

Tackling Loneliness with Transport Evaluation Appendix F

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Appendix F

Survey findings

This appendix presents a description of each Pilot's survey and their key findings. This focusses on changes in loneliness before and after the Pilot programme, and so does not present results for the Community Transport Association.

Measuring Loneliness

All pilot surveys collected a consistent set of questions to measure their beneficiaries' self-reported experience of loneliness. To measure this experience, two approaches recommended by the Office for National Statistics were applied¹ (ONS, 2018). The first used three items that asked participants how often they felt a lack of companionship, left out, or isolated. Respondents could answer either "hardly ever or never", "some of the time", or "often". These three measures were then combined to produce an overall loneliness score ranging from three, the lowest loneliness score, to nine, the highest. The second approach was a single question, which directly asked how often people felt lonely ranging from "never" to "often/always".

To provide a point of comparison for the pilot data, the Opinions and Lifestyle survey (OPN) found that in October 2023 among adults in Great Britain 7% felt lonely "often/always", 18% "some of the time", 27% "occasionally", 28% "hardly ever" and 18% "never"².

Reporting convention

In the reporting below, wherever the loneliness experiences of participants at baseline and follow up were compared a significance test was conducted to determine if the difference between the two waves was likely to have arisen by chance. If there is less than a 5% chance that a difference of this size might have arisen by chance, it is statistically significant.

Although these differences have been tested for statistical significance, this does not account for the potential bias in this data introduced by the way it was collected (as outlined in Appendix A).

Please see below for findings related to each pilot.

Age UK

Age UK conducted one pilot (with no sub-pilots) and all beneficiaries were requested to complete a survey upon signing up for the activity. The follow up survey was completed when a participant left the pilot, ranging from 1-10 weeks later. It was not administered to those that left the service early, either because they dropped out or

¹ ONS (2018), Measuring loneliness: guidance for the use of national indicators on surveys. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/measuringlonelinessguidanceforuseofthenationalindicatorsonsurveys>

² ONS (2023), Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/methodologies/opinionsandlifestylesurveyqmi>

were referred on. The survey was conducted in a face-to-face interview with individuals that completed more than one session and were aged 50+ years.

In total 42 respondents had complete data for the loneliness measures at baseline and follow up. Despite the small sample size, a statistically significant reduction was observed across all the measures of loneliness.

- At baseline, 40% of the sample reported feeling that they often lacked companionship, 52% that they did so some of the time and 7% hardly ever/never. At the follow up time point, there had been a 33% reduction in the proportion of beneficiaries who reported feeling they often lacked companionship.
- At baseline, over a third (36%) of the sample reported often feeling left out, 55% felt left out some of the time, and 10% hardly ever/never. At the follow up, there had been a 34% reduction in those often feeling left out – with only 2% of the sample reporting they often felt left out.
- Nearly four in ten (38%) participants reported they often felt isolated at the baseline, 50% felt isolated some of the time, and 12% hardly ever or never felt this way. At the follow up, the proportion who often felt isolated fell by 31%.

These reductions in the three individual measures are also present in the overall loneliness score, which decreased from 6.9 to 5.1.

This fall in loneliness was also repeated when respondents were asked directly about how frequently the beneficiaries felt lonely, at the baseline 43% reported feeling lonely often, 33% that they felt lonely some of the time, 14% occasionally, and 9% hardly ever or never. At the follow up time point, the proportion who often felt lonely had fallen to 12% and the proportion who sometimes felt lonely was reduced to 36%.

Compared to the OPN figures from October 2023, the Age UK pilot participants had a lower proportion reporting they are never or hardly ever lonely, 9% pre-intervention and 26% post-intervention compared to 46% in the OPN survey.

Devon County Council (DCC)

The DCC conducted a number of sub-pilots and its survey was administered directly by those partners. Initially it was intended that all beneficiaries would complete a survey before their activity and again after a period of time had passed. In practice, this level of administrative burden was excessive and as a result only some beneficiaries were invited to take part. People were selected to participate by the partners delivering each sub-pilot. The survey was also administered only by some sub-pilots, so its coverage is not complete. It was completed as a paper questionnaire either by the beneficiary or by the activity leader in conversation with the beneficiary. There was not a fixed time period between the pre- and post- questionnaires and data collection dates were not recorded.

Data collected through the DCC yielded the largest number of cases with complete pre- and post- intervention data, 106 participants in total, but a smaller number of statistically significant changes were observed compared to the data from Age UK. The only statistically significant result observed regarded the reduction in the frequency of those feeling left out.

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- At baseline, 13% of the sample participants often felt left out, 50% felt out some of the time and 36% hardly ever or never felt left out. At the follow up timepoint the percentage who often felt left out had fallen to 9%.
 - On the other two indirect measures, feeling a lack of companionship or feeling isolated, the proportion who often experienced these had not changed by a statistically significant amount between baseline and follow up.
 - In the baseline survey 27% of people hardly ever or never lacked companionship, 58% sometimes lacked companionship, and 15% often lacked it. By the time of the follow up the percentage who often lacked companionship had fallen to 6%.
 - At the baseline survey 36% hardly ever or never felt isolated, 49% sometimes felt isolated and 15% often felt isolated. By the time of the follow up the percentage who often felt isolated had fallen to 9%.

There was a statistically significant reduction observed in the overall loneliness score, which decreased from 5.4 to 5.1 at the time of the follow up.

Regarding the direct loneliness question, 8% of the sample reported often feeling lonely at the baseline, 38% sometimes felt lonely and 38% occasionally felt lonely, and 21% reported hardly ever or never feeling lonely. By the time of the follow up, the proportion who often felt lonely had fallen to 3% and the proportion who sometimes felt lonely remained similar at 36%.

Living Streets

All Living Streets pilot beneficiaries were invited to participate at the baseline, with those who had completed a baseline survey the main group invited to complete a follow up, although some did take part at the follow up who had no baseline. The survey was administered both as a paper questionnaire or it could be completed online. Beneficiaries were asked to participate by delivery staff at all locations where Living Streets activities took place, either at the start and end of walks, or in some cases where the beneficiaries took them home to complete. For the follow up survey, beneficiaries were also invited to take part by email and by phone, with calls made by a Living Streets staff member to conduct the survey as a telephone interview. There was not a consistent time period between the completion of baseline and follow up surveys. It was intended that the baseline survey be collected at someone's first session and the follow up at their last session, although in practice this was not possible. The dates of the baseline fieldwork were between November 2022 and June 2023 and follow up surveys collected between April and July 2023 (which meant that some follow up surveys were also collected while the project was continuing to run).

However, once people who had not completed either the baseline or follow up questionnaire were excluded the sample size for the Living Streets survey was only 25, and so given the small sample size it was decided not to conduct a pre and post analysis of the survey findings.

Community Transport Association (CTA)

A random selection of participants in each of the CTA's sub-pilots invited participants to take part in the survey, with a quota for completed surveys set for each pilot based on the number of beneficiaries it had. The mode of completion varied, it was a paper questionnaire which could be completed independently by passengers or with support from pilot staff. The time period between pilot's varied, beneficiaries were invited to take part during their first session, and to have completed at least two journeys with the pilot before completing the follow up. Of 2,319 people who took part in the pilot, 800 responded to the baseline survey and 972 completed the follow up. An

additional limitation in the CTA data was that it is not possible to link an individual's response at baseline and follow up, meaning that any changes in reported loneliness by an individual between the start and end of the pilot could not be observed. As a result this survey was not used to explore changes in loneliness between baseline and follow up.

Transport for West Midlands

The Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) pilot also conducted a survey, however, only a very small number of beneficiaries returned a completed questionnaire and so this data has not been analysed for this evaluation.

Data tables

The below three tables show the findings for the different loneliness measures pre- and post-intervention for each of the pilots where there was sufficient data to analyse: Age UK, Devon County Council, and Living Streets. The top set of each table, titled "Total Number of Valid Cases (Across both measures)", shows the proportional responses for the loneliness measures for valid cases pre-intervention and for valid cases post-intervention. Whereas, the bottom set of each table, titled "Number of Cases in Each Loneliness Measure: with valid cases across both time points", shows the proportion of responses for cases that have a valid response across both pre-and post-intervention. This bottom set also includes significance testing to show if the difference observed between pre- and post-intervention were statistically significant (i.e., the likelihood that observed results likely would have occurred by random chance), with the exception of Living Streets due to small sample sizes. This is represented by 'P' values, with a statistically significant p value being under $p=0.05$, whereas 'N' refers to the number of participants in each sample, and 'SD' refer to the standard deviation (i.e., how much participants differ from the mean value for the group).

Tables F.1: Age UK

	Yes	No
Total number of valid cases (across both measures)	156	199

Number of cases in each loneliness measure

"Lack companionship" measure	% Pre (N=154)	% Post (N=42)
Hardly ever/never	13%	35%
Some of the time	44%	58%
Often	43%	7%

"Left out" measure	% Pre (N=150)	% Post (N=43)
Hardly ever/never	15%	33%
Some of the time	45%	63%
Often	41%	5%

"Isolated" measure	% Pre (N=151)	% Post (N=43)
Hardly ever/never	21%	44%
Some of the time	38%	49%
Often	42%	3%

"Lonely" measure	% Pre (N=147)	% Post (N=43)
Never	3%	5%
Hardly ever/never	12%	21%
Some of the time	29%	26%
Occasionally	14%	37%
Often/Always	41%	12%

Number of Cases in Each Loneliness Measure: with valid cases across both time points

"Lack companionship" measure (p-value 0.001 ¹)	% Pre (N=42)	% Post (N=42)
Hardly ever/never	7%	33%
Some of the time	52%	60%
Often	40%	7%

"Left out" measure (p-value <0.001 ¹)	% Pre (N=42)	% Post (N=42)
Hardly ever/never	10%	33%
Some of the time	55%	64%
Often	36%	2%

"Isolated" measure (p-value 0.002 ¹)	% Pre (N=42)	% Post (N=42)
Hardly ever/never	12%	43%
Some of the time	50%	50%
Often	38%	7%

"Lonely" measure (p-value 0.001 ¹)	% Pre (N=42)	% Post (N=42)
Never	2%	5%
Hardly ever/never	7%	21%
Some of the time	33%	26%
Occasionally	14%	36%
Often/Always	43%	12%

Score	Pre (N=42)	Post (N=42)
3	2%	21%
4	5%	17%
5	12%	12%
6	31%	40%
7	12%	5%
8	12%	2%
9	26%	2%
Score (Mean) (p-value 0.001 ²)	6.86	5.07
Score (SD) (p-value 0.001 ²)	1.86	1.5

¹ McNemar's Chi-squared test with continuity correction.

² Wilcoxon's signed rank test with continuity correction.

Table F.2: Devon County Council

	Yes	No
Total number of valid cases (across both measures)	109	29

Number of cases in each loneliness measure

"Lack companionship" measure	% Pre (N=107)	% Post (N=108)
Hardly ever/never	27%	28%
Some of the time	57%	66%
Often	16%	7%

"Left out" measure	% Pre (N=106)	% Post (N=108)
Hardly ever/never	36%	37%
Some of the time	50%	57%
Often	14%	6%

"Isolated" measure	% Pre (N=107)	% Post (N=106)
Hardly ever/never	36%	35%
Some of the time	48%	56%
Often	17%	9%

"Lonely" measure	% Pre (N=107)	% Post (N=106)
Never	8%	9%
Hardly ever/never	13%	21%
Some of the time	36%	34%
Occasionally	36%	33%
Often/Always	8%	3%

Number of Cases in Each Loneliness Measure: with valid cases across both time points

"Lack companionship" measure (p-value 0.024 ¹)	% Pre (N=106)	% Post (N=106)
Hardly ever/never	27%	28%
Some of the time	58%	66%
Often	15%	6%

"Left out" measure (p-value <0.016 ¹)	% Pre (N=105)	% Post (N=105)
Hardly ever/never	36%	38%
Some of the time	50%	58%
Often	13%	4%

"Isolated" measure (p-value 0.070 ¹)	% Pre (N=105)	% Post (N=105)
Hardly ever/never	36%	35%
Some of the time	49%	56%
Often	15%	9%

"Lonely" measure (p-value 0.200 ¹)	% Pre (N=106)	% Post (N=106)
Never	8%	9%
Hardly ever/never	13%	21%
Some of the time	36%	34%
Occasionally	36%	33%
Often/Always	8%	3%

Score	Pre (N=103)	Post (N=103)
3	23%	19%
4	10%	14%
5	13%	18%
6	35%	41%
7	10%	6%
8	2%	0%
9	8%	2%
Score (Mean) (p-value 0.035 ²)	5.35	5.08
Score (SD) (p-value 0.035 ²)	1.76	1.37

¹ McNemar's Chi-squared test with continuity correction.

² Wilcoxon's signed rank test with continuity correction.

Table F.3: Living Streets

	Yes	No
Total number of valid cases (across both measures)	71	3

Number of cases in each loneliness measure

"Lack companionship" measure	% Pre (N=52)	% Post (N=44)
Hardly ever/never	40%	70%
Some of the time	46%	25%
Often	13%	5%

"Left out" measure	% Pre (N=52)	% Post (N=44)
Hardly ever/never	42%	70%
Some of the time	46%	27%
Often	12%	2%

"Isolated" measure	% Pre (N=52)	% Post (N=44)
Hardly ever/never	46%	75%
Some of the time	38%	20%
Often	15%	5%

"Lonely" measure	% Pre (N=52)	% Post (N=44)
Never	12%	30%
Hardly ever/never	29%	34%
Some of the time	38%	27%
Occasionally	17%	7%
Often/Always	4%	2%

Number of Cases in Each Loneliness Measure: with valid cases across both time points

"Lack companionship" measure	% Pre (N=25)	% Post (N=25)
Hardly ever/never	56%	64%
Some of the time	36%	28%
Often	8%	8%

"Left out" measure	% Pre (N=25)	% Post (N=25)
Hardly ever/never	56%	64%
Some of the time	32%	32%
Often	12%	4%

"Isolated" measure	% Pre (N=25)	% Post (N=25)
Hardly ever/never	68%	72%
Some of the time	20%	24%
Often	12%	4%

"Lonely" measure	% Pre (N=25)	% Post (N=25)
Never	12%	16%
Hardly ever/never	44%	36%
Some of the time	20%	36%
Occasionally	20%	8%
Often/Always	4%	4%

Score	Pre (N=25)	Post (N=25)
3	44%	44%
4	20%	28%
5	8%	8%
6	16%	16%
7	0%	0%
8	4%	0%
9	8%	4%

