

Getting Started



End Loneliness in...

Campaign to
EndLoneliness
CONNECTIONS IN OLDER AGE

Why start an End Loneliness in... campaign?

You've obviously come to this point because, like us, you are passionate about the need to end loneliness. Community groups and individuals are in the best position to highlight local problems and help decision makers like your town or county council, or local health and wellbeing board, to understand the challenges in their own area. As a national organisation, we can only have so much influence on local policy in your area; but if you start talking, as an individual or as a group, to your MP, councillors, local newspaper or radio, they are much more likely to listen to what you have to say.

“The council told me that they'd been 'bombarded' with letters about the issue and overwhelmed with the response to the consultation. They said that they would definitely be putting loneliness in their strategy, which is a great result.”

Local campaigner in Cornwall

Using the End Loneliness in... brand

You're welcome to use the End Loneliness in... logo, poster and leaflet for your own activities. Please put your own location into the logo. It's up to you to choose how large this area is – it could be your entire county, your town or even just your street. The poster and leaflet have been left blank for you to fill in your own details. Can we please ask that you read through the Terms of Use before using these materials?

Choosing the right type of activity for you

There are so many different ways to create change in your community, some of which you can do on your own, or others which involve a whole bunch of

people. For example, you could write to influential people or to local newspapers, attend meetings, organise an event - or even a series of events.

There are various factors you will need to consider in designing and running a successful campaign.

Have a think about the resources you will need, such as:

- ❓ money
- ❓ people
- ❓ time

Try to be realistic about what you can achieve with your resources, and plan your involvement accordingly. You're more likely to achieve your goals if you do this, which will help you stay enthusiastic!

❓ **End Loneliness In... as part of a group**

Working as a group can really strengthen your efforts. It shows that the issue is important to lots of people and helps you share the workload and draw on everyone's skills.

If you're not currently a member of a group but would like to organise a group campaign, the first thing to do is get in touch with us and find out if there are other people in your area who have already got a campaign started, or who are in a similar position as you. If not, you'll need to find your own allies. We have plenty of advice on how you can do that here – take a look at “working with like minded people”.

End Loneliness In... as an individual

You might feel that organising a group campaign is too complicated; co-ordinating lots of people isn't always easy. Also, people may have different ideas about how to do things or how much time they want to commit. You might simply feel passionately about this issue and have definite ideas about

what needs to be done. If so, go ahead! It's incredible how much difference just one person can make.

Either way, read on for ideas on how to get going. There are lots of examples of work that's already underway all over the country, which we hope might inspire your own activities, but you probably already have ideas of your own.

What change do you want to create?

Community activism can achieve major change. However, it's important to set yourself realistic and achievable steps towards that change (these step-changes are sometimes called outcomes).

When starting to take action, or even if you just want to write a letter, ensure that you have a clearly defined aim and clear ways of expressing this to the people you are trying to convince. This will help others who might want to work with you. It will also remind you of what you're trying to achieve, and ensure that everyone knows the 3 main points you need to articulate when talking to the press, decision makers and anyone outside the group that you may want to influence.

Finally, it helps to know what you want to achieve so you can make sure that you all recognise when it has been achieved: don't forget to celebrate that success!

“ We will be writing to our ward councillors and our MEP to involve them in our "Ending Loneliness Campaign". We have three volunteers who are currently phoning all our non-renewed members and members who have no next of kin to start talking to those who are isolated, alone, lonely and in need. ”

Choosing an angle

You may already have a clear idea as to what you think needs to be done, or you may be looking to us for inspiration. There are lots of angles you could take:

- ❓ You could run a general ‘awareness raising’ campaign

Shine a Light on Loneliness: The East Anglian Daily Times and Age UK Suffolk have formed a partnership to launch a year-long campaign to stop older people in the county being lonely.

The campaign aims to highlight the challenges many Suffolk residents face in later life and publicise some of the opportunities that exist to get out and about.

- ❓ You could demand your local authority take action on loneliness by using our [guidance for local authorities and commissioners.](#)

E.g. A Campaign to End Loneliness supporter started lobbying her Health and Wellbeing Board in Bedford. Writing first to her MP, she received a quick response. She also made contact several times with the Board and her local councillor via letters, phone calls and emails, and received an encouraging letter from the Mayor of Bedford.. She was invited to attend the Adult Health and Wellbeing sub group to highlight the issue further.

- 📌 You could organise a 'get to know your neighbour' campaign

E.g. Joseph Rowntree's Neighbourhood Approaches to Loneliness was a three-year action research programme exploring and identifying what makes us feel lonely where we live and work and what we can all do about it. They produced a set of resources to help individuals, groups, communities and neighbourhoods take a closer look at – and to reduce – loneliness. We suggest, when thinking about the angle you want to take on this issue, you have a read through the JRF resources

- 📌 Or, you could take a look at issues specific to your area, such as a lack of public transport or community spaces, and run some local activities around one of these

E.g. 'Still Waiting' campaign to end transport isolation: Too many older people in Scotland lack access to suitable public transport, making their free bus pass all but useless. The 'Still Waiting' campaign aims to ensure alternative Community Transport services are available to meet their needs.

What has been achieved so far:

- Put isolation due to lack of transport on the politician's agenda, with 38 MSPs backing our campaign and Parliamentary debates and enquiries on
- Secured £1m in additional funding for Community Minibuses.
- The Scottish Government has now commissioned further research that should better demonstrate the benefits of investment in Community Transport.

Choosing an issue specific to your area

There are lots of different ways to find out the key issues affecting older people that might be leading to loneliness or social isolation in your area. It's worth spending time getting to know local views – what do people want? This will help make your case stronger and your achievements clearer:



- ❓ Visit your local older people's forum and ask for the views of members
- ❓ Visit a day centre, lunch club or other regular club and speak to those attending
- ❓ Speak to local older people's charities about local concerns
- ❓ Ask your local council if they have undertaken any surveys of local people that they could share with you
- ❓ Read your local newspaper and identify any relevant issues

The partners in the 'Rotherham Less Lonely Campaign' are working together to reduce loneliness by including people of all ages from their local communities. They encourage people to get involved as an individual, as a business, as a school, as a team at work, in a community group or a church or mosque. They encourage people to volunteer, fundraise or take action in their community. Ideas you could take from them include:

- Your local school could put on a 'tea party' for older people who cannot get out and about, and bring them in to have tea, cake and fun!
- Your church or community organisation could put on a lunch club or social club and transport people to it who cannot get out without help.

Choosing your target

Once you have decided on the specific issue you want to highlight, you will need to decide WHO you need to target to achieve your goals. Who has the power to make the change you want to see? For example, if you wanted to lobby your health and wellbeing board, your ultimate target would be members of your local board.

Choose your target carefully and make sure they have the power to make the change you want to see. There is no point lobbying a national minister over a very local issue, for example, as they are unlikely to have any control over aspects of local policy.

If you're planning general awareness-raising, you will want to target as many local influencers as possible – so make sure you contact your MP, local councillors, local Healthwatch, local newspapers and any relevant local charities. Remember, your local MP or councillor is an influential person who can speak up on your behalf, so getting their support can only help you achieve your goals.

A local angle on an existing Campaign issue

We're currently asking health and wellbeing boards to take a leadership role in reducing loneliness in their local area. We have produced a range of resources to support them on this, and will be publishing online guidance for commissioners at the end of June to support your board to find effective ways to reduce loneliness in your local area.

We're asking local people to raise awareness of this issue and lobby their local representatives to take steps to tackle loneliness, using these resources to

“

As an older person and having lost my partner, quite often lonely, it was good to talk to others and gave me a lot of hope that loneliness is an issue that is being addressed as a matter of importance ”

Attendee at a local campaigning event
in Yorkshire

support them. If you would like to take this on specifically in your local area, we have a range of extra resources that can help you.

However, it's important to bear in mind that local activities need to be owned by the people who run them, rather than the Campaign. You are very welcome to use the End Loneliness in... branding, but please do not use Campaign to End Loneliness branding because we cannot monitor its use.

Actions

Once you have identified your aim(s) and highlighted the key messages you want to communicate, you can start thinking about how you are going to achieve these aims. Read on for possible actions.