

It is estimated that around 10 per cent of over 65's are lonely all or most of the time).

As a first step, local authorities should seek to identify those who are affected (or at risk) of loneliness in their local population.

## Loneliness mapping

Local authorities can use existing data to predict and 'map' where the most lonely and isolated residents live. They do this by focusing on individuals affected by the circumstances, or 'risk factors' that can lead to loneliness.

Local authorities may want to map variables including, but not limited to, households that:

- Have a head of household aged 65-74, or 75+
- Have one occupant
- Report various health issues including mental illness, anxiety and depression
- Do not own a car
- Speak to their neighbours less than once a month or never
- Say they don't have someone to listen to them, help in a crisis, or to relax with
- Say they are not satisfied with their social life
- Have a low annual income
- Require help with bin collection
- Have bereaved older people

A number of data sources may be useful in identifying the likely numbers and concentrations of lonely and isolated older people in an area for example:

- ONS data on lone pensioner households;
- Local authority data;
- Local NHS health and wellbeing data
- [The Older People's Health and Wellbeing Atlas](#);
- Mosaic Public Sector which brings together data on population demographics, lifestyles and behaviours;
- Lifestyle or behaviour surveys

## Loneliness/isolation in lifestyle or behaviour surveys

Local authorities should consider including questions about loneliness and isolation in any lifestyle or behaviour surveys they undertake. Scales and existing questions for capturing evidence about loneliness and isolation can be found on the Campaign to End Loneliness's guidance: [Measuring Your Impact on Loneliness in Later Life](#).

## Using loneliness data

Once data has been gathered, it can be used in a number of ways, for example:

**Targeting neighbourhoods:** Essex and Gloucestershire County Council have used mapping to identify and prioritise interventions in neighbourhoods. This could highlight where high numbers of older people who match risk criteria live.

**'Smart' home visits:** Age UK Cheshire with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services (CFRS) used advanced data sharing to target 30,000 home visits to older people by CFRS staff, who act as a gateway to a range of early intervention and support activity.

**Joint Strategic Needs Assessment:** It is important that the information gathered informs local JSNA's.

**Sharing data:** It is unlikely that third sector organisations can access this level of data so local commissioners can help them target their resources more effectively by sharing this data.

For further information, see the report [Hidden Citizens](#), by the Campaign to End Loneliness for a detailed exploration on identifying older people experiencing loneliness.