



# Rotherham Less Lonely: April 2012



# Introductions

**Lesley Dabell** - Chief Executive of Age UK Rotherham

**Carole Haywood** - Local Strategic Partnership  
Manager, Rotherham LSP



# Loneliness in Older Age: How big is the problem?

- 10% of older people are always or intensely lonely = 4, 000 + in Rotherham
- 38% are sometimes lonely = 17, 000 in Rotherham
- Almost 50% of older people are affected by loneliness = 21, 000 in Rotherham



# Loneliness in Older Age: Why does it matter?

## Impact on older people

- Has health impacts comparable to life long smoking
- Close links to depression and deprivation as well as e.g. dementia
- Also linked to physical health problems such as CVD, excess drinking.
- Loneliness and poor physical health interact – vicious cycle



# Loneliness in Older Age: Why does it matter?

## Impact on public services

- Loneliness costs us money
- Exacerbates and creates health conditions
- Decreases ability to live independently
- Leads to 'inappropriate' use of services as no other alternative service to address the issue  
e.g. AUKR Hospital Aftercare, District Nurses, GPs, Police



# Loneliness in Older Age: What can we do about it?

**Good news – amenable to low level and relatively low cost interventions**

- Effective in combatting vulnerability and reducing need for health and social care services
- Volunteers and VCS organisations have a large part to play – but remember ‘low cost’ not ‘no cost’



# Action in progress: Example = Age UK Rotherham

- **Championing** this issue for past 2 years, lead partner in Campaign
- **Services** supported by NHSR grants and fundraising:
  - **Linkline** – daily telephone call by volunteers
  - **Two's Company** – volunteer befriending service
  - Trips and events
  - **Phase 2:** Friendsline/ Linked up? Men in Sheds?



# The Rotherham Less Lonely Campaign

**Supported by Rotherham's Local Strategic Partnership partners to develop the Campaign to:**

- Raise awareness of the issue and its impacts
- Help to generate a whole community response e.g. through local events, corporate volunteering and fundraising
- Make it intergenerational – involve schools/ colleges and young people





# Health and Well Being Board

- LGA report outlines why local authorities needs to take this issue seriously
- It recommends that loneliness in older age is considered as part of local Health and Well Being and Ageing Well Strategies.





**Contacts:** Lesley Dabell, Chief Executive, Age UK  
Rotherham

[lesley.dabell@ageukrotherham.org](mailto:lesley.dabell@ageukrotherham.org)

Carole Haywood, LSP Manager,

[Carole.haywood@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:Carole.haywood@rotherham.gov.uk)

**References:**

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