

18.09.23



Helping older people across Oxfordshire to ‘Stay Strong and Steady’

Independent local charity Age UK Oxfordshire is pleased to launch a new falls prevention programme this week during Falls Prevention Awareness Week. Working in collaboration with Move Together (a project delivered by Active Oxfordshire and the district councils) the initiative will support older people across the county.

Stay Strong and Steady is a falls prevention exercise and information programme for those over 65 who have fallen or are at risk of falling. The free programme will support people to keep moving and doing everyday activities, so that they maintain health, mobility and confidence to remain independent.

Locally, falls are the largest cause of emergency hospital admissions for older people – during 2021/2 in Oxfordshire there were 3005 emergency hospital admissions for falls in people aged 65+. There were also 3,232 ambulance callouts for people who had fallen and needed to be picked up from the floor, 39% of these were conveyed to hospital.

Falls in later life often lead to a reduction in independence and increased social isolation and affect long term outcomes for individuals. Falls that result in injury can be devastating, and of those suffering a hip fracture, only one in three people return to former levels of independence and a further third leave their own homes and move to long-term care.

Paul Ringer, CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire said “Whilst it is true that as we get older our risk of a fall increases, it does not mean a fall is inevitable. Many falls are preventable, and steps can be taken to reduce the risk of falling. That’s why we are excited about the impact Stay Strong and Steady will have in enabling older adults to age healthily and maintain confidence and independence, along with reducing pressures that falls cause on other vital services across Oxfordshire.”

The evidence-based community exercise programme is expected to prevent falls in 26% of participants, resulting in a positive impact on people’s health outcomes and a reduction in both pressure and costs on the health and social care system. Based on a target of 1,920 participants over the life of the project, this equates to 520 falls prevented.

Josh Lenthall, CEO of Active Oxfordshire, involved with the project through their Move Together initiative, said: “Being physically active is a powerful tool in enabling people to live happy, fulfilling lives and to retain their sense of connectivity in their community. Stay Strong and Steady, working in collaboration with Move Together provides the vital support to enable people to move more in a tailored way that makes activity enjoyable and gives people the agency to live independently.”

Stay Strong and Steady is an excellent example of the Oxfordshire Way in action – supporting people to live well in their own homes for as long as possible. To maximise take-up the programme will be delivered in multiple formats to enable people to receive the support that they need in the right way, at the right time for them.

Stay Strong and Steady is available in-person at community hub sites, online via Zoom, or through an at home programme, with the best option for a person discussed through a triage call.

The programme will be delivered by trained specialists and will provide;

- Strength and resistance exercises, which are beneficial for bone and joint health and help to make everyday tasks easier.
- Balance exercises, which help to reduce the risk of falls and improve posture.
- General information and discussion to support people to stay strong and steady on their feet.

After the initial programme, participants will be encouraged to continue with a personalised plan to maintain progress and activity levels.

[You can find out more here](#), by calling 01235 849403, or emailing active@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.



Join us at our online webinar on Thursday 19th October, 10-11am, to find out why Stay Strong and Steady is so needed across Oxfordshire, what the programme involves and how those you are working with can benefit from taking part. Sign up here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/vPSwVLAZ5b>

Age UK Oxfordshire's Physical Activity Service was formerly known as Generation Games.

ENDS

.....
Editor's notes

About Age UK Oxfordshire

Age UK Oxfordshire is an independent local charity dedicated to enabling older people in Oxfordshire to maintain their independence and live life to the full.

We provide free local information, advice, and a wide range of support services as well as campaigning on the issues that matter to people in later life. We work with our national partner, Age UK, and other local Age UKs in England. Our work focuses on four key areas: money matters, health and wellbeing, home and care and social connections and enjoyment.

You can find further information on all our services and volunteering opportunities by telephoning 0345 450 1276 or by visiting our website: www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire

Age UK Oxfordshire is a charitable company limited by guarantee (registered charity number 1091529 and company number 4328143). For all media enquiries please contact Emma Duckett on 07799 051682 or email media@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

About Move Together

Move Together is funded by Oxfordshire County Council Public Health and Integrated Care Board Inequalities Fund, and is co-ordinated by Active Oxfordshire in partnership with District Councils.

The programme is focussed on supporting older people and those with long-term health conditions to improve their health and wellbeing by moving more.

www.activeoxfordshire.org