

5 October 2017

## Campaign to End Loneliness launches in Cambridgeshire

- 9 in 10 people in Cambridgeshire believe loneliness in older age is now ‘more likely than ever’
- Over 70% of people in Cambridgeshire have suffered with loneliness
- Over 80% of over-65s in Cambridgeshire say they would find it hard to admit to feeling lonely because they do not want to be a burden to others
- The Campaign to End Loneliness says that the stigma of loneliness is isolating older people in Cambridgeshire
- But 67% of people say they want to help address the loneliness crisis
- 1.2 million older people around the UK experience chronic loneliness
- The Campaign and its partners invite local communities and people to attend free discussions on loneliness

**The Campaign to End Loneliness** has revealed that 9 in 10 people in Cambridgeshire believe loneliness in older age is more likely than ever - with 60% saying that admitting to loneliness is difficult. Over 70% of people in Cambridgeshire have suffered with loneliness

This research comes as the Campaign launches the first phase of its work to tackle loneliness in Cambridgeshire. The Campaign to End Loneliness, in partnership with Cambridgeshire Older People’s Enterprise (COPE) and Care Network Cambridgeshire is hosting a series of free discussions on loneliness around Cambridgeshire. All members of the community are invited to come along to learn more about loneliness, and how Cambridgeshire can tackle it. The Campaign is supported with National Lottery funding from the Big Lottery Fund.

### **Andy Nazer, Campaign Manager for the Campaign to End Loneliness, said:**

“We are thrilled to be bringing the Campaign to End Loneliness to Cambridgeshire. There is some great work happening to tackle loneliness amongst older people – and we are delighted to be part of this. But, as our research shows, there is still much to do to end loneliness, thanks to the sheer scale of the problem in Cambridgeshire. The health impacts of loneliness are devastating; it is as bad for you as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and worse for you than obesity. Most worrying, however, is the widespread view more likely than ever - that loneliness is inevitable. We’re here to challenge that.

“We’re hosting a series of free informal discussions to find out what we can do to push back against loneliness in Cambridgeshire. We are inviting anyone with an interest in older people and loneliness to join us - including all older people, carers, community and faith groups that work with older people, and members of the health and statutory sectors. We will be assessing loneliness in the area, and working to find solutions. We want to break down that stigma of loneliness – a stigma that means 80% of older people in Cambridgeshire fear admitting to being lonely. And, with the majority of our communities wanting to address the loneliness epidemic, we know that we can do this. Together, we can end loneliness.”

### **David Bailey, Chair of COPE, said:**

"Loneliness has a devastating impact on the lives of older people in Cambridgeshire and tackling it must be a priority. COPE believes that loneliness and isolation should not be seen as an inevitable part of growing older. COPE is delighted to partner with the Campaign to End Loneliness on this series of discussions to kick-start the local campaign to push back against loneliness”.

**ENDS**

Admission is free and all are welcome. No booking required. If you have any special requirements or wish for further information email [info@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk](mailto:info@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk) or call 01954 211919

**Monday 16 October, 10.30am**

WISBECH - The Queen Mary Centre, Queens Road, PE13 2PE

**Tuesday 17 October, 10.30am**

CAMBRIDGE - St. Luke's Church, Victoria Road, CB4 3DZ

**Wednesday 18 October, 7.00pm**

PETERBOROUGH - City College, Brook Street, PE1 1TU

**Thursday 19 October, 10.30am**

ST NEOTS - St Neots Town Football Club, 5 Kester Way, PE19 6SL

**Friday 20 October, 10.30am**

ELY - Ely Cathedral Conference Centre, Palace Green, CB7 4EW

**Monday 23 October, 2.00pm**

ST IVES - St Ives Free Church, Market Hill, PE27 5AL

**Tuesday 24 October, 2.00pm**

PETERBOROUGH - St Mary's Church, New Road, PE1 1TT

**Wednesday 25 October, 7.00pm**

CAMBRIDGE - The Meadows Community Centre, 1 St Catherine's Road, CB4 3XJ

**Notes to Editors**

- More than half (63%) of British adults have suffered with loneliness
- A quarter (24%) of those saying they have suffered with it for months or more
- A quarter of those aged 45+ believe that loneliness is an inevitable part of getting older.
- More than three-quarters (76%) of those aged 65+ say older people will not admit to feeling lonely because they do not want to burden others

**Based on a Censuswide survey of 2240 general consumers, including 504 65+ year olds, in August and September 2017**

**About the LSE Research**

The initial findings of '[Making the economic case for investing in actions to prevent and/or tackle loneliness: a systematic review](#)' were published in September 2017. LSE searched a number of health and social science literature databases to identify studies that compare the costs of investing in an action to tackle / prevent loneliness with the costs that may be avoided as a result of intervention. **The review has demonstrated that it is clear that it pays to invest in loneliness interventions**

- The societal and health costs of loneliness (expenditure for visits to GP's, A&E, prescriptions and other health-related costs) comes in at £6,000 per person over ten years
- Preliminary findings show that for every £1 invested you can expect a £3 return in health costs. If we spend £1 tackling the problem now, it will save us £3 in five years

**Loneliness: The Facts**

- There are 1.2 million chronically lonely older people in the UK (Age UK 2016, No-one should have no one)
- Half a million older people go at least five or six days a week without seeing or speaking to anyone at all (Age UK 2016, No-one should have no one)
- Over half (51%) of all people aged 75 and over live alone (Office for National Statistics 2010. *General Lifestyle Survey 2008*)
- Two fifths all older people (about 3.9 million) say the television is their main company (Age, U.K., 2014. Evidence Review: Loneliness in Later Life. *London: Age UK*)

### **About the Campaign to End Loneliness**

The Campaign to End Loneliness believes that loneliness is everyone's business. We believe that everyone in older age should have meaningful connections in their life. We work with thousands of organisations and people to tackle loneliness. We influence government policy and practice through our research and learning network, and campaign to ensure that loneliness is a public health priority at national and local levels. We believe that loneliness is not inevitable. Watch our film, [The Loneliness Project](#).

Using our recent grant from the Big Lottery Fund, we have begun work in four areas across the UK - Glasgow, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, Cambridgeshire and Belfast - to support change already being delivered by our partners and others. In each area we hope to help catalyse ideas, share good practice and influence service providers, so loneliness is reduced for local older people.