

AGEING WELL EXERCISE CLASS SURVEY REPORT

FEB/MARCH 2022

PLEASE SEE A COPY OF ORIGINAL QUESTIONNAIRE IN APPENDIX 1

The Ageing Well team undertook an extensive survey amongst our class participants during February and March 2022. The purpose of the survey was to collect, analyse, and report on our current service users' opinions, ideas and comments to shape future improvements and changes to the operations of the service.

'SurveyMonkey' was chosen to collate responses, as this proved the most cost-effective way to produce the report. SurveyMonkey is an online, survey development software. It allows users to easily create and send surveys, collect and store data, and produce reports. Many of our service users were unable to complete the survey online (digitally excluded), so paper copies of the survey were also available (these were entered into SurveyMonkey by staff).

The team were over-joyed by the response. We collected a total of 404 responses from over 60 different exercise classes across Somerset (289 responses) and North Somerset (115 responses).

KEY HEADLINES:

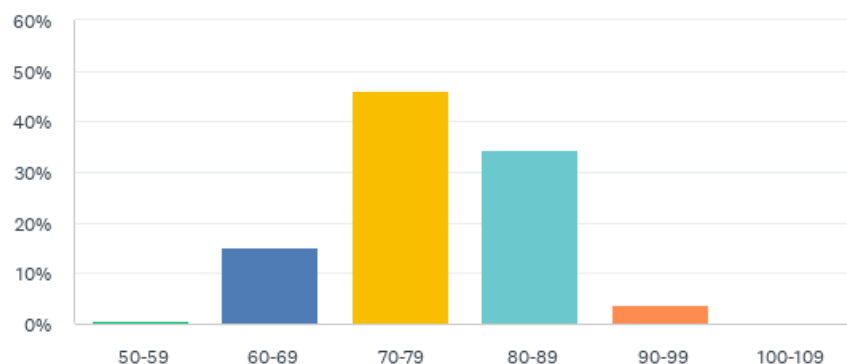
- * We are very appreciated as a charity, and a service.
- * Our classes are valued for improving both physical and mental wellbeing.
- * Our participants want more – more classes, more venues, and more instructors.

RESULTS:

Age Distribution

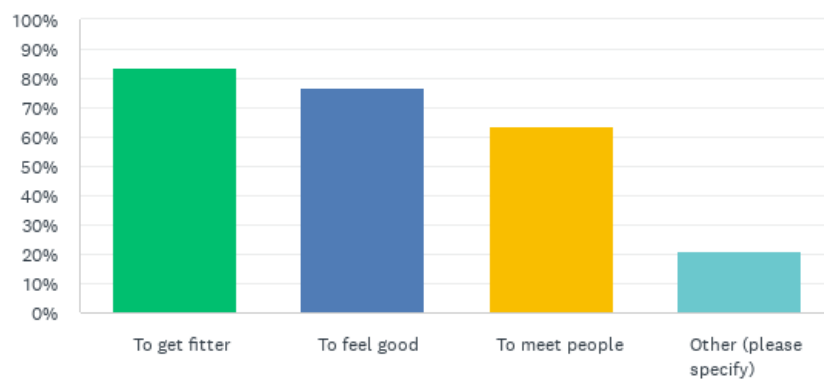
The Ageing Well Team at Age UK Somerset is dedicated to improving the Health & Wellbeing of over 60s. We are pleased to see that we are serving our target demographic well. The ages of our service users ranged from 56 years-99 years. We don't yet have any centenarians on our books, but if the current trend in the UK of increased life expectancy continues, then perhaps next year we will.

Q2 What is your age?



Main Benefits of Your Class

Q4 How do you feel this class benefits you? Tick all statements that apply.



“The health benefits of physical activity are proved and wide ranging, exceeding that of any drug. The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges has described physical activity as a “miracle cure.” Meanwhile, inactivity contributes to as many deaths in the UK as smoking and is the fourth leading risk factor for mortality worldwide.” ([Promoting physical activity to patients | The BMJ](#))

We were pleased to see that over 80% of participants selected more than one response to this question. We know from years of experience that our classes are far more than ‘just an exercise class’....

How do you feel
this class benefits
you?

“build confidence after
death of husband and
25 years of caring”

“The only class that
has actually
benefited me over
my lifetime”

“my only
outing of the
week”

We are always looking for opportunities for our class participants to engage in meaningful social engagements. To this extent, we encourage (where possible) instructors to have tea/coffee with their service users after their class, and perhaps even arrange other social outings. We would also like to explore the idea of buddying new participants with more experienced class members to befriend and help them.

“a few of us go for coffee,
chat & laughs afterwards”

WHAT DID THE ‘OTHERS’ SAY?

Out of the 404 respondents, 20% left a comment suggesting other ways they benefit from the class. These included:

“Mentally alert”

“It's the only
place I breath
properly”

“It makes me
happy”

“To help with
stress release
and pain from
arthritis.”

Venue

Q5 How would you rate the quality of the venue?

Well welcoming good facilities Nice Light airy welcoming easy parking car park space
flooring excellent live easy access accessible light airy ventilation airy
safe plenty space size good Convenient hall class
spacious local clean bright warm good size room
good facilities parking parking heating light needed large fairly
plenty room exercise home close home easy free parking venue

As you can see from the word cloud above (where the larger the word, the more times it was mentioned by respondents), important features in a venue for our service users include being 'spacious, warm, clean, light and airy' spaces.

Age UK Somerset take great pride in providing good quality venues to host our classes. We always conduct a detailed 'venue assessment' ahead of any venue booking in which we look at the suitability of many variables, including: parking, access, welfare facilities, and safety.

99% of respondents reported their class venue to be 'good or satisfactory'

1% of respondents reported their venue was poor (which we are already acting on).

We are always looking to expand our reach, so if you know of any venues that may suit our criteria, please do get in touch with the team.

Instructor

Q6 How would you rate the quality of your instructor?

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

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Good	98.76%	399
▼ Satisfactory	0.99%	4
▼ Poor	0.25%	1
TOTAL		404

The data showed 99% of respondents selected good, but they were frustrated there was no option to select 'excellent'!

Here's what some had to say about our team of excellent instructors:

'She is excellent she doesn't make us feel old, is always smiley, we love her'

'She is extremely experienced, makes the whole class fun'

'She looks after everyone'

'Good doesn't describe her well enough, she is amazing'

'She is very pleasant and kind'

'Encouraging- on the ball and cheerful!'

'Knowledgeable, cheerful, energetic'

'Great personality great teacher, increasingly pushes me - I've noticed great improvement & staying power mentally and physically'

'Our instructor is superb' 'She is so helpful' 'Our class is always happy'

'Easy to follow and very encouraging' 'She is a lovely person, so friendly to all'

'Cheerful, reassuring to newcomers, very competent instructor'

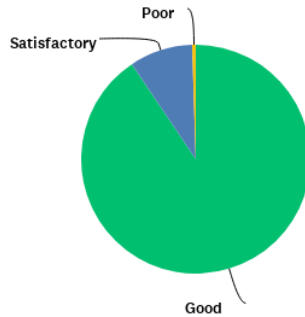
'She is very good, her exercises are very helpful'

'He is excellent - a very enjoyable hour'

Age UK is a very reputable employer. We financially supported our entire staff throughout the pandemic, including all lockdowns, leading to great staff retention when face-to-face classes resumed post pandemic. We know (through regular communication and check-ins) that our staff enjoy being on the AUKS team, and they tend to stay with us many years. Our class participants really value the longevity and reliability of our classes, but above all else – **they love their instructors.**

Value

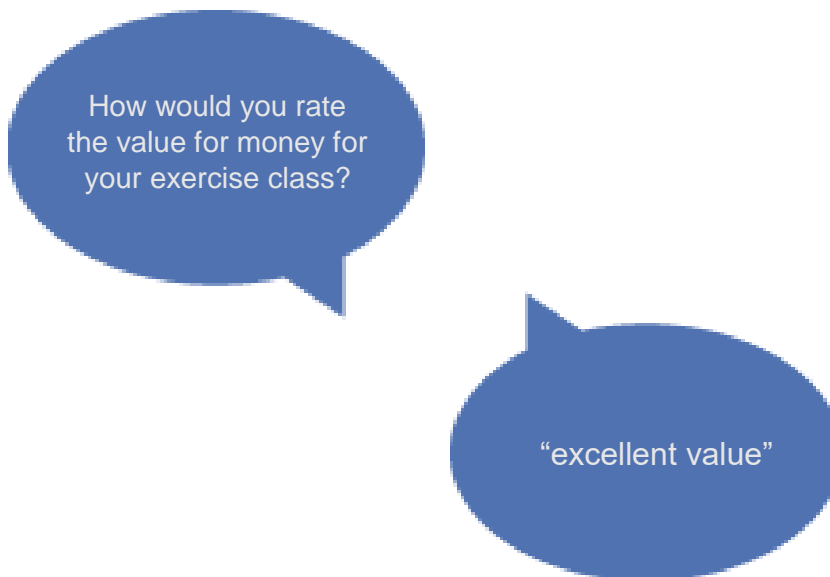
Q7 How would you rate the value for money for your exercise class?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Good	90.59% 366
Satisfactory	8.91% 36
Poor	0.50% 2
TOTAL	404

91% - said we were good value, 8% said satisfactory, and 1% said poor (but left no comment as to why).

Our classes range between £2-£5 per session.

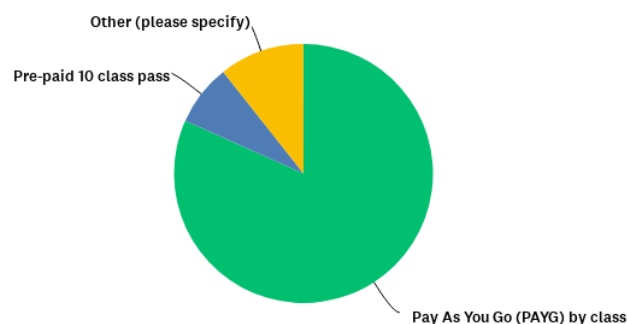


“£5 for hour of class very reasonable”
“Acceptable price for pensioner to pay for 1hr of exercise”
“Not sure where else you would get such a high standard of tuition for £5”
“fits most people's budget” “Worth every penny”
“very good value” “Well worth the money”
“for an hour workout very good”
“many classes more expensive”
“Thought it was worth more”
“very affordable, great value for money”
“have paid a lot more for a class, but this is the best”
“excellent teacher, reasonable cost”
“a cup of coffee costs the same but the class is far more beneficial and enjoyable”

Our recent market analysis shows our class prices are below the average cost. We review the pricing structure every September; our aim is to provide an excellent service at an affordable rate. We believe we offer excellent value for money, and we're pleased that 91% of our respondents agree. We never want the cost of our classes to act as a barrier to participation.

Payment Frequency

Q8 How often would you like to pay for your class?(Please note the Stay Strong Stay Steady Classes are Pay As You Go for contractual reasons)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Pay As You Go (PAYG) by class	81.68%	330
▼ Pre-paid 10 class pass	7.67%	31
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 10.64%	43
TOTAL		404

It is clear that the majority of our participants prefer to pay-as-you-go (PAYG). The wording of this question had some impact on the response, e.g., our concept of the 'Pre-paid 10 class pass' wouldn't charge participants for any missed classes, but fear that it may, could have negatively skewed the statistics, as per the quotes below:

*"only if unattended
paid classes were
not lost"*

*"Dont pay for classes
I have to miss"*

*"pre paid as a regular user but would we be credited if for some reason we were
unable to attend?"*

"would consider if 10 classes not necessarily consecutive"

"can't pre-pay as I can't go every week"

*"Would be happy to pre-pay but there might be disadvantages if a class had to be
missed due to illness"*

*"I have very poor eyesight and have to rely on someone else to book the classes for
me. It would be more convenient to pay by card over the phone, or take cash at the
start of term."*

WHAT DID THE 'OTHERS' SAY?

"Whenever needed"

"Whatever is easier for Age UK Somerset"

"A tap and go card reader would be good"

"Monthly" "Half-termly"

"Current system works well"

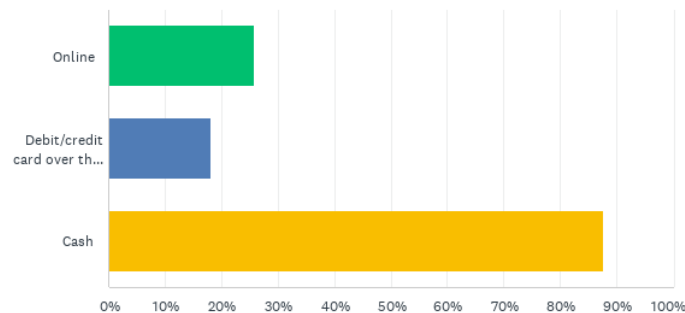
Last year Age UK Somerset contributed to a piece of research by 'Bristol Ageing Better'. In the report (please see below), one objective for removing barriers to participation for older people is to keep the session 'low commitment' which is why we have no plans to introduce pay monthly 'memberships' or 'contracts'.

[Physical activity report \(bristolageingbetter.org.uk\)](http://bristolageingbetter.org.uk)

Payment Type

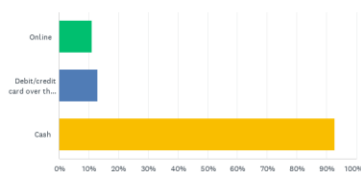
Multiple choice responses

Q9 Which payment methods would you be happy to use? Please tick all that apply.



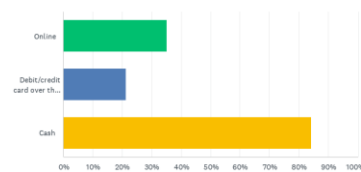
Over 80s response:

Q9 Which payment methods would you be happy to use? Please tick all that apply.



Under 80s response:

Q9 Which payment methods would you be happy to use? Please tick all that apply.



In recent years we've gone from 'cash is king' to contemplating a 'cashless society'. All payment types have their pros and cons. Most recently (and largely due to the pandemic), there has been much talk about ways to reduce cash handling.

Based on this survey, we will not be removing our PAYG cash option anytime soon, however we will be researching other payment options to introduce alongside cash payments in the next few years, such as online booking/payment software.

When we cross correlated the results between Q.2 (what is your age) and this question (payment type), there was evidence that some over 80s do want other payment methods available... and under 80s even more so.

The results showed that there is still a little fear for some older people around paying by any other method than cash:

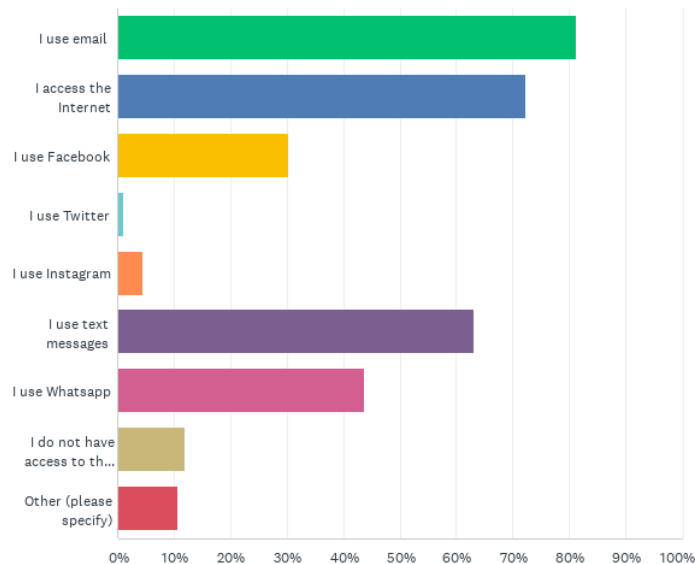
The anxiety experienced by older people about going online was reflected in some of our responses.

"would not like online payments or phone. I got scammed in 2018"

"...too vulnerable to scams, fearful of personal info/financial activity getting into the wrong hands."

Digital Inclusion

Q10 Please tick all statements that apply.



We were pleased to see that 72% of respondents said they have internet access and 81% respondents use email. This has encouraged us to keep in touch with our members more by circulating our monthly newsletters (as below) via email.

[Age UK Somerset | Ageing Well News and Other activities](#)

28% of people said they were active on Facebook - An action for us to make sure they're all following us here:

[Ageing Well | Facebook](#)

63% of people use texts, and 45% of people use Whatsapp. This got our team thinking that perhaps we could encourage class members to set up Whatsapp groups for their classes, to stay connected and communicate with each other outside of class (entirely optional).

The Age UK Somerset website has a page dedicated to sharing links about how to use various forms of digital technology including Whatsapp and Zoom.

[Technology How To Guides | Age UK Somerset](#)

"I am slowly learning how to use above"

"I cant manage computers"

"I'm not very good on computers"

"I use email as little as possible - technology left me behind about 40 years ago!"

"I'm very insecure with technology!"

Other Comments

"Everything is first class"

"I would like to thank Age UK for all they do to help keep us fit and active."

"I have appreciated being able to make a block booking as having to remember to book each week and by lunch time on Friday was a pain. I plan to go each week unless there is an unexpected problem."

"It would be lovely now to book termly or even half termly"

"We have too few appropriate classes for elderly in this region"

"I really enjoy the class, both for keeping fit and socialising."

"The class is so good - hope it carry's on"

"As I have Parkinson's for 17 years this class is important to discourage falls."

"Keep up the good work"

"I love the sense of well-being this class brings - I would attend twice weekly if possible."

"I REALLY enjoy this class. It has helped my mobility and wellbeing. We are also very fortunate to have an excellent instructor."

"The best exercise class I have ever experienced"

"Thanks to those manning the phones for their help and friendly manner"

"She is very adaptable to everyone's needs & includes everyone, whatever their ability"

"would really miss the exercise and companionship"

"Thank you, Age UK,"

"I am so active, more than my friends, because of 6 yrs. with Ageing Well."

"So glad I found this class during lockdown. Really enjoy it and look forward to it. Hope it will continue on line. (And wish I'd started Yoga years ago!)"

"Only been 2 times but I already have more confidence to walk"

"it would be super if there could be second weekly class as there are so many benefits to my wellbeing"

"It's a wonderful caring service."

“Living in a rural area, the zoom classes have enabled me, not only to participate in quality classes throughout the pandemic, but more importantly, have saved me driving several miles each week to attend my nearest live Age UK class.”

“Eventbrite is a bit clunky. I have to fill in the same details every time including my details twice. Then I get 3 or 4 emails in my inbox. Your service is brilliant though. Thank you for providing these classes!”

“Have attended these classes for many years despite my initial dislike of any form of organised exercise. She is excellent; she makes the classes fun, a real pleasure to attend and puts everyone at their ease”

“Please keep this class going - we love ‘our happy hour’.”

“It’s good that age UK puts on these classes. It’s not just about exercising it’s important to meet people ‘to feed the soul’.”

“Tutor is excellent friendly and encouraging Xx”

SUMMARY

To summarise, we need to keep doing what we do, and do more of it!

KEY HEADLINES:

- * We are very valued as a charity, and a service.
- * Our classes are valued for improving both physical and mental wellbeing.
- * Our participants want more – classes, venues, and instructors.

A BIG THANK YOU to all instructors, participants, and team members who helped create and send out this survey, collect and input the data, and produce the reports.

Appendix 1



Exercise Class Questionnaire

Age UK Somerset Exercise Class Questionnaire

Please complete this short survey to help inform our Ageing Well and Stay Strong Stay Steady exercise class provision. We really appreciate your responses and feedback. Thank you. Please complete one survey for each class you attend.

1. What is your full name? (leave blank if you would like to be anonymous)

2. What is your age?

- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80-89
- 90-99
- 100-109

* 3. Which class with Age UK Somerset do you attend most regularly?
(please base all future answers on this class only, if you attend more than one, please fill in additional survey/s).

* 4. How do you feel this class benefits you? Tick all statements that apply.

- To get fitter
- To feel good
- To meet people
- Other (please specify)

* 5. How would you rate the quality of the venue?

- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor

Please comment why

* 6. How would you rate the quality of your instructor?

- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor

Please comment why

* 7. How would you rate the value for money for your exercise class?

- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor

Please comment why

* 8. How often would you like to pay for your class?
(Please note the Stay Strong Stay Steady Classes are Pay As You Go for contractual reasons)

Pay As You Go (PAYG) by class

Pre-paid 10 class pass

Other (please specify)

* 9. Which payment methods would you be happy to use? Please tick all that apply.

Online

Debit/credit card over the phone

Cash

* 10. Please tick all statements that apply.

I use email

I access the Internet

I use Facebook

I use Twitter

I use Instagram

I use text messages

I use Whatsapp

I do not have access to the Internet

Other (please specify)

11. Do you have any other comments or questions?