

News release

**For Immediate Release**

**NEW RESEARCH REVEALS THE REASONS BEHIND WHY SO MANY LONDONERS ARE SEVERELY LONELY**

* **At least 700,000 Londoners are severely lonely (one in 12 people)**
* **People who are severely lonely are more likely to be:** 
  + **acutely poor**
  + **single or living alone**
  + **living with a long-term disability**
  + **going through life changes or new to London**
  + **feeling different or experiencing prejudice**
* **New report commissioned by GLA calls for more concerted action by organisations across the capital and for ‘kindness’ to be designed into how public services are organised across the capital**

New research commissioned by the Greater London Authority (GLA) reveals which Londoners are more likely to be severely lonely. *Reconceptualising Loneliness in London,* which was produced by the Campaign to End Loneliness, Neighbourly Lab and the What Works Centre for Wellbeing found that there are 700,000 Londoners who are severely lonely. According to the report, this group of people living in the capital were more likely to have one of the following characteristics and be:

* **acutely poor** - 50% of severely lonely Londoners are acutely poor
* **single or living alone** - 61% of severely lonely Londoners are single and live alone
* **living with a disability** - 41% of severely lonely Londoners are living with a long-term disability
* **going through life-changes or being new in London**
* **feeling different or experiencing prejudice**  - 59% of people have recently experienced prejudice

More ….1/2·

The report proposes that severe loneliness can be significantly reduced through a concerted effort across local government, funders, charities and service providers in London working together and makes four key calls to action:

* make a massive step-up in London’s levels of social connectedness
* instigate a systemic redesign to build kindness into all service provision
* rethink the targeting of loneliness interventions in London
* view the structural drivers of severe loneliness in terms of their health risk

Harry Hobson, Director of Neighbourly Lab and co-author of the report said:

"This report for the first time adds real depth to our understanding of which Londoners are most likely to experience loneliness. Loneliness is complex and is multi-faceted - we know that people living in London are more likely to experience one or more of the characteristics which mean that they are more likely to be severely lonely.

“Increasing our knowledge and understanding of what causes loneliness is critical in being able to offer guidance and help so that organisations in every layer of London life as well as all of us as individuals who are living in the capital can help tackle this issue."

Robin Hewings, Programme Director for the Campaign to End Loneliness which co-authored the report said

“Severe loneliness has a massive impact on people’s lives and their health and mental wellbeing. It overlaps with depression and anxiety and feelings of despair and alienation. It is critical that we recognise the health risks and costs posed by loneliness in London which as this report shows falls hardest on people who are already vulnerable.

“Tackling loneliness is challenging - and needs concerted effort from organisations frm every layer of London society and we look forward to the GLA’s work in making this happen.

Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, London’s Deputy Mayor for Communities & Social Justice said

“As this research commissioned by City Hall reveals, sadly, too many Londoners feel lonely and isolated. This has been heightened by the effects of the pandemic, but we know that loneliness is a symptom of wider structural inequalities and there are many complex contributing factors, such as poverty, prejudice and disability. The Mayor and I are determined to create a fairer, more integrated city, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and reach their potential. That is why a key part of our Social Integration Strategy is focused on building stronger relationships between Londoners from all backgrounds, seeking to tackle the root causes of social isolation.”

Notes to editors

1. *Reconceptualising Loneliness in London is available at (web address to be completed) was commissioned by the GLA Social Integration Unit in Spring 2021. The report was produced by the Campaign to End Loneliness, Neighbourly Lab, the What Works Centre for Wellbeing and findings were collated from data analysis from the Survey of Londoners, from 2018-2019.*
2. *The report also indicates that while overall 8% of Londoners experience severe loneliness, this is 12% for young Londoners; 18% for low-income Londoners; 15% for LGBTQ+ Londoners; 12% for Single Parents; 18% for Deaf and Disabled Londoners, and as high as 14% for some ethnic minority groups.*
3. *The report was produced by the Campaign to End Loneliness, Neighbourly Lab and the What WorksCentre for Wellbeing*
4. *Severe loneliness means people who report being lonely ‘often’ or ‘always’*

**Ends**

**Media enquiries**

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