



ambition
for
ageing

Marginalisation and risks of isolation

Ambition For Ageing



- Ambition for Ageing reduces social isolation amongst older people through the development of age friendly communities
- Work with public sector, voluntary sector, universities
- 24 LA wards, 5 years, £50k per year – half support, half small investments (plus programmes at scale - eg social eating)
- Decision making by older people
- 13000+ people involved in designing and delivering 1350 projects

SOCIAL ISOLATION AMONG OLDER PEOPLE IN URBAN AREAS

A review of the literature for the Ambition for Ageing programme in Greater Manchester

Tine Buffel, Samuèle Rémillard-Bollard and Chris Phillipson



GMCVO



Who is at risk from isolation



- Evidence suggest that isolation interacts with other vulnerabilities and especially within marginalised groups.
 - BAME communities
 - LGBT people
 - People over 75
 - Carers
 - People with psychological vulnerabilities (eg social anxiety, depression)
 - People with learning disabilities
 - People in poverty

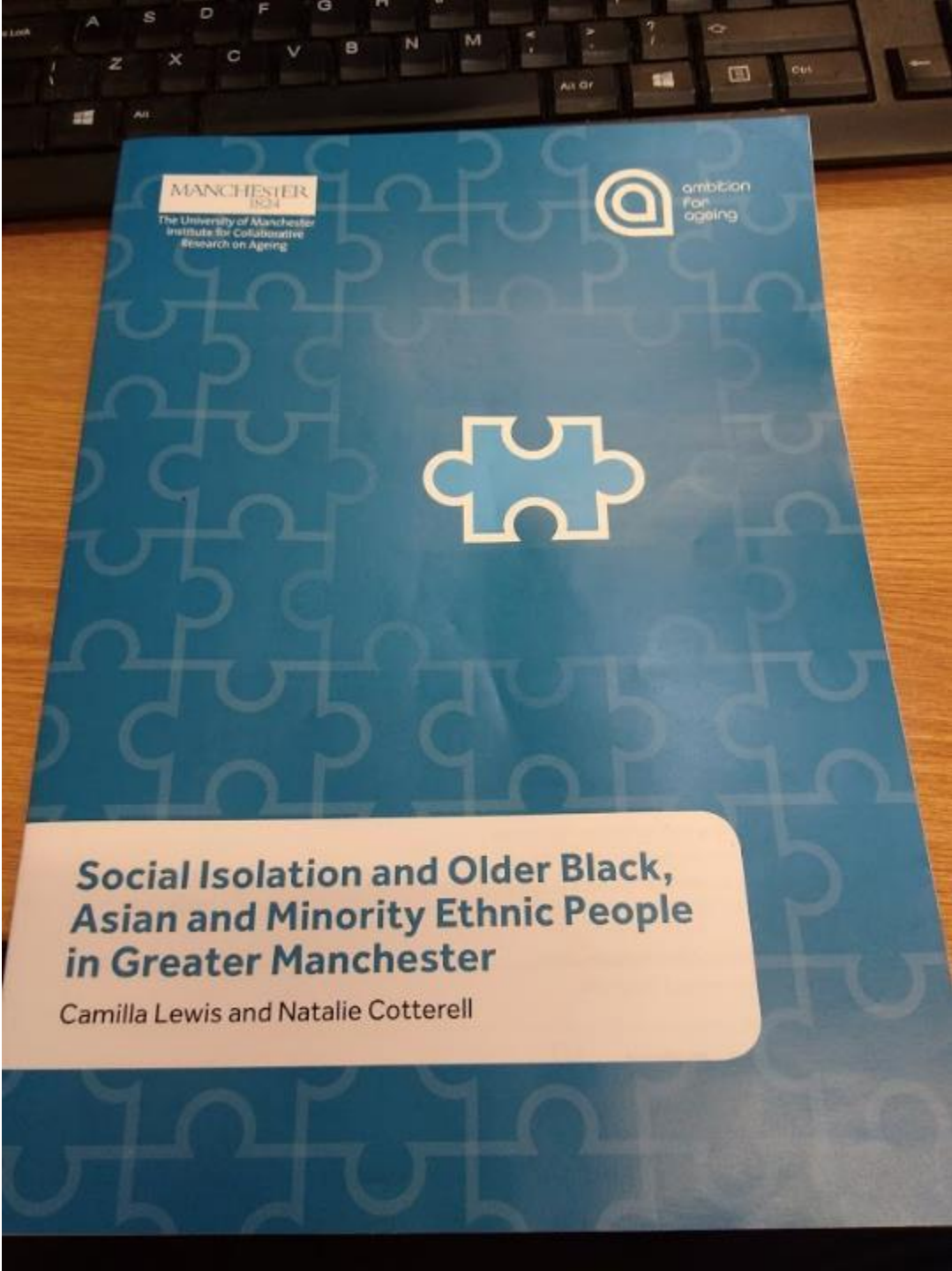
Community risk factors



- Presence of physical barriers
- Population change and neighbourhood turnover
- Crime and feeling of unsafety
- Living in a deprived urban environment
- Poor urban design and planning policies
- Insufficient access to resources (e.g. public transport, information)
- Age-segregated living
- Low level of place attachment
- Lack of opportunities for participation

What works

- Evidence of what works is sketchy but:
- Group approaches work better than 1-2-1
- A spectrum of approaches can help reduce isolation:
 - Interacting with friends and neighbours
 - Walking in the neighbourhood
 - Using public spaces
 - Volunteering
 - Joining an association/club
 - Political involvement
 - Activism



MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester
Institute for Collaborative
Research on Ageing



**Social Isolation and Older Black,
Asian and Minority Ethnic People
in Greater Manchester**

Camilla Lewis and Natalie Cotterell



ambition
for
ageing

Isolation in BAME communities



- Risk of social isolation varies amongst minority ethnic groups
- People from BAME groups more likely to face health, social & economic inequalities
- Discrimination & racism limits opportunities for social participation
- Cultural & community organisations can create bridges
- Co-research is a valuable tool for understanding experiences of isolation

Recommendations

- Generalisations should be avoided
- Address language and communication
- Support cultural & community organisations
- Use co-research
- Need a broader understanding of quality of life
- Need much more research on how isolation is experienced



Resilience in an ageing Greater Manchester

Kirsty Bagnall
October 2018

A programme led by:
Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation

St Thomas Centre
Ardwick Green North
Manchester M12 8FZ
www.ambitionforageing.org.uk

0161 277 1000
ambitionforageing@gmcvo.org.uk
[@afageing](https://www.instagram.com/afageing)

Resilience and ageing



- Older people experiencing social isolation have the potential to be impacted more by shocks and stresses.
- But also have assets and memory
- Communities made up of people with connections to those outside of a person's own group (bridging social capital) are likely to be more resilient
- Older people with additional marginalising characteristics, such as minority ethnicities, often have high levels of bonding social capital but weak bridging social capital

Resilience and isolation



- Many people in marginalised groups have high personal resilience. However, communities made up of marginalised people often lack the information and resources to react adequately during times of shock.
- Areas with better social infrastructure are often more resilient
- Exposure to shocks and stresses, such as discrimination in the form of racism or experiencing economic deprivation build up over a lifetime.



Key learning on Asset-based Approaches and Inequalities

Challenges

- People who are the most socially isolated are often also the most marginalised.
- If implemented without an understanding of marginalisation, asset-based approaches risk contributing to existing inequalities, excluding those who are the most socially isolated.

Strategies

- Members of marginalised groups need to be supported to be involved in genuine co-production and asset mapping.
- Targeted approaches for the identification and engagement of marginalised, minority, and socially isolated groups can be a way to meaningful and inclusive asset-mapping and co-production.
- Well-planned processes for enhancing community capacity are critical for meaningful engagement and in ways which motivate future forms of participation. Such engagement and support processes take time and require resources and expertise.

Introduction

Asset-based approaches can make significant and positive changes to people's lives but they need to be implemented skilfully because of a few challenges they present.

Although asset-based approaches to community development have been a longstanding ideal, their rediscovery and subsequent implementation in the late 20th Century has led to rapid growth in their use over the last few decades.

As a result of this growth, application of the approach by those new to the approach is likely to vary and there are risks attached to this.

In particular, when implemented without supporting targeted work, asset-based approaches can contribute to existing inequalities.

This paper uses learning from the Ambition for Ageing programme so far to exemplify different uses of these approaches, explore these limitations and offer some solutions.

Ambition for Ageing is a £10.2 million Greater Manchester level programme aimed at creating more age friendly places and empowering people to live fulfilling lives as they age.

We do this by funding local delivery leads to work with older people in their areas to provide small investments to help develop more age-friendly neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester.

As a research project, we are committed to sharing the learning we gain from the programme to help influence local, regional and national policy.



If implemented without an understanding of marginalisation, asset-based approaches risk **contributing to existing inequalities**, excluding those who are the most socially isolated.

Strategies for reducing impact of marginalisation



- Genuine support for members of marginalised groups
- Targeted approaches aimed at those who are missing from engagement
- Time and resources

Ambition For Ageing



- Ambition for Ageing reduces social isolation amongst older people through the development of age friendly communities

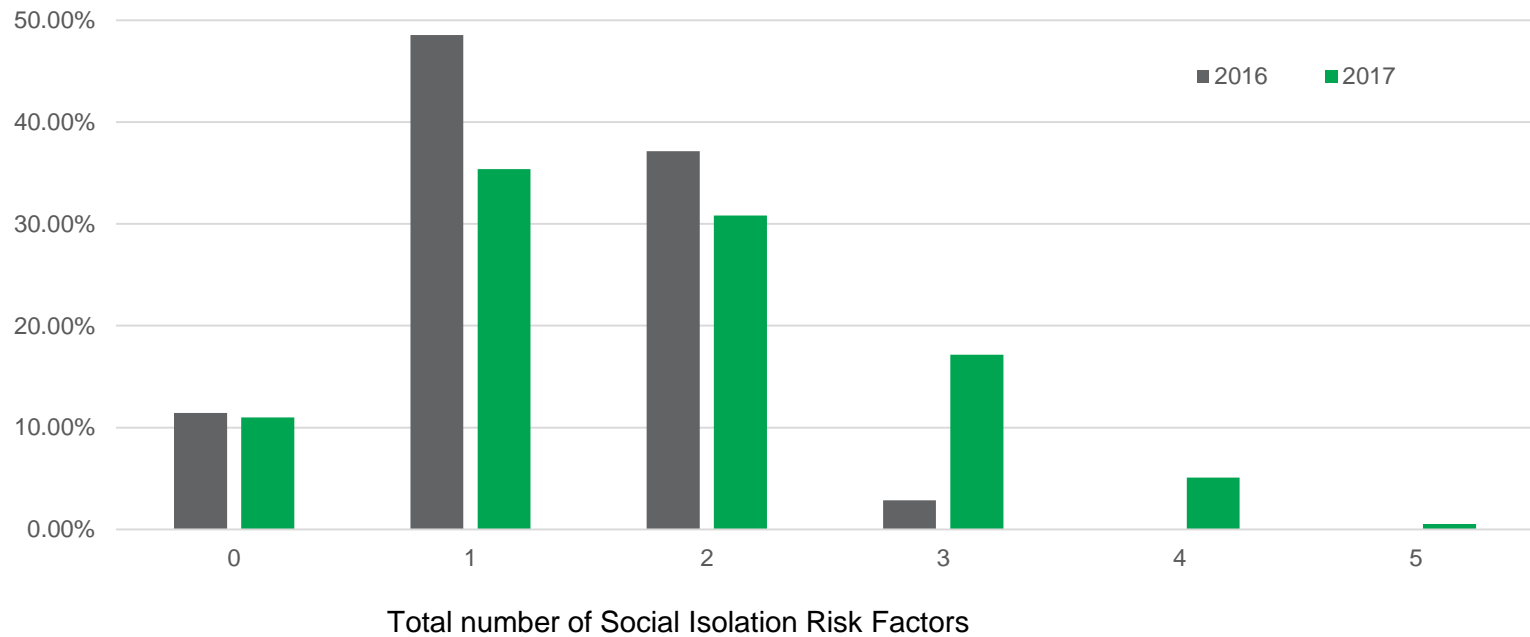
Who is at risk from isolation




- Evidence suggest that isolation interacts with other vulnerabilities and especially within marginalised groups.
 - BAME communities
 - LGBT people
 - People over 75
 - Carers
 - People with psychological vulnerabilities (eg social anxiety, depression)
 - People with learning disabilities
 - People in poverty

Engaging with marginalised people

Distribution of Number of Social Isolation Risk Factors of Respondents
(n=408)





Building Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester: evidence from the Ambition for Ageing programme

Jessica Thorley
August 2018

A programme led by:
Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation

St Thomas Centre
Ardwick Green North
Manchester M12 6FZ
www.ambitionforageing.org.uk

0161 277 1000
ambitionforageing@gmcco.org.uk
[@afageing](https://twitter.com/afageing)

GMCA
GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMMUNITY
AUTHORITY



GMCO

What happens when you ask 3000+ people “What makes an age friendly neighbourhood”?



Community Integration and Belonging

- Light touch support, positive ‘micro-interactions’, weak ties: *‘we look out for each other but we don’t want to live in each other’s pockets’*
- Issues of perceived population change – no longer fit in
- *‘A place for people like me’* – tensions particularly around generational and cultural differences. Need tackling through celebrating difference and similarities.

Meeting and Participation Opportunities



- Variety crucial – diversity of interest as well as identity
- Construct own communities of shared interests – sense of belonging
- Connection **and** contribution '*somewhere I can have a voice*'

Community Resources and Spaces



- Green outdoor space and parks, swimming pools, local centres and services, and general spaces to meet
- Desire for 'one-stop shop'
- General sense of decline and loss
- Re-imagine and re-invest in spaces to boost resilience and share resources

Accessibility, Transport and Facilities



- *“Things that let me stay independent”*
- Physically isolating – lack of seating, toilets, bus stops too far apart, poor street lighting, uneven pavements
- Unconscious exclusion
- AfA - combination of specialist projects and making mainstream projects more accessible

Feelings of Safety and Security



- Street lighting, keeping areas clean and clear, antisocial behaviour and crime
- AfA promoting collective action and sense of control
- Projects to challenges myths and fear e.g. intergenerational projects to reclaim spaces

“The network now feels when they come together that there is strength in numbers which enables a stronger voice”

Information and Communication



- More important for those considering ‘why my area is not age friendly’ than ‘what makes your place age friendly’
- Physical > digital
- What’s On Guides.
- Tackling digital exclusion - tech and tea

Summary

- Reinforces the need for a joined-up approach
- Fix places not people
- Importance of widening perceptions of who are ‘people like me’
- Importance of social side ... but is this because of the question asked?





ambition
for
ageing

John Hannen

Programme Manager

john.hannen@gmcvo.org.uk

Led by:

**Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary
Organisation**

St Thomas Centre

Ardwick Green North

Manchester M12 6FZ

T: 0161 277 1000

W: www.ambitionforageing.org.uk

