


London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	
	HEALTH, ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
18th APRIL 2016	
Social Isolation and Loneliness in the Borough	
Report of the Director for Delivery and Value – Kim Dero	
Open Report	
Classification - For Scrutiny Review & Comment	
Key Decision: No	
Wards Affected: All	
Accountable Director: Kim Dero - Director for Delivery and Value	
Report Author: Fawad Bhatti – Policy Officer	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8753 7346 E-mail: fawad.bhatti@lbhf.gov.uk

1.0 Background

1.1 In recent years social isolation and loneliness have become issues with an increasing national and regional profile. Research has shown that social isolation and loneliness can be issues for anyone, regardless of age and background. Links have been established with wider health and wellbeing outcomes, including the increased risk of physical ill health and mental health issues.

1.2 Tackling social isolation and loneliness amongst older people presents a number of challenges. Identifying and targeting those who would most benefit from support is a key challenge. Many isolated older people are usually the most hidden and the stigma attached to 'loneliness' means that they are reluctant to acknowledge loneliness and hence access support services.

1.3 Based on the latest Greater London Authority Population Projections for Hammersmith and Fulham in 2016 there are 5,400 men over 70 and 7,000 women over 70. A total of 12,400.

1.4 Based on the 2011 census, Hammersmith and Fulham has the third highest proportion of older people who live alone (43%) of anywhere in England. This amounts to 7,100 people. Ten years previously, the proportion was even higher (56% - the third highest in the country). The drop since 2001 is broadly reflective of a

general drop across the country but may have been larger in the borough due to a change in the affordability and tenure of housing locally.

2.0 Defining Social Isolation and Loneliness

2.1 Social isolation is an *objective* measure and is a way of reflecting an individual's lack of connections with others. A separation from social or familial contact, community involvement or access to services.

2.2 Loneliness is *subjective* and is the (unwelcome) feeling of a gap between the social connections we want and the ones we have. It is influenced not only by circumstances and events, but also by cultural and psychological factors.

2.3 Although social isolation can lead to loneliness, loneliness is not inherently linked to social connectedness. Someone can feel lonely despite participating in various social networks. An individual may also make a choice to be alone but not consider themselves as lonely.

2.4 People experiencing loneliness may benefit from tailored social support to help them develop meaningful social networks. People experiencing social isolation may require practical assistance such as transport arrangements or other resources to help them re-establish or strengthen their social contacts.

2.5 However there are instances where the distinction blurs. Sensory deprivation combined with depression can create physical barriers which mean some older people can experience isolation even in a group setting (especially if their first language is not English).

3.0 Demographic groups at risk of being isolated and lonely in H&F

3.1 Key H&F statistics:

- At the time of the 2011 Census there were 16,413 people aged 65 or over living in the borough, making up almost 9% of the total population.
- The proportion of those aged 65 and over who were divorced increased by half from 10% in 2001 to 15% in 2011; this compares to 9% in London and 11% in England.
- 16.7% (30,148) of the population within LBHF are living alone. The Borough has the 4th highest proportion of older people (aged 65 or over) that live alone (at 43%). Just over 7,050 adults aged 65 or over live alone in the borough (out of a total population aged 65 or over of 16,413).
- 41.9% (20,778) of people aged over 45 are not in a family (Never married, Separated, Divorced or Widowed).

- According to the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation over 37% of the older population live in the top 30% of most deprived areas (nationally), with over a fifth in the top 20%.
- Almost 68% of the older population of the borough live in areas which are in the top 30% most deprived nationally for Income Deprivation Affecting Older People, with over 18% living in the most deprived decile.
- 22% of older people are from non-white ethnic backgrounds.
- Just over 51% of older people living in the borough stated that their day to day activities were limited (either a lot or a little). This is similar to the levels in London and England.
- 54.8% of older people living alone have a long term health problem or a disability.
- Almost 32% of the population of the borough aged 65 or over are receiving Pension Credit. This is high compared to London as a whole (at 25%) and England (at 19%).
- 53.2% of the population aged 65+ live in social rented or private rented accommodation and are highly unlikely to be able to afford market or some affordable housing products.
- Only 10.6% of older people living in the borough provide some level of informal, unpaid care. This is low when compared to London as a whole (12.4%) and to England (13.8%).
- There are an estimated 8,500 households deemed to be in fuel poverty in the Borough, representing just over 10% of the total number of households in the Borough.

(Insight & Analytics Team, March 2016)

3.2 **APPENDIX A** shows two radar charts that display various indicators that are linked to isolation and loneliness. Each indicator is ranked nationally with the blue line representing LBHF and the red line representing the worst local authority in the country. The nearer the blue line is to the red line the worst the issue is in LBHF.

3.3 The charts indicate that the borough has a relatively high number of one person households, a high number of older people who are income deprived as well as a significant number of people who experience anxiety.

4.0 Causes of Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older People

4.1 Research shows that older people, particularly carers, older men and the least wealthy over 50s, are higher risk demographic groups. However older people living alone in more affluent areas can also be at risk. Studies have estimated that nearly three-quarters of over 75s who live alone feel lonely and there is a growing number of older people living alone with their children being living a substantial distance away.

4.2 Other conditions which are prevalent amongst elderly people, such as caring responsibilities, bereavement, mental health problems and physical limitations, often present barriers to social engagement and for many older people can compound the issue of loneliness and / or social isolation.

4.3 Some external factors can also act as a barrier to social engagement. Lack of easy access to public transport is consistently identified by older people as a key barrier to social engagement. Older people are often afraid to use public transport, are put off by unreliable provision, lengthy waiting times for connections and many do not have the confidence to plan connections for indirect journeys. Cold weather, and dark nights often exacerbate the above issues, and as a result older people can miss medical appointments as well as forego social activities.

4.4 Although wealth is an important determinant of life satisfaction, its effect declines over the age of 75.

5.0 How does the Council measure degrees of isolation for older people in H&F?

5.1 Every year, a sample of users of adult social care respond to a question around how they rate their level of social contact. This question is also asked to carers every two years. The proportion that say “I have as much social contact as I want with people I like” is used as the basis for an indicator in the ASC and Public Health Outcomes Framework.

- In LBHF in 14/15, 38% of ASC service users say they have as much social contact as they would like, which is fifth lowest in London (London is 42%) and lower than England (45%)
- For carers in 14/15, 27% in LBHF have as much social contact as they would like, which is the sixth lowest in London (London is 36%) and lower than England (39%)

6.0 Initiatives to tackle Social Isolation and Loneliness in H&F

6.1 There are a range of projects and voluntary and community sector organisations funded through Public Health, the Third Sector Investment Fund (3SIF) and by Adult Social Care. Some of these are jointly funded with the Clinical Commissioning Group, who also have their own funding programme through the work on Whole Systems Integrated Care

6.2 As part of the Public Health Investment Fund in LBHF, £190,000 is used to fund eight community and voluntary sector initiatives. All of these either focus directly on reducing loneliness or have an impact indirectly. These grants are administered by LBHF's Corporate Community Investment Team

6.3 The Community Investment Team administer 3SIF which includes a specific stream for "Health and Well-Being". Through monitoring, organisations report on customer information, which includes the individual's social connectivity rating - on a scale from having good social networks and socialise often, to extremely lonely and isolated. Although the figures are not just for people over 70, 41% of people reported that they were very isolated with few families and friends.

6.4 Funding to a range of other areas through this fund also address the issues of isolation, for example through the contribution to community centres, neighbourhood projects, the arts, culture and sports and environmental projects.

6.5 In addition to those services funded through the Third Sector Investment Team, ASC funding of community services is used to address isolation and community engagement issues for people with a variety of support needs and their family carers. Extra Care Housing schemes and Day Services are an obvious example, but the recent specification for Home Care also includes reference to the providers responsibility to support people to link up with local community services.

6.6 ASC is also piloting a 12 month project to develop an innovative Befriending and Community Engagement Service. The service, delivered by Bishop Creighton House, aims to provide support by way of home visits and phone calls to isolated, hard to reach, socially excluded people who face barriers such as confidence and motivation to leave home and get involved in community activities.

6.7 This service works specifically with older people (55 and above) living in Hammersmith and Fulham and referrals are coordinated through PATHS (Placement and Assessment Team).

6.8 For those referred to the service, a support plan is developed which puts in place a programme of 1:1 visits, phone call updates and referrals to community activities, to enable confidence building. The eventual aim is for participants to access activities which will improve their mental and physical wellbeing and increase socialisation and involvement in the community.

6.9 For those older people whose frailties are such that they cannot leave the house, the service looks at neighbourly contacts as well as possibly arranging for small group activities in the user's home.

6.10 A senior commissioner for ASC appeared in a campaign video produced by Open Age, an organisation funded by LBHF and others to provide activities and to support people to be active in their communities.

6.11 **APPENDIX B** lists a number of council funded 3rd sector initiatives being delivered to tackle social isolation and loneliness. There are also befriending

initiatives being delivered on council estates and parts of the borough that are not funded by the council (e.g. White City Big Local).

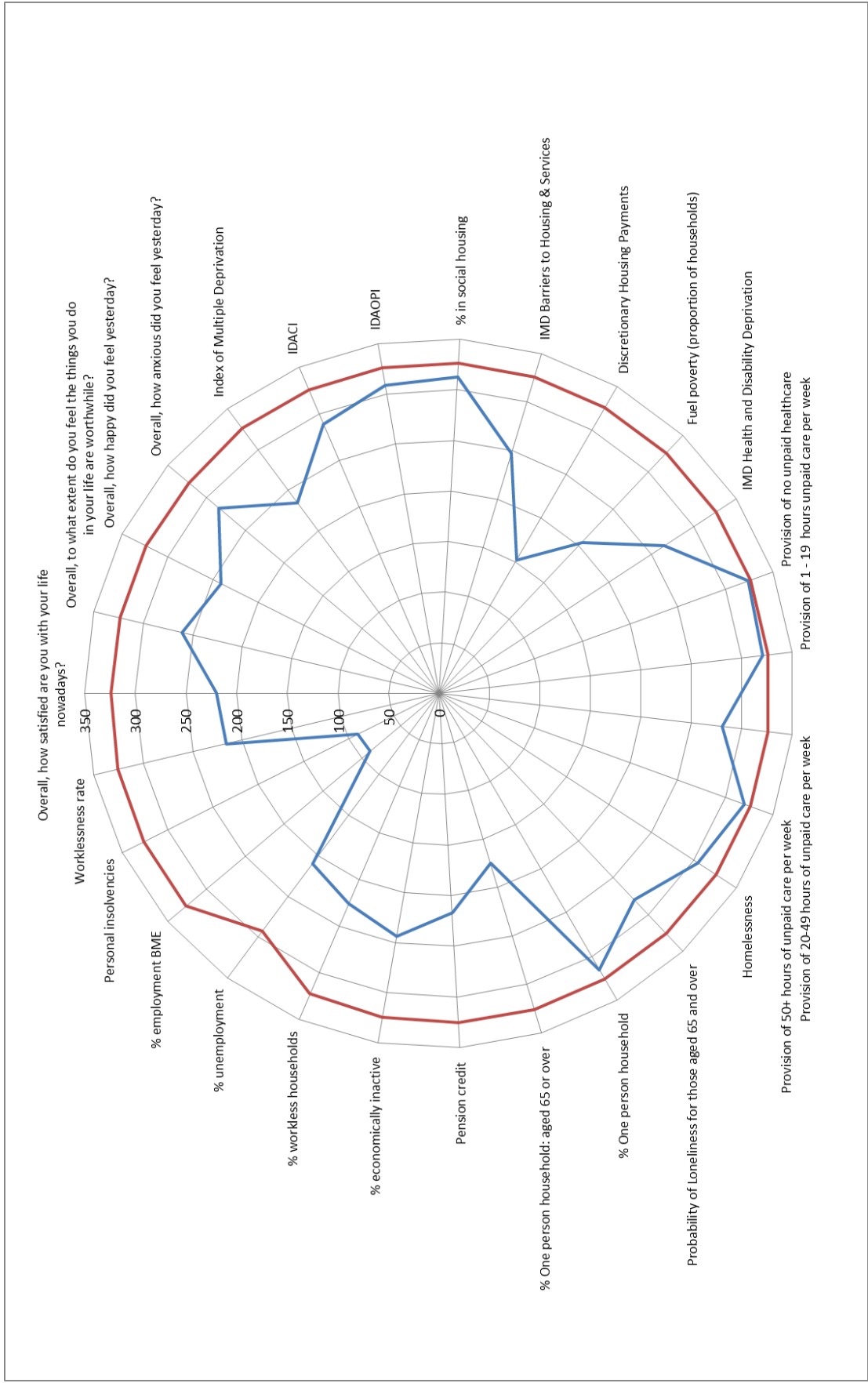
7.0 The next steps

7.1 Working with the Campaign to End Loneliness, a workshop is currently being planned to bring together all relevant local stakeholders across the public and 3rd sectors. The workshop will aim to take in learning and good practice from elsewhere, identify community assets and gaps in provision as well as develop realistic solutions.

7.2 'Silver Sunday' 2016 will also promote and stimulate activities that will primarily address loneliness and isolation amongst older people in the borough. The 2015 Silver Sunday scheme included awarding a Third Sector Invest Fund grant to the Consultative Forum and Age UK to host a local conference on tackling isolation.

7.3 Based on the new duties in the Care Act 2014, Public Health, ASC, the Third Sector Investment Team, Housing and the Clinical Commissioning Group are starting to work to develop a more coordinated prevention strategy which identifies loneliness as one of the key risk factors that contributes to frailty and loss of independence. This work has been informed by many of the documents produced by the Campaign to End Loneliness (e.g. The Cost of Loneliness, January 2014).

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Current 3SIF funded services.

Age UK: “The Connect Project”

The Connect Project is designed to improve the quality of life for older people, their families and carers. Its aim is to reduce isolation and loneliness and generate a feeling of safety in the home, at the same time improving physical and mental wellbeing. The project has developed participatory ways through local activities in which older people could help each other to achieve well-being through social networking and offering volunteering opportunities to local people.

Activities include:

Exercise, Pilates, Book and a Cuppa, Crafts & sewing, Health promotion & checks , IT & telephone lessons, Silver Surfer Internet Café, Information & advice, Holistic & beauty therapy, Community café, Information & Advice, Escorted Shopping service, In-Touch befriending & Practical support service (weekly to isolated older people), Well-Being Supporters Group (volunteers offering 1:1 support to older people experiencing a difficult period i.e. following a fall or bereavement), ‘Mindgames’.

Alzheimer’s Society: “Dementia Support Worker & DFC”

The Dementia Support Service supports people with dementia and/or their carers who live in the LBHF. The service will identify the barriers people with dementia experience when obtaining a diagnosis, and then accessing both mainstream and statutory services. The service also support people with dementia and/or their carers who are of a working age and who wish to remain actively employed.

Volunteers will be trained as Dementia Friends Champions, and in partnership with the Dementia Support worker will work closely with providers to ensure they are aware of the difficulties people with dementia and their carers may be experiencing whilst trying to access, and make use of their services.

Asian Health Agency: “Shanti Lunch & Wellness Service”

The service aims to improve physical and mental wellbeing amongst older people & older carers and reduce social isolation, primarily through a café service with additional activities that focus on health education and healthy living, reducing isolation and connecting communities. The café aims to operate 6 days a week, delivering up to 25 meals a day.

Barons Court Project

Day centre for residents with mental illness and/or are at risk of becoming homeless. The service also works with people that have a mental illness that are street homeless in LBHF. The service receives referrals from GP’s, CMHT’s, Charing Cross Hospital and Social Workers.

The service includes:

- Alcohol and drug free drop-In Mon, Tue and Wed 2-5pm: practical support, showers, laundry and a cost-price café.

- Tuesday & Thursday 11-1: one-to-one support (mainly benefits advice) plus help with budgeting, housing advice and emotional support.
- Thursday afternoons: Life skills - an 8 week programme including cookery, IT, Arts & Crafts & Living Skill).
- Fridays: a Women's Group and a BME Group.

The service offers users the opportunity to take part in social activities away from the centre.

Bishop Creighton House: “*Homeline*”

A telephone based service which aims to reduce the loneliness and isolation felt by older people in Hammersmith and Fulham through greater social contact and increased activity. Homeline volunteers provide telephone befriending, plus home visits, help with day to day tasks, walking outdoors and hospital visits.

Deaf Plus: “*Living with hearing loss*”

Service designed to support older people to manage the difficulties experienced by losing their hearing through the ageing process. This is achieved by providing access to appropriate information, skills and services in an empathic learning environment.

Fulham Good Neighbour Service

Helping local older people overcome social isolation & loneliness and to help people remain active & independent. The service will achieve increases in social contact, people getting out and about, and independence. The service will offer 1-2-1 befriending, social events, help with getting out and about, practical help in and around the home and information and signposting.

H&F Mencap: “*Community Inclusion*”

This will enable Mencap to utilise existing community facilities, developing tailor-made community packages to support users of the service to access meaningful day and evening local community activities, including mainstream leisure, sport, recreation, cultural activities, community events, social clubs, developing skills to increase independence, confidence and skills for life.

H&F Mencap: “*Safety Net People First*”

This service focuses on user participation and a self-advocacy group that aims to empower individuals with learning disabilities living in the LBHF to become equal and active citizens in the community supported by a co-ordinator who actively supports the development of meaningful volunteering opportunities for members.

Open Age: “*Linked In And Active*”

A service for older people who live on low incomes to improve their health & wellbeing and thus enable them to live independently within the community for longer.

The **Link-Up** element of the service will reach out to people age 50+ in primarily deprived areas of H&F through a dedicated worker. They will support and encourage people into activities offered by both Open Age and other. The project aims to reach older people who are socially excluded, less motivated, or more isolated (perhaps as a result of bereavement, health issues, or a fear of crime) and provide encouragement and continuing support to help them choose an activity that interests them, and then help build their confidence to initially access health related activity sessions. Once introduced to an activity and taken to the first session, Volunteer Champions will offer ongoing peer support to the individual if appropriate.

Urban Partnership Group: “Masbro Older People’s Access Service”

Enable older people to live independently reducing their need for high level care. The service includes:

- Weekly tea clubs with guest speakers and activities
- Local visits to places of interest
- Celebration lunches at Eid, Christmas etc.
- A whole day summer outing
- Information and access to mainstream services through a service information pack
- Running of the Masbro Elders Forum
- A Digital Inclusion programme
- home visiting service offering companionship and supporting
- risk assessments
- Health and fitness activities at the Masbro Centre
- Guidance on healthy living and eating
- IAG on keeping warm in winter and hydrated in summer
- Information and assistance in managing finances

A brokering service whereby people can access ‘in home’ personal services to maintain their appearance and external physical health

N&NWL Vietnamese Association: “Vietnamese Elderly People”

A weekly Luncheon Club with drop in session, health advice, keep fit exercise, home visits and befriending for the Vietnamese and Chinese elder community age 50 plus, to prevent social isolation. Funding also sought to provide basic informal IT and ESOL classes to improve language and digital skills, to promote independent living.