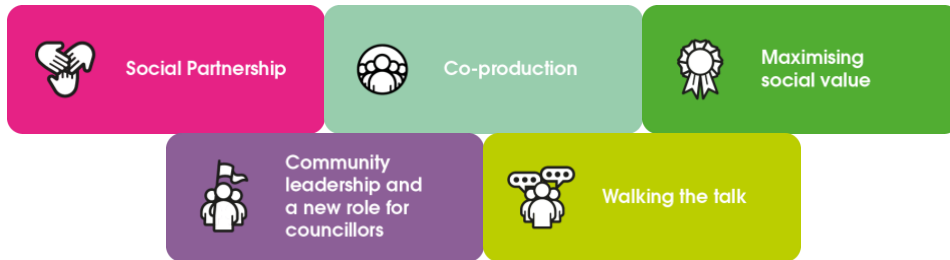




Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Burntwood Town Council

Warmer Welcome Across Town

As fears of energy price rises grew over the summer of 2022, Burntwood Town Council was aware that, given our local demography, a significant number of our residents would find themselves in fuel poverty and unable to heat their homes adequately. Seeing numerous warm spaces initiatives taking shape across the country, including by Councils within our Network, we felt that we as a parish council should do what we could with limited resources to support our residents.

We have a strong voluntary and community sector locally and we reached out to partners to ask if they would provide a Warmer Welcome to their neighbours in need. We engaged a key partner to develop a database of the Warmer Welcome spaces offering exactly that, along with free refreshments and other offers they might make such as sharing newspapers, board games, jigsaws etc. The information was widely advertised on social media and posters around the town. We were also able to give some financial support to groups who needed it to help pay for accommodation and resources. The total cost to the Council was £2000.

Over the winter of 2022/23, we had 16 Warmer Welcome spaces across our town, run by a magnificent band of volunteers each hosting between 10 and 30 residents per session. These included churches, community centres, the library, leisure centre, football club and a primary school. The initiative confirmed the value of local community leadership with a number of Councillors using their time and networks to make sure this initiative was supported and known about by our voluntary groups, our other local authority partners and, of course, our residents.

What became clear very quickly was that those attending Warmer Welcome venues were doing so for social interaction rather than heating, addressing the endemic problem of loneliness. During the summer of 2023, with Warmer Welcome continuing, we met with providers to reshape the offer which has been renamed Welcome Spaces, and continues to thrive and combat loneliness in our town.



Councillors Darren Ennis (left) and Sue Woodward (right) visiting Chasetown Football Club's Warmer Welcome session

For further information contact:

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