



Working together to tackle loneliness

The Campaign to End Loneliness aims to reduce chronic loneliness using research, policy, campaigning to influence policy makers and inspire organisations to work more effectively to reach and help those most at risk of loneliness.

www.campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk

Journey through loneliness...



- 1. The challenges**
- 2. The solutions?**
- 3. Your part in the solution**

The challenge - what is loneliness?



Loneliness – quality of contact

Social isolation – numerical

Solitude

“Language... has created the word "loneliness" to express the pain of being alone. And it has created the word "solitude" to express the glory of being alone.”

Paul Johannes Tillich

The challenge – Who feels lonely?



- 51% of people over 75 live alone
- 6% of over 65s leave their house once a week or less
- 17% of older people are in contact with family, friends and neighbours less than once a week, and 11% are in contact less than once a month
- Almost 5 million older people say that the television is their main form of company
- 6 - 13% of older people say they feel very or always lonely

The challenge - risks and triggers

- Social exclusion
- Demographic changes: population and single households, divorce
- Disability: Sensory or cognitive impairment and mobility
- Life changes: retirement and bereavement
- Becoming a carer, ceasing to care
- Rural isolation
- Hospitalisation, moving house or into a care setting or institution

The challenge – the impact of loneliness

- Health :
 - Blood pressure
 - Mental health – proven link to physical health
 - Alzheimers disease
 - Mortality risk
- Community
- Contribution



The solutions are at three levels

- Personal action- personal responsibility for ourselves and others: Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning, Give
- Community action- - a range of accessible services and activities – reaching and truly helping
- Strategic decisions about our health and wellbeing, commissioning and partnerships to deliver change

Solutions – examples

- **Community sharing** – Time Banks, the Big Lunch, Circles of Support
- **Diversity** - Men in Sheds, Widows Bereavement Project
- **Befriending** – Good Neighbour Schemes, telephone befriending
- **Online** – ‘In Touch Kirklees’ online interest groups
- **Statutory bodies and partnerships** – Social prescriptions by Doctors in Cambridge , Fire Services working with Age UK local partner to find the most isolated in Cheshire
- **Strategic decisions** taken by health and wellbeing boards about the whole older population in Manchester

Solutions we are calling for...

- Public health prioritising the health impacts of loneliness
- Local groups getting their voices heard by health and wellbeing boards - *loneliness harms health*
- Health and wellbeing boards setting measures and targets to tackle loneliness
- A better evidence base, with research partners: better understanding of risks , prevalence and what works
- Support for front line organisations: reach out to and help the most isolated



What you can do

- One – to – one: make your contacts count
- Community-level: reach the most isolated; refer to appropriate services; measure your impact on their loneliness
- Strategic decisions: get your voice heard by director of public health; be aware of what measures are used and ensure you feed in if appropriate