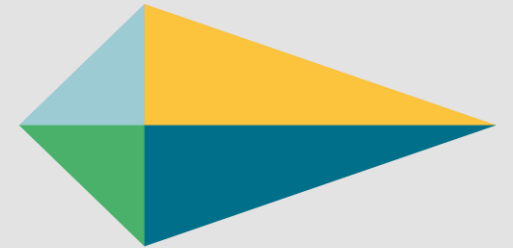# Social Isolation and Loneliness in East Suffolk

EASTSUFFOLK
COUNCIL

What is loneliness and isolation?

A **mismatch** of the relationships we have and the ones we want

Loneliness = the **pain** of being alone

Solitude = the **joy** of being alone

Isolation is where there is **no choice** but to be alone

Campaign to End Loneliness – Health Risks

People who are widowed, with a long- term illness or with a disability are more likely to experience loneliness

43-45% of people reporting bad or very bad health are often/always lonely

Loneliness is likely to increase your risk of death by 26% (Holt-Lunstad, 2015)

Loneliness, living alone and poor social connections are as bad for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. (Holt-Lunstad, 2010)

Loneliness is worse for you than obesity and associated with high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke

Loneliness is a risk factor for depression in later life and puts people at greater risk of cognitive decline and dementia

Campaign to End Loneliness – Older People

The number of over-50s experiencing loneliness is set to reach **two million** by 2025/6. This compares to around 1.4 million in 2016/7 – a **49% increase in 10 years**

Half a million older people go at least **five or six days** a week without seeing or speaking to anyone at all

Well over half (59%) of those aged 85 and over and 38% of those aged 75 to 84 **live alone**

Two fifths of all older people (about 3.9 million) say the **television is their main company**

Which parts of East Suffolk are at highest risk of loneliness among older people?
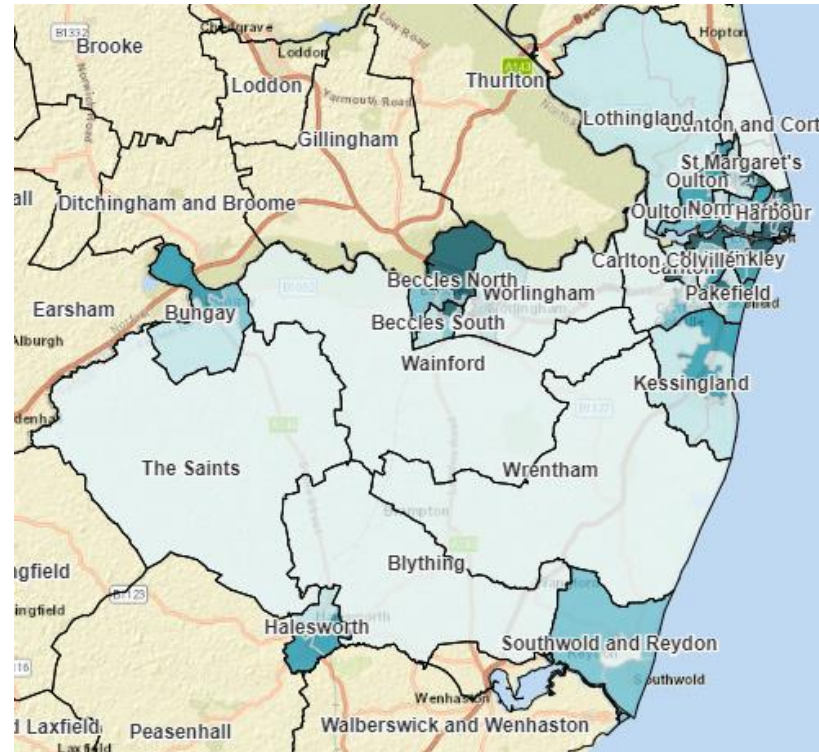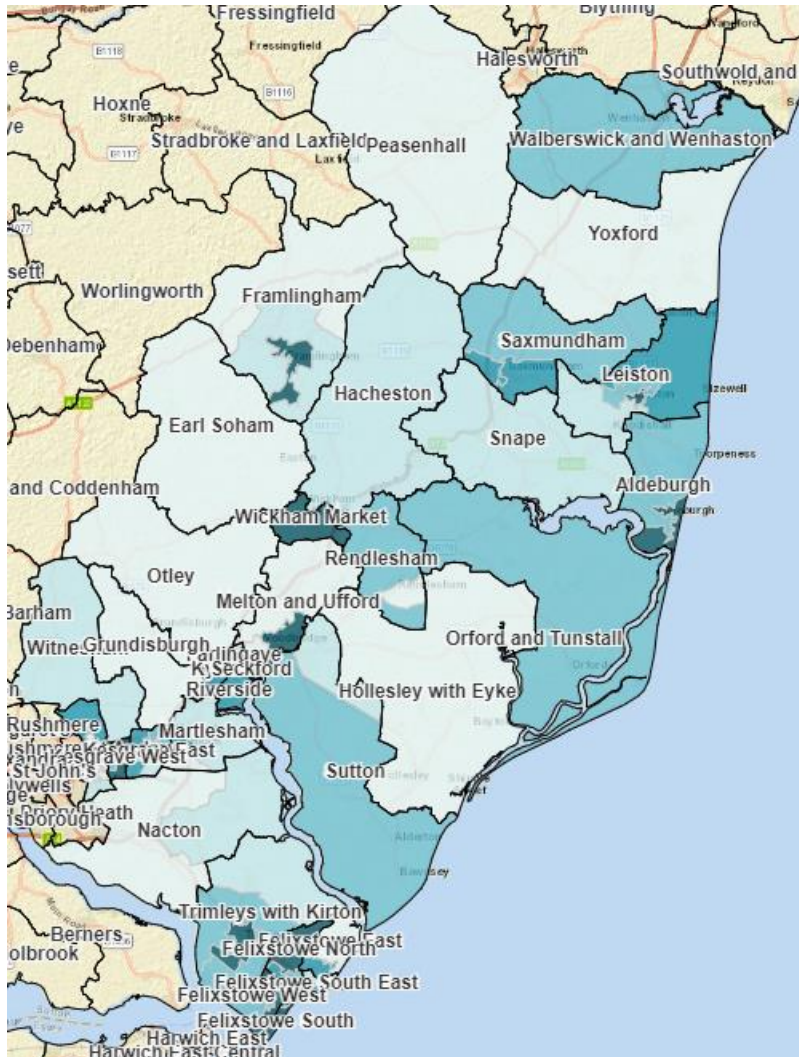
- Age UK loneliness maps to highlight areas have with higher risk of loneliness among people aged 65+.

- The map shows the **relative risk of loneliness** across England. The relative risk of loneliness is based on the Census 2011 figures for marital status; self-reported health status; age; and household size.

- The risk of loneliness appears to be highest in urban areas.

Risk within this authority

- Very low risk
- Low risk
- Medium risk
- High risk
- Very high risk

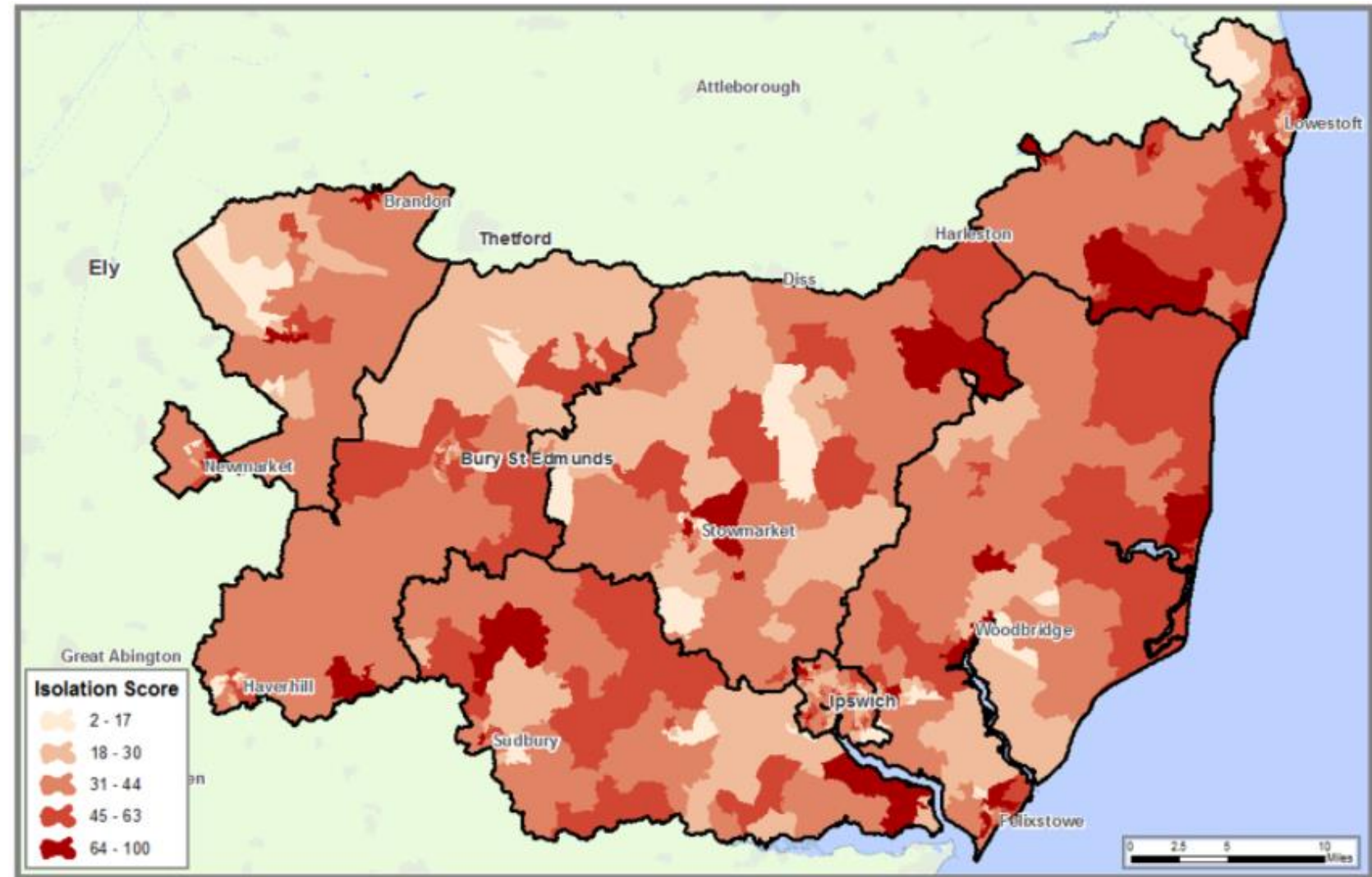http://data.ageuk.org.uk/loneliness-maps/england-2016/

Social isolation

Which areas in Suffolk are prone to social isolation considering a range of factors that could influence the likelihood of becoming socially isolated?

The most highly weighted factors are:

- aged 65 and over

- Widowed / single

- depressed

- on a low income

The results of the analysis indicate that areas with a higher social isolation score tend to be along the East coast and on the outskirts of towns such as Lowestoft, Woodbridge, Felixstowe, and Leiston

How many people in East Suffolk feel lonely?

We can estimate how many people in East Suffolk often/always feel lonely by applying national survey data to population estimates. This indicates that just over **10,000 people in East Suffolk often / always feel lonely**

Age group	Population	People who often/always feel lonely	
		Prevalence	Number
16-24	20,850	9.8	2,039
25-34	23,917	6.1	1,449
35-44	24,789	4.9	1,217
45-54	33,489	4.5	1,504
55-64	36,245	5.4	1,939
65-74	36,194	2.9	1,046
75+	33,173	3.0	979
Total	208,657	-	**10,173**

- The prevalence of often / always feeling lonely is highest among 16-24 year olds and gets lower as age increases

- 16-24 year olds make up the smallest population group but the highest number of lonely people

- There are significant numbers of people who often/always feel lonely across all age bands.
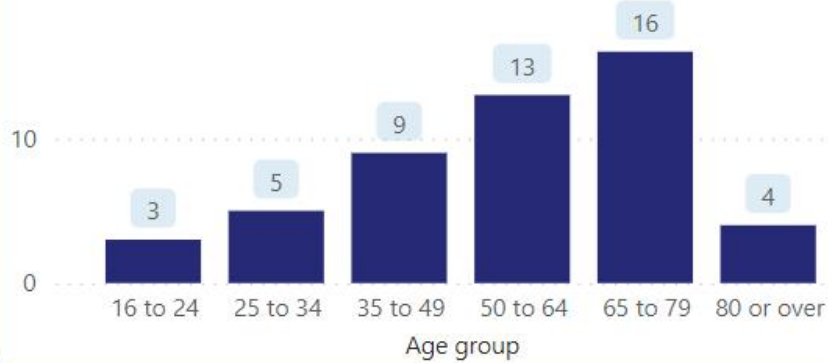
How often do you feel lonely? Response: Often/always
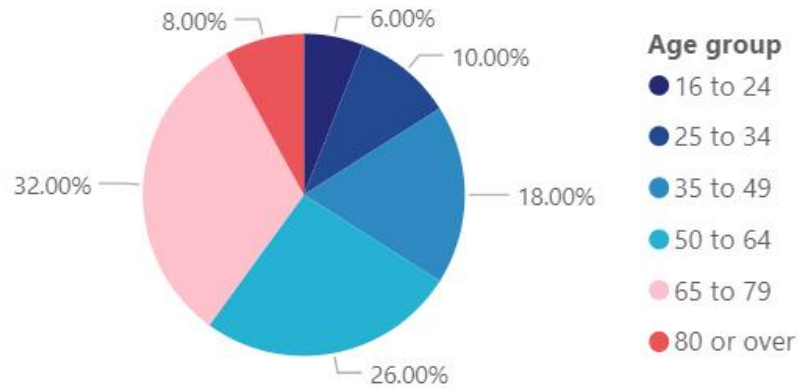
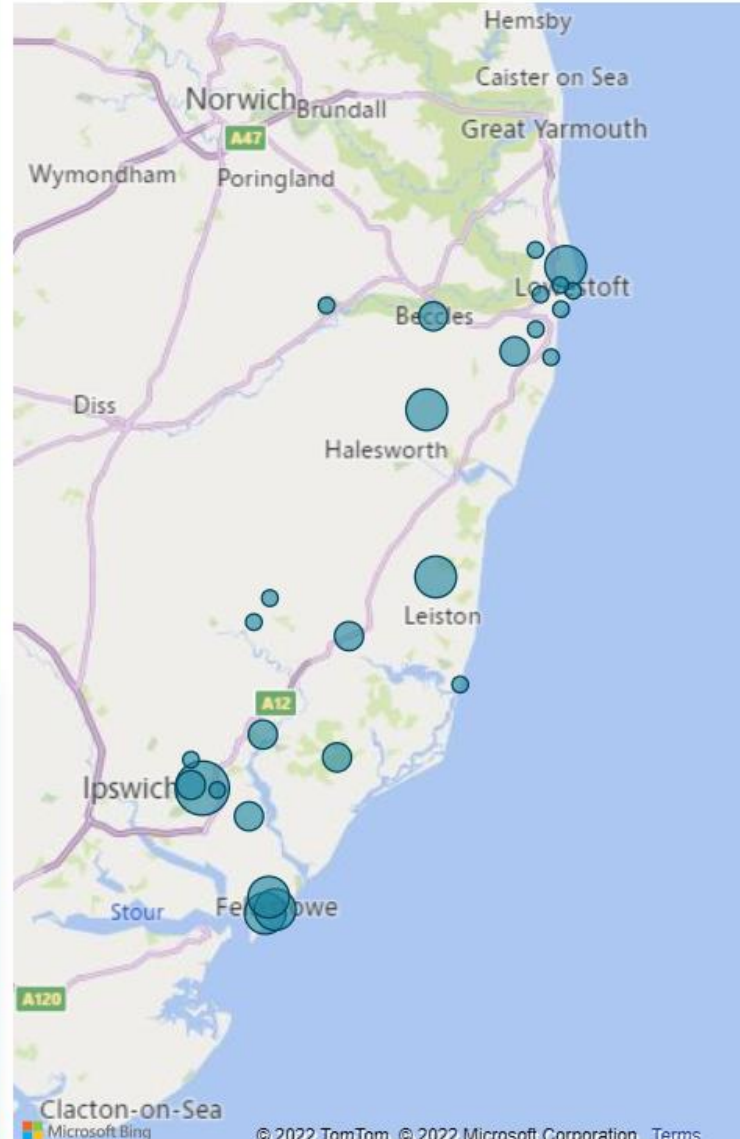Press and hold Ctrl to select more than one option

50
Count of respondents

Age of the respondents

Bar chart — Age group:
- 16 to 24: 3
- 25 to 34: 5
- 35 to 49: 9
- 50 to 64: 13
- 65 to 79: 16
- 80 or over: 4

Age of the respondents

Pie chart — Age group:
- 16 to 24: 6.00%
- 25 to 34: 10.00%
- 35 to 49: 18.00%
- 50 to 64: 26.00%
- 65 to 79: 32.00%
- 80 or over: 8.00%

Where respondents come from

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Where respondents come from

16 to 24 ● 25 to 34 ● 35 to 49 ● 50 to 64 ● 65 to 79 ● 80 or over

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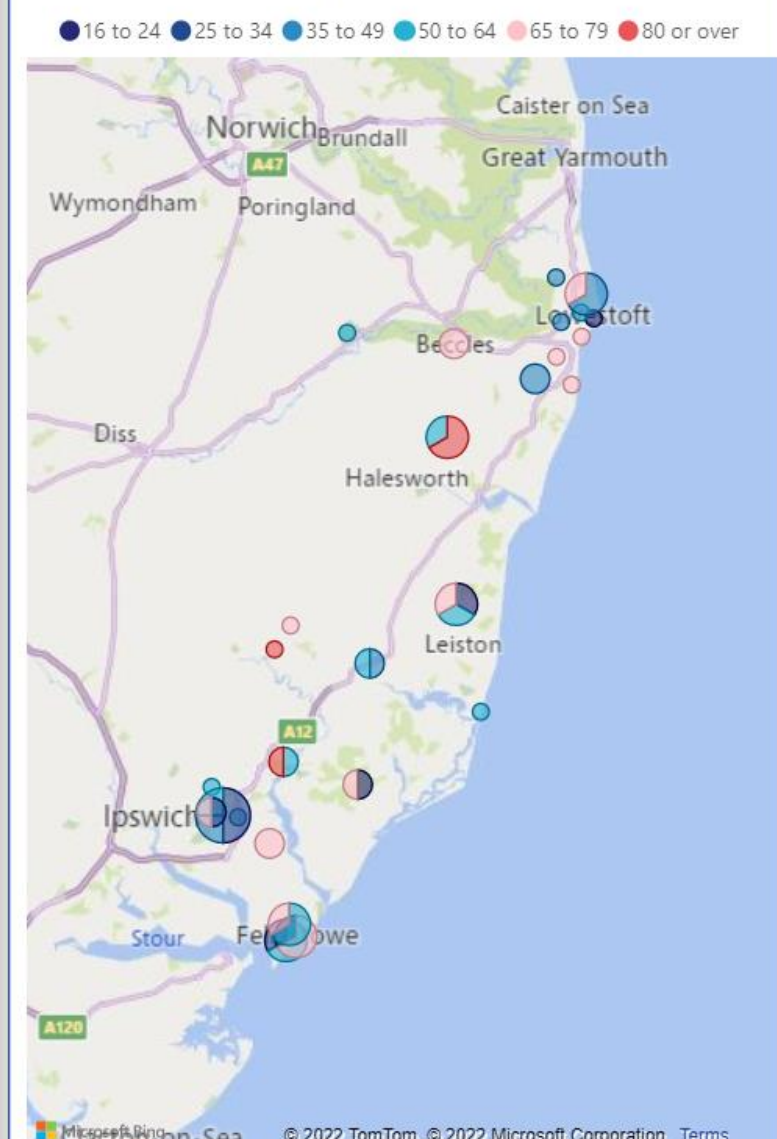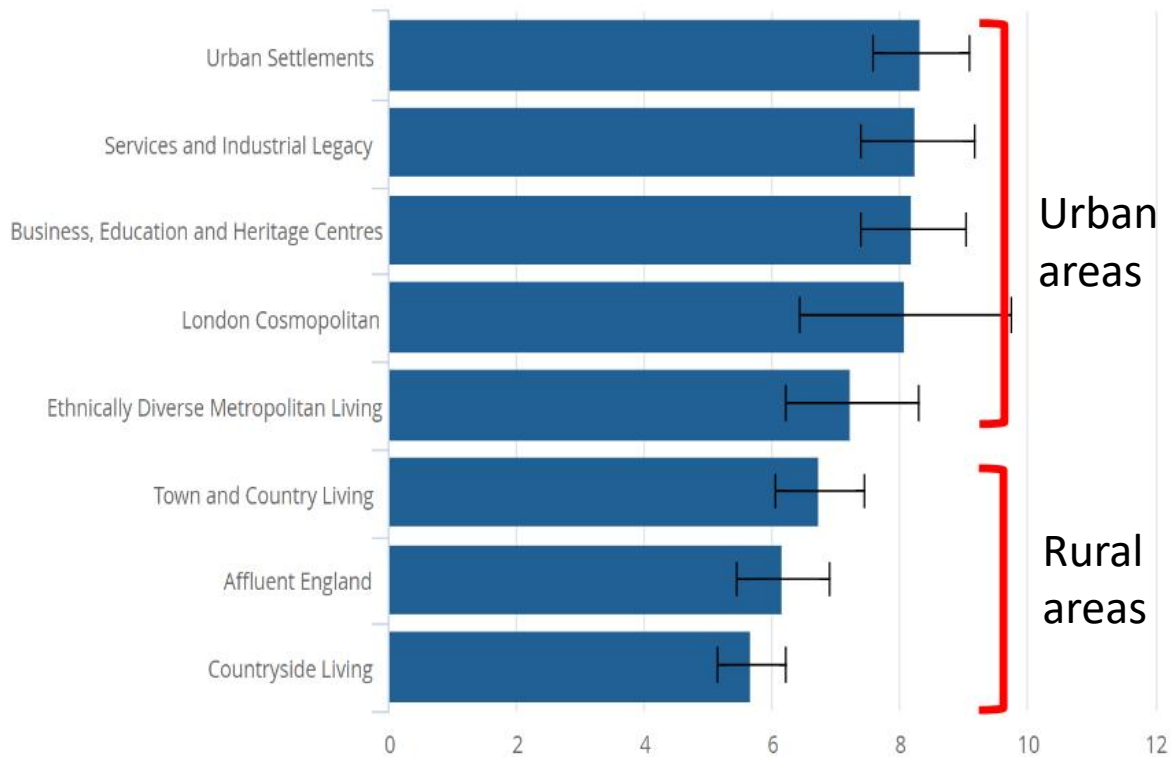
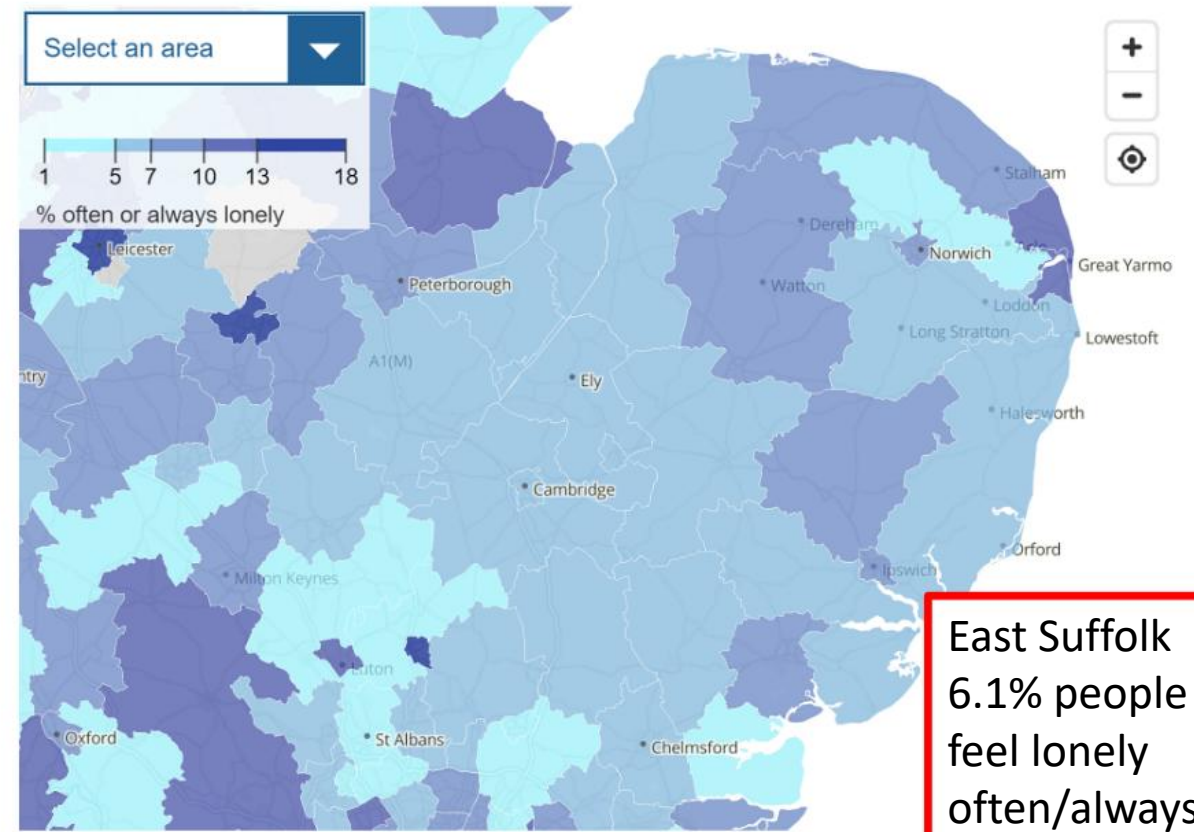# Mapping loneliness during the coronavirus pandemic

Local authorities in countryside areas had a lower loneliness rate than urban, industrial, or other types of area. Respondents were asked how often they felt lonely - options were "often/always", "some of the time", "occasionally", "hardly ever" or "never"

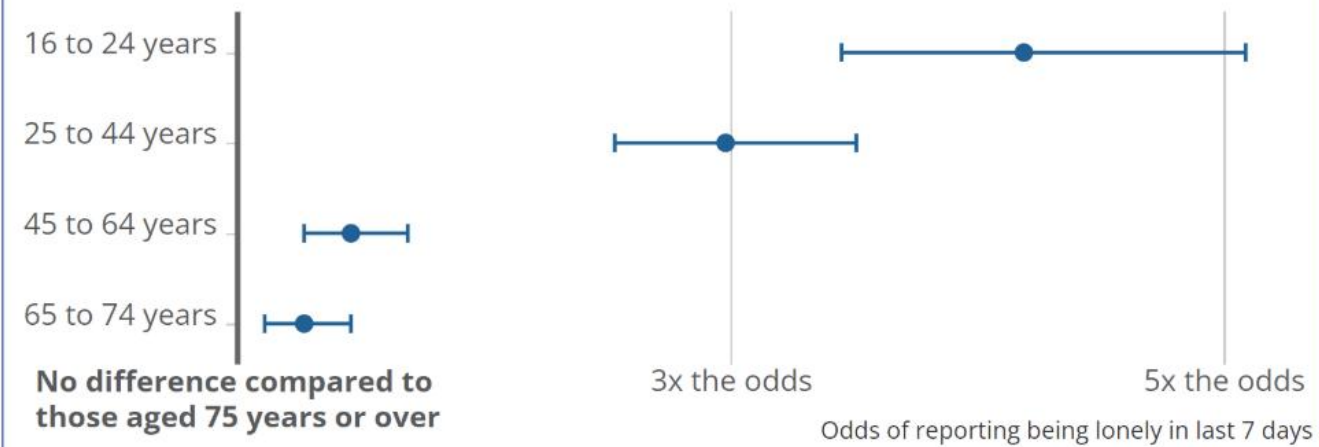**Percentage of people who felt lonely "often" or "always" by local authority supergroup**

Urban areas

Rural areas

Percentage reporting "often or always" feeling lonely, Great Britain, 14 October 2020 to 22 February 2021

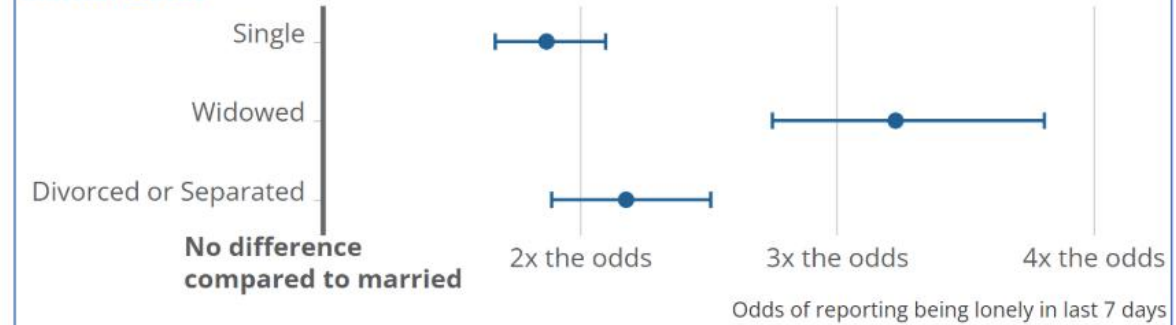East Suffolk 6.1% people feel lonely often/always

Mapping loneliness during the coronavirus pandemic (2)

Younger and single people were more likely to be lonely in the last seven days

Odds of reporting feeling lonely in last 7 days, of people who said their well-being was affected by the coronavirus, Great Britain, 14 October 2020 to 22 February 2021.

16 to 24 years

25 to 44 years

45 to 64 years

65 to 74 years

No difference compared to those aged 75 years or over

3x the odds

5x the odds

Odds of reporting being lonely in last 7 days

Marital Status

Single

Widowed

Divorced or Separated

No difference compared to married

2x the odds   3x the odds   4x the odds

Odds of reporting being lonely in last 7 days

Households

One person household

No difference compared to two person household

2x the odds   3x the odds   4x the odds

Odds of reporting being lonely in last 7 days

Community Partnership Funded Projects to tackle Loneliness and Isolation

- Four rounds of Hidden Needs Grants focussing on social isolation 'hot spots'
- Boost Grants: Five themes – Sustainable Food, Get Fit, Dementia, Disabilities and (NEW) Mental Health
- Bounce Back Grants (now Suffolk Community Restart)
- Grandpads – simplified tablets for older people
- Virtual Walks
- 'Voice of Friend' befriending
- Covid Buddies (Community Action Suffolk)
- Talking/Chat Benches (Singing Benches…?)
- EAST Bags (Christmas 2020/21)
- NEW Cuppa and Chat project

'Starter for Ten'...sources of community connection

- Meet Up Mondays (CAS/RCC)
- Worry Tree Café's
- Rural Coffee Caravan
- Coffee and Friends Events (RCC)
- Good Neighbour Schemes (CAS)
- Men's Sheds/Menders Sheds
- Chin Wags (BSEVC)
- Hearts and Minds (BCS and ACT)
- Digital Champions
- Robopets (ESC)
- Christmas Card Campaign (ESC)
- Support/Peer Support Groups (e.g. dementia, carers, disability, mother and toddler)
- 'Living with / health recovery groups
- Compassionate Communities/Companions
- Environment / Nature Groups
- Park Runs
- Intergenerational Groups

- Befriending support – phone and face to face
- Art/Craft Clubs
- Courses – e.g. photography
- Lunch Clubs e.g. Over 60's
- Social Prescribing
- Community Café's
- Walk & Talk Events
- Theatre / Dance groups
- Choirs/Singing for Health
- Knit and Natter Groups
- Membership Groups e.g. Rotary / Lions
- Youth Groups/Clubs
- Sports clubs/teams e.g. football, boxing, walking football
- Uniformed Groups - Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts
- Faith Groups
- Book / Reading Groups

'Starter for Ten'...places of community connection

- Village Halls and Community Centres
- Leisure Centres and Gyms
- Community Café's
- More than a Shop (RCC)
- Top Up and Pop Up Shops
- Supermarkets
- Allotments
- Pubs

- Care Farms
- Dementia Day Centres
- Churches
- Libraries
- Schools
- Supported Housing
- Citizens Advice
- Parish Council offices
- 'Warm Rooms'

Priority Groups

- Early years, particularly children born during the pandemic

- Children

- Young people aged 16 – 24

- Children in Care

- Young people leaving care

- 25 – 29 year olds

- Working age males

- Men aged 40 plus

- Single parents

- Aged 50 - 64 - preventative ageing

- Older people 65 plus

- Older people 80 plus

- People who are new to an area

- With mental ill health, particularly Men and 11-18 year olds

- With long term/acute health issues

- Discharged from hospital

- Carers – respite support

- Non-drivers (particularly rural areas)

- New Mum's

- BAME communities

- Refugees

15 IDEAS

1. **Designing Solutions** – bring local partners together in individual communities to focus on solutions – what assets do we have and what do we need. What are the best ways to identify people who are lonely and isolated?

2. **Coordination** – a lead partner with dedicated resource, who can map to identify what is already there (to avoid duplication), connect groups together to share spaces and resources, coordinate volunteers

3. **Communication** – signposting about services that are already available, in different formats (not everyone online), between groups and between areas

4. **Community Hubs** – all ages, person centred, multi-agency - include a range of services and groups e.g. Pantry, Men's Shed, Citizens Advice outreach, library, digital support, Meet Up Monday, face to face housing support, health services, opportunities to be active

5. **Thinking differently** – use resources and spaces in different ways to their traditional uses e.g. churches, schools, business premises, more activities in the evenings / weekends

6. **Go to people / more outreach** – mobile facilities e.g. Vinny Van Go, Rural Coffee Caravan

15 IDEAS

7. **Address transport issues** – increase availability, including home to location transport
8. **Support for individuals** - telephone / digital / face to face e.g. support to attend groups – buddies and paid befrienders, including carers
9. **Intergenerational activities** – funding for transport, venues, resources e.g. games, technology, young volunteers to provide company and support for older residents
10. **Funding** - to enable individuals to participate in things e.g. group fees, seek sponsorship from local businesses
11. **Regular Engagement** – speak to the public about what they need / can offer, market place events
12. **Capacity Building** – upskills local groups and organisations working with Town and Parish Councils
13. **Learning** – learn from other areas and communities – identify what works, and what doesn't
14. **Volunteers** – help to identify and support volunteers, develop a volunteer bank to work on different community projects
15. **Support Carers** – respite (mix of paid and volunteers), support for carers to attend groups and activities

Questions

Q1. Is there anything missing from the list of connection opportunities:

1) groups/activities?
2) places?

Q2. Of the priority groups identified at the Forum Workshop, which three groups within the population would be your priorities to focus any projects/activities to reduce loneliness and isolation on?

Q3. Looking at the list of ideas to tackle isolation and loneliness that emerged from the Forum, are there any gaps? Which project/area of focus would be your top priorities for East Suffolk?