

The background of the slide is a photograph of a stone building with a church tower, reflected in a body of water. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text is centered over the image.

Older People's Task and Finish Group

Report to Kent County Council, Select Committee on
Loneliness

24th September, 2018

Content

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 - Importance of a proactive, prevention focused approach
- The needs to
- Create a voice for older people
 - Establish Older People's Champions
 - Establish a well maintained and extensive services data base
 - Improve resilience to deal with critical life challenges
 - Improve support for people living with dementia and their carers

Introduction

- Loneliness does not only affect older people , but many of the causes of loneliness are more prevalent in our older population.
- Key factors – health and disability, widowed, living alone, income, caring
- It is one of the biggest concerns for older people
- Measuring loneliness is not straightforward. 6 -13% of older people feeling lonely often or always
- Around 3,000 lonely older people in Maidstone, and 30,000 in Kent?
- Most studies have concluded that loneliness increases with age
- Highest risk cohort – women, over 75, widowed, living alone
- 49% of over 75s live alone, and over 75 is the fastest growing age group
- Loneliness likely to be a growing problem

Approach

- The approach should be proactive, preventative and personalised
 - Loneliness is an individually determined, subjective state - partially determined by nature. Not simply determined by external factors.
 - Lonely people can be disillusioned, distrustful, difficult ,disengaged- part of a vicious circle known as maladaptive social cognition
 - Older people are more stoical, do not want to be “trouble”
 - Risk factors are known and identifiable and afford an opportunity for preventative intervention

CAB, health and social care co ordinators and community wardens

- Needs to be part of and integrated with an holistic approach to active ageing
- Needs to have the capacity to deal with its own success

Voice for Older People

- Not a homogenous group, great variety of need
- Any approach should reflect need, and have desired outcomes relevant to those needs
- Recognised that co production is a desirable way to develop meaningful services
- Work stream led by Involve
 - Link existing sources of information – Older People’s Forum, Age UK, Active Retirement Associations, U3As, etc
 - Create or support existing forums in parishes
 - Identify individuals who could form customised focus groups to contribute both to defining need and developing solutions
 - One such group could be on loneliness

Older People's Champion

- Establish Older People's Champions as step to provide a voice & an agent of change for older people in the local community
- This is part of a recommended approach contained in NICE guidance note 32
- Experience of Ageless Thanet indicates that securing suitable volunteers to develop this approach is problematic.
- Following their advice we have contacted parish councils and have identified 3 parishes that are prepared to discuss a pilot approach
- If there is sufficient support, we will explore funding.

Services Data Base

- There are around 10 databases covering service provision in the Maidstone area. They
 - Overlap
 - Have significant gaps
 - Are not always well maintained
 - Are generally not shared, or publicly available
- We need a more comprehensive publicly available, well maintained data base that includes activities that promote social inclusion – arts, sports and leisure – small and local.
- Involve are leading on this, and the database required to support the social prescribing activity with WKCCG is seen as the best solution
- Gap analysis will identify service improvement activity

Critical Life Challenges

- Establish a process to identify older people facing critical life challenges e.g. retirement, bereavement, divorce, the onset of limiting long term conditions and caring
- Strong evidence that these events are significant risk factors that impact on mental health, wellbeing and loneliness – NICE QS 137
- Limited processes exists and there is limited support to deal with these challenges
- To be led by Age UK with Involve & Kent Fire & Rescue Services
- Proposal is that rather than develop a process, that all agencies that come into contact with people facing these challenges should
 - a. Be aware of the potential risks to mental health and wellbeing
 - b. Use new data base to promote awareness of existing support services and be able to sign post to them
 - c. Fill gaps in training & support relevant to critical life changes

Retirement

- Develop a strategy to determine how training & support prior to retirement could provide opportunities for self & Community development.
- The very great majority of people embark on their Third Age without any consideration of their next 15 -30 years of life
- They therefore fail to consider options that might be of personal and community benefit
- Having established current practice, trying to make contact with employers and employer facing organisations
- Volunteering is a key activity both for individual and community wellbeing - Our Work of Art/HOPE with art.
- Application for funding of this activity will be needed

People Living with Dementia and Carers

- Help build a Dementia Friendly Maidstone and encourage Maidstone businesses to be both Dementia and Age Friendly
- The improvement in our approach to dementia will be worked in partnership with “Building Dementia Friendly Maidstone”
- The development of Age Friendly businesses will be based on achievements in County Monahagn and Thanet, and it is proposed that work will be in partnership with One Maidstone

Other Workstreams

- Improve hospital discharge processes to reduce time spent in hospital by older people
- Frail and elderly interventions including falls prevention.

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Next steps

- Establish desired outcomes and implementation plans for each workstream within 4 -6 months
- Agree creation of project manager to integrate workstream activities, and oversee implementation.



Questions?