

Find out how we're  
**working together** to end  
loneliness in later life



Campaign to  
**EndLoneliness**  
CONNECTIONS IN OLDER AGE

## The challenge

Today, up to 10% of older people living in Great Britain say they're intensely lonely\*. That's nearly one million over-65s who feel alone and isolated.

Most people understand the emotional pain that loneliness can cause. But evidence shows it can also harm our physical and mental health too.

In fact, research reveals that the impact of loneliness and isolation on early death is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day\*.

**The challenge is not just to support older people feeling lonely right now – it's taking action to ensure we all enjoy a less lonely future.**

## Who we are

At the Campaign to End Loneliness, we create connections in older age by working with and through organisations and individuals that support older people, and by influencing national and local policy.

To achieve this, we collaborate with everyone from campaigners and small charities to local authorities and large government departments. By sharing the latest research, evidence, information and good practice we aim to ensure lonely older people get the support they need to lead happier and more fulfilled lives.



\*For references for all statistics please see our website  
[www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research](http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research)



## What we've achieved so far

Addressing loneliness is a serious challenge, especially since we're a small team with limited funding. Despite this, in our first three years we've already changed minds, inspired action and raised the profile of loneliness as a health problem. This critical work has been made possible through the support and expertise provided by our managing partners – Age UK Oxfordshire, Independent Age, Manchester City Council, Royal Voluntary Service and Sense.

To evaluate our impact, we worked with the Charities Evaluation Services (CES) to produce a report which highlights how we've:

- Exceeded what we hoped to achieve in **raising awareness** of our Campaign and the issue of loneliness – especially through TV, newspapers and the internet.
- Increased people's understanding of, and commitment to, tackling loneliness and **inspiring action** from supporters and influencers on the issue.
- Exceeded expectations in securing real **policy change** – particularly on a national level.

## Raising awareness

At the heart of our work is making sure politicians, key influencers and the wider public understand the importance of tackling loneliness in later life.

To achieve this, we've shared information and research through the internet and social media, delivered one-to-one presentations to key influencers and completed extensive media work to promote our message.

The CES report praises the “unexpected level of success in [the Campaign's] media work” and concludes that, “There is evidence of a change in the nature of the debate around loneliness.”

“

**In the last two years I have written more on these issues, partly due to the Campaign. They are good at highlighting evidence and action for social care.**

Social Care Journalist

”

1/2

of all older people (over 5 million) say television is their main company.



## Inspiring action

In a survey of 175 supporters, sixty-five per cent said we've inspired them to do more to tackle loneliness. And forty-seven per cent of these supporters say we've helped them do "considerably more" to make change happen.

We know our supporters are passionate about creating a high-profile debate on loneliness. In our June 2013 supporter survey, 86% said they passed Campaign information on – often to service providers, but also to friends, family, colleagues and academics in the UK and beyond.

Influencing health and wellbeing boards – which bring together health officials and local authorities to develop local strategies for action – is an important way supporters can put loneliness on the health agenda.

We help them do this by providing practical lobbying tools, along with the evidence they need to build a powerful case for tackling loneliness.

We've taken our Campaign direct to key influencers too. In 2012 we hosted an event with the Department of Health to mobilise organisations on the health harms of loneliness.

Events like this help raise the government's awareness of our work. In an nfpSynergy report, 16% of MPs surveyed said they were definitely aware of the Campaign and 31% supported our aims. This level of impact is similar to that achieved by major campaigns run by some of the UK's largest charities.



# 50%

People with stronger social relationships had a 50% increased likelihood of survival.



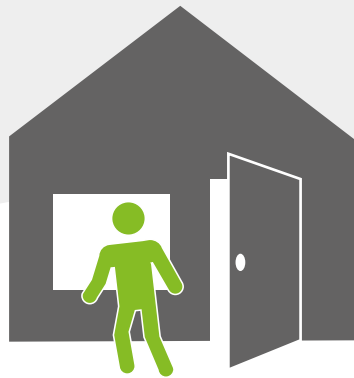
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**I am now a council expert on loneliness! I'm able to use that knowledge to influence others.**

Member of  
Essex County Council

”





6%

of older people  
leave their house  
once a week or less.

## Changing policy

The CES report says that, “The Campaign has achieved more than expected in terms of national and local policy change.”

We’ve achieved this by working directly with key influencers targeting national policy as well as local activists campaigning for change from the grass roots.

By encouraging our supporters to share our information, use our dedicated toolkits and spread our evidence and research, we’ve helped ensure that loneliness is included in key policies.

As a direct result of Campaign lobbying, loneliness was included in a government White Paper, Caring For Our Future: Reforming Care and Support, and two government measures of wellbeing.

When England’s 128 new health and wellbeing boards published strategies, 61 had at least recognised that loneliness or isolation was a serious issue that needed to be addressed, in part due to our efforts.

“

**We used the Toolkit to  
draft the initial paper to the  
Health and Wellbeing Board...  
this resource was really helpful.**

Commissioner for  
Older People and Dementia,  
Thurrock Council

”

## Our toolkit

**Our online toolkit is a practical way  
we help health and wellbeing boards  
understand, identify and plan how  
to tackle loneliness in older age.**

[www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/toolkit](http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/toolkit)



## Together we can achieve even more

We believe that loneliness must stand alongside smoking as one of the most important public health issues of our time. By tackling it now, we can create a happier, less lonely future for everyone.

Despite our small size we like to think we've punched above our weight to help others understand, highlight and tackle loneliness at all levels of society. But we need to do much more. And that means changing the way we work to empower our supporters to create an even greater impact.

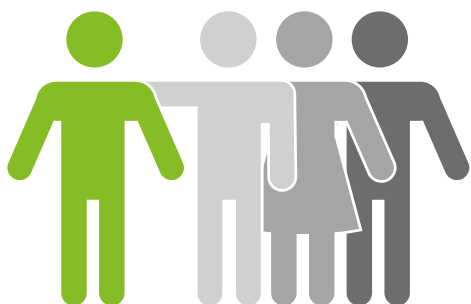


### OUR GOAL

Between 2014-16 we want to move closer to our goal of reducing loneliness in old age by creating the right conditions for a range of organisations to improve their policy and practice.

We want to:

- Help organisations develop and commission more high quality services and activities for older people to tackle loneliness
- Make the services and activities that already exist even better
- Encourage older people to make more use of them



## To do this we'll focus on three key parts of our work over the next three years:

### BETTER CAMPAIGNING

Over half (53%) of England's health and wellbeing boards do not recognise the importance of tackling loneliness.

In the next 36 months, we want to convince three-quarters of all the health and wellbeing boards in England to tackle the issue and 40% to actually commission services that work.

We'll achieve this by inspiring more local supporters to become active campaigners in the battle against loneliness. Then we'll supply them with the evidence, research and tools they need to make a difference and help everyone share their knowledge of success on the frontline.

We'll also continue to improve national awareness by targeting policy-makers including ministers, the Department of Health, HealthWatch England and the media at large. Specialist meetings and effective events are a key part of this strategy to get them onside.

### BUILDING BETTER RESEARCH

Developing the most effective tools for local supporters means gathering the best possible evidence for tackling loneliness.

To achieve this we're bringing together leading academics across Europe to help them collaborate with each other and to support them in sharing their expert knowledge with activists on the frontline.

As part of this effort, we'll also hold informative and inspiring events to bring people together to learn from one another and to mobilise as many organisations as possible to take action on loneliness.

### DEVELOPING AND SHARING RESOURCES

Getting our message out to local communities means empowering supporters to identify where services are needed and highlight the impact of services that already exist.

Where these tools don't already exist we'll bring together the research community with frontline services to help create them.

For instance, at present there's no widely available, free tool that allows organisations to highlight the impact of services to funders or policy-makers. During the next three years we aim to bridge this gap with a new tool we're developing to achieve just that.

# Campaign to **EndLoneliness**

CONNECTIONS IN OLDER AGE

## Join us

To find out more about us and how we can support your work, please phone 020 7012 1409, email [info@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk](mailto:info@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk) or visit [www.campaigntoendloneliness.org](http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org)

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