

Embargoed: 0001hrs Friday 13 January 2017

LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOODS INSPIRED TO TACKLE LONELINESS WITH £2.7MILLION NATIONAL LOTTERY GRANT

- Big Lottery Fund awards more than 50% of funding for new £4m loneliness project
- Targeting four parts of the UK
- Collaborative community-wide approach to mobilise kindness
- Over 1 million older people in the UK suffer chronic loneliness

A pioneering UK-wide project to tackle loneliness through community collaboration has received £2.7million from the Big Lottery Fund.

The Campaign to End Loneliness will deliver a national initiative, using funding raised by National Lottery players, to reduce the loneliness experienced by more than one million older people in the UK. The project will work with them to co-design programmes to tackle the issue and will drive public action to create 250, 000 acts of kindness such as regular phone calls and volunteer work in the community.

The £4 million project will be based in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire, Cambridgeshire, Glasgow and a selected region in Northern Ireland, engaging businesses, local authorities, policymakers and people to develop their own local solutions to address isolation amongst older people.

Research has shown that chronic loneliness can increase the likelihood of early death as well as the risk of dementia, high blood pressure and depression. These can converge with other emotional and physical barriers in later life, such as bereavement, disability, poor health and lack of local transport, making it harder for people to participate in activities they enjoy and to feel part of their community.

Laura Alcock-Ferguson, Director of the Campaign to End Loneliness, said: “We are delighted to receive this funding from the Big Lottery Fund. Over the next four years we will be expanding our work to inspire thousands of people to take action in their neighbourhoods, workplaces, businesses and high streets. There are more than one million older people suffering chronic loneliness in the UK, but - by making it our business to help just one of those million - we can all make a big difference.”



Big Lottery Fund Chief Executive Dawn Austwick, said: “Loneliness is an issue that touches us all, so there’s a real opportunity for this valuable project to bring communities together up and down the country to address it head on. Through putting the power in the hands of those most affected by isolation, we can develop local solutions that make a real difference to people’s lives.”

Since 2011 the Campaign to End Loneliness has increased public awareness of loneliness as a serious health threat. By building a movement of internationally renowned academics, local authority networks, and over 900 organisations, almost 80% of English health authorities have now made a commitment to tackling loneliness, with the majority attributing this to the Campaign’s influence. Now, the Campaign is broadening its approach to involve the wider community.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

Campaign to End Loneliness

The Campaign to End Loneliness inspires thousands of organisations and people to do more to tackle the health threat of loneliness in older age through community action, good practice and evidence.

For the last five years, the Campaign to End Loneliness has been working with organisations up and down the country, sharing evidence and encouraging best practice. We’re extremely proud of what we’ve achieved:

- Through building a new research network of 119 leading academics we have been instrumental in making loneliness a major public health issue
- Our Learning Network has shared best practice with over 900 organisations across all UK nations, transforming service delivery. 95% say they have improved existing services or activities to tackle loneliness in older people as a result of the Campaign
- 83% of English local authorities have commissioned new services to tackle loneliness; the majority say they used our materials to do so
- 80% of English Health & Wellbeing Boards have made a commitment to tackle loneliness; 73% say this is as a result of our influence.

The Campaign was launched in 2011, is led by five partner organisations, Age UK Oxfordshire, Independent Age, Manchester City Council, Royal Voluntary Service and Sense, and works alongside more than 2,000 supporters to tackle loneliness in older age. To date, the Campaign is funded by Founder Funder the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Independent Age, the John Ellerman Foundation, the Tudor Trust and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

More information can be found at www.campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk



For further information on the research mentioned in this release see [James et al, 2011](#) , [Hawkley et al, 2010](#) and [Cacioppo et al, 2006; Green et al, 1992](#).

Big Lottery Fund

- The Big Lottery Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It puts people in the lead to improve their lives and communities, often through small, local projects.
- It is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by National Lottery players for good causes. Every year it invests over £650 million and awards around 12,000 grants across the UK for health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
- Since June 2004 it has awarded over £8 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people.

More information can be found at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

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