

JAN - MARCH 2026

**LIVE
STRONGER
FOR LONGER**

NEWSLETTER



Record breakers!

In February we received the exciting news direct from GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS, who wrote:

“I am so happy to tell you: You successfully achieved the Guinness World Records title! The largest chair-based exercise lesson consists of 1,163 people and was achieved by Age UK Derby and Derbyshire and Chesterfield Football Club Community Trust (both United Kingdom), in Derbyshire, United Kingdom on 25 September 2025. Congratulations! You are now officially amazing!”

This confirmation marks the culmination of months of preparation, partnership, and community spirit - and we are thrilled to share this historic achievement with everyone who took part.

The previous record, set in Hong Kong in 2016, stood at 731 participants. Thanks to the enthusiasm, energy, and incredible commitment from people across Derbyshire, we didn't just beat the record - we shattered it.

The record is now live on their website and can be found here:
<https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/most-people-doing-chair-based-exercise>

Thank you to everyone that joined us in making this possible!

Scan the QR code to see our record



A Strong and Steady success!

One of our recent Strong and Steady participants Norma, shared how the programme has helped her rebuild strength, confidence, and independence.

She admitted she wasn't sure the classes would help at first, but was quickly surprised by her progress. The easy-to-follow exercises and supportive group atmosphere helped her settle in straight away.



Key benefits experienced:

- Improved balance and posture
- Increased confidence walking and reaching without support
- Ability to correct her balance when overreaching
- Greater independence with daily tasks

The friendly social environment also made a big difference. She especially enjoyed the chance to chat with others over cake and coffee after sessions.



Emotional Wellbeing and Social Connection

Following her stroke, she had struggled with confidence and awareness of her right leg. The programme helped her approach these challenges positively, both in class and at home.

Her family has also noticed improvements in her communication and overall happiness.

Looking Forward

Norma plans to continue with follow-on classes and would "100% recommend" the programme to others.

"It's a friendly bunch, no competition. You've got nothing to lose."

Strong and Steady

Making a real difference

We recently received heartfelt feedback from the family of one of our Strong and Steady participants, and it perfectly captures the life-changing impact of the programme.

After attending classes for just a few weeks, the participant's daughter reported significant improvements in their mum's confidence, energy levels, mobility, and engagement. They told us:

"You are miracle workers! We've really noticed the difference in mum's physical abilities and mental acuity. Her engagement is miles better - it is wonderful to see."

They also shared that she has become more positive and motivated at home, saying things like:

"I've got so much to live for - I'm not going to die just yet!"

The daughter later wrote to us to express her thanks, describing how her mother - after several serious health episodes - had become frail, housebound, and at high risk of falls. Since joining Strong and Steady, she has become more active, more alert, and much more hopeful. She wrote: *"This class will do as much to keep Mum out of hospital as all her pills. We are so grateful for this fantastic and effective intervention."*

Stories like this remind us why Strong and Steady matters. The programme is helping older adults rebuild strength, independence and confidence - offering a lifeline to participants and families alike.

A Small Change That Meant the World

A client joined our Strong & Steady class in January. By week four, she told us she'd managed to put on her shoes and socks by herself - and even tie her laces for the first time in years.



Wall press ups for Strong and Steady

Dave's Tai Chi

I went to monitor Dave's Tai Chi class on Monday 2nd Feb, it is 1 and a half hours long and they really manage to get a lot of balance and coordination exercises in that time. To start with they really focus on lots of flexibility and stretches, making sure each part of the body is moving and woken up. Then they work on form, slowly moving into lots of positions, with a few quick movements in too, to test their reflexes and balance. Each week, new movements are added and practiced.

After form, they learn some moves in pairs, to work on self-defence, while ensuring their bodies are still in an untensed state, true to Tai Chi. At the end they got to put some of the moves they had been focussing on with swords which added another level of coordination and extra strength. Such a fun and friendly class, in a big space, and full of lots of beneficial exercises.

Emma Richards
Falls Prevention Service Advisor



Client testimonials

1. I've been coming 9 years this time round, but actually first started 30 years ago. I had to stop due to work. When I had more free time, I saw that Dave still taught the sessions, so I rejoined straight away. That tells you everything! I get lots out of Tai Chi, both physically and mentally.

2. We are reasonably new at it but the main thing we have got so far is how enjoyable it is. Dave makes it funny and all are very friendly. We are meeting the other members for a drink afterwards. I can already see how it is helping with our balance and coordination, as you really have to think about what each part of you is doing. I ached a bit the next day too, which I know must be a good thing.

Tai Chi is an effective exercise for preventing falls and improving balance ability in older adults, whether they are healthy or at high risk of falling. The effectiveness of Tai Chi increases with exercise time and frequency.

In the community

It works both ways

We received the following from one of our community class instructors: Live Stronger for Longer and Strong and Steady are working together to support my class members. J has been with our falls prevention service since it was called Strictly No Falling. She has recently had a run of bad health, including hearing issues a dementia diagnosis and declining mobility. I spoke to Tim Taylor one of our Strong and Steady instructors about referring J into S and S for something more intensive. I contacted the family who spoke with me of their concerns too and agreed it would be a great opportunity to keep J's routine of exercise going. With immediate effect J transferred to the Ilkeston Class. I arranged the taxi and communication between Tim the instructor to discuss the next steps. The daughter really appreciates the way we have thought about J in keeping her falls prevention routine, as an instructor its hard to lose a class member if there is no other facility to refer into so this has been a great option. I know J will be looked after and I will follow her progress with Tim.



Live Stronger for Longer
Horsley community class

Update:

I have now managed to get another of my class members to join Strong and Steady with J, they know each other well from my class. Like J, the other member is a longstanding attendee of the Falls Groups. Over time she has become frailer and her confidence has reduced. Following conversations including the mention of fear when going out, I made the referral, I'm sure she will benefit greatly.

Following the completion of the 24 weeks, I hope they both will return to the group at my Horsley class.

Di Cliff - Horsley LSFL class instructor

Doverage Tai Chi

Wonderful feedback from our Doverage tai chi group - Our new Doverage tai chi class is already making a difference. Participants report feeling fitter, more balanced, and more confident. Some are even walking more independently and relying less on their stick. Many also enjoy the supportive group size and the chance to practice techniques at home. All class details are available on our website.



Ilkeston S&B

Amy's strength & balance sessions at Ilkeston fire station are making a real difference to local members. One participant shared:

"I've been coming since the class began over a year ago. I struggle with balance due to arthritis, but these sessions have really helped my coordination, strength and overall fitness."

Amy says seeing this progress is the best part of her job:

"Their balance and confidence have improved so much. Hearing their success stories is incredibly rewarding."

All the community class dates, times and contact info is on our website.

Reasons for falling and how I got up

The following was written by a Moria, a member of the Live Stronger for Longer Little Eaton community class:

I have osteoarthritis in my right shoulder and both knees. Also have dropped foot and nerve damage in my left leg.

Major back surgery has allowed my posture to straighten because of rods and screws, and 4 discs have been replaced with artificial ones.

Having a dropped foot means I'm prone to falling. Unless I remember to lift it each time I walk, a fall usually results. This happened recently when I fell in the kitchen and ended up on my right side. Being unable to turn onto my knees because of pain, I managed to sit up and shuffle on my bottom towards a table where I was then able to twist and pull myself up.

We had recently been shown by Emma, our instructor, ways of helping ourselves in these situations and the importance of keeping the muscles in our bottoms strong by exercising, I was grateful that I had this knowledge, due to attending her classes.

Thank you for writing this Moria, we love to hear from our members.

Do you know someone that would like to join the Live Stronger for Longer team?

LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

Vacancies for independent strength and balance instructors available with Age UK Derby and Derbyshire.

Do you:

- Enjoy helping others?
- Understand the importance of exercise?
- Care about falls prevention, particularly within the elderly population?
- Want to make a difference to the quality of lives and keeping people independent and socially active?
- Have the time and commitment to dedicate a couple of hours each week to the sessions?

If so, we would love to hear from you.
Training is offered to deliver the exercises if needed.

Please contact Age UK Derby & Derbyshire for more information on 01773 766922

Live Stronger for Longer
the falls prevention service for Derbyshire,
funded by Derbyshire County Council, delivered by Age UK Derby and Derbyshire



LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

2025 - 2026 Quarter 3 Report

We had a busy and exciting quarter wrapping up the county-wide library tour, running several training sessions for instructors and staff, and hosting festive events that brought the community together.

925 PEOPLE WENT TO A LSFL COMMUNITY CLASS

160 REFERRALS RECEIVED

6 EVENTS ATTENDED

19 SESSIONS MONITORED

10 CBE INSTRUCTORS TRAINED

2 NEW CLASSES LAUNCHED

Festivities

Christmas can be a tough time for older people, in the run up to the big day our classes put on their Christmas clothes and threw parties, fuddles and quizzes.



Across social media we shared the 12 moves of Christmas to encourage people to move, we also advertised our exercises that can be done at home on the website:



<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/derbyandderbyshire/our-services/exercise/live-stronger-for-longer/lsfl-classes/lsfl-exercise1/>

Training CHAIR BASED EXERCISE



10 new people completed their Strength and Balance CPD training this quarter, learning 22 new exercises to improve mobility, posture, balance and lower limb fitness.

SOCIAL MEDIA

To increase the reach across our social media channels, 5 people were trained in using our social media in November, to allow live posting at events or classes. This resulted in our Facebook reach increasing by 52% in the first week.



Strong and Steady

This quarter one client said the Strong and Steady programme had "Changed my life" she confirmed it had really helped with balance and confidence, she feels much more stable when she walks and she now goes out on her own without any worry if there are steps or other challenges, as she feels much more confident.

Scan the QR code to see the progress video another client agreed we could share, it really highlights how good this programme is, and how it really does change lives!

