

# Duchess of Cornwall pays tribute to stalwart on Somerset trip<sup>1</sup>

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Camilla visited Frome Medical Centre and presented Gerald Franks with an award to mark his contribution to the local community.



Duchess of

Cornwall in Somerset

The Duchess of Cornwall has recognised a community stalwart during a day in Somerset highlighting services for those in need.

Camilla paid tribute to Gerald Franks, who set up the Frome and District day centre lunch club in 2000.

It offers a hot meal and friendship to older people who are unable to cook and take care of themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/uk-news/2019/01/30/duchess-of-cornwall-pays-tribute-to-stalwart-on-somerset-trip/>

East London and West Essex Guardian

Belfast Telegraph

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HRH The Duchess of Cornwall present Gerald Franks w/an award for running the District Day Centre Lunch Club when she dropped into Frome Medical Centre today to meet groups involved in the highly successful @MendipHCM programme Compassionate Frome tackling loneliness and isolation

As she presented an honour to Mr Franks, the duchess said: "Here's an award for all you do. You're doing a fantastic job."

Mr Franks said: "I was quite surprised. I didn't know about this. It was very enjoyable speaking with the duchess."

"She's very down to earth and speaks to you like she's known you a long time."

Today The Duchess of Cornwall has been carrying out engagements in Somerset.

At Frome Medical Centre, HRH met community groups and volunteers who are working to end isolation and loneliness in the town.

The founders of the project recognised that loneliness & isolation can exacerbate and lead to health problems.

They recruited a team of Health Connectors to direct people to services on offer in the area including hearing loss support, exercise classes and befriending services.







Camilla met Mr Franks when she visited Frome Medical Centre, where she saw first-hand the work of community groups and volunteers who join together to end isolation and loneliness in the town.

The project, sometimes known as Compassionate Frome, connects people to support networks, groups and services throughout Mendip.

It has resulted in a reduction in emergency hospital admissions.

Frome Medical Centre senior GP partner Dr Helen Kingston, co-founder of the initiative, said: “We recognised that well-being is more than simply the absence of disease.

“Loneliness and isolation can exacerbate and lead to health problems.”

Camilla also met a variety of groups who provide services to the community, including the Health Connectors and volunteer Community Connectors.

They are members of The Hub, which was set up by the practice to identify patients who might benefit from this approach, as well as other local support groups and services.



Before leaving the area the duchess visited Frome Men's Shed, which offers a work space where people can work on practical projects with others.



The Duchess of Cornwall (right) chats to members during a visit to Frome Men's Shed later in the day (Andrew Matthews/PA)