

Organisation Name		Reference code
Care to Dance		2025-10-YWG08
Organisation Address		
30 Bankside Court Stationfields Oxford Oxfordshire OX5 1JE England		
Website Address		
www.caretodance.co.uk		
How did you hear about the Triangle Trust?		
Online		
Please describe your organisation's purpose in one or two sentences.		
Care to Dance empowers care-experienced young people, who face a significantly higher risk of entering the criminal justice system, through creative programmes that build confidence, resilience, and positive pathways.		
Type of organisation? (tick all that apply and complete relevant details)		
Charity	Registered Charity Number	Date Registered
Yes	1214447	2025
Community Interest Company	Registered Companies House Number	Date Registered
No		2019
Social Enterprise	Has your organisation been awarded the Social Enterprise Mark?	Year Awarded
No		
Grant Summary		
This grant will enable Care to Dance to deliver creative, wellbeing-focused programmes that support care-experienced young people, mostly women and girls, at high risk of entering the criminal justice system, helping them build confidence, resilience, and positive futures.		
Please describe the specific needs of the young women and girls you work with that this project will address		
<p>Care to Dance is uniquely led by qualified social workers and trauma-informed dance artists. This structure ensures that our programmes combine safeguarding expertise with creative, therapeutic practice. We recognise that care-experienced young women and girls are significantly more likely than their peers to become involved in the criminal justice system, experience exploitation, or face a range of challenges. The young people we support across Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Birmingham live with multiple vulnerabilities: many have been subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), have a history of missing episodes, or are at serious risk of exploitation. These risks are heightened for girls, who are more likely to experience grooming, sexual violence, coercion into exploitative relationships, and the compounding effects of trauma. Our project responds directly to these challenges, ensuring that young women and girls are not just included in general provision but are actively supported through interventions that meet their specific needs.</p> <p>Social workers bring in-depth knowledge of safeguarding, the care system, and the structural inequalities that affect care-experienced young women. Trauma-informed dance artists bring expertise in creative, body-based approaches that enable young people to process difficult experiences and express themselves safely. Together, this</p>		

combination of professional and creative leadership ensures that our programmes are both safe and transformative. It also models collaboration between statutory knowledge and community-based creativity, an approach that is rare but highly effective.

Through our creative, wellbeing-focused programmes, we provide safe, trusted spaces where young women and girls can build confidence, resilience and self-worth. Dance is a powerful medium for this work: it allows young people to express complex emotions in non-verbal ways, helping them to process trauma, build confidence, and connect positively with peers. For care-experienced girls who have often been silenced or stigmatised, this form of self-expression is vital. Our social workers also deliver structured wellbeing and leadership workshops that addresses key areas such as mental health, relationships, and decision-making. This approach helps tackle the root causes of risk, rather than focusing only on surface behaviours.

We know from experience that many of the young people have low trust in statutory services due to frequent placement moves, disrupted schooling, and a sense of being 'let down' by professionals. Our project provides consistency and long-term commitment. The trusted relationships built with our social workers and artists are often the first dependable connections these young women have experienced, and this stability is a critical protective factor against further risk. By offering ongoing support, we help girls develop positive self-identities, rather than being defined by their care status or vulnerabilities.

In practice, this means that young women and girls in our project are supported to:

- Rebuild confidence and self-esteem through creative achievement and positive recognition.
- Develop coping strategies for anxiety, low mood, and trauma symptoms, reducing the likelihood of crisis or unsafe behaviours.
- Build safe peer networks that counteract the isolation and social exclusion many care-experienced girls experience.
- Explore healthy relationships and boundaries, equipping them to resist exploitation and coercion.
- Access education, training and employment opportunities with increased confidence and aspiration. This includes accredited level 1 and 2 leadership qualifications.

Our work already supports over 60 care-experienced young people in Birmingham and the Black Country, with over 95% being young women and girls. This funding would allow us to sustain and strengthen our work in this region, in collaboration with local authorities, schools and organisations.

**What are the key outcomes you will be seeking to achieve for young women and girls either at risk of offending or who are already caught up in the criminal justice system? How will you track the impact you are making?**

"The key outcomes we seek to achieve for care-experienced young women and girls are centred on safety, wellbeing, resilience, and long-term positive life chances. We recognise that these young women face multiple intersecting risks, and therefore our outcomes are both preventative and developmental.

Our key outcomes include:

Improved emotional wellbeing and resilience.

Young women will develop strategies to manage trauma symptoms.

They will experience increased confidence, self-esteem, and positive self-identity.

Strengthened protective factors against exploitation and offending

Participants will demonstrate improved awareness of healthy relationships, boundaries, and personal safety.

Reduced missing episodes and risk-taking behaviours, as young women gain safe alternatives and supportive networks.

Re-engagement with positive pathways.

Increased participation in education, training, or employment, supported by our accredited qualifications and developed aspiration and skills.

Opportunities to experience achievement and recognition through dance, building belief

in their future potential.

Building consistent, positive relationships with social workers and trauma-informed dance artists who understand their lived experiences.

Strengthened ability to seek help from trusted adults, services and community resources, reducing reliance on unsafe networks.

Reduced risk of involvement in the criminal justice system

For those at risk: diversion from offending by addressing root causes such as trauma and lack of opportunity.

For those already involved: stabilisation, improved wellbeing, and engagement with rehabilitative opportunities that reduce likelihood of re-offending.

We combine qualitative and quantitative methods to measure progress.

Baseline and exit measures: At entry, participants complete self-assessments. These are repeated at agreed intervals and at programme completion, allowing us to evidence distance travelled.

Attendance and engagement data: We monitor session attendance, participation levels, and consistency to identify patterns of progress or risk.

Observations and interviews: Social workers record observations of behaviour, coping strategies, and peer relationships. Testimonials with young people, providing rich qualitative data.

Feedback loops: We conduct structured feedback sessions with young women to capture their voices, experiences, and suggestions for improvement.

External indicators: Where possible, and with consent, we track safeguarding outcomes such as reductions in missing episodes, involvement in risky situations, or offending behaviours.

By combining structured measurement with the voices of young women themselves, we can demonstrate both the statistical outcomes and the lived impact of our work.

Most importantly, our tracking systems ensure that learning is continuous, helping us to adapt and respond quickly to the changing needs of care-experienced young women and girls.

#### **What are the key activities you will undertake with this funding to achieve these outcomes?**

With funding, Care to Dance will expand and strengthen our provision for care-experienced young women and girls across Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Birmingham, ensuring that those most at risk of offending or exploitation are supported through safe, creative, and therapeutic programmes. Our activities will be led by qualified social workers and trauma-informed dance artists, whose combined expertise ensures that our interventions are both safeguarding-led and trauma-responsive.

Key activities will include:

##### **1. Dance workshops**

- Delivery of weekly dance-based workshops designed to promote self-expression, confidence, and emotional release.
- Integration of trauma-informed practice, enabling young women to process difficult experiences in safe and creative ways.
- Group-based activities to foster positive peer relationships and belonging.

##### **2. Targeted Wellbeing and Leadership Support**

- One-to-one and small group sessions led by our social workers, focusing on mental health, relationships, boundaries, and decision-making.
- Development of individual support plans tailored to each young woman.
- Opportunities for young women to take on peer leadership roles within sessions, building responsibility, confidence, and transferable skills.

##### **3. Leadership by professionals with dual expertise**

- Programmes designed and delivered jointly by social workers (bringing safeguarding, care experience and justice system expertise) and trauma-informed dance artists

(bringing specialist skills in creative engagement, body-based therapies, and youth empowerment).

- Leadership team qualified in social work and trauma-informed practice ensures that activities are safe, accountable, and rooted in professional best practice.

- Leadership workshops that provide them with opportunities to work towards their Level 1, 2 and 3 Dance/Sport Leadership Qualifications.

#### 4. Pathways into Education, Training and Positive Destinations

- Linking participants to opportunities in education, training, and employment, supported by confidence gained through our programme.

- Facilitating creative showcases where young women can share their achievements, helping them to feel seen, celebrated, and valued.

#### 5. Partnership and Collaboration

- Working with local safeguarding boards, schools, and community partners to ensure joined-up support and to share insights into effective practice with care-experienced young women and girls.

- Signposting participants into complementary services, ensuring holistic support.

Through creative and therapeutic programmes, we reduce risks like low self-esteem, isolation, and unsafe relationships while building resilience, peer support, and aspirations. Led by social workers and trauma-informed artists, we provide consistent, trusted support so care-experienced girls gain the tools and opportunities to thrive.

**Does your proposed project already exist or is this a new piece of work? If this project is already operating, please describe to us how you will use this as an opportunity to build on what you have achieved to date. If this is a new piece of work, please explain what this funding will enable you to do differently.**

This is an existing and well-established project that has already demonstrated strong impact and high levels of demand. Since its launch, Care to Dance supports over 60 care-experienced young people across Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Birmingham, offering holistic programmes led by social workers and trauma-informed dance artists. The success of the programme has been evident not only in the outcomes for young people but also in the growing numbers seeking to participate. The level of interest has been so significant that in several areas, such as Walsall and Birmingham, we have had to split classes to accommodate the numbers. This demonstrates both the relevance of our approach and the urgent need for sustainable funding to keep pace with demand.

To date, our programme has provided safe spaces where care-experienced young people, particularly young women and girls, can build confidence, resilience, and supportive peer networks. We have seen clear improvements in emotional wellbeing, reductions in risk-taking behaviour, and stronger engagement with education and training opportunities. The combination of social workers and trauma-informed dance artists has been crucial to this success, ensuring a blend of safeguarding and creative, therapeutic practice. This unique model provides young people with consistent, skilled, and trusted adult support, which is often lacking elsewhere in their lives.

However, our current funding is due to expire, creating a critical need for new support to sustain and grow the programme. While we are working closely with Local Authorities to secure match funding, Thrive support would provide the stability required to maintain provision while we embed longer-term partnerships. Without this, there is a real risk that many young people will lose access to a trusted source of support at a time when demand is increasing.

This funding will enable us to build on what we have already achieved in three key ways:

Sustain provision - maintain existing sessions across Birmingham and the Black Country, ensuring continuity of support for current participants.

Expand capacity - meet the growing demand by increasing provision in areas where classes are oversubscribed, ensuring no young person is turned away.

Strengthen collaboration - work more closely with Local Authorities, schools, and partners to secure the programme's long-term sustainability and embed it into the wider

support offer for care-experienced young people.

This funding will sustain current sessions, expand capacity in oversubscribed areas, and strengthen collaboration with Local Authorities to secure long-term sustainability. Thrive support offers the stability to build on proven success, meet rising demand, and ensure care-experienced young people continue to access vital support.

**What expertise and track record do you have to be able to deliver this work successfully? Please specifically mention your expertise linked to gender and trauma informed approaches.**

Care to Dance has developed a strong track record of working with care-experienced young people who are at heightened risk of criminalisation, exploitation, and poor mental health. Our work is designed and delivered by a team of qualified social workers and trauma-informed dance artists, ensuring that every aspect of the programme is grounded in trauma informed practice. This dual expertise is central to our ability to work effectively with young women and girls whose experiences are shaped by trauma, instability, and vulnerabilities.

We recognise that care-experienced young women and girls face distinct challenges compared with their male peers. They are disproportionately affected by grooming, sexual violence and exploitative relationships. Our programme is explicitly designed to respond to these needs. Staff receive ongoing training in gender-specific issues, including understanding coercive control, healthy relationships, and the impact of gendered expectations on self-esteem. By creating safe spaces, we enable young women to share experiences without fear of judgment and to explore their identities in a supportive environment.

Trauma-informed practice is central to our work. Many of the young people we support have faced abuse, neglect, multiple placements, and disrupted schooling, often leading to anxiety, anger, or risk-taking. Our dance artists use movement and non-verbal expression to provide safe ways of processing emotions, while our social workers bring safeguarding expertise and an understanding of how trauma shapes behaviour. Sessions are structured around consistency, predictability, and choice, ensuring they are both supportive and empowering. We have also created a CPD programme for dance teachers on trauma-informed practice, due to be accredited this month, strengthening sector-wide capacity and evidencing our leadership in embedding trauma-informed approaches.

Care to Dance is a national charity founded in 2019 (originally as a CIC, now a CIO since August 2025). We work with 30 Local Authorities and have supported over 400 young people across the UK. In the West Midlands, we currently reach 60 care-experienced young people across Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Birmingham, with numbers continuing to grow. Our impact is evidenced, and we have built strong, collaborative partnerships in the sector and region that continue to expand.

In summary, Care to Dance combines specialist knowledge of care-experienced young people with professional expertise in gender-responsive and trauma-informed practice. Our unique blend of social work and creative leadership equips us to deliver programmes that are safe, holistic and transformative. We are trusted by young women themselves, as well as by Local Authorities and partners, and we have a proven track record of helping care-experienced young women and girls reduce risks, build resilience, and pursue positive futures.

**Please explain how the grant will be spent**

The total cost of this project over two years is £43,050, with Local Authorities committed to match-funding £23,050. We are therefore requesting £20,000 per year for the next two years from the Triangle Trust to secure the programme's sustainability and ensure that care-experienced young women and girls in the West Midlands continue to receive consistent, high-quality support.

The grant will be used to cover the following key costs:

Programme delivery staff - £28,980

46 weeks of delivery per year, with 6 hours of provision each week across four programmes.

Each session is staffed by two trauma-informed dance artists and one qualified social worker, ensuring both creative engagement and professional safeguarding expertise. Delivery is costed at £35 per hour per staff member.

Studio hire - £8,280

Safe venues are essential to ensure young people feel secure and able to fully engage. This covers 46 weeks of studio hire at £30 per hour.

Social events - £1,200

Two events per year for each of the four groups, providing opportunities for community-building, peer support, and celebration of progress.

These events strengthen belonging and reduce the isolation so many care-experienced young people experience.

Celebration events - £2,000

Two larger events across the funding period, bringing groups together with families, carers, and professionals.

Costs include venue hire, technician support, and delivery team input.

These events showcase achievements, build aspirations, and demonstrate impact to the wider community.

T-shirts - £540

Branded T-shirts for young people to foster a sense of belonging, identity, and pride in participation.

Core contribution (5%) - £2,050

An allocation towards core costs, covering administration, oversight, and supervision of the delivery team by the Care to Dance leadership. This ensures that the programme is well-managed, staff are supported, and safeguarding and quality standards are consistently upheld.

In summary, the Triangle Trust grant will be directly invested into the frontline delivery of our creative and therapeutic programmes, with a small contribution to essential overheads. Combined with Local Authority match funding, this will secure the continuation of our projects that are already demonstrating strong impact and high demand. Over the next two years, it will enable us to sustain regular workshops, expand opportunities through events, and provide care-experienced young women and girls with safe, trusted, and inspiring spaces to build resilience, confidence, and positive futures.

#### **Who will be responsible for overseeing and delivering this work?**

Oversight and delivery of this project will be shared across our experienced leadership and programme team, ensuring that young people receive high-quality, consistent support and that the programme is managed safely and effectively.

##### **Programme coordination**

Day-to-day logistics are managed by our Programme Coordinator, who oversees timetabling, venues, staffing, and communications. They are in weekly contact with delivery teams and carers, ensuring that sessions are responsive to young people's needs and that any emerging issues are addressed promptly. Their role ensures smooth delivery on the ground and continuity of support for participants.

##### **Organisational leadership**

Overall responsibility sits with our Chief Executive Officer, who has professional qualifications as a social worker and extensive experience in safeguarding and care-experienced practice. They are also undertaking a PhD researching the impact of dance on care-experienced young people through a trauma-informed lens. The CEO provides strategic oversight of the programme, ensuring alignment with our charitable objectives, compliance with safeguarding and quality standards, and accountability to funders and Local Authorities. The CEO also provides reflective supervision for the delivery team, strengthening trauma-informed practice and safeguarding.

##### **Training and professional development**

Internal training is delivered jointly by the CEO and the Artistic Director (both social workers). This ensures that all staff are confident in safeguarding practice and trauma-informed creative delivery. In addition, Care to Dance has developed a Continuing

Professional Development (CPD) programme on trauma-informed practice for dance teachers, which is due to be accredited this month. Once accredited, this CPD will be embedded into our staff training cycle and made available to external practitioners, further evidencing our leadership in trauma-informed youth engagement.

**Delivery team**

Weekly workshops are co-delivered by two trauma-informed dance artists and one qualified social worker per session. This ensures that each class has both safeguarding and contextual expertise as well as creative, therapeutic input. The team works collaboratively to provide safe, structured, and inspiring spaces where young women and girls can thrive.

In summary, the project is managed through a clear structure: the Programme Coordinator ensures smooth operations and regular communication; the CEO provides strategic oversight and safeguarding leadership; and the Artistic Director shapes creative practice. With a skilled delivery team and an embedded training offer, we are confident that this programme will be delivered to the highest standards of safety, consistency, and impact.

**How do you plan to continue this work once the grant ends?**

We are committed to sustaining this programme well beyond the lifetime of the grant. While Thrive funding will provide essential stability in the short term, our focus is on building the evidence, partnerships, and diverse funding needed for long-term continuation.

As this is a relatively new geographical area, we are prioritising robust monitoring and evaluation to show the difference our work makes. We will continue to track attendance, engagement, wellbeing outcomes, and safeguarding indicators, alongside feedback from young people, carers, and partners. Demonstrating measurable impact will be central to securing future investment.

We already work with 30 Local Authorities nationally, and have built strong links with councils and Virtual Schools in Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Birmingham. Our model directly supports their statutory duties for care-experienced young people, particularly around wellbeing and reducing risk of criminalisation. By evidencing outcomes, we aim to strengthen these partnerships so that Local Authorities continue to match fund or commission the programme directly.

In addition to Local Authority commissioning, we will continue to pursue grants from charitable trusts and other funders aligned with our focus on young people and trauma-informed practice. We are also developing new revenue streams, including our soon-to-be accredited CPD training in trauma-informed practice for dance teachers, which will strengthen sustainability and continue to build upon our leadership in the sector. In summary, Thrive funding will enable us to deliver and consolidate this work while building the case for long-term funding. Beyond the grant, we will sustain the programme through a combination of Local Authority commissioning, Virtual School funding, charitable grants, and income from training. This approach ensures that care-experienced young women and girls in the West Midlands continue to access consistent, safe, and empowering support long after the funding period ends.

**Is your organisation led by women and are at least 80% of your organisation's total beneficiaries' women and girls? Please provide a breakdown of your beneficiary numbers for the past 2 years.**

Yes, in terms of beneficiaries, since starting these programmes, we have supported 55 girls and 6 boys, meaning 91% of our total beneficiaries are women and girls. While we occasionally work with boys, our programmes are primarily for young women and girls, and their needs remain at the centre of all delivery, training, and strategic planning. Care to Dance is a women-led organisation, with both our CEO (a qualified social worker) and Artistic Director (a trauma-informed dance artist) being women. Our leadership team and delivery staff reflect our commitment to women-centred practice. Our beneficiaries across the past two years, we have supported approximately 94% women and girls across the country.

**Does your organisation have existing knowledge and expertise working across**

<b>the criminal justice system?</b>	
<p>Yes. Care to Dance has significant knowledge and expertise in working with young people at risk of, or already involved in, the criminal justice system. Our programmes are specifically designed for care-experienced young people, who we know are disproportionately represented in the CJS, and we have built strong practice in supporting those facing complex risks.</p> <p>We have worked directly with young people who are subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), those placed in secure units, and young people who have been arrested or are at high risk of offending. Our delivery model provides both preventative and rehabilitative support, helping young women and girls to process trauma, build protective factors, and access positive pathways that reduce the likelihood of further CJS involvement.</p> <p>Our team includes qualified social workers and trauma-informed dance artists, ensuring that interventions are both creative and rooted in safeguarding and trauma informed practice. This blend of expertise allows us to address the underlying causes of risk while also supporting young people to make positive choices and engage with services. We help young people to build trust in professionals and services, working collaboratively with other adults and agencies around the young person.</p> <p>We work closely with Local Authority social workers and youth justice teams, contributing to care planning and risk management processes. Our staff regularly attend care team meetings, risk management meetings, and multi-agency safeguarding discussions, ensuring that our work is fully integrated into the wider support network around each young person. This partnership approach not only strengthens outcomes for the individuals we support but also contributes to better coordination across the sector.</p> <p>In summary, our experience spans both prevention and intervention: from working with young women and girls at the earliest stages of risk, through to those already in secure settings or with CJS involvement. By combining our creative, trauma-informed approach with close partnership working and professional expertise, we are well placed to continue supporting young people whose lives are shaped by the criminal justice system.</p>	
<b>Will you be receiving funding from any other sources for this project?</b>	
Yes Local Authority funding	
<b>Do all staff have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks? If no please state why.</b>	
Yes	
<b>Reason why not all staff have DBS checks.</b>	
<b>Total funding requested in this application (£10,000 to £80,000 with a maximum of £40,000 in one year)</b>	
£40000	
<b>Proposed grant start date</b>	<b>Proposed grant duration in months</b>
11/5/2025	24
<b>How much funding is required each year?</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
£20000	£20000
<b>What was your organisation's expenditure in the most recent financial year?</b>	<b>What was your organisation's annual income in the most recent financial year?</b>
£208083	£231474
<b>What value of unrestricted reserves did your organisation have at the end of the most recent financial year?</b>	
£23391	