



**THE BLAIR ACADEMY**

# Impact Report 2022



# The Story so far

The Blair Academy promotes healthy, happy ageing through Hip Hop Dance. We are a social enterprise founded on Charlie Blair's experiences as a professional dancer, homeless teenager and carer for the elderly. Through our innovative chair based Hip Hop workshops and on demand service 'The BA Box', we aim to drastically change the approach to entertaining and engaging older adults.

Since launching in 2018, we have engaged over 6000 people across a multitude of care and community settings. At The Blair Academy, we are trailblazers in Healthy, Happy Ageing.

Our diverse team boasts an impressive mix of performers, carers and therapists with an inclusive approach.

We envisage a world where Hip Hop brings health, happiness and well-being to the lives of many older people so that we can:

- Combat loneliness
- Improve/prevent the deterioration of mental health
- Bridge social and generational gaps



# The year in numbers

**31**

Organisations that  
we've worked with

**928**

Sessions delivered

**300+**

Older People engaged



**£30,634**

In funding awarded to us

**86,460**

IGTV views

**15**

Blog posts

# 2022 Highlights



## NAPA Partnership

This year we officially partnered with The National Activity providers association. Together, we produced a creative dance resource which has been used by over 2000 care homes across the UK. We also delivered a session at their conference.

## Branching into Academia

We kickstarted the process of creating a pilot research project with The University of East London to test the effectivity of our intervention and potentially fill literary gaps. Our founder was invited to speak about this at the Hip Hop 4 Health Conference in Swansea produced by Becky Inkster.

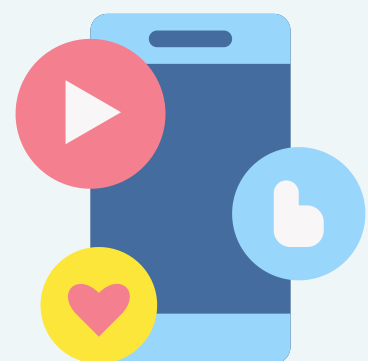


## Award Winning

Our Founder, Charlie made it onto Natwest's WISE100 list, celebrating the top female social entrepreneurs in the country. She was also voted as one of the top 10 young business owners to watch by Starling Bank and The Great British Entrepreneur awards.

## Increased Social Media Presence and Following

As well as improving engagement on Instagram and Facebook, we have launched profiles on Tik tok, LinkedIn and Twitter.





# 2022 Projects & Events



## Beaumont Estate Social Club

Funding from L&Q Housing and Future Formed WF has enabled us to start an 8 month intergenerational project. We have over 20 older people attending our weekly social club & we've been working with community groups like Project Zero to involve local young people. We hope to support them through accredited training which will enable them to lead the social club themselves.



## Tea Dance with a Twist!

Thanks to support from WF Council, we were able to bring care home residents out to Fellowship Square E17 for an outdoor dance session and afternoon tea. Further funding enabled us to hold a Christmas version in Mornington Hall, Chingford.



## Tai Chi Collaboration

We teamed up with the wonderful Dao Lu Tai Chi group to hold a day of workshops and performances which brought care home residents together with older adults living in the community.

# Testimonials



I didn't know what was missing from my life until I started coming to this class.

- Mae, 84



Your organisation has helped many of our clients, and we are truly grateful

-Tapestry Care



It's so refreshing to see services for older people that are presented in such a vibrant and inspiring way

-David, Flourishing Lives



There were so many smiles and good vibes around the room, it was like being at a festival!

- Bella, Qube Social Club



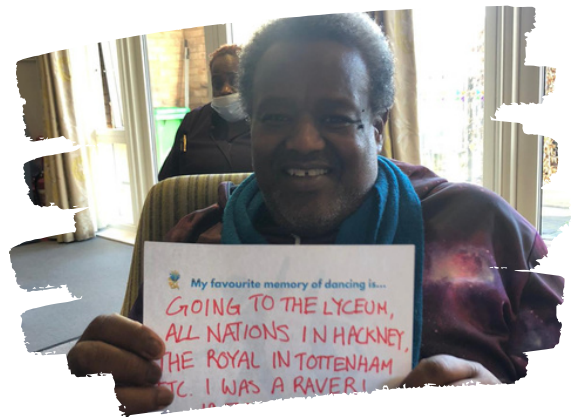
The Exercise was fantastic for me. The movement made me feel alive. Charlie is a fantastic person to lift anyones mood.

-Josie, 66

# Real People, Real Stories

## Paul - Lorenzo House

Paul has been dancing with us for nearly three years now and he frequently tells us stories about his 'raving days'. He often brings his record collection down to the lounge to show us his eclectic music taste. Our classes have become a staple part of Paul's weekly routine and we can always count on him to give us some funky song suggestions.



"My favourite memory of dancing is going to the Lyceum, all nations in Hackney, The Royal in Tottenham. I was a raver in the 70's- the best decade"

We feel so humbled to have participants share their stories with us. Paul is just one example of how dance can be an important part of someones life for many years. We create a safe space to reminisce on music and memories from the past whilst learning something new.

The staff at Lorenzo House told us "We find it really hard to get residents to come down and join in with activities but the lounge is always full when The Blair Academy are here. Isolation is a big problem here and these sessions really help residents socialise with one another and enjoy a shared experience."



# Doreen and Vera - The Spinney

Doreen and Vera's friendship has truly blossomed in their time living at The Spinney. Their Monday Morning BA class is a key feature in their social diaries. When asked why she likes coming to the classes, Doreen said "because it's just so great for everyone involved".

The connection between them has been so lovely to us to watch over the four years that we've danced with them. We believe that having things to look forward to, which connect you to the people around you are key aspects to happy, healthy ageing.

When we asked The Spinney why they keep booking us, they said "It's so fun, everyone is happy and full of smiles and they love to see you guys"



## Mae - The Seddon Centre

Mae was the first person to come along to our social club at The Seddon Centre on Beaumont Estate E10.

Now, she has formed friendships with more than 20 other older people in the area (as well as adopting her 2 teachers Charlie and Sarah as Granddaughters).

Mae said "The sessions have given me a new lease of life, and to be honest, I didn't know so many people like me lived around here."







# We thank you for your support!

## Acknowledgements

The impact we have is only made possible by lots of hard work from Incredible people.

Thank you to our Management and Teaching team for making it happen each and every day.

Thank you to our Mentors Neil and James for their guidance.

Thank you to the funders who believe in us.

Thank you to the community groups and partners that support us.

Thank you to our clients who book us

AND of course, thank you to every single person who dances with us.



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