



### **Project in brief**

In 2015, [Promising Approaches to reducing loneliness and isolation in later life](#) was published by the Campaign to End Loneliness and Age UK. This set out a framework approach to combatting loneliness and was targeted at local authorities commissioning services, highlighting effective services in the Third Sector, and for funders.

The [Campaign to End Loneliness](#) would like to revisit that framework in light of a number of government strategies across the UK to combat loneliness, the increased awareness and activity on this issue, and to explore if there are other promising approaches worth investing and expanding upon.

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

The Campaign to End Loneliness believe that people of all ages need connections that matter. Our focus is on older people.

We've been experts in the field of loneliness and connection since 2011. We share research, evidence and knowledge with thousands of other organisations and the public to make a difference to older people's lives.

We inspire everyone to connect and bring communities together across the UK. We're hosted and funded by Independent Age and supported by the National Lottery Community Fund. We have also been funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, The Tudor Trust alongside generous donations from the general public.

## **The issue**

Loneliness and unwanted social isolation are now widely recognised as among the most significant and entrenched issues facing our society. The two are often talked about in the same breath, but there are important distinctions. Whilst unwanted social isolation is an objective state – defined in terms of the quantity of social relationships and contacts – loneliness is a subjective experience. Loneliness is a negative emotion associated with a perceived gap between the quality of relationships that we have and those we want. In this way loneliness is deeply personal – its causes, consequences and indeed its very existence are impossible to determine without reference to the individual and their own values, needs, wishes and feelings.

Research indicates that loneliness can negatively impact on mental and physical health – from higher blood pressure, increased risk of cardio-vascular problems and strokes, to higher risk of dementia<sup>1</sup>. Loneliness is now widely accepted to be influenced by a combination of psychological factors too, including attitudes to participating in social interactions. Feeling lonely can sit alongside depression and anxiety and other mental health issues <sup>2</sup>.

If you are single, a lack of social connections it is the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day says Professor Julianne Holt-Lundstadt<sup>3</sup>. This statistic has helped focus minds on the impact of loneliness on public health.

Everyone can experience loneliness, and it is now acknowledged that loneliness is an all-age problem. There is considerable stigma around the issue of loneliness. Older people may find constant loneliness hard to overcome as it may be compounded by, or triggered by, changes in personal circumstances around health, work, and living situation.

Age UK have projected that within the next decade, if we do not tackle loneliness, there will be two million lonely people aged 50 and over in England, for example<sup>4</sup>.

Our focus remains with older people.

## **Background to this project**

In 2015, [Promising Approaches to reducing loneliness and Isolation in later life](https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health/) was published by the Campaign to End Loneliness and Age UK. A companion document was also published with the Local Government Association in 2016 for local authorities. The framing of the issue as a public health concern helped generate action and funding. The work done by Professor Julianne Holt-Lundstadt highlighted that loneliness if you lived alone, and lacked social

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.apa.org/members/content/holt-lunstad-loneliness-social-connections>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-press/articles/2018/october/all-the-lonely-people-report/>

connections, was comparable to other major health risk factors and helped public health take the issue more seriously<sup>5</sup>

The biggest development since the publication of Promising Approaches has been the rise to prominence of the issue of loneliness and the emergence of government strategies across the UK. This built on years of policy and research work by the Campaign to End Loneliness, Age UK, Independent Age and key funders and other stakeholders.

The work of Jo Cox MP and the Commission in her name catapulted the issue of loneliness high onto the UK political agenda. The Jo Cox Commission formed in January 2017 was made up of 13 organisations including the Campaign to End Loneliness. This worked alongside a cross-party group of MPs who published a report with key recommendations in December 2017 that would apply to England. The then Prime Minister, Theresa May, appointed the world's first Loneliness Minister in 2018. The strategy was published in October 2018 for England<sup>6</sup>. A significant fund £11.5 million to combat loneliness was set up and managed by the National Lotteries Communities Fund for UK-wide programmes across the life course<sup>7</sup>

In Scotland and Wales, loneliness is a devolved issue. Ministers in Scotland and Wales had combatting loneliness added onto their portfolios. The development of the Scottish strategy had its genesis in work done by the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee who called for an investigation into the prevalence of loneliness in Scotland in 2015<sup>8</sup>. Scotland published its strategy in December 2018 and a £1 million fund was announced that has not distributed funds yet<sup>9</sup>

The Welsh strategy is expected in Autumn/ Winter 2019 with consultations already held.

In Northern Ireland, despite the stalemate at Stormont, many MLA's have been engaged on the issue through participation in All-Party Groups<sup>10</sup>, particularly that on ageing and older people; as have various councils. There has also been a North-South All-Ireland Taskforce on Loneliness established<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-connected-society-a-strategy-for-tackling-loneliness>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.tnlfund.org.uk/news/press-releases/2018-12-22/government-announces-11-5-million-fund-to-tackle-loneliness-across-england>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1712/social-isolation-and-loneliness-in-scotland-a-review-of-prevalence-and-trends.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/connected-scotland-strategy-tackling-social-isolation-loneliness-building-stronger-social-connections/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/mlas/allpartygroups.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> <https://lonelinesstaskforce.com/>

## **Project scope and objectives**

The world of loneliness has changed dramatically since we published [Promising Approaches](#) in December 2015 with its rise to prominence and recognition that this is an all-age issue.

Using our 2015 publication as a foundation, we want to develop a new publication with an online version, that:

### **Definitions**

- Focuses on older people (though there may be examples that illustrate intergenerational connections). We are defining older age as 55+ given the different experience of ageing across the country.
- Considers expanding on definition of types, duration and intensity of loneliness.

### **Evidence and context**

- Include any new evidence on existing approaches as set out in the original framework.
- Look to include any relevant new promising approaches for combatting chronic loneliness.
- Explore if the model requires refinement or expansion (e.g. considerations around housing and public spaces).
- Ensure due consideration is given on rural, as well as urban, loneliness.
- Explore some best case examples of promising approaches in preventative earlier interventions.

### **Data**

- Review, or draw on, recent and existing quantitative household data sources across the UK to underline who is most at risk and whether there are any indications of what is having an impact. Check in around learning gathered from funders, particularly the £11.5m fund to combat loneliness in older populations.

### **Policy Drivers**

- Identify other key policy drivers that combatting loneliness could be contained or coupled with.

## **Case studies**

- Source and interview potential case studies for the model.
- Search out positive examples of collaborative approaches amongst local authorities, health bodies, other public bodies with the Third Sector to combat loneliness, particularly those approaches that have check-in points along the way for individuals. To explore examples of how sustainable funding has been secured.
- Utilise the insight gathered from Campaign to End Loneliness colleagues. This includes the use of the Promising Approaches model from the public and Third Sector on the robustness or need for expansion of the model (e.g. Belfast, Age UK local branches around England, and examples in Wales and Scotland).
- In liaison with the Campaign Manager for NI, to be cognisant of, and where applicable and useful, incorporating learning from NI's work on Promising Approaches:
  - Through the campaign's test area in Belfast, and in collaboration with the Belfast Health and Development Unit, develop a case study
  - Through partnership working with CLARE-CIC and QUB, develop a case study, and
  - If timely and useful, incorporate or reference the Campaign to End Loneliness and Age NI's research on what has worked for older people in NI, particularly that which utilises the existing promising approaches model.

## **Indicators, guides and mapping**

- Indicators are often used in projects to demonstrate progress. Review which indicators would help chart progress for an individual in making meaningful connections. This may involve asking key funders on loneliness projects to share some of the indicators or ways they know a project is making a positive difference to an individual or community. We would anticipate also looking at what the data tells us about the impact of the £11.5m fund for combatting loneliness as it relates to older people.
- To explore what promising 'open conversation' tools there are to help chart problems faced by individuals experiencing loneliness, and for charting improvements in self-confidence and self-efficacy.

- To explore social mapping approaches that organisations, like Glasgow Disability Alliance, have taken to map improvements in individual's ability to develop greater social capital<sup>12</sup>
- Review whether some research work done by the LSE to develop a cost-effectiveness tool should be referenced in this publication.

### **Future areas to explore**

- To identify through conversations with key thinkers on this issue any new potential areas for research or expansion for the future.

### **Policy recommendations**

- To make key recommendations across different chapters that takes account of different devolved areas.

### **The Existing Model**

Promising Approaches had set out a framework that provided an entry point to commissioners and service providers. See page 11.

The starting point of our model is 'Foundation Services' – reaching people experiencing chronic loneliness, understand and personalise a response, and ensure they can access appropriate supports.

Structural enablers highlighted the need to put in place the right conditions within society to enable people to make 'meaningful connections'; such as having neighbourhoods that are welcoming, the use of volunteering, asset-based community development, and addressing positive ageing.

The publication highlighted that there were a number of categories for types of intervention: from helping people maintain existing connections, making new connections, and helping individuals change their thinking to help combat loneliness. The latter will be the focus of a publication commissioned by the Campaign to End Loneliness and released in Spring 2020.

It also highlighted the gateway role that transport and technology have to enable people to keep existing connections as well as new connections.

### **Anticipated approach**

- Desk research.

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<sup>12</sup><sup>12</sup> <http://gda.scot//content/publications/Final-2016-GDA-SocialCapitalSummary.pdf>

- Interview of key academic, third sector, and think tanks for latest thinking on promising approaches.
- Understand the key policy drivers in health and social care in particular across the devolved nations through conversations with local authority, public bodies, think tanks and key thinkers in the third sector e.g. Kings Fund, SCIE, LGA, COSLA, WLA (and Northern Ireland). Identify other key policy drivers that combatting loneliness could be contained within.
- Explore the British Red Cross parameters of types of interventions and how these could be applied to the existing model featured in Trapped in a Bubble research <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/action-on-loneliness>.
- Agree key criteria for case studies with steering group.
- Work with Project Manager and Evaluation Manager to agree how learning from the development of this publication will be captured in a timely and non-time-intensive way.
- Identify potential case studies and interview.
- Ensure it is reflective across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Determine whether to include the cost effectiveness tool work done by the LSE and whether it should be incorporated into this document.
- Ensure that rural and urban loneliness contexts are considered. Determine if it impacts on the model and ensure there are rural based case studies.
- Particularly consider those interventions that help address the impacts of poverty and long-term conditions on older people as data indicates these are major drivers for loneliness.
- Review, or draw on, recent and existing quantitative household data sources across the UK to underline who is most at risk and whether there are any indications of what is having an impact.
- The Campaign to End Loneliness staff will be holding a series of workshops early in 2020 to explore best way to embed any learning from the previous publication. The writer should determine how best to integrate any of that insight with respect to the model.

- Review existing evaluation criteria from funders on what makes an impact on loneliness interventions.
- Test and ensure language for the model is straightforward and understandable.
- Look at appendix contained in this tender to see what questions the organisation is interested in.

### **Timescales and deliverables**

The product should be no more than 70 pages to reflect an updated model. This should include new case studies. Appendices are additional.

It is also expected that a set of recommendations should be included, pertinent to different chapters.

A chapter or appendix setting out key indicators for service providers and commissioners to consider is expected, as is a review of some of the different approaches to having person-centred outcome conversations.

A chapter or appendix setting out some promising approaches for demonstrating an individual's expanded social network is also expected.

### **Indicative Timetable**

Closing date	10 December
Interviews:	w/c 16 December
Appointment	End w/c 16 December 2019
Induction	w/c 13 January 2020
Desk study	From 20 Jan 2020
Case study recommendations	w/c 10 February 2020
Report framework	w/c 24 February 2020
Case study interviews	late Feb-late March 2020
Report 1 <sup>st</sup> draft	by 3 April 2020
Design brief for online presentation	10 April (input from writer)
Report 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft	30 April 2020
Photography commissioned	End April 2020; delivered mid-May
Sign off	By 15 May 2020
Design (print and online)	18 May-5 June 2020
Final design sign off	1 June 2020
Final proofing	3-5 June 2020
To print	15 June 2020
Available	29 June 2020

## **Budget**

£15-20k for the writing process. We estimate that this will take approximately 35 days.

## **Project governance and management**

Project Manager is Anne Callaghan, Campaign Manager in Scotland for the Campaign to End Loneliness.

## **Steering committee**

There will be a steering committee of no more than 15 individuals, set up to ensure we take views on the development of the publication. This will meet roughly quarterly. It will be drawn from members within the Campaign to End Loneliness staff team, Age UK representatives, external academics, community/service providers, local authority/health representatives.

## **Performance and quality requirements**

The contractor will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and must agree to abide by any guidelines issued by their profession.

Ownership of all research outcomes, including the final report and all data produced as a result of the research, lies with the Campaign to End Loneliness. The appointed contractor should not discuss project findings in public before a final report has been cleared by us, although with prior agreement aspects of the study may be discussed. Following publication, the contractor will be free to discuss the study in public; however, we should be given the opportunity to comment on any proposed presentation or publication using data or findings from this project.

## **How to respond to this brief**

Deadline for questions on the tender are by noon on **4 December**

**The deadline for tender is Noon on 10 December 2019.**

Bidders should supply a short proposal document (of up to 15 pages with a minimum 11-point font size) outlining:

- Their understanding of the project and the issue of loneliness
- Their knowledge of who the key players are in the sector and what recent research since 2015 that would be relevant
- Proposed approach to the task/methodology
- Their experience of developing reports and recommendations
- Experience of working in devolved nations and understanding of different policy contexts
- Experience of interviewing stakeholders
- Experience of writing photography briefs to support case study materials.
- CV for other key staff may be included as an appendix, if appropriate.

Any questions about the tender should be directed to  
[anne@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk](mailto:anne@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk).

Bidders should submit an electronic copy of their tender submission to  
[anne@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk](mailto:anne@campaigntoendloneliness.org.uk) no later than **12.00 Noon on 10 December 2019**.

The subject line should be as follows: "Tender reference – promising approaches 2" (name of publication tbc).

By submitting a tender, the bidder agrees to keep that tender open for acceptance by the Campaign for 21 days following the closing date for submission of tenders.