

## It's May already...

and it's easy to feel the year is whizzing by. We slowed down for International Tai Chi Day and offered members of the Age UK Somerset head office team a chance to get up from behind their desks and try a Tai Chi taster session. What's your favourite way to slow down?



Age UK Somerset staff trying some of the movements we include in our Tai Chi QiGong sessions.

## Meet the team

We have some new faces in the team, so over the next few issues we will be featuring all of our staff members so you can get to know us better. We feature spotlights on volunteers and instructors who'd like to join in too. This month's spotlight is on Tansin Benn, Movement to Music instructor in North Somerset and recently retired trustee.

Tansin has just celebrated her 70th birthday, pictured here on the big day, with her beautiful mum who is 97! Read on to see our in depth spotlight later in the newsletter.



# News

## Engaging older people in physical activity



Age UK Somerset has helped to contribute to a report on older people and physical activity published by Bristol Ageing Better (BAB). In order to inform future service delivery, BAB captured the collective learning and recommendations about physical activity from 9 local organisations working with older people in and around Bristol. It is full of tips to engage older people in physical activity, reduce drop-out rates for older people's physical activity and ideas how to combine physical activity with social connection.

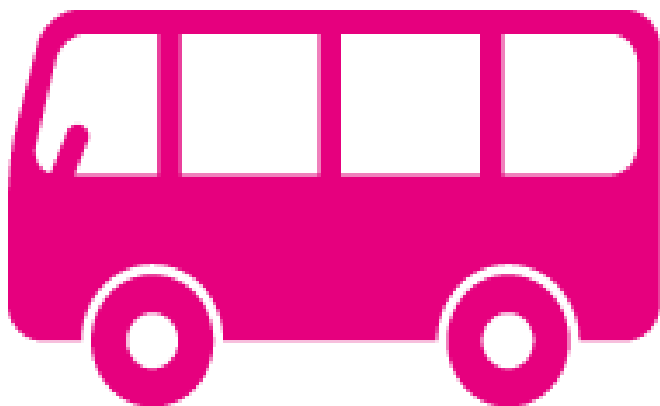
To see the full report click here: [Physical activity report \(bristolageingbetter.org.uk\)](https://bristolageingbetter.org.uk)



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## New transport planner from Somerset County Council

There is a new travel website from Somerset County Council which can help plan trips in Somerset.



When planning your route it shows transport options including community transport for your journey. You can change it to allow for any mobility needs.

Check it out here: <https://somerset.thinktravel.info/>







## Volunteers Needed!

Would you like to volunteer with Age UK Somerset to enhance the lifestyle of older people?

Flexercise is a chair-based exercise session which uses fun props to get people moving in a relaxed way. We are searching for people to train in and then run Flexercise sessions in Somerset.

These workshops are aimed at people who work with or have an interest in enhancing the lifestyle of the not so young. They are open to carers from nursing and residential homes, volunteers, helpers in day care centres and officers or 'active' residents from sheltered homes and they will provide all the information and skills necessary for you to run your own activity sessions.

The next Flexercise workshop is on May 26th 2022 in Bridgwater, with more dates to be announced.

For more information please contact the Ageing Well team:

**01823 345626**

[ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk)

**flexercise**





# Volunteers Needed!

## Do you want to feel good inside and out?

Age UK Somerset are seeking volunteers to train in and then lead Tai Chi QiGong sessions in Somerset. No previous experience necessary, but a knowledge of tai chi or a background in leading or talking to groups is advantageous.

- ✓ Train with us to learn how to be a Tai Chi Shibashi instructor. Workshops are being held on 6th and 20th June 2022.
- ✓ Volunteer with us to improve the health and wellbeing of older people in your area.

If you have an interest in Tai Chi, can spare an hour a week to volunteer with us and have a passion for improving the health of older people then please contact us to find out more.

# 01823 345626

[ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk)

# Focus On North Somerset

In the last six months we have started several new classes in North Somerset.



**Somerset  
ageUK**



**GET GROOVIN'  
AT YOUR  
OWN PACE**  
THE DANCE PARTY WORKOUT  
FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

**Zumba Gold®**

Zumba Gold® is a low impact dance-fitness class for older people. You'll find the moves easy to follow, the music inspiring, and you'll have lots of fun.

**Mondays  
14.30-15.30**

**PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL**  
Cost: £5

This class is held at:  
**Our Lady of Lourdes**  
28 Baytree Road  
Weston-Super-Mare  
BS22 8HQ

For more information or to book your place  
please contact the Ageing Well team  
**01823 345626**  
[ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk)  
visit our website: [www.ageuksomerset.org.uk](http://www.ageuksomerset.org.uk)

Ref: 17/03/2022

Registered Charity No. 1015909

We run a Zumba Gold® class in Weston-super-Mare where participants are encouraged to 'ditch the workout and start the party'. Instructor, Maria, sent in some wonderful comments from participants who have said it's, **"good fun, give it a try"**, **"a fun-filled dance class"** and that people should **"come-ba to Zumba!"**

North Somerset class co-ordinator, Dawn, has launched **ESCAPE-pain**, a free programme for people with chronic arthritic hip or knee pain. The course is delivered in two locations, Bleadon and Worle. **Do you know anyone that might benefit?**



**Somerset  
ageUK**



**Strong and Steady**

**Improve your balance.  
Rebuild your muscle strength.  
Stay confident and mobile.  
Have some fun!**

For more information, please contact Age UK Somerset.  
We want to help you to stay independent as you get older.

You will need to complete a short health questionnaire before starting your class. The cost is £4.00 per session.

[fallsprevention@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:fallsprevention@ageuksomerset.org.uk)  
**01823 345614**  
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Ref: 27/04/2022

Registered Charity No. 1015909

Our Falls Prevention service has expanded and now runs classes in Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead, Weston-super-Mare and Yatton.

**We are seeking PSI or Otago trained instructors in the Weston and Worle area.**

If you are interested please get in touch with Michelle.

[fallsprevention@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:fallsprevention@ageuksomerset.org.uk)



**Somerset  
ageUK**



**FREE**

**Do you have  
knee or hip pain?**

**Join our ESCAPE-pain class.**  
**A gentle, individualised exercise programme that  
matches your needs and pace**  
Better manage your knee and hip pain and meet other people  
over 45 years who are also living with osteoarthritis.

**FREE!**  
**PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL**  
For more information or to book your place please  
call Dawn at Age UK Somerset on  
**07530 777895**  
[ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk](mailto:ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk)  
[www.ageuksomerset.org.uk/ageingwell](http://www.ageuksomerset.org.uk/ageingwell)

These classes are held on:  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays**  
in Bleadon & Worle

**Helping you manage your joint pain**

Ref: 10/03/2022

Registered Charity No. 1015909



# Increase online confidence

We know going online isn't for everyone, but for people who do want to increase their knowledge, confidence and skills then there are step-by-step guides on the Age UK Somerset website.

Click the photo or use this address:

[www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset/our-services/it-how-to-guides/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/somerset/our-services/it-how-to-guides/)

Content includes:

Whatsapp, Email, Facebook, Twitter and Skype.

## Want to use digital technology but not sure how?

We've put together some links to easy to follow guides which will get you connected in no time.



We are on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Insta](#)!  
Why not give us a like and a follow once you've set yourself up?!



## Dates for your diary

We've picked out some interesting dates to celebrate health and wellbeing and added them to the holiday calendar below.

The Ageing Well and Falls Prevention office is closed on bank holidays and please remember that classes don't run as we aren't available to give support.

### May

2nd - Early May B.H.

8th - Garden day

11th - Somerset Day

9-15th - UK Mental Health Week

15-21st - Dementia Awareness Week



### June

2nd - Spring Bank Holiday

3rd - Queen's Platinum Jubilee

21st - International Yoga Day

27th-1st July - World Wellbeing Week.

# Tansin Benn - Mini Autobiography

## Volunteer instructor for the Ageing Well Service

Professionally, I spent my life in the field of dance, sport and physical education. In 2012 I retired as a professor from the University of Birmingham and it soon struck me on returning to my home town of Weston super Mare that I would like to continue using my skills, but as a volunteer. I was connected with Age UK Somerset's Ageing Well team after walking into Weston Library in 2013 and talking with a lady who was spreading the word about the charity and its work. As a carer for mum I had started to discover how much these activities meant to those less able or connected than they used to be, as well as those who just want fun and a sense of well-being with like-minded people.



*On my 70<sup>th</sup> with my beautiful mum who will be 97 in June.*

### Thanks for talk

Age UK Somerset (AUKS) would like to thank Dr Lucy Pollock, consultant geriatrician and author, for giving up her valuable time on February 11 to talk to the public at Weston Winter Gardens.

It is rare to have an opportunity to listen to, and exchange questions with, a practising doctor who has so much experience. Dr Lucy has a mission to share knowledge with the public to make lives easier. She is prepared to talk openly and honestly about issues related to decisions we will all have to make as we get older. During the talk her approach was compassionate, amusing and poignant, addressing the hardest questions that individuals and their families need to plan for and discuss. Special thanks for making this afternoon possible go to Weston College, the Winter Gardens, Alliance Homes and the volunteers of AUKS.

For those who are interested in the range of topics covered such as managing the pills, responding to dementia, when to stop driving, advance care planning, who makes the decisions, the good news and the delicate questions, please see 'The Book about getting older - for people who don't want to talk about it' by Dr Lucy Pollock, (2021) Penguin publisher, or her podcasts on the internet. For Dr Lucy old age is

The wreck of the SS Nornen at Berrow

something to be celebrated and not avoided, her positive attitude to her life's work is an inspiration.

**Dr Tansin Benn**  
Trustee AUKS & Chair of Weston Winter Gardens Community Board

*Tansin's recent letter printed in the Weston Mercury*

My first inroads were through leading Flexercise with a weekly class in sheltered accommodation in Worle for six years. I was able to take my mum to the classes for five years when she came to live with me at 89 years of age and she's now almost 97. Despite being wheelchair bound and having been diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2013, mum loved the classes and even took part in two fund raising demonstrations at Weston Winter Gardens.

As a former researcher I undertook a 'Stay Strong Stay Steady' study in 2016

with teachers and participants that helped us get further funding and staff to develop the programme. With a background in teacher-trainer I volunteered to help with CPD and other training opportunities for the Ageing Well Team which extended the groups of lovely people I met in the course of my retirement 'hobby'.



In the spring term of 2018 I did the 'Extend' training course with the amazing Chris Burrt and started classes in June of that year at Milton Baptist Church, Weston. It was here I really found my niche and felt most able to use my dance background to bring movement experiences and lots of laughter in the 'Music and Movement' classes I now teach. Restarting after Covid brought many brave souls out and my class numbers became too big so I split the class and now run two on Monday mornings. They are definitely the 'Happy Hours' of my week, full of interesting, funny and positive women. I am so privileged to share time with them.



***Tea Dance at the Winter Gardens 2019***

Looking for other ways to contribute I signed up to be a Trustee for the Charity in April 2018 and, although not a requirement of Trustees, during my four years in this role I facilitated two fund-raising Social Tea Dances at the Winter Gardens, raising almost £2,000 at each, and the Afternoon with Dr Lucy Pollock in February of this year which raised around £1,600.

### **HAPPY 70TH BIRTHDAY TAN**



I stepped down as Trustee this month when my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday arrived and I decided to focus on things that bring the most happiness. A definite in that category is in my active teaching and training support as a volunteer for Age UK Somerset so my focus for the Charity continues here. It is making a difference – not only in my life but in the lives of those who come in with that 'Monday morning feeling' and leave with a smile on their faces and spring in their step. I am lucky to contribute to the fabulous Ageing Well work of the Age UK Somerset Team and hope to be able to continue for some time yet.

***Card made by one of my classes for my 70<sup>th</sup> and somehow they managed to insert a photo of me! And I never had a body like that!!!***



# Celebrating Success

Thanks to all of you who completed our recent survey.

We had an overwhelming response with more than 400 participants giving us their opinion!

Here is a snapshot of some of the wonderful things they had to say about their Ageing Well and Falls Prevention instructors...

Terry makes class enjoyable knows keeps us excellent instructor calm friendly JO knows stuff  
welcoming lovely lady excellent teacher teaches us informative Great personality  
kind calming teacher week explains moves well Tracie clear group cheerful  
pace clear instructions Suzie caring explains exercises always  
clearly us Michelle helpful interested encouraging instructions  
friendly brilliant good enjoyable fun works excellent  
routines makes Easy follow instructor experienced great individual  
knowledgeable music class push enthusiastic lovely Chris  
Corrine pleasant professional patient lot movements Always smile  
understanding exercises well exercise excellent tutor happy every way manner  
lovely personality explains well Makes enjoyable everyone demonstrates

**We will be sharing the completed report in our next newsletter.**

## Contact Us



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01823 345614



ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk  
fallsprevention@ageuksomerset.org.uk



[www.ageuksomerset.org.uk/  
ageingwell](http://www.ageuksomerset.org.uk/ageingwell)

**Please share  
your stories  
with us.**

## Share with us

We'd love for you to get involved with our newsletter. If you want to share your bio, case studies, positive feedback, photos or videos, then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you to all who have submitted things already!