

# FaME Update – Northern Devon

May 2025

# What is FaME?

- FaME (Falls and Management Exercise Programme) is a structured exercise programme that in clinical trials has been shown to **prevent or reduce falls, reduce the fear of falling and increase habitual physical activity and fitness**. It has efficacy in adults who live independently (not in a care or nursing home).
- The FaME programme is led by a Postural Stability Instructor (PSI) with specialist training for working with older people at risk of falling. They have the ability to tailor the structured exercises and progressions to suit an individual's medical conditions and functional ability. They will do their own health and function assessment of the person on the first visit.
- FaME is delivered over 24 weeks in weekly 1-hour group exercise classes (approximately 10-14 participants per class) plus directed home exercises to ensure effective dose and get quicker functional gains. Elastic resistance training bands and small items of equipment and mats are used throughout the programme.
- There are three main expected health outcomes:
  - Reduce the risk of injurious falls
  - Increase physical activity levels
  - Reduce social isolation

# FaME across Northern Devon – from July 2024 evaluation report:

- A FaME course was provided in each of the seven ONE Communities in Northern Devon; Barnstaple, Braunton, Ilfracombe, South Molton, Bideford, Torrington and Holsworthy. **These courses were provided free of charge to all participants.**
- Trained 3 new Postural Stability Instructors and identified two further already qualified instructors to deliver the courses. One of these instructors also acted as project co-ordinator.
- Vista Wellbeing were identified as a One Northern Devon partner and undertook the co-ordination and management of the programme.
- Each course was supported by volunteers within the sessions, whose role was to assist with meet and greet, facilitating conversations within the social element of the class, prepare refreshments and to assist in the event of an emergency.
- Participants were provided with home exercise booklets and resistance bands in order that they could be guided to complete exercises at home and achieve the recommended exercise dose to for desired results.
- Conversations were guided within the social element of the session, using behavioural change techniques and providing advice around falls prevention strategies and drawing on shared experiences.
- Financial help was also offered to support with transportation in order to enable participation from all those who could benefit.
- The referral criteria was informed by the evidence for delivery of FaME and agreed with the One Northern Devon management team and the Professional Lead for Community Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy at Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.
- **Participants could self-refer or be referred by a health professional.**
- The programme was advertised via the Steady On Your Feet Website <https://devon.steadyonyourfeet.org/staying-active/north-devon-evidence-based-strength-and-balance-classes> and via social media to encourage self-referrals.
- Overall, 132 referrals were received. Of these, 13 referrals were inappropriate, not meeting the referral criteria. 4 from health professionals and 9 self-referrals. 93 people were assessed as suitable and recruited to the programme. 47 of these reported having fallen previously. 14 people requested help with transport. It was found that in most cases, a taxi was the most economical way of providing this, and costs were refunded.

# Current position, considerations and proposal (May 2025)

## 1. Proposals: From Anita Griggs (Director of Vista Wellbeing CIC) – Two proposals:

- The number of people on the programme should allow for a 25% attrition rate as it is expected that there will be a drop off rate throughout the programme.
- Therefore, based on the budget and capacity of service, the FaME programme is expected to support a throughput of at least **100 people per year**, with at least 75 completing 75% of the programme, based on the 25% attrition rate.
- This is based on there being **3 classes per week, each with capacity for up to 14 attendees** (depending on whether there is a support worker or volunteer present, and on venue capacity) on a 24-week programme.
- It is noted that there may be a higher attrition rate if people are living with higher levels of frailty. Full completion is attendance at least 75% of classes.

a. Proposal 1: **includes** transport and refreshment costs. Used AI for population data. **Cost - £40,130 per annum including venue hire, transport and refreshments.**

b. Proposal 2: **does not include** transport and refreshment costs – **Cost - £34,550 per annum (includes venue hire of £4,500)**

c. Classes going forward, if funded, would be held in **Ilfracombe, Barnstaple** and **Westwood Ho.** (*A query raised as to why not Bideford if targeting the most deprived communities*)

- Areas chosen due to IMD and falls risks.
- There are still pay as you go classes (costing £6) in various locations including WWHo! Asked if could expand this offer (if there was no funding available) Anita was hesitant but could trial further sessions and see what the appetite is – but without guaranteed income / sessions her PSIs might not want to continue.

a. *The rationale for Westward Ho! over Bideford, was that it is was a clean, accessible building, free parking and level access for walkers from the bus stop.*

b. *FaME have used Pollyfield Community Centre (Bideford) previously, but the walk from the bus stop was too steep for our clients and other issues such as having to move furniture around, and slot has been booked. At that time, Antia was unable to find another fully accessible building in Bideford that was big enough and clean enough.*

c. *The move to Westward Ho! was agreed with HAND as the SWAST data had indicated EX39 as the area where most fallers were picked up, and didn't specify Bideford.*

d. *If there is a suitable space for in Bideford, that would be preferable as Anita was not sure that they reach the people who need it most there.*

e. *However, there is no doubt that the people who are attending are reducing their risk of falling, and engagement is good.*

Current funding due to end - July 25

## 2. Proposal to use North Devon Community Hospitals to deliver FaME:

- a. The Trust have been approached re using Ilfracombe & Bideford Community Hospitals as they run strength and balance classes. Agreed by the Trust if there is an available class slot.
- b. Anita has noted Community Hospitals would be great if they were very close to a bus stop without a hill to manage and had plenty of parking – and space!. **To be explored!**
- c. Anita would be happy to re-visit if we think that these issues can be overcome as there would be clear benefits to delivering in the same locations as the community physio teams.
- d. However, on the flip side, it may reduce the likelihood of participants transferring to paid for classes in the community for maintenance of their training gains.
- e. **Any other “free” and suitable venues?**

## 3. How does this programme fit and support the existing S&B programme run by the Trust? View from the Trust:

- There is a question whether moving from S&B classes to FAME is actually a progression or more maintenance.
- With the focus of the S&B classes moving more towards strength, a query that the FAME classes challenge some of our patients enough?
- Anita Griggs has contacted the Trust when a patient has self-referred to the FAME class but has felt they need the Trust's Frailty Team input instead.
- Cost is what puts a lot of patients off attending classes in general after finishing in S&B class.

To agree if funding from OND HI Funding?. A longer term and system committed offer of Falls prevention in Devon is being worked through.....

# Funding breakdown:

## Service description and location(s)

### 5.1 Service description

The FaME programme will be delivered in three locations across the Northern Devon LCP area, with classes held in Central Barnstaple, Ilfracombe and Westward Ho! The number of people on the programme should allow for a 25% attrition rate as it is expected that there will be a drop off rate throughout the programme. Therefore, based on the budget and capacity of service, we expect the FaME programme to support a throughput of at least 100 people per year, with at least 75 completing 75% of the programme, based on the 25% attrition rate. This is based on there being 3 classes per week, each with capacity for up to 14 attendees (depending on whether there is a support worker or volunteer present, and on venue capacity) on a 24-week programme. It is noted that there may be a higher attrition rate if people are living with higher levels of frailty. Full completion is attendance at least 75% of classes.

Total assumed service costs are listed below:

Staffing	Cost
Assessment and Instruction	14550
Co-ordination and reporting	12000
Non-Pay	Cost [No Title]
Venue Hire	4500
Resources and equipment	2000
Volunteer expenses	1500
Transport provision	4500
Refreshments	1080
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>40130</b>

Total cost of delivering the programme is £ 40130 per annum.

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Assessment and Instruction	14550
Co-ordination and reporting	12000
Non-Pay	Cost
Venue Hire	4500
Resources and equipment	2000
Volunteer expenses	1500
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>34550</b>

Total cost of delivering the programme is £ 34550 per annum.