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## Somerset Village Agents are warming up the county

Community Council for Somerset (CCS) Village Agents have been giving out winter blankets across the county in time for the colder weather.

With a successful application to the Somerset Community Foundation we secured £500 from the Keeping Warm fund from Public Health to spend on 50 cosy blankets purchased from Poundstretcher in Taunton. The shop was really supportive and, as we were bulk buying for charity they, gave us 5 blankets for free.

Somerset Village Agents live and work in their local area, making them perfectly placed to support individuals to improve the quality of life of people living in rural areas and support groups to set up, grow and flourish.

Audrey Mansfield, the Village Agent who made the successful application, said: "The feedback has been really great and I know that all recipients were extremely grateful for the thought as well as the actual item."

Another CCS Village Agent said: "She was completely overwhelmed and burst in tears but it was good to finally engage with her and I have high hopes for helping this lady now in the New Year. The blanket was just what was needed and I very much doubt she has been given a gift in years."



Joan said: "I am in love, I have just unwrapped my throw, it is gorgeous. A big improvement on my current blanket. I feel quite posh, so once again, thank you so much



Hear what some of the happy recipients said when receiving the cosy, colourful blankets:

Lynda said: "It was so nice to see you today. Please can you pass on my grateful thanks for the blanket, it really cheered me up and has put warmth in my heart. I know I will get a lot of pleasure and warmth snuggling underneath it. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you, it has made my day."

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of thinking of me. I am very grateful for all yours and the other people involved with you generosity and kindness.

Maureen said: "Thank you so much for the wonderfully warm & snugly blanket. It's just perfect for staying up a bit later in the evenings & watching a bit of T.V as opposed to going to bed early to keep warm."

Jane said: "That is wonderful. Just what I need. I have a draught coming through my cottage back door and I can now wrap my legs and feet and keep warm"

Mary said: "That's just what I need. I can't have heavy bedclothes because of my arthritis but this is just right. Thank you"

Pam aged 90 said: "I can put this on my bed to keep me warmer through the night, thank you so much."

CCS Village Agents have been really happy to be part of helping people to keep warm and cosy this winter. After giving out one blanket our Village Agent said: "And then she kissed me on the cheek, and I felt like a million dollars all afternoon!"

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Editors notes:

The Somerset Village Agent project is a project of CCS and now covers half of the county. The project uses paid, part time, highly trained individuals living in the parish 'clusters' they support. They help to bridge the gap between isolated, excluded, vulnerable and lonely individuals and statutory and/or voluntary organisations which offer specific solutions to identified needs.

Village Agents offer a signposting and referral service with a difference

Village Agents work with all ages dealing with a wide variety of issues, although a considerable number of their clients are elderly and involves social care issues. Helping to solve these problems may, ultimately, help the elderly to remain living independently for longer. Village Agents also have the role of helping to shape services by feeding back to the appropriate body information about gaps in service e.g. transport provision. They can also motivate and support a community to respond to a local need by working together to address issues e.g. by helping them to set up a coffee morning for a group of lonely people or start a volunteer car scheme.

CCS supports people who live and work in Somerset communities. We do this through a range of diverse projects which bring together people who care about local community life in Somerset. We focus our energy on helping you and your community.

See [our work](#) to see what projects are running across Somerset.