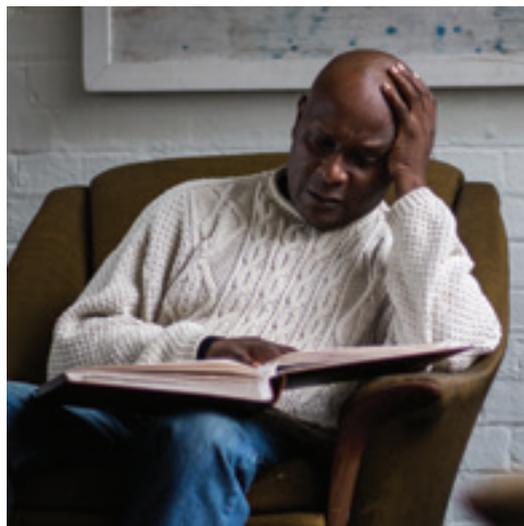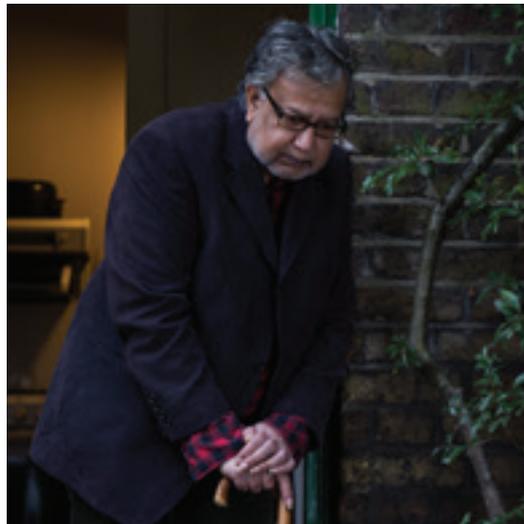KANTAR PUBLIC=

Trapped in a bubble
An investigation into triggers for loneliness in the UK

Technical appendix

CO OP | Supporting **BritishRedCross**

Contents

Introduction

Here we present the technical details of our programme of quantitative and qualitative research into loneliness and isolation in the UK.

Research approach

Work was conducted iteratively across four phases, with each phase flexibly adapting to emerging insight from the phase before. In Phase 1 we mapped the landscape via interviews with expert witnesses in the field (e.g. service designers and deliverers); in Phase 2 we explored the views of members of UK public actually experiencing loneliness, and views on needs for the future; in Phase 3 we shared findings with expert witnesses and explored potential support responses; and in Phase 4 we validated overall findings with the public, and tested potential support ideas. Figure 1 summarises the research approach. For a detailed discussion of the approach to this research, see the supporting sections which follow.

For further information about the methodology, including full sample details and topic guides for each phase of research, see later sections of this Annex.

Phase 1 overview – mapping the landscape

Phase 1 focused on mapping the landscape of loneliness in the UK. In order to expand on the findings of the literature review, we interviewed 27 'expert witnesses' – including service designers, service deliverers, policy experts and partnership stakeholders – to learn from their experiences of tackling loneliness in the UK.

Research was carried out by 30-45 minute telephone discussions.

Figure 1. Summary of the research approach

Phase 1: Mapping the landscape	Phase 2: Contexts and needs	Phase 3: Brainstorming solutions	Phase 4: Testing and validating
27 telephone interviews with expert witnesses	**Primary research** with six target groups - reaching **115** lonely people	**Online workshops and depths** - reaching 21 expert witnesses	**Online forum research** - reaching 24 people experiencing loneliness
Mix of service providers and BRC and Co-op membership and partners	Mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums	To share findings from the public research and brainstorm support solutions	To test and validate support solutions
		What could work, who could provide it?	**Nat-rep survey of 2,523 UK adults aged 16+**
			Survey also made available to Co-op members

45 experts all together - 27 in Phase 1 and 18 new experts in Phase 3.

Phase 2 overview – contexts and needs

Phase 2 of this research was a large-scale qualitative research element with 115 people experiencing transitional (loneliness which can happen following a life event or disruption) and chronic (loneliness which has been experienced across a longer time period) loneliness from across the UK – to explore its contexts, causes and impacts for a variety of real people, in real life across the 6 target groups. Insight from the expert witness interviews was used to shape our topic guides – ensuring more targeted questioning, and helping us to explore potential service and support solutions as raised by our public participants, but also as suggested by experts in the field of loneliness.

A range of methods was used in this phase within and across groups, including; focus groups, depth interviews, and online forums. Taking a mixed method approach in this phase ensured that our overall findings benefitted from the relative strengths of different interviewing approaches. It also ensured that we could meet the needs of each individual target group, and reduce barriers to participation. For example, depth interviews were most useful to gain deep understanding of individual journeys to and within loneliness; to discuss particularly sensitive or emotional issues (e.g., bereavement); or to accommodate participants' needs during interviewing (e.g., adapting language to support participants with learning difficulties; taking breaks for those with physical health issues). Group discussions offered our participants the opportunity for positive interaction and engagement with others, and allowed us to 'test' service ideas in vibrant conversation – in a cost-effective and time-efficient way. Online forums, which participants were able to log into in a way that was convenient for them (e.g., three sessions over the course of a week), made it easy for people who would have struggled to attend a face-to-face session to engage

Phase 3 overview – Brainstorming solutions

In Phase 3, we then worked with 21 expert witnesses (3 re-convened from Phase 1, and 18 newly-engaged participants) to share Phase 2 findings; explore experts' views about what might work to meet the needs identified by the groups; and conduct co-creation exercises to further develop potential support solutions.

Phase 4 overview – Testing and validating solutions

The final phase of the research involved testing and validating the findings of the experience of loneliness and the potential solutions for tackling loneliness – via an online workshop with public participants (Phase 4a) and a nationally representative general public survey (Phase 4b).

Phase 4a – online workshop with people experiencing loneliness

Phase 4a provided the opportunity to validate conclusions from Phase 2 of the research; ask any additional questions arising from discussions with expert witnesses in Phase 3; and to test any adjustments or new potential support offers as developed with the expert witnesses and people experiencing loneliness from across Phases 1-3. This phase took the form of an online forum with 24 people experiencing loneliness re-convened from Phase 2 of the research, and representing a mix of all six groups and every nation of the UK.

Phase 4b – general public survey

In order to better understand what the general public thinks about loneliness, a quantitative phase of research was conducted towards the end of the project – Phase 4b. The general public survey was conducted using TNS' online omnibus as a means of data collection. A representative sample of 2,523 adults aged 16 and over across the UK was interviewed between 5th and 11th July 2016.

All interviewing was conducted online, using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) with the sample drawn from Lightspeed GMI, TNS' online panel partner. To ensure the sample was representative demographically and geographically, quota sampling was used with the final data weighted to match population profile information for the UK. Additional information about TNS' online omnibus and online panel and the questionnaire used in the general public survey are available in the later sections of this document.

Analysis

Our analytical approach for the qualitative research was iterative and inductive – building upwards from the views of participants – incorporating elements of 'grounded theory' analysis i.e. the thematic review and continual analysis of hypotheses from participants' transcriptions and dialogue. Analysis began informally during fieldwork itself; as our research team worked closely together throughout the fieldwork period, feeding back headline findings to each other as discussions were conducted, and continually updating our approach and thinking as we amassed data. The data was analysed to search for themes and trends.

Analysis of the general public survey data was conducted primarily at a total sample level, but the large, robust sample size allowed for analysis by demographic sub-groups, and of target groups of interest, where relevant.

This technical report includes a full description of the methods used, and qualitative and quantitative research materials. This includes the questionnaire for the nationally representative survey, a copy of each topic guide used in qualitative research activities, the screening questionnaires for recruitment.

1. Phase 1 – Mapping the landscape

Methodology

Phase 1 focused on mapping the landscape of loneliness in the UK. In order to expand on the findings of the literature review, we interviewed 27 'expert witnesses'– including service designers, service deliverers, and policy experts, and partnership stakeholders – to learn from their experiences working to tackle loneliness in the UK.

Recruitment

The sample was developed in collaboration with the partnership after discussions of what each group might bring to the research. Primary sampling criteria involved:

- Expert type –a mix of service designers, service deliverers, policy experts and partnership stakeholders

- Knowledge type – a mix across our target groups (Young new mums, retired/empty nesters, recently bereaved, individuals with mobility limitations, individuals with health concerns)

- Location – across the nations.

The partnership gained initial consent from the expert witnesses for the research team to then schedule appointments. The TNS BMRB in-house recruitment team then made contact to arrange interview times. Expert witnesses were not compensated for taking part in a discussion as they were contributing to the research as part of their day to day job, in line with industry standards.

Achieved sample tables, by group and location

Target group	Achieved
Young new mums	1
Retired/empty nesters	7
Recently bereaved	3

Target group	Achieved
Divorced/separated	1
Individuals with mobility limitations	2
Individuals with health concerns	5
Across the groups	8
Total	27

Location	Achieved
England	5
Scotland	2
Wales	3
Northern Ireland	2
UK Wide	15
Total	27

Fieldwork

Research was carried out by 30-45 minute telephone discussions. Interviews were supported by a topic guide covering the following themes: experts' views on the causes of loneliness; what the groups might need or be interested in; what is and could be done to counter loneliness in the UK; and any key barriers to engagement plus ways to overcome them.

Analysis

Our analytical approach for the qualitative research was iterative and inductive – building upwards from the views of participants – incorporating elements of 'grounded theory' analysis. Analysis began informally during fieldwork itself; as our research team worked closely together throughout the fieldwork period, feeding back headline findings to each other as discussions were conducted, and continually updating our approach and thinking as we amassed data. Our analysis drew on a range of evidence sources, including: online 'transcripts' of discussions and individual participant contributions; researchers' recall and in-session notes of the research sessions; and audio-recordings. A brainstorm including all members of the research team was conducted. The data was analysed to search for themes and trends.

Analysis of the general population survey data was conducted primarily at a total sample level, but the large, robust sample size allowed for analysis by demographic sub-groups, and of groups of interest, where relevant.

Topic guide – Expert witnesses

Background

TNS BMRB[1] is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/is already being done to combat it identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Expert witness interview objectives

- ¤ To understand the state of play for support of people experiencing loneliness in the UK

- ¤ To understand their perspectives on the experiences and needs of people experiencing loneliness in the UK

- ¤ To provide insight into what kind of support is needed, any barriers to engagement and how these might be overcome

- ¤ To explore what can be/ is being done to understand and to counter loneliness in the UK

- ¤ To understand the above objectives in relation to key groups who will be engaged in the research. (Note that some expert witnesses have expertise linked to a particular group.) These interviews will help to inform research materials for the research with the groups which follows.

- ¤ To engage the wider expert witness group with the issue of loneliness and with the campaign.

Moderator notes

Researcher to use topic guide flexibly, tailoring to the participant's expertise/area. Throughout, please try to understand views on loneliness in general, and specifically in relation to the key groups for the campaign. Throughout, also explore how support might help tackle both temporary and chronic loneliness but bear in mind that the partnership will be looking to set up services and campaign to address the earlier stages of loneliness. We are interested in hearing about a range of ages – research on loneliness tends to focus on older people.

We are interested in hearing thoughts on services but also on the role of businesses, communities and policy makers in responding to loneliness.

Please review the expert witness excel summary prior to interview and ensure you are familiar with the participant's role/title, any areas of particular expertise or areas of interest outlined by Co-op and/or BRC. Remember that we are representing the campaign more widely; this stage is a key part of stakeholder involvement and engagement.

Introduction (2 minutes)

- ¤ Introduce yourself, TNS BMRB – independent research company

- ¤ Introduce research and purpose of the interview – research on behalf of British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding of loneliness in the UK and insight into what could be done/is being done to combat it – identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play.

- Phase 1 research: talking to a number of experts with knowledge and professional experience in this area to understand the state of play for support of people experiencing loneliness; will help inform research with the groups in Phase 2

- Phase 3 research: we are also going to speak to a number of experts later on in research, once we have heard back from the public, to talk through what responses (services, business and community responses and policy interventions) to mitigate loneliness might look like. We'll be gathering a range of experts to contribute via an online forum. If you are interested in potentially being involved in that phase, you can let me know at the end of the discussion.

- MRS guidelines

- Explain recording; no right or wrong answers – we are grateful for their contribution as experts in this area, but also appreciate that there are a lot of unknowns.

- Length 30-45 minutes

- Any questions/concerns?

Mapping participant context and responses provided (3 minutes)

- Moderator note: please adapt this section accordingly to fit the context of each given participant. For example, individuals working in academia may be able to speak about the specific area of academic focus of their work/their organisations work – but may not be delivering services per se. In addition we have a selection of experts from the devolved nations so please explore any region specific aspects as appropriate.

- Ask expert to briefly describe the remit of their response/organisation (service, community project, business service, policy) and their role in their organisation – and any other key agencies or organisations they work with.

- How do they personally or at an organisational level engage with people experiencing or at risk of loneliness?

- (IF relevant) Sketch out the specific service or support they design/deliver – probing to understand contact/support for people experiencing or at risk of loneliness as relevant

o Key aims – to do what, for whom?

o Are the people they support already in receipt of statutory services?

o Format – location, type of service/support – length and frequency – etc.

o Who funds the service/ support?

o How are people referred/signposted to the service/ support?

o Key impacts

o Key challenges or limitations

Understanding loneliness or isolation – and key needs (10+ minutes)

- What is your understanding of loneliness and isolation in the UK (Moderator to use 'loneliness' or 'isolation' as reflecting participant preference and understanding)

o What does the experience of loneliness or isolation look like on the ground for the various groups? (emotions; behaviours; attitudes; impacts on other areas of life; etc) Moderator to focus on any target groups that the participation has specific experience/expertise of – but also to briefly explore the other groups.

o What do you think causes loneliness (keep in mind causes on both sides of the Behaviour Web) Initially? Longer term?

– Personal factors? (e.g. situational e.g. age and stage-of-life , unemployment, poverty; life events; pre-disposing factors such as aspects of personality e.g. shyness; cultural values)

– Wider factors? (e.g. social structures; economic factors; social and demographic trends)

o How does loneliness manifest itself?

o Can loneliness be recognised by others? If so, what are the obvious and less obvious signs? If not, why not? What causes loneliness to become chronic (2+ years)?

Probe: different durations from transient/ every day > situational/transitional > chronic

– How would you differentiate between

loneliness that is situational or temporary (i.e. transient loneliness, transitional loneliness) and loneliness that becomes longer term (i.e. chronic loneliness)?

– What are the risk factors; do these two kinds of loneliness differ?

o Are there any misconceptions about loneliness?

o What is the impact of loneliness in your view:

– on individuals (health – mental and physical /well-being/ability to work and function/ propensity to unhealthy behaviours e.g. heavy drinking, poor nutrition, etc)

– on health and care services?

– on wider society? (e.g., economic contribution)

◘ What do you think people experiencing loneliness need or look for/are interested in – in terms of either formal or informal support: Moderator to focus on target groups the participant has the most experience with – but also to briefly cover the other target groups.

o What are the key needs and why?

o What form could/should services or support take? (type of support; how often; where; provided by who; etc)

o How would users want to find out about support available?

o How might this differ by group; probe key group groups

o How does this differ for situational/chronic loneliness?

Delivery – mapping the landscape (10+ minutes)

◘ Overall – what do you think the support network looks like for people experiencing loneliness in the UK? This could include anything you/your organisation is involved in personally, but also the wider support landscape (services, policy, etc):

o What is available – provided by who – format – etc. Including both formal and informal supports and across different sectors.

– Targeting who and through which channels?

– Trying to do what? (e.g. improve social skills, enhance social support, increase opportunity for social interaction, change thinking, new connections, support existing relationships)

◘ Tackling situational/chronic loneliness?

– Type of intervention? (e.g. self-management, peer support, community based, tech based etc.)

– How is it being delivered?

o Overall strengths/weaknesses?

◘ What do you think group awareness, knowledge, access and take-up looks like for the services/ responses discussed above?

o Any groups more/less likely to be aware of and using services or accessing other types of responses? (group types, temporary/chronic)

o Anyone of the groups that you think are more likely to be falling through the gaps? Why?

◘ Overall, how well do you think services /support are meeting needs currently? What is the impact of the services/support provided? How do we know what this impact is?

o For individuals?

o Wider communities?

o Personal/social/health/care services?

◘ What are the areas of best practice? (across groups; situational/chronic)

o Types of interventions that have been particularly effective? Probe if needed:

– Improving social skills?

– Enhancing social support?

– Peer support/befriending/community based programmes?

– Technology based programmes?

– Animal assisted programmes?

o Any standout services or responses?

o What makes this impactful?

o Lessons learned?

◘ Are there areas where there are gaps or poor support for the groups?

o Unmet need?

- o Poor take-up/impact?
- o Lessons learned?

Overcoming barriers and challenges (5-10 minutes)

- ¤ Overall, what do you see as the key barriers and challenges for support and service deliverers to help those experiencing loneliness? For example, in relation to:

  - o Identifying need; group awareness and take-up; meeting need; supporting priority groups (within the target groups or others); sustained participation and impact; etc.

  - o If note already mentioned, what are the key challenges of urban vs. rural environments regarding group awareness, knowledge, access and take-up of services/support?

  - o To what extend do you believe that feelings of loneliness are stigmatised and therefore under reported?

- ¤ How might these challenges be overcome? E.g. overall and for the key groups, in terms of:

  - o Identifying need

  - o Meeting needs via informal supports

  - o Ensuring group awareness/service signposting and community based responses

  - o Designing fit-for-purpose services and community based response

  - o Ensuring and understanding impact

  - o Service funding – how could these types of service become more sustainable?

  - o What else could be done to understand and tackle loneliness – to ensure people are supported, and that loneliness doesn't become chronic?

- ¤ What role do you see different stakeholders playing in combatting loneliness?

  - o GPs?

  - o Social workers?

  - o Housing associations?

  - o Individuals

  - o Communities?

  - o Charities or other service delivery organisations?

- o Policy makers?

- o Businesses?

- o Co-op and Red Cross?

- o What else would we need to know to design and deliver better support? What would your key questions be to try to answer in our research with the groups?

Conclusions/looking ahead (3+ minutes)

- ¤ Looking ahead, what do you think the future looks like in relation to loneliness and those experiencing loneliness in the UK – e.g., any expected changes in relation to:

  - o Who is/will become lonely?

  - o Needs from services, other responses and wider social support networks?

  - o What loneliness 'looks like' – and our ability to recognise it?

- ¤ What else could be done to understand and tackle loneliness – to ensure people are supported, and that loneliness doesn't become chronic?' – And what are the areas for improvement? i.e. what is being done but could be improved?

- ¤ Any major new challenges?

- ¤ Any major new opportunities?

Summing up (2 mins)

- ¤ Any other thoughts you would like to share

- ¤ Are you potentially interested in participating in our expert online forum later on in the research process? The online forum itself would take place in mid-June (most likely w/c 13 June) and involves an hour or so of participation.

- ¤ Moderator to note on scale of 1-10 how much value they think the stakeholder would add to the Phase 3 forum phase to aid sample development- with 10 being priority and 1 being less useful.

2. Phase 2 – Contexts and needs

2. Phase 2 – Contexts and needs

Methodology

Phase 2 of this research was a large-scale qualitative research exercise with 115 people experiencing transitional and chronic loneliness in the UK – to explore its contexts, causes and impacts for a variety of real people, in real life. Insight from the expert witness interviews was used to ensure more targeted questioning and to begin to explore potential service and support solutions.

Six key groups were targeted and included:

1. Young new mums between the ages of 18-24

2. Individuals who had experienced bereavement of a loved one in between 6 months and two years ago. This timing minimised the likelihood of discussions focusing solely on grief, while still being recent enough to impact on feelings of isolation and loneliness.

3. Individuals in mid to late life who had experienced divorce or separation

4. Individuals with mobility limitations

5. Individuals with health issues

6. Individuals who were identified as 'empty nesters' (their children had left the family home) or retirees

See the next section for more details about sample design and approaches to recruitment and fieldwork.

In considering the best way to reach the various groups in question, we have prioritised:

¤ including as many members of the public in a meaningful way as possible, within the budget allocated;

¤ Ensuring that interview methods used for each group are tailored to specific needs (emotional, physical, in terms of scheduling, and so on), to help ensure a positive participant experience; and

¤ Using the method that we feel would provide maximum insight and engagement for each group.

The following methodologies were used in Phase 2, and described in more detail below

Method	Target group method used with
Focus groups	Divorced/separated Empty nesters/retirees Young new mums Recently bereaved
Depth interviews	Mobility limitations Individuals with health issues Recently bereaved Divorced/separated
Online forums	Mobility limitations Individuals with health issues Recently bereaved Divorced/separated Young new mums Empty nesters/retirees

Small group discussions: group discussions were a cost-effective option for reaching wider samples of people in a time-efficient way, and for enabling dynamic discussion between participants. In our view, a small group approach was also ideal for some of the key groups for this work in terms of providing a positive and enjoyable research experience, representing the chance to come together with others to talk honestly about their own lives and needs. Sessions of approximately 90 minutes allowed deep discussion and reflection whilst minimising burden on participants.

Depth interviews: (both face-to-face and telephone): we used depth interviewing for groups where we thought participation in group discussions would be difficult due to health and mobility concerns, or where we think some people in a given group may need a more private space to share their experiences. Depth interviews were more cost and time intensive, but critical where we feel that we would otherwise fail to understand what really drives experiences and needs for a given group. Discussions lasted one hour for depth interviews – but we allowed more time in a flexible manner if, for example, people need to take breaks to rest.

Online forum discussions: We conducted online forums to aid participation from groups we expected accessibility might be of concern. Forums involved a mix of specific prompted tasks (e.g., describing your daily life, services used, etc); engagement with a researcher/moderator; and discussion with others. Forums were open for five days, with participants invited to response to pre-set questions and moderator prompts across the days, totally about 1.5 hours of their time.

Across all three methodologies, exploratory questioning and 'journey mapping' was used to understand participants' current context and how they arrived where they are as well as driver mapping of current experiences and needs. Additionally, discussions included perceived impacts of loneliness and exploration of services used and perceptions of the relative strengths of these. Co-creation exercises were also used to consider what optimal services might look like and how potential users would find out about them – e.g., who would attend them; what format they would be; the focus of activity; who would deliver them; what messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest.

In addition to the above methods, a small number of video 'vox pops' were collected by mobile with members of the public were included to bring research findings to life. These were optional, and initial consent was gained at the point of recruitment then additional staged consent was sought at the point of collection. Given the sensitivities of some of the interviews, and personal preferences to not take part in a video but rather to verbally share experiences, twelve videos were collected.

Recruitment

Loneliness is a common experience which can, and does, affect people from all backgrounds. However, in order to provide some focus for what was an ambitious piece of exploratory research, this research focussed specifically on the views and experiences of people from six target groups which were viewed to represent potential triggers for loneliness across different life stages. The views and insight reported here are gathered from the following groups: young new mums (ages 18-24), the recently bereaved, those divorced or separated, empty nesters or retirees, individuals with mobility limitations, and individuals with health issues. The sampling criteria for target groups appear in the next section.

For the partnership, these six groupings groups met several of the following characteristics for inclusion in the research:

1) Suspected as being at increased risk of experiencing loneliness;

2) The partnership literature review demonstrated a gap in understanding on the needs and experiences of the people in the target groups;

3) The groups were thought to be under-served by existing services and support based on the literature review or through British Red Cross' experience from the delivery of its existing services;

4) Occurred in high enough numbers in the general public to make research feasible – i.e. the group could be identified and recruited to the research.

Loneliness type was self-reported and measured using the UCLA loneliness scale questionnaire. Three questions were asked of potential participant with set response options, each of which had codes assigned to them.

1. How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

a. Hardly ever = 1

b. Some of the time = 2

c. Often=3

2. How often do you feel left out?

a. Hardly ever=1

b. Some of the time=2

c. Often=3

3. How often do you feel isolated from others?

a. Hardly ever=1

b. Some of the time=2

c. Often=3

The scores for each individual question were added together to give a possible range of scores from 3 to 9 for each participant. People who scored 3 – 5 were categorised as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 were categorised as "lonely". If scoring between 3-5 the individual was not recruited (not lonely). If scoring between 6-9 the individual was recruited (lonely). See the screening questionnaires for each target group below for more information about how these questions were used in practice.

Phase 2 sampling criteria, by target group

Target group	Primary sampling criteria
Divorced/separated	Mix of ages across 35-54; 55-74; 75+ - Minimum 8 recently divorced/separated (within last 2 years) - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations
Retirees/empty nesters	- All ages 55-70 - Minimum 10 empty nesters - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations
Mobility limitations	- Mix of genders - Mix of ages across <35; 35-54; 55+ - 12 with mobility limitations due to poor health - 12 with mobility limitations due to lack of access to transport - Mix of chronically lonely - Mix of experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Mix of geographical locations
Individuals with health issues	- Mix of gender - Mix of ages across<35; 35-54; 55+ - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations
Recently bereaved	- Minimum 5 males, 5 females - All bereaved within last 2 years - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Age: 18+ - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations
Young new mums	- All to be under age 25 - Mix of chronically lonely and experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Mix of geographical locations

The recruitment screeners used for each target group, structured around the above relevant primary sampling criteria, appear below.

As compensation for participants' time, participants who took part in face-to-face discussions received £40 and participants who took part in an online forum received £50.

Achieved sample table

The following table summarises the achieved sample of Phase 2 participants, for each target group. A total of 115 members of the public experiencing loneliness took part in Phase 2.

Target group	Region	Loneliness type	Urban/rural
Mobility limitation* **Total = 26**	England = 22 Wales = 4	Chronic = 18 6 months = 8	Urban = 19 Rural = 7
Health issues **Total = 22**	England = 18 Wales = 4	Chronic = 16 6 months = 6	Urban = 15 Rural = 7
Bereaved **Total = 18**	England = 10 N. Ireland = 8	Chronic = 11 6 months = 7	Urban = 18 Rural = 0
Young new mums **Total = 13**	England = 6 Wales = 1 N. Ireland = 6	Chronic = 8 6 months = 5	Urban = 13 Rural = 0
Divorced/ separated** **Total = 19**	England = 10 Scotland = 8 Wales = 1	Chronic = 12 6 months = 6	Urban = 9 Rural = 10
Empty nesters/ retirees **Total = 17**	England = 11 Scotland = 6	Chronic = 8 6 months = 9	Urban = 6 Rural = 11
Total = 115	England = 77 Scotland = 14 Wales = 10 N. Ireland = 14	Chronic = 73 6 months = 41	Urban = 80 Rural = 35

*5 Partial completes of the online forum for the mobility limitations target group
** 1 participant profile not complete for divorced/separated so do not have loneliness type data

Screener (Recently divorced/separated)

B1 : TNS BMRB QUAL – BRC/Co-op SCREENER TEMPLATE	Begin block

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	Begin block

Q1 : NAME	Open

TITLE: FIRST NAME: SURNAME:

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Q2 : CONTACT DETAILS	Open

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

HOME PHONE NUMBER:

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER: MOBILE PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Q3a : GROUP	Open

GROUP NUMBER:

DATE: TIME:

LOCATION: RESEARCHER:

Q3b : F2F DEPTH	Open

DEPTH NUMBER:

DATE: TIME:

LOCATION:

RESEARCHER:

Q4 : Recruitment method	Single coded

1 ☐ Face to face

2 ☐ On the street

3 ☐ Telephone

4 ☐ Recruiter's own database

5 ☐ Delivered invite

6 ☐ Other: (please record) _____

Q5 : Recruiter's declaration	Open

The person named above has been recruited by me in accordance with the instructions and within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

SIGNED

NAME

DATE

BACKCHECKED: YES/NO

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	End block

Q6 : QUOTAS	Open

Target Group Sample

Group	Method and Number	Session Length	Venue	Additional sample considerations
18 Divorced/ separated people in mid to late life	2 Groups: 1 male and 1 female group with x 6 people each 6 F2F depths (age 75+ participants)	1.5 hours 1 hour	Hotel Home	For groups: - All to be ages 35+ with a mix of ages within the above of 35-54; 55-74; 75+ For groups and depths: - Minimum 8 recently divorced/separated (within last 2 years) - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations across London, Oldham, Belfast, Glasgow and Aberystwyth

T1 : INTRODUCTION	Open

"Good morning/afternoon, I'm from TNS BMRB, an independent research organisation. The British Red Cross and Co-op has asked us to do some research for them to understand your local area and how they can help support a better sense of community.

Please note that:

- The research is confidential.

- TNS BMRB is completely independent of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

- TNS BMRB will not pass any of your details to either of these organisations or anyone else and it will not be possible to identify any individual or individual organisation in the findings that we report.

- The findings from the research will be used by the British Red Cross and Co-op to improve their services and how they work with and support local communities.

We were wondering if you might be interested in taking part?

1. ☐ Yes

2. ☐ No

May I ask you a few questions please?

Recruiter Note:

Background – The British Red Cross and the Co-op have commissioned a research project to understand and tackle the underlying causes of loneliness in communities and how they can help people reconnect back to their communities if they wish to do so. It is important during this recruitment process that the subject of loneliness is not referred to directly as this is a sensitive issue which may make respondents feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community issue.

B2 : Exclusions	Begin block

Q7 : EXCLUSIONS Intro	Multi coded

Are you working for or involved in any of the following?

DO NOT RECRUIT IF ANY OF THESE ARE MENTIONED

1 ☐ Advertising

2 ☐ Market research

3 ☐ Marketing

4 ☐ Journalism

5 ☐ Public relations

6 ☐ Lobby or campaign group

7 ☐ Local, regional or national politics

Q8 : Previous research experience	Single coded

Have you taken part in a market research interview, focus group or event in the last 6 months?

1 = Go to next block

2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ No

2 ☐ Yes

B2 : Exclusions	End block

B3 : Demographics	Begin block

Q9: GENDER	Single coded

Note the gender of the respondent.

DO NOT ASK

Recruit to quota (mix)

Recruit to quota (mix)

1 ☐ Male

2 ☐ Female

Q10 : ETHNICITY   Single coded

How would you describe your ethnicity?

MONITOR

1   ☐ White – British

2   ☐ White – Irish

3   ☐ Any other white background

4   ☐ Mixed – White & Black Caribbean

5   ☐ Mixed – White & Black African

6   ☐ Mixed – White & Asian

7   ☐ Any other mixed background

8   ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Chinese

9   ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Any other

10   ☐ Black or Black British – Caribbean

11   ☐ Black or Black British – African

12   ☐ Any other Black background

13   ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian

14   ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

15   ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

16   ☐ Any other Asian background

17   ☐ Refused

Q11 : AGE   Single coded

Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you fall within?

If 1 = Do not recruit, If 2-4 = Please recruit to quota

1   ☐ 18-34

2   ☐ 35-54

3   ☐ 55-74

4   ☐ 75+

Q12 : SEG	**Single coded**

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

> PROBE FULLY, WRITE IN AND CODE BELOW:
>
>
> RECRUIT TO QUOTA AS ABOVE (Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE)

1   ☐ AB

2   ☐ C1

3   ☐ C2

4   ☐ DE

Q13 : Marital Status	**Multi coded**

Which of the following describes your current marital status?

> If 3 or 5 recruit

1   ☐ Single

2   ☐ Married

3   ☐ Divorced

4   ☐ Living with a partner

5   ☐ Separated

6   ☐ Widowed

7   ☐ None of the above

Q14 : Recently separated/divorced	**Multi coded**

How recently have you been divorced or separated?

Recruit a minimum of 8 divorced or separated within the last 2 years across groups/depths

1   ☐ In the last 2 years

2   ☐ In the last 5 years

3   ☐ Over 5 years ago

B3 : Demographics	End block

B4 : Loneliness Assessment	Beginning Block

I am now going to read you some statements and ask how often you feel each of these statements I read out.

You can answer with one of the following:

- I *hardly ever* feel this way
- I feel this way some of the time
- I *often* feel this way

Recruiter Note: This block is used to recruit to quota for loneliness type. Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

In order to score somebody's answers, their responses should be coded as follows:

- Hardly ever = 1
- Some of the time = 2
- Often = 3

The scores for each individual question can be added together to give you a possible range of scores from 3 to 9. Researchers in the past have grouped people who score 3 – 5 as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 as "lonely".

Q15 : Companionship	Single coded

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

RECORD:

1 ☐ Hardly ever
2 ☐ Some of the time
3 ☐ Often

Q16 : Inclusive	Single coded

How often do you feel left out?

RECORD:

1 ☐ Hardly ever
2 ☐ Some of the time
3 ☐ Often

Q17 : Isolated   Single coded

How often do you feel isolated from others?

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RECORD:



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1   ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

Recruiter Note: Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

If scoring between:

3-5 = Do not recruit (not lonely)

6-9 = Go to Q18 (lonely)

Q18 : Chronic   Single coded

Have you been feeling this way… RECRUITER READ OUT

1= recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota
2= recruit to chronic loneliness quota

1   ☐ Within the last six months?

2   ☐ For longer than six months

B4 : Vox Pop Consent   Start Block

Q19: Vox Pop Consent   Multi coded

If recruiting, please ask the following:

At the end of the discussion, we would like to invite those we speak to to be filmed in a short video. We'd ask you to repeat some of the views discussed at interview. There is no obligation to take part in this, but it is really helpful for British Red Cross and Co-op as it brings the findings 'to life' and helps them better understand the communities they serve.

It takes about 5 minutes, and of course would stay totally anonymous – the people watching wouldn't know your name or details. The videos are only used by our team and people interested in this specific project at British Red Cross and Co-op. The videos will not be made publically available.

In principle, would you be happy to be filmed at the end of the session?

If Yes = Please make a note of consent

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

B4 : Vox Pop Consent	End block

Q20: Concluding interview	Multi coded

If not recruiting:

I am sorry to say that you actually fall outside of the range of people that we need to recruit as part of this study. Apologise for taking up respondent's time. **Thank and close**.

If recruiting for focus groups;

We would like you to take part in a group discussion which will last 1.5 hours. You will receive £40 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them – those have recently experienced a bereavement.

The discussion will take place at;

Date:

Time:

Venue:

If recruiting for face-to-face depths:

We would like you to take part in a face-to-face discussion which will last up to 1 hour. You will receive £40 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them – those have recently experienced a bereavement.

The discussion will take place at;

Date:

Time:

Venue:

We will be audio recording the discussions. The discussions/forum will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team.

You do not need to have any prior knowledge to take part in this discussion. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

Screener (Mobility limitations)

B1 : TNS BMRB QUAL – BRC/Co-op SCREENER TEMPLATE	Begin block

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	Begin block

Q1 : NAME	Open

TITLE:

FIRST NAME:

SURNAME:

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Q2 : CONTACT DETAILS   **Open**

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

HOME PHONE NUMBER:

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER:

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

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│  PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY                        │
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Q3 : Recruitment method   **Open**

1   ☐ Face to face

2   ☐ On the street

3   ☐ Telephone

4   ☐ Recruiter's own database

5   ☐ Delivered invite

6   ☐ Other: (please record) _____

Q4 : Recruiter's declaration   **Open**

The person named above has been recruited by me in accordance with the instructions and within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

SIGNED

NAME

DATE

BACKCHECKED: YES/NO

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B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	End Block

Q5 : QUOTAS	Open

Group	Method and Number	Session Length	Venue	Additional sample considerations
24 people with mobility limitations	10 F2F depths 14 Online	Up to 1.5 hours Up to 1.5 hours over 5 days	Home Online	For depths and online: - Mix of genders - Mix of ages – across <35; 35-54; 55+ - 12 with mobility limitations due to poor health - 12 with mobility limitations due to lack of access to transport - Mix of chronically lonely - Mix of experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Mix of geographical locations across London, Oldham, Belfast, Glasgow and Aberystwyth

T1 : INTRODUCTION	Text

"Good morning/afternoon, I'm from TNS BMRB, an independent research organisation. *The British Red Cross and Co-op has asked us to do some research for them to understand your local area and how they can help support a better sense of community.*

Please note that:

• The research is confidential.

• TNS BMRB is completely independent of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

• TNS BMRB will not pass any of your details to either of these organisations or anyone else and it will not be possible to identify any individual or individual organisation in the findings that we report.

• The findings from the research will be used by the British Red Cross and Co-op to improve their services and how they work with and support local communities.

We were wondering if you might be interested in taking part?

1. Yes

2. No

May I ask you a few questions please?

Recruiter Note:

Background – The British Red Cross and Co-op have commissioned a research project to understand and tackle the underlying causes of loneliness in communities and how they can help people reconnect back to their communities if they wish to do so. It is important during this recruitment process that the subject of loneliness is not referred to directly as this is a sensitive issue which may make respondents feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community issue.

B2 : Exclusions	Begin block

Q6 : EXCLUSIONS Intro	Multi coded

Are working for or involved in any of the following?

DO NOT RECRUIT IF ANY OF THESE ARE MENTIONED

1 ☐ Advertising

2 ☐ Market research

3 ☐ Marketing

4 ☐ Journalism

5 ☐ Public relations

6 ☐ Lobby or campaign group

7 ☐ Local, regional or national politics

Q7 : Previous research experience :	Single coded

Have you taken part in a market research interview, focus group or event in the last 6 months?

> 1 = Go to next block
>
> 2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ No

2 ☐ Yes

B2 : Exclusions	End block

B2 : Demographics	Begin block

Q8 : GENDER	Single coded

Note the gender of the respondent.

DO NOT ASK

2 = Recruit

1 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ Male

2 ☐ Female

Q9 : ETHNICITY	Single coded

1 ☐ White – British

2 ☐ White – Irish

3 ☐ Any other white background

4 ☐ Mixed – White & Black Caribbean

5 ☐ Mixed – White & Black African

6 ☐ Mixed – White & Asian

7 ☐ Any other mixed background

8 ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Chinese

9 ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Any other

10 ☐ Black or Black British – Caribbean

11 ☐ Black or Black British – African

12 ☐ Any other Black background

13 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian

14 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

15 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

16 ☐ Any other Asian background

17 ☐ Refused

Q10: Age	Single coded

Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you fall within?

Recruit to quota (mix)

1 ☐ 18-34

2 ☐ 35-54

3 ☐ 55-74

4 ☐ 75+

Q11: Poor health mobility	Single coded

Do you currently have any health issues which have an impact on your ability to get around independently?

1 = Recruit to quota (Maximum 12)

2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ No

2 ☐ Yes

Q12: Transport mobility	Single coded

Do you currently have difficulties getting to places due to a lack of access to transport?

1 = Recruit to quota (Maximum 12)

2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

Q13: SEG :   Single coded

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

> PROBE FULLY, WRITE IN AND CODE BELOW:
>
> RECRUIT A MIX

1   ☐ AB
2   ☐ C1
3   ☐ C2
4   ☐ DE

Q14: Internet Access   Single coded

Do you have daily internet access at home which you can access on a laptop/desktop or tablet?

> 1 = consider recruiting for online forum and go to Q16, 2= consider recruit for F2F depths and go to Q16

1   ☐ Yes
2   ☐ No

Q15: Internet Confidence   Single coded

How confident are you using a computer and interacting online? (If needed e.g. similar to posting on Facebook or posting on a comments page)

> 1 = consider recruiting for online forum and go to Q16, 2= consider recruit for F2F depths and go to Q16

1   ☐ Fairly confident
2   ☐ Not confident

B3 : Demographics   **End block**

B4 : Loneliness Assessment   **Beginning Block**

I am now going to read you some statements and ask how often you feel each of these statements I read out.

You can answer with one of the following:

*   I *hardly* ever feel this way

*   I feel this way some of the time

*   I *often* feel this way

Recruiter Note: This block is used to recruit to quota for loneliness type.

Please note the answers to 16-Q18 and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9

In order to score somebody's answers, their responses should be coded as follows:

- Hardly ever = 1
- Some of the time = 2
- Often = 3

The scores for each individual question can be added together to give you a possible range of scores from 3 to 9. Researchers in the past have grouped people who score 3 – 5 as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 as "lonely".

Q16 : Companionship	Single coded

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

```
RECORD



```

1 ☐ Hardly ever

2 ☐ Some of the time

3 ☐ Often

Q17 : Inclusive	Single coded

How often do you feel left out?

```
RECORD



```

1 ☐ Hardly ever

2 ☐ Some of the time

3 ☐ Often

Q18: Isolated	Single coded

How often do you feel isolated from others?

```
RECORD



```

1 ☐ Hardly ever

2 ☐ Some of the time

3 ☐ Often

Recruiter Note: Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

If scoring between:

3-5 = Do not recruit (not lonely)

6-9 = Go to Q19 (lonely)

Q19 : Chronic	Single coded

Have you been feeling this way…RECRUITER READ OUT

> 1= recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota
>
> 2= recruit to chronic loneliness quota

1 ☐ Within the last six months?

2 ☐ For longer than six months

B4 : Vox Pop Consent	Start Block

Q20: Vox Pop Consent	Multi coded

If recruiting for F2F depth, please ask the following:

At the end of the discussion, we would like to invite those we speak to to be filmed in a short video. We'd ask you to repeat some of the views discussed at interview. There is no obligation to take part in this, but it is really helpful for British Red Cross and Co-op as it brings the findings 'to life' and helps them better understand the communities they serve.

It takes about 5 minutes, and of course would stay totally anonymous – the people watching wouldn't know your name or details. The videos are only used by our team and people interested in this specific project at British Red Cross and Co-op. The videos will not be made publically available.

In principle, would you be happy to be filmed at the end of the session?

> Record both responses

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

B3: Vox Pop Consent	End Block

Q21: Concluding interview :	Multi coded

If not recruiting:

I am sorry to say that you actually fall outside of the range of people that we need to recruit as part of this study. Apologise for taking up respondent's time. **Thank and close.**

If recruiting for face-to-face depths:

We would like you to take part in a face to face interview. The interview may last up to 1.5 hours and take place in your own home. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them - those who have difficulties getting to places due to transport issues and have health issues.

You will receive £40 as a thank you for your time.

We will be audio recording the interviews. The discussions will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team.

You do not need to have any prior knowledge to take part in this interview. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

If yes, please explain they will receive a reminder phone call before the scheduled interview.

If recruiting for online forum;

We would like to invite you to take part in an online discussion forum. This is an online discussion board where you and others post responses to a number of activities.

You are invited to share your views over 5 days in an online forum and this is expected to take 1.5 hours of your time in total.

You will receive £50 as a thank you for your contribution.

The discussions will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team.

You do not need to have any prior knowledge to take part in this group. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

If yes, please explain they will be contacted by the research team via e-mail to confirm their participation, and provide a link and log in instructions to the online platform.

Screener (Retirees and empty nesters)

B1 : TNS BMRB QUAL – BRC/Co-op SCREENER TEMPLATE	Begin block

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	Begin block

Q1 : NAME	Open

TITLE:

FIRST NAME:

SURNAME:

Q2 : CONTACT DETAILS	Open

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

HOME PHONE NUMBER:

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER:

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Q3 : GROUP — Open

GROUP NUMBER:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

RESEARCHER:

Q4 : Recruitment method — Single coded

1 ☐ Face to face

2 ☐ On the street

3 ☐ Telephone

4 ☐ Recruiter's own database

5 ☐ Delivered invite

6 ☐ Other: (please record) _____

Q5 : Recruiter's declaration — Open

The person named above has been recruited by me in accordance with the instructions and within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

SIGNED

NAME

DATE

BACKCHECKED: YES/NO

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	End Block

Q6 : QUOTAS	Open

Group	Method and Number	Session Length	Venue	Additional sample considerations
18 retirees and empty nesters (male and female)	3 Groups of x 6 people each: 2 male groups, 1 mixed group	1.5 hours	Hotel/ recruiter home	- All ages 55-70 - Mix of ages within the above - Minimum 10 empty nesters - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Min 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations across London, Oldham, Belfast, Glasgow and Aberystwyth

T1 : INTRODUCTION	Text

"Good morning/afternoon, I'm from TNS BMRB, an independent research organisation. *The British Red Cross and Co-op has asked us to do some research for them to understand your local area and how they can help support a better sense of community.*

Please note that:

- The research is confidential.

- TNS BMRB is completely independent of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

- TNS BMRB will not pass any of your details to either of these organisations or anyone else and it will not be possible to identify any individual or individual organisation in the findings that we report.

- The findings from the research will be used by the British Red Cross and Co-op to improve their services and how they work with and support local communities.

We were wondering if you might be interested in taking part?

1. Yes

2. No

May I ask you a few questions please?

Recruiter Note:

Background: The British Red Cross and Co-op have commissioned a research project to understand and tackle the underlying causes of loneliness in communities and how they can help people reconnect back to their communities if they wish to do so. It is important during this recruitment process that the subject of loneliness is not referred to directly as this is a sensitive issue which may make respondents feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community issue.

B2 : Exclusions	Begin block

Q7 : EXCLUSIONS Intro	Multi coded

Are you working for or involved in any of the following?

DO NOT RECRUIT IF ANY OF THESE ARE MENTIONED

1 ☐ Advertising
2 ☐ Market research
3 ☐ Marketing
4 ☐ Journalism
5 ☐ Public relations
6 ☐ Lobby or campaign group
7 ☐ Local, regional or national politics

Q8 : Previous research experience	Single coded

Have you taken part in a market research interview, focus group or event in the last 6 months?

1 = Go to next block
2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes

B2 : Exclusions	End block

B3 : Demographics	Begin block

Q9 : GENDER	Single coded

Note the gender of the respondent.

DO NOT ASK

Recruit to Quota (Minimum 12 men across 2 male groups; 1 mixed group of 6)

1 ☐ Male
2 ☐ Female

Q10 : ETHNICITY	Single coded

How would you describe your ethnicity?

MONITOR

1 ☐ White – British
2 ☐ White – Irish
3 ☐ Any other white background

4   ☐ Mixed – White & Black Caribbean

5   ☐ Mixed – White & Black African

6   ☐ Mixed – White & Asian

7   ☐ Any other mixed background

8   ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Chinese

9   ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Any other

10 ☐ Black or Black British – Caribbean

11 ☐ Black or Black British – African

12 ☐ Any other Black background

13 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian

14 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

15 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

16 ☐ Any other Asian background

17 ☐ Refused

| **Q11 : Children** | **Multi coded** |

Do you have any children?

1 = Go to Q12 (plan to recruit for Empty Nester quota)

2 = Go to Q13 (plan to recruit for Retiree quota)

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

| **Q12: Children left home** | **Multi coded** |

Have any of your children recently left the family home in the last six months, for example to go to university/moved out on their own?

If yes, recruit a minimum of 10 empty nesters as per quota.

If no, go to Q13 to try and recruit for Retiree quota

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

| **Q13 : Retired** | **Single coded** |

Are you retired?

1 = Recruit

2 = Do not recruit. Thank and close.

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

Q14 : Age	Single coded

Can you tell me what age you were on your last birthday?

1 ☐ 18-34

2 ☐ 54 and below

3 ☐ 55 – 70

4 ☐ 71 and over

Q15 : SEG	Single coded

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

PROBE FULLY, WRITE IN AND CODE BELOW:

RECRUIT TO QUOTA AS ABOVE (Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE)

1 ☐ AB

2 ☐ C1

3 ☐ C2

4 ☐ DE

B3 : Demographics	End block

B4 : Loneliness Assessment	Beginning Block

I am now going to read you some statements and ask how often you feel each of these statements I read out.

You can answer with one of the following:

- I *hardly ever* feel this way

- I feel this way some of the time

- I *often* feel this way

Recruiter Note: This block is used to recruit to quota for loneliness type. Please note the answers to Q16-18 and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

In order to score somebody's answers, their responses should be coded as follows:

- Hardly ever = 1

- Some of the time = 2

- Often = 3

The scores for each individual question can be added together to give you a possible range of scores from 3 to 9. Researchers in the past have grouped people who score 3 – 5 as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 as "lonely".

Q16: Companionship

Single coded

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

RECORD

1 ☐ Hardly ever
2 ☐ Some of the time
3 ☐ Often

Q17 : Inclusive

Single coded

How often do you feel left out?

RECORD

1 ☐ Hardly ever
2 ☐ Some of the time
3 ☐ Often

Q18 : Isolated

Single coded

How often do you feel isolated from others?

RECORD

1 ☐ Hardly ever
2 ☐ Some of the time
3 ☐ Often

Recruiter note: Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

If scoring between:

3-5 = Do not recruit (not lonely)

6-9 = Go to Q19 (lonely)

Q19 : Chronic	Single coded

Have you been feeling this way… RECRUITER READ OUT

| 1 = recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota |
| 2 = recruit to chronic loneliness quota |

1   ☐ Within the last six months?

2   ☐ For longer than six months

B4 : Vox Pop Consent	Start Block

Q21: Vox Pop Consent	Multi coded

If recruiting, please ask the following:

At the end of the group, we would like to film a few of the participants in a short video. We'd ask you to repeat some of the views discussed in the group/at interview. There is no obligation to take part in this, but it is really helpful for British Red Cross and Co-op as it brings the findings 'to life' and helps them better understand the communities they serve.

It takes about 5 minutes, and of course would stay totally anonymous – the people watching wouldn't know your name or details. The videos are only used by our team and people interested in this specific project at British Red Cross and Co-op. The videos will not be made publically available.

In principle, would you be happy to be filmed at the end of the session?

| If Yes = Please make a note of consent |

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

B3 : Vox Pop Consent	End Block

Q21: Concluding interview	Multi coded

If not recruiting:

I am sorry to say that you actually fall outside of the range of people that we need to recruit as part of this study. Apologise for taking up respondent's time. **Thank and close**.

If recruiting for focus groups;

We would like you to take part in a group discussion which will last 1.5 hours. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them – those who are retired and/or have children who have left the home.

The discussion will take place at;

Date:

Time:

Venue:

You will receive £40 as a thank you for your time.

We will be audio recording the discussions. The discussions will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team.

You do not need to have any prior knowledge to take part in this group. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

Screener (Recently bereaved)

B1 : TNS BMRB QUAL – BRC/Co-op SCREENER TEMPLATE	Begin block

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	Begin block

Q1 : NAME :	Open

TITLE:

FIRST NAME:

SURNAME:

Q2 : CONTACT DETAILS :	Open

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

HOME PHONE NUMBER:

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER:

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Q3a : F2F DEPTH :	Open

DEPTH NUMBER:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

RESEARCHER:

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Q3b : GROUP   Open

GROUP NUMBER:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

RESEARCHER:

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Q4 : Recruitment method   Single coded

1   ☐ Face to face

2   ☐ On the street

3   ☐ Telephone

4   ☐ Recruiter's own database

5   ☐ Delivered invite

6   ☐ Other: (please record) _____

Q5 : Recruiter's declaration   Open

The person named above has been recruited by me in accordance with the instructions and within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

SIGNED

NAME

DATE

BACKCHECKED: YES/NO

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
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```

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	End Block

Q6 : QUOTAS	Open

Group	Method and Number	Session Length	Venue	Additional sample considerations
18 recently bereaved individuals	2 groups of x 6 individuals each 6 F2F depths	Up to 1.5 hours 1 hour	Hotel/ recruiters home Home	For group and depths: - Minimum 5 males, 5 females - All bereaved within last 2 years - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Age: 18+ - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations across London, Oldham, Belfast, Glasgow and Aberystwyth

T1 : INTRODUCTION :	Text

"Good morning/afternoon, I'm from TNS BMRB, an independent research organisation. *The British Red Cross and Co-op has asked us to do some research for them to understand your local area and how they can help support a better sense of community.*

Please note that:

- The research is confidential.

- TNS BMRB is completely independent of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

- TNS BMRB will not pass any of your details to either of these organisations or anyone else and it will not be possible to identify any individual or individual organisation in the findings that we report.

- The findings from the research will be used by the British Red Cross and Co-op to improve their services and how they work with and support local communities.

We were wondering if you might be interested in taking part?

1. Yes

2. No

May I ask you a few questions please?

Recruiter Note:

Background: The British Red Cross and Co-op have commissioned a research project to understand and tackle the underlying causes of loneliness in communities and how they can help people reconnect back to their communities if they wish to do so. It is important during this recruitment process that the subject of loneliness is not referred to directly as this is a sensitive issue which may make respondents feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community issue.

B2 : Exclusions	Begin block

Q7 : EXCLUSIONS Intro :	Multi coded

Are you working for or involved in any of the following?

DO NOT RECRUIT IF ANY OF THESE ARE MENTIONED

1 ☐ Advertising
2 ☐ Market research
3 ☐ Marketing
4 ☐ Journalism
5 ☐ Public relations
6 ☐ Lobby or campaign group
7 ☐ Local, regional or national politics

Q8 : Previous research experience :	Single coded

Have you taken part in a market research interview, focus group or event in the last 6 months?

1 = Go to next block
2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes

B2 : Exclusions	End block

B3 : Demographics	Begin block

Q9 : GENDER	Single coded

Note the gender of the respondent.

DO NOT ASK

Recruit to Quota – Minimum 5 male, 5 female

1 ☐ Male
2 ☐ Female

Q10 : ETHNICITY :	Single coded

How would you describe your ethnicity?

MONITOR

1 ☐ White – British
2 ☐ White – Irish
3 ☐ Any other white background
4 ☐ Mixed – White & Black Caribbean

5 ☐ Mixed – White & Black African

6 ☐ Mixed – White & Asian

7 ☐ Any other mixed background

8 ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Chinese

9 ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Any other

10 ☐ Black or Black British – Caribbean

11 ☐ Black or Black British – African

12 ☐ Any other Black background

13 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian

14 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

15 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

16 ☐ Any other Asian background

17 ☐ Refused

Q11 : Age   Single coded

Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you fall within?

1 ☐ 18-34

2 ☐ 35-54

3 ☐ 55-74

4 ☐ 75+

Q12 : SEG :   Single coded

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

PROBE FULLY, WRITE IN AND CODE BELOW:
RECRUIT TO QUOTA AS ABOVE (Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE)

1 ☐ AB

2 ☐ C1

3 ☐ C2

4 ☐ DE

Q13 : Bereavement Multi coded   **Single coded**

I am sorry to hear of your loss, do you mind if I ask how recently this bereavement was?

> If yes, go to Q114

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

Q14 : Bereavement timing Single coded   **Single coded**

I am sorry to hear of your loss, do you mind if I ask how recently this bereavement was?

> 2 = go to Q15
>
> 1 or 3 = do not recruit

1   ☐ In the last six months

2   ☐ In the last 2 years

3   ☐ In more than 2 years

B3 : Demographics   **End block**

B4 : Loneliness Assessment Beginning Block   **Beginning Block**

I am now going to read you some statements and ask how often you feel each of these statements I read out.

You can answer with one of the following:

- I *hardly ever* feel this way

- I feel this way some of the time

- I *often* feel this way

Recruiter Note: This block is used to recruit to quota for loneliness type. Please note the answers to Q15-17 and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

In order to score somebody's answers, their responses should be coded as follows:

- Hardly ever = 1

- Some of the time = 2

- Often =3

The scores for each individual question can be added together to give you a possible range of scores from 3 to 9. Researchers in the past have grouped people who score 3 – 5 as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 as "lonely".

Q15: Companionship   Single coded

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

```
RECORD
```

1   ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

Q16: Inclusive   Single coded

How often do you feel left out?

```
RECORD
```

1   ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

Q17: Isolated   Single coded

How often do you feel isolated from others?

```
RECORD
```

1   ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

RECRUITER NOTE: Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

If scoring between:

3-5 = Do not recruit (not lonely)

6-9 = Go to Q19 (lonely)

Q18: Chronic	**Single coded**

Have you been feeling this way… RECRUITER READ OUT

1= recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota
2= recruit to chronic loneliness quota

1 ☐ Within the last six months?

2 ☐ For longer than six months

B4 : Vox Pop Consent	**Start Block**

Q19: Vox Pop Consent	**Multi coded**

If recruiting, please ask the following:

At the end of the discussion, we would like to invite those we speak to to be filmed in a short video. We'd ask you to repeat some of the views discussed at interview. There is no obligation to take part in this, but it is really helpful for British Red Cross and Co-op as it brings the findings 'to life' and helps them better understand the communities they serve. It takes about 5 minutes, and of course would stay totally anonymous – the people watching wouldn't know your name or details. The videos are only used by our team and people interested in this specific project at British Red Cross and Co-op. The videos will not be made publically available.

In principle, would you be happy to be filmed at the end of the session?

Record both responses

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

B3: Vox Pop Consent	**End Block**

Q20: Concluding interview :	**Multi coded**

If not recruiting:

I am sorry to say that you actually fall outside of the range of people that we need to recruit as part of this study. Apologise for taking up respondent's time. Thank and close.

If recruiting for online forum;

We would like you to take part in an online forum which will last 1.5 hours across five days in one calendar week. You will receive £50 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them – those have health concerns.

The online forum will take place on:

Date:

Venue: your home on your laptop or tablet

If recruiting for face-to-face depths:

We would like you to take part in a face-to-face discussion which will last up to 1.5 hour. You will receive £40 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them – those have health concerns.

The discussion will take place at;

Date:

Time:

Venue:

We will be audio recording the discussions. The discussions/forum will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team.

You do not need to have any prior knowledge to take part in this discussions. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

Screener (Young mothers)

B1 : TNS BMRB QUAL – BRC/Co-op SCREENER TEMPLATE	Begin block

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	Begin block

Q1 : NAME :	Open

TITLE:

FIRST NAME:

SURNAME:

Q2 : CONTACT DETAILS :	Open

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

HOME PHONE NUMBER:

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER:

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Q3: GROUP: Open   Open

GROUP NUMBER:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

RESEARCHER:

Q4 : Recruitment method :   Single coded

1   ☐ Face to face

2   ☐ On the street

3   ☐ Telephone

4   ☐ Recruiter's own database

5   ☐ Delivered invite

6   ☐ Other: (please record) _____

Q5 : Recruiter's declaration :   Open

The person named above has been recruited by me in accordance with the instructions and within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

SIGNED

NAME

DATE

BACKCHECKED: YES/NO

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS   End Block

Q6 : QUOTAS   Open

Group	Method and Number	Session Length	Venue	Additional sample considerations
12 young mothers	2 groups of x 6 people each (and children, if needed)	Up to 1.5 hours	Hotel/ recruiters home	- All to be under age 25 - Mix of chronically lonely - Mix of experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Mix of geographical locations across London, Oldham, Belfast, Glasgow and Aberystwyth

T1 : INTRODUCTION :	**Text**

"Good morning/afternoon, I'm from TNS BMRB, an independent research organisation. *The British Red Cross and Co-op has asked us to do some research for them to understand your local area and how they can help support a better sense of community.*

Please note that:

- The research is confidential.

- TNS BMRB is completely independent of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

- TNS BMRB will not pass any of your details to either of these organisations or anyone else and it will not be possible to identify any individual or individual organisation in the findings that we report.

- The findings from the research will be used by the British Red Cross and Co-op to improve their services and how they work with and support local communities.

We were wondering if you might be interested in taking part?

1. Yes

2. No

May I ask you a few questions please?

Recruiter Note:

Background: The British Red Cross and Co-op have commissioned a research project to understand and tackle the underlying causes of loneliness in communities and how they can help people reconnect back to their communities if they wish to do so. It is important during this recruitment process that the subject of loneliness is not referred to directly as this is a sensitive issue which may make respondents feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community issue.

B2 : Exclusions	**Begin block**

Q7 : EXCLUSIONS Intro	**Multi coded**

Are you working for or involved in any of the following?

DO NOT RECRUIT IF ANY OF THESE ARE MENTIONED

1 ☐ Advertising

2 ☐ Market research

3 ☐ Marketing

4   ☐ Journalism
5   ☐ Public relations
6   ☐ Lobby or campaign group
7   ☐ Local, regional or national politics

| **Q8 : Previous research experience :** | **Single coded** |

Have you taken part in a market research interview, focus group or event in the last 6 months?

1 = Go to next block

2 = Do not recruit

1   ☐ No
2   ☐ Yes

| **B2 : Exclusions** | **End block** |

| **B3 : Demographics** | **Begin block** |

| **Q9 : GENDER :** | **Single coded** |

Note the gender of the respondent.

DO NOT ASK

Recruit to Quota – Minimum 5 male, 5 female

1   ☐ Male
2   ☐ Female

| **Q10 : ETHNICITY :** | **Single coded** |

How would you describe your ethnicity?

MONITOR

1   ☐ White – British
2   ☐ White – Irish
3   ☐ Any other white background
4   ☐ Mixed – White & Black Caribbean
5   ☐ Mixed – White & Black African
6   ☐ Mixed – White & Asian
7   ☐ Any other mixed background
8   ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Chinese
9   ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Any other
10   ☐ Black or Black British – Caribbean
11   ☐ Black or Black British – African
12   ☐ Any other Black background
13   ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian

14 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

15 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

16 ☐ Any other Asian background

17 ☐ Refused

Q11 Children Multi coded	Single coded

Do you have any children?

```



```

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

Q12: Age	Single coded

Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you fall within?

```



```

1 ☐ 18-34

2 ☐ 35-54

3 ☐ 55-74

4 ☐ 75+

Q13 : Marital Status Multi coded	Single coded

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

```
Record

```

1 ☐ Single

2 ☐ Married

3 ☐ Divorced

4 ☐ Living with a partner

5 ☐ Separated

6 ☐ Widowed

7 ☐ None of the above

Q14 : SEG :   `Single coded`

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

> PROBE FULLY, WRITE IN AND CODE BELOW:
>
>
> RECRUIT TO QUOTA AS ABOVE (Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE)

1 ☐ AB

2 ☐ C1

3 ☐ C2

4 ☐ DE

B3 : Demographics   `End block`

B4 : Loneliness Assessment   `Beginning Block`

I am now going to read you some statements and ask how often you feel each of these statements I read out.

You can answer with one of the following:

- I hardly ever feel this way

- I feel this way some of the time

- I often feel this way

Recruiter Note: This block is used to recruit to quota for loneliness type. Please note the answers to 15-Q17 and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

In order to score somebody's answers, their responses should be coded as follows:

- Hardly ever = 1

- Some of the time = 2

- Often = 3

The scores for each individual question can be added together to give you a possible range of scores from 3 to 9. Researchers in the past have grouped people who score 3 – 5 as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 as "lonely".

Q15: Companionship   `Single coded`

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

> RECORD (and plan to add with Q16 and Q17 score)

1 ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

Q16: Inclusive	Single coded

How often do you feel left out?

```
RECORD (and plan to add with Q16 and Q17 score)



```

1   ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

Q17: Isolated	Single coded

How often do you feel isolated from others?

```
RECORD (and plan to add with Q16 and Q17 score)



```

1   ☐ Hardly ever

2   ☐ Some of the time

3   ☐ Often

RECRUITER NOTE: Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

If scoring between:

3-5 = Do not recruit (not lonely)

6-9 = Go to Q18 (lonely)

Q18: Chronic	Single coded

Have you been feeling this way…RECRUITER READ OUT

```
1= recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota

2= recruit to chronic loneliness quota
```

1   ☐ Within the last six months?

2   ☐ For longer than six months

B4 : Vox Pop Consent	**Start Block**

Q19: Vox Pop Consent	**Multi coded**

If recruiting, please ask the following:

At the end of the discussion, we would like to invite those we speak to to be filmed in a short video. We'd ask you to repeat some of the views discussed at interview. There is no obligation to take part in this, but it is really helpful for British Red Cross and Co-op as it brings the findings 'to life' and helps them better understand the communities they serve.

It takes about 5 minutes, and of course would stay totally anonymous – the people watching wouldn't know your name or details. The videos are only used by our team and people interested in this specific project at British Red Cross and Co-op. The videos will not be made publically available.

In principle, would you be happy to be filmed at the end of the session??

Record both responses

1   ☐ Yes

2   ☐ No

B3: Vox Pop Consent	**End Block**

Q20: Concluding interview	**Multi coded**

If not recruiting:

I am sorry to say that you actually fall outside of the range of people that we need to recruit as part of this study. Apologise for taking up respondent's time. **Thank and close.**

If recruiting for a group;

We would like you to take part in a group discussion which will last 1.5 hours. You will receive £40 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them – young women with children.

The discussion will take place at;

Date:

Time:

Venue:

We will be audio recording the discussions. The discussions/forum will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team. You do not need to have any prior knowledge to take part in these discussions. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

3.2.7 Screener (Health issues)

B1 : TNS BMRB QUAL – BRC/Co-op SCREENER TEMPLATE	Begin block

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS	Begin block

Q1 : NAME :	Open

TITLE:

FIRST NAME:

SURNAME:

Q2 : CONTACT DETAILS :	Open

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

HOME PHONE NUMBER:

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER:

MOBILE PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

Q3a : F2F DEPTH :	Open

DEPTH NUMBER:

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

RESEARCHER:

Q3b : ONLINE:	Open

DATE:

RESEARCHER:

Q4 : Recruitment method : — Single coded

1 ☐ Face to face

2 ☐ On the street

3 ☐ Telephone

4 ☐ Recruiter's own database

5 ☐ Delivered invite

6 ☐ Other: (please record) _____

Q5 : Recruiter's declaration : — Open

The person named above has been recruited by me in accordance with the instructions and within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct.

SIGNED

NAME

DATE

BACKCHECKED: YES/NO

B2 : RESPONDENT DETAILS — End Block

Q6 : QUOTAS — Open

Target Group Sample

Group	Method and Number	Session Length	Venue	Additional sample considerations
18 people with health issues	8 F2F depths 10 Online Forum	Up to 1.5 hours Up to 1.5 hours over 5 days	Home Online	For depths and online: - Mix of gender - Mix of ages across <35; 35-54; 55+ - Minimum 4 chronically lonely - Minimum 4 experiencing loneliness over the last 6 months - Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE - Mix of geographical locations across London, Oldham, Belfast, Glasgow and Aberystwyth

T1 : INTRODUCTION :	**Text**

"Good morning/afternoon, I'm from TNS BMRB, an independent research organisation. *The British Red Cross and Co-op has asked us to do some research for them to understand your local area and how they can help support a better sense of community.*

Please note that:

- The research is confidential.

- TNS BMRB is completely independent of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

- TNS BMRB will not pass any of your details to either of these organisations or anyone else and it will not be possible to identify any individual or individual organisation in the findings that we report.

- The findings from the research will be used by the British Red Cross and Co-op to improve their services and how they work with and support local communities.

We were wondering if you might be interested in taking part?

1. Yes

2. No

May I ask you a few questions please?

Recruiter Note:

Background: The British Red Cross and Co-op have commissioned a research project to understand and tackle the underlying causes of loneliness in communities and how they can help people reconnect back to their communities if they wish to do so. It is important during this recruitment process that the subject of loneliness is not referred to directly as this is a sensitive issue which may make respondents feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community issue.

B2: Exclusions	**Begin block**

Q7: EXCLUSIONS Intro :	**Multi coded**

Are you working for or involved in any of the following?

DO NOT RECRUIT IF ANY OF THESE ARE MENTIONED

1 ☐ Advertising
2 ☐ Market research
3 ☐ Marketing
4 ☐ Journalism
5 ☐ Public relations
6 ☐ Lobby or campaign group
7 ☐ Local, regional or national politics

Q8 : Previous research experience :	**Single coded**

Have you taken part in a market research interview, focus group or event in the last 6 months?

1 = Go to next block
2 = Do not recruit

1 ☐ No
2 ☐ Yes

B2 : Exclusions	End block

B3 : Demographics	Begin block

Q9 : GENDER :	Single coded

Note the gender of the respondent.

DO NOT ASK

Recruit to Quota

1 ☐ Male

2 ☐ Female

Q10 : ETHNICITY :	Single coded

How would you describe your ethnicity?

MONITOR

1 ☐ White – British

2 ☐ White – Irish

3 ☐ Any other white background

4 ☐ Mixed – White & Black Caribbean

5 ☐ Mixed – White & Black African

6 ☐ Mixed – White & Asian

7 ☐ Any other mixed background

8 ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Chinese

9 ☐ Chinese or other Ethnic group – Any other

10 ☐ Black or Black British – Caribbean

11 ☐ Black or Black British – African

12 ☐ Any other Black background

13 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Indian

14 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

15 ☐ Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

16 ☐ Any other Asian background

17 ☐ Refused

Q11 : Disability	Multi coded

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?

1= recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota
2= recruit to chronic loneliness quota

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

3 ☐ Refused

Q12 : Disability specification:　　　　　　　　　**Multi coded**

Do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

> Record

1　☐ Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)

2　☐ Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)

3　☐ Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)

4　☐ Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)

5　☐ Learning or understanding or concentrating

6　☐ Memory

7　☐ Mental health

8　☐ Stamina or breathing or fatigue

9　☐ Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)

10　☐ Other (please specify)

…….

Q13: Age　　　　　　　　　**Single coded**

Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you fall within?

1　☐ 18-34

2　☐ 35-54

3　☐ 55-74

4　☐ 75+

Q14 : SEG :　　　　　　　　　**Single coded**

What is/was the occupation of the chief income earner in your household?

> PROBE FULLY, WRITE IN AND CODE BELOW:
>
> RECRUIT TO QUOTA AS ABOVE (Minimum 5 ABC1, 5 C2DE)

1　☐ AB

2　☐ C1

3　☐ C2

4　☐ DE

Q16: Internet Confidence	Single coded

How confident are you using a computer and interacting online? (If needed e.g. similar to posting on Facebook or posting on a comments page)

> 1 = consider recruiting for online forum and go to Q16, 2 = consider recruit for F2F depths and go to Q16

1　☐ Fairly confident

1　☐ Not confident

B3 : Demographics	End block

B4 : Loneliness Assessment	Beginning Block

I am now going to read you some statements and ask how often you feel each of these statements I read out.

You can answer with one of the following:

- I *hardly ever* feel this way

- I feel this way some of the time

- I *often* feel this way

Recruiter Note: This block is used to recruit to quota for loneliness type. Please note the answers to Q15-17 and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

In order to score somebody's answers, their responses should be coded as follows:

- Hardly ever = 1

- Some of the time = 2

- Often = 3

The scores for each individual question can be added together to give you a possible range of scores from 3 to 9. Researchers in the past have grouped people who score 3 – 5 as "not lonely" and people with the score 6 – 9 as "lonely".

Q17: Companionship	Single coded

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

1　☐ Hardly ever

2　☐ Some of the time

3　☐ Often

Q18: Inclusive | Single coded

How often do you feel left out?

> RECORD

1 ☐ Hardly ever

2 ☐ Some of the time

3 ☐ Often

Q19: Isolated | Single coded

How often do you feel isolated from others?

> RECORD

1 ☐ Hardly ever

2 ☐ Some of the time

3 ☐ Often

RECRUITER NOTE: Please note the following answers and add up the scores to give you a possible score from 3-9.

If scoring between:

3-5 = Do not recruit (not lonely)

6-9 = Go to Q19 (lonely)

Q20: Chronic | Single coded

Have you been feeling this way…RECRUITER READ OUT

> 1 = recruit to loneliness in last 6 months quota
>
> 2 = recruit to chronic loneliness quota

1 ☐ Within the last six months?

2 ☐ For longer than six months

B4 : Vox Pop Consent | Start Block

Q21: Vox Pop Consent | Multi coded

If recruiting for F2F depth, please ask the following:

At the end of the discussion, we would like to invite those we speak to to be filmed in a short video. We'd ask you to repeat some of the views discussed at interview. There is no obligation to take part in this, but it is really helpful for British Red Cross and Co-op as it brings the findings 'to life' and helps

them better understand the communities they serve.

It takes about 5 minutes, and of course would stay totally anonymous – the people watching wouldn't know your name or details. The videos are only used by our team and people interested in this specific project at British Red Cross and Co-op. The videos will not be made publically available.

In principle, would you be happy to be filmed at the end of the session??

> Record both responses

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

B3: Vox Pop Consent	End Block

Q22: Concluding interview	Multi coded

If not recruiting:

I am sorry to say that you actually fall outside of the range of people that we need to recruit as part of this study. Apologise for taking up respondent's time. **Thank and close**.

If recruiting for online forum;

We would like you to take part in an online forum which will last 1.5 hours across five days in one calendar week. You will receive £50 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them - those have health concerns.

The online forum will take place on:
Date:
Venue: your home on your laptop or tablet

If recruiting for face-to-face depths:

We would like you to take part in a face-to-face discussion which will last up to 1.5 hour. You will receive £40 as a thank you for taking part. Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people like them - those have health concerns.

The discussion will take place at:

Date:
Time:
Venue:

We will be audio recording the discussions. The discussions/forum will be confidential and anonymous – your details will not be shared with anyone except the TNS BMRB research team.

You **do not** need to have any prior knowledge to take part in this discussions. We will not be testing people's knowledge, but simply asking for people's views and opinions.

Would you be interested in participating in this research?

Topic guide – Depths (Divorced/Separated, Health issues, Mobility limitations)

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to combat it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involves exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups of the public, reaching 108 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums.

Phase 2 interview aims

Phase 2 research activities aim to understand:

- What it is like to be lonely in the UK, including contexts, causes and individual impact

- For individuals experiencing chronic loneliness, understand how what might have been a temporary situation became a long-term issue – and what might have prevented this

- How loneliness experienced by our participants – temporary and chronic – could be identified

- What support options are available; what is working well; where are the gaps

- What kind of support is needed and the form that this would take.

Please note that we are interested in support in the broadest sense. In addition to services, please probe to gain insight into the role of communities and businesses (both as an employer and as a deliverer of products and services) in helping to tackle loneliness.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

- The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment and why the term lonely should only be used in depth interview discussions if a participant has used this term themselves. Please use the information from the screener to get an appreciation of the extent of the person's loneliness prior to the interview. Please familiarise yourself with the loneliness scoring but do not make reference to it during the conversation.

- Questioning and probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

- Approaches to using the guide will be flexible and adapted to each participant to minimise burden e.g. the order/elements used/how much time is spent in home (if relevant). The prompts provided are not exhausted, but rather indicate the types of content we would expect to be covered – this may vary across participant groups.

- The researcher will ensure that they observe both nonverbal and verbal withdrawal of consent e.g., if someone wants to take a break, is uncomfortable with the line of questioning, or would like to withdraw.

- If someone becomes upset within the interview, the researcher will check if they want a break or to carry on with participation in the research. All participants will be left with support materials around connecting with others/combating loneliness. Please provide to all participants so no one feels stigmatised or judged – explaining 'We're giving this to everyone, because if even one person felt upset, we'd want to know that one person had support'. We would also leave support materials for more serious issues (e.g., serious emotional distress) where appropriate. This should be offered to participants and not forced on them. It may be that it is more appropriate to provide materials via follow-up rather than in the moment if there is not a more private way to do this.

- Our approach to duty of disclosure for this project: TNS BMRB will disclose to BRC on behalf of the partnership in the case of suspected current or likely risk of harm to participants and others (e.g., suicidality; life-threatening self-harm). If you have any concerns whatsoever about a participant let your line manager and the project Director (Caitlin) know immediately – as soon as you leave the interview.

Introduction to the research (3 mins)

- Introduce yourself: TNS BMRB – independent research company

- Introduce research and purpose of the interview – research on behalf of British Red Cross and Co-op to understand experience of community in their area and how they can help support a better sense of community

- Reason for participation – Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people with similar experiences – (tailor for target group).

- Reassurances – No right or wrong answers; not a test- we are simply asking for people's views and opinions; comfort – let me know if you'd like a break at any time

- MRS guidelines

- Disclosure – If we see or hear something which causes concern about your physical safety, we have a duty to act to make sure you are protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If this was to happen, we would talk to you about what to do first – e.g., we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies (e.g. BRC) on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, it will stay confidential.

- Explain recording – the interview will be recorded so that researchers do not have to make notes during the interview and can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team at TNS BMRB will have access to the recordings.

- Length: up to 1 hour (or 1.5 hour if poor health and disability or mobility groups)

- Incentive – £40 as a thank you for taking part, in the form of a debit card to be given following the discussion

- Any questions/concerns?

- Start recording – acknowledge participant consent for being recorded. If participant does not wish for the interview to be recorded, ask for permission to take notes.

Understanding context and history (10-15 minutes)

Section aim: Warm up the participant to the tone/style of a discussion, understand their circumstances and needs in relation to feeling connected to their communities

- Description of area (what it's like, rural/ urban, population, close knit community?); favourite activity to do

- Briefly discuss the stage they are at in their life e.g. what is it like to be [divorced/experiencing health or mobility concerns] in your area

  o What's important in their life now (e.g. hobbies, health, family, community, finances)

  o How time is spent now e.g. hobbies/ activities, engaging with friends/families/ community

  o How this feels, whether/how this varies by situation/context

  o Past expectations of this stage of their lives vs. reality

  o How has life changed?

- Briefly explore what is good about/the downside to the stage you are at in your life in relation to engaging with others and connecting with people/with your community (can be in person or virtually)

- Discuss in more detail how the participant connects with others/ if they want to connect/ spend time with others. Spontaneous then prompt for:

  o Who they are connecting with on a regular basis e.g. close/distant family and friends, neighbours, strangers, service providers (broadly – e.g. butcher, GP, postman,

people in their local shop etc.) and why this person (proximity, friendly, has time to listen etc)

- o How they are connecting e.g. informal/ formal, face-to-face/online/phone/print e.g. pen pal.

  - – informal – visiting friends/family, going to the shops, chatting with people on the bus/grocery story/GP/in the local park etc., bumping into neighbours on the street, attending community events or groups;

  - – formal – statutory services, services from charities, physical and mental health services, social and leisure services, volunteering

- o When types of engagement are happening – some more often than others?

- o Reasons for differences in types of engagement e.g. personal preference, access/availability, stage in their life

¤ Let's take things back a bit; in the last few years or so what made it easier/harder to spend time with others? What were the high points in terms of feeling connected to others, and how did that feel/what did that look like; and if there's any low points you're willing to share, that's fine to talk about too. Broadly – flexibly – map and prompt sensitively and in a tailored way to explore:

- o What was going on then

- o What did you do in those situations; what did you do next, why

- o How were you feeling at those times

- o How did that affect you? What was the impact on how you felt/what you did/what you thought

- o What else was going on around that time

- o Tell me how you 'acted' at this time – looking from the outside, what would I have seen? What would have shown me you were feeling more/less connected?

- o What helped you to feel more/less connected during those times

- o If not yet discussed, probe specifically in relation to the stage they are at in their life based on target group (e.g. before

and after divorcing/separating) we'd be interested to know if this was the sole trigger or whether there was a combination of factors at play.

- o Is there anything that could have helped you out during this period? If anything was 'missing' what was this?

Experience and impact of loneliness (20-30 minutes)

Section aim: Move the discussion sensitively towards loneliness specifically, capturing understanding of loneliness, what loneliness looks and feels like, causes of loneliness and impacts of loneliness

Researcher note: if the word 'lonely' is not mentioned then sensitively use the language of the participant throughout. If/when appropriate, explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

¤ Explore how connected and socially supported the participant feels currently, referring back to what was said earlier – and why

¤ When they feel more/less connected and socially supported – spontaneous, then prompt to understand if feeling lonely:

- o When alone – or also with others?

- o Off-and-on, or frequently?

- o Projectives – if needed: Some people have told us being lonely/unconnected can happen even when they are with other people, or do have friends and family in their lives – what do you think?

¤ What does being lonely/feeling less connected and socially supported look like for you? Explore for both temporary and chronic loneliness and capture examples. Spontaneous then prompt for:

- o How do you feel? e.g. low social confidence, low self-esteem, sad, angry, frustrated, empty

- o What are you doing? e.g. staying in, missed work, or if mobile – striking up conversations with neighbours, people in local shops and parks or on public transport, volunteering.

- o How do you look? e.g. may look glum, may care less about appearance

- o Who would notice what you are doing or feeling? e.g. is it noticeable at all; only to certain people like friends/family
- What makes you feel this way – the causes? Spontaneous then prompt for influence of behaviour web factors on feeling lonely. Please ensure that probe around whether it is the group/life change or if there are wider factors at play around:
  - o Relevance of interactions/support to their needs
  - o Timeliness of interactions/support when they need/needed it – e.g. whether the right kind of support was available during the initial moments of need
  - o Cost of activities e.g. to get to activities, to afford activities. [It would be useful to explore links between income, loneliness and health]
  - o Feeling unable to engage with others in the way that they want – e.g. lack of confidence, lack of awareness of what's available, health and mobility restrictions

– Does loneliness contribute to any health issues (e.g. stress resulting in illness)

- o Habit: tendency to do the same types of things or see same type of people
- o Physical environment – e.g. live remotely, limited transportation, etc.
- o What you think others will think, say or do [we are very interested to hear about the stigma associated with admitting to feelings of loneliness]
- Explore impact of feeling this way:
  - o What does it feel like when you are less connected and supported?
  - o What impact does this have in their life? Spontaneous, then probe – health/mental health/general well-being/eating less well/ activity levels, etc.
  - o Projectives – if needed: Some people tell us they feel… [to provide room to talk about more negative feels depending on how conversation is developing – e.g., disconnected, lonely, lost, isolated] – have you felt like that?

Target group-specific prompts:

Researcher note: *Explore the following where relevant in the discussion around causes and experiences of loneliness for the relevant target group:*

- Divorced/Separated: Is there anything about your divorce/separation that has made it harder to feel more connected and supported?
  - – Moderator: e.g., could be impact in terms of loss of shared friends/family networks; family or participant moving away; seeing less of children or other family and loved ones; loss of hobbies that had been shared with partners etc
- Health issues and disability/mobility issues:
  - – How do you think your health concerns have influenced how connected you feel with others – or how easy it is to connect with others?
  - – If physical health issues – how do your health issues impact your ability to visit others, get around, and generally take part in your community?
  - – Moderator – to note and sensitively explore as relevant- there may be issues around:
- individuals with 'hidden' health issues expressing concern around having to explain/ share these with strangers
- energy levels – or concerns about sustaining these over longer periods
- Access to transport – and feeling safe/secure on transport
- How people see themselves – e.g. if people feel they are 'contributing' less due to serious health concerns this can
- Stigma or misperceptions of health issues
- Rurality and opportunity for easy transport and interaction versus urban areas
- Cost of travel and affordability of activities (if not already covered)
- Please probe to see if loneliness contributes to health issues (e.g. stress associated with it compounds illness) rather than just whether isolation restricts access to improved wellbeing (e.g. not being able to exercise or attend a class).

- Thank you for sharing your experiences. Thinking about what you've just shared, what do you think could have been done differently to stop you from feeling lonely? Spontaneous then prompt for:
  - Whether someone could have noticed their needs sooner; who, when, what should they have looked out for?
  - Whether support could have been provided; by who, when, in what form could this have been provided? Probe for information sharing/emotional/ psychosocial/physical support types. Please probe beyond services to identify the role for neighbours, the community, employers…
  - What the participant could have done, in hindsight? What, why, how, what would they have needed to act differently if they could do it all over again?
  - Did you feel able to reach out for help and if not why.

Support experiences (15-20 minutes)

Section aim: Moving towards experiences of support in relation to loneliness, explore what factors make support good and bad, the impact of good and bad support and suggestions for improving support

First, explore general understanding and perceptions of supports and services available to help – are they aware of what's on offer, and do they think this meets their needs:

- Awareness: Do they know what is available locally?
  - How have they/would they look for support e.g. online, word of mouth, GP?
  - How do they hear about opportunities to be more connected e.g. post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members
- Thoughts on types of activities/opportunities available – does it meet their needs? (signposting, shared interest groups, meal type projects, befriending, technology or transport support to stay in touch with friends or family, community events, pet therapy, volunteering)

- Format of activities/opportunities – location, type of service/support – length and frequency – etc.
- Who provides the activities/opportunities e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business
- Statutory and formal services versus more informal support such as those offered by the local community? Value of each?

Researcher note: Explain you want the participant to think of one recent experience, either one where they did something that helped them to feel more connected and involved (e.g. less lonely) or one where they did something to try to be more connected and involved but did not feel that way. These can be anything, big or small, formal or informal. Give the participant a couple minutes to think about these experiences – approximately when were the experiences, where were they, what were they doing, who/what was involved, what were they thinking/feeling. Continue this type of probing throughout this section.

Moderator – if more than one option choose whichever 'path' (good experience or bad experience) that seems most fruitful: it may have come up in discussion already! To check coverage across the sample.

Begin by briefly explore the background of the experience before going into detail about what made it good/not good.

- Tell me about the experience -
  - What did the support/service/experience involve e.g. informal encounter, community group, activity, volunteering, type of service, length, frequency of use, location
  - What was the aim/purpose of the support or service; how did you know?
  - Who provided the support or service e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, neighbours, local community group, employer
  - How did you find out about the support or service – did you know where to access support or did someone else tell you?
  - What were your expectations of the support/service? Thinking back to when you learned about it, how did you feel?

- What about the experience made it good/not good? Spontaneous then prompt for:
  - o Relevance to their needs at the time
  - o Quality of the engagement e.g. perceived as beneficial and high quality
  - o Type of engagement – informal encounter vs. formal service
  - o Convenience/ease/cost
  - o Promotion – positive rather than negative?

- Discuss the result of the experiences. Spontaneous then prompt for:
  - o How it felt
  - o Importance to the participant
  - o Whether lead to other opportunities to connect

- What could have been improved about the support/service/experience?

- To what extent their initial expectations of the support matched their actual experience, reasons.

Group specific questions on support
Divorced/separated

- If in employment at point of divorce/separation – accessed any support from employer related to feelings of loneliness? For example HR, confidential employee assistance programme? Or their union?

- If legal services involved (divorce, custody etc.) – offered any support related to loneliness?

Health and mobility

- Used local community more to help with feelings of loneliness – neighbours, community groups and activities, volunteering. Local shops, parks etc

- Rely on technology more to maintain social connections?

- Role of pets for more house bound groups?

- If in employment at point of health/mobility issues emerging – accessed any support from employer related to feelings of loneliness? For example HR, confidential employee assistance programme? Support from their union?

- Accessed support to improve mobility – for example mobility aids, transport services or people who help them get out of the house e.g. to attend an interest group or to do some shopping (probing around current British Red Cross services).

- Transport support – either formal or informal – are people more likely to support for essentials such as hospital appointments rather than for maintaining social contacts? Is the participant able to drive? If yes, do they feel confident in doing so?

What would good support look like (10-15 minutes)

Section aim: To understand exactly what makes a service good, moving beyond actual experiences of support to mapping out what an ideal service would look like for them.

Explain we'd now like to understand what makes a particular form of support the most important and effective for them. Instruct the participant to think of a form of support that is important to them, visualise all aspects of it and jot down some notes (if comfortable doing so) about what would make it an ideal service. After a couple minutes discuss their views – write these on the 'good support' stimulus if not done so by the participant.

Please ensure it is clear that we are looking at life event through impact on loneliness not life event. Not support for the life event per se.

- What would an ideal service or support look like for people that are in your situation to feel connected and engaged?

- What's the aim/purpose of the service or support – does it help you build connections or help you maintain connections with current network of friends/family (via tech or transport for example)?

- Level of intervention – e.g. would something as simple as more people asking how you are and stopping for a chat help with feelings of loneliness or would it need to be more in depth?

- Who provides the service – e.g. local government, charitable org, friends/family, community, employer, neighbour, local business or shop?

- Format of the service – location, type of service/support, time of day service runs, length and frequency (shorter term intervention to help you build networks or longer term befriending type interventions). What would you like to do as part of the service?

- How would people find out about this service?

  - o what messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest (positive v negative wording and imagery)?

  - o What would you need to hear to convince you to give the service a try?

  - o format of communication – e.g. post, telephone, TV, posters in community locations such as shops, word of mouth, online

  - o Messenger – e.g. friends/family, neighbours, service providers, people from local community who come into contact with.

- Under what circumstances would this ideal service be more or less helpful to you?

- What would the next two years look like for you under this service? – what has enabled that?

Researcher note: Through this section, refer back to specific examples/situations that the participant has already mentioned and explore relevance/effectiveness of this ideal service on those experiences.

Conclusion (2-5 mins)

- Any other thoughts to share?

- Thanks, reminder of MRS guidelines, hand out incentives and support information (hand out to all participants and explain that this has been given to all to avoid participants feeling judged or stigmatised. Offer support information but do not force if participant doesn't want it).

- This interview is feeding into some wider research on people who aren't feeling connected – which is sometimes described as being lonely or isolated.

Topic guide – Depths (Bereaved)

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to combat it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involves exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups of the public, reaching 108 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums.

Phase 2 interview aims

Phase 2 research activities aim to understand:

- What it is like to be lonely in the UK, including contexts, causes and individual impact;

- For individuals experiencing chronic loneliness, understand how what might have been a temporary situation became a long-term issue – and what might have prevented this;

- How loneliness experienced by our participants – temporary and chronic – could be identified;

- What support options are available; what is working well; where are the gaps

- What kind of support is needed and the form that this would take.

Please note that we are interested in support in the broadest sense. In addition to services, please probe to gain insight into the role of communities and businesses (both as an employer and as a deliverer of products and services) in helping to tackle loneliness.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

- The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment. Please reflect the language the participant uses and when appropriate explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

- Questioning and probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

- Approaches to using the guide will be flexible and adapted to each participant to minimise burden e.g. the order/elements used/how much time is spent in home (if relevant). The prompts provided are not exhausted, but rather indicate the types of content we would expect to be covered – this may vary across participant groups.

- The researcher will ensure that they observe both non-verbal and verbal withdrawal of consent e.g. if someone wants to take a break, is uncomfortable with the line of questioning, or would like to withdraw.

- If someone becomes upset within the interview, the researcher will check if they want a break or to carry on with participation in the research. All participants will be left with support materials around connecting with others/combating loneliness. Please provide to all participants so no one feels stigmatised or judged – explaining 'We're giving this to everyone, because if even one person felt upset, we'd want to know that one person had support.'. We would also leave support materials for more serious issues (e.g. serious emotional distress) where appropriate. This should be offered to participants and not forced on them. It may be that it is more appropriate to provide materials via follow-up rather than in the moment if there is not a more private way to do this.

- Our approach to duty of disclosure for this project: TNS BMRB will disclose to BRC on behalf of the partnership in the case of suspected current or likely risk of harm to participants and others (e.g. suicidality; life-threatening self-harm). If you have any concerns whatsoever about a participant let your line manager and the project Director (Caitlin) know immediately – as soon as you leave the interview.

Using the behaviour web to inform discussion

Throughout, researchers will keep in mind the wide range of factors which can influence behaviour and attitudes – e.g. across all aspects of the Behaviour Web. Below is a summary of key factors that may influence participant behaviour, though this is not exhaustive so please explore other emerging influences.

Costs and benefits of taking part:

- Benefits: Something to fill my time? Someone to talk to? Something to do?

- Costs: Is it worth the energy/time/money? Embarrassing? – is it worth putting myself out there?

- Facilitators: Things they've done in the past/Rekindled past life? Help figure out likes and dislikes?

Efficacy and confidence:

- Fear of falling – can I get out and be safe?

- Can I get to and from this place easily and safely?

- Can I do this without looking silly? Will I be the only one that doesn't know what I'm doing?

- I'm hurting too much – I can't think about this.

Morality and emotional needs:

- Fear of the unknown – New places? New people?

Am I worthy of a service? Should someone really be offering to help me? Is it too much to ask someone to do this?

Social and cultural norms – and identification:

- Expectation that they should be able to cope?

- Loneliness isn't something that people really need help with?

- Stigma – How did I get here? How did I get in this situation?

- Habit:

- Sustainability? Building new social networks? Building a habit?
- Heuristics:
- "Nothing to do"/ More afraid of loss than benefits.

Physical environment:

- Is the area safe?
- Is there adequate transport?
- Can I get into the building easily?

Introduction to the research (3 minutes)

- Introduce yourself: TNS BMRB – independent research company
- Introduce research and purpose of the interview – research on behalf of British Red Cross and Co-op to understand experience of community in their area and how they can help support a better sense of community.
- Reason for participation – Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community engagement and connectedness from people who have recently experienced a loss or bereavement and how they could be given proper support. Obviously there's a lot to adjust to after someone you love has passed away, but we're not here to talk about grieving necessarily. We're here because one thing we hear from people who have had someone pass away is that one of the things they struggle with is feeling a bit lonely or feeling less connected to others. And that's what we would like to focus on today, how to tackle that.
- Reassurances – there are no right or wrong answers; this is not a test – we are simply asking for people's views and opinions; comfort breaks as needed. I know this is a sensitive space so please only share what you are comfortable sharing with us today. We want this to be a safe space for you to relax and speak openly, so please be assured that your views will remain completely confidential.
- MRS guidelines
- Disclosure – If we see or hear something which causes concern about your physical safety,

we have a duty to act to make sure you are protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If this was to happen, we would talk to you about what to do first – e.g. we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies (e.g. BRC) on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, it will stay confidential.

- Explain recording – the interview will be recorded so that researchers do not have to make notes during the interview and can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team at TNS BMRB will have access to the recordings.
- Length: up to 1 hour
- Incentive – £40 as a thank you for taking part, in the form of a debit card to be given following the discussion
- Any questions/concerns?
- Start recording – acknowledge participant consent for being recorded. If participant does not wish for the interview to be recorded, ask for permission to take notes.

Understanding context and history (10-15 minutes)

Section aim: Warm up the participant to the tone/style of a discussion, understand their circumstances and needs in relation to feeling connected to their communities

- Description of area (what it's like, rural/urban, population, close knit community?); favourite activity to do?
- Just to begin, can you think of a time when you felt really connected to others in your life?
  - o This could be with loved ones/family members/friends/colleagues?
  - o How would you describe "feeling connected"?
- Briefly explore what is good about/the downside to the stage you are at in your life in relation to engaging with others and connecting with people/with your community (can be in person or virtually)?
- Discuss in more detail how the participant connects with others/ if they want to connect/

spend time with others. Spontaneous then prompt for:

o Who they are connecting with on a regular basis e.g. close/distant family and friends, neighbours, strangers, service providers (broadly – e.g. butcher, GP, postman, people in their local shop etc.) and why this person (proximity, friendly, has time to listen etc)

o How they are connecting e.g. informal/ formal, face-to-face/online/phone/print e.g. pen pal.

– informal – visiting friends/family, going to the shops, chatting with people on the bus/grocery story/GP/in the local park etc., bumping into neighbours on the street, attending community events or groups;

– formal – statutory services, services from charities, physical and mental health services, social and leisure services, volunteering

o When types of engagement are happening – some more often than others?

o Reasons for differences in types of engagement e.g. personal preference, access/availability, stage in their life?

✪ Let's take things back a bit; in the last few years or so what made it easier/harder to spend time with others? What were the high points in terms of feeling connected to others, and how did that feel/what did that look like? Are there any low points you're willing to share, that's fine to talk about too.

Experience and impact of loneliness (20-30 minutes)

Section aim: Move the discussion sensitively towards loneliness specifically, capturing understanding of loneliness, what loneliness looks and feels like, causes of loneliness and impacts of loneliness

Researcher note: Please reflect the language the participant uses and when appropriate explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

✪ Explain: For a number of months after the death of a loved one, people are very busy with practical arrangements and with people supporting them – for example arranging the funeral, wills and probate, and so on. Following this period of practical activities and when friends and family stop calling round, sometimes we see feelings of loneliness emerge, rather than grief.

✪ Explore how connected and socially supported the participant feels currently, referring back to what was said earlier – and why?

✪ When they feel more/less connected and socially supported – spontaneous, then prompt to understand if feeling lonely:

o When alone – or also with others?

o Off-and-on, or frequently?

o Projectives – if needed: Some people have told us being lonely/unconnected can happen even when they are with other people, or do have friends and family in their lives – what do you think?

✪ What does being lonely/feeling less connected and socially supported look like for you? Explore for both temporary and chronic loneliness and capture examples. Spontaneous then prompt for:

o How do you feel? e.g. low social confidence, low self-esteem, sad, angry, frustrated, empty

o What are you doing? e.g. staying in, missed work, striking up conversations with neighbours, people in local shops and parks or on public transport, volunteering.

o How do you look? E.g. may look glum, may care less about appearance

o Who would notice what you are doing or feeling? e.g. is it noticeable at all; only to certain people like friends/family

o Thinking of your experiences, how much is loneliness compared to grief? Are there distinctions for you? If so, what?

✪ What makes you feel this way – the causes? Spontaneous then prompt for influence of behaviour web factors on feeling lonely.

o Relevance of interactions/support to their needs?

o Timeliness of interactions/support when they need/needed it – e.g. whether the right kind of support was available during the initial moments of need?

o Feeling unable to engage with others in the way that they want – e.g. lack of confidence, lack of awareness of what's available?

o Physical environment? – e.g. live remotely, limited transportation, etc.

o How do other people react to you following bereavement? (e.g. make less of an effort to visit as don't know what to say or make more of an effort as you're expected to feel lonely?)

o Normality – changes to routine following loss of a loved one e.g. didn't feel able to do things you used to do together for example for loss of a partner/didn't feel able to visit partners friends and family like used to and/or loss of mutual friends as not 'in a couple'/ for general loss due to memories/reminders

o [For those with caring responsibilities over many years]: How did your carer role coming to an end influence on your feelings of connectedness?

 – How did the change in how much time you had day to day influence on how connected you felt?

¤ How, if any, has your recent loss or bereavement had an impact on how connected you feel with others? (By others I mean your friends and family but also within your wider community?) I know this is a very emotional space for you so please only share what you feel comfortable sharing.

¤ Explore for differences in experience by the circumstances of the loss of their loved one e.g. expected vs. unexpected.

Researcher Note: This is very emotional, sensitive space for participants so please do not force responses here, allow for spontaneous and then probe sensitively;

o Impact on your ability to engage in social activities? i.e. meeting up with friends, keeping to your previous schedule/activities?

o Impact on your mood or confidence to do things that you enjoy/meet people you enjoy spending time with?

o What impact did your environment have on

how connected you felt? (please explore difference between rural and urban support networks)

o Impact on ability to get around – whether changes in how to get around e.g. if the loved one was the main/only driver and impact of this.

¤ Following your recent loss or bereavement, did you feel like reaching out to others or did you prefer to spend time in your own company? Or was there a mixture of both?

o Were there different times when you felt like you needed to talk to others and other times when you wanted your own space?

o Were there specific points following the bereavement where you felt you could have been given more support? What would that have looked like for you? (More visits from family/friends, people making an effort to engage with you/people reaching out to you through letters/phone calls/emails?)

¤ Did you seek out any support following your loss or bereavement?

¤ If yes

o How did you find out about this support?

o What kind of services were on offer? (Formal/Informal – Face to face/online?)

 – If appropriate, whether received support from their funeral director and whether see a role for their help support beyond the practicalities of arranging a funeral

o Did it meet your expectations? Why/Why not?

o Did you seek out any opportunities to engage with others if things were difficult for you, like volunteering, joining a club or using an online forum?

o Role of technology in maintaining social connections?

¤ If not

o Why did you not seek out support? What, if anything prevented you from seeking support?

¤ Explore impact of feeling this way:

o What does it feel like when you are less connected and supported?

o What impact does this have in their life? Spontaneous, then probe – health/mental health/general well-being/eating less well/ activity levels, etc.

o Projectives – if needed: Some people tell us they often feel lost and frustrated when they experience sudden loss or bereavement [to provide room to talk about more negative feels depending on how conversation is developing – e.g., disconnected, lonely, lost, isolated] – have you felt like that?

🔴 Thank you for sharing your experiences. Thinking about what you've just shared, what do you think could have been done differently to stop you from feeling lonely? Spontaneous then prompt for:

o Whether someone could have noticed their needs sooner; who, when, what should they have looked out for? And what could they have done had they noticed?

o When speaking about bereavement in particular, if there were certain points where you would have expected some support to be available?

o Whether support could have been provided; by who, when, in what form could this have been provided? Probe for information sharing/ emotional/psychosocial/physical support types. Please probe beyond services to identify the role for neighbours, the community, employers.

o What the participant could have done, in hindsight? What, why, how, what would they have needed to act differently if they could do it all over again?

o Did you feel able to reach out for help and if not why.

Support experiences (15-20 minutes)

Section aim: Moving towards experiences of support in relation to loneliness, explore what factors make support good and bad, the impact of good and bad support and suggestions for improving support

First, explore general understanding and perceptions of support and services available to help – are they aware of what's on offer, and do they think this meets their needs:

🔴 Awareness: Do they know what is available locally?

o How have they/would they look for support e.g. online, word of mouth, GP, community notice boards etc?

o Are they aware of any specific bereavement support services which are currently being offered? And how effective these services might be?

o How do they hear about opportunities to be more connected e.g. post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members

o Have they accessed any support from employer (if in employment?)

🔴 Thoughts on types of activities/opportunities available – does it meet their needs? (signposting, shared interest groups, meal type projects, befriending, technology or transport support to stay in touch with friends or family, community events, pet therapy, volunteering, help with paperwork)

🔴 Format of activities/opportunities – location, type of service/support – length and frequency – etc.

🔴 Who provides the activities/opportunities e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business – those who supported with funeral arrangements or will and probate

🔴 Statutory and formal services versus more informal support such as those offered by the local community? Value of each?

o Some examples of less specific and more broad support include regular tea parties/coffee mornings, regular shared interest groups (e.g. knitting, book club), regular calls or visits (similar to befriending schemes) – whether used any of this and views on value of them

Researcher note: *Explain you want the participant to think of one recent experience, either one where they did something that helped them to feel more connected and involved (e.g. less lonely) or one where they did something to try to be more connected and involved but did not feel that way. These can be anything, big or small, formal or informal. Give the participant a couple minutes*

to think about these experiences – approximately when were the experiences, where were they, what were they doing, who/what was involved, what were they thinking/feeling. Continue this type of probing throughout this section.

Moderator – if more than one option choose whichever 'path' (good experience or bad experience) that seems most fruitful: (it may have come up in discussion already!) To check coverage across the sample.

Begin by briefly exploring the background of the experience before going into detail about what made it good/not good.

- ¤ Tell me about the experience -
    - o What did the support/service/experience involve e.g. informal encounter, community group, activity, volunteering, type of service, length, frequency of use, location?
    - o What was the aim/purpose of the support or service; how did you know?
    - o Who provided the support or service e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, neighbours, local community group, employer?
    - o How did you find out about the support or service – did you know where to access support or did someone else tell you?
- ¤ What were your expectations of the support/service? Thinking back to when you learned about it, how did you feel?
- ¤ What about the experience made it good/not good? Spontaneous then prompt for:
    - o Relevance to their needs at the time
    - o Quality of the engagement e.g. perceived as beneficial and high quality
    - o Type of engagement – informal encounter vs. formal service
    - o Convenience/ease/cost
    - o Promotion – positive rather than negative?
- ¤ Discuss the result of the experiences. Spontaneous then prompt for:
    - o How it felt?
    - o Importance to the participant?
    - o Whether it led to other opportunities to connect?

- ¤ What could have been improved about the support/service/experience?
- ¤ To what extent their initial expectations of the support matched their actual experience, reasons for this? What impact did they think this would have on how they were feeling?
- ¤ I now want to briefly speak to you about the support available in work; were you offered any specific support in your work/employment following your bereavement/loss, what did that look like?
    - o What kind of help/support was offered/ did they have a specific programme?
    - o Did this provide you with the right kind of support at the time/did it match your needs? How?
    - o What could they have done differently to make you feel better supported at this time?

What would "good support" look like (10-15 minutes)

Section aim: To understand exactly what makes a service good, moving beyond actual experiences of support to mapping out what an ideal service would look like for them.

Explain we'd now like to understand what makes a particular form of support the most important and effective for them. Instruct the participant to think of a form of support that is important to them, visualise all aspects of it and jot down some notes (if comfortable doing so) about what would make it an ideal service. After a couple minutes researcher to discuss participant views and explore fully any difference in opinion.

Please ensure it is clear that we are looking at life event through impact on loneliness, not life event solely e.g. Not support for the life event per se.

- ¤ What would an ideal service or support look like for people who have been recently bereaved or experienced a loss to feel connected and engaged?
- ¤ What's the aim/purpose of the service or support – does it help you build connections or help you maintain connections with current network of friends/family (via tech or transport for example)?

- Level of intervention – e.g. would something as simple as more people asking how you are and stopping for a chat help with feelings of loneliness or would it need to be more in depth?

- Who provides the service – e.g. local government, charitable org, friends/family, community, employer, neighbour, local business or shop, others experiencing loneliness?

- Format of the service – location, type of service/support, time of day service runs, length and frequency (shorter term intervention to help you build networks or longer term befriending type interventions). What would you like to do as part of the service?

- How would people find out about this service?
  - o What messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest (positive v negative wording and imagery)?
  - o What would you need to hear to convince you to give the service a try?
  - o When would be the appropriate time to communicate these services?
  - o Format of communication? – e.g. post, telephone, TV, posters in community locations such as shops, word of mouth, online?
  - o Messenger? – e.g. friends/family, neighbours, service providers, people from local community who come into contact with?

- Under what circumstances would this ideal service be more or less helpful to you?

- What would the next two years look like for you under this service? – What has enabled that?

Researcher note: Through this section, refer back to specific examples/situations that the participant has already mentioned and explore relevance/effectiveness of this ideal service on those experiences.

Conclusion (2-5 mins)

- Any other thoughts to share?

- Thanks, reminder of MRS guidelines, hand out incentives and support information (hand out to all participants and explain that this has been given to all to avoid participants feeling judged or stigmatised. Offer support information but do not force if participant doesn't want it).

- This interview is feeding into some wider research on people who aren't feeling connected – which is sometimes described as being lonely or isolated.

Topic guide – Mini groups (Empty nesters/Retired, Divorced/Separated, Young new mums)

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to combat it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 25 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involves exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups of the public, reaching 108 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums.

Phase 2 interview aims

Phase 2 research activities aim to understand:

- What it is like to be lonely in the UK, including contexts, causes and individual impact

- For individuals experiencing chronic loneliness, understand how what might have been a temporary situation became a long-term issue – and what might have prevented this

- How loneliness experienced by our participants – temporary and chronic – could be identified

- What support options are available; what is working well; where are the gaps; and what could potential support options look like

- What kind of support is needed and the form that this would take.

Please note that we are interested in support in the broadest sense. Please probe beyond services to gain insight into the role of communities and businesses (both as an employer and as a deliverer of products and services) in helping to tackle loneliness.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

- The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment and why the term lonely should only be used in depth interview discussions if a participant has used this term themselves. Please use the information from the screener to get an appreciation of the extent of the person's loneliness prior to the interview. Please familiarise yourself with the loneliness scoring but do not make reference to it during the conversation.

- Questioning and probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

- Approaches to using the guide will be flexible and adapted to each participant to minimise burden e.g. the order/elements used/how much time is spent in home (if relevant). The prompts provided are not exhausted, but rather indicate the types of content we would expect to be covered – this may vary across participant groups.

- The researcher will ensure that they observe both nonverbal and verbal withdrawal of consent e.g., if someone wants to take a break, is uncomfortable with the line of questioning, or would like to withdraw.

- If someone becomes upset within the interview, the researcher will check if they want a break or to carry on with participation in the research. All participants will be left with support materials around connecting with others/combating loneliness. Please provide to all participants so no one feels stigmatised or judged – explaining 'We're giving this to everyone, because if even one person felt upset, we'd want to know that one person

had support'. We would also leave support materials for more serious issues (e.g., serious emotional distress) where appropriate. This should be offered to participants and not forced on them. It may be that it is more appropriate to provide materials via follow-up rather than in the moment if there is not a more private way to do this.

- Our approach to duty of disclosure for this project: TNS BMRB will disclose to BRC on behalf of the partnership in the case of suspected current or likely risk of harm to participants and others (e.g., suicidality; life-threatening self-harm). If you have any concerns whatsoever about a participant let your line manager and the project Director (Caitlin) know immediately – as soon as you leave the interview.

Introduction to the research (5 minutes)

- Introduce yourself: TNS BMRB – independent research company

- Introduce research and purpose of the interview – research on behalf of British Red Cross and Co-op to understand attitudes towards and experiences of community relations in your area and how they can help support a better sense of community.

- Reason for participation – Explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people with similar experiences – (tailor for target group).

- Reassurances – No right or wrong answers; not a test-simply asking for people's views and opinions

- MRS guidelines

- Disclosure -If we see or hear something which causes concern about your physical safety, we would have a duty to act to make sure you were protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If this was to happen, we would talk to you about what to do first – e.g., we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies (e.g. BRC) on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, it will stay confidential.

- Explain recording – the interview will be recorded so that researchers do not have to make notes during the interview and can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team at TNS BMRB will have access to the recordings.

- Length: up to 1.5 hour

- Incentive – £40 as a thank you for taking part, in the form of a debit card to be given following the discussion

- Ground rules – Please be respectful of others and do not speak over one another. There are no right or wrong answers – everyone's views are important.

- Any questions/concerns?

- Start recording – acknowledge participant consent for being recorded

Context and needs (15 minutes)

Section aim: Warm up group to the tone/style of a group discussion, understand the circumstances of the participants and understand the needs of the group in relation to feeling connected to their communities.

- Introductions – say name and one example of what they like to do in their area

- Briefly discuss the stage they are at in their life e.g. what is it like to be [retired/divorced/a young mum] in your area
  - o What's important in their life now (e.g. hobbies, health, family, community, finances)
  - o How time is spent now e.g. hobbies/ activities, engaging with friends/ families/community
  - o How this feels, whether/how this varies by situation/context
  - o Past expectations of this stage of their lives vs. reality
  - o How has life changed?

- Briefly explore what is good about/the downside to the stage they are at in their life in relation to engaging with others and connecting with people/with your community (can be in person or virtually)

- Discuss in more detail how participants engage with others/ if they want to engage with others. Spontaneous then prompt for:
  - o Who they are engaging with e.g. close/ distant family and friends, neighbours, strangers, service providers (broadly e.g. butcher, GP, postman, people in their local shop etc.) and why this person (proximity, friendly, has time to listen etc)
  - o How they are engaging e.g. informal/ formal, face-to-face/online/phone/print e.g. pen pal.
    - – informal – visiting friends/ family, going to the shops, chatting with people on the bus/grocery story/GP/bumping into neighbours in the street/going to community activities and events etc.; and
    - – formal – statutory services, services from charities, volunteering, physical and mental health services, social and leisure services
  - o When types of engagement happening – some more often than others?
  - o Reasons for differences in types of engagement e.g. personal preference, access/availability, stage in their life

- Let's take things back a bit; in the last few years or so what has made it easier/harder to spend time with others? Spontaneous then prompt:
  - o What was going on then?
  - o What did you do in those situations, why?
  - o How were you feeling at those times?
  - o What else was going on around that time?
  - o What helped you to feel more/less connected during those times?
  - o If not yet discussed, probe specifically in relation to the stage they are at in their life based on target group (e.g. before and after divorcing/separating and was this the driver of making it harder to spend time with others or was there other factors)
  - o Is there anything that could have helped you out during this period? If anything was 'missing' what was this?

Experience of loneliness (25 min)

Section aim: Move the discussion sensitively towards loneliness specifically, capturing understanding of loneliness, what loneliness looks and feels like, causes of loneliness and impacts of loneliness.

Researcher note: if the word 'lonely' is not mentioned then sensitively use the language of the participant throughout. If/when appropriate, explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

◘ Explore how connected and socially supported the participant feels currently, referring back to what was said earlier – and why

◘ When they feel more/less connected and socially supported – spontaneous, then prompt to understand if feeling lonely:

  o When alone – or also with others?

  o Off-and-on, or frequently?

  o Projectives – if needed: Some people have told us being lonely/unconnected can happen even when they are with other people, or do have friends and family in their lives – what do you think?

◘ What does being lonely/feeling less connected and socially supported look like for you? Explore for both temporary and chronic loneliness and capture examples. Spontaneous then prompt for:

  o How do you feel? e.g. low social confidence, low self-esteem, sad, angry, frustrated, empty

  o What are you doing? E.g. staying in, missed work, or if mobile – striking up conversations with neighbours, people in local shops and parks or on public transport, volunteering.

  o How do you look? E.g. may look glum, may care less about appearance

  o Who would notice what you are doing or feeling? E.g. is it noticeable at all; only to certain people like friends/family

◘ What makes you feel this way – the causes? Spontaneous then prompt for influence of behaviour web factors on feeling lonely. Please ensure that probe around whether it is the group/life change or if there are wider factors at play around:

  o Relevance of interactions/support to their needs

  o Timeliness of interactions/support when they need/needed it – e.g. whether the right kind of support was available during the initial moments of need

  o Cost of activities e.g. to get to activities, to afford activities. [It would be useful to explore links between income, loneliness and health]

  o Feeling unable to engage with others in the way that they want – e.g. lack of confidence, lack of awareness of what's available, health and mobility restrictions

Does loneliness contribute to any health issues (e.g. stress resulting in illness)

  o Habit: tendency to do the same types of things or see same type of people

  o Physical environment – e.g. live remotely, limited transportation, etc.

  o What you think others will think, say or do [we are very interested to hear about the stigma associated with admitting to feelings of loneliness]

◘ Explore impact of feeling this way:

  o What does it feel like when you are less connected and supported?

  o What impact does this have in their life? Spontaneous, then probe – health/mental health/general well-being/eating less well/ activity levels, etc.

  o Projectives – if needed: Some people tell us they feel… [to provide room to talk about more negative feels depending on how conversation is developing – e.g., disconnected, lonely, lost, isolated] – have you felt like that?

Target group-specific prompts

Researcher note: Explore the following where relevant in the discussion around causes and experiences of loneliness for the relevant target group:

◘ Divorced/separated: Is there anything about your divorce/separation that has made it harder to feel more connected and supported?

Moderator: e.g., could be impact in terms of loss of shared friends/family networks; family or participant moving away; seeing less of children or other family and loved ones; loss of hobbies that had been shared with partners etc.

◘ Retired/empty nesters – anything about being retired that makes it harder to feel more connected/supported

  o Loss of identify that work provided? Felt that didn't have anything to add to society?

  o Loss of social network that work colleagues provided?

o Did you look for ways to keep engaged with society? Setting up or attending clubs, volunteering etc?

o Children leaving home – impact of social network – i.e loss of network of other mums?

◘ Young new mums:

  o Whether/how your needs differed before and after having a child?

  o Whether/how your available support networks change when you were pregnant/after birth e.g. friends, family, support types used? (did your new networks replace the old ones or did you miss friends who may have drifted away?)

  o Did you notice a difference in how your work colleagues, social networks interacted with you? (maybe assumptions made about lack of time to socialise or that you would now be interested in different things etc)

  o Or if left work to be full time mum – how did this impact your social group?

  o What was your employer's role (if in employment) in preparation for maternity leave and during early years

  o Did you rely on your local community more as it was easier that travelling?

  o Did you use technology as a form of support? e.g. internet and use of advice forums when baby wouldn't sleep etc.

◘ Thank you for sharing your experiences. Thinking about what has been shared so far, what do you think could have been done differently to stop you from feeling lonely?

Spontaneous then prompt for:

  o Whether someone could have noticed their needs sooner; who, when, what should they have looked out for?

  o Whether support could have been provided; by who, when, in what form could this have been provided? Probe for information sharing/emotional/psychosocial/physical support types and covering beyond services to identify role for neighbours, community, employers

  o What the participant could have done, in hindsight? What, why, how, what would they have needed to act differently if they could do it all over again?

  o Thinking about the different types of loneliness – those feelings that come and go and those feelings that stay with you over a long period – how would your responses change?

Support experiences (15 minutes)

Section aim: Moving towards experiences of support in relation to loneliness, explore what factors make support good and bad, the impact of good and bad support and suggestions for improving support.

First, explore general understanding and perceptions of supports and services available to help – are they aware of what's on offer, and do they think this meets their needs:

◘ Awareness: Do they know what is available locally?

  o How have they/would they look for support e.g. online, word of mouth, GP?

  o How do they hear about opportunities to be more connected e.g. post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members?

◘ Thoughts on types of activities/opportunities available – does it meet their needs? (signposting, shared interest groups, meal type projects, befriending, technology or transport support to stay in touch with friends or family, community events, pet therapy, volunteering)

◘ Format of activities/opportunities – location, type of service/support – length and frequency – etc.

- Who provides the activities/opportunities? e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business
- Statutory and formal services versus more informal support such as those offered by the local community? Value of each?

Researcher note: Explain you want the participant to think of one recent experience, either one where they did something that helped them to feel more connected and involved (e.g. less lonely) or one where they did something to try to be more connected and involved but did not feel that way. These can be anything, big or small, formal or informal. Give the participant a couple minutes to think about these experiences – approximately when were the experiences, where were they, what were they doing, who/what was involved, what were they thinking/feeling. Continue this type of probing throughout this section.

Moderator – if more than one option choose whichever 'path' (good experience or bad experience) that seems most fruitful: it may have come up in discussion already! To check coverage across the sample.

Begin by briefly explore the background of the experience before going into detail about what made it good/not good.

Tell me about the experience -

- o What did the support/service/experience involve? e.g. informal encounter, community group, activity, volunteering, type of service, length, frequency of use, location
- o What was the aim/purpose of the support or service; how did you know?
- o Who provided the support or service? e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, neighbours, local community group, employer
- o How did you find out about the support or service – did you know where to access support or did someone else tell you?
- o What were your expectations of the support/service? Thinking back to when you learned about it, how did you feel?
- What about the experience made it good/not good? Spontaneous then prompt for:

- o Relevance to their needs at the time
- o Quality of the engagement e.g. perceived as beneficial and high quality
- o Type of engagement – informal encounter vs. formal service
- o Convenience/ease/ cost
- o Promotion – positive rather than negative?
- Discuss the result of the experiences. Spontaneous then prompt for:
- o How it felt
- o Importance to the participant
- o Whether led to other opportunities to connect
- What could have been improved about the support/service/experience?
- To what extent their initial expectations of the support matched their actual experience, reasons

Group specific questions on support

Divorced/separated

- If in employment at point of divorce/separation – Accessed any support from employer related to feelings of loneliness? For example HR, confidential employee assistance programme? Or their union?
- If legal services involved (divorce, custody etc.)– offered any support related to loneliness?

Retired

- Role of employer or union – did they provide pre or post retirement support, did any of this cover maintaining social connections?
- Did you access support from your local community? For example did you join or set up local clubs or volunteer.

Young new mums

- Did you access support from your local community? For example did you use local shops/park more to get out of the house and have someone to speak to?
- Employers role (if in employment) in prep for mat leave and during early years – did any of the support cover maintaining social connections?
- Role of tech – did you use technology to access online support networks – ie forums?

Was this as satisfying as speaking to people face to face?

What good support looks like (20 minutes)

Section aim: To understand exactly what makes a service good, moving beyond actual experiences of support to mapping out what an ideal service would look like for them.

Explain we'd now like to understand what makes a particular form of support the most important and effective for them. Instruct each participant to think of a form of support that is important to them, visualise all aspects of it and, in pairs, jot down some notes about what would make an ideal service. After a couple minutes bring the group together to share their views and write these on a flipchart.

If participants haven't accessed support before, this can be hypothetical on what they would imagine good support to look like. Please ensure it is clear that we are looking at the life event through impact on loneliness and not the life event per se.

- What does an ideal service or support look like for people that are in your situation to feel connected and engaged?

- What's the aim/purpose of the service or support – does it help you build connections or maintain existing connections? Who provides the service they use e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, employer, neighbour, local business, shop?

- Format of services – location, type of service/support, time of day service runs, length and frequency

- How would people find out about this service:
  - o What messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest – positive messaging important?
  - o What would you need to hear to convince you to give the service a try; your friends/families/neighbours recommendations?
  - o Format of communication – e.g. post, telephone, TV, posters, word of mouth, online
    - – any group-specific portals e.g. magazines for retirees, new mums etc.
  - o messenger – e.g. friends/family,

neighbours, service providers, people from community come into contact with

Researcher note: For the above discussion, compare and contrast the views of the group, exploring for differences in opinion by:

- rural/urban location

- different needs discussed in the group

- different times in their life they may access the support e.g. life stages, milestones.

Researcher note: As a group, review the notes on the flipchart and have the group rank the top 5 most important aspects of a good service that would help reduce loneliness to people like them.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

- Any other thoughts to share?

- Thanks, reminder of MRS guidelines, hand out incentives and support information. General support information will be handed out to all participants. Moderators will use their professional judgement whether a participant appears to be particularly vulnerable and distressed and will follow up with individual support information

- This interview is feeding into some wider research on people who aren't feeling connected – which is sometimes described as being lonely or isolated.

Topic guides – Mini groups (Bereaved)

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/is already being done to combat it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involves exploring the contexts and needs of

six target groups of the public, reaching 108 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums.

Phase 2 interview aims

Phase 2 research activities aim to understand:

- What it is like to be lonely in the UK, including contexts, causes and individual impact

- For individuals experiencing chronic loneliness, how what might have been a temporary situation became a long-term issue – and what might have prevented this

- How loneliness experienced by our participants – temporary and chronic – could be identified

- What support options are available; what is working well; where are the gaps; and what could potential support options look like

- What kind of support is needed and the form that this would take.

Please note that we are interested in support in the broadest sense. Please probe beyond services to gain insight into the role of communities and businesses (both as an employer and as a deliverer of products and services) in helping to tackle loneliness.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

- The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment. Please reflect the language the participant uses and when appropriate explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

- Questioning and probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

- Approaches to using the guide will be flexible and adapted to each participant to minimise burden e.g. the order/elements used/how much time is spent in home (if relevant). The prompts provided are not exhausted, but rather indicate the types of content we would expect to be covered – this may vary across participant groups.

- The researcher will ensure that they observe both non-verbal and verbal withdrawal of consent e.g. if someone wants to take a break, is uncomfortable with the line of questioning, or would like to withdraw.

- If someone becomes upset within the interview, the researcher will check if they want a break or to carry on with participation in the research. All participants will be left with support materials around connecting with others/combating loneliness. Please provide to all participants so no one feels stigmatised or judged – explaining 'We're giving this to everyone, because if even one person felt upset, we'd want to know that one person had support.'. We would also leave support materials for more serious issues (e.g. serious emotional distress) where appropriate. This should be offered to participants and not forced on them. It may be that it is more appropriate to provide materials via follow-up rather than in the moment if there is not a more private way to do this.

- Our approach to duty of disclosure for this project: TNS BMRB will disclose to BRC on behalf of the partnership in the case of suspected current or likely risk of harm to participants and others (e.g. suicidality; life-threatening self-harm). If you have any concerns whatsoever about a participant let your line manager and the project Director (Caitlin) know immediately – as soon as you leave the interview.

Using the behaviour web to inform discussion

Throughout, researchers will keep in mind the wide range of factors which can influence behaviour and attitudes – e.g. across all aspects of the Behaviour Web. Below is a summary of key factors that may influence participant behaviour, though this is not exhaustive so please explore other emerging influences.

Costs and Benefits of taking part:

- Benefits: Something to fill my time? Someone to talk to? Something to do?

- Costs: Is it worth the energy/time/money? Embarrassing? – is it worth putting myself out there?

- Facilitators: Things they've done in the past/ Rekindled past life? Help figure out likes and dislikes?

Efficacy and confidence:

- Fear of falling – can I get out and be safe?

- Can I get to and from this place easily and safely?

- Can I do this without looking silly? Will I be the only one that doesn't know what I'm doing?

- I'm hurting too much – I can't think about this

Morality and emotional needs:

- Fear of the unknown – New places? New people?

- Am I worthy of a service? Should someone really be offering to help me? Is it too much to ask someone to do this?

Social and cultural norms – and identification:

- Expectation that they should be able to cope?

- Loneliness isn't something that people really need help with?

- Stigma – How did I get here? How did I get in this situation?

Habit:

- Sustainability? Building new social networks? Building a habit?

Heuristics:

- "Nothing to do"/More afraid of loss than benefits

Physical environment:

- Is the area safe?

- Is there adequate transport?

- Can I get into the building easily?

Introduction to the research (5 mins)

- Introduce yourself: TNS BMRB – independent research company

- Introduce research and purpose of the interview – research on behalf of British Red Cross and Co-op to understand attitudes towards and experiences of community relations in your area and how they can help support a better sense of community.

- Reason for participation – explain that they have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community relations from people who have been recently bereaved/ experienced bereavement and how they could be given proper support. Obviously there's a lot to adjust to after someone you love has passed away, but we're not here to talk about grieving, necessarily. We're here because one thing we hear from people who have had someone pass away is that one of the things they struggle with is feeling a bit lonely or feeling less connected to others. And that's what we would like to focus on today, how to tackle that.

- Reassurances – there are no right or wrong answers; this is not a test, we are simply asking for people's views and opinions. I know this is a sensitive space so please only share what you are comfortable sharing with us today. We want this to be a safe space for you to relax and speak openly, so please be assured that your views will remain completely confidential.

- MRS guidelines

- Disclosure – if we see or hear something which causes concern about your physical safety, we would have a duty to act to make sure you were protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If this was to happen, we would talk to you about what to do first – e.g., we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies (e.g. BRC) on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, it will stay confidential.

- Explain recording – the interview will be recorded so that researchers do not have to make notes during the interview and can listen back when analysing the data. The recorder is encrypted and only the research team at TNS BMRB will have access to the recordings.

- Length: up to 1.5 hour

- Incentive – £40 as a thank you for taking part, in the form of a debit card to be given following the discussion

- Ground rules – please be respectful of others and do not speak over one another. There are no right or wrong answers – everyone's views are important.

- Any questions/concerns?

- Start recording – acknowledge participant consent for being recorded

Context and needs (15 minutes)

Section aim: Warm up group to the tone/style of a group discussion, understand the circumstances of the participants and understand the needs of the group in relation to feeling connected to their communities

- Introductions – can you turn to the person beside you and get to know them for a few minutes. After a few minutes, I will go around the table and ask you to introduce each other. If you could ask them their name and what they like to do in their spare time.

- Just to begin, can you think of a time when you felt really connected to others in your life?
  - o This could be with loved ones/family members/friends/colleagues?
  - o How would you describe "feeling connected"?

- Discuss in more detail how participants engage with others/ if they want to engage with others now. Spontaneous then prompt for:
  - o Who they are engaging with e.g. close/ distant family and friends, neighbours, strangers, service providers (broadly e.g. butcher, GP, postman, people in their local shop etc.) and why this person (proximity, friendly, has time to listen etc)?
  - o How they are engaging e.g. informal/formal, face-to-face/online/phone/print e.g. pen pal?
    - – informal – visiting friends/ family, going to the shops, chatting with people on the bus/grocery story/GP/bumping into neighbours in the street/going to community activities and events etc.; and
    - – formal – statutory services, services from charities, volunteering, physical and mental health services, social and leisure services
  - o When types of engagement happening – some more often than others?
  - o Reasons for differences in types of engagement e.g. personal preference, access/availability, stage in their life?

- Let's take things back a bit; in the last few years or so what has made it easier/harder to spend time with others? Spontaneous then prompt: What were the high points in terms of feeling connected to others, and how did that feel/what did that look like; and if there's any low points you're willing to share, that's fine to talk about too.

Researcher note: Please be aware that participants may bring up experiences relating to bereavement here. We have more targeted questions in the next section to directly address this, however we are also keen to explore loneliness outside of this experience in the broadest sense i.e. in what other circumstances they also experience loneliness outside of this context.

Experience of loneliness (25 minutes)

Section aim: Move the discussion sensitively towards loneliness specifically, capturing understanding of loneliness, what loneliness looks and feels like, causes of loneliness and impacts of loneliness

Researcher note: Please reflect the language the participant uses and when appropriate explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

- Explain: For a number of months after the death of a loved one, people are very busy with practical arrangements and with people supporting them – for example arranging the funeral, wills and probate, and so on. Following this period of practical activities and when friends and family stop calling round,

sometimes we see feelings of loneliness emerge, rather than grief. Do this tally with their own experiences?

○ Explore how connected and socially supported the group feels currently, referring back to what was said earlier – and why?

○ When they feel more/less connected and socially supported – spontaneous, then prompt to understand if feeling lonely:

  o When alone – or also with others?

  o Off-and-on, or frequently?

  o Projectives – if needed: Some people have told us being lonely/disconnected can happen even when they are with other people, or do have friends and family in their lives – what do you think?

○ What does being lonely/feeling less connected and socially supported look like for you? Explore for both temporary and chronic loneliness and capture examples. Spontaneous then prompt for:

  o How do you feel? e.g. low social confidence, low self-esteem, sad, angry, frustrated, empty

  o What are you doing? e.g. staying in, missed work, striking up conversations with neighbours, people in local shops and parks or on public transport, volunteering.

  o How do you look? e.g. may look glum, may care less about appearance

  o Who would notice what you are doing or feeling? E.g. is it noticeable at all; only to certain people like friends/family

○ What makes you feel this way – the causes? Spontaneous then prompt for influence of behaviour web factors on feeling lonely:

  o Relevance of interactions/support to their needs?

  o Timeliness of interactions/support when they need/needed it – e.g. whether the right kind of support was available during the initial moments of need?

  o Feeling unable to engage with others in the way that they want – e.g. lack of confidence, lack of awareness of what is available.

  o Physical environment? e.g. live remotely, limited transportation, etc.

  o How do other people react to you following bereavement? e.g. make less of an effort to visit as don't know what to say or make more of an effort as you're expected to feel lonely?

  o Changes to routine following loss of a loved one e.g. didn't feel able to visit partners' friends and family like used to; loss of mutual friends as not 'in a couple'.

  o [For those with caring responsibilities over many years]: How did your carer role coming to an end influence on your feelings of connectedness?

    – How did the change in how much time you had day to day influence on how connected you felt?

○ How, if any, has your recent loss or bereavement had an impact on how connected you feel with others? (By others I mean your friends and family but also within your wider community?) I know this is a very emotional space for you so please only share what you feel comfortable sharing.

○ Explore for differences in experience by the circumstances of the loss of their loved one e.g. expected vs. unexpected.

Researcher note: *This is a very emotional, sensitive space for participants so please do not force responses here, allow for spontaneous and then probe sensitively;*

  o Impact on your daily life e.g. cooking, cleaning, paying bills if these were new responsibilities for you

  o Impact on your ability to engage in social activities? i.e. meeting up with friends, keeping to your previous schedule/activities?

  o Impact on your mood or confidence to do things that you enjoy/meet people you enjoy spending time with?

  o What impact did your environment have on how connected you felt? (please explore difference between rural and urban support networks)

  o Impact on ability to get around – whether changes in how to get around e.g. if the

loved one was the main/only driver and impact of this.

🔴 Following your recent loss or bereavement, did you feel like reaching out to others or did you prefer to spend time in your own company? Or was there a mixture of both?

   o Were there different times when you felt like you needed to talk to others and other times when you wanted your own space?

   o Were there specific points following the bereavement wherein you felt you could have been given more support? What would that have looked like for you? (More visits from family/friends, people making an effort to engage with you/ people reaching out to you through letters/phone calls/emails?)

🔴 Did you seek out any support following your loss or bereavement?

🔴 If yes,

   o How did you find out about this support?

   o What kind of services were on offer? (Formal/Informal – face to face/online?)

   o Did it meet your expectations? Why/Why not?

   o Did you seek out any opportunities to engage with others if things were difficult for you, like volunteering, joining a club or using an online forum?

🔴 If no,

   o Why did you not seek out support? What, if anything prevented you from seeking support?

🔴 Explore impact of feeling this way:

   o What does it feel like when you are less connected and supported?

   o What impact does this have in their life? Spontaneous, then probe – health/mental health/general well-being/eating less well/ activity levels, etc.

   o Projectives – if needed: Some people tell us they often feel lost and frustrated when they experience sudden loss or bereavement … [to provide room to talk about more negative feels depending on how conversation is developing – e.g., disconnected, lonely, lost, isolated] – have you felt like that?

🔴 Thank you for sharing your experiences. Thinking about what has been shared so far, what do you think could have been done differently to stop you from feeling lonely? Spontaneous then prompt for:

   o Whether someone could have noticed their needs sooner; who, when, what should they have looked out for? And what could they have done had they noticed?

   o When speaking about bereavement in particular, if there were certain points where you would have expected some support to be available?

   o Whether support could have been provided; by who, when, in what form could this have been provided? Probe for information sharing/emotional/ psychosocial/physical support types and covering beyond services to identify role for neighbours, community, employers

   o What the participant could have done, in hindsight? What, why, how, what would they have needed to act differently if they could do it all over again?

   o Thinking about the different types of loneliness – those feelings that come and go and those feelings that stay with you over a long period – how would your responses change?

Support experiences (15 minutes)

Section aim: Moving towards experiences of support in relation to loneliness, explore what factors make support good and bad, the impact of good and bad support and suggestions for improving support.

First, explore general understanding and perceptions of support and services available to help – are they aware of what's on offer, and do they think this meets their needs:

🔴 Awareness: Do they know what is available locally?

   o How have they/would they look for support e.g. online, word of mouth, GP, community notice boards?

   o Are they aware of any specific bereavement support services which are currently being offered? And how effective these services might be?

- How do they hear about opportunities to be more connected e.g. post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members
- For those in employment – have they accessed any support from their employer?

▣ Thoughts on types of activities/opportunities available – does it meet their needs? (signposting, shared interest groups, meal type projects, befriending, technology or transport support to stay in touch with friends or family, community events, pet therapy, volunteering)

▣ Format of activities/opportunities? – location, type of service/support – length and frequency – etc.

▣ Who provides the activities/opportunities e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business? – those who supported with funeral arrangements or will and probate

  ▣ Statutory and formal services versus more informal support such as those offered by the local community? Value of each?

  - Some examples of less specific and more broad support include regular tea parties/coffee mornings, regular shared interest groups (e.g. knitting, book club), regular calls or visits (similar to befriending schemes) – whether used any of this and views on value of them.

Researcher note: Explain you want the participant to think of one recent experience, either one where they did something that helped them to feel more connected and involved (e.g. less lonely) or one where they did something to try to be more connected and involved but did not feel that way. These can be anything, big or small, formal or informal. Give the participant a couple minutes to think about these experiences – approximately when were the experiences, where were they, what were they doing, who/what was involved, what were they thinking/feeling. Continue this type of probing throughout this section.

Moderator – if more than one option choose whichever 'path' (good experience or bad experience) that seems most fruitful: it may have come up in discussion already! To check coverage across the sample.

Begin by briefly explore the background of the experience before going into detail about what made it good/not good.

Tell me about the experience -

- What did the support/service/experience involve e.g. informal encounter, community group, activity, volunteering, type of service, length, frequency of use, location
- What was the aim/purpose of the support or service; how did you know?
- Who provided the support or service e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, neighbours, local community group, employer?
- How did you find out about the support or service – did you know where to access support or did someone else tell you?
- What were your expectations of the support/service? Thinking back to when you learned about it, how did you feel?
- What motivated you to access the support/service?

▣ What about the experience made it good/not good? Spontaneous then prompt for:
- Relevance to their needs at the time?
- Quality of the engagement e.g. perceived as beneficial and high quality?
- Type of engagement – informal encounter vs. formal service?
- Convenience/ease/cost?
- Promotion – positive rather than negative?

▣ Discuss the result of the experiences. Spontaneous then prompt for:
- How it felt?
- Importance to the participant?
- Whether it led to other opportunities to connect?

▣ What could have been improved about the support/service/experience?

▣ To what extent their initial expectations of the support matched their actual experience, reasons for this? What impact did they think this would have on how they were feeling?

- I now want to briefly speak to you about the support available in work; were you offered any specific support in your work/employment following the bereavement, what did that look like?
    - o What kind of help/support was offered/ did they have a specific programme?
    - o Did this provide you with the right kind of support at the time/did it match your needs? How?
    - o What could they have done differently to make you feel better supported at this time?

What "good support" looks like (20 minutes)

Section aim: To understand exactly what makes a service good, moving beyond actual experiences of support to mapping out what an ideal service would look like for them.

Explain we'd now like to understand what makes a particular form of support the most important and effective for them. Instruct each participant to think of a form of support that is important to them, visualise all aspects of it and, in pairs, jot down some notes about what would make an ideal service. After a couple minutes bring the group together to share their views and write these on a flipchart.

If participants haven't accessed support before, this can be hypothetical on what they would imagine good support to look like.

Please ensure it is clear that we are looking at life event through the impact on loneliness, not life event solely e.g. Not support for the life event per se.

- What does an ideal service or support look like for people who have been recently bereaved or experienced a loss to feel connected and engaged?
- What's the aim/purpose of the service or support – does it help you build connections or maintain existing connections?

Researcher note: If participants say something about wanting to feel valued or get involved in their local community can we ask whether they think volunteering locally would help to address it?

- *Who provides the service they* use e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, employer, neighbour, local business, shop, others experiencing bereavement?
- *Format of services – loc*ation, type of service/support, time of day service runs, length and frequency?
- How would people find out about this service?
    - o What messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest – positive messaging important?
    - o What would you need to hear to convince you to give the service a try; your friends/ families/neighbours recommendations?
    - o When would be the right time to communicate these services?
    - o Format of communication – e.g. post, telephone, TV, posters, word of mouth, online?
    - o Messenger – e.g. friends/family, neighbours, service providers, people from community come into contact with?

Researcher note: For the above discussion, compare and contrast the views of the group, exploring for differences in opinion by:

- rural/urban location
- different needs discussed in the group
- different times in their life they may access the support e.g. life stages, milestones

Researcher note: As a group, review the notes on the flipchart and have the group rank the top 5 most important aspects of a good service that would help reduce loneliness to people like them.

Conclusion (5 mins)

Any other thoughts to share?

Thanks, reminder of MRS guidelines, hand out incentives and support information. General support information will be handed out to all participants. Moderators will use their professional judgement whether a participant appears to be particularly vulnerable and distressed and will follow up with individual support information.

Topic guide – Online forum (Health issues)

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to combat it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involves exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups of the public, reaching 108 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums.

Phase 2 aims

Phase 2 research activities aim to understand:

- What it is like to be lonely in the UK, including contexts, causes and individual impact

- For individuals experiencing chronic loneliness, understand how what might have been a temporary situation became a long-term issue – and what might have prevented this

- How loneliness experienced by our participants – temporary and chronic – could be identified

- What support options are available? What is working well? Where are the gaps?

- What kind of support is needed and the form that this would take.

Please note that we are interested in support in the broadest sense. In addition to services, please probe to gain insight into the role of communities and businesses (both as an employer and as a deliverer of products and services) in helping to tackle loneliness.

Online forum moderation

To ensure confidentiality participants will not be able to view each other's comments in closed private activities, in open activities they will be able to discuss and explore similar activities/ experiences but will only be able to see limited personal information such as first name and first letter of surname to promote trust. To build rapport with participants and encourage ongoing discussions with moderators, researchers will be assigned to participants and follow their journey across the forum over the five days it is live. Researchers will review the sample characteristics of their assigned participants and ensure prompts draw out how these characteristics may influence the individual's behaviours and attitudes. Researchers will follow up any responses with a series of prompts to make sure we are drawing out the right answers to meet the overall research objectives.

The following guide does not contain all pre-set questions but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with each participant. It does not include all follow-up questions like 'why', 'when', 'how', etc. as participants' contributions will be fully explored in response to what they tell us throughout in order to understand how and why views and experiences have arisen. The amount of time spent on different themes will vary between participants.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment. Please reflect the language the participants use and when appropriate and explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

Moderator probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

Using the behaviour web to inform discussion

Throughout, researchers will keep in mind the wide range of factors which can influence behaviour and attitudes – e.g. across all aspects of the Behaviour Web. Below is a summary of key factors that may influence participant behaviour, though this is not exhaustive so please explore other emerging influences.

Costs and Benefits of taking part:

- Benefits: Something to fill my time? Someone to talk to? Something to do?

- Costs: Is it worth the energy/time/money? Embarrassing? – is it worth putting myself out there?

- Facilitators: Things they've done in the past/ Rekindled past life? Help figure out likes and dislikes?

Efficacy and confidence:

- Fear of falling – can I get out and be safe?

- Can I get to and from this place easily and safely?

- Can I do this without looking silly? Will I be the only one that doesn't know what I'm doing?

- I'm hurting too much – I can't think about this

Morality and emotional needs:

- Fear of the unknown – New places? New people?

- Am I worthy of a service? Should someone really be offering to help me? Is it too much to ask someone to do this?

Social and cultural norms – and identification:

- Expectation that they should be able to cope?

- Loneliness isn't something that people really need help with?

- Stigma – How did I get here? How did I get in this situation?

Habit:

- Sustainability? Building new social networks? Building a habit?

Heuristics:

- "Nothing to do" More afraid of loss than benefits

Physical environment:

- Is the area safe?

- Is there adequate transport?

- Can I get into the building easily?

Introduction – Welcome to the community

Section aim: This section will welcome the participant to the community and explain what they can expect from their involvement in the forum.

Welcome to this online forum! Thank you for taking the time to log on – we appreciate your participation and value your input.

This research is being conducted by TNS BMRB – an independent research agency specialising in social research – on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op partnership.

The aim of this forum is to understand your experience of community in your local area and how the British Red Cross and Co-op can help support a better sense of community.

You have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community connections and interactions from people who share at least one of these common characteristics – you have told us you have a health condition or disability or have issues with mobility.

Participation in the forum is voluntary, confidential and anonymous – we will not share your name or details with the British Red Cross, Co-op or any other organisation and your name will not be used in the report. We may use quotes you've given in the final report but there will be know way of knowing who said this; we will remove all identifying information from the quotes. . You will be able to engage with other participants in certain activities across the forum and we would like you to get involved in having conversations about similar experiences or similar ideas where you feel comfortable. We will make you aware across the forum when tasks are open to all participants for commentary. Please be respectful of each other's views and feel free to join discussions.

This forum will be open for five days from Wednesday, 18th May to Sunday, 22nd May 2016. We ask you to please do the following:

- Please login at least three times across the five days the forum is open and complete the activities posted. We expect this to take around 90 minutes of your time in total.

- Please check your email for notifications as we will be following up your responses with further questions and comments.

As a thank you for logging onto the forum at least three times and responding to the questions posted, you will receive £50. You will not receive the payment if you do not login at least three times over the five days the forum is live and provide your responses.

Please be reassured that this is not a test of your knowledge and there are no right or wrong answers. This is also not a grammar test so please don't worry about spelling or grammar errors. It is meant to be a safe, non-judgemental space, and all views are equal. It's really important that we get to understand your current and honest opinions during the course of this research.

Disclosure – If we read something which causes us concern about your physical safety, we would have a duty to act to make sure you are protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If this were to happen, we would like to talk to you about what to do first – e.g., we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, your information is confidential.

If you have any questions or experience any technical issues please contact Emily O'Neill on emily.oneill@tns.bmrb.co.uk or t +44 (0)20 7656 5593.

To start – please click the 'activities' tab in the pink bar at the top of the page to see your tasks to complete.

We look forward to your posts!

The TNS BMRB Team

Day 1 – Activity 1 – Your local community

Section aim: To warm up participants to the forum and to briefly understand personal contexts to inform later discussions.

Task 1

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the forum over the next 5 days.

To begin, can you please tell us:

a) What the area you live in is like? (e.g. what you like/don't like about it)

b) How you like to spend your time? (e.g. friends, hobbies, family, community?)

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Whether urban/rural*
- *What transportation is available – how you get around?*
- *What's important in your life? (e.g. hobbies, health, family, community)*
- *Is there anything which impacts on your ability to enjoy time with friends or family?*

Task 2

What do you like about the stage you are at in your life in relation to connecting with people and others in your community? What do you dislike?

(Open text response)

Moderator Prompts:

- *Do they engage with others? If not, do they want to?*
- *Who do you connect/chat with? (family, friends, neighbours?)*
- *When do you connect with other people? (hobbies, social activities, local clubs, libraries, local shops?)*
- *In what kinds of circumstances do you like to reach out and connect with others?*
- *What were your past expectations of this stage of your life vs. what it is now?*
- *If/when appropriate, ask specifically how their health has influenced their responses*

Task 3

In the last few years or so what has made it easier to spend time with others? What has made it harder?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *What did you do in those situations?*
- *How were you feeling at those times?*
- *How did that affect you? What was the impact on how you felt/what you did/ what you thought?*
- *What else was going on around that time?*
- *What helped you to feel more/less connected during those times?*

- *Is there anything that could have helped you out during this period? If anything was 'missing' what was this?*

Task 4

How, if at all, has your health had an impact on your ability to connect with others, such as visit others, get around or generally take part in your community?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *If not, why e.g. taken action to prevent impact? Role of pets? Connected to people online or in local community? Visit friends or go for walks in local area/ local shop to strike up conversations, attending community events and clubs etc.*

- *How they see themselves? e.g. Some people tell us people have the wrong idea sometimes of what it is like to live with health issues which effects their ability to engage- what has your experience been like?*

- *Rurality – Does living in a remote setting affect them?*

- *Access to transport – Either formal or informal – are people more likely to support for essentials such as hospital appointments rather than for maintaining social contacts? Is the participant able to drive? If yes, do they feel confident in doing so? How do they usually get around and are they happy with it?*

- *If in employment at point of health issues emerging – accessed any support from employer related to feelings of loneliness? For example HR, confidential employee assistance programme? Support from their union?*

Day 2 – Activity 2 – Community and social interactions

Section aim: Understand experiences of loneliness, including the causes and impact, and what could have been done differently.

Task 1

Thanks for your helpful responses to Activity 1. We'd now like to learn more about your experience of community and social interactions - what these interactions look like, how they feel and how they may have affected you.

What does feeling less connected and socially supported look like for you in terms of:

a) How you feel?

b) How you behave and how you look?

c) Would others notice how you are feeling?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *Anything you do differently when feeling less connected?*

- *Is it noticeable to others? e.g. any signs or indicators? If it is noticeable – who tends to notice and what do they notice? Is it those people close to them or others?*

- *How often do you feel this way? e.g. frequently or "on and off"*

- *If they are experiencing long-term loneliness – What could have been done to address how you were feeling at an earlier stage when you first experienced these feelings?*

Task 2

What makes you feel less connected and socially supported? e.g. the causes

(Open text response)

Moderator probes: Probe for behaviour web factors:

- *Feeling unable to engage with others in the way that they want – e.g. lack of confidence, lack of awareness of what's available, health and mobility restrictions, financial pressures*

- *Relevance of interactions/support to their needs?*

- *Timeliness of interactions/support when they need/needed it – e.g. whether the right kind of support was available during the initial moments of need?*

- *Explore any emerging links between cost of activities/transport, loneliness and health*

- *Habit: Tendency to do the same types of things or see same type of people?*

- *Physical environment – e.g. live remotely, limited transportation, etc.*

- *What you think others will think, say or do – e.g. stigma associated with feeling less connected?*

Task 3

What do you think is the impact on you of feeling less connected or socially supported is on your life? e.g. on your health, general well-being, activity levels?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *Does feeling this way/loneliness contribute to any health issue e.g. stress resulting in illness or lack of activity affecting overall well-being*

- *Does it have an effect on mental health/ general well-being/eating less well/activity levels etc.*

Task 4

Thinking about the experiences you have shared, what do you think could have been done differently to stop you from feeling less connected or socially supported?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *Whether and how someone may have noticed your needs sooner (who, what should they have looked out for?)*

- *What kind of support did you need at that time? Type, from who, when provided and how frequently (please consider beyond services to include role of neighbours, community, employer if applicable).*

- *What would have helped you to access the support you needed, in hindsight? E.g. someone checking in (who/when), information on available support (in what form, how to deliver that, what content)*

- *What would they have done differently if they could do it all over again?*

Day 3 – Activity 3 – Support Experiences

Section aim: Understand participants support experiences and identify gaps in provision which have potential to be addressed by future services or support (we are as interested in support such as the role of community, local businesses and employers as formal support services).

Task 1a

You've made it to Day 3 – thanks for all your valuable contributions to the forum so far. Thisnext section looks at your experiences of connecting with others and your community, including support available that helps you to do this.

Please tell us what support is available to you (e.g. local community groups/schemes) that may help you feel more connected to people in your community and how you heard about this support?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *Whether and what support they've used, why/why not (Accessed support in local area as more accessible – local shops, parks, community events and groups?)*

- *Accessed transport or mobility aid services? Accessed support at home services?*

- *How do you hear about opportunities to be more connected e.g. post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members, employer if appropriate?*

- *What is the format of activities/ opportunities – location, type of service/ support – length and frequency?*

- *Who provides the activities/opportunities? (e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business)*

Task 1b

Is there any support that you would like that isn't available?

Task 2a

In what ways do you use technology to maintain social connections – such as through social media, websites and mobile phones?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *Technology to maintain existing connections (i.e. Skype family and friends who don't live nearby – or just a landline) or to make new connections/friends? Examples of technology used e.g. Twitter/FB, online forums, informative websites, mobile phones, apps, multi-player online games, landline phone*

- *How often and under what circumstances? And does this replace face to face contact?*

- *How useful is this technology in making or maintaining the social connections you want?*

- *How easy online support is to connect with others?*

- *Whether and how social media replaces face-to-face interaction and support?*

- *When is it not useful to communicate through technology?/ When would you would prefer to communicate face to face? (for example if online has replaced face to face and has this made you feel less connected overall)*

- *How do you keep in touch with friends and family who don't like to use these kinds of technology?*

Task 2b

Thinking of your personal experiences, in what situations is technology helpful to maintain social connections? Are there any drawbacks?

(Open Text Response)

Task 3

We would now like you to think of one recent experience, where:

1. You did something to feel more connected and involved, or

2. You did something to try to be more connected and involved but did not end up feeling that way.

These can be anything, big or small, formal or informal. It may have been something you have done independently or something that was organised by somebody else.

Please describe this experience, including when it was, what you were doing, who or what was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling at the time.

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *When it was?*

- *What you were doing at the time/ what was going on in your life?*

- *Who or what was involved?*

- *What you were thinking and feeling at the time?*

- *What did you enjoy most and least about this experience?*

- *Who provided the support or service?e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, neighbours, local community group, employer?*

- *How did you find out about the support or service – did you know where to access support or did someone else tell you?*

- *What were your expectations of the support/service? Thinking back to when you learned about it, how did you feel?)*

Task 4

What was the experience like of the example you've described and what was the result of this experience? For example, what did you gain or not gain from experiencing the support you have described?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *How it felt to take part?*

- *Importance of the experience to the participant?*

- *Quality of the engagement e.g. perceived as beneficial and high quality; Type of engagement – informal encounter vs. formal service; Convenience/ease/cost; Promotion – positive rather than negative?*

- *Whether and how it led to other opportunities to connect?*

- *Whether and how they learned any new skills/ rediscover old talents?*

- *Whether and how they made new friends/connections?*

- *Any gaps which could have been improved to make it a better experience?*

- *How information or support could have been introduced differently?*

Day 4 – Activity – What would "good support" look like?

Section aim: Understand what "good support" should look like and to draw out and identify gaps in service provision. Please consider support beyond services – i.e. role of neighbours and local community and role of businesses, both as employer and deliverer of services (i.e. local shop).

Task 1

Thank you for your contributions so far. We'd now like to understand what good support or help to feel better connected in your community looks like to you.

What would an ideal service or support look like for you to feel better connected and engaged with your communities?

To share your thoughts you can do any of the following or as many as you like: Please feel free to be as creative as you like. You could potentially show how you would like this to look by:

- Taking a short video or record yourself on a smart phone and upload them here*

- Taking photos of your surroundings or items that reflect what good support looks like and upload them here

- Collecting news articles or publically available stories and upload them here

- Typing your response in the box provided.

Please don't forget to explain why you have shared the examples or responses and what these mean to you.

*Please do not upload audio, video or images of other people without the consent of those people to do so.

Moderator probes:

We are specifically interested in the impact of the health or on loneliness so please probe around this rather than support for the health issue in isolation.

- *What's the aim/purpose of the service or support?*

- *Who is the support or service for?*

- *Level of intervention? Formal or informal*

- *Who provides the support or service?*

- *Format of the support or service?*

- *How would people find out about this support or service?*

- *What messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest? And the format of communications?*

Consent to use Material for Research Purposes

Thanks for sharing your thoughts with us in the previous exercise. We would like to use the information you have recorded in the previous task to help with our research. Your name and contact details will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed by any party, at any point.

The purpose of this consent is to notify you that your personal information is being collected and

to obtain your permission for TNS, the British Red Cross and Co-op to use the information you have provided. By sharing your information during this study you agree to grant us and TNS, the British Red Cross and Co-op permission to use the material solely as it pertains to this study and unconditionally release all from and against any and all claims, liabilities, demands, actions, causes of action, costs and expenses, whatsoever, arising out of your performances, the broadcast or use of such video or otherwise.

In relation to content shared in the previous task, please choose below if you consent to this information to be used in any of the following ways:

You may choose as many or as few uses for your information as you like. Please note that you may also choose for your information to be deleted if you wish.

1. *To be viewed by members of the TNS, British Red Cross, and Co-op research teams to inform the findings of the research*

2. *To be used by the British Red Cross, Co-op and TNS in reports or presentations about this research – to help their colleagues and partners understand the public's views and the findings of this research.*

3. *To be used in publicly available reports of this research (for example, on the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS websites about this research project) and more widely (for example, on social media accounts of the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS)*

4. *Please do not use my information for any research purposes*

Task 2

Thinking about the ideal support or service you have created and your own experiences, in what circumstances or situations would use this support or service?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *When they would use the support or service – When you need to talk to someone? When you feeling isolated from other family and friends? As a hobby? To get you out and about from the house?*

- *How they would like to learn about the support or service*

- *Why they would use the support or service over other possible ones*

- *How often they would use the support or service – regular, ad hoc*

- *What would prevent them from using the support or service – barriers*

Task 3

What would help you to engage with your ideal service or support? What would stop you or other people you know from engaging with the service or support?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Affordability e.g. low cost/free transport to get to venue?*

- *Initially being accompanied to the venue by a friend/volunteer? Perhaps to overcome potential embarrassment when trying something new or anxiety around meeting new people*

- *Doing an activity that you are familiar with or have enjoyed in the past?*

- *Ability to meet people in similar circumstances and talk about shared issues*

- *Potential access problems? (Being able to get in and out of the building/transport)*

- *Promotional materials positive rather than negative*

- *Timings: e.g. certain days better than others, time of the day, length of time it takes to get to the service or support*

Task 4

What would be the key thing you would get from taking part in this service or support? For example, an opportunity to talk about yourself, improved confidence, rediscovering an old hobby, new friends or acquaintances?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Connecting to your community (where relevant)*

- *Connect to people with similar interests*

- *Improved confidence/self-esteem?*

- *Rediscovering an old hobby?*

- *Developing a new skill/talent?*

- *Discovering a new social circle/ new friends?*

- *Having something enjoyable to do to fill out my spare time?*

- *Feeling that I had a safe place to confide my worries/problems with other people?*

Day 5 – Activity 5 – Share your final thoughts with us

Section aim: Ensure responses to all questions received, capture final thoughts and capture video feedback on participants' views.

We have now reached the end of our time together on the online forum. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us over the past five days.

Over the course of the forum we've asked you for more detail about some of your responses. Please take a moment to review your responses and ensure you have responded to all of our follow-up questions. You can do this by hitting the "comment" button under any of the moderator comments you want to respond to.

Next steps

Our team will be in touch to arrange the £50 payment to everyone who has logged in at least three times and responded to the activities and follow-up questions.

You can find out more about the partnership at www.Co-operative.coop/our-ethics/charity-partnership/about-our-charity-partnership

If you have any final comments or questions, please don't hesitate to post them here.

Thanks again!

Topic guide – Online forum (Mobility limitations)

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop an in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to combat it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations; businesses, policy makers and individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involves exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups of the public, reaching 108 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group sessions and online forums.

Phase 2 aims

Phase 2 research activities aim to understand:

- What it is like to be lonely in the UK, including contexts, causes and individual impact

- For individuals experiencing chronic loneliness, understand how what might have been a temporary situation became a long-term issue – and what might have prevented this

- How loneliness experienced by our participants – temporary and chronic – could be identified

- What support options are available? What is working well? Where are the gaps?

- What kind of support is needed and the form that this would take.

Please note that we are interested in support in the broadest sense. In addition to services, please probe to gain insight into the role of communities and businesses (both as an employer and as a deliverer of products and services) in helping to tackle loneliness.

Online forum moderation

To ensure confidentiality, participants will not be able to view each other's comments in closed private activities, in open activities they will be able to discuss and explore similar activities/experiences but will only be able to see limited personal information such as first name and first letter of surname to promote trust. To build rapport with participants and encourage on-going discussions with moderators, researchers will be assigned to participants and follow their journey across the forum over the five days it is live. Researchers will review the sample characteristics of their assigned participants and ensure prompts draw out how these characteristics may influence the individual's behaviours and attitudes. Researchers will follow up any responses with a series of prompts to make sure we are drawing out the right answers to meet the overall research objectives.

The following guide does not contain all pre-set questions but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with each participant. It does not include all follow-up questions like 'why', 'when', 'how', etc. as participants' contributions will be fully explored in response to what they tell us throughout in order to understand how and why views and experiences have arisen. The amount of time spent on different themes will vary between participants.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment. Please reflect the language the participants use and when appropriate explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

Moderator probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

Using the behaviour web to inform discussion

Throughout, researchers will keep in mind the wide range of factors which can influence behaviour and attitudes – e.g. across all aspects of the Behaviour Web. Below is a summary of key factors that may influence participant behaviour, though this is not exhaustive so please explore other emerging influences.

Costs and Benefits of taking part:

- Benefits: Something to fill my time? Someone to talk to? Something to do?
- Costs: Is it worth the energy/time/money? Embarrassing? – is it worth putting myself out there?
- Facilitators: Things they've done in the past/Rekindled past life? Help figure out likes and dislikes?

Efficacy and confidence:

- Fear of falling – can I get out and be safe?
- Can I get to and from this place easily and safely?
- Can I do this without looking silly? Will I be the only one that doesn't know what I'm doing?
- I'm hurting too much – I can't think about this

Morality and emotional needs:

- Fear of the unknown – New places? New people?
- Am I worthy of a service? Should someone really be offering to help me? Is it too much to ask someone to do this?

Social and cultural norms – and identification:

- Expectation that they should be able to cope?
- Loneliness isn't something that people really need help with?
- Stigma – How did I get here? How did I get in this situation?

Habit:

- Sustainability? Building new social networks? Building a habit?

Heuristics:

- "Nothing to do" More afraid of loss than benefits

Physical environment:

- Is the area safe?
- Is there adequate transport?
- Can I get into the building easily?

Introduction – Welcome to the community

Section aim: This section will welcome the participant to the community and explain what they can expect from their involvement in the forum.

Welcome to this online forum! Thank you for taking the time to log on – we appreciate your participation and value your input.

This research is being conducted by TNS BMRB – an independent research agency specialising in social research – on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op partnership.

The aim of this forum is to understand your experience of community in your local area and how the British Red Cross and Co-op can help support a better sense of community.

You have been selected to participate in this research because we are specifically interested in learning more about the views and experiences of community connections and interactions from people who share a common characteristic – you have told us you have issues with mobility – either physical or due to lack of access to transport.

Participation in the forum is voluntary, confidential and anonymous – we will not share your name or details with the British Red Cross, Co-op or any other organisation and your name will not be used in the report. We may use quotes you've given in the final report but there will be no way of knowing who said this; we will remove all identifying information from the quotes. You will be able to engage with other participants in certain activities across the forum and we would like you to get involved in having conversations about similar experiences or similar ideas where you feel comfortable. We will make you aware across the forum when tasks are open to all participants for commentary. Please be respectful of each other's views and feel free to join discussions.

This forum will be open for five days from 10:30am on Wednesday 25th May to 23:59pm on Sunday 29th May 2016. We ask you to please do the following:

- Please login at least three times across the five days the forum is open and complete the activities posted. We expect this to take around 90 minutes of your time in total.

- Please check your email for notifications as we will be following up your responses with further questions and comments.

As a thank you for logging onto the forum at least three times and responding to the questions posted, you will receive £50. You will not receive the payment if you do not login at least three times over the five days the forum is live and provide your responses.

Please be reassured that this is not a test of your knowledge and there are no right or wrong answers. This is also not a grammar test so please don't worry about spelling or grammar errors. It is meant to be a safe, non-judgemental space, and all views are equal. It's really important that we get to understand your current and honest opinions during the course of this research.

Disclosure – If we read something which causes us concern about your physical safety, we would have a duty to act to make sure you are protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If this were to happen, we would like to talk to you about what to do first – e.g., we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, your information is confidential.

If you have any questions or experience any technical issues please contact Emily O'Neill on emily.oneill@tns.bmrb.co.uk or t +44 (0)20 7656 5593.

To start – please click the 'activities' tab in the pink bar at the top of the page to see your tasks to complete.

We look forward to your posts!

The TNS BMRB Team

Day 1 – Activity 1 – Your local community

Section aim: To warm up participants to the forum and to briefly understand personal contexts to inform later discussions.

Task 1 (Private Task)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the forum over the next 5 days.

To begin, can you please tell us;

- c) What the area you live in is like? (e.g. what you like/don't like about it)

- d) How you like to spend your time? (e.g. friends, hobbies, family, community?)

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- ⍟ Whether urban/rural
- ⍟ What transportation is available – how you get around?
- ⍟ What's important in your life? (e.g. hobbies, health, family, community)
- ⍟ Is there anything which impacts on your ability to enjoy time with friends or family?

Moderator Note: This forum will be dealing primarily with those who have mobility issues – either due to physical limitations or lack of access to transportation and mobility aids. We want to get a sense of how this affects them so please try and draw out transport/mobility issues here. Please also try to draw out whether their mobility issues are temporary or longer term and how long they've been impacted.

Task 2 (Private Task)

What do you like about the stage you are at in your life in relation to connecting with people and others in your community? What do you dislike?

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Do they engage with others? If not, do they want to?*
- *Who do you connect/chat with? (family, friends, neighbours?)*
- *When do you connect with other people? (hobbies, social activities, local clubs, libraries, local shops?)*
- *In what kinds of circumstances do you like to reach out and connect with others?*
- *What were your past expectations of this stage of your life vs. what it is now?*
- *If/when appropriate, ask specifically how their mobility issues has influenced their responses*

Task 3 (Private Task)

In the last few years or so what has made it easier to spend time with others? What has made it harder?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *What did you do in those situations?*
- *How were you feeling at those times?*
- *How did that affect you? What was the impact on how you felt/what you did/what you thought?*
- *What else was going on around that time?*
- *What helped you to feel more/less connected during those times?*
- *Is there anything that could have helped you out during this period? If anything was 'missing' what was this?*

Task 4 (Private Task)

How, if at all, has your mobility issues had an impact on your ability to connect with others, such as visiting others, getting around or generally taking part in your community?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *If not, why e.g. taken action to prevent impact? Role of pets? Connected to people online or in local community? Support in form of mobility aids, transport assistance (if appropriate to level of mobility – visit friends in local area/local shop to strike up conversations, attending community events and clubs etc).*
- *Does mobility affect their ability to attend essential appointments such as medical appointments/dentists or essential tasks such as shopping?*
- *Does mobility affect their ability to see friends and family?*
- *Where transport is an issue are people more likely to offer lifts for what is seen as essentials rather than social events.*
- *How they see themselves? e.g. Some people tell us people have the wrong idea sometimes of what it is like to live with mobility issues which affects their ability to engage – what has your experience been like?*
- *Rurality – does living in a remote setting affect them?*
- *Access to transport – Either formal or*

informal – what is access to transport like in their area? Is the participant able to drive? If yes, do they feel confident in doing so? If in employment at point of mobility issues emerging – accessed any support from employer related to feelings of loneliness? For example HR, confidential employee assistance programme? Support from their union?

Day 2 – Activity 2 – Community and social interactions

Section aim: Understand experiences of loneliness, including the causes and impact, and what could have been done differently.

Task 1 (Private Task)

Thanks for your helpful responses to Activity 1. We'd now like to learn more about your experience of community and social interactions- what these interactions look like, how they feel and how they may have affected you.

What does feeling less connected and socially supported look like for you in terms of;

d) How you feel?

e) How you behave and how you look?

f) Would others notice how you are feeling?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *Anything you do differently when feeling less connected?*

- *Is it noticeable to others? e.g. any signs or indicators? If it is noticeable – who tends to notice and what do they notice? Is it those people close to them or others?*

- *How often do you feel this way? e.g. frequently or "on and off"*

- *If they are experiencing long-term loneliness – What could have been done to address how you were feeling at an earlier stage when you first experienced these feelings?*

Task 2 (Private Task)

What makes you feel less connected and socially supported? E.g. the causes

(Open text response)

Moderator probes: Probe for behaviour web factors:

- *Feeling unable to engage with others in the way that they want – e.g. lack of confidence, lack of awareness of what's available, health and mobility restrictions*

- *Relevance of interactions/support to their needs?*

- *Timeliness of interactions/support when they need/needed it – e.g. whether the right kind of support was available during the initial moments of need?*

- *Explore any emerging links between cost of activities/transport, loneliness and mobility*

- *Habit: Tendency to do the same types of things or see same type of people?*

- *Physical environment – e.g. live remotely, limited transportation, etc.*

- *What you think others will think, say or do – e.g. stigma associated with feeling less connected?*

Task 3 (Private Task)

What do you think is the impact on you of feeling less connected or socially supported is on your life? e.g. on your health, general well-being, activity levels?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *Does feeling this way/ loneliness contribute to any health issues? e.g. stress resulting in illness or lack of activity affecting overall well-being*

- *Does it have an effect on mental health/ general well-being/eating less well/activity levels etc?*

Task 4 (Private Task)

Thinking about the experiences you have shared, what do you think could have been done differently to stop you from feeling less connected or socially supported?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- Whether and how someone may have noticed your needs sooner (who, what should they have looked out for?)

- What kind of support did you need at that time? Type, from who, when provided and how frequently (please consider beyond services to include role of neighbours, community, employer if applicable).

- What would have helped you to access the support you needed, in hindsight? E.g. someone checking in (who/when), information on available support (in what form, how to deliver that, what content)

- What would they have done differently if they could do it all over again?

Day 3 – Activity 3 – Support Experiences

Section aim: Understand participants support experiences and identify gaps in provision which have potential to be addressed by future services or support (we are as interested in support such as the role of community, local businesses and employers as formal support services).

Task 1 (Community Task)

You've made it to Day 3 – thanks for all your valuable contributions to the forum so far. This next section looks at your experiences of connecting with others and your community, including support available that helps you to do this.

Please tell us what support is available to you (e.g. local community groups/schemes) that may help you feel more connected to people in your community and how you heard about this support? Is there any support that you would like but that isn't available?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *Whether and what support they've used, why/why not (accessed support in local area as more accessible – local shops, parks, community events and groups?)*

- *Accessed transport or mobility aid services?*

- *Access to statutory services – are these available to you? What do you support or services do you use currently? How do you find the support/service provided?*

- *Accessed support at home services?*

- *How do you hear about opportunities to be more connected e.g. post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members, employer if appropriate?*

- *What is the format of activities/ opportunities – location, type of service/ support – length and frequency?*

- *Who provides the activities/opportunities? (e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business)*

Task 2 (Community Task)

In what ways do you use technology to maintain social connections – such as through social media, websites and mobile phones? Thinking of your personal experiences, in what situations is technology helpful to maintain social connections?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *Technology to maintain existing connections (i.e. Skype family and friends who don't live nearby – or even just a landline) or to make new connections/ friends? Examples of technology used e.g. Twitter/FB, online forums, informative websites, mobile phones, apps, multi-player online games, landline phone*

- *How often and under what circumstances? And does this replace face to face contact?*

- *How useful is this technology in making or maintaining the social connections you want?*

- *How easy online support is to connect with others?*

- *Whether and how social media replaces face-to-face interaction and support?*

- *When is it not useful to communicate through technology? When would you prefer to communicate face to face? (for example if online has replaced face to face and has this made you feel less connected overall)*

⚙ *How do you keep in touch with friends and family who don't like to use these kinds of technology?*

Task 3 (Community Task)

We would now like you to think of one recent experience, where:

1. You did something to feel more connected and involved, or

2. You did something to try to be more connected and involved but did not end up feeling that way.

These can be anything, big or small, formal or informal. It may have been something you have done independently or something that was organised by somebody else.

Please describe this experience, including when it was, what you were doing, who or what was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling at the time.

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *When it was?*

- *What you were doing at the time/what was going on in your life?*

- *Who or what was involved?*

- *What you were thinking and feeling at the time?*

- *What did you enjoy most and least about this experience?*

- *Who provided the support or service? e.g. local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, neighbours, local community group, employer*

- *How did you find out about the support or service – did you know where to access support or did someone else tell you?*

- *What were your expectations of the support/service? Thinking back to when you learned about it, how did you feel?*

Task 4 (Community Task)

What was the experience like of the example you've described and what was the result of this experience? For example, what did you gain or not gain from experiencing the support you have described?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *How it felt to take part?*

- *Importance of the experience to the participant?*

- *Quality of the engagement e.g. perceived as beneficial and high quality; Type of engagement – informal encounter vs. formal service; Convenience/ease/cost; Promotion – positive rather than negative?*

- *Whether and how it led to other opportunities to connect?*

- *Whether and how they learned any new skills/rediscover old talents?*

- *Whether and how they made new friends/connections?*

- *Any gaps which could have been improved to make it a better experience?*

- *How information or support could have been introduced differently?*

Day 4 – Activity – What would "good support" look like?

Section aim: Understand what "good support" should look like and to draw out and identify gaps in service provision. Please consider support beyond services – i.e. role of neighbours and local community and role of businesses, both as employer and deliverer of services (i.e. local shop).

Task 1 (Private Task)

Thank you for your contributions so far. We'd now like to understand what

good support or help to feel better connected in your community looks like to you.

What would an ideal service or support look like for you to feel better connected and engaged with your communities?

To share your thoughts you can do any of the following or as many as you like: Please feel free to be as creative as you like. You could potentially show how you would like this to look by:

◘ Taking a short video or record yourself on a smart phone and upload them here*

◘ Taking photos of your surroundings or items that reflect what good support looks like and upload them here

◘ Collecting news articles or publically available stories and upload them here

◘ Typing your response in the box provided.

Please don't forget to explain why you have shared the examples or responses and what these mean to you.

*Please do not upload audio, video or images of other people without the consent of those people to do so.

Moderator probes:

We are specifically interested in the impact of mobility on loneliness so please probe around this rather than support for the mobility issue in isolation.

- *What's the aim/purpose of the service or support?*

- *Who is the support or service for?*

- *Level of intervention? Formal or informal*

- *Who provides the support or service?*

- *Format of the support or service?*

- *How would people find out about this support or service?*

- *What messages users would like to hear to engage them and spark interest? And the format of communications?*

Consent to use Material for Research Purposes

Thanks for sharing your thoughts with us in the previous exercise. We would like to use the information you have recorded in the previous task to help with our research. Your name and contact details will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed by any party, at any point.

The purpose of this consent is to notify you that your personal information is being collected and to obtain your permission for TNS, the British Red Cross and Co-op to use the information you have provided. By sharing your information during this study you agree to grant us and TNS, the British Red Cross and Co-op permission to use the material solely as it pertains to this study and unconditionally release all from and against any and all claims, liabilities, demands, actions, causes of action, costs and expenses, whatsoever, arising out of your performances, the broadcast or use of such video or otherwise.

In relation to content shared in the previous task, please choose below if you consent to this information to be used in any of the following ways:

You may choose as many or as few uses for your information as you like. Please note that you may also choose for your information to be deleted if you wish.

1. To be viewed by members of the TNS, British Red Cross, and Co-op research teams to inform the findings of the research

2. To be used by the British Red Cross, Co-op and TNS in reports or presentations about this research – to help their colleagues and partners understand the public's views and the findings of this research.

3. To be used in publicly available reports of this research (for example, on the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS websites about this research project) and more widely (for example, on social media accounts of the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS)

4. Please do not use my information for any research purposes

Task 2 (Community Task)

Thinking about the ideal support or service you have created and your own experiences, in what circumstances or situations would you use this support or service?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator probes:

- *When they would use the support or service – When you need to talk to someone? When you feeling isolated from other family and friends? As a hobby? To get you out and about from the house?*

- *How they would like to learn about the support or service?*

- *Why they would use the support or service over other possible ones?*

- *How often they would use the support or service – regular, ad hoc*

- *What would prevent them from using the support or service? – barriers*

Task 3 (Community Task)

What would help you to engage with your ideal service or support? What would stop you or other people you know from engaging with the service or support?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Affordability e.g. low cost/free transport to get to venue?*

- *Provision of mobility aids e.g. wheelchair*

- *Initially being accompanied to the venue by a friend/volunteer? Perhaps to overcome potential embarrassment when trying something new or anxiety around meeting new people?*

- *Doing an activity that you are familiar with or have enjoyed in the past?*

- *Ability to meet people in similar circumstances and talk about shared issues*

- *Potential access problems? (Being able to get in and out of the building/transport)*

- *Promotional materials positive rather than negative*

- *Timings: e.g. certain days better than others, time of the day, length of time it takes to get to the service or support*

Task 4 (Community Task)

What would be the key thing you would get from taking part in this service or support? For example,

an opportunity to talk about yourself, improved confidence, rediscovering an old hobby, new friends or acquaintances?

Please note: You will be able to see other participant responses in this task and they can see yours so please feel free to engage in discussions with each other around similar experiences or to explore interesting comments.

(Open Text Response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Connecting to your community (where relevant)*

- *Connect to people with similar interests*

- *Improved confidence/self-esteem?*

- *Rediscovering an old hobby?*

- *Developing a new skill/talent?*

- *Discovering a new social circle/ new friends?*

- *Having something enjoyable to do to fill out my spare time?*

- *Feeling that I had a safe place to confide my worries/problems with other people?*

Day 5 – Activity 5 – Share your final thoughts with us

Section aim: Ensure responses to all questions received and capture final thoughts on participants' views.

We have now reached the end of our time together on the online forum. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us over the past five days.

Over the course of the forum we've asked you for more detail about some of your responses. Please take a moment to review your responses and ensure you have responded to all of our follow-up questions. You can do this by hitting the "comment" button under any of the moderator comments you want to respond to.

Next steps

Our team will be in touch to arrange the £50 payment to everyone who has logged in at least three times and responded to the activities and follow-up questions.

You can find out more about the partnership at www.Co-operative.coop/our-ethics/charity-partnership/about-our-charity-partnership/

If you have any final comments or questions, please don't hesitate to post them here.

Thanks again!

3. Phase 3 – Brainstorming solutions

Methodology

Following Phase 2 primary qualitative research with the public, we returned to the expert witness group in order to share what we had learned; explore stakeholders' views about what might work to meet needs as identified by the key groups; and continue co-creation exercises to further develop potential support solutions. Working with the expert groups in this way carried the benefits of:

- Ensuring that any recommendations included in project reporting are feasible and appropriate – as well as fully taking advantage of the various resources on offer via Co-op and British Red Cross' existing networks; and

- Helping further engagement with the research process, the groups in question and the topic of loneliness more widely

This phase was conducted via an online approach, where participants logged in remotely to an online forum – where they reviewed a summary of Phase 2 findings, answered a variety of research questions individually, and then engaged with others' responses to share experiences and debate and discuss ideas. Three supplementary telephone interviews were also conducted with expert witnesses who were not able to join in the forum activity.

Recruitment

Participants in Phase 3 included mostly newly-engaged stakeholders; 18 new stakeholders joined the 3 reconvened expert witnesses from Phase 1. As in Phase 1, the British Red Cross' and Co-op teams provided direction on engaging and coordinating stakeholders to participate in Phase 3. The TNS BMRB team coordinated all recruitment.

Achieved sample table

A summary of the expert witness sample, including the target group their expertise relates to, and their geographic coverage, is included. (right).

Target group	Achieved
Young new mums	1
Retired/empty nesters	1
Recently bereaved	1
Divorced/separated	1
Individuals with mobility limitations	3
Individuals with health issues	3
Across the groups	11
Total	21

Location	Achieved
England	4
Scotland	3
Wales	2
Northern Ireland	1
UK Wide	11
Total	21

Topic guide – expert witness online workshop

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to tackle it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations, businesses (both as an employer and deliverer of services), policy makers, individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involved exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups of the public, reaching 110 individuals from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group discussions and online forums. Phase 3 invites two experts to take part in teledepths to pilot the guide, up to three more to conduct teledepths if they are unavailable or if their area of specialism doesn't quite fit with the online format (e.g. PHE, NICE) to take part in the online workshop, then the remaining experts take part in the online workshop (x23-x25).

Phase 3 Expert witness interview objectives

- Share findings from the public research and explore experts' views about what might work to meet the needs of the six target groups

- Brainstorm potential support solutions – what support is needed and what form this would take – to then test and validate with the public in Phase 4a

- Understand the opportunities and limitations of potential support solutions brainstormed, including feasibility to implement, deliver and sustain a service

- Gain insight to what further questions or solutions should be posed to the public in Phase 4a – testing and validating solutions

- Engage the wider expert witness group with the issue of loneliness and with the campaign.

Online forum set-up

- Experts are invited to participate anonymously or to indicate their name in their user name on the forum. If they choose to be anonymous, we ask that they indicate the region and service and/or target group/s they represent.

- Experts are invited to login as many times as they like. The benefits of networking, knowledge sharing and engaging in a community dialogue will be communicated to encourage experts to login more times, engaging with their peers and the researchers' questions and comments.

- The forum is closed to the public but responses are public to those in the forum – experts can see the responses of others and can comment on these.

- There is a staged consent page, requesting experts indicate whether they wish for their responses to only be reviewed by fellow participants, the research team and client, or if they consent for their responses to be used in public dissemination of the research.

- The workshop briefly summarises Phase 2 findings to give experts enough flavour of what the public has said without over burdening them or distracting them from the primary aim of brainstorming solutions based on those findings.

Online forum moderation

- To build rapport with experts and encourage on-going discussions with moderators, researchers will be assigned to experts and follow their journey across the forum over the seven days it is live.

- Researchers will review the sample characteristics[4] of their assigned participants and ensure prompts draw out how these characteristics may influence the individual's behaviours and attitudes. Researchers will follow up any responses with a series of prompts to make sure we are drawing out the right answers to meet the overall research objectives.

- The workshop is a community, an opportunity for experts to network, share knowledge and become committed to the future campaign and service development work of BRC and Co-op. Throughout, we will prompt experts to reflect

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[4]This relates to the area of expertise from which the EW may have specific experience or insight so that we can draw this out for our data but also make sure that they are providing us with holistic responses in addition to specific insight around a particular target group.

on the comments of their peers in a targeted way e.g. *Participant 1 suggested the opposite of your response, what are the challenges and opportunities of that view?*

◘ Remember that we are representing the campaign more widely; this stage is a key part of stakeholder involvement and engagement.

The following guide does not contain all pre-set questions but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with each participant. It does not include all follow-up questions like 'why', 'when', 'how', etc. as participants' contributions will be fully explored in response to what they tell us throughout in order to understand how and why views and experiences have arisen. The amount of time spent on different themes will vary between participants.

Email Confirmation – *sent one day before fieldwork*

SUBJECT: British Red Cross and Co-op Loneliness Research – Expert online workshop

Dear X,

Thank you for agreeing to contribute to an online workshop of experts working to understand and tackle loneliness and isolation in the UK. Your expertise and insight will be invaluable for brainstorming solutions to loneliness after having exclusive early sight of some of the insights from the research with members of the public experiencing loneliness.

The findings from this workshop will be tested and validated by members of the public experiencing loneliness in the next stage of the research, and ultimately the research will inform campaign development and service design. A report will be published in the autumn and a copy will be sent to you. We would appreciate if the details shared with you in this email were treated as confidential prior to publication.

You don't need to do anything right now – the online workshop will be open for seven days from tomorrow Thursday, 23rd June at 08.00 until Thursday, 30th June at 23.59. You will be able to access the workshop account at any time across this time period. You can engage in the Workshop as much as you like and we estimate that participation should amount to around 90 minutes in total across the week. The link to the project site can be found here (we would recommend using the Google Chrome internet browser to open this link): **lonelinessresearch.recollective.com/loneliness**

The workshop is closed and not visible to the public however your responses can be seen and commented on by other experts taking part. We encourage you to login to the workshop as much as you like during this time, to engage with the community, network and share lessons and knowledge with the moderators and your peers.

If you have any questions or experience any technical issues please contact Mark Harrison on Mark.Harrison@tns.bmrb.co.uk or t +44 (0)20 7656 5146.

Thank you,

The TNS BMRB team

Consent for information to be used – *first page experts see after logging in*

Thank you for joining the online workshop to discuss solutions for tackling loneliness in communities across the UK. You are making an important contribution to Co-op and British Red Cross partnership to highlight and tackle loneliness and social isolation in communities across the UK.

Your contribution will be viewed by members of the TNS, British Red Cross and Co-op teams for our research. This research will help shape future service design and a campaign response including what role businesses have as an employer and deliverer of services; what role individuals and communities can play; and potential advocacy activity which will be As the final publication is due to be published in the Autumn of this year we would appreciate if your participation and the details shared in this workshop were treated as confidential prior to publication.

We would also like to consider using your views to increase knowledge and understanding of loneliness and ensure that the voices of people experiencing loneliness are heard. Consent will be sought for any quotes we may like to use.

We also want to give you the chance to stay involved in our partnership and to keep you up to date with news and developments as our partnership progresses.

The British Red Cross or Co-op may contact you in the future:

- with project updates

- to discuss any further ways we could draw on your expertise and experiences to help us highlight and tackle loneliness and social isolation.

Please tick below if you consent to your views to be used in any of the following ways:

You may choose as many or as few uses for your views as you like. Please note that you may also choose for your views to be deleted if you wish.

1. To be viewed by members of the TNS, British Red Cross, and Co-op research teams to inform the findings of the research

2. To be used by TNS, British Red Cross, and Co-op in reports or presentations about this research – to help their colleagues and partners understand the public's views and the findings of this research

3. To be used in publicly available reports of this research (for example, on the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS websites about this research project) and more widely (for example, on social media accounts of the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS)

4. For verbatim quotes expressed in this online workshop to be attributed to me and my organisation in publicly available work/campaigning materials relating to the research

5. Please do not use my views for any research purposes (your data will be deleted and not viewed by any party).

Introduction to the online workshop

Welcome to this online workshop to discuss solutions for tackling loneliness in the UK. Thank you for taking the time to log on – we appreciate your participation and value your input.

This workshop is being carried out by the research agency TNS BMRB on behalf of British Red Cross and Co-op. You are part of a group of experts on the topic of loneliness and isolation taking part in this workshop, from a range of regions, organisations and specialties. Here you will learn about the early findings from research with 110 people from six target groups (young new mums, recently bereaved, mobility issues, health concerns, retirees and empty nesters, and divorced and separated) experiencing loneliness across the UK. You are invited to share your expertise about what solutions may be possible to respond to and prevent loneliness among these groups (or more broadly). The findings from this workshop will be tested and validated by members of the public experiencing loneliness in the next stage, and ultimately the research will inform campaign development and service design.

This workshop will be open for seven days from **8:00am on Thursday, 23rd June to 23:59pm on Thursday, 30th June, 2016**. The workshop is closed and not visible to the public however; your responses can be seen and commented on by other experts taking part. We encourage you to login to the workshop as much as you like during this time, to engage with the community dialogue, network and share lessons and knowledge with the moderators and your peers. We ask that as a minimum you login at the beginning and end of the workshop, to respond to questions from moderators and your peers.

The following table summarises the content to be covered in the different activities:

In addition to the questions posed to you in the workshop activities, this online space has a Discussion room (click on the 'Discussion' tab in the pink bar at the top of the page). You can use this to have a more unstructured exchange about solutions to tackling loneliness and share lessons learned from your own experience with others taking part.

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Concluding the workshop
Findings summary of the research with people experiencing loneliness. Your views on synergy of findings to your experience and the challenges and opportunities of responding to the public's needs	Your views on best practice examples of digital and face-to-face support relating to findings	Co-designing solutions with your fellow experts	Your views on what else can be done to tackle loneliness	Thank you and next steps

If you have any questions or experience any technical issues please contact Mark Harrison on Mark.Harrison@tns.bmrb.co.uk or t +44 (0)20 7656 5146.

To start – please click the 'Activities' tab in the pink bar at the top of the page to see your tasks to complete.

We look forward to your posts,

The TNS BMRB Team

Activity 1 – Findings from research with those experiencing loneliness

Activity aim: Share findings about causes and impacts of loneliness from Phase 2 and warm experts up to sharing their views in an online workshop setting.

Causes of loneliness

Feeling lonely was most often described as beginning when life events had disrupted participants' existing social connections, e.g. due to:

- the loss of close social connections from relationship breakdown like when a participant got divorced following a health issue that 'took focus from the relationship' or becoming a young mum when friends are at university or going out mostly in the evenings

- the loss of more casual companionship like banter at the pub when mobility restrictions limit access to social spaces or sharing a smile with regulars on one's work commute following retirement

- the loss of habitual and purposeful connections with colleagues after retirement or with other families after children have left the home.

Following such life events many factors were seen to undermine participants' ability to strengthen connections or establish new ones:

- social norms around who you are 'allowed' or 'expected' to speak to make it harder to connect with others

- the individual's ability to access local services

- the perceived financial, emotional and physical cost of social engagement

- confidence in engaging with others and services

- the sustainability of social interactions and available support.

What it feels like to be lonely

Participants highlighted that when they do not have the opportunity to engage with others through social connections and social roles (e.g., their local communities, hobby and friendship groups) people can feel they 'don't know who they are,' and can find it difficult to find meaning in their daily lives. Part of what made loneliness so difficult for people was the feeling that in the absence of social connection, life felt less interesting and worthwhile.

Participants' stories showed that when people are not connected this can lead to a wide range of personal impacts, some of which were very serious. Participants felt 'lost' and 'without purpose'; guilty or confused about why they feel lonely; like a burden to others with nothing to other; and misunderstood or angry. There was also a loss of energy and motivation to do day-to-day tasks and participate in social outings; loss of confidence in social engagement with others; increased anxiety about appearing 'strange' or 'weird' to others; emergence or exacerbation of mental health issues such as depression and anxiety; belief that things would never get better; and negative thought patterns including suicidal thoughts or desire for self-harm.

Loneliness also impacted on participants' behaviours, including a lack of future planning; not maintaining one's appearance; changes in sleeping and eating patterns; unsuccessful efforts to 'reach out'; and disengaging with existing friends and family.

Preventative and responsive support available

It was felt there was very little adequate or fit-for-purpose support available for people experiencing loneliness. A general lack of awareness of support options available, especially informal support, made it harder to 'see a way out.' Support to help participants develop new social connections and make them feel 'useful' and have 'a purpose' was a recurring message from the people included in the research. Support opportunities included community activities and courses to develop skills and interests, volunteering, opportunities for shared meals, and inspiration workshops with

others who had dealt with loneliness and or similar issues.

For some, digital supports like online and app-based communities were seen as effective at helping participants stay connected and helped participants to contact support providers. However, other participants noted that digital social support networks (e.g. Facebook) could actually be detrimental: helping people achieve a 'bare minimum' of social contact, whilst avoiding more 'quality' social connection via face-to-face contact.

It was also felt there was very little adequate or fit-for-purpose support available to support people during transitional life moments to prevent longer term loneliness from occurring. Formal support was generally felt to be available at key life stages, such as medical support following a health issue, support with logistics of responding to bereavement, or healthcare following childbirth. However, this support was specific to a particular need and not sufficient to prepare individuals for possible lifestyle changes or loss of social connections. In addition to needing to know what was on offer in the local area, and for that to be communicated through mixed channels (e.g. TV, radio, internet, flyers around the community), participants also reported needing someone to talk to about how they were feeling, and activity-based support with people in similar circumstances (e.g. for people that have recent bereavement or having a child at a young age in common). A key barrier to accessing support was the fear and anxiety of attending services and activities alone. Linking up a person with a 'buddy' or 'sponsor' and for friends and family to join the participant out in the community would have helped them overcome this hurdle.

Task 1

How do the findings about the causes and impacts of loneliness resonate with your understanding of loneliness based on your professional expertise?

Moderator prompts:

- How does this overview of participants' views relate to what you would expect?

- What, if anything, are you surprised to see in the findings?

- What, if anything, is missing?

Task 2

What are the challenges for society in responding to the causes and impacts of loneliness described by our participants? What are the opportunities?

Moderator prompts:

- Under what circumstances/setting would you expect to see the challenges you describe? E.g. with particular sub-groups within society, in particular regions

- What could help overcome the challenges you describe? E.g. knowledge, time, tools, investment, people, policy

- Whose role is it to overcome challenges/ create opportunities E.g. business, local gov., central gov., communities, individuals, charities, voluntary organisations

Activity 2 – Best practice support

Activity aim: Gather examples of best practice and support experts to think about different types of support and their merits/weaknesses in advance of the co-design activity.

Task 1

What are examples of good practice delivered in person that are providing support (either formally or informally such as community activities and groups) that responds to and/or prevents feelings and experiences of loneliness? What makes these examples work well and not so well?

Please feel free to upload any materials that relate to the example(s) you discuss, so that we can share them with others who are interested in making change: *Facility to upload documents/ images/videos of examples of good practice*

Moderator prompts:

- What makes these example(s) 'good practice'?

- Are there any groups who may have difficulty accessing this/these examples of support?

- What are the challenges in delivering this/ these good practice example/s?

- What supports or hinders the identification/ targeting of potential users of the service?

- What are the challenges for organisations/ individuals/communities trying to keep the service or support going?

- How could this form of support be further improved or enhanced?

- The role of technology and digital/online spaces which can help people connect with each other?

Task 2

Are there any examples of good practice delivered digitally or over the phone (e.g. apps, online forums, informative websites, helplines and support lines) that are providing support that responds to and/or prevents feelings and experiences of loneliness? Please upload any materials that relate to the example(s) you discuss: *Facility to upload documents/images/videos of examples of good practice*

Moderator prompts:

- What makes these example(s) 'good practice'?

- Are there any groups who may have difficulty accessing this/these examples of support?

- What are the challenges in delivering this/ these good practice example/s?

- What supports or hinders the identification/ targeting of potential users of the service?

- What are the challenges for organisations trying to keep the service or support going?

- How could this form of support be further improved or enhanced?

- We've heard that some people are wary of formal support. If you agree, what ways have you found to address this?

Activity 3 – Co-designing solutions

Activity aim: Brainstorm feasible solutions of support, encourage debate and discussion amongst experts, and challenge thinking about the best solutions.

We would like you to work together with your fellow experts to co-design solutions to tackling loneliness with some of the target groups this research is focussed on. The groups include:

- young new mums

- retired and empty nesters

- recently bereaved

- divorced or separated

- individuals with mobility issues

- individuals with health concerns

You'll now be able to click through each of these groups in turn. If you feel you have particular expertise in one or more of these areas, please feel free to focus on these discussion groups. If there are any areas where you feel you have no knowledge, please feel free to skip these discussion groups.

Imagine you are part of a taskforce which has been asked to develop a service(s) or intervention(s) that (i) help to respond to the needs of people experiencing loneliness and (ii) prevent loneliness in [TARGET GROUP] considering the role of formal services, community and individual responses, business responses and advocacy.

Working together with others, please brainstorm the following:

We have set up separate online spaces for each of the target groups. Please go to the 'Activities' tab in the pink toolbar at the top of the page and select 'Activity 4' then click on the target group that you would like to complete the exercise. You are welcome to participate in more than one target group brainstorm solutions exercise.

[*Set-up instructions: Create five 'tasks', each to serve as the discussion for each target group. Copy the instructions above into each 'task' and set up follow-up questions in each task for the above three discussion topics.*]

Your strategy	What are the main issues of your target group and ultimately, what is the purpose of the service?
Your delivery plan	How will the service be delivered? Think about how you will identify people who would benefit from your service, the format, how often and when support is provided, how money should be spent to deliver the service, who will deliver the service, how you will encourage people to engage with the service. What are the key outcomes of the service? The aim is to brainstorm a service or intervention that is feasible to implement so please consider budget and infrastructure needs that your service or intervention would require. Please consider how the following could play a role in your strategy: • Services (e.g. helping people stay mobile, providing transport) • Businesses as an employer (e.g. Providing support at life transition points both formal and informal) • Businesses as a deliverer of products and services (e.g. using local and regional businesses as "community hubs" where people can connect with each other either formally or informally) • Community and individual responses/services (e.g. shared interest groups, volunteering, shared meals, etc) these could be formal or informal for example empowering communities/individuals to respond etc) • Advocacy (e.g. potential for collaborative campaigning and lobbying activities to raise profile of the issues faced)
How you'll evaluate the success of your strategy	How will you measure the success of your services? How will you know your service has achieved its desired outcomes?

Moderator prompts:

- Where appropriate, encourage experts to think of both preventative and responsive services/support for people in their target group

Strategy

✿ What is the vision of your strategy?

✿ What kinds of words or phrases would you use in your strategy's statement of purpose or 'About Us' section of your strategy's website?

✿ What are the limits to your strategy? What can the strategy not achieve?

Delivery

✿ Format of service or support – community organised, signposting, shared interest groups, meal type projects, befriending, technology or transport support to stay in touch with friends or family, community events, pet therapy, volunteering, mobility aids

✿ Identifying service users – through statutory services, through friends and family, through employers, self-referral

✿ Encouraging engagement – post, email, phone, posters in local venues such as shops, community members, online

- Provider of service or support – local government, charitable org, private org, friends/family, community, neighbour, employer, local business
- Role of businesses/individuals and communities/charities and voluntary organisations
    - When can businesses/individuals and communities/charities and voluntary organisations get involved in preventing or responding to loneliness?
    - How can businesses/individuals and communities/charities and voluntary organisations get involved in preventing or responding to loneliness?
    - What are the limitations of businesses/individuals and communities/charities and voluntary organisations in preventing or responding to loneliness?
    - What do businesses/individuals and communities/charities and voluntary organisations need in order to play a role in tackling loneliness? E.g. awareness of the issue and information of appropriate forms of support, impact of the issue on their business, pressure from advocacy or government groups, resources (e.g. money, people, time, templates)
- What are the potential challenges that might be faced in delivering these services or support, and how might these be overcome?
- How will you support users of your service to transition out of the service?

Activity 4 – Final views

Task 1

Knowing what you know from the research findings shared here, your own experiences and the discussions that have taken place in this online workshop, what else could work to respond to and/or prevent loneliness in the UK?

Task 2

We know from our research with people experiencing loneliness that they want help with strengthening their existing connections and in establishing new connections – what else could work to deliver this support?

Task 3

What else could we explore with individuals experiencing loneliness during the final phase of research with the public? What questions should we asking to understand what could be done to tackle loneliness?

Task 4

One response to the issues raised during our research is to run a public campaign to build awareness of the seriousness of issues of loneliness and social isolation, and encourage people to seek support for themselves or refer friends and family before the situation becomes a crisis.

From your experience what themes/messages/channels or activities would be particularly appropriate for such a campaign?

Activity 5 – Concluding the workshop

We have now reached the end of our time together on the online workshop. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

Please review the responses of your peers and the questions from the moderators then add your final comments and reflections. You can do this by hitting the "comment" button under any of the comments you want to respond to.

Next steps

The final stage of the research involves testing and validating the solutions discussed here with individuals experiencing loneliness across the UK, as well as a nationally representative survey to determine the prevalence of the findings shared with you on the forum. All research findings will be published following the completion of the research, in the autumn.

4. Phase 4a – Testing and validating (Qualitative)

Photo: © iStock.

Methodology

To close the qualitative research element of needs assessment research, a final phase of validation and testing with the key groups was conducted via an online forum. This provided an opportunity to validate the research conclusions from Phase 2; to ask additional questions arising from the Phase 3 expert witness research; and to test adjustments or new potential support offers as developed from Phase 3.

Participants received a secure web link to a password protected website, and logged in to take part in pre-set activities. The forum was open for 5 days in early July, 2016 and involved about 1.5 hours of participant's time over that period.

To ensure confidentiality, participants weren't able to view each other's comments in closed private activities; in open activities they were able to discuss and explore similar activities/experiences with other participants. To build rapport with participants and encourage on-going discussions with moderators, researchers were assigned to participants and followed their journey across the

forum over the five days it was live. Researchers reviewed the sample characteristics of their assigned participants and ensured prompts drew out how these characteristics influenced the individual's behaviours and attitudes. Researchers followed up responses with a series of prompts to make sure we drew out the right answers to meet the overall research objectives. Moderator probing was framed to ensure the research team understood participants' situations as they viewed them.

Recruitment

Twenty-four participants were reconvened from Phase 2, representing a mix of the key research groups, loneliness type, geographic coverage and rurality coverage. Phase 2 recruitment screeners included a recontact question and individuals who had consented to be recontacted in relation to the research were invited to take part in the final phase. A summary of the achieved Phase 4a sample appears below.

As compensation for their time, participants received £50 for taking part.

Achieved sample tables

Target group	Region	Loneliness type	Urban/rural
Mobility limitation	England = 2 Wales = 2	Chronic = 3 6 months = 1	Urban = 1 Rural = 3
Health Issues	England = 2 Wales = 2*	Chronic = 4* 6 months = 0	Urban = 1* Rural = 3
Bereaved	England = 2 Ireland = 2	Chronic = 2 6 months = 2	Urban = 4 Rural = 0
Young new mums	England = 1 Wales = 1 Ireland = 2	Chronic = 2 6 months = 3	Urban = 5 Rural = 0
Divorced/ separated	Wales = 1 Scotland = 3	Chronic = 3 6 months = 1	Urban = 4 Rural = 0
Empty nesters/ retirees	England = 1 Scotland = 3	Chronic = 3 6 months = 1	Urban = 3 Rural = 1
Total = 24			

Topic guide – Validation online workshop

Background

TNS BMRB is conducting research on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op to develop in-depth understanding into loneliness in the UK focusing on the needs of people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and strategic insight into what could be done/ is already being done to tackle it and identifying what roles charities and voluntary organisations, businesses (both as an employer and deliverer of services), policy makers, individuals and communities have to play. The research will inform campaign development and service design.

Phase 1 involved mapping the landscape of loneliness needs and services in the UK, through discussions with 27 expert stakeholders. Phase 2 involved exploring the contexts and needs of six target groups[5] of the public from five locations across the UK through a mix of depth interviews, small group discussions and online forums. Phase 3 invited 28 experts (3 teledepths and 25 online forum participants) to engage with our initial findings and to help brainstorm and co-design potential services and solutions to tackling loneliness within the UK. Phase 4a will aim to validate our overall findings and to gauge reaction to the Phase 3 Expert Witness findings with 28 members of the public, made up of both fresh and re-convened participants from the Phase 2 research.

[5]Retired/Empty Nesters, Young new mums, Recently Bereaved, Health issues, Mobility issues, Divorced/Separated

Phase 4 Validation Forum Objectives

�‐ Provide an opportunity for us to refine and validate our findings from Phase 2 of the research to ensure that our overall data is representative and reflective of participants' views.

�‐ To pose additional questions relating to data from the Phase 3 Expert Witness Forum so that we can extract further data for our overall conclusions to inform recommendations.

◐ Gauge initial reactions and commentary from those experiencing loneliness towards potential support options presented in the Phase 3 Forum to ensure our recommendations are appropriate and appealing and explore how these could be improved or tailored to individual need.

Online forum moderation

To ensure confidentiality, participants will not be able to view each other's comments in closed private activities, in open activities they will be able to discuss and explore similar activities/ experiences. To build rapport with participants and encourage on-going discussions with moderators, researchers will be assigned to participants and follow their journey across the forum over the five days it is live. Researchers will review the sample characteristics of their assigned participants and ensure prompts draw out how these characteristics may influence the individual's behaviours and attitudes. Researchers will follow up any responses with a series of prompts to make sure we are drawing out the right answers to meet the overall research objectives.

The following guide does not contain all pre-set questions but rather lists the key themes and sub-themes to be explored with each participant. It does not include all follow-up questions like 'why', 'when', 'how', etc. as participants' contributions will be fully explored in response to what they tell us throughout in order to understand how and why views and experiences have arisen. The amount of time spent on different themes will vary between participants.

Key principles for researchers to follow throughout fieldwork

The subject of loneliness is a sensitive issue which may make participants feel vulnerable; this is why

the project has been framed as a community relations issue during recruitment. Please reflect the language the participants use and when appropriate explain that some people describe what you are discussing as loneliness.

Moderator probing will be framed to ensure we understand participants' situations as they view them.

Introduction to the online workshop

Section aim: This section will welcome the participant to the community and explain what they can expect from their involvement in the forum.

Welcome to this online forum! Thank you for taking the time to log on – we appreciate your participation and value your input.

This research is being conducted by TNS BMRB – an independent research agency specialising in social research – on behalf of the British Red Cross and Co-op.

The aim of this forum is to understand your experience of community in your local area and how the British Red Cross and Co-op can help support those who may be feeling disconnected.

We will be presenting you with some of our ideas on how organisations might support people to feel better connected and we are interested to hear your views on what services and support should look like and what shape they could take.

Participation in the forum is voluntary, confidential and anonymous – we will not share your name or details with the British Red Cross, Co-op or any other organisation and your name will not be used in the report. We may use quotes you've given in the final report but there will be no way of knowing who said what; we will remove all identifying information from the quotes.

You will be able to engage with other participants in certain activities across the forum and we would like you to get involved in having conversations about similar experiences or similar ideas where you feel comfortable. We will make you aware when tasks are open to all participants for commentary. Please be respectful of each other's views and feel free to join discussions.

This forum will be open for five days from 12:00am on Saturday 9th July and will close at 23:59pm on Wednesday 13th July 2016. We ask you to please do the following:

- ¤ Please login at least three times across the five days the forum is open and complete the activities posted. We expect this to take around 90 minutes of your time in total.

- ¤ Please check your email for notifications as we will be following up your responses with further questions and comments.

As a thank you for logging onto the forum at least three times and responding to the questions posted, you will receive £50. You will not receive the payment if you do not login at least three times over the five days the forum is live and provide your responses to all activities.

Please be reassured that this is not a test of your knowledge and there are no right or wrong answers. This is also not a grammar test so please don't worry about spelling or errors in grammar. It is meant to be a safe, non-judgemental space, and all views are equal. It's really important that we get to understand your current and honest opinions during the course of this research.

Disclosure – If we read something which causes us concern about your physical safety, we have a duty to act to make sure you are protected; for example, if you tell us something which may cause significant harm to you or another person. If you were tell us something that raised concerns, would talk to you about what to do first – e.g., we would encourage you to talk to someone who can help, or agree that we would talk to support agencies on your behalf. That's the only exception. Otherwise, your information is confidential.

If you have any questions or experience any technical issues please contact Emily O'Neill on emily.oneill@tns.bmrb.co.uk or t +44 (0)20 7656 5593.

To start – please click the 'activities' tab in the pink bar at the top of the page to see your tasks to complete.

We look forward to your posts!

The TNS BMRB Team

Activity 1 – Welcome to the forum

Section aim: To warm up participants to the forum and to briefly understand personal contexts to inform later discussions.

Task 1 (Private Task)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the forum over the next 5 days.

To begin, please tell us:

- e) A little bit about yourself and the area you live in
- f) How you like to use your spare time (hobbies/family/activities you enjoy)
- g) What is important to you in your life right now

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- *What is going on in their area?*
- *Explore the activities/family/hobbies*
- *What do they enjoy about these activities?*
- *Explore whether urban/rural landscape?*

Task 2 (Private Task)

How connected do you currently feel with people in your neighbourhood and community?

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- *How do they engage with others in their community? (briefly explore any mention of volunteering)*
- *Do they engage with people in their community in the local shop at the bus stop etc?*
- *If disconnected, what would make them feel more connected?*
- *Any examples of community groups where they live?*
- *Have they ever sought out support if feeling disconnected? What form did this take?*
- *Have they ever sought out local interest groups in their area? What form did this take? What was appealing about this??*

Task 3 (Private Task)

Our research to date has shown that people think that the way people in society live and work these days makes it harder for people to connect with each other.

Do you agree/disagree with this? Why do you think people may be feeling this way?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *Influence of increase in digital/internet use?(positive/negative effects)*

- *Not being able to find the time due to work/other stresses?*

- *Explore any urban/rural differences*

- *Transport issues?*

- *Unusual working hours/shift work?*

- *Changes to family life e.g. roles played by older people living away from their grown-up children, levels of divorce/separation?*

- *If disagree, explore how modern society has facilitated connection and seek out examples.*

Activity 2 – Findings from research on Community Connections

Section aim: Share findings about causes and impacts of loneliness from Phase 2 and warm up participants to scenarios later on in the Forum.

[UPFRONT TASK NOTE]

We would now like to explore your views on some of the findings from our research so far. We would be interested in whether these reflect your experience of connection or disconnection and whether you can relate to any of these from your own personal experiences.

The tasks in this activity are open for other participants to read and comment on if they choose.

Task 1 (Open Task)

Our research has shown that people can often become disconnected after an important life event which has an impact on their ability to see friends and family. Some people say that they sometimes find it more difficult to see anyone if they are feeling disconnected This can sometimes mean that is harder for people to see friends or take part in hobbies which they have previously enjoyed.

We've also heard that people can feel that life events fix them with a "label" to one identity (such as a widow, a new mother or someone with a

health problem) and that members in society are then not able to see past this label to the person behind it. They feel that this can often have a negative impact on how they then feel about themselves and their ability to engage with others.

What are your thoughts on these findings? Do you find you can relate to this or do you have a different view on how people can become disconnected?

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Explore the impact of life events*

- *Explore any disagreement in this view fully*

- *Explore other avenues when disconnection can occur*

- *What might make it harder to see friends and family?*

- *Does this "label" make it easier/harder to connect and why?*

Task 2 (Open Task)

Our research has found that people don't think that members of society are good at talking about isolation or loneliness and that there needs to be more awareness of these issues in their communities. The view is that if someone is feeling disconnected, they often feel like they can't talk about it to family or friends or that it's not seen as a serious enough issue to seek support or to access services

What are your thoughts on this from your experience?

(Open text response)

Moderator prompts:

- *Fully explore differences in opinion*

- *Why do you think some people feel like they can't talk about feeling disconnected? Is it about seriousness of the issue, or something else?*

- *Does feeling disconnected have any other impacts on their life? If so, what are they?*

- *What do they think could be done to address these impacts?*

- *How should awareness be raised? Through which channels?*

Task 3 (Open Task)

Our research has also shown that people think that there is not enough support for people who feel isolated or lonely.

Those we spoke to were generally unaware of any services which are on offer to them and don't think these are well enough advertised. In general, people think that their communities need more informal support for helping people to better come together, such as social events. They also thought that employers and businesses could be doing more to support isolated or those experiencing loneliness in the workplace.

For example, in our research, people have said that new services or support to help isolated individuals need to put the needs of the person first and need to be tailored to their interests. They think that services or support should be built and led by people who have encountered the same problems, so that they are able to offer reassurance and advice on how the overcame obstacles and challenges.

People also want services to focus on positive things, like helping them re-discover a talent, learn new skills, or volunteer to help others in their community. They wanted not just help and advice but also the opportunity to meet new people who had common interests so they could form new friendships and meaningful connections.

Do you agree/disagree with this? What are your thoughts on this from your experience?

(Open text response)

Moderator probes:

- *What does good support look like?*
- *What other kinds of informal support should be designed?*
- *Any previous experiences of seeking out activities? What was the result of these?*
- *Anything surprising about this finding?*
- *What do they think about support by others who have dealt with the same problems as them?*
- *Fully explore any disagreements*

Task 4 (Open task)

Our research has also shown that people are making lots of use of the internet and social media to connect with others and that this has been important for them in keeping up with fast-paced lifestyles these days.

Some people however, feel that while this is helpful to feel connected it is not a good substitute for face-to-face interactions and can sometimes make them feel more disconnected.

Overall, people thought that better use could be made of online support; for example, the use of social media or websites to chat with people in similar circumstances to themselves in order to ask for advice about their concerns. They also liked the idea of using these spaces as somewhere that they could be signposted towards services or activities going on in their area.

Do you agree/disagree with this? What are your thoughts on this from your experience?

Moderator probes:

- *What are the drawbacks/positives of digital communities?*
- *(Where relevant) Why is face to face interaction important?*
- *Anything surprising about this finding?*
- *Fully explore any disagreements*

Activity 3 – Video Capture (Private Task)

Activity aim: To gather information through video capture of the key questions for the campaign and internal final presentation.

Task 1 (Private Task)

Thank you for your contributions so far. We would now like you to participate in recording a short video on your smart phone or laptop which will automatically connect with your camera when you click on the below link.

This is an optional activity and you do not have to take part if you do not wish to. We would like you to participate in this as it is really important for the research to hear from real people like you to help design new services.

You can consent for this video to be used in any way you choose on the next page where you'll find a consent form. Please make us aware if you have technical difficulties with this task or if you are uncomfortable taking part. You do not have to take part but we encourage you to.

As these videos are only a minute long, we would like you to have a think through which question you would like to answer before recording.

This activity is private, no one else on the forum will be able to see your video.

Please choose **one** of the below questions and click on the below link to record your response:

1. *What kinds of support or services have made a real difference for you in your own life – to help you feel more socially connected and supported?*

2. *What is the one thing people or organisations can do today to support those experiencing disconnection in their local community?*

3. *What do you think it feels like to be less socially connected than you'd like to be and how might this impact you?*

4. *If a person was feeling isolated, do you think they would feel comfortable telling someone or do you think they would be more likely to keep it to themselves? Why?*

The link to capture your response can be found here:

[INSERT LINK HERE]

Task 2 – Consent to use material fo research purposes

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us in the previous activity. We would like to use the information you have recorded in the previous activity to help with our research. Your name and contact details will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed by any party, at any point.

The purpose of this consent is to notify you that your personal information is being collected and to obtain your permission for TNS, the British Red Cross and Co-op to use the information you have provided. By sharing your video you agree to grant us and TNS, the British Red Cross and Co-op permission to use the material solely as it pertains to this study and unconditionally release all from and against any and all claims, liabilities, demands, actions, causes of action, costs and expenses, whatsoever, arising out of your performances, the broadcast or use of such video or otherwise.

You may choose as many or as few uses for your information as you like. Please note that you may also choose for your information to be deleted if

you wish. Please choose below if you consent to this information to be used in any of the following ways:

7. *To be viewed by members of the TNS, British Red Cross, and Co-op research teams to inform the findings of the research*

8. *To be used by the British Red Cross, Co-op and TNS in reports or presentations about this research – to help their colleagues and partners understand the public's views and the findings of this research.*

9. *To be used in publicly available reports of this research (for example, on the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS websites about this research project) and more widely (for example, on social media accounts of the British Red Cross, Co-op or TNS)*

10. *Please do not use this video for any research purposes*

Activity 4 – Tackling Disconnection – Testing Solutions

Activity aim: Brainstorm feasible solutions of support, encourage debate and discussion amongst participants.

[Upfront note on first page]

We would now like you to discuss together with your fellow participants, your views on the following potential services which could be developed to help people who are feeling disconnected or lonely in your area. We would like to know how you think these would work for you or how they could be improved.

We would like you to comment on three of the five solutions outlined. Please read all the solutions then comment on two of the solutions would consider using and comment on one solution you would be less likely to consider using, explaining the reasons for your responses.

The tasks in this activity are open for other participants to read and comment on if they choose. These potential solutions have been made up based on findings from this research and will not necessarily be developed or invested in as a result of this research.

An overview of the solutions you will be presented with in the upcoming activities is included for your reference:

Solution 1: In-home support	Home visits from a volunteer supports people to connect by supporting them to get in touch with services and activities that are of interest in the area.
Solution 2: Community hub	A local community space – like a library or leisure centre – acts as a connection hub to help people in the community engage with each other and to provide advice to those who would like to seek support if they are feeling isolated.
Solution 3: Local activities	A group of local businesses develop and host opportunities for people in their neighbourhood to use in order to connect while nurturing their talents and skills.
Solution 4: LUNCH2GETHER	You and people from your neighbourhood are invited to a free, healthy meal prepared on the premises of a local charity. The organisers believe that meeting others in this setting to share a meal is a fun and easy way for people to meet their neighbours and to engage in the local community.
Solution 5: DigiCom	A digital community hub, DigiCom will act as an "online community notice board" in your area, signposting you to activities and events and linking you up to people in your area with common interests.

Task 1 (open task) – In-home support

Scenario 1

A charity based in the local area runs a support service for people facing a change in their lives such as bereavement, retirement or job loss, divorce or health changes. The service is available free of charge and aims to put people in touch with services and activities that are of interest in the area, from statutory services to an art class or Spanish lesson.

The person using the services receives a home visit from a volunteer from the charity to talk about what they would like to achieve during the support to help them to feel more connected. The person is then matched to a trained volunteer who will provide free support for up to 12 weeks. The volunteer is a great listener and has an in-depth knowledge of what is available in the local community and will go with them to new appointments, clubs, meetings or events if the person is worried about going there alone. The volunteer will also provide support with daily life if extra help is needed with things like transport and mobility aids.

Please tell us whether you would consider using this service and the reasons for your response. How would you change this service to make it more relevant for you?

Moderator prompts

- *What kinds of support would you expect from the volunteer?*

- *How would you like to find out about a service like the one described?*

- *What do you see as the key problems this service might encounter?*

- *Where should this service be advertised?*

- *What would encourage or entice you or others in your community to use this service?*

- *What may put you off from accessing this service?*

- *What would encourage you or others to continue to use this service in the long-term?*

Task 2 (open task) – Community Hub

Scenario 2

A community space in your neighbourhood – a library or leisure centre – is introducing a "Community Hub". The hub aims to support people who are feeling disconnected due to an important life transition such as the birth of a new baby, serious health issues, retirement or relationship breakdown. It encourages people to drop in if they want to and access a range of information to help with the life transition. For example, it will make people aware of nearby support groups and point people in the right direction in terms of the challenges they are facing. There will also be information on nearby classes/hobbies/activities such as yoga, reading or football, and a range of opportunities for people to volunteer their time. The hope is that visitors to the hub will use it to set up their own groups to meet like-minded people with common interests.

The aim of the scheme is to act as a connection Hub to help people in the community engage with each other and to provide advice to those who would like to seek support if they are feeling isolated. It is hoped that this kind of informal support will encourage people to reach out and foster a better sense of community and tackle disconnection.

Please tell us whether you would consider using this service and the reasons for your response. How would you change this service to make it more relevant for you?

Moderator prompts

- *Who should deliver/fund this service?*

- *What do you see as the key problems this service might encounter?*

- *Where this service should be advertised?*

- *What would encourage or entice you or others in your community to use this service?*

- *What should organisers say to get people in the door?*

- *Imagine you are asking a friend to come to this service with you? What would you say to encourage them to come along?*

- *What might stop you from accessing this service?*

- *What might stop you or others from continuing to use this service in the long-term?*

- *How do you think this service could be improved?*

Task 3 (open task) – Local activities

Scenario 3

People from a group of local businesses – a clothing shop owner, a supermarket cashier and a bartender from the local pub – feel that their neighbourhood could benefit from some more opportunities for people to connect while nurturing their talents and skills. They've thought about how to promote volunteering opportunities by advertising in their windows and talking to customers about the exciting volunteering opportunities going on in the area.

They've also thought of ways their business premises could be used to host events such as coffee mornings, walking and reading groups, a cooking club that focuses on using local produce. These activities are open to everyone in your community and are run by donation.

Please tell us whether you would consider using this service and the reasons for your response. How would you change this service to make it more relevant for you?

Moderator prompts

- *Who else in your neighbourhood could deliver services like this?*

- *What do you see as the key problems this service might encounter?*

- *Where should this service be advertised?*

- *What would encourage or entice you or others in your community to use this service?*

- *What may put you off from accessing this service?*

- *What should organisers say to get people in the door?*

- *Imagine you are asking a friend to come to this service with you – what would you say to encourage them to come along?*

- *What would encourage you or others to continue to use this service in the long-term?*

Task 4 (open task) – LUNCH2GETHER

Scenario 4

Your local community centre in partnership with a voluntary charity has just set up a new scheme called LUNCH2GETHER which welcomes everyone in your local community to a healthy meal prepared on the premises. It is hosted by different attendees each month which is maintained through a rotating schedule, with each attendee taking it in turn to host.

The organisers believe that meeting others in this setting to share a meal is a fun and easy way for people to meet their neighbours and to engage in the local community. It will allow all kinds of people to interact with each other, such as those who are younger and older.

LUNCH2GETHER is being advertised around the community and organisers have been out in the community encouraging people to join. It aims to be an inclusive space where you can bring friends and family but also make new acquaintances.

It is open every Friday from midday until 2:00pm, serving tea and coffee with the hosts moving around chatting to people who have come along followed by a healthy meal. There is no need to book ahead, people just show up on the day.

Organisers ask for a £1.50 donation to help cover the cost of the food they buy. All those who work there do so on a voluntary basis and they are always keen for more people across the community to become involved.

Across the year, they will also be running a series of cookery events for all age groups who are interested in coming along.

Please tell us whether you would consider using this service and the reasons for your response. How would you change this service to make it more relevant for you?

Moderator prompts

- *Who should deliver/fund this service?*

- *What do you see as the key problems this service might encounter?*

- *Where this service should be advertised?*

- *What would encourage or entice you or others in your community to use this service?*

- *What should organisers say to get people in the door?*

- *Imagine you are asking a friend to come to this service with you? What would you say to encourage them to come along?*

- *What might stop you from accessing this service?*

- *What might stop you or others from continuing to use this service in the long-term?*

- *How do you think this service could be improved?*

Task 5 (open task) – DigiCom

Scenario 5

A voluntary organisation is rolling out a project called "DigiCom" as a pilot in your area. DigiCom is a digital community hub which will act as an "online community notice board" in your area. It will act as a central point of contact for individuals within your local community as an online forum.

On DigiCom people in your community will be able to speak with each other on matters important to the community, and spread the word about activities or events that are happening. It will also operate as a space where people can set up support groups or mutual interest groups around hobbies and skills.

There will also be a section specifically relating to getting involved in your community by volunteering your time to run a community event, set up a block party or in a local shelter.

The aim of the project is to bring people in your community together including those who are unable to dedicate time to attend community events if they have demanding work schedules, busy family lives or health issues. Everyone in your community will have access to the site and will be able to contribute. There will be a number of voluntary moderators to oversee it.

Log-in is free of charge and the organisation hopes to roll the project out across the rest of the UK before the end of the year.

Please tell us whether you would consider using this service and the reasons for your response. How would you change this service to make it more relevant for you?

Moderator prompts

- *What kinds of events, services or activities would you personally want to learn about on this notice board?*

-   *Who should deliver/fund this service?*

-   *What do you see as the key problems this service might encounter?*

-   *Where this service should be advertised?*

-   *What would encourage or entice you or others in your community to use this service?*

-   *What should organisers say to get people in the door?*

-   *Imagine you are asking a friend to come to this service with you? What would you say to encourage them to come along?*

-   *What might stop you from accessing this service?*

-   *What might stop you or others from continuing to use this service in the long-term?*

-   *How do you think this service could be improved?*

Activity 5 – Concluding the forum

Task 1 – Open Task

We have now reached the end of our time together on the online workshop. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

Please review the responses of other participants and the questions from the moderators then add your final comments and reflections. You can do this by hitting the "comment" button under any of the comments you want to respond to.

Over the course of the forum we've asked you for more detail about some of your responses. Please take a moment to review your responses and ensure you have responded to all of our follow-up questions. You can do this by hitting the "comment" button under any of the moderator comments you want to respond to.

Next steps

Our team will be in touch to arrange the £50 payment to everyone who has logged in at least three times and responded to the activities and follow-up questions.

You can find out more about the partnership at www.Co-operative.coop/our-ethics/charity-partnership/about-our-charity-partnership/

If you would like to be kept up to date with how British Red Cross and Co-op take forward the findings of the research and how you can support their work in this important area further, please contact Co-op@redcross.org.uk.

If you have any final comments or questions, please don't hesitate to post them here.

Thanks again!

5. Phase 4b – Testing and Validating (General Population Survey)

'General Population' survey

In order to better understand what the general public thinks about loneliness, a quantitative phase of research was conducted towards the end of the project. The 'general population' survey aimed to investigate how serious a problem the public perceived loneliness to be, who experiences it and how individuals could help reduce loneliness.

Approach

The quantitative element of the research was conducted using TNS' online omnibus as a means of data collection. A representative sample of 2,523 adults aged 16 and over across the UK were interviewed between 5th and 11th July 2016. All interviewing was conducted online, using CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing) and quota sampling.

The sample was designed to be representative of this population and not just those who have online access. Interlocking quotas were set (by age within gender) to ensure a representative sample, and although quotas were not set on social grade or region, the sample is stratified by these before variables before being sent out to ensure a representative distribution. Any sample profile imbalances are corrected at the analysis stage through weighting to match the corresponding population profile for the UK. This data was weighted by age within gender, social grade, and by region (Government Office Region).

The sample for TNS online omnibus is drawn from Lightspeed GMI (also part of the Kantar Group to which TNS belongs). The online panel is recruited and maintained according to rigorous standards to ensure high quality sampling. Invitations to complete the questionnaire were e-mailed to a sample of UK online panellists who have agreed to participate in market research.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed by the TNS research team and in consultation with BRC and Co-op, following on from the qualitative stage. In addition to the survey questions, demographic information (such as age, gender, region, working status, social grade etc.) was collected as is standard on the online omnibus.

General Population Questionnaire

135555: BRC/Co-op Loneliness Quant Survey – Questionnaire V10

Intro

The next questions are about loneliness.

Loneliness is a feeling or mood that occurs when there is a gap between the social relationships an individual would like and those they have. This could be in terms of either the quantity or the quality of the relationships.

ASK ALL

Q1: How often do you feel lonely, if at all?

☐ Always

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

☐ Don't know

Q2: How serious a problem do you think loneliness is in the UK today?

☐ A very serious problem

☐ A quite serious problem

☐ Not a serious problem

☐ Don't know

ASK ALL

Below is a list of different groups of people.

Q3A: Which group do you think is most likely to experience loneliness?	Single code

Q3B: Which do you think is second most likely to experience loneliness?	Single code – excluding code at Q3A

Q3C: And which others do you think experience loneliness?	Multicode – excluding code at Q3A/B

RANDOMISE

☐ People bereaved in last two years

☐ People experiencing divorce or separation

☐ Retired people

☐ People experiencing health or mobility issues

☐ People unable to easily access to transport

☐ Young new mums

☐ Young people

☐ People in mid life

☐ Older people

☐ People living on their own

☐ Recently moved to a different area

☐ Those who care for someone (e.g. an older person or someone with an illness/disability)

☐ Those in work

☐ Those not in work/unemployed

☐ Those whose children have left home

☐ Other (please specify) **FIX AT END**

☐ None of these **FIX AT END. SINGLE CODE**

☐ Don't know **FIX AT END. SINGLE CODE**

ASK ALL

I am now going to show you some statements other people have made about loneliness. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each one.

Q4: How much do you agree or disagree that:

RANDOMISE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

1. I have heard a lot about loneliness as a problem recently

2. I wouldn't know who or where to turn to if I was experiencing loneliness

3. There are lots of small actions that everyone can take in their daily lives to help those feeling lonely

4. Everybody has a duty to help people in their local communities who might be experiencing loneliness

☐ Agree strongly

☐ Agree slightly

☐ Neither

☐ Disagree slightly

☐ Disagree strongly

ASK ALL

Q4A: How much do you agree or disagree that:

Please select all that apply.

RANDOMISE

☐ Family

☐ Friends

☐ Work colleague

☐ Neighbour/someone in my local community

☐ GP or other health professional

☐ An organisation such as a charity

☐ None of these **FIX AT END. SINGLE CODE**

☐ Don't know **FIX AT END. SINGLE CODE**

ASK ALL

Q5: If you were experiencing loneliness which, if any, of the following do you think you personally would do to help you overcome feelings of loneliness?

Please select all that apply.

RANDOMISE

☐ Re-establish contact/have more contact with family or friends

☐ Speak to family or friends about feeling lonely

☐ Meet people by becoming a volunteer

☐ Strike up conversations with people you meet in your local community

☐ Join a group based on a shared interest (e.g. a sport, craft or other hobby)

☐ Attend a course or class to learn or improve a skill (e.g. Spanish or woodwork)

☐ Visit a GP/health professional/counsellor

☐ Visit a website for support

☐ Use websites/social media to engage with people with a shared interest

☐ Call a telephone helpline for information about support services

☐ Use a befriending or mentoring service for company

☐ Get support from a charity to help you connect with people in your community

☐ Attend a regular food based event in your community, such as afternoon tea or a dinner club

☐ Speak to someone who has had the same experience as you

☐ Get support from your employer if it was available (e.g. counselling)

☐ Other (specify) **FIX AT END**

☐ None of these **FIX AT END. SINGLE CODE**

ASK ALL

Q6: How much of a role do you think each of the following have to play in helping to reduce loneliness in the UK?

ROTATE

Central government

Local councils

Employers

Businesses in local communities

GPs/the NHS

Charities

Communities/community groups

Technology e.g. social media (e.g. Facebook)

A lot

A little

None at all

Don't know

ASK ALL

Q7: For each of the following, please say whether it is something you currently do, whether you would be willing to do it in the future, or if it is something you would not be willing to do.

ROTATE

Ask people other than my friends and family how they are

Stop for a short chat in the street with neighbours and members of my community

Regularly call or drop in on family or neighbours for a chat

Help family or neighbours with transport to social events

Help family or neighbours with transport to appointments

Volunteer regularly for a small amount of time a week, e.g. half an hour

Volunteer regularly for a longer period of time e.g. half a day a week

Run a regular shared interest group in my community (e.g. sports, craft or other hobby)

Run a regular food based event in my community (e.g. afternoon tea or a dinner club)

Run a regular community group based on sharing skills (e.g. DIY)

I currently do this

I don't currently do this, but would be willing to do it

I would not be willing to do this

Don't know

ASK ALL

Q8: Which of the following, if any, apply to you?

Please select all that apply

RANDOMISE

1) Have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more

2) Aged under 25 and parent of a young child

3) Experienced a bereavement of a close friend, family member or loved one in the last 2 years

4) Aged 55 or over and retired

5) Aged 55 or over with no children at home

6) Have any health issues which have an impact on your ability to get around independently

7) Have limited access to transport which impacts your ability to get around independently

8) Aged 35 or over and divorced/separated from partner in the last 2 years

9) None of these **FIX AT END. SINGLE CODE**

ASK ALL

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in these questions and wish to have some further support please find below contact details for a number of organisations which can offer you confidential advice, or consider contacting your local GP surgery:

- **Samaritans**
  Phone: 116 123 (24 hours a day, seven days a week and calls are free)
  www.samaritans.org

- **Mind**
  Phone: 0300 1233 393
  www.mind.org.uk

- **British Red Cross**
  Phone: 0344 871 1111 and select option 0 (calls charged at local rate)
  www.redcross.org.uk

END OF SECTION

6. Miscellaneous

Best practice examples of support captured in Phase 1

Charity/Trust responses

- CLICK (Nottingham): Positive approach particularly highlighted i.e. finding out what individuals have to offer/contribute to society via its mentoring support. Community involvement aspect also beneficial.

- British Red Cross – Torbay Navigators: Project set up to meet need amongst those 50+ years old. Provides 3 months one-to-one support for individuals to help them identify and meet goals to tackle loneliness in a person-centred way. Highlighted because it responded to the need i.e. there was no desire/need for assisted hospital discharge support but for support at home after the 6 weeks amongst the CCGs. Also highlighted integrated approach e.g. worked with 600+ voluntary organisations, piloted with GP surgeries/social work (integrated Trust area), drug and alcohol recovery teams. Lottery Funded Aging Better Programme.

- A day in the life project (Public Health England (PHE) with Social Spider): Exploratory online blogging project to understand the everyday impacts of living with a mental health issue by inviting them to share their experiences four times a year.

- Men's Sheds: Internationally branded initiative but example from Wales. Worked mostly with middle-aged to older men who he identified as being at risk of loneliness and as being less likely to have social network of older women (especially C2DE – middle class professionals seen as having 'the golf club' and the like to socialise in). Initiative focuses on what the men in a geographical area would like to do (e.g. woodwork) and builds social club around that as opposed to being a 'loneliness' support group. Treats those experiencing loneliness as individuals with individual interests so common factor uniting them together isn't their loneliness.

- Age UK in Manchester runs a day centre that delivers cinema club, gardening, knitting, book clubs, meals and so on which benefits people by linking those with common interests together.

- LinkAge in Bristol identifies and mobilises individual and community 'assets', rather than focusing on problems and needs (see p.46 www.northerntrust.hscni.net/about/2616.htm)

- Mentor/matching/befriending services like Community Navigators employed by Northern Health and Social Care Trust builds confidence and other skills to address factors contributing to loneliness.

- Silver Surfer, Silver line, Connect Online are all examples of technology-enabled support services that connects people via technology either by finding social connections and/or providing interaction online.

- Retired employee associations e.g. Age UK or Co-op give 'purpose' and a 'sense of doing' to those retired.

- Charities within the Richmond Group offer helplines and online/F2F communities. Though not specific to loneliness and isolation, people can still talk about. E.g. Co-op Pension Service offers telephone advice for retirement planning (and loneliness can sit within this).

- 'Couples MOT' for those 50+ and work by Relate (and Chief Executive, Chris Sherwood) all focus on relationships and what a quality relationship looks like, helping with expectations and so on.

- Good Gym an interesting model; volunteering both within the prevention and intervention space. www.goodgym.org/how_it_works

- British Red Cross 'First Call Support in the Home' is a health and social care programme that provides practical and emotional support to vulnerable people or anybody in crisis. Although they can work with anyone 18+ years old, main target group is 80+ years old. This

scheme works closely with 'Friendship at Home'[6]. Community Connections Befriending Scheme[7] within Wales also mentioned in this space.

- NSPCC's schools service visited over 8000 schools within the UK; talk to children and give the message that don't need to feel lonely or keep secrets and that support out there.

- Childline have over 1500 trained volunteer councillors, 24-hour helpline, online message boards, and one-to-one chats (website receives over 1m hits every year). Together, focus on building resilience in children and young people to help them overcome the hurdle of seeking support.

Community responses

- Community Transport: Examples shared (but specific names of service unknown) of where community transport volunteers had looked in on some of their regular users over Christmas/New Year period as for these users the volunteers were the only people they saw over this period. The experience of travelling communally in a community transport car/minibus was seen as building relationships both with volunteers and with other service users.

Business responses

- Business in the Community: Seeks to support those in older age to remain in the workforce (should they want to) and to prepare for retirement when appropriate. Good examples from Nationwide Building Society (Mid-Career Conversation), Jaguar (whole family discussion) and Co-op.

- Retired transition initiative project by The Shaftesbury Partnership – Co-funded by Jaguar Land Rover, this project adopted a residential model focussing on retirement planning and getting people to think holistically about their needs and aspirations for retirement. It involves a course package that is offered to those coming up to retirement and covers topics such as health, finances, social connections, aspirations for spending time and therapeutic-based ways of engaging with people.

[6]friendshipathome.org.uk

[7]befriendingmonmouthshire.org.uk/index.htm

Local authority responses

- Social prescribing (Bristol/Southwark/Oxfordshire): Capturing those who are attending GPs for no other reason than to talk to someone and making use of this contact point that may otherwise go unnoticed. GP 'prescribing' people towards services/support intended to reduce loneliness (i.e. rather than just saying 'please don't waste my time' and sending them away). In Oxfordshire, four GP surgeries employ more than 75 coordinators that not only identify people who might be suffering from loneliness or isolation but then build relationships with them, invite them to local events and groups, and try and help them with more practical problems (e.g. housing).

- Integrated working more generally: e.g. on the Isle of Wight, in Wands worth and by Lankally Chase. Other areas using Police/Fire and rescue services and data as early indicators and preventative measures.

- Prime GP: Over 75's coordinator is trusted by elderly people in the same way as a GP would be due to their ongoing presence and connection to the GP. Visits patients in hospital (which GP used to do but no longer has time for), helps them resettle when they leave hospital, and builds relationship with patients from there. These surgeries also put effort into being a social hub for the community (e.g. invited all 75+ patients to a party with individual invites and 50% of them came; arrange 'Nosh and Natter' down local Cricket club).

- Local authority in Stockport has brought together a number of charities to work within a broader prevention framework – in order to reduce duplication and increase calibration thus to increase reach and achieve greater impact for less money.

- Local authority in Birmingham has adopted very much a tech-based approach in partnership with Tunstall Healthcare.

- Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire provides a health and social care signposting directory.

- Shropshire County Council have developed a community interests company, set up as part of a social work practice pilot (the board is community-led) and effectively acts as the front-end of the adult social services offering. This is helping to reduce the numbers who need to go into formal care and support services.

Other responses

✪ Reconnection (Social Finance, Social Impact Bonds – Worcestershire): Tailored response and preventative in nature (works with range of different organisations). Pilot in Worcestershire, particularly praised for its innovative approach in engaging local authorities, offering a sustainable funding model and producing the baseline economic effect of loneliness which will enable future measurement of impact (and demonstrating the health and economic impact).

redcross.org.uk/lonely

coop.co.uk/charitypartnership