

The Australian Dance Council Ausdance (ACT) Inc

Dance and
Spaces used for Dance
in the ACT

2011 Review





Introduction

Ausdance ACT took the initiative to review dance and dance spaces in the ACT and surrounding region. Director Neil Roach, assisted by Administrator Danielle White, spent countless hours liaising with local dancers. To Neil and Danielle, the Board of Ausdance ACT extends its sincere thanks.

Dance results in the wellbeing of the body, heart and soul. We want people to dance whenever and wherever they want to. Ausdance ACT's objectives include lobbying for safe, all-weather dance spaces in community facilities, evenly distributed, across the Territory.

This review tells us about dance activity in the ACT as at 30 November 2011 and where it takes place. By conducting this survey, we came into direct contact with almost every group represented in the very diverse ACT dance community – teachers, students, choreographers and performers of all ages and from many cultural backgrounds. All of them have different and wonderful reasons for dancing.

At its conclusion, Ausdance ACT recommends areas for attention and what needs to be done to increase the number and location of safe, attractive dance facilities in the Territory.

Ausdance ACT intends this review to be used by dancers and teachers, those seeking out dance and places to dance and, especially, by the ACT Government and our planners.

Ausdance ACT
April 2012

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Cover photo the Ausdance ACT project Youth Dance Festival
Courtesy of art atelier

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GEOGRAPHICAL AREA REVIEWED

This Review has grouped areas of the ACT together for the purposes of describing activity. The basic map used is the electoral map of the ACT. The groupings are along the major town centre dividers:

- Belconnen/Gungahlin
- Central Canberra, from Watson to Pialligo in the east, and from O'Connor to Deakin in the west
- Woden/Weston Creek
- Tuggeranong



Figure 1: Electoral map of the ACT showing geographical areas reviewed

This Review also includes a general count of dance activity in the surrounding areas of NSW as far as a 99km drive from the ACT border.

Ausdance ACT regrets if any group or venue has been inadvertently overlooked or not counted in this Review due to the constraints of available funding and time. Ausdance ACT has not been able to inspect each space used for dance classes, and in a minority of data has had to rely on information published by dance groups about the location of their classes.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Dance activity in the ACT ranges from successful businesses with multi-studio hired facilities to small cultural groups in ACT Government community facilities, from individual professionals creating artistic dance work to social groups of senior citizens.

General Level of Activity

Available statistics indicate some 10,700 people participate in dance in the ACT, across all ages and cultures, but significant under-reporting has occurred. Available statistics do not identify the relative numbers of dancers, dance teachers, or creative professionals.

Numbers of Dance Studios and Groups Teaching Public Classes

This Review identified 102 studios, social groups and dance clubs conducting regular public classes for fee-paying students in the ACT, with a further 18 studios within an hour's drive of the ACT border. These are almost exclusively managed by women and many of these conduct classes in multiple locations. There were 22 casual performance groups identified, mostly traditional cultural dance groups, with other areas of cultural activity to study.

Spaces Used

This Review identified 121 different spaces used for teaching dance in the ACT. These vary from commercially leased premises leased on a medium/long-term basis to community centres and community halls, church halls, scout halls, arts centres, and a small number of private studios. ACT Government arts centres generally have high-quality facilities; small community halls are in demand and are frequently shared with other activities requiring similar spaces such as martial arts.

Well-established dance studios and groups operate on a business footing and generally invest in quality facilities where zoning and availability allow, but social and cultural groups rely on ACT Government community halls and church and other community facilities. There are dance classes in cultural clubs, but little dance class activity amongst the members of Clubs ACT.

Locations

Central Canberra is the focus for social and cultural dance classes, but has comparatively little youth dance teaching and available youth dance classes tend to be located on the edges of the region as there are few appropriate spaces for commercially viable classes. Belconnen/ Gungahlin has a variety of youth dance classes, mostly commercial studios and groups, in a mix of community centres and halls and scout halls. Woden/ Weston Creek features a high number of commercial studios in leased premises on the Woden side, with limited community activity across the section, and Tuggeranong mostly features commercial youth classes.

Regional Distinctions

Belconnen and Gungahlin benefit from a number of community halls that are affordable for small community and cultural dance groups.

Central Canberra features a high level of social adult and folk dance, featured in many Church and Scout community spaces, but comparatively few dance classes for children.

Woden/Weston Creek features a relatively high number of commercial studios on the Woden side, but there is only minor community activity across the whole region.

Tuggeranong features all the major hip hop studios in the ACT but comparatively little activity in community spaces, which may reflect the availability of spaces and the age demographics of the population.



IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Needs

With the number of studios and groups teaching dance increasing every year to meet the demand for dance classes in Canberra, unsuitable spaces are being used and there are high levels of competition with other community practices such as martial arts, and with non-physical activities. This survey has identified some areas lacking suitable spaces for dance, particularly in:

- The inner sections of central Canberra.
- The high density residential suburbs of Gungahlin and central Belconnen.
- South Tuggeranong.
- Weston Creek.

The lack of suitable spaces restricts participation, and also presents an access and equity issue. With more facilities available which meet the basic requirements of dance studio space, safety issues can be addressed and more opportunities created for dance programs to reach more of Canberra's population. This includes quality dance spaces for the needs of dance artists. Refer to Section 6 of this Review for Minimum Standards for Dance Spaces and Floors.

Recommendations

Ausdance ACT recommends that:

- Recommendation One: Community development planning needs to reconsider the appropriateness of community facilities in the planning process to facilitate activity.
- Recommendation Two: a review of ACT Government spaces, especially community centres and halls, is undertaken. Some spaces being used, for want of any other, do not meet the minimum requirements identified by Ausdance ACT.
- Recommendation Three: The managers of spaces need a better awareness of the occupational health and safety requirements of dance.
- Recommendation Four: Infrastructure funding needs to be available to address the shortcomings of facilities.
- Recommendation Five: Most dance activity is delivered by owner/operators, who are generally excluded from community lobbying for suitable community space and are excluded from community grants from Clubs ACT members. However, affordable and suitable spaces need to be assured in community development for these providers.
- Recommendation Six: Clubs ACT members consider wider benefits for the community grants, and include dance. Currently the majority of their community support is directed to sporting groups.

1. Background to this Review

This is a review of spaces used for dance activity in the ACT and immediate surrounds as of 30 November 2011, with the aim of mapping areas of dance activity and identifying any need for facilities suitable for dance. The need for a review of spaces became apparent following increased costs and restrictions on a number of dance spaces used for teaching, including The Griffin Centre and the Tuggeranong Community Centre, the relocation of some commercial dance studios due to cost issues and capacity demands, and the planning of ACT Government facilities.

This Review fills some gaps in knowledge about the use of facilities for dance activity including the levels of participation and locations of classes and performances. It includes all public dance classes and the spaces used within the ACT borders and the surrounding region that Ausdance ACT can identify. It will help to build the evidence base called for in the Canberra Social Plan.¹

It should be remembered amongst the discussion that there are local dance students who will progress to dance at the highest international levels, and there are a small number of resident professional dance artists and two key arts organisations (Ausdance ACT and QL2 Centre for Youth Dance) who need for high-quality spaces for rehearsal and presentation.

The numbers known to Ausdance ACT of locally-resident dance artists at work with their practice is perhaps 10 or less, focused (but not exclusively) on contemporary dance. Many of these are dependent on project work, with contract or teaching work with Ausdance ACT or QL2 Centre for Youth Dance, and irregular teaching in dance studios. None are able to survive financially from performance and choreography alone, and all of them travel interstate to pursue work as performers or choreographers. There is one small dance company, Mirramu Dance Company, funded on a project basis.

Information Sources

Information about “who was dancing where” was compiled by Ausdance ACT using public sources of information such as the 2011/2012 Ausdance ACT Dance Directory, the ACT Multicultural Directory², web searches, phone directories, and finally personal contact. It was noted that much online information is incomplete or out of date, and where questions have arisen about the veracity of information Ausdance ACT has clarified information where possible.

Excluded Activities and Further Areas for Study

Dance in schools, whether taught as part of studies, as an extra-curricular activity, or part of an Active After-School Communities program, was not considered as part of this Review. Local dance performance groups were also not considered, although a count is included. There is also a discussion of cultural dance practices, which due to their private or family context are often unacknowledged in formal surveys of activity. Calisthenics clubs and the Bjelke-Peterson School of Physical Culture clubs were not included, although Pole dance is.

Ausdance ACT is aware of some further groups conducting classes in public and private schools and colleges (e.g. Joy Reiher School of Scottish Dancing at St Vincents Primary School Aranda) but it has not been possible to extend the scope of this Review to include such groups or locations in schools and colleges due to a lack of time and reliable information.

¹ Canberra Social Plan 2011, ACT Government 2011, P.43.

² There are dance practices amongst cultural communities that do not have public classes and consequently may not be counted in this review or in more formal surveys.

2. The Context of Dance in the ACT

Dance activity in the ACT and surrounding areas varies from high-quality professional presentations at large theatres, to commercial studio warehouses with multiple classrooms, cultural groups rehearsing in social clubs, folk dancers and dance in schools. Much of this activity is unrecognised, and the spaces used for classes are largely unmapped.

Anecdotal evidence in the ACT from the owners and managers of commercial dance studios – that is studios where the owners earn their living from the teaching of dance for fee-paying students - reported that numbers of enrollments had steadily increased over the previous four years. Social and community dancers also reported difficulty in finding suitable spaces to teach and practice in terms of affordability and occupational health and safety.

Dance teachers work to ensure that the facilities they use conform to minimum safety and space requirements and have suitable flooring, with a safe surface designed and constructed to minimise risk of injury. Commercial dance studios frequently invest in medium to long-term privately leased premises, and where they can ensure occupancy they will install high-quality dance floors. Smaller dance studios and cultural groups are more dependent on available facilities from a variety of providers.

Dance as a community activity can get lost in formal studies of community needs, as revealed in the consultations on the redevelopment of the ABC Flats in Currong Street Canberra City³, as small community and cultural dance groups are generally not formal community organisations, and classes may be organised on a seasonal basis to suit school terms. However, their needs are valid and suitable spaces are hard to secure.

Dance artists creating new work do not inhabit the studio sector but to survive financially and artistically they rely on a wide network of support across Australia and the world through professional dance organisations. In the ACT, two key arts organisations funded through artsACT offer artistic and financial support and employment in projects where possible.



Image 1: Dance Central in Phillip January 2012 - a commercial studio stripped back to bare concrete floors before a sub-floor is installed for the dance surfaces. Photo Dance Central

³ A particular reference is the *Community Facilities Assessment, Sections 52 and 57 Braddon, Section 7 Reid, Planning Study*, Purdon and Associates June 2010.

3. Evidence of Participation in Dance in the ACT – a Discussion

It is possible to state that a great deal of dance activity has not been reflected in government surveys. The following is a discussion of some principal survey data in support of this assertion. It should be noted that, while the main focus for this Review is to identify ‘who is dancing where’ and to identify need (and ‘dancers do class’, so the use of spaces can indicate levels of activity), there are dance practices amongst cultural communities that do not have public classes, are only seen at festivals, and are not reflected in surveys. The Australia Council does not appear to have conducted any independent research into this topic and refers instead to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) surveys.

Performers, Teachers, Professionals?

In 2010 the ABS found that nationally there were only 202 full-time dancers or choreographers.⁴ Given these low numbers, it can be ventured that the 202 were probably dancers and choreographers under some form of contract in funded classical and contemporary dance companies.

However, in 2007 the ABS found that nationally there were 277,600 people (excluding musicians) who performed as actors, dancers or in other performing arts roles before an audience and approximately 14%, or 38,864, of these were paid for at least one of their performances.⁵ The Australia Council confirmed this in 2010, stating that “there are currently 50 dance companies, 1400 professional dancers and more than 200 choreographers.”⁶

This suggests that nationally there is a wider group of dancers and dance workers, dance studio owners, dance teachers, and social dance club organisers beyond the 2010 ABS Survey. It is the belief of Ausdance ACT that this group is the main driver of dance participation, across the commercial, community, and education sectors.

Children aged 5-14 who Dance

There is some useful evidence of participation from 2009, when the ABS conducted the fourth survey of Children’s Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities.⁷ The survey collected information on participation in selected organised cultural and leisure activities and attendance at selected cultural venues and events, outside of school hours by children aged 5 to 14 years

This survey “considers dancing to include formal dancing lessons (e.g. ballet and calisthenics), musicals and eisteddfods where the child’s predominant activity was dancing. The dancing must have occurred outside of school hours and may have included lessons, practicing and performances.”

This survey identified that the overall participation rate for children aged 5-14 years in Australia who danced increased significantly from 10.4% in 2000 to 14.3% in 2009. Significant increases were



Image 2: A dancer from the non-profit hip-hop studio *Kulture Break* performing on the outdoor dance stage at the Belconnen Fresh Food Markets, Australian Dance Week 2009. Photo art atelier

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics: *4172.0 Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview Australia 2010*.

5 Australian Bureau of Statistics: *6281.0 Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities 2007*.

6 *Dance Sector Plan 2010 – 2012*, The Australia Council.

7 Australian Bureau of Statistics : *Feature Article: Children’s Participation in Dancing; 4172.0 Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 2010*.

also evident between selected survey periods, with the participation rate in dancing increasing from 10.4% in 2000 to 12.4% in 2003 and again between 2006 (12.5%) and 2009 (14.3%). It is clear that the majority are girls.

When the 14.3% is applied to the numbers of children 5-14 in the ACT reported by the ABS in 2010 it can be said that more than 3,000 children in this age range are surveyed as engaged in these "selected organised cultural and leisure activities",⁸ even if we exclude the 480 participants reported by ACT Calisthenics in the seven calisthenics clubs in the ACT that the ABS also appears to have counted.

Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities does not capture participation in:

- Dance in schools.
- Boy's hip-hop (largely practiced casually outside schools and the studio system).
- Cultural dance e.g. Ghawazee Moon Bellydance – 37 students.
- The Active After-School Communities (AASC) programs delivered in 2010, where dance was the most delivered of all 15 programs. According to the ACT/NSW coordinator, in 2011 in the ACT and NSW dance was 17% of the AASC program.⁹

Dance Participation for Ages 15+

To these 3,000 young dancers can be added dancers from the age of 15 and up. In a report presented to the Federal Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport 2009¹⁰, it was stated that in 2008 in the ACT there were 7,700 people of ages 15+ participating in organised (club or association) and non-organised dance activities.

Given the age of the respondents, It is possible to say that this activity is not principally focused on ballet or other forms of formal dance training, but instead more on social dance that may include nightclubs and discos (the report did not request that distinction). It may or may not also include social and cultural dance classes such as:

- Latin: Salsabor – 600 adult students, in eight different class locations.
- Swing: Jumptown Swing – 80 students.
- Flamenco: The Flamenco Centre – 16 students.
- Maori: Tumanako, the dance display section of Te Rere o te Tarakakao – Canberra and Queanbeyan Maori Cultural Group – 50 dancers.
- Folk: Monaro Folk Society – 300 dancers.
- Hungarian: Gyongyosbokreta Dance Group – 20 students/display team.¹¹

Adding the 5-14 and 15+ numbers together, it can be estimated with some reliability that 10,700 people in the ACT of all ages are captured in these reports, with under-reporting in ages 5-14. There are also small numbers of <5 in movement and early dance classes not captured.

8 Australian Bureau of Statistics: *3201.0 - Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories, June 2010*. 31010DO002_201006 *Australian Demographic Statistics, Jun 2010*

9 AASC State Coordinator NSW, 1 February 2012.

10 *Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey 2008 Annual Report*, P.84.

11 Numbers are estimates provided by the groups.

Gender Balance

It should be noted that male dance teachers generally appear only appear in hip-hop teaching, and there is only one male manager/owner of a major dance studio identified in this Review (Kulture Break, which is a non-profit Hip Hop studio). There appears to be a more even balance in cultural dance practice.

Under Reporting?

This Ausdance ACT Review has identified 102 dance teaching studios and groups across all ages and many cultures that offer regular classes for the public in the ACT. A number of the commercial dance studios have a minimum of 200 students in the 5-14 age bracket, and some have more, such as Legs Dance Studio (Tuggeranong - 450) and Dance City (Hume - 300). It is therefore possible to reach the 3,000 students reported in the 5-14 age range with perhaps only the 10 to 12 largest commercial dance studios working in this age range.

There are further social and cultural groups not included in the 102 dance teaching studios and groups who do not generally conduct advertised public classes, or practice their dance form within a cultural community, including:

- Hip hop crews dancing privately but attending someone else's dance classes.
- Groups widely seen at festivals (e.g. Manquehue Chilean Folkloric Dance Group of Canberra, Scottish Highland dancing groups).
- Groups affiliated with larger groups (Irish Set Dancing, part of Monaro Folk Society; Kerr-Ly-Qs Square Dance Group (the sole teaching group of the five groups in the ACT Square Dance Society).
- Senior dance clubs that privately book community facilities (Majura Hall) or seniors who attend dance classes at seniors clubs (Woden Seniors Club).

It should be noted that some of the 102 include non-profit organisations focused on the 5–14 age group. These include:

- National Capital Ballet – 200 students (Ballet).
- Fresh Funk – 300 (Hip-hop), Kulture Break – 350 (Hip-hop).
- Liz Gregory Irish Dance Academy – 50 (Irish).



Image 3: The Bush Dance Display Group of Monaro Folk Society, dancing in the food court of The Canberra Centre in 2006. This space is no longer available for performances of any kind. Photo The Bush Dance Display Group

Reporting of 'Creative Workers'

It is also illustrative to include some evidence about the geographical spread of 'creative workers' in the ACT. In a paper released in 2008, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia identified numbers of creative workers across Australia.¹²

Creative workers were defined for the purposes of the report as workers in 'artistic or related cultural fields' and included authors, visual artists, craftspeople, photographers and community arts workers, musicians, film and media professionals, radio and TV presenters, journalists, designers, and architects.

The paper identified 1,064 creative workers in the ACT, noting that "most of Canberra's creative workers reside in the north of the city - a quarter of ACT artists and 30 per cent of media workers live in these areas" (north Canberra being the inner north of the city not including Belconnen or Gungahlin). For Australia as a whole, the study identifies creative workers in dance as dancers and/or choreographers (1,187) and private teachers of dance (4,394), giving 5,581 out of a total creative workforce of 156,145, or 3.5%.

If 3.5% is applied to the ACT total, then this study reported 37 'dancers and/or choreographers and private teachers of dance'. Given the level of activity identified in this Ausdance ACT Review, it appears that the majority of dance activity in the ACT did not register on this study.

| Table 3: Main locations of creative workforce: by States: Australia 2006 Location | Total creative workforce | | Total professional workforce | |
|--|--------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| | (no.) | (%) | (no.) | (%) |
| Australian Capital Territory | | | | |
| North Canberra | 260 | 24.4 | 8569 | 16.6 |
| Belconnen | 194 | 18.2 | 11520 | 24.5 |
| Tuggeranong | 195 | 18.3 | 11023 | 21.4 |
| South Canberra | 159 | 14.9 | 5136 | 10.0 |
| Total ACT | 1064 | 102.0 | 51603 | 102.0 |

Figure 2: Table taken from 'Creative Australia: The Arts and Culture in Australian Work and Leisure', by David Throsby, *Occasional Paper 3/2008 Census Series # 1 The Academy of the Social Sciences, Canberra, p19, p22.*

Other studies of arts support and participation mix terms in a way that creates a perception that dance workers in the ACT are abundant and well-supported. One recent study stated that there are "55 infrastructures that provide support programs for dancers in the ACT".¹³ The term infrastructure is not useful in this study, as almost all the 55 are not facilities but instead a mix of commercial and social dance studios and groups. The term 'support programs' refers to public dance classes and employment for the class teachers. Ausdance ACT and QL2 Centre for Youth Dance appear to be the only organisations on the list that offer more than teaching jobs.

12 'Creative Australia: The Arts and Culture in Australian Work and Leisure' by David Throsby, *Occasional Paper 3/2008 Census Series # 1*, The Academy of the Social Sciences, Canberra, p19, p22.

13 *Audit of Support Infrastructure in the ACT*, CAMRA project, November 2008, p. 43; part of Cultural Asset Mapping for Planning and Development in Regional Australia.

General Conclusions about Available Evidence

- Children up to the age of 14 represent a high proportion of the dancers in the ACT and surrounds and this is reported in surveys of organised dance activity.
- Significant numbers of adults participate in organised and non-organised dance activity, with a greater engagement in community classes and social and cultural dance.
- Available statistics indicate 10,700 people dance in the ACT, but the numbers are significantly under-reported.
- It is difficult to assess the relative numbers of dancers, dance teachers, and creative dance professionals.



Image 4: ACT independent choreographer Meg Millband presented the professional dance work *Enduring Intimacy* at the National Gallery of Australia in 2008. Spaces at the majority of national cultural institutions in the ACT have been used for professional dance presentations in recent years, as dance professionals seek to extend the reach of their work outside traditional theatre spaces, and seek support outside government arts grants. Photo D Pang and National Gallery of Australia, courtesy of Meg Millband.

4. Dance in the Surrounding Region

The ACT is the focus for dance action in the region, but this Review has identified 18 established dance studios in nearby regional centers such as Queanbeyan, Braidwood and Cooma which are very active and successful. There is a substantial cross-border exchange of dance students in school ages, notably in the more formal dance areas such as ballet, but also in hip hop and other styles. Examples include:

- Free Form Dance Studio (Yass), run by an ACT resident who drives to Yass to run this small hip-hop studio.
- Sparkles Dance Studio (Murrumbateman), which draws students from Yass, Belconnen and Gungahlin.
- Kim Harvey School of Ballet (Turner), and National Capital Ballet (Phillip), both of which have students from Queanbeyan/ Jerrabomberra.
- Dance City (Hume) which draws from Tuggeranong, Woden, and Queanbeyan/ Jerrabomberra.
- Students from regional dance schools in Cowra, Young, Cooma, Batemans Bay and Pambula attending the Ausdance ACT Master School of Dance each January.



Image 5: Bom-Funk in Jerrabomberra proudly displaying a newly installed dance floor in 2010. This floor was installed at Bom-Funk's expense and is a bamboo floating floor installed on a roll-out cushioned gymnasium underlay set on concrete. Photo Bom-Funk.

5. Classification of Dance Activity – a Challenge

Dance activity in the ACT and surrounding areas varies from high-quality professional presentations at large and small theatres, to commercial studios the size of warehouses with multiple classrooms, to cultural groups rehearsing in social clubs, folk dancers and dance in schools. This has presented some challenges in typifying activity for reporting.

A commercial dance studio with an owner generally engaged in youth training can be in:

- A leased warehouse-size facility with five internal dance studios, a shop, a waiting area and change facilities (Dance City - Hume).
- A community hall (Dance Northside - Kaleen Community Hall).
- A community centre (Canberra Dance Development Centre - Mt Rogers Community Centre Spence; Classical Ballet Centre – Cook Community Hub).
- A church hall (Gale Edwards School of Ballet - St Pauls Anglican Church Griffith).

There are non-profit studios of similar scale and income (National Capital Ballet – Phillip; Kulture Break - Erindale College) which are included as commercial studios for this Review. Commercial studios less oriented on traditional dance styles can occupy a similar mix of commercial and government facilities (Dance Central - leased premises in Philip and classes at Belconnen Arts Centre) or a private studio at a home (Gwen Wallace Dance Studio, Melba) but frequently also offer dance activities with additional commercial aspects such as hip-hop, cheerleading and Zumba.

There are two dance key arts organisations funded by the ACT Government: Ausdance ACT, which does not conduct regular dance classes and so is not included in this Review, and QL2 Centre for Youth Dance, which does conduct regular classes and so is included in this Review.

Social dance clubs and studios offer dance more appealing to older ages such as Latin and swing and can also rent premises (Danzon - Petrie Plaza Canberra City), or hire government-owned studios (Kokoloco Dance and Salsabor - Belconnen Arts Centre) or maintain a private studio attached to a house (Earthly Delights Historic Dance Academy - Yarralumla). And there are private hip-hop crews teaching classes in sympathetic studios.

Cultural dance studios and groups can cross over the mix of smaller premises (Hilal Egyptian Dance, Flamenco, Canberra School of Bollywood Dance - Belconnen Arts Centre Belconnen; Folk Dance Canberra - Folk Dance Canberra Hall Hackett; Ghawazee Moon Bellydance – Nellie Hall Melba), but are generally in smaller less expensive spaces and more dependent on community and government spaces. Community centres and seniors associations can also schedule recreational dance classes inside their rooms and halls e.g. Weston Creek Community Centre conducts a Friday belly dance class.

First Nation Dance

The most active Indigenous/ Aboriginal dance performing group known to Ausdance ACT (Wiradjuri Echoes) is resident in Queanbeyan but originates out of country (Wagga Wagga). The Ngambri Local Aboriginal Land Council is in Queanbeyan but the Ngambri Dancers are listed at a personal address in the ACT. Ausdance ACT has not been able to identify a Ngunnawal dance group in the sense of a traditional group that performs at events and/or conducts classes or teaching. There is a hip hop/ contemporary group Dance Beyond Barriers in Tuggeranong working with “issues within the Aboriginal community and within mainstream society” but they do not identify as Indigenous/ Aboriginal.

6. Minimum Standards for Dance Spaces and Floors

The facilities that are used for dance in Canberra and surrounds vary from Church and Community halls, to purpose built dance studios. The needs of groups vary depending on their activity, but there are some minimum standards that should apply no matter what dance activity is occurring, starting with a floor that provides a measure of elasticity for impact.

The spaces used for dance classes in the ACT have a variety of dance surfaces, from concrete and carpet over concrete to timber floors, resistant floors, and purpose-built dance floors. Not all of the spaces used have surfaces safe for all dance styles, yet they are used for lack of a better space and the dance is moderated to manage the risk.

It is the opinion of Ausdance ACT that there is a lack of awareness about what constitutes a suitable dance space or dance floor, although excellent floors are being constructed in the ACT. Spaces such as these are multi-use and suit any physical activity such as martial arts.

Minimum Standards for Dance Spaces

Ausdance considers a minimum standard for a dance space to be the following:

- No obstacles such as building support structures and furniture.
- Sprung or semi-sprung non-slip floors (concrete floors are not safe for repetitive physical activity even with wood or carpeted covering).
- 6 sqm minimum space per participant (depending on the movement style/genre).
- Adequate lighting and ceiling height (at least 3.5m) for dance activity.
- Enough ventilation and heating for weather/climate conditions and number of participants.

In addition:

- Full-length mirrors on the walls.
- No windows that allow outside views of activity.
- A change room.
- Male and female toilets.
- A waiting area.

More specific material discussing standards for dance studios includes a guide from the National Association for Dance Teachers (UK)¹⁴ and the Arts Council of Ireland.¹⁵

Commercial dance studios frequently invest in spaces and surfaces where the facility is available in the medium to long term, to ensure their facilities meet the increasing OH & S expectations of dancers and the parents of dancers. Non-commercial cultural dance groups or social dance clubs frequently do not have the resources to invest on suitable facilities and are reliant on government or community facilities for suitable spaces. The exception is the National Folk Festival, which invested \$40,000 in quality timber bearers and sheeting for two large temporary dance floors.

14 www.ndta.org.uk/advice-information/dance-studio-specification

15 *Giving Body to Dance, Review of building-based dance infrastructure in Ireland*, Arts Council of Ireland 2010, available at www.artscouncil.ie

Sports Floors are not Dance Floors

The *Ausdance Safe Dance II Report 1997*¹⁶ found a number of injuries such as shin splints, ankle and Achilles tendinitis, plantar fasciitis and tibial stress fractures occurred from students dancing on hard floors. Particularly, landing from jumps caused the highest incident rate of injuries sustained (27%), with boys being more susceptible than girls, possibly due to insufficient technical training.

The need for properly designed sprung, semi-sprung or cushioned dance floors is well established, and dance on a hard surface such as concrete, especially any percussive dance where striking actions or jumps are involved e.g. ballet, hip-hop, tap, or flamenco, will rapidly result in injury. It is a key learning area for formal teacher training.¹⁷

In the book *Dance Floors: a handbook for the design of floors for dance*¹⁸, architect Mark Foley discusses appropriate dance floors and gives examples of the stress and injuries that can result by dancing on hard unyielding floors. The following text is partly drawn from that work.

Floor systems for dance are generally referred to as 'area elastic' floors – i.e. floors with a stable surface deck and an underlying cushion, spring or elastic suspension system on which the deck floats to absorb the impact of a dancer's landing. The deck provides a stable surface on which to balance, slide, move and turn while spreading the load more widely onto the underlying suspension layers.

Sports floors tend to require a less resilient level of performance than a dance floor because sports users are more concerned with 'ball bounce' characteristics, for example, and also benefit from the additional comfort and protection afforded by cushioned sports shoes.

Qualities such as 'ball bounce' measured in the German DIN-Standard are irrelevant to dancers. However, the 'shock absorption' characteristics of a floor are particularly relevant and provide the protective component in the design of floors for dance where there is little or no cushioning provided by the dancers' footwear.

According to *Dance Floors*, a 'good' dance floor will have a shock absorption value of at least 53%. This means that the floor will absorb a minimum of 53% of the impact energy of a person landing on the floor, while the remaining 47% is absorbed by the person on landing. By comparison, a concrete floor will have a shock absorption value of 0%, leaving the full 102% shock of impact to jar the person landing.

While most regular wooden floors have adequate shock absorption (unless the boards are laying on concrete) and are generally accepted for ballroom, folk and social dance, there is always a risk of splinters, unevenness and protruding nails. Wooden floors require regular and careful maintenance and are not the preference of most professional dancers.



Image 6: Senior boys from Marist College in the 2007 Ausdance ACT Youth Dance Festival at The Canberra Theatre. The stage is often used for dance without a roll-out dance surface, although a roll-out surface and an improved standard of flooring is required for the highest level of percussive dance such as ballet. Photo art atelier

16 *Safe Dance II Report*, Tony Geeves, Australian Dance Council – Ausdance, 1997, p33/34.

17 E.g. CUADTM403A Apply safe dance teaching methods, part of the Live Performance Training Package, Dance Qualifications' Certificate IV Dance Teaching and Management.

18 *Dance Floors: a handbook for the design of floors for dance*, Dance UK, 1998

7. Spaces used for Dance Classes in the ACT

The 121 spaces identified as being used for dance classes in the ACT have a varying range of flooring, spaces and inclusions. Most commercial dance studios for jazz, ballet, contemporary, tap and hip hop require reflexive wooden floors or a combination of resistant underlay with roll-out flooring. Ballet barres, mirrors, and multiple studio spaces in the facility are also highly desirable for this type of dance business. A location close to residential area of choice is also important when seeking a space.

Zoning regulations restrict where commercial studios can operate, with many operating in light industrial areas. In Central Canberra, as defined in this Review, there are only two commercial multi-style studios focused on youth with a third (QL2 Centre for Youth Dance) as a key arts non-profit organisation in a government arts centre. The majority of activity in this area is social dance styles such as ballroom, salsa and folk.

Community groups, such as seniors, cultural dance and social folk styles generally find community, church and school halls with suitable wooden flooring quite appropriate. They do not necessarily require the same resistant flooring as the more 'technical' studio styles.

Categories

Of the 121 spaces used for dance classes identified in the ACT in this Review, the majority are commercial leased premises followed by premises leased from the ACT Government. There are no free dance spaces – all are hired at some cost, whether on exclusive leases, term hires for specific class times, or one-off hire for special classes.

For this Review, teaching/rehearsing facilities were allocated into four groups:

28 Commercial spaces leased from private owners, frequently occupied by the larger studios on a long-term basis.

47 ACT Government spaces, typified by community halls, community centres and to a much lesser extent arts centres, almost exclusively managed by community organisations under contract.

44 Community leased spaces such as churches, cultural clubs, and other spaces owned and managed by community organisations.

2 Private studios at a person's house.

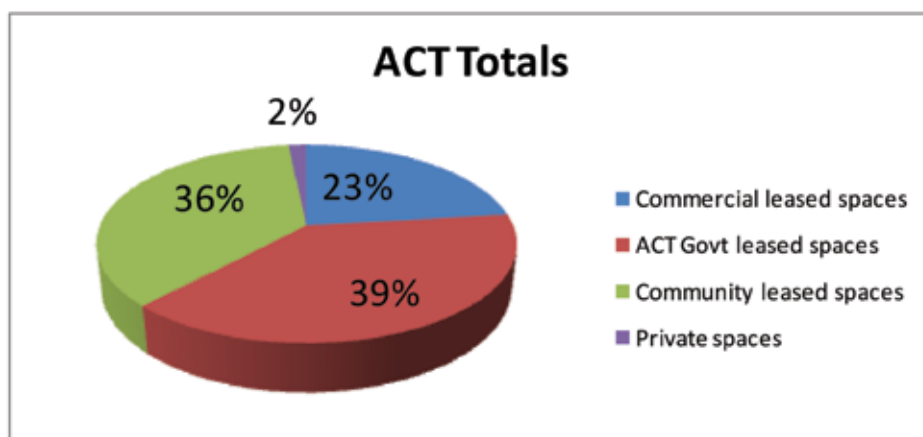


Figure 3: Break-down of dance spaces in the ACT

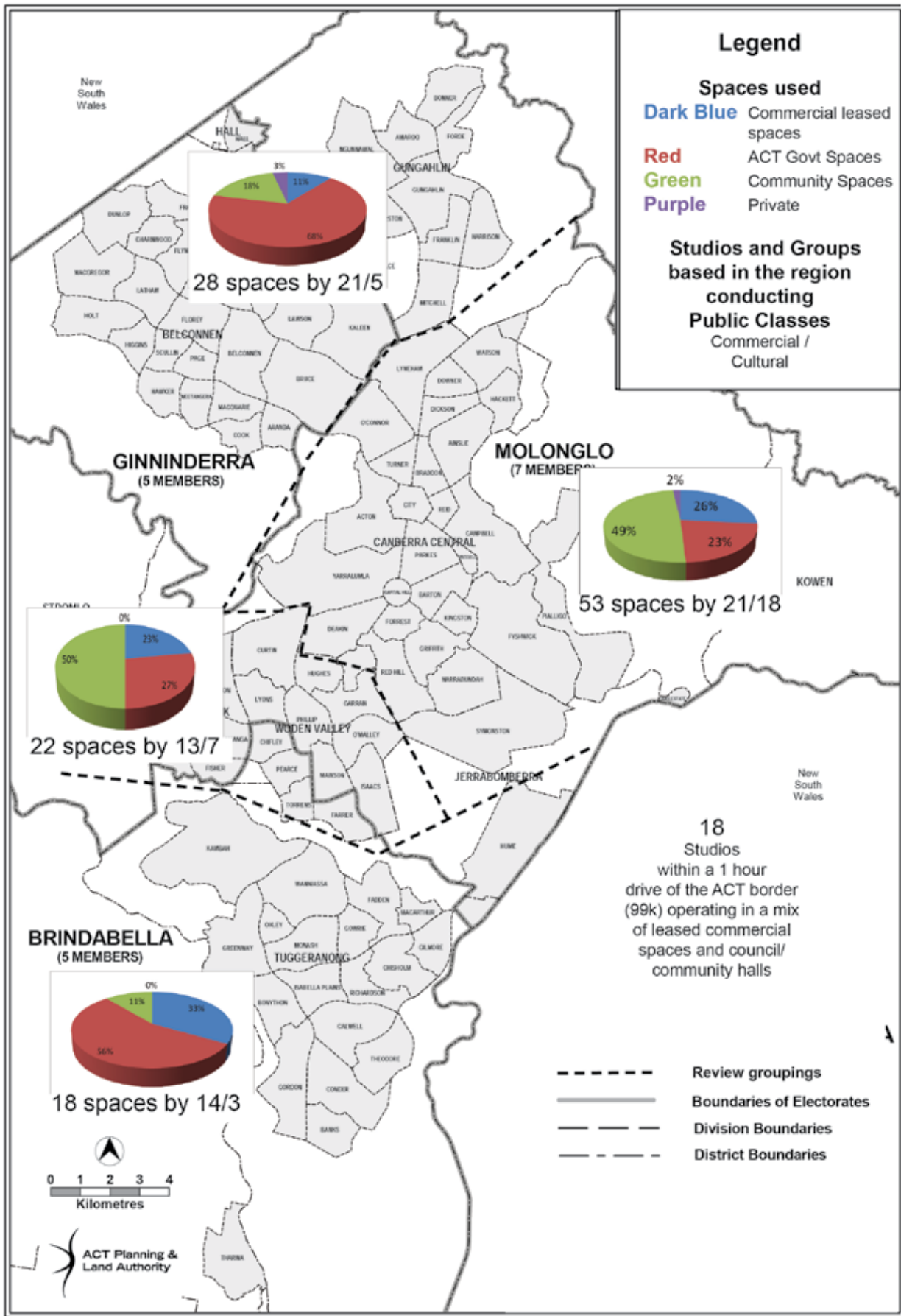


Figure 4: Space and user numbers

8. Location and Types of Dance Classes

This Review identified 102 studios, social groups and dance clubs conducting regular public classes for fee-paying students in 121 spaces in the ACT as of 30 November 2011.

Seventy of the studios, social groups and dance clubs conducting public classes for fee-paying students are defined here as commercial and private teaching studios with a principal owner. The remaining 32 are defined here as community (including cultural) dance groups.

Age and Style Focus

A definition can be made across the 102 into age and style focus – youth or adult/social, or primarily cultural/folk dances. Of course, some youth dance classes are highly social e.g. hip hop and most cultural dance has a highly social focus. However, if this distinction of age and style is drawn then some useful detail is revealed about patterns of dance class activity.

- Thirty one focus on teaching commercial youth styles including ballet, theatre jazz, contemporary and hip hop/funk, and sometimes with multiple class locations.
- Thirty nine focus on single dance styles with a social and non-youth, or adult, orientation, such as ballroom, salsa, swing, and tango.
- Thirty two focus on cultural and traditional dance such as bollywood, bellydance, Irish, Scottish Country Dance, and Scandinavian.

By Region

When these age and style definitions are applied to the 4 regions a further pattern emerges.

| | Commercial youth focus | Commercial social/ adult focus | Cultural focus youth & adult |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Belconnen/Gungahlin | 9 | 10 | 7 |
| Central Canberra | 7 | 17 | 15 |
| Woden/Weston Creek | 7 | 9 | 4 |
| Tuggeranong | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| Total | 31 | 39 | 32 |

Figure 5: Types of dance class by region

It can be seen that Central Canberra has a low level of commercial youth classes and a high level of social and cultural dance classes, compared to the other regions.

9. Regional Distinctions

Central Canberra

The greatest number of dance class spaces, studios and groups occur in Central Canberra. This area can be defined as a centre of social dance and social dance classes as activity is focused on social/adult dance with:

- Social dancing such as salsa in the City area with classes in some small commercial spaces in office buildings and bars such as the monkeybar in Civic – but not in discos.
- Cultural dances in cultural clubs and heritage dances such as folk dance in spaces in cultural clubs, church halls, and scout halls, and there is heavy use of the few community halls in the region such as Corroborree Park. Folk essentially appears in this region only, with eight spaces used by Monaro Folk Society, Folk Dance Canberra, and Canberra International Folk Dance Association.

In all of Central Canberra there are only seven studios and groups focused on youth classes compared to 17 social/adult studios and groups and 15 cultural dance groups conducting classes. These seven (six commercial, one non-profit) are located in:

- A small warehouse in Fyshwick (1).
- Gorman House Arts Centre (2).
- A small warehouse in Pialligo (1).
- A ballet school in a church hall in Manuka (1).
- In a space in a non-government school (1 – this studio is focused on preschoolers).
- A ballet school operating in three different spaces of a non-profit dance studio in City West, a church in Turner, and a private school in Dickson (1).

It has been reported by this last studio (Kim Harvey School of Dance) that zoning for commercial leases in the inner suburbs of Central Canberra hinders securing premises for commercial studio teaching. This studio is a well-established and successful classical studio forced to operate out of the three separate spaces to maintain class structure for a full-time teaching workload for vocational students. This statement is supported by the location of the other six – on the periphery, in one ACT Government arts facility, or in a church hall or a non-government school.

Without Gorman House Arts Centre, Corroborree Park hall (used by community and cultural dance groups) and the studio of Canberra Dance Theatre (which does not feature youth dance classes except for special needs) there would only be two providers of commercial youth dance classes except on the fringes of this large region. As one small community dance group dancing in a scout hall said during this Review “You take what you can get”.¹⁹

Apart from zoning issues, there is another explanation for the lack of suitable spaces for youth dance classes in the central Canberra region – the age of the area probably predates any social policy to create community halls and centres that would facilitate activity. The age of the Central Canberra region also explains why there are many cultural clubs in this region, and these clubs are facing operating challenges as their membership ages and the land is under threat from residential development that would eliminate them as a space for community activity.²⁰ Their use would not be made up for by the clubs of Clubs ACT, which are focused on sports

¹⁹ Capital Cloggers in Duntroon-Campbell Scout Hall.

²⁰ The former Hungarian Australian club in Narrabundah serves as an example.

activities, and which are essentially not present in the Central Canberra zone but more present in the newer town centres and outlying suburbs.

As noted below in “Relationship to Clubs”, activities for youth do not sit well in a club environment, so neither cultural clubs or sporting clubs, with an adult environment and licensing laws, can provide the same access as a community space.

Belconnen/Gungahlin

Belconnen and Gungahlin benefit from a number of community halls that are affordable for small community and cultural dance groups. However, some small groups, such as Irish dance groups, find scout halls to be their only choice and the high uptake for the dance studio at Belconnen Arts Centre has demonstrated a demand for facilities in Belconnen.

Rates for the community halls and scout halls are generally in the range of up to \$25 an hour. Beyond this rate small groups find difficulty paying, unless they are a practice such as Flamenco that requires the high quality floor of the Belconnen Arts Centre.

Woden/Weston Creek

Woden/Weston Creek features a relatively high number of commercial studios on the Woden side, especially in Phillip. There are minor levels of activity in the seniors centres and community centres across the section, but the lack of suitable community spaces restricts participation, especially in Weston Creek.

Tuggeranong

Tuggeranong mostly features commercial youth classes, and all the principally hip hop studios in the ACT, which may reflect an age demographic, but the lack of suitable community spaces restricts participation across the area. The preponderance of community houses in Tuggeranong has created a lack of community hall space for classes, and a corresponding lack of community/cultural dance.

This Review has also noted that the available space in the Tuggeranong Community Centre has been re-priced by the management and the resident dance studio was forced to relocate to an industrial area in Hume, so students cannot walk or use public transport to this location. It has also been forced to locate some 75 meters from another major studio due to the lack of available space elsewhere. This highlights a shortage of suitable space.

artsACT Facilities and Dance Spaces

It should be noted that arts facilities controlled by artsACT are occupied by key arts organisations with their own programs, so access for the wider community can be problematic. There are six spaces for dance classes:

- Belconnen Arts Centre dance studio is available for general hire and is an excellent surface and space.
- Tuggeranong Arts Centre has two spaces, a larger and a small space, which are largely occupied by the non-profit studio Fresh Funk. The small space is the private office of the Director of Fresh Funk.
- Gorman House Arts Centre has three spaces. One is privately leased by a dance artist for a private studio. The other two are managed by QL2 Centre for Youth Dance for their own artistic program and are generally not available for public hire.

10. Examples of High-Quality Spaces used for Classes

Belconnen/Gungahlin

- Belconnen Arts Centre dance studio. This is a new ACT facility with a high-quality floor, a change room with toilets, sound and lighting for presentations, and a waiting area.
- Nellie Hall at Melba Community Centre, an ACT Government facility with a good-quality dance floor, full-length mirrors, a change room, toilets, and a waiting area.

Central

- QL2 Centre for Youth Dance Theatre Studio, in an ACT Government facility with an installed dance floor, some mirrors, a change room, toilet and a waiting area.
- Danzon, in leased premises with two installed dance floors, change rooms, toilets and a waiting area.

Woden/Weston Creek

- National Capital Dancers, in leased premises with two medium-sized studios with installed dance floors and ballet barres, change rooms, toilets and a waiting area.
- Universal Dance Academy, in leased premises with four medium-sized studios with installed dance floors and ballet barres, change rooms, toilets and a waiting area.

Tuggeranong

- Lisa Clark Dance Centre (Hume), in leased premises with four large studios with installed dance floors, ballet barres and mirrors, change rooms, toilets and a waiting area. Three studios are laid with Tarkett (a brand of non-slip vinyl flooring specifically designed for dance) and the fourth a timber floor, an ideal surface for tap.



Image 7: The QL2 Centre for Youth Dance Studio at Gorman House Arts Centre, Braddon, during the Ausdance ACT Master School 2009. This is an ACT Government arts facility. Photo art atelier

11. Examples of Low-Quality Spaces used for Classes

Belconnen/Gungahlin

- Humpy Hall in Scullin, an ACT Government facility, has a carpeted floor on timber and no waiting area.
- Dynamic Studios in Mitchell in leased premises has a load-bearing post in the centre of a dance studio floor.

Central

- Corroboree Park, an ACT Government facility, lacks change facilities, mirrors or waiting area, and lighting is poor.
- The Courtyard Studio of The Canberra Theatre Centre is parquetry laid directly on concrete. It is the only space in the Centre for dance classes for visiting ballet and contemporary companies, but its unresisting floor does not meet the minimum requirements.
- The Loft in East Row Civic, a leased facility managed by a church, has no mirrors and a carpeted floor on timber.

Woden/Weston Creek

- Building 2 at Pearce Community Centre, an ACT Government facility, lacks a change room and male and female toilets.
- Dance Central in Phillip in leased premises has timber dance floors set on carpet.

Tuggeranong

- Mura Youth and Community Centre at Lanyon, an ACT Government facility with Government funded programs in dance for youth through the YWCA of Canberra. The room is small with carpet laid directly on concrete. Carpet (with concrete underneath) is a low-quality dance surface.



Image 8: Bollywood dance classes in a second-floor exercise room at the ANU Sports Centre, Australian Dance Week 2008. The flooring is suitable for some dance styles as it is constructed for exercise classes, but it is not suitable for any style that does not use a sports-style shoe. Photo Ausdance ACT.

12. Relationship to Community Hubs and Halls

In 2004 the Community Services Facilities Management Strategy, ACT Government²¹, listed 37 community facilities managed under lease with community groups and stated that “the provision of community centre floor space is generally uniformly distributed across all districts although Gungahlin and Belconnen are under-represented at this stage.”

Space counted in the strategy in North Canberra included the Griffin Centre located in Civic, which had a large floor area and was seen as providing services to all of Canberra. The strategy stated that without the Griffin Centre, the space for North Canberra dropped to below that for Belconnen. Since the publication of that strategy, the Griffin Centre has been redeveloped, with a reduction in available floor space, and an increase in rents beyond the reach of almost all dance groups (e.g. an advertised \$192 ‘per session’), so availability has deteriorated.

Regional Community Hubs

In the Revitalising Our Communities consultation in 2008, the ACT Government identified four Regional Community Hubs (Cook, Melrose, Weston and Holt) and eight neighbourhood halls (Hall, Tharwa, Holt, Cook, Weston, Griffith, Village Creek and Bonython) based mostly on former primary school sites.²²

One Regional Community Hub has a dedicated space for dance (Cook; Classical Ballet Centre, formerly the Canberra Youth Ballet, which was a tenant before the Cook hub was formally established) but no other dance users of these particular hubs and halls have been identified.

Part of the issue for reuse of former schools may be observed in the current community consultations for the old Flynn Primary School, where reuse is based on expressions of interest from community organisations seeking to occupy space. As many dance studios are private, they may not be eligible to occupy space, and smaller community dance practices may not be an organisation as such, yet they serve a community interest. If a single body were able to express interest on behalf of a number of different groups, more need would be registered.

Use of Community Halls

Spaces important to smaller social and cultural dance and ‘casual’ performance groups are ACT Government community halls and rooms controlled by community centres and service associations, with a number used for dance. Many users compete with each other for the spaces, and compete with martial arts clubs, who have similar needs, and consistent bookings can be difficult due to the nature of community management. Examples of halls:

- Nellie Hall (Ghawazee Moon belly dance).
- Palmerston Hall (Brindabella Ballroom).
- Majura Hall (private seniors dance group).
- Corroboree Park (Tribalista bellydance, Drum Effect African Dance, Ben Kelly’s Line Dancers, Salsambada, Sunday Dance Jams, Folk Dance Canberra, and in 2012 a new ballet school).
- Torrens Hall (Rachel Strong Dance Academy).
- Chisholm Community Centre (Dance Without Barriers).

²¹ *Community Services Facilities Management Strategy*, ACT Government, February 2004, p.16/18.

²² Report for ACT Community Sites Consultation, *Consultation Summary Report*, August 2008, p6/8.

13. Relationship to Clubs

Clubs ACT

Clubs ACT represents 31 clubs and club groups operating out of 53 venues in the ACT. These clubs and groups play a key role in providing facilities to the community and providing community grants, and major club groups such as Vikings Group, the Southern Cross Club, and the Tradies Group have many affiliated social and sporting organisations. Club venues are used for social balls and dances, providing a full-cost range of catering and support services. The clubs support many community groups, mostly sporting groups.

From the viewpoint of facilities used for dance classes, there is little or no activity in the 53 venues of Clubs ACT.

The exceptions that have been identified are:

- The Canberra Irish Club in Weston, which supports Irish dancing classes at the club and another location, and acts as a class and event venue for the adult dance studio Miss Kitka's House of Burlesque.
- The ACT Rock'n'Roll Club uses the West Belconnen Leagues Club for classes.
- The Hellenic Club, which supports The Canberra Hellenic Dancers display group.
- The Burns Club in Tuggeranong, which supports Scottish Highland Dancing.

Dance teachers questioned as part of the research for this Review questioned the appropriateness of conducting youth classes in a club environment, where member sign-ins, poker machines and liquor licensing provisions apply, and many dance teachers expressed concern about teaching youth dance classes in a club environment.

It has not been possible to identify any grants issued to community dance groups from clubs ACT members, although community festivals with dance displays are often supported and key arts organisations such as QL2 Centre for Youth Dance receive some support. This may be a question of the sporting focus of the clubs, and the fact that the majority of dance activity is not conducted on a charitable basis, so the grants programs are not accessible.

Cultural Clubs

Cultural clubs are not members of Clubs ACT, apart from The Burns Club, The Canberra Irish Club and The Hellenic Club. Cultural clubs often have an associated cultural dance group, and they are used by other groups not of the 'host' culture. They can play a key role in providing lower-cost facilities for dance classes, probably because dance is regarded as a key part of cultural inheritance.

Examples include:

- Sol de España Spanish Dancers at The Canberra Spanish Club.
- The International Dance Studio (ballroom) at the Italo Australian Club.
- The Polish Dance Group "Wielkopolska", Audacity Swing Dance, Tengo Tango, Jumptown Swing and an Irish Step Dancing group at the Polish Australian White Eagle Club in Turner.

14. Performance Facilities used for Dance

Government Theatres and Halls

Government performance facilities are shared amongst the performing arts, with dance presentations focused on four areas:

- Professional local productions at the ACT Government or Queanbeyan Council theatres, which include The Canberra Theatre.
- Annual presentations by teaching studios in ACT Government or Queanbeyan Council theatres.
- Social balls or galas at social clubs and ACT Government non-theatre facilities.
- Cultural performances at festivals using external spaces, such as Stage 88, Tuggeranong Town Park Stage, or temporary stages.

Ausdance ACT has identified 16 theatres of the ACT Government and two theatres of the Queanbeyan City Council used for ACT dance presentations. The theatres are widely distributed

and vary in quality, from The Canberra Theatre to the Albert Hall, and the new Gungahlin Theatre to the Belconnen Community Theatre. Half the theatres used are in the Central Canberra area.

Theatres in high schools and colleges have access issues for community dance groups versus school and college needs and compete for space with other community performances such as musicals. As a result, they are not preferred venues, and Erindale College Theatre is the only venue generally used.

The facility most used for dance by local studios and groups is The Canberra Theatre Centre, which offers three theatres. The flooring of the main stage is now regarded as less than ideal and the Courtyard Studio is parquetry laid on concrete, which does not meet minimum standards.

There are other spaces bearing the title theatre, such as the Bogong Theatre and the Ralph Wilson Theatre (Gorman House Arts Centre) but they are more theatres in name as they are not well-equipped for presentations.

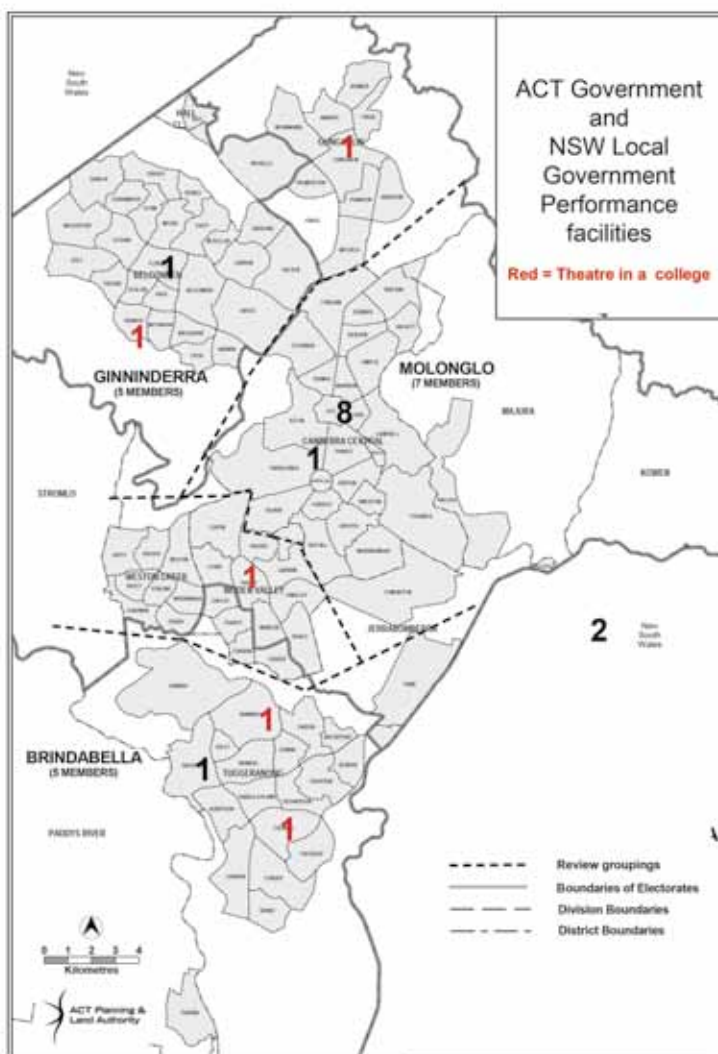


Figure 6: ACT Government and NSW Local Government performance facilities

Other Theatres Rarely Used for Dance

The ANU Arts Centre and Llewellyn Hall are generally not used for dance presentations, even though both venues have original dance studios now used for other purposes. There are additional theatres in non-government schools, such as at Canberra Boys Grammar School, but these are rarely used for dance presentations.

Some of the sporting and cultural clubs have auditoriums used for social dance events, and many adult social dance studios are prepared to pay commercial rates to use these venues for this purpose. Commercial dance studios where children are the prime focus, and catering is not required, prefer to use less expensive ACT Government theatres for their concerts.

There are no other performing venues of substance located within the surrounding region, although there are adapted cinema spaces in Yass (the Liberty Theatre), Braidwood (the National Theatre), Cooma (the Little Theatre), and Goulburn (the Lieder Theatre, built for song and adapted for cinema).

Outdoor Stages

There are a range of external venues used for performances, including Stage 88 in Commonwealth Park, which remains the most used outdoor stage.

Some folk groups use Stage 88 for classes and it has been used for dance performances during festivals. However, the flooring does not meet safe dance requirements for percussive dance as it is a hard timber floor, and as a facility it is probably on par with a temporary hired stage.

However, external stages have weather-proofing issues which limit the options for stage surfaces. In addition, the temporary treatment of stage surfaces for presentations is problematical.

For example, roll-out temporary flooring placed over a concrete surface or hard timber surface set on concrete will not create more 'spring' in a dance floor unless the roll-out flooring is a purpose made roll-out flooring with a dense foam backing, although it may smooth over cracks and prevent splinter injuries. A ballet presentation outdoors will require a temporary sprung floor such as Harlequin Liberty²³, and this option is beyond the financial resources of most theatres and festivals or The Australian Ballet without a national commercial sponsorship of such facilities.



Image 9: A temporary stage at the 2006 Moon Festival in Tuggeranong. Ensuring temporary stage floors are safe can be problematic with hire companies. Roll-out dance flooring such as Tarkett or Harlequin can smooth over edges and splintered surfaces but will not significantly improve shock absorption characteristics unless the flooring incorporates a resistant layer, especially on hard surfaces such as concrete, where choreography must be adapted to be safe and/or sports-style footwear is required. Photo Ausdance ACT

23 www.harlequinfloors.com/aus/architects-area.html

15. Conclusions

- Dance activity is popular, with 102 studios and groups conducting public classes in 121 different spaces.
- Dance is widely disbursed across the ACT and across all ages, with a high proportion of youth.
- It is difficult to typify dance activity due to its variety of styles and ages, and the differing social or cultural importance attached to it. The leaders or instigators of dance activity are difficult to identify as ‘creative workers’.
- Most dance activity is generated by (in descending order of levels of activity) commercial, social, and cultural dance.
- Well-established dance studios and groups operate on a business footing and generally invest in quality facilities where zoning and availability allow, but social and cultural groups rely on ACT Government community halls and church and other community facilities.
- Dance artists creating new work do not inhabit the studio sector but rely on a wide network of support across Australia and the world, especially professional dance organisations.

With the number of studios and groups teaching dance increasing every year to meet the demand for dance classes in Canberra, unsuitable spaces are being used. This survey has identified some areas lacking suitable venues for dance, particularly in:

- The inner sections of central Canberra.
- The high density residential suburbs of Gungahlin and central Belconnen (North).
- South Tuggeranong.
- Weston Creek.

With more facilities available which meet the basic requirements of dance studio space, safety issues can be addressed and more opportunities created for dance programs to reach more of Canberra’s population.

Attachment 1 - Dance Studios and Groups with Public Classes

| Belconnen/Gungahlin | Studio (Commercial & Private) | Community (NFP, Cultural) | Casual Performance Groups |
|---|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ACT Rock 'n' Roll Club | | 1 | |
| Bellyfusion | 1 | | |
| Brindabella Ballroom | 1 | | |
| Busy Bodies | 1 | | |
| Canberra Dance Development Centre | 1 | | |
| Canberra Festival Ballet School | 1 | | |
| Canberra School of Bollywood Dancing | 1 | | |
| Capital Ballroom Dance Academy | 1 | | |
| Capital Dance Studios | 1 | | |
| CIT Dance short courses | 1 | | |
| Classical Ballet Centre | 1 | | |
| Dance Northside | 1 | | |
| Dynamic Studios | 1 | | |
| Ghawazee Moon | 1 | | |
| Gungahlin Dance Academy | 1 | | |
| Hilal Dance Canberra | | 1 | |
| Indian Rhythms Dance Studio | 1 | | |
| Lake Night Learning (the P&C of UC Lake Ginniderra College) | | 1 | |
| Liz Gregory Irish Dance Academy | 1 | | |
| Phoenix Arts Pacific Island Dance | | 1 | |
| Pointe to Pointe | 1 | | |
| Rahbani Arabic Music and Dance Troupe | | | 1 |
| Rostan Line Dancing Group | | 1 | |
| Salsabor Dance Company | 1 | | |
| Scoil Rince Tir an Oir | 1 | | |
| Tabla Bellydance | | | 1 |
| The Flamenco Centre | 1 | | |
| Tiny Toes | 1 | | |
| Belconnen/Gungahlin Totals | 21 | 5 | 2 |

| Tuggeranong | Studio (Commercial & Private) | Community (NFP, Folk/MC) | Casual Performance Groups |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bellyup Bellydance | 1 | | |
| Dale's Ballroom Dancing | 1 | | |
| Dance City | 1 | | |
| DancEdge | 1 | | |
| Dance Beyond Barriers | | 1 | |
| Dream Team | | | 1 |
| Fresh Funk | | 1 | |

| | | | |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|
| Kulture Break | | 1 | |
| Legs Dance Pty Ltd | 1 | | |
| Lisa Clark School of Ballet | 1 | | |
| O'Connor Talent Academy | 1 | | |
| Pure Salsa | 1 | | |
| Scottish Highland Dancing | 1 | | |
| Sheehan-Stenson School of Irish Dance | 1 | | |
| Silver Soles Cloggers Inc | 1 | | |
| Simpson Academy of Irish Dance | 1 | | |
| Swingdevils | | | 1 |
| Urban Lava | 1 | | |
| VertiGal Bar Fitness (Canberra Pole Dancing) | 1 | | |
| Tuggeranong Totals | 14 | 3 | 2 |

| Woden/Weston Creek | Studio (Commercial & Private) | Community (NFP, Cultural) | Casual Performance Groups |
|---|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Academies of Irish Dance | 1 | | |
| ACT Square Dance Society (5 groups) | | | 1 |
| Dance Central | 1 | | |
| Dare to Dance Canberra | 1 | | |
| Dimmock Academy of Irish Dancing | 1 | | |
| Governor's Pleasure Early Colonial Dancers, The | | | 1 |
| iSpin Pole Studio | 1 | | |
| Kerr-L-Qs Square Dancing | | 1 | |
| Kokoloco | 1 | | |
| Miss Kitka House of Burlesque | 1 | | |
| Morris Dancing | | 1 | |
| Moonspinners Round Dance Club | | 1 | |
| National Capital Ballet School | 1 | | |
| National Capital Bootscooters | | 1 | |
| Rachel Strong Dance School | 1 | | |
| Salsambada | 1 | | |
| Salsarico | 1 | | |
| Scandinavian Folk Dance Group | | 1 | |
| Souhair of Zaghareet Middle Eastern Dance Co | | 1 | |
| Sparkles Dance Studio | 1 | | |
| Step N Line Dancers | | 1 | |
| Universal Dance Academy | 1 | | |
| Canberra Hellenic Dancers | | | 1 |
| Gygongyosbokreta Hungarian Group | | | 1 |
| The Austrian Dancers | | | 1 |
| Sol de Espana Spanish Dancers | | | 1 |
| Woden/Weston Creek Totals | 13 | 7 | 6 |

| Central Canberra | Studio (Commercial & Private) | Community (NFP, Folk/MC) | Casual Performance Groups |
|--|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ANU Dance | | 1 | |
| Aria | 1 | | |
| Audacity | 1 | | |
| Ben Kelly Line Dancers | | 1 | |
| Bollywood Dimensions | 1 | | |
| Bordonian Heritage Dancers | | | 1 |
| Burns Scottish Country Dancing Group | | 1 | |
| Bush Dance Group | | 1 | |
| Canberra City Dance Club | | 1 | |
| Canberra Contra Club | | 1 | |
| Canberra Dance Theatre | | 1 | |
| Canberra German Dancers | | | 1 |
| Canberra International Folk Dance Association (CIFDA) | | 1 | |
| Canberra Old Time Dance Club Inc | | 1 | |
| Canberra Recorder & Early Music Society Dance Group | | 1 | |
| Capital Cloggers | | 1 | |
| Ceroc Canberra | 1 | | |
| Dance Generation (formly Dancecorp) | 1 | | |
| Danzon | 1 | | |
| dna: dance and aerial | 1 | | |
| DunDunba African Drum + Dance | 1 | | |
| Earthy Delights Historic Dance Academy | 1 | | |
| FitSistas Pole & Fitness Studio | 1 | | |
| Folk Dance Canberra | | 1 | |
| Gaby's Dance Studio Club | 1 | | |
| Gale Edwards School of Ballet | 1 | | |
| Israeli Dancing | | 1 | |
| Jayz Dance Company | 1 | | |
| Jumptown ACT Swing Dance Society Inc. | | 1 | |
| Kim Harvey School of Dance | 1 | | |
| Kmotion Dance Studio | 1 | | |
| Monaro Folk Society | | 1 | |
| The International Dance Studio (formally Penny De Kauwe School of Dancing) | 1 | | |
| Play the Dance Agency @ Emmaus College | 1 | | |
| QL2 Centre for Youth Dance | | 1 | |
| Quake | | | 1 |
| Scottish Country Dance Club of Canberra | | 1 | |
| Subsdance | 1 | | |
| SV Dance Company (Javier Castro) | 1 | | |

| | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Tengo Tango | 1 | | |
| Tribalista Bellydance | 1 | | |
| Welsh & Cornish Dancing | | 1 | |
| Manquehue Chilean Folkloric Dance Group | | | 1 |
| Weilkopolska Polish Dance Group | | | 1 |
| Irish Step Dancing group | | | 1 |
| Central Canberra Totals | 21 | 18 | 6 |

Attachment 2 – Geographic Location: Class Venues by Suburb

Belconnen/Gungahlin

| | |
|------------|--|
| Amaroo | Amaroo School |
| Aranda | Aranda Scout Hall |
| Belconnen | Belconnen Arts Centre |
| Belconnen | Belconnen Community Centre |
| Belconnen | Belconnen Sea Scouts Hall |
| Belconnen | Capital Dance Studios |
| Belconnen | Lake Ginninderra College |
| Belconnen | Senior Citizens Club |
| Cook | Cook Regional Community Hub |
| Gungahlin | Canberra Festival Ballet School |
| Gungahlin | Indian Rhythms Dance Studio |
| Gungahlin | Gungahlin College, Gungahlin Town Centre |
| Harrison | Harrison School |
| Hawker | Hawker Primary School |
| Holt | Holt Uniting Church |
| Holt | West Belconnen Leagues Club |
| Kaleen | Kaleen Community Hall |
| Latham | Capital Ballroom Dance Academy |
| Macquarie | Jamison Centre |
| Melba | Nellie Hall Melba Community Centre |
| Mitchell | Dynamic Studios |
| Nicholls | Gold Creek High |
| Nicholls | Nicholls Sports Precinct |
| Palmerston | Palmerston Hall |
| Scullin | Humpy Hall |
| Spence | Mount Rogers Community Centre |

Tuggeranong

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Bonython | Dimmock Academy of Irish Dancing |
| Chisholm | Chisolm Community Hall |
| Greenway | Tuggeranong Town Centre |
| Greenway | Tuggeranong Arts Centre |
| Hume | Dance City |
| Hume | Lisa Clark School of Ballet |
| Hume | Vertigal Bar Fitness |
| Isabella Plains | Isabella Plains Early Childhood School Hall |
| Kambah | Burns Club, The |
| Kambah | DancEdge & Silver Sole Cloggers |
| Lanyon | Mura Lanyon Youth & Community Centre |
| Tuggeranong | Scottish Highland Dancing |
| Tuggeranong | Sheehan-Stenson School of Irish Dance |

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Tuggeranong | Tuggeranong Youth Centre |
| Tuggeranong | Tuggeranong Community Centre |
| Wanniassa | Erindale Active Leisure Centre |
| Wanniassa | Erindale College |
| Wanniassa | Erindale Shopping Centre |

Woden/ Weston Creek

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Curtin | St James Church Hall |
| Holder | Holder Shopping Centre |
| Hughes | Hughes Community Centre |
| Lyons | Lyons Early Childhood Centre |
| Mawson | Austrian Australian Club |
| Pearce | Pearce Community Centre Collett Pl Pearce |
| Phillip | Lvl 1 21 Aintree Court Phillip |
| Phillip | 27 Colbee Court Phillip |
| Phillip | 1/50 Colbee Crt Phillip, |
| Phillip | 7-11 Botany St, Phillip |
| Phillip | Woden Senior Citizens Centre |
| Phillip | Slovenian Club |
| Torrens | Torrens Hall |
| Weston | Royals Rugby Club |
| Weston | Weston Scout Hall |
| Weston | Weston Creek Community Centre |
| Weston Creek | Dimmock Academy of Irish Dancing |
| Weston Creek | Souhair of Zaghareet Middle Eastern Dance Co |
| Weston Creek | Canberra Irish Club |
| Woden | Hellenic Club |
| Woden | 19b Irving Street Woden |
| Woden | Woden Senior Citizens Centre |

Central Canberra

| | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Ainslie | All Saints Church Hall |
| Ainslie | Corroboree Park Hall |
| ANU | ANU |
| ANU | ANU North Oval Pavillion |
| Braddon | Unit 12, 33 Mort Street, Braddon |
| Braddon | Gorman House, Ainslie Ave Braddon |
| Braddon | 21 Lonsdale Street Braddon |
| Braddon | O'Donnell Youth Centre |
| Campbell | Duntroon-Campbell Scout Group Hall |
| Canberra City | Canberra Dance Theatre |
| Canberra City | Level 1, 17 East Row Canberra |
| Canberra City | 10-8 Petrie Plaza, Canberra |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Canberra City | Griffin Centre |
| Canberra City | K'motion Dance Studio |
| Canberra City | monkeybar |
| Canberra City | Riley Hall |
| Canberra City | Salsabor Dance Company |
| Canberra City | The Loft (Church space) |
| Canberra City | The Uni Pub |
| Dickson | Darramalan College |
| Dickson | Dickson College |
| Dickson | Emmaus College |
| Dickson | Majura Community Centre Hall |
| Downer | Downer Community Hall |
| Forrest | Italo Australian Club |
| Forrest | St Andrews Church |
| Forrest | Wesley Centre (church) |
| Fyshwick | Koala Court, Unit 10 151-155 Gladstone St, Fyshwick |
| Griffith | Griffith Community Neighbourhood Centre |
| Griffith | St Pauls Anglican Church hall, |
| Griffith | SV Dance Company |
| Gungahlin | Gungahlin Community Centre |
| Hackett | Folk Dance Canberra Hall |
| Hackett | St Margarets Church |
| Kingston | Canberra Baptist Church Hall |
| Narrabundah | Canberra Spanish Club |
| Narrabundah | Harmonie German Club |
| Narrabundah | St Benedicts Primary School Hall |
| Narrabundah | St John the Baptist Church |
| O'Connor | O'Connor Guide Hall |
| Pialligo | 8 Beltana Road, Pialligo |
| Reid | Lutheran Church |
| Reid | Reid Uniting Church Hall |
| Reid | St Johns Reid |
| Turner | North Canberra Baptist Church hall |
| Turner | Polish Australian White Eagle Club |
| Turner | Southern Cross Club, Turner |
| Turner | Turner Senior Citizens Centre |
| Watson | Canberra Senior Citizens Centre |
| Yarralumla | The Garden Studio, Private Yarralumla |
| Yarralumla | Yarralumla Uniting Church |
| Yarralumla | Yarralumla Woolshed |
| Yarralumla | YMCA Sailing Club |



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