This is how to design for isolation and loneliness in our communities

Harry Knibb; Principal Consultant
How many neighbours do you know the names of?

How many items have you borrowed in the past year?
Why is this important for you?

- **DEVELOPER** – Better product, smoother/quicker planning
- **CITY OFFICIAL** – Mitigate significant social cost
- **HEALTHCARE** – Preventative not curative approach
- **CITIZEN** – 9 million now lonely

Because of this, I believe that *loneliness is going mainstream*...

- **Media** – BBC World’s largest survey on loneliness
- **National Gov Support** – Tracey Crouch MP, strategy launch today!
- **Local Authority Support** – Southwark Loneliness Policy linking to Place
- **Developers / Biz** – Waking up to the opportunity/cost
Key Terms
Who's at Risk?
Why do People Suffer?
Impacts?
Solutions & Case Studies

What we’re about to cover
Note on methods

- Mix of methods
- Literature review
- Primary data
- 2017 - 2018
What? An objective state involving the separation of a person or community from social contact, community involvement, or access to services.

Key Terms

Social Isolation

• Quantifiable / objective
• Mostly Negative

Long term v short term
What? A subjective, emotional state, including a sense of lacking of social contact to the extent where they are wanted or needed. Concerned with quality (rather than quantity) of contact.

Key Terms

Lonely

Always Negative

Long term v Short term
## Who’s at risk?

### High Risk Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical</th>
<th>Less Typical</th>
<th>Not often considered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groups who feature most in the research and have the most resources dedicate to them.</td>
<td>Groups who featured, but not as often as the ‘typical’ group and have less resources dedicated to them.</td>
<td>Groups who feature very little and have few resources dedicated to them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Elderly & retired
- Migrants
- Minorities
- Disabled/ with disabilities
- Ill
- Poor
- Living alone
- Reliant on public transport
- Bereaved & carers

- LGBT community
- Young mothers/ fathers
- Children & adolescents
- Vulnerable (psychologically)

- Working age individuals
Who’s at risk?
Who’s at risk?
Who’s at risk?

• **75%** didn’t know the names of more than three neighbours, and more than half didn’t know more than two

• For those who live in apartments, three-quarters didn’t know the name of anyone in their block.
Who’s at risk?
Why do people suffer?
## Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Economic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacking social connections is as damaging to an smoking 15 cigarettes a day</td>
<td>Higher levels of stress hormone, disrupted sleep, increased cognitive deterioration (memory), depression and even suicide.</td>
<td><strong>Public</strong> – 3 out of 4 GPs report one to five visits per day are because of loneliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increases chance of mortality by 26% which is similar to obesity</td>
<td>leading to antisocial behaviour, poor decision making, increased use/reliance on alcohol.</td>
<td><strong>Private</strong> – absenteeism, health, reduced productivity costs £2.1bn per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater stress leading to increased blood pressure, altered immune system, heart disease and stroke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Solutions are available and can be broken down into:

- Structural
- Social
- Planning
- Technological
Solutions & Case Studies

Washington Metro
*Worlds most accessible metro*

Copenhagen Cycling
*Worlds top cycling city*

WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guide
*Accessibility guidelines for designers*

Sættedammen
*World’s first cohousing community*
Solutions & Case Studies

Carmel Places
Micro living with amenities and common spaces

Barbican
Brutalist and walkable

TONIC living
LGBT housing for older people

Capelton New Town
Community centred masterplanning
Solutions & Case Studies

Access Maps
Maps for people with limited mobility

Melbourne Audio Cues
Smart instructions for the visually impaired

Rushey Green Time Bank
‘Time’ is the new currency

Poundbury
10 minute walking radius