

CASE STUDY – VILLAGE AGENTS AS A FORCE FOR CHANGE

IDENTIFYING GAPS IN SERVICES, AND WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO HELP FILL THEM

Milford-on-Sea

Tony, the Milford Village Agent for six years, works with other community volunteers to operate a Community Forum, meeting regularly to review what services and activities are available to their community, and to identify any gaps.

Tony has highlighted to the Forum that older people struggle with hearing aids, even with the apparently simple act of changing batteries, and he has been working with a number of local businesses to try to encourage them to run a hearing aid clinic in Milford on a regular basis. He is also involved in the discussions about the future of Milford Hospital, and also to work to get a minibus service established in the village, starting with a visit to a local post office.

Wellow

Meic, one of our newest VAs in Wellow, has made contact with a number of organisations for the over-60s in the village, and has taken the opportunity to seek their views on what aspects of life in Wellow are good, and not so good – as well as priorities for improvement. The views are also being shared with the Neighbourhood Planning Group and forming an evidence base for Meic's forthcoming activities. He has also made links with Hampshire Fire and Rescue in a move to set up a STEER exercise class in Wellow, with support from the Parish Council and the Wellow Village Hall Charity. He also aims to increase volunteering amongst the newly retired of the village through support to existing volunteer schemes, and possibly as a hub of the new Totton Timebanking Scheme.

Burghclere

When the village shop closed, Burghclere lost a meeting place as well. But that changed when the Community Café opened in the church, on a weekly basis. Lynda, the Burghclere VA at the time, was partly responsible for identifying the need for this event.

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Colden Common

Both Village Agents in Colden Common have been working closely with the Parish Council and with the Church, identifying the needs of older people, in particular for dropped kerbs and crossing points around the village. The new VA is especially active in the mobile home parks in the village.

Highclere

Access to local service can be a real problem for older people in northern Hampshire, close to the West Berkshire border, and Sarah supports one or two older people in her village by linking with the local surgery, collecting medications for them, and checking up on their welfare regularly. She has also been working closely to link ACH volunteer befrienders with those in need of some company.

