

LI 22

Ymchwiliad i unigrwydd ac unigedd

Inquiry into loneliness and isolation

Ymateb gan: Fforwm 50+ Cyngor Caerdydd

Response from: Cardiff Council 50+ Forum

Inquiry into Loneliness and Isolation

Please see below views of Cardiff's 50+ Forum members on what causes loneliness and isolation and what needs to be done to help overcome these.

Members discussed the topic and indicated that loneliness and isolation were not the same and indicated that they could be a personal thing with it being different from person to person. Member gave examples and indicated that whilst some people have outgoing personalities and are able to mix well, others find interacting with others difficult.

Members indicated that a host of evidence has been produced in recent years indicating the links between loneliness and isolation and health issues. They endorse this evidence and indicated how they have seen this in their own communities.

Members indicated that they either had experienced loneliness and isolation themselves or that they had friends or relatives who had. They indicated a range of reasons for why loneliness and isolation can be encountered these included:

- Bereavement
- Family moving away
- Not having family
- Being away from old neighbours / communities (due to downsizing / financial constraints)
- Being shy / not mixing / lack of confidence
- Loss of community spirit
- Loss of transport
- Reliance on public transport (especially in rural locations)
- Ill health (poor mobility, dementia, sensory impairments)
- Lack of Dr's appointments leading to greater ill health
- Retirement

- Fear of crime
- Community facilities closing (banks, community centres, post offices)
- Funding cuts to community organisations / groups
- Poor public footpaths resulting in fear of falling
- Lack of finances
- Lack of public toilets
- Lack of information of what is available / local activities
- Over reliance of ICT to promote opportunities (not all older people have access to or want to use ICT)

Members then discussed ways of overcoming loneliness and isolation these included:

- Planning for retirement, both financially and how to occupy time
- The promotion of volunteering opportunities
- The promotion of services giving financial / benefit take up advice
- Joining friendship clubs or other community based groups / activities
- The promotion of learning for fun
- Welsh Government / Local authorities to provide funding for voluntary organisations such as Age Connects or for Good neighbour schemes
- The provision and promotion of befriending services
- The provision of information about activities / groups available in local areas
- The provision of community / local transport
- The provision of public toilets
- Timely repair of pavements
- More sheltered/ community housing
- More intergenerational activities
- More job opportunities for older people (who want to work)

Members wanted to point out that many initiatives have previously been implemented and have been seen to be of benefit but due to lack of funding or the ending of grants initiatives have come to an end. This needs to end.