

The impact of loneliness on health & well-being

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Social Isolation

An 'objective' concept

Can refer to a lack of
supportive people in
one's life *or...*

*...a lack of contact with
those supportive people.*





Loneliness

A 'subjective' concept

A sense of lacking support
& positive contact.

Reducing isolation does not
always reduce loneliness.

MailOnline



Liz Jones

LIZ JONES: Sorry all you do-gooders, but some of us love being lonely

By LIZ JONES FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

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“It is not a social problem, to be fixed by public money”

**Why should we invest in tackling
loneliness & social isolation?**

Impact on Mortality

(Holt-Lunstad et al 2015)

- Social isolation increased risk of mortality by 29% and loneliness increased risk by 26%.
- Effect was independent of socioeconomic status or medical condition at baseline (cause & effect).
- The effect was greater in those aged under 65.

Impact on Illness

(Bashir Bhatti & Haq 2017)

- Perceived Social isolation increases risk of:
 - cardiovascular disease
 - type 2 diabetes
 - depression
 - dementia
- Increase in health and social care costs
- How does the effect happen...?

Social Isolation and Loneliness

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graph TD; A[Social Isolation and Loneliness] --> B[Physiology (Stress Response)]; A --> C[Behaviour (Lifestyle & Healthcare)]; B --> D[Health & Well-Being]; C --> D;
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Physiology
(Stress Response)

Behaviour
(Lifestyle & Healthcare)

Health & Well-Being

What works?


(Dickens et al 2011)

- Review of 32 studies
- Overall benefit for physical & mental health
- Group based programmes more effective than one-to-one home visiting.
- 'Participatory' interventions more effective (active input from participants rather than just education or service)

Effect on healthcare costs?

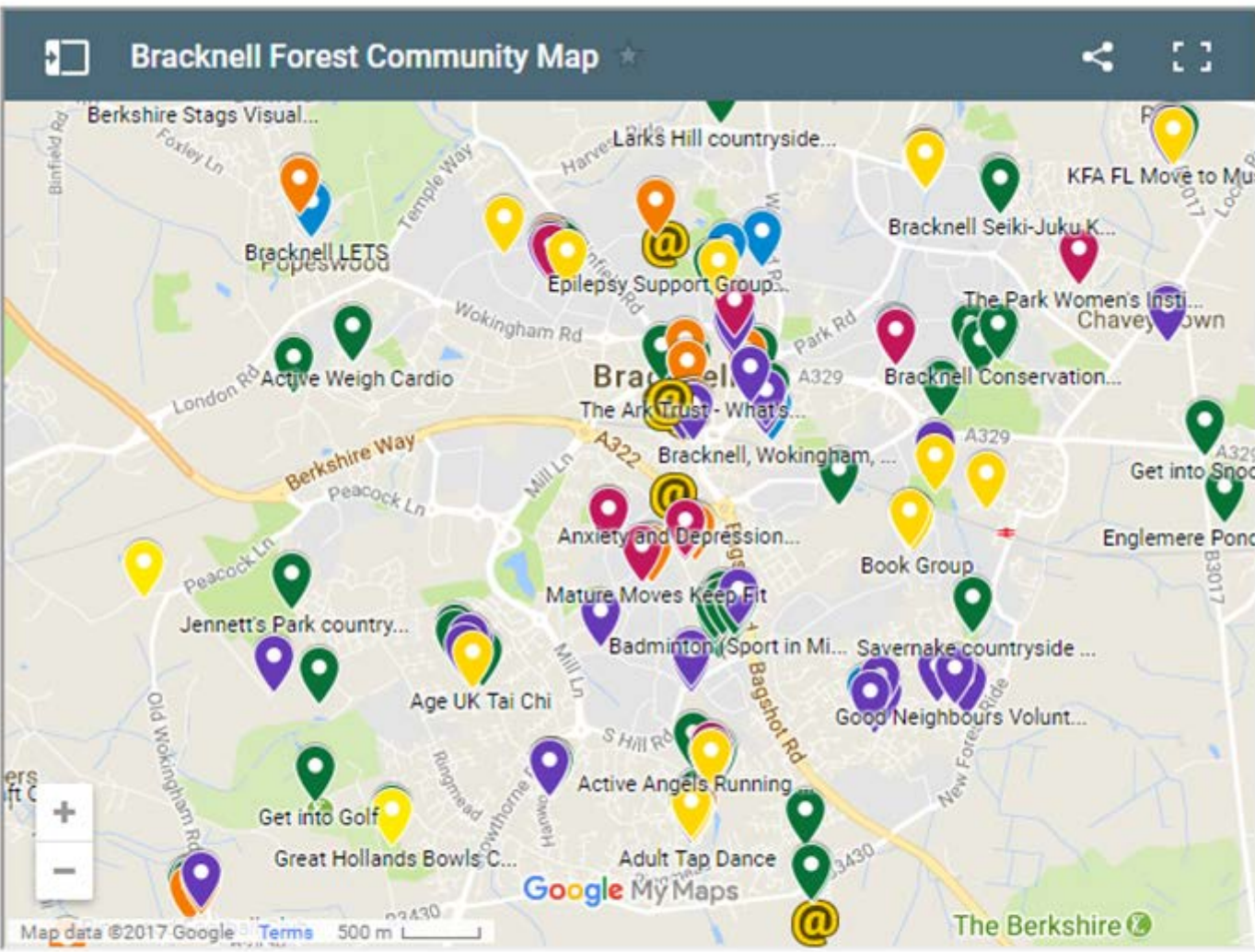
(Pitkala et al 2009)

- RCT of group programme for older adults
- Intervention: social interaction via group focused on writing / art / exercise & discussion plus promotion of social integration and activity.
- Two year follow up... Intervention group had lower annual healthcare costs (-£832 per year)

A photograph of two elderly men playing soccer on a grassy field. The man on the left is wearing a light-colored sweater, khaki pants, and a straw hat. The man on the right is wearing a brown sweater, light-colored pants, and a cap. A soccer ball is in the air between them. The background shows trees and a red banner.

**The power of community to
create health is far greater than
any physician, clinic or hospital.**

Mark Hyman MD



Get Active



Get Creative



Get Help



Get Connected



Get Learning



Get Ideas for Kids

Social Prescribing



Health or Care Professional



Social Prescriber



Local Groups & Services