



Company of Elders - FAQ's

Thank you for your interest in Sadler's Wells' Company of Elders. Please see the Q&A's below for common questions about company workshops and membership:

What is Sadler's Wells?

Located in Islington, Sadler's Wells is a world-leading creative organisation dedicated to dance in all its forms. With over three centuries of theatrical heritage and a year-round programme of performances and learning activities, it is the place where artists come together to create dance, and where people of all backgrounds come to experience it – to take part, learn, experiment and be inspired.

What is the Company of Elders (COE)?

Since 1989, Company of Elders, Sadler's Wells' resident over-60s performance company, has been demonstrating the power of lifelong creativity and proving it is never too late to start dancing. Every week during term time, the group of 20 individuals rehearse with a renowned choreographer to make new work for public performances that can happen locally, nationally or internationally. The company celebrates diversity in age, ethnicity and gender and has recently worked with choreographers who have expertise in dance forms such as Congolese Rumba, Hip Hop, Tap, Bharatanatyam, Contemporary and more.

Why is Sadler's Wells running Company of Elders workshops?

Sadler's Wells is committed to involving as many people as possible in dance and workshops are an opportunity to inspire a diverse range of older adults to get involved with dance activity. When there are opportunities to take on new members to Company of Elders, workshops give us a chance to meet enthusiastic, open-minded people who may be interested in making the commitment to join.

Can anyone from any borough come to the workshops?

Yes, everyone is welcome to take part in workshops, however, priority will be given to people who live in **Islington, Waltham Forest, Hackney, Tower Hamlets or Newham**. Sadler's Wells is an Islington based organisation and is planning to open a new building in the Queen Elizabeth Park in Newham. It is our aim to engage with our communities through workshops to offer local residents the chance to get involved with our work.

What age do I have to be?

Our workshops are open to people 55+, and dancers in Company of Elders are 60-90+.

I've only danced at weddings and in my kitchen, do I need to be an expert in dance to join in?

Not at all, we welcome everyone with every level of experience.

Why should I take part?

Dance is a great way get your body moving, have fun, get fit and increase your circle of friends. Joining in with a Company of Elders workshop can give you an insight into one of the activities that Sadler's Wells runs with community members as well as can signpost you to further activities and projects. In certain circumstances, joining in with a workshop can also give you an opportunity be invited to join the company as a company member.

What should I wear?

You can wear whatever you like that is comfortable, and we recommend wearing soft soled shoes that are flexible.

Should I bring food/drink?

Please bring water and a light snack with you.

What will happen during the workshop?

There will be an introduction to the dance class, the dance teacher may ask you about any injuries or aches and pains you may have. Please let them know so that they can adapt the dance style for you. This will be followed by a warm-up and the dance teacher will lead your group through a series of creative tasks to give you the chance to explore different styles of dance. You will also have a chance to ask us any questions you may have about the Company of Elders, its rehearsals and our full programme of activity at Sadler's Wells.

What happens when the dance classes finishes?

All workshop participants will be given information about other classes and projects we run at Sadler's Wells for over 60's so that you can continue to enjoy the benefits of taking part in regular dance activity including having fun, keeping fit and increasing your circle of friends. You will also be able to register your interest regarding taking part in future opportunities with Company of Elders. In addition, individuals from the workshop may be invited to take part in a company class (a workshop with the Company of Elders). This would happen in the weeks following the workshop, and would mean that you would join in dancing with the company to gather insight into their weekly practice as well as learn more about their yearly schedule. Following that, you may be invited to join the company for a maximum period of five years.

How are people selected to join Company of Elders?

When spaces in the company become available, we are interested in meeting people who have a passion for dance, find joy in working collaboratively and can commit to frequent weekly rehearsals in order to create new dance pieces. We are particularly interested in welcoming residents of Islington, Waltham Forest, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham and those who represent the BAME community (BAME definition – Black, Asian, and minority ethnic). Dancers who have previously taken part in projects at Sadler's Wells may also be invited to join a company class with the view of potentially joining as a company member.

How much does it cost and how do I pay?

All Company of Elders workshops are **free**.

Membership for Company of Elders dancers is £20 a year.

Will there be any pictures / videos taken? What if I disagree?

We use photos to help us remember all the people that took part in the workshops. There is a chance that some photos can be used to promote Sadler's Wells' community engagement programmes online (on the website and on social media). You will be asked to sign a photo consent form before the workshop, and it is not a problem at all if you do not wish to have photos or videos taken. If this is the case, we will have you wear a sticker so we can be sure you are not included in those photos / videos.