

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

For immediate release

PRESS RELEASE

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NEW PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS BENEFITS OF DANCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

*Royal Academy of Dance and mental health charity SANE to raise
awareness of the power of dance*



Image by Kara Smith.

The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) and SANE announce a partnership promoting the significant and transformative benefits of dance on mental health.

The collaboration between the two charities was formally launched at a show on Sunday evening that celebrated the life and legacy of SANE Ambassador and Strictly star Robin Windsor who sadly passed away in February. The event, attended by leading UK dance figures, saw the announcement of a new award in dance in honour of Robin Windsor and produced in partnership with the RAD.

The Robin Windsor Dance Award is a nationwide competition recognising an individual who has harnessed the power of dance and movement to help

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them through challenging times and overcome adversity and to enhance their mental wellbeing.

A shortlist of selected finalists will be invited to attend a dance experience at the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD). Following this day, a winner will be announced, and they will be awarded funding to continue their journey in dance and to benefit from the positive impact of dance on their mental wellbeing.

SANE and RAD will also launch a programme of corporate engagement and training to showcase the importance of dance and movement for improving mental health and wellbeing.

Commenting on the partnership Majorie Wallace CBE, Chief Executive of SANE, said: “We are thrilled to be working in partnership with the Royal Academy of Dance and I cannot think of anything more exciting than introducing the joy and power of dance to those struggling with depression, anxiety and other mental illness. Dancing through darkness is how the late wonderful Robin Windsor described his experience when he came to SANE. Mental health has always been the Cinderella and now at last has come to the glittering ball.”

Alexander Campbell, Artistic Director of the RAD, said: “Every day, thousands of people take RAD classes around the world to experience the joy of dance and feel its transformative impact. We are delighted to be partnering with SANE to raise awareness on the benefits dance has on mental health and look forward to what our partnership has in store.”

The impact of physical activity on mental health is well documented, with benefits including better brain function, mood and memory, and an increased sense of belonging. In recent years, dance has been highlighted as the preferred form of exercise for improving mental health, with [new research from the University of Sydney](#) highlighting that “undertaking structured dance of any genre is generally equal and occasionally more effective than other types of physical activity interventions for improving a range of psychological and cognitive outcomes.”

SANE runs a national out-of-hours helpline and campaigns to improve services for anyone suffering mental-ill health, their families and carers. It also promotes and hosts research at its Prince of Wales International Centre for SANE Research in Oxford.

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The RAD is one of the world's most influential dance education and training organisations. Its work brings dance to diverse communities around the world, widening access to dance and sharing the benefits and wellbeing that dance brings. The RAD produces a wide range of classes and programmes designed to improve mental health, including ballet classes for cancer patients at its HQ in London.

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For further information, please contact:

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Notes to Editors

About the Royal Academy of Dance

The RAD is one of the world's most influential dance education and training organisations. With its global headquarters in London, the RAD works locally and around the world to bring dance to diverse communities, widen access to dance and share the benefits and wellbeing that dance brings.

With a strong global membership presence in over 85 countries, each year around 250,000 dancers learn the RAD syllabus and take exams. Over 1,000 students are enrolled in in-person and distance-learning dance teacher training programmes.

The RAD empowers people through dance education and enjoyment and believes that 'every body' should have the opportunity to learn to dance.

About SANE

SANE is a leading national mental health charity set up in 1986 by its Chief Executive, Marjorie Wallace CBE, following her pioneering articles, *The Forgotten Illness*, in *The Times*. These exposed the way in which society neglected individuals and families affected by mental illness and the lack of information, treatments and strategies for prevention. The charity, which is independent of government, campaigns to improve the quality of life of people affected by mental illness. It aims to:

- Raise awareness and understanding of all mental health conditions.
- Fight to improve frontline mental health services for individuals and carers.

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- Provide support, information and guidance through its helpline, SANEline, ongoing support service, Textcare and Online Forum.
- Promote and host research into causes, treatments and therapies at the Prince of Wales International Centre for SANE Research in Oxford.

It also runs the SANE Creative Awards Scheme, which aims to improve the quality of life for people with mental health problems, their families and carers, by awarding grants for individuals to develop their creative potential. For more details, visit www.sane.org.uk