

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

## Stay Independent and Prevent Falls

Reg. Charity No. 1068550



Working in partnership with Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

## The Super Six Challenge

Falls are not an inevitable part of getting older.

Anyone can have a fall but older people who fall are more likely to end up in hospital.

**Do you want to stay independent?**

**Do you want to take action to reduce the risk of having a fall ?**

This booklet will help you assess your risk of having a fall and by taking our Super Six Challenge to help you **LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER.**





### Am I at Risk?



### STAY ACTIVE

It is easy to improve your balance.

Gardening, vigorous housework, walks, cycling can help strengthen our muscles.



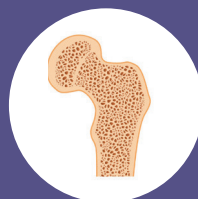
### CREATE A SAFER HOME

Remove trip hazards, increase lighting, install grab rails on stairs and key areas.



### LOVE YOUR HEALTH

Talk to your GP and share your history of falls.



### BETTER BONES

Weight bearing exercises are great for maintaining healthy bones. Whilst a healthy diet and vitamin D from sunlight or certain foods are also important.



### PLAN AHEAD

Make the house as fall proof as possible, keep your phone with you and get a falls pendant.

Place cushions, blankets and water around the home.

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

## Falls myth buster

### Only really old or frail people fall?

**No** – around one in three people over 65 will fall each year, many of them in good health. It is true that our risk of falling increases as we age, half of people aged 80 and over will fall each year.

### Falls cannot be prevented – they are inevitable aren't they?

**No** – falling is not an inevitable part of ageing – the risk of falling can be prevented with some modest changes

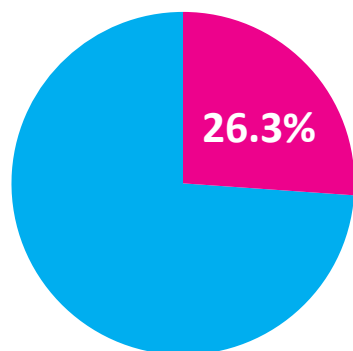
to your lifestyle and home. Falls can be a warning sign but if you act, you can remain independent, improve your quality of life and reduce your risk of a serious injury such as a hip fracture.

### Only people that live on their own fall.

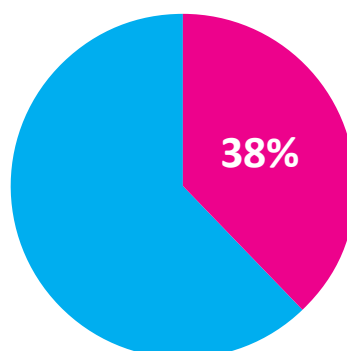
**No** – falls happen to older people living together and to those living on their own. However if you live on your own you may not have someone to help you after a fall and you may want to think about reducing your risk of falling and having a get off the floor plan.

### The percentage of adults who reported a fall in the last two years

People aged 65 and over



People aged 80 and over



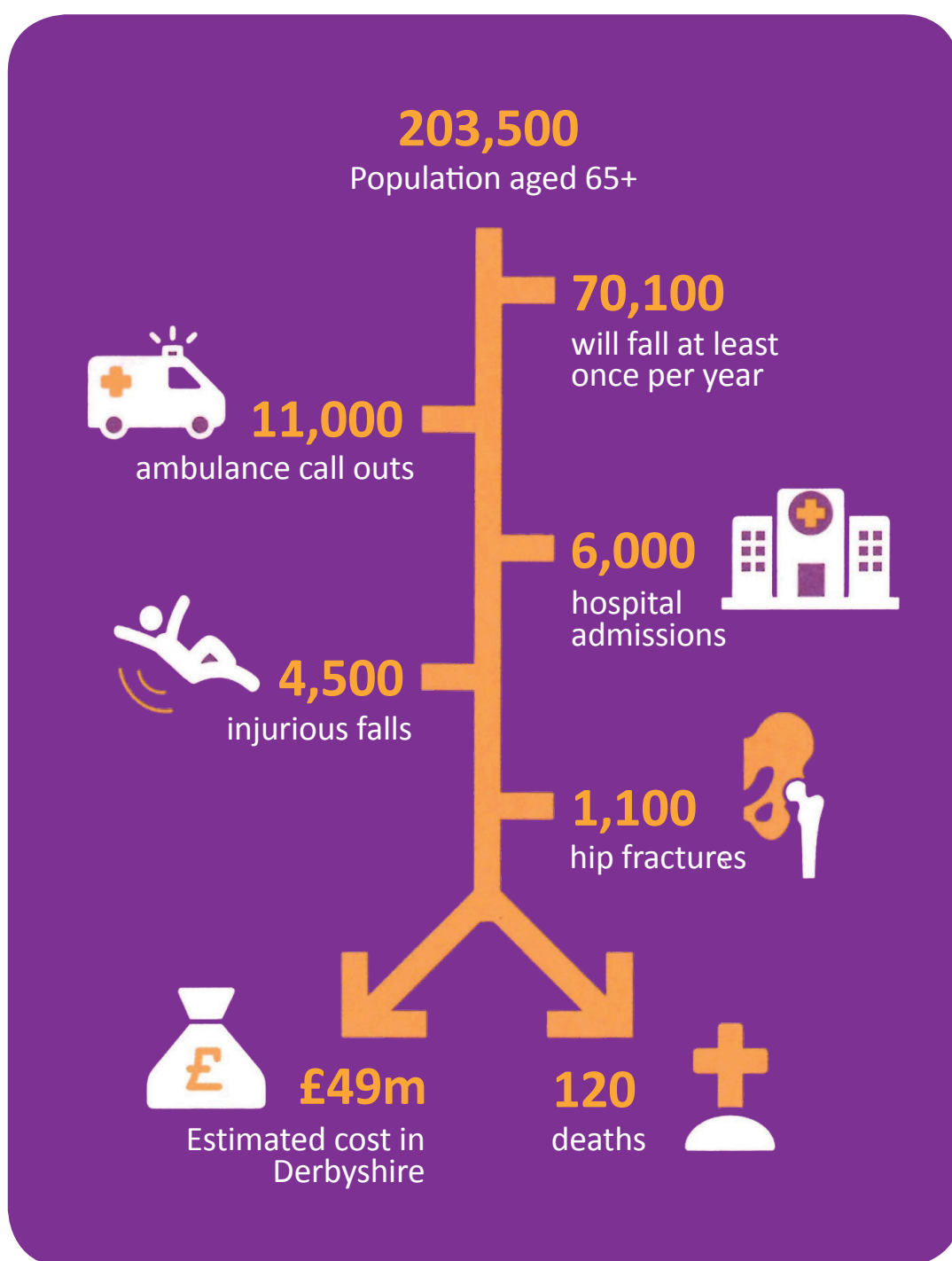
In the last two years, more than a quarter (26.3%) of adults over the age of 60 and nearly four in ten (30%) adults over the age of 80 reported a fall\*

Fall Don't fall

\*Source Data from Wave 7 of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing, provided by Dr Nina Rogers, Institute of Epidemiology and Health, University College London.



# The impact of falls in Derbyshire



# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

## Am I at Risk of falling

Everyone is more at risk of a fall as they age, it's a big cause of hospital admissions and can result in serious injuries and long-term complications. Falling can also contribute to a loss of confidence and independence.

### Check your risk of falling

Please circle 'Yes' or 'No' for each statement below	Yes	No	Why it matters
I have slipped, tripped or fallen in the last year.	Yes	No	People who have fallen once are more likely to fall again.
I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	Yes	No	This is a sign of weak leg muscles which can be a major reason for falling.
I am worried about falling.	Yes	No	People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.
Sometimes I feel unsteady when walking, or have been told to use a walking stick to help get myself around safely.	Yes	No	Unsteadiness, or needing support while walking, are signs you may have poor balance.
I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	Yes	No	This is also a sign you may have poor balance.
I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Yes	No	Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.
I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel sleepy, feel light-headed, dizzy or more drowsy than usual (sleeping pills, blood pressure pills etc.)	Yes	No	Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
I often feel sad or depressed.	Yes	No	Symptoms of depression, such as feeling sad or unmotivated, have been linked to falls.
It has been more than two years since I had my eyes checked.	Yes	No	Your eyes can change as you age, your glasses may need to as well.
I sometimes have to rush to the toilet.	Yes	No	Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night increases your chance of falling.

**If you answer yes to one or more questions, you could be at risk of falling. Discuss your answers with your health practitioner.**



## Stay Active

Staying active and in particular improving your strength and balance is one of the most effective ways of reducing the risk of falling and staying independent.

It can also:

- Get you out and about and help make friends
- Keep your bones strong
- Give you more energy
- Help you sleep better
- Provide other health benefits - control blood pressure, blood sugar levels and weight

Some people worry so much about falls that they restrict their movement and stay seated for long periods – this will reduce their strength and balance, increasing the risk of falling. To help break this vicious circle set yourself small goals to exercise more and speak to your GP for advice.

Throughout Derbyshire there are Strictly No Falling classes to help anyone aged 65 and older to **LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER**. These classes are approved to ensure that they meet recognised standards for strength and balance exercise and there are different types of classes to suit different abilities.

### Top Tip

Aim to do strength and balance exercises at least two times per week.

Try to undertake 150 mins of moderate aerobic activity each week such as walking, swimming etc. Live Life Better Derbyshire can help you to exercise more.



Stay Independent and Prevent Falls

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

All you need to wear is clothes that you can easily move in, and flat, comfortable shoes – no lycra unless you want to!

To find your nearest Strictly No Falling class contact Age UK Derby and Derbyshire on **01773 766922** or see [www.ageuk.org.uk/derbyandderbyshire/snfc\\_classes](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/derbyandderbyshire/snfc_classes)



“Joining a Strictly No Falling class was one of the best things I have ever done. I have made new friends and don’t worry about falling like I used to. The instructor is brilliant and makes sure the class is fun – we have lots of laughter! I feel fitter, find it easier to get up from a chair and don’t need to use my walking stick as much”.





To help you stay steady, try doing the ‘super six’ three times a week if you don’t want to join Strictly No Falling.



### SIT TO STAND

Sit up tall near the front of your chair.

Place your feet slightly back and hip-width apart. Lean forwards slightly and stand up slowly - using your hands on the chair if needed.

Step back until your legs gently touch the chair. Slowly tower your bottom back into the chair - using your hands if needed. Repeat up to 10 times.



### HEEL RAISES

Stand tall with your feet hip width apart.

Hold your support. Slowly lift up your heels, keeping the weight over your big toes. Try not to lock your knees.

Aim to lift for a slow count of 3 and lower for a slow count of 5 each time. Repeat up to 10 times.



### TOES RAISES

Stand tall with your feet hip width apart.

Hold your support. Slowly lift the front of your foot keeping your knees soft. Try not to stick your bottom out. Lower the toes slowly.

Aim to lift for a slow count of 3 and lower for a slow count of 5 each time. Repeat up to 10 times.



- **MAKE SURE THE CHAIR YOU USE IS STURDY**
- **WEAR SUPPORTIVE SHOES**
- **IF YOU EXPERIENCE CHEST PAIN, DIZZINESS OR SEVERE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, STOP AND CALL YOUR GP OR CALL 111**
- **A SLIGHT SORENESS THE DAY AFTER IS QUITE NORMAL**

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER



## HEEL TOE STAND

Stand tall, take hands off if possible, holding on.

Place one foot in front of the other so that your feet form a straight line. Look ahead and balance for 10 seconds - taking your hand off if possible.

Take the feet back to hip width apart. Repeat with the other foot in front, balancing for another 10 seconds.



## HEEL TOE WALKING

Stand tall side on, to your support.

Walk 10 steps forwards placing one foot directly in front of the other so that your feet form a straight line. Look ahead and aim for a slow walking action.

Only hold on if you need to. Take your feet back to hip width apart before turning slowly towards your support. Repeat the steps in the other direction.



## ONE LEG STAND

Stand close to your support and hold on.

Balance on one leg, keeping your leg straight but your knee soft.

Stand tall. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat with the other leg.

For further information please visit:

<https://fallsassistant.org.uk/exercise-centre/>



## Safe Home

Over half of all falls happen at home, where we spend much of our time moving around without thinking. But there are lots of simple and practical things you can do to make your home a safer environment and reduce the risk of falls.

- Remove clutter and tripping hazards such as trailing cables
- Do not store items on the stairs
- Use non-slip mats in the bath and consider fitting grab rails
- Keep outside paths free of moss and leaves
- Rearrange cupboards so that frequently used items are within easy reach

### Lighting

Ensure stairs and any steps are well lit.

When going to the toilet when you're sleepy your reactions are not 100%. Putting a light on helps prevent accidents.

Keep a torch by your bed in case the power is out and you need to get up.

### Flooring

Removing loose mats and rugs reduces the risk of tripping accidentally.

Replace any frayed carpets or get someone to tack them down.

## Top Tip

You can request a home hazard assessment for you or someone you are worried about – contact Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service. The Derbyshire Handy Van service provides practical help with changing bulbs, securing rugs etc.

“I always hated the idea of hand rails and non-slip mats everywhere – it was a sign you were getting old. But making a few little changes at home has actually given me more freedom and confidence, not less”.

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

## Love your Body

You have been through a lot together, by keeping healthy and staying active you can reduce your risk of falling and **LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER**.

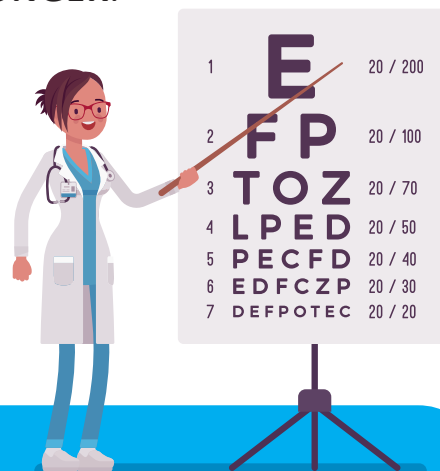
### Speak Up

Discuss any worries or concerns about your health with your GP – let them know about any falls or feeling dizzy.



### Vision

Have your eyes checked at least once every year (its free for anyone 60 and older). Keep your glasses clean and wear the correct prescription.



### Feet

Look after your feet, wear correct fitting comfortable, supporting footwear. Throw out sloppy slippers!!

Age UK Derby and Derbyshire offer an affordable footcare service for people over 50 years. Keeping your toenails trimmed and managing your foot hygiene can be a real problem if you have difficulty with your eyesight, mobility, grip or if you have thickened toenails.

Please call 01773 766922 for further information or to make an appointment.



## Manage your Medicines

As we get older we are more likely to take several prescribed medications. Certain medications and taking four or more medications can increase the risk of falls by causing drowsiness, dizziness or give you blurred vision.

If you ever feel like this, speak to your GP or pharmacist – they may want to change the dose you are taking or try a different medicine for you.

### What can I do?

Never stop taking any prescribed medicine suddenly – if you think your medicine is making you feel unwell, drowsy, dizzy etc. then speak to your GP or pharmacist.

- Check the instructions. Even if you have been taking the medication for some time - sometimes you may need to take it with water, food or on an empty stomach so that it works properly.
- Ask your GP or pharmacist if alcohol can interfere with your medication.
- Check with your pharmacist before taking any 'over the counter' medication or supplements that you can buy without a prescription if these can have an effect on other medication you are taking.

### Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol has a damaging effect on bones and can affect your balance both of which will increase your risk of a trip or fall. As we get older fat replaces muscle and drinking the same amount results in a higher blood alcohol concentration. Alcohol can interfere with prescribed medicines. Keep within the recommended guidelines (14 units of alcohol per week for men and women and try to aim for 2 days a week alcohol free).

### Rushing for the loo

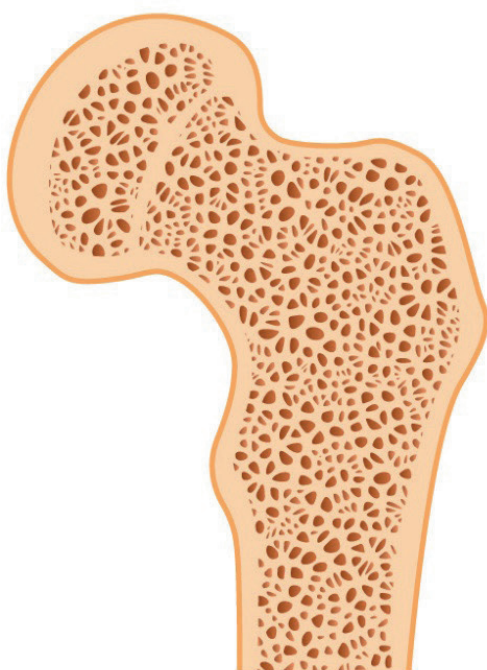
If you have to hurry to the loo, especially at night, you are more likely to have a fall. Drink normally as cutting down on liquids usually makes urinary incontinence worse not better, try de-caffeinated tea or coffee and speak to your GP.



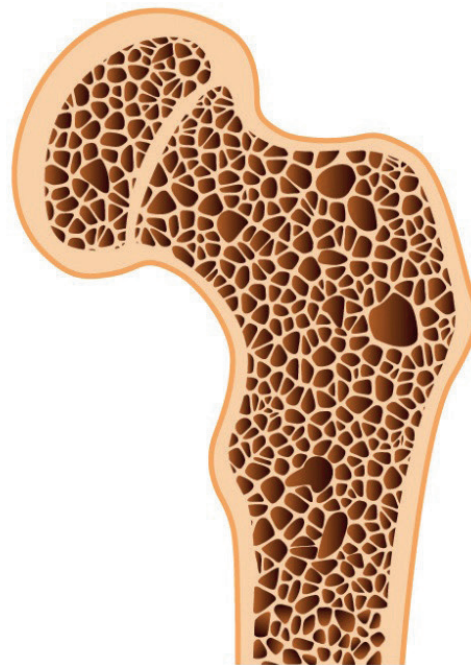
# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER



Keeping your bones healthy is important, regardless of your age.  
If your bones are strong, there is less chance of you breaking a bone if you fall.



**Healthy Bone**



**Osteoporosis**



As we get older, our bones become weaker – a condition called osteoporosis. Having osteoporosis means that your bones are more porous than healthy bones and this makes them more fragile and likely to fracture if you fall.

### To keep your bones strong and healthy you should:

- Do weight-bearing exercises and keep active
- Reduce alcohol consumption
- Stop smoking
- Eat a well –balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D – dairy products like cheese, milk, yoghurts, nuts, dried fruits, green vegetables such as broccoli, kale or cabbage, bread, pasta, fish
- Keep taking any medication for osteoporosis prescribed by your GP
- Love your bones and keep yourself safe



**1 in 2  
women**

**1 in 5  
men**



**are expected to  
break a bone**

### Risk factors for Osteoporosis:

- Age
- Have broken a bone after a seemingly minor injury
- Family history of osteoporosis
- Low body weight
- Low levels of physical activity
- Smoking
- Excessive alcohol intake
- Early menopause

## Top Tip

The National Osteoporosis Society provides lots of useful information on osteoporosis and good bone health

See their web site at <https://nos.org.uk/> or ring their helpline on **0808 800 0035**

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

Falls can sometimes happen when we least expect them, but by planning ahead we can help to reduce the impact of the fall.

## If you have a fall

Keep calm, lie still for a minute and check for injuries. If you are unhurt and think you can get up, then:

- Ease yourself up onto your elbows
- Move onto your hands and knees
- Hold onto a firm surface e.g. chair to support you
- Facing the chair, ease yourself to a standing position
- Turn yourself gently and sit on a firm surface
- Tell your GP or health professional you had a fall

## If you are hurt or can't get up then:

- Summon assistance by using your falls alarm, use your phone to dial 999, shouting or banging for a neighbour
- Stay warm – cover yourself with a blanket, coat or anything to hand
- Put a pillow under your head
- Keep moving your arms and legs if the pain allows to keep warm and the blood circulating

## Planning ahead

Practice lying on the ground and getting up but have a relative or friend with you to help you. Consider getting a falls alarm and keep your falls alarm pendent or mobile phone with you. Leave a spare key in a key safe outside or with someone you trust so they can let themselves in if needed.



## Top Tip

Consider getting a falls alarm to enable you to summon assistance after a fall – contact the Derbyshire Handyperson Service about installing an alarm or your housing provider.

Never be afraid or embarrassed to activate your falls alarm or dial 999 in an emergency. The person who responds is there to look after you, and trained to help you.





## Getting up from a fall



1.

Roll onto your side, then push up on to your elbows.



2.

Use your arms to push yourself on to your hands and knees.



3.

Crawl to a very stable piece of furniture (a sturdy chair or bed) and hold on it for support.



4.

Slide or raise the foot of your stronger leg forward so it's flat on the floor.



5.

Lean forwards and push up using your arms and front leg.



6.

Turn around, sit down and rest for a few minutes.

### If you can't get up

If you can't get up from a fall and have no phone to hand, shout for help and/or bang on the walls or radiators. Try to get onto your bottom to shuffle to the phone or door to get help. If possible keep moving by rolling from side to side - this will help you keep warm. Use a blanket, tablecloth, cushions, towels or anything you can reach as a blanket.

In future always carry a mobile phone around with you or get a pendant alarm.

# LIVE STRONGER FOR LONGER

Super 6 Challenge	Example Actions	What I will do	Done (tick)
<b>Complete the falls risk assessment</b> 	<p>If you are at risk of falling discuss the results with your GP.</p>		
<b>Stay Active</b> 	<p>Begin exercises to improve strength and balance.</p> <p>Join Strictly No Falling class.</p>		
<b>Create a safer home</b> 	<p>Remove clutter</p> <p>Re-locate trailing cables</p> <p>Arrange for a check of my home by Derbyshire Fire and Rescue or the Handy Van service.</p>		
<b>Love Your Health</b> 	<p>Get more active – join Strictly No Falling.</p>		
<b>Better Bones</b> 	<p>Improve your diet – eat more vitamin D and calcium rich food eg fatty fish, cheese.</p>		
<b>Plan Ahead</b> 	<p>Cushions, blankets and water around the home.</p> <p>Make the house as fall proof as possible, keep your phone with you and get a falls pendant.</p>		



### Age UK Derby and Derbyshire

can provide general advice on falls prevention and information on Strictly No Falling classes. If you feel your mobility is not so good or you lack confidence these can help you improve and maintain good balance and mobility as well as being fun and sociable. If you would like to find out more about the Service, please contact:

Tel: **01773 766922** or search 'no falling' at [www.ageuk.org.uk/derbyandderbyshire](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/derbyandderbyshire)

## Live Life BETTER DERBYSHIRE

### Live Life Better Derbyshire

Live Life Better Derbyshire can provide free help to people to lose weight, stop smoking, improve diet and get more active. Tel: **0800 0852299** or [www.livelifebetterderbyshire.org.uk](http://www.livelifebetterderbyshire.org.uk)



### Derbyshire Handy Van

The Derbyshire Handy Van Service offers older and vulnerable people help with practical household tasks, ranging from taking down curtains to putting up shelves, as well as undertaking fire safety checks and providing free smoke alarms to improve safety in the home.

Tel: **0203 535 4999** or email: [handyvan@metropolitan.org.uk](mailto:handyvan@metropolitan.org.uk)

### Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service

carry out Safe and Well visits that can check your home for fire and other hazards and offer advice on falls prevention in the home. If you or someone you know would like a visit contact the relevant Area Office:



**Derby**  
**01332 777850**

Derby City and South Derbyshire

**Chesterfield**  
**01246 223500**

North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield and Bolsover

**Buxton**  
**01298 608720**

High Peak and Derbyshire Dales

# Acknowledgements

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**The Scottish Government**

**Age UK Derby and Derbyshire**

**Saga**

**Derbyshire County Council**

**Later Life Training**

## Safeguarding Adults

Abuse causes harm or distress to an older person.

It is a violation of an individual's human rights.

Abuse can happen anywhere.

If you need help please talk to someone.

Help is available from 'Call Derbyshire' on **01629 533190**  
(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)  
or Derby on **01332 717777**.

**In an emergency, always dial 999.**



Working in partnership with Derbyshire Community  
Health Services NHS Foundation Trust

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