

Releasing Somerset's Capacity to Care



Community micro-providers in Somerset

The impact and outcomes of the
Community Catalysts project

July 2017

1. Background

[Community Catalysts](#) is a social enterprise working across the UK to make sure that people who need care and support to live their lives can get help in ways, times and places that suit them, with real choice of attractive local options. In 2014 Somerset Council commissioned us to use our 5-step approach to nurture community enterprise in Somerset. The strategic aim:

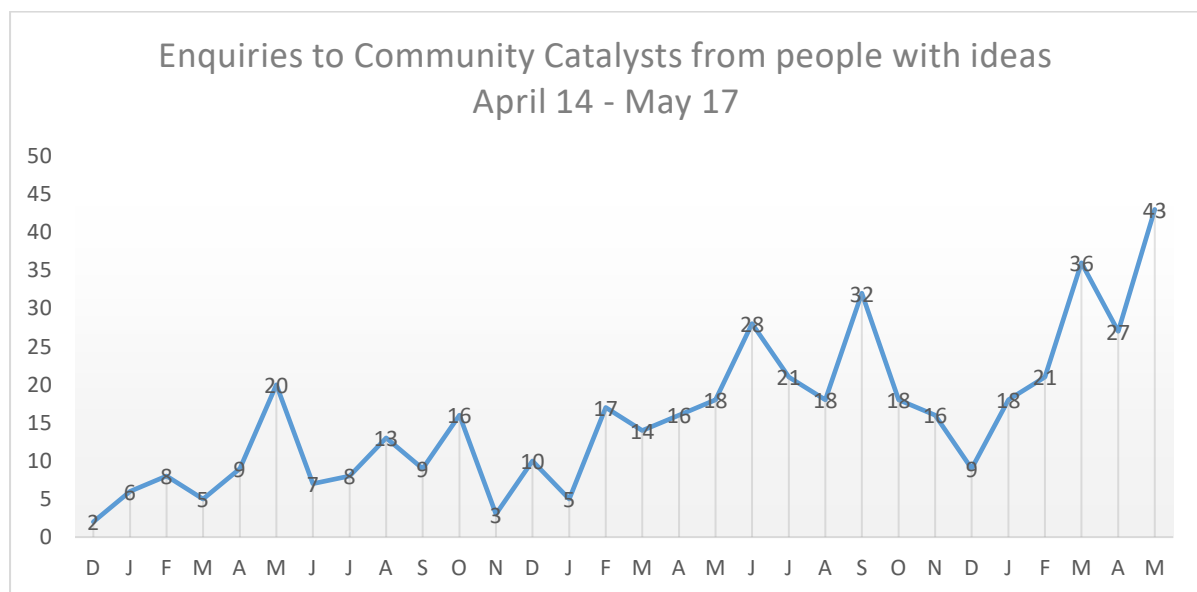
To increase the number of flexible, responsive, high quality local services and supports that can give people real choice and control over their care

With a focus on supporting local people to deliver local solutions to keep older people independent and well at home.

In 2016 we gained support from St Margarets Hospice, Somerset Community Foundation and The Local Government Association and this enabled to us to extend the reach of our project.

2. Achievements at a glance

471 enquiries from local Somerset people interested in running a community micro-enterprise.



179 new community micro-enterprises delivering help and care to people at home supported

15 new community micro-enterprises delivering other kinds of care and health services supported

96 established community micro-enterprises identified, engaged and supported

164 community micro-enterprises are members of an online peer-support network, facilitated by Community Catalysts

59 networking 'meetups' facilitated by Community Catalysts

505 community micro-providers attended networking 'meetups'



3. What do community micro-enterprises offer?

As part of the project Community Catalysts has worked with partners to develop the Community [Somerset Community Micro-enterprise Directory](#) The directory features 275 community-enterprises all of whom offer services linked to health, care or wellbeing. Of these

223 offer help to older people to enable them to stay at home

58% of these providers offer personal care services, including for people with more complex care needs. This care is often provided alongside home help, domestic and social support.

42% offer home help type services including support, companionship, domestic help, gardening, cleaning, trips out, transport.

3,500 hours of care a week are delivered by Community micro-enterprises in Somerset

4. Who is supported by community micro-enterprises?

800 people across Somerset are supported by community micro-enterprises. These include older people, people with a mental or physical illness and disabled people.

5. What is the impact in Somerset?

- Older people are well-supported at home by people from their neighbourhood.
- Support is co-designed. Creative people on both sides of the care equation are finding ways to do things differently
- **245** local jobs created by community micro-enterprises in Somerset People can work locally, earn an income and make a positive difference.

- Commissioners, older people and families know good support is available. As a result people are able to come home earlier from hospital and stay in their home for longer.
- More people are choosing to take a direct payment. The project has helped to drive a 43.6% increase in uptake of direct payments. This means that more people have choice and direct control over their support and services
- People can stay connected to their community for longer, contributing and avoiding loneliness

6. What outcomes are delivered?

The survey

Community Catalysts undertook a survey of 45 families who have used both a micro-provider and a traditional domiciliary agency. The survey was circulated by Village Agents, Health and Wellbeing Advisors, Social Workers and community entrepreneurs locally. The results showed that community micro-providers are able to deliver strong and valued outcomes for the people they support.



Savings

32 community micro-enterprises in rural West Somerset are delivering £134,712 in annual savings. Projected across the 223 micro-enterprises supported by Community Catalysts in Somerset, the project delivers:

£938,607 in annual savings

56% of people supported use direct payments, showing

£525,619 of direct and ongoing annual savings to the council

7. What do people say?

Families

I was frustrated with having different carers, coming at different times and sometimes not showing up at all. So I decided to use a micro-provider, I felt more in control, there was someone I could speak to and organise my care with. **Mrs S**

Gerry wanted to die at home. This was only possible with the support of micro-providers. They gave us the opportunity to take control of his care without the stress. They come at times to suit us, are local, they do exactly what they are supposed to do plus more. They go that extra couple of miles and we love them to bits.... We had a provider who takes us to appointments, we have even had providers sleep on an airbed on the floor in an emergency. I can't explain the difference this made. They are more like friends now. **Mrs Vanessa Henley**

Professionals

I have referred many clients to the micro-provider list and find them invaluable in their support to families at a time when they need an extra pair of hands and encouragement. Micro-providers are often not just about visiting to do the shopping or cleaning they are an emotional support to those who may be isolated, unwell or feeling low. Some micro-providers go on to build a friendship with their clients, often these clients have little or no family or close support and the wellbeing they gain from this new support is obvious in their feedback

Audrey Mansfield – Village Agent

Community micro-providers

When I found out about Community Catalysts it turned what was an idea into a reality. It was great to have someone that you could trust at the end of a phone who is able to listen, offer help and provide answers. The networking meetings that Rhys organised opened my mind to the possibilities. I didn't know what was out there and it makes you really think about your business and the considerations. The contacts and links from these meetings mean I no longer feel isolated, I have a network can give families more options of support if they needed

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Since Community Catalysts have been in Somerset it has really helped. The information they send through is so useful. I now have a lot more confidence in what I am doing.... Now if anything is wrong or if I have any doubts I can call Rhys and I have someone on my side who can give unbiased advice or point me in the right direction. The networks, training courses have been a real help. **Pat Clarke**