

Village Agents Mid Essex Pilot October 2009 to March 2010 Report



Easy access to services and information

Purpose of the report

The Village Agents service is a free face to face signposting service for people living in rural communities. The Rural Community Council is managing and delivering a pilot service in Mid Essex. The purpose of this report is review the first six months of operation.

Background

The pilot project is funded by Braintree LSP, Essex County Council and NHS Mid Essex. The project is aimed at supporting the strategic priorities of the:

- Essex Local Area Agreement
- Braintree Sustainable Communities Strategy
- NHS Mid Essex Strategic Plan

It will support the common themes of:

- Improving access to services
- Enabling the community to enjoy a healthier lifestyle
- Reducing health inequalities
- Supporting people to live in their own homes

The project is set against a background of:

- the expectations of an ageing population
- equal opportunities to access services
- the success demonstrated in Gloucestershire
- trying new methods of engaging with people living in rural villages
- demonstrating the value of actively seeking people that may need support
- preventing or delaying the need for more costly critical care
- Informing organisations about the unmet need for services
- improving service delivery effectiveness and efficiency
- promoting the wide range of statutory and voluntary services available

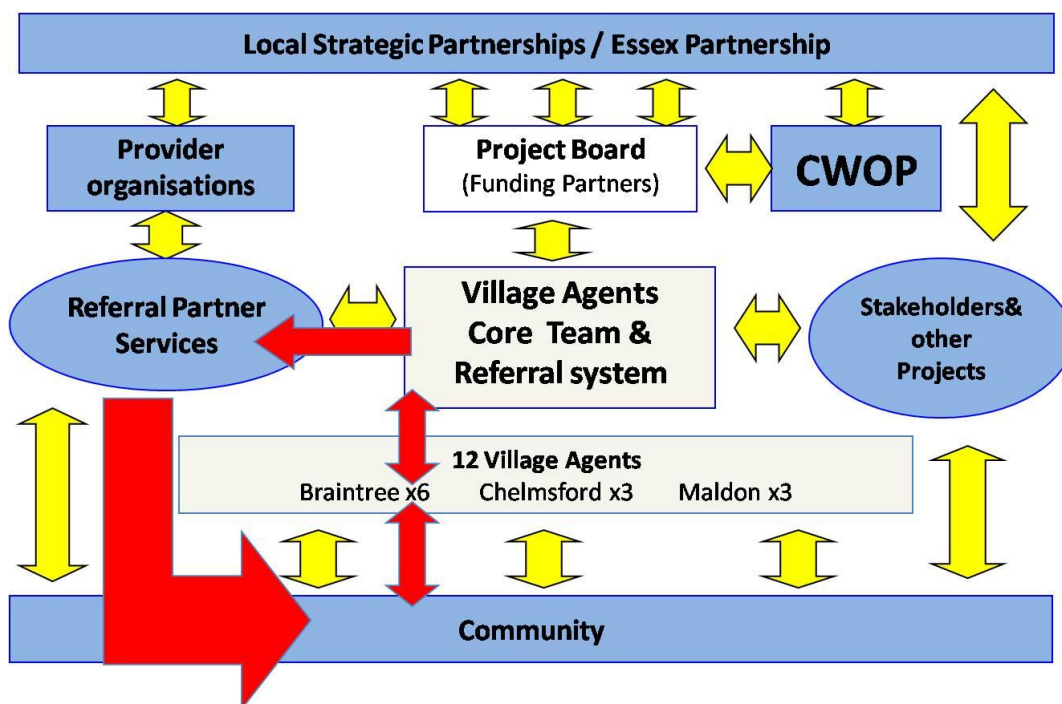
Delivery structure and procedures

A Project Board monitors and directs the pilot. The project is linked to the Essex Partnership and Local Strategic Partnerships. Twelve agents operate in Mid Essex in accordance with the policies and procedures developed for the project. They report to the Village Agents Manager. Quarterly Stakeholder meeting are held.

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The Service

Each Village Agent aims to:

- Become a trusted, well known friendly face at the heart of the rural communities
- Seeking out and helping otherwise hard to reach people, particularly the elderly
- Utilize active link to all services; Statutory, Non statutory, Voluntary and Community sector
- Identify and highlight unmet need for services
- Promote wellbeing and prevention initiatives

The referral process is undertaken through a new online system, the VA Hub. A client's details are recorded on a form (see appendix A) and securely stored online and an email provides notification of a referral. The system allows comprehensive performance reports to be produced.

Clients are allocated to a referral partner using criteria that is being developed based on; quality, timeliness, locality and cost.

Milestones/Achievements

- Recruited and trained the Agents. List of training contained in appendix B
- Established procedures and policies
- Launched the service mid October
- Prepared promotional materials. See appendix C
- Set up a website www.villageagentsessex.org.uk and an online referral system
- Produced performance report template and monthly activity sheets

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- Completed initial staff appraisals and probation period reviews

Evaluation Model

The first draft evaluation models have been completed based on the value of the benefit to the community provide by different categories of referrals and activities. The value is based on the reduced risk of high cost care or damage to a person's home or the increased spending power in the local economy. The benefits have been split in to six categories:

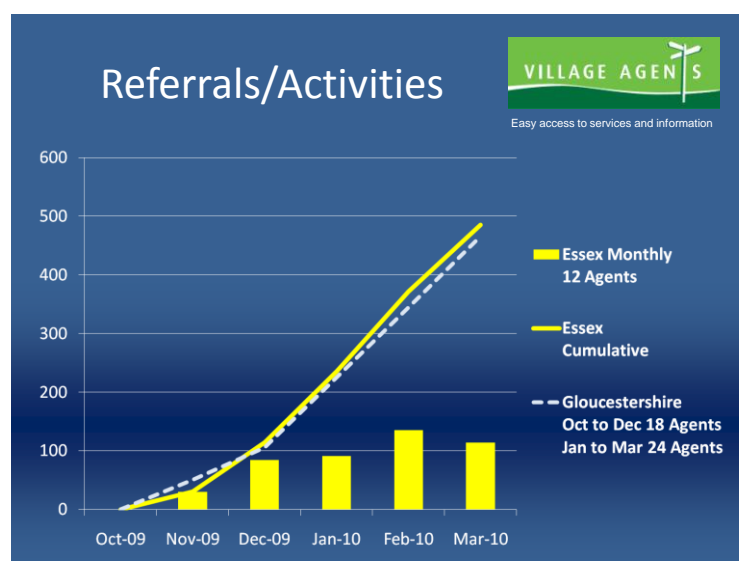
- Community Safety
- Healthy lifestyle
- Income maximisation
- Social care
- Housing
- Accessibility
- Prevention

An initial value for each category has been calculated based on a relevant example. The benefit values are considered to very conservative and further work is will now take place with funding partners to refine the society costs and risk reduction elements of the models. A summary of the initial model values is contained in appendix C.

Performance

The overall performance reports for the first and second quarter is contained in appendix E. The key points are:

- 67 formal Referral Partners
- 288 customers to end of March 10 resulting in approximately 485 referral and activities since the launch.



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- The Essex performance is running at the same pace as Gloucestershire but with half the number of Village Agents

An assessment of the client profile and other input activity analysis is contained in appendix F.

The current list of Referral Partners is contained in appendix G.

Delivery experience/analysis

From the first six months of operation the project has established:

- There are people living in rural parts of Mid Essex that are not getting all the help that is available
- It would appear that clients value the independence of the signposting service from actual service delivery
- A detailed insight in to the cost of delivering such a service
- The initial evaluation suggests that the comparison of benefit value to deliver cost is likely to be positive
- How the project capacity in terms of; time, resources, knowledge, ability and management can be developed to promote the service more widely.
- A set of initial client case studies (3 per agent) is contained in appendix H.
- An emerging insight into information about the under and over met need for services

In view of this the Village Agents are now ready to focus on more of Mid Essex. The service will continue to serve the original areas but it will also be promoted in the surrounding parishes. Given that the time devoted to establishing the service has now eased, we are confident that the level of service established in the original areas will be maintained. The new areas will be covered through a reallocation of the setting up time and extended working hours. The table contained in appendix I. provides details of the areas.

Opportunities

To enhance performance the pilot project aims to explore the benefits of:

- Each agent to promote the service over a larger area based on a rural population of approximately 5000
- Increased awareness through wider brand and system deployment utilising local organisations
- The potential for Agents to undertake additional tasks such as the completion of self referral forms, and minor home adaptations
- Refined time management aimed at optimum productivity and lowest unit cost
- The potential to share knowledge about local need and interventions and the value of the data in relation to future strategy and joint working.

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- Research provided by the “Why Not” group about the client experience and an older persons emotional journey.
- The prospect for working in partnership with other initiatives such as “Timebank”

Summary

The pilot project is due to finish at the end of March 2011. The aim over the remaining period will be to develop an effective and sustainable service that ensures people living in rural areas have easy access to services and information. New promotional materials are being developed and the local Village Agent will be contacting the Parish Councils and local groups shortly to discuss how we can work with them to launch and develop the service in the additional areas.

If you would like more information about the service or the opportunity to discuss more details about the pilot project then please visit www.villageagentsessex.org.uk or contact the Village Agents Manager at the Rural Community Council of Essex. Tel 0800 9775858 or email brian.goodwin@vaessex.org.uk

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Appendix A. Referral Form

Referral Form

Village Agent:

Mobile No.:

Client Name :

Client Tel Number:



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Tel: 0800 9775858
E-mail: enquiries@vaessex.org.uk
Web: www.villageagentsessex.org.uk

Address:

Extra

Direction:

Live Alone: YES NO **Own Transport:** YES NO **Armed Forces:** YES NO

NI Number: Would you describe yourself as disabled: YES NO

D.O.B: **Gender:** **Religion/Belief:**

Marital Status: **Ethnicity:** **Sexuality:**

Nature of Referral/Action:

Any Special Needs/existing services we should be aware of:

Housing: Owner Family Owned Private Rental
Council Rental Sheltered Acc Unknown

Housing Association: Hanover Housing Chelmer Housing Springboard Housing
Shaftesbury Housing Swan Housing Warden Housing
Other Unknown

District Council: **Parish Ref:**

Where did you hear Parish Council Family Neighbour/Friend
about Village Agents: District Council PCSO/Warden Health
Social Care Other

The Above information may be made anonymous for statistical and/or analytical purposes. It will be held securely on paper and/or computer in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

I give permission for the above information to be shared and distributed to all/individual relevant service providers.

Signed: Date:

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Appendix B. Training List (to 12 May 2010)

Date	Training	Organisation
22nd Sept 09	Carers Support & Strategy	Essex County Council
23rd Sept 09	Information Portal	Essex County Council
23rd Sept 09	Fire & Rescue Home Fire Safety Visits	Essex Fire & Rescue
24th Sept 09	Introduction to Benefits	Essex County Council
28th Sept 09	Health Trainers	NHS Mid Essex
28th Sept 09	Swan Floating Support	Swan Housing Association
28th Sept 09	Buy with Confidence - Consumer direct & trading standards	Essex County Council
29th Sept 09	Attendance Allowance & Disability Living Allowance	Essex County Council
30th Sept 09	Supporting the farming community	Farm Crisis Network
30th Sept 09	Passenger Transport	Essex County Council
30th Sept 09	Helping older people use technology	Millrace IT
1st Oct 09	Benefits for the over 60's	Essex County Council
9th Oct 09	Telecare Information and Knowledge Training	Essex County Council
21st Oct 09	Housing Options for Older People	Care & Repair England
10th Nov 09	Hanover Home Improvement Agents	Hanover
10th Nov 09	Library Services	
10th Nov 09	Guinness Independence at Home	Guinness Trust
11th Nov 09	Governance Training	RCCE
27th Nov 09	Interpersonal Skills Training	RCCE
11th Dec 09	SSAFA support	SSAFA
12th Jan 10	Essex Blind	Essex Blind
12th Jan 10	Age Concern Services	Age Concern

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Date	Training	Organisation
12th Jan 10	Warm Front	Warm Front
12th Jan 10	Can cook will cook	RCCE
12th Jan 10	Benefit Referral Choice	Essex County Council
3rd Feb 10	Intervention Training	NHS Mid Essex
9th Feb 10	Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	
9th Feb 10	Rural Transport & Access Advisor	RCCE
24th Feb 10	Safeguarding Adults Basic Awareness Course	Essex County Council
25th Feb 10	Social Care Direct	Essex County Council
9th Mar 10	Samaritans	
9th Mar 10	Energy saving and fuel poverty	Energy Saving Trust
9th Mar 10	Rural Affordable Housing	RCCE
19th Mar 10	Setting Up and Supporting a Community Group	RCCE
23rd Mar 10	Carers Awareness Training	Essex County Council
14th April 10	Adult Learning Services	Essex County Council
14th April 10	B M E Group	NHS Mid Essex
5th May 10	Poppy Appeal	Royal British Legion
5th May 10	Hate Crime	Braintree District Council
5th May 10	Gypsy Traveller Communities	NHS Mid Essex
12th May 10	Mental Health Capacity Training	Essex County Council

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Appendix C. Promotional materials

A face to face signposting service for people living in rural communities

- Putting people in contact with organisations that provide services they need
- Providing high quality information and advice to local residents
- Promoting health and independence

For further information please contact Village Agents free on tel: **0800 9775858**
or e-mail: enquiries@vaessex.org.uk
www.villageagentsessex.org.uk

Mid-Essex Pilot
VILLAGE AGENTS DIRECTORY
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VILLAGE AGENTS Local directory of Village Agent locations and contact numbers
Easy access to services and information

Your Village Agent can help you with:

- Local social groups, leisure and learning
- Welfare benefits
- Fire and home safety
- Health and fitness
- How to travel
- Services and carers' support
- Volunteering

Call free on: **0800 9775858**
or e-mail: enquiries@vaessex.org.uk

Brian Goodwin
Village Agents Manager
MOBILE: 07540 720601

Braintree

Chelmsford

Maldon

MAP REF	LOCATION	NAME	MOBILE NUMBER
1	Alphamstone	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
2	Bawdrip Saling	Chivonne Claydon	07540 720603
3	Belchamp Otton	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
4	Belchamp St Paul	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
5	Belchamp Walter	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
6	Biedbrook	Richard Ould	07540 720610
7	Borley	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
8	Bulmer	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
9	Fairstead	Sally Austin	07540 720602
10	Faulkbourne	Sally Austin	07540 720602
11	Fewearth	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
12	Great Henny	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
13	Great Saling	Chivonne Claydon	07540 720603
14	Lamarsh	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
15	Liston	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
16	Little Henny	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
17	Little Witham	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
18	Middleton	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
19	Owington	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
20	Panfield	Chivonne Claydon	07540 720603
21	Peulow	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
22	Ridgewell	Richard Ould	07540 720610
23	Shalford	Chivonne Claydon	07540 720603
24	Silver End	Lydia Howat	07540 720606
25	Stambourne	Richard Ould	07540 720610
26	Tetling	Sally Austin	07540 720602
27	Tilbury Justa Clare	Jayne Laken	07540 720607
28	Toppefield	Richard Ould	07540 720610
29	Twinstead	Peter Darlington	07540 720604
30	White Noisley	Sally Austin	07540 720602
31	Chignall	Jo Metson	07540 720609
32	East Hanningfield	John Peart	07540 720611
33	Good Easter	Jo Metson	07540 720609
34	Higwell	Brendis Smith	07540 720612
35	Margaretting	Brendis Smith	07540 720612
36	Mashbury	Jo Metson	07540 720609
37	Pleshey	Jo Metson	07540 720609
38	Retendon	John Peart	07540 720611
39	Bradwell-on-Sea	Laura Stacey	07540 720613
40	Goldhanger	Jan Hawkins	07540 720605
41	Hazeleigh	Christine McDonald	07540 720608
42	Little Totham	Jan Hawkins	07540 720605
43	Purleigh	Christine McDonald	07540 720608
44	St Lawrence	Laura Stacey	07540 720613
45	Steeple	Laura Stacey	07540 720613
46	Tollchurch Major	Jan Hawkins	07540 720605
47	Woodham Mortimer	Christine McDonald	07540 720608
48	Woodham Walter	Christine McDonald	07540 720608

Braintree

Chelmsford

Maldon

Brenda Smith
brenda@vaessex.org.uk

John Peart
john@vaessex.org.uk

Chivonne Claydon
chivonne@vaessex.org.uk

Laura Stacey
laura@vaessex.org.uk

Christine McDonald
christine@vaessex.org.uk

Lydia Howat
lydia@vaessex.org.uk

Jan Hawkins
jan@vaessex.org.uk

Peter Darlington
peter@vaessex.org.uk

Jayne Laken
jayne@vaessex.org.uk

Richard Ould
richard@vaessex.org.uk

Jo Metson
jo@vaessex.org.uk

Sally Austin
sally@vaessex.org.uk

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Appendix C. Promotional materials (continued)

A face to face signposting service for people living in rural communities

- Putting people in contact with organisations that provide services they need
- Providing high quality information and advice to local residents
- Promoting health and independence

For further information please contact Village Agents free on tel: 0800 9775858 or e-mail: enquiries@vaessex.org.uk

www.villageagentsessex.org.uk




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A face to face signposting service for people living in rural communities

- Putting people in contact with organisations that provide services they need
- Providing high quality information and advice to local residents
- Promoting health and independence



Working as a well equipped team the Village Agents offer free personal advice and a link to many services such as:

- Home adaptations and equipment to make your life easier and safer
- Home security, fire safety checks and smoke alarm fitting
- Housing and getting jobs done around the home and garden
- Healthy living advice and activities such as fitness, weight loss or smoking cessation
- Making sure you are receiving the correct benefits or pension
- Information about all forms of travel and access to community transport
- Support opportunities for your family or carers
- Help you to become a volunteer to help others
- Access to local social groups, leisure activities and learning opportunities

Agents can help people choose the best service. We aim to:

- Provide independent, confidential trusted advice
- Complement not duplicate existing services
- Reduce confusion and add value to service choice
- Help anyone in need, particularly the elderly and families
- Share information and experience
- Inform future Adult Health and Community Wellbeing strategy

For more information or to arrange a meeting with an agent please call us free on 0800 9775858 or visit www.villageagentsessex.org.uk

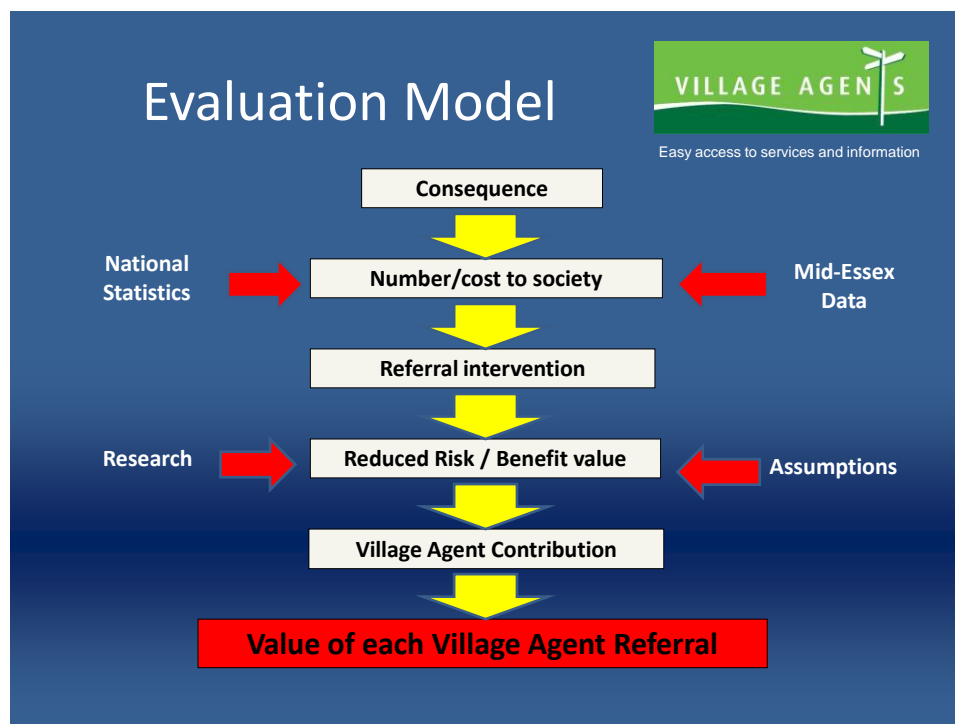




Village Agents are employed by: Rural Community Council of Essex
Registered Charity No. 1097009
Company Limited by Guarantee No. 4609624



Appendix D. Evaluation Model Initial Values



All outcomes include a time saving of £7.36 per referral

- **Community Safety - £21.62** per referral based on working smoke alarm
 - Smoke detector, Safety/security checks, etc.
- **Health - £39.40** per referral based on NHS Mid Essex winter admissions (meeting arranged to refine data)
 - Advice (alcohol, smoking etc), Training, Falls prevention, Home insulation etc.
- **Income maximisation - £885.61** per referral based in ECC benefits helpline average for 2008/09
 - Benefits, Pension credits, Housing benefits, Council tax etc.
- **Social Care - £156.49** per referral based on reduced risk of a fall
 - Social Care Direct, Safeguarding
- **Housing - £17.25** per referral based on time saving and travel
 - Accommodation and affordable housing
- **Accessibility - £17.25** per referral based on travel cost and time saving
 - Transport, Jobs, Learning, Social interaction, Sport and active recreation, Volunteering etc.
- **Prevention - £156.49** per referral based on reduced risk of a fall
 - Adaptations, TeleCare, Personal and Carer support etc.


All activities are assumed to represent a time saving of £7.36p

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Appendix E. Performance Report October to December 2009



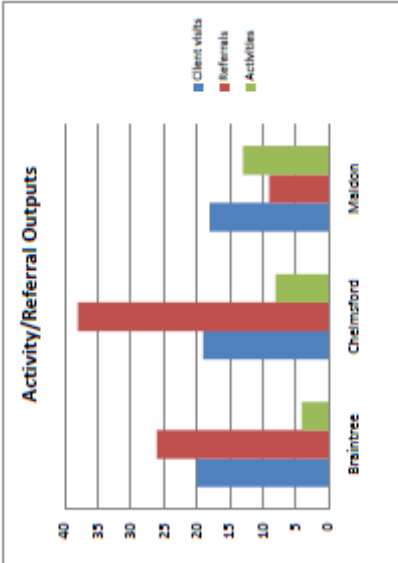
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Village Agents Mid Essex Pilot - Overall Performance Report

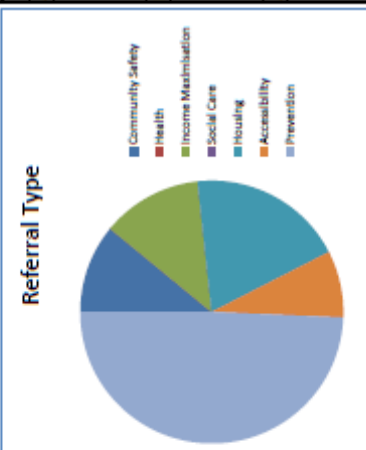
Period: October to December 2009 Report date: 8th April 2010
 Report by: Brian Goodwin

	Braintree	Chelmsford	Maldon	Mid Essex
Village Agent Outputs				
Number of clients	20	19	18	57
Number of Referrals	26	30	9	73
Number of Activities	4	8	13	25
Village Agents Inputs:				
Number of hours worked	997.15	592.75	442.25	2032.15
Miles travelled	4273.5	2244	1584	8101.5
Expenses	£311.47	£251.54	£429.95	£992.96
Direct operational cost £'s (excluding overheads and set up costs)	£13,906.67	£8,262.14	£6,370.55	£28,619.36

Activity/Referral Outputs



Referral Type



Types of referral:	Number	Percentage
Community Safety	8	11.0%
Health	0	0.0%
Income Maximisation	9	12.3%
Social Care	0	0.0%
Housing	14	19.2%
Accessibility	6	8.2%
Prevention	36	49.3%
TOTAL	73	100.0%

Economic Benefit £'s

Village Agent Outcomes	Economic Benefit £'s
Community Safety	£172.96
Health	£0.00
Income Maximisation	£7,970.49
Social Care	£0.00
Housing	£241.50
Accessibility	£103.50
Activities	£184.00
Prevention	£5,633.64
TOTAL	£14,306.09

Rate of return: -50.0%

Performance Summary:

Achievements:

Issues/Risks:

Action:

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Appendix E. Performance Report January to March 2010

Village Agents Mid Essex Pilot - Overall Performance Report

Period: January to March 2010

Report date: 28th April 2010
Report by: Brian Goodwin

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Activity/Referral Outputs

Location	Client visits	Referrals	Activities
Braintree	~125	~80	~40
Chelmsford	~75	~75	~25
Maldon	~85	~85	~45

	Braintree	Chelmsford	Maldon	Total
Village Agent Outputs				
Number of clients	131	69	88	288
Number of Referrals	84	69	76	229
Number of Activities	59	21	36	116
Village Agents Inputs:				
Number of hours worked	929.35	494.75	559.5	1983.6
Miles travelled	4500	2248	1495	8323
Expenses	£235.69	£179.84	£245.43	£660.96
Direct operational cost £'s (excluding overheads and set up costs)	£13,219.89	£7,016.04	£7,557.43	£27,793.36

Referral Type

Referral Type	Number	Percentage
Community Safety	37	16.2%
Health	3	1.3%
Income Maximisation	14	6.1%
Social Care	10	4.4%
Housing	24	10.5%
Accessibility	30	13.1%
Prevention	111	48.5%
TOTAL	229	100.0%

Types of referral:	Number	Percentage
Community Safety	37	16.2%
Health	3	1.3%
Income Maximisation	14	6.1%
Social Care	10	4.4%
Housing	24	10.5%
Accessibility	30	13.1%
Prevention	111	48.5%
TOTAL	229	100.0%
Check sum	0	
Formal Referral Partners:	62	

Village Agent Outcomes

Community Safety	£799.94
Health	£118.20
Income Maximisation	£12,398.54
Social Care	£1,564.90
Housing	£414.00
Accessibility	£517.50
Activities	£883.76
Prevention	£17,370.39
TOTAL	£34,037.23
Rate of return	22.5%

Performance Summary:

Achievements:
 Second performance report completed
 Stakeholder meetings held 1st week in March
 Initial evaluation models completed
 Stage one VA Hub improvements implemented

Issues/risks:
 Stage two VA Hub improvements due April 2010
 Approval to expand areas covered by each agent and more local contact points
 Referral emails not reaching ECC and EF&R
 Strong Maldon performance due to initial local contacts but Braintree growing fastest

Action:
 Workshop to discuss structure and data for benefit calculations
 Organisations to check spam filters
 Presentation to ECC managers 4/5/2010

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Appendix F. Performance statistics

Client profile to end of March 2010

Age Category	Number	Percentage
Total number of customers	288	100%
Number with recorded age	179	62%
		Percentage of recorded age
Over 80 years of age	60	33.5%
Over 70 years of age	109	60.9%
Over 60 years of age	146	81.6%
Over 50 years of age	162	90.5%
Under 50 years of age	17	9.5%
Gender Category	Number	Percentage
Total number of customers	288	100%
Number gender recorded	229	79.5%
		Percentage of recorded gender
Male	71	31.0%
Female	158	69.0%

Promotional Material usage to end of March 2010

Item	Number produced	Number used	Email
Directory leaflets	3000	2700	50
A4 Posters	2000	1000	N/A
Generic calling cards	2000	1800	N/A
Christmas cards	12000	10000	0
Quarterly newsletter (Jan 2010)	1300	1200	270
A5 Flyers	10,000	8,000	0
Pens	1000	900	0

Engagement Jan to Mar 2010

Website sessions	4618
Number of People spoken to at meetings by agents (excludes referrals & activities)	2482

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Appendix G. Referral Partners (as of 19th May 2010)

Action for Family Carers
Adult Social Care - Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
Adult Social Care - Social Care
Age Concern
BME Community Development
Braintree Community Transport
Braintree DC Benefits Advice
Braintree District Crime and Disorder
Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency
Braintree Transport Enquiries
Care Call Direct
Carers Support
Charms: The Essex Therapy Centre
Chelmer Housing
Chelmsford Borough Council
Chelmsford Community Transport
Chelmsford Council for Voluntary Services
Chelmsford Transport Enquiries
Chelmsford Volunteer Centre
Co-op Bereavement Support
Colne Housing
Dengie Project Trust (One Place)
Essex Art Development Team
Essex Blind
Essex CC Benefits Team
Essex Guardians
Essex Record Office
Essex Traffic Control Centre
Falls Prevention - NHS Mid Essex
Farleigh Hospice - caring for life
Farm Crisis Network
Fire and Rescue Service
FitSteps
Greenfields Housing
Gypsy and Traveller Health Improvement
Halstead Age Concern
Hanover at Home - Braintree Home Improvement
Healthy Living
Homeshield Plus Suffolk

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In Touch
Independence at Home - Chelmsford and Maldon Home
Maldon Community Transport (Viking)
Maldon Council for Voluntary Services
Maldon DC Benefits
Maldon DC Housing
Maldon District Council Customer Services
Maldon Transport Enquiries
Meadows Shop Mobility
Mera Resource Centre
Mid Area Highways
Moat Housing
More2Life
Referral to another Organisation
Relatives and Residents Association (Essex)
REMAP
Samaritans
Salvation Army - Braintree
SSAFA
Stroke Association
Swan Housing Support
Swan Floating Support - Braintree
Swan Floating Support - Learning Disability
Swan Floating Support - Maldon
SWANS
Tabor Centre
The Royal British Legion
Trading Standards

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Appendix H. Initial Client Case studies April 2010.

1. Mrs X, aged 73 contacted me after seeing my piece in the village magazine. She had recently had a fall and wanted a pendant alarm. I referred her for Telecare. I also found out in the course of our chat that even though she had a mobility vehicle, she was sometimes unable to use it, such as the day before when she had had to go to Broomfield hospital via taxi. I have signed her up to Community Transport so she can use them if needed. She was also waiting to hear from CHP about a transfer to a larger bungalow – she is on dialysis and the hospital recommend she has a separate bedroom for this and to store her dialysis equipment which she currently keeps in the shed, her son-in-law bringing in a week's supply at a time, which is not ideal as it should be kept at room temperature. She was worried about her cat that needed an operation she couldn't afford and I found out some details of charitable vets for her. I am going to see her again next week to follow everything up, and am planning on suggesting a falls prevention course amongst other things. Mrs X was very impressed with the range of things I could help with that she wouldn't have thought about or known about otherwise!
(Follow up) Mrs X is going to see a new 2 bed property with CHP. She has been trying to get a housing transfer on medical grounds for over 2 years to no avail, and was suddenly offered one 3 days after our meeting with CHP last week!
2. Mr and Mrs X, both 74 contacted me after receiving a Christmas card. A lovely very independent and intelligent couple, but Mrs X has Parkinson's and Mr X is her full time carer. However he has just been diagnosed with Parkinsonism and was worried about their independence. I have referred them to the carer's team for a Carers Assessment and to Telecare for a pendant alarm for Mrs X so Mr X can have a little more independence, for example just going to the garden without worrying. Mr X drives but recently had a burst blood vessel in his eye so had to stop. I filled out the forms for Community Transport and a bus pass for them and gave them a bus timetable. Mrs X feels the cold due to her condition and I have referred them to WarmFront to see if they are eligible for any insulation etc, especially as their front door opens into their lounge. Mrs X was very touched that we were offering this service and wanted to write and thank the RCCE for the service! I have visited them twice, and keep in touch with them.
3. Mrs X contacted me as she wanted to set up a yoga group for the older members of her village. I was able to direct her to Chelmsford CVS who talked to her about grants etc and the loan of equipment. We canvassed and found 6 people definitely interested. I have since mentioned her to CBC who has some money available for community projects such as this. Mrs X is

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running a 6 week trial session to see if the project is viable. I am hoping to speak to her again soon now I have more resources at my disposal, and to see how the trial run went.

4. Mr X has Motor Neurone disease and is unable to leave his home. He asked for Chelmsford Borough Council for help with his garden, they passed it onto me. I asked Guinness Trust for help, but their gardener is off sick. However, they gave me a name who I contacted. The garden has now been tidied up. Customer happy. Whilst visiting Mr X I also found out that he is having trouble accessing his bathroom due to his lack of mobility. I have referred him to Social Care direct to get him a seat with wheels on, to move around small spaces. He is also looking at the telecare leaflets I gave him as he is prone to falling and is unable to get up.
5. Mrs X has had to move in with her daughter due to illness and is not getting out much. I asked Age Concern to provide me with a list of local clubs that meet in afternoons that her daughter could take her to. Information provided and given to Sheila and her daughter. I also provided daughter with Carer and emergency Carer information.
6. Older people in East Hanningfield unable to get to supermarket if they have not got own transport. I told them about Community transport and arranged membership for 4 people. They now use transport to go to Asda at South Woodham Ferrers on Fridays each week. Two of the people also said they were interested in toe nail cutting service provided by Age Concern. Referrals made.
7. Two older ladies living in different Chelmsford parishes had both suffered broken arms in falls last year. Living alone as both had been recently widowed. Their confidence levels to go out alone had reduced considerably. The Village Agent was able to refer these ladies to the Falls Prevention team. One prefers to drive to the classes as this gives her the opportunity to socialise and make new friends. The other does not drive, so after her initial training classes, she prefers to practice her exercises at home. Both ladies say they now feel much more positive and confident to go out alone.
8. "Mi village" is on a County Bus Contractor service route. However, this route has recently changed and the bus no longer travels via a major supermarket, thus removing access to a vital service to non-drivers from the village and the older persons group in the village asked if it could be possible to have this old route re-instated. It is very fortunate to have a Trust running a weekly bus

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service to the closest town and a monthly service to the County town. However, in recent times the number of passengers has reduced and the Trust are concerned that they may have to withdraw the service. The village agent approached the Trust with the suggestion that the Trust monthly bus trip to the County town be re-route via the supermarket, increasing usage and re-instating a lost service. Additionally, the County Council have offered to obtain alternative quotations for the Trust's consideration to help reduce their costs and also approach the County Bus Contractor with a view to reversing the route change.

9. Mr X, an 87 year old ex RAF serviceman had been living alone since his wife was taken into care some 9 months ago. He was quite proud of how he had managed to look after himself until a fall put him in hospital. Mr X was discharged with a 6 week re-enablement package. Although Mr X was able to wash and prepare a meal, he relied on a frame and could not carry his meal to table and asked for help with his general housework and washing and ironing. The Village Agent referred him to Age Concern for housework and befriending service, SSAFA and has prepared a list of local Care Agencies. The Agent also suggested to the Social Team that he may benefit from regular visits to a local day centre.
10. Asked to visit to talk about Telecare falls pendant after this was done, while talking Mrs X. asked me to complete a Benefits check. Talking through found at the age of 72 she was still paying full council tax and rent. Her savings were just under £16k and after talking with the Benefits Agency found Mrs X was entitled to a reduction of £93.82 per week. I called the Maldon District Council and when the forms arrived I helped to fill them in and gather supporting documents ready for her to take to the Council offices.
11. Mr X arrived at the cancelled Open Day in Maldon Town Hall. He lives alone and was worried about falling. I referred him to Telecare and was given a free pendant and as he had no local responder Telecare also fitted a key safe box for him.
12. Mrs X Lives alone and, at the age of 86, is nearly blind. She wants to stay in her home as it is the only place her 13 year-old dog has lived. She is amazingly independent and copes with day to day life but finds she gets lonely. She would like to meet people generally but wants to be able to meet people for lunch. As I cannot find any groups that do this I am in the process of starting a club for people to meet for lunch at a pub or restaurant. I am hoping to get a local establishment to discount the group and make it affordable for as many as possible.

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13. Mr X is 64 years old and lives on his own. He recently moved and had not long been discharged from hospital. He has several severe health issues – heart, stoma, diabetes to name a few. He has a pension, receives benefits and rents his home. He met our service through Greenfields. He expressed a wish that he wanted to become fitter and look after his health better. I helped him devise a healthy eating and walking programme, which we very gently embarked upon and his fitness is slowly improving. I also made telephone referral to Benefits to get his Attendance Allowance reviewed. In February, Mr X was without a car and I took him to a Hospital and Therapists appointment, as no other transport was available. Currently I am referring him to Greenfields (his landlord) as the guttering needs repairing. We still continue regular walks every other week. He has very kindly agreed to take part in the Community Needs Assessment for Older People survey conducted by Braintree District Council – a meeting is being arranged. Also, he is keen to use the Community Shopper Bus when it is launched in April.
14. Mrs X is 90 years of age and lives with her daughter – who is 50. Mrs X's husband died some years previously and her daughter is single. They have a frugal income of pension and rent their home. They heard about our service from the Christmas card I delivered through their door. She is housebound and relies on her daughter for everything as she is her main carer. The daughter is currently not working or claiming any kind of benefits, as she didn't think she would be eligible since she had given up work 2 years ago, to look after her mother. Mrs X was only getting her small pension, heating grant and part housing benefit. Also, not long ago she had a fall when her daughter was out for the afternoon. Her daughter found her lying in the hallway and she was worried that it might happen again. I made a referral to Carecall for a Telecare pendant and referred Mrs X to the Benefits team for Attendance Allowance and overall benefit check. Subsequently, her daughter will be highlighted and be reviewed by the Benefits Team once Mrs X's claim has been established.
15. I was contacted by their nephew who was given my name and number by the District Councillor for the area. Mrs X is 92 years old and Mr X 88 years old. They have a comfortable retirement and own their own home. She is in remarkable good health but now suffering as after contracting flu and in bed for 3 weeks, recovery is slow and she isn't as agile. She is the main carer for her husband who has had a heart attack, a couple of strokes, is deaf and eyesight failing. He walks around the house with the use of a walking frame and sleeps downstairs. Currently he receives 2 days a week of personal care from Forest Home Care. With her health in its slow healing state, I rang Forest Home Care who advised me that he would have to be referred by the Review Team. So through Mid Essex Review Team at Social Services, I referred Mr X for a review of his personal care needs, as she is now unable to cope with the majority of his wellbeing. I also referred him to Hanover Home

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Improvement services to have some adaptations done in the bathroom – grab rail fitted and they have suggested another one on the other wall (the family are considering this option). As he finds it difficult to manoeuvre about with his current frame, I called the hospital he was in but due to the lapsed time they advised me to contact his GP. I have advised them (and a close friend of theirs) to contact the GP and have an assessment by them for a different walking frame. This is an on-going case as currently Social Services have a 6 week waiting time and when a Social Worker is due to visit, the family have ask if I would be present to assist in the deliberation as to their personal needs as Mrs X feels that she can't deal with them on her own. I also referred her to Carecall for a watch strap for her pendant as she didn't like to wear it round her neck.

16. Mr X is 85 years old and lives on his own. He has lived in Essex for many years since he moved with his sister from Greece. He has several health issues – diabetes, high blood pressure to name a couple. He has a small pension, receives benefits and owns his home. He met our service through the Police when they became concerned for his welfare. Since his sister died he has become quite isolated and was worried that if he had a fall, no one would find him. I referred him to Carecall for a Telecare pendant and to Hanover Home Improvement Services for an extra banister rail on his stairwell and a home safety check for repair to the staircase and adaptations in the bathroom. He is going to Greece for the Easter holidays and on his return, he expressed an interest in joining a club.
17. I had a call from Action for Family Carers who were looking for a volunteer to help a family who looked after an elderly relative. They just needed someone to go and provide respite care for a few hours a week to support a daughter who looks after her mother. Through my contacts I successful found someone and made the connection.
18. Mr and Mrs X, both aged under 60. Referral came via Moat Housing Neighbourhood Officer to see if the Village Agent project could offer any further support from that offered by Moat. I visited them and their family. He has a long term disability and received Disability Living Allowance on higher rates for both care and mobility. His wife had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and found it very difficult to care following sessions of chemotherapy. An initial review of the family's benefits by the VA showed that there may be scope to maximise the financial entitlement. The VA contacted the ECC Benefits Team, who arranged a full review of circumstances and suggested the possibility of a change from him claiming Employment and Support to her claiming Carers Allowance, together with other related financial entitlements for her family. Subject to medical evidence, she may also entitled to short term Disability Living Allowance for herself. Mr X said, "We have been

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trying to get help for our family's financial affairs for months and seemed to be getting no-where. After your visit, everything started moving".

19. Mrs X, aged over 85. Referral came via a friend. I visited her and whilst initially she was uncertain whether she needed Telecare, we chatted over a cup of tea and biscuits about the advantages of the system. Mrs X agreed that her family, who lived abroad would have better peace of mind should she have a fall or need to contact a named responder urgently. A Telecare base unit and pendant was arranged and she decided on three local friends who would be prepared to act as responders. Due to her age, she qualified for the current Essex Pledge of free on loan equipment and 12 months free response back up. She said, "My son is so proud of me that I set this up for myself so I can continue to live independently in my own home".

20. Mr X, partially sighted man, aged over 80. Contacted during the icy weather at the beginning of 2010 as part of an exercise in conjunction with the Parish Council to contact people who may be vulnerable due to the abnormal weather conditions. Although he had no concerns regarding the weather, he did have queries about equipment available to partially sighted people and information was provided in conjunction with Essex Blind. Additional activities included arranging for large font correspondence and information leaflets.

21. I met Mrs X at her local WI group, when she talked to me she was very tearful and appeared to be very frail. She explained that she lost her husband in October 2009 and by her own admission was not coping very well and was feeling lonely and isolated. I suggested that she may like to try attending a bereavement group and Mrs X agreed that this was something she would like to do but she didn't know where her local one was or how she would get there as she didn't drive. I found her a bereavement group but there was no direct bus route to it and community transport worked out to be £16 round trip which she could not afford. I received permission from the office to take her myself for three weeks. During this time, she met other attendees of the group who live near her and they were able to offer her a lift each week. She also mentioned to me that she would like to visit her sister who lives in London but had no idea how to get there. I planned a route using buses and trains and worked out all the connections for her. Mrs X is now excitedly planning her trip for Easter. Over the last few weeks I have seen her confidence grow, she has started eating properly again and whilst she is still grieving, she is on the whole, feeling a lot better and much less isolated.

22. Mrs X contacted me directly after I gave a talk to some of her friends at the Wednesday Club. She is 93 and lives alone in her own home. Mrs X is hard of hearing and wears a hearing aid, she was worried that when she takes her

hearing aid out at night she would not be able to hear the smoke alarm if it were to go off. I referred her to Essex Fire & Rescue who visited her that same week and installed a strobe light smoke alarm with vibration sensor (which goes under her pillow). Mrs X was over the moon with the new alarm and now feels a lot safer when she goes to sleep.

23. Mr X contacted me directly after I met his partner at the local WI Group. He is 83, partially sighted, has a heart condition and lives alone. For the last five years he has been receiving treatment at Barts Hospital in London for his heart condition. They have always provided him with transport to and from the hospital. The last time Mr X used the hospital transport he was told that he was no longer eligible for it and in future he would have to make his own way to and from his appointments. This caused him a great deal of distress as he had previously had to give up his driving licence due to his sight problems and he finds it incredibly hard to take public transport as he cannot read timetables or see the numbers/names of trains and buses. He could not understand why his transport had suddenly stopped after all this time and he was worrying about it immensely. I telephoned the transport department of the hospital and after speaking to several people, I managed to explain his problems and they agreed to re-instate his free transport and apologised for the distress they had caused him, they said his transport had been stopped in error. I let Mr X know the good news and he is so pleased as it had been causing him to lose sleep.
24. Mrs X is a 49 year old disabled lady who has twin 17 year old sons both of whom are also disabled one permanently wheel chair bound. Although on a variety of benefits she told me these had not been reviewed for 8 years. I referred her case to Essex County Benefits office, who were able to offer her informed advice. She also raised several issues regarding her property which I referred to Hanover at Home in Braintree. They are about to visit her to discuss some repairs to the home and also to build a new wheel chair ramp to enable easier access to the front of the property.
25. Mr X a 67 year old partially sighted gentleman could not access his back garden because of insecure paving stones on the steps of a tiered garden leading to his back gate. Being a diabetic who has also had two toes amputated he is very insecure on his feet. Hanover at Home are arranging to re-lay the paving stones and Mr X is now looking forward to spending more time in his garden particularly as the summer months approach. Hanover will also be reviewing the rest of his property to ensure maximum safety.

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26. Mrs X a 68 year old widow has also recently lost her 41 year old son. She is of a very nervous disposition and understandably in mourning. She was very worried about the rendering to the side of her property which I was able to refer to Hanover at Home who are advising her regarding necessary repairs. She was very relieved to be put in touch with a reliable organisation. She had also recently been attacked by a dog near her home which was not under proper control. She sustained bruising to her arm and I arranged for the local community police officer to visit her who in turn interviewed the dog's owner and issued a formal caution. This has eased her worries about being confronted by the dog in future.
27. Mr X was made redundant in August 2009, shortly afterwards his elderly mums health deteriorated quickly. He lives with his mum so made the decision to become her full time carer. When I went to visit him he had given up his car and all activities he used to do as he couldn't afford them anymore. He was struggling financially keeping up with bills but didn't want to worry his mum. I did a quick benefit check to see what he was already getting (carers allowance) and realised he would be able to claim council tax and housing benefit as he is not working. I referred him to Braintree District Council benefits team who confirmed he is entitled to both housing and council tax benefit and may be able to get some of it back dated. This has relieved Mr X of his financial worries while he concentrates on looking after his mum.
28. I was called by Mrs X on 23 December last year. She was very upset as her husband had suddenly lost his sight 2 weeks earlier and wasn't coping at all. I went to visit them straight away as she clearly needed to talk to someone. During my visit it was obvious that he was distressed and angry about the situation but also that she was very down and suffering with depression from the stress of it all. I referred him to Essex Blind Charity, Adult Social Services, Carecall and Age Concern. Essex Blind visited and he bought a talking watch and a gadget to put on the side of a cup so you don't overfill it – he can now make himself a cup of tea. Age Concern have spoken to both of them about their befriending service. Carecall visited and installed a pendant alarm – this has given her the confidence to pop out leaving him in the house alone. She has returned to church and the local luncheon club and seems much better in herself. It is early days for them but they now have all the support they need in place to start moving forward. I call them occasionally just to check they are ok.
29. Tea @3 – Silver End Congregational Church. I attended this club at the end of last year – the club is mainly elderly ladies. The day I visited there was a seated exercise class and we got chatting about Falls Prevention and First Aid etc. Lyn (the lady who runs the club) said she would love to run some sort of First Aid session aimed at the elderly to learn about safety in the home.

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When I got home I got in touch with the British Red cross who I had been informed by a colleague run free courses in rural locations. They said they could tailor a course to an elderly group and would focus on safety at home and what to do in the event of accidents in the home (falls and burns etc). They have booked to go along to the church in April and run a course which I intend to go along to and meet everyone again. Lyn is over the moon as the course will be tailored to their exact need and is entirely free.

30. Mrs X is a 66 year old widower living alone. She moved to the village two years ago and her husband passed away suddenly last year. She does not drive, having relied on her husband, and is lonely and isolated. The two buses a week fail to meet her needs as she is frustrated at only having a short hour and a half in town to run all her errands before catching the bus home. As her Village Agent I have arranged referral to Braintree Community Transport and she is thrilled with her membership to the Social Car Scheme, enabling time for a leisurely coffee in town on market day. Mrs X has concerns about her health being asthmatic and after my Health Training I was able to discuss the benefits of the Smoking Cessation Courses and she was very keen to participate, asking for group sessions to enable her to meet like minded individuals in the community. Age Concern have been contacted for their 'Befriending Service', and I have telephoned the Secretary of the local Women's Institute and supplied full event details to client who intends to join in the Spring when the weather improves. Towards the end of the appointment the Emergency Information Scheme bottle was explained and left with Mrs X who has written all her medication / health details on the form and placed safely in the fridge, with identifying stickers on the door to alert the Emergency Services should the need arise.
31. Mrs X is an 82 year old lady caring for her 85 year old husband who has advanced Parkinson's Disease. Although she is coping admirably she feels that she should be starting to consider respite care. We discussed her options and the care solutions available at length and I was able to refer to Adult Social Care in the first instance for a full needs assessment. My second referral was to Care Call for a Telecare Pendant, Mr X is immobile now but if Mrs X was to take a fall at home the pendant would provide peace of mind that assistance could be called in an emergency. Age Concern has also been contacted for use of their Befriending Scheme, allowing Mrs X a valuable hour in town whilst knowing that a trusted friend was sitting with her husband. Finally, I ascertained that Mr X served for many years in the Royal Airforce Medical Corps so I suggested a referral to SSAFA for their help and assistance.

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32. Mr X is an 84 year old gentleman living alone. He is a widow, having lost his wife a few years ago now. His two adult sons have both moved away and locals in the village report that he always 'keeps himself to himself'. His wife seemed to organise life and maintain friendships and communication with neighbours and now that she has passed away he goes for very long periods seeing and speaking to nobody apart from Mrs X (his next door neighbour), and the nurses that now visit.

He has lost his sight following macular degeneration. Referrals have been made to Care Call for Telecare, Benefits Office to claim for Disability Living Allowance, Age Concern Toe Nail Cutting Service, Essex Fire Service to re-site his smoke alarms, Adult Social Care for meals on wheels and care workers now visit him three times a day to care for his needs and help him to remain independent in his own home, which he is loathed to leave.

Membership to the Social Car Scheme has also been set up enabling short trips into town. Essex Blind were contacted through the Village Agent Scheme and have completed a home visit to demonstrate simple solutions to aid independent living.

Mr X had a fall after the telecare pendant had been provided. It would be great to say that he used this to call for help that day but in actual fact the pendant was safely locked away in the top drawer of his bureau...!! He took a tumble on an uneven road surface whilst trying to take a walk in the village and a local found him by the side of the road with a broken hip some time later. It probably served as a bit of a wakeup call and he now always has the pendant on, discreetly under his jumper.

Over and above the referrals made, I also took the time to telephone and confirm hospital transport booking for his most recent trip up to Moorfields Eye Hospital in London. His previous appointment had not been kept due to the failure of the transport to arrive, and him not having any local friends or family available to take him there. I also mailed the Trading Standards 2010 calendar to Mrs X so that appointments could be written down and hung on the wall above all the paperwork on the bureau. He is unable to see, but nurses can now view the appointments and give reminders to him when they visit each morning.

The most recent referral was to Hanover to cut the over-grown lawn in his back garden now Spring is here. I have to say Hanover is an excellent referral partner with their excellent communication throughout. The VA Hub is updated, phone messages are left for me and the customers. Exact dates are given, and they do exactly what has been promised.

Not only has my signposting assisted Mr X, it has support Mrs X who was becoming increasingly concerned about Mr X and the things that she was needed to do.

33. A lady did not have a smoke alarm in her house at all. I visited a friendship club and met this lady, she did not realise that the smoke alarms were free of charge and that they lasted for 10 years. I referred her on and the Fire

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Service came out and did their safety checks. She now has 2 fitted and her house is safer because of this.

34. A lady required a couple of things. An amputee, she wondered if she could have her bathroom adapted to make her personal care easier. I contacted Social Services and explained the situation and they said they would contact her to arrange an assessment of her needs, saying she would almost definitely be able to have some adaptations. I also contacted Age Concern as this lady wanted to know what groups were going on locally. Age Concern contacted her and provided this information – they also carried out a benefits check to see if the lady had all the benefits she was entitled to.
35. A lady I met at a coffee morning also had the fire brigade fit a smoke alarm. She also contacted me a week or so after I first met her and asked if I could help her fill in a passport application as she had trouble reading and understanding them. I carried this out, which gave the lady the confidence to carry on with her passport application.
36. Mrs X contacted me after somebody had broken in to her house causing major damage to her front door which meant that she was unable to make her property secure. After making a visit and inspecting the damage Hanover were contacted and the work (repairs to the damaged door and repainting, replacing the lock and fitting additional security devices) carried out within twenty four hours of my initial phone call. All the work was carried out at no cost to Mrs X as it was covered by Hanover's Emergency Fund. Subsequent to this Mrs X has used Hanover on other occasions.
37. Mrs X contacted me after she had read an article in the Parish Magazine. Her boiler had failed and she wanted to know about the Boiler Scrap page Scheme and would she be eligible, all this had occurred in the very cold spell just before Christmas. We were able to arrange temporary heating and with the prompt help from a local heating engineer the work was completed in five days. After the work was completed I was contacted to by Mrs X to say thank you and invited to tea, in conversation she commented that she had contacted the Fire Service and that they were to come and fit a smoke alarm. She had read about this in the magazine article.
38. This case is an example of how with regular contact with people in a village you can gain their confidence. Miss X is ninety two and living on her own, she is also a very private person. I met her at the village coffee mornings and over a period of time she felt able to both talk to me with ease but also to allow me into her house to talk about having the Care Call system. The system has been installed and I have been invited on several occasions to tea.

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39. Mr X wanted his mother who is now widowed and living in sheltered accommodation in Gloucestershire to move up to Essex again to sheltered accommodation so that she would be near family. When Mr X's father died his mother was given a great deal of support and assistance by the Village Agent in her village in Gloucestershire. I contacted the agent and she was able to log on to the Gateway to Homechoice web site. The mother will be moving to Essex in the near future and will continue to be supported by an Essex Village Agent.

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Appendix I. Stage 2 areas for service promotion

Braintree Village Agents Parishes:

Patch	Original parishes	Additional parishes
1. Chivonne	Great Bardfield Great Saling Panfield Shalford	Bardfield Saling Gosfield Rayne Wethersfield
2. Jayne	Belchamp Otten Belchamp St Paul Belchamp Walter Borley Foxearth Liston Little Yeldham Tilbury Juxta Clare Ovington Pentlow	Castle Hedingham Gestingthorpe Gt Yeldham Sible Hedingham
3. Peter	Alphamstone Bulmer Great Henny Lamarsh Little Henny Middleton Twinstead, ,	Bures Hamlet Colne Engaine Earls Colne Great Maplestead Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Little Maplestead Pebmarsh White Colne Wickam St. Paul
4. Sally	Fairstead Faulkbourne Terling White Notley	Black Notley Great Notley Hatfield Peverel
5. Richard	Birdbrook Ridgewell Stambourne Toppesfield	Ashen Finchingfield Helions Bumpstead Steeple Bumpstead Sturmer
6. Lydia	Silver End	Bradwell Cressing Rivenhall Stisted

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Chelmsford Village Agents Parishes:

Patch	Original parishes	Additional parishes
1. John	East Hanningfield Rettendon	Runwell South Hanningfield West Hanningfield
2. Jo	Chignall Good Easter Mashbury Pleshey	Great Waltham Little Waltham Roxwell
3. Brenda	Highwood Margaretting	Stock Writtle

Maldon Village Agents Parishes:

Patch	Original parishes	Additional parishes
1. Laura	Bradwell-on-Sea Steeple St Lawrence	Althorne Latchingdon Mayland
2. Jan	Goldhanger Little Totham Tolleshunt Major	Heybridge Tollesbury Tolleshunt Darcy Tolleshunt Knights
3. Christine	Hazeleigh Purleigh Woodham Mortimer Woodham Walter	Mundon