyn Garden City

Our Welwyn Garden City class runs weekly on **Wednesdays, 10 - 12.30pm** at **Hazel Grove Community Centre**.

3
participants
and carers
registered

100%
return
rate

Another one of our most recent sessions, our Welwyn Garden City class consists mostly of seated work with some gentle standing work depending on the week.

We work alongside the popular Hertswise Dementia Support group in WGC to try and encourage those living with Dementia to attend our class with their carers.



5. Feedback

“ I think the classes are wonderful and so important! ”



90% of participants & carers have seen an improvement to all areas physical health

10% have seen some improvements to physical health

95% have seen improvements to their quality of life through better mental wellbeing and social connections

100% of Carers find our sessions 'extremely beneficial' for them

95% of Carers find our sessions 'extremely beneficial' for those they care for.

5% find them 'fairly beneficial'



“Gets us out of the house, meeting others in a safe & welcoming environment, Hannah is great, kind and funny and seen so much benefit!”

"Excellent - like the way that you treat everyone, especially those with Dementia. Already seen a huge improvement"

"It's not just good for physical movement, the exercises help with mental stimulation as well... and we love the music!"

“Keeps us well oiled and is such fun!”

“Immense and immeasurable benefits”

“Great to be able to meet new people”

Case Study 1: Jose & David Dickinson

Jose and David have been attending our Gamlingay Movement for Memory class since it began in September 2022. **David is living with Dementia**, and **Jose is his partner and primary carer**. They are both keen dancers and attend weekly ballroom dance classes – reminiscent of the way the couple met back in the 1950s. Although both have their own mobility struggles now - David being unsteady on his feet and has a shoulder injury meaning he can't lift his left arm above shoulder height, and Jose having restricted movement in her left knee – they both still attend the ballroom dancing class as a social event and for the music. **Both especially feel that our class has helped with their mobility**, with Jose stating that over the period of attending our class, **she has felt muscles in her arms she didn't know she had!**

Jose and David **have a keen social life and attend many groups** - including a Music for Dementia group and many different coffee mornings! Our Movement for Memory class, however, is the only exercise class they attend and they both feel it **complements their other groups**. They feel that the Movement for Memory class **“keeps them alert for the music group”**, helping with their rhythm and co-ordination, as well as David's ability to copy and follow an instructor. Jose states that it helps **“the brain to tick over!”**

Jose told us that the class is extremely beneficial for their social life, and that **“we have a laugh! It's fun to attend and we need fun in our lives.”** They both agreed that it is so important to get out the house, and that the class **allows them to see other people that they wouldn't meet usually**. Jose also says that the class comforts her to know that she has support from others in similar situations. She also states that it is **brilliant that the class is so tailored to people with different needs** – “the teacher is wonderful and knows how to handle different people and different needs so well”.



Case Study 2: Marilyn & Michael Dodds

Marilyn and Michael have been attending Stevenage Movement for Memory since November 2022. **Michael is living with Dementia**, and his partner **Marilyn is his primary carer**. They are both very keen in fitness as for years they both attended many physical activities such as Michael loved playing badminton and Marilyn attended weekly Pilates sessions – however as they got older and began to both struggle with their mobility, they missed not being able to attend these sessions. Although neither of them specifically attended dance classes they did however enjoy going to Barn Dances – which was the theme for Marilyn’s 60th Birthday and according to Michael **“we used to do a mean Jive back all those hundreds of years ago!”** they both felt Movement for Memory was the best way to get back into fitness with the enjoyment of dance they experienced in their lives together. **Both have felt that our class has helped with their mobility, with Michael stating the classes are using muscles he hasn’t used for a long time!**

Marilyn and Michael both attend other local groups which has helped them continue to lead their social lives – including Hertswise groups and an art group called Open Art box. Our Movement for Memory session is **the only physical exercise class that they attend**, although the couple continues with regular walks they feel this exercise class complements the other sessions as the class works their minds and bodies whilst enjoying the social side of sessions. They feel that Movement for Memory **“stretches the muscles I didn’t think I had”** helping them to work all areas of their bodies they wouldn’t be using so much without the class.

For Marilyn she spoke about **how beneficial our class is for her social life, and that “it gets us out the house to meet new people we wouldn’t have without it.”** They both agree that the class is good fun and so important because it also includes the social side. Marilyn says that its “nice to be amongst other people” and takes comfort from sharing life stories and advice from the other carers in the class – **“The class is very enjoyable, good fun and a chance to meet other in similar situations – the teacher always has a lovely choice of music!”**



6. Community Connections

‘At Hertswise we support people living with Dementia. The clients love having Imagination Dance into our groups. The seated exercise/ dance sessions are always inclusive of different types of Dementia and different levels of need. We have some clients that follow all the moves enthusiastically, others that add their own flare, and some who are more advanced but love to tap along to the music and reminiscence along to their favourite songs. The props involved help to aid client’s confidence, as they are encouraged to try out their own moves, the rest of the group then mirror them, which leads to lots of laughter. Clients always leave with a smile on their faces. The sessions are perfect for exercising the body, mind and soul. Thank you to Hannah and her fantastic team.’ - **Hollie, Team Leader at Hertswise Dementia Support**

“The Movement for Memory sessions you provide at All Sorts are a really popular session that clearly brings enjoyment and fun to exercise for our members who love to sing and dance along with you. We find that the sessions are not only good for their health but for their mood and wellbeing.” -

Kelly, Director at All Sorts Dementia Group



‘Movement for Memory has been an asset to Hertswise groups. Being able to give our clients and carers, the opportunity for seated movement, music and fun- with familiar and friendly facilitators is brilliant. Having the service facilitated by such kind, talented and friendly staff is brilliant. But more so for us, when Movement for memory visit our session to facilitate, they are very aware that they come into the clients and carers space and adapt their approach, language and deminer for each of our groups to ensure our clients are engaged and communicate throughout. This is us is the most important part. Thank you for your ongoing work and fun.’ - **Kerryn, Cheshunt Hertswise**



7. Feedback from our Directors

This programme has been hugely beneficial to those living with memory loss and their partner/carers, as well as to Imagination Dance as an organisation. We have been able to reach communities that may not have been offered the 'chance to dance' previously, and the funded has allowed us to initiate a longer-term, successful and sustainable programme.

IDCIC has made amazing use of the provided funding. They have branched out to many locations, reaching out to multiple local communities. They have also got excellent ideas in which to branch out further. Hannah and her staff has therefore utilised the funding to its fullest potential.

8. Conclusion

Our Movement for Memory programme has been proven to be highly successful and continues to receive positive feedback from both participants, their partners/carers and community organisations.

Our classes have brilliant results on participant's mental, physical and social wellbeing and we believe that our classes do improve the quality of life of those who attend.

Going forward, we look forward to working with more community organisations to develop our classes and expand our reach even further. We would love to open more classes in different areas of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, and we are working hard behind the scenes to ensure our participants continue to receive high quality content in their classes.

Imagination Dance are passionate about bringing our Movement for Memory programme to as many people as possible, and with an ageing population and more people than ever being diagnosed with Dementia, Parkinson's and MS, our programme will only grow from strength-to-strength as we develop and expand.

All information correct as of April 2024.

9. References

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