

# **A Connected Scotland:**

## **Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections**



In the last Parliamentary term, the Scottish Government welcomed The Equal Opportunities Committee report on Social Isolation which was the first of its kind anywhere in the world. The committee found that social isolation and loneliness was a problem in Scotland, and recommended that the Government developed a national strategy to tackle it. This consultation is an important part of the process.

Social Isolation and loneliness is an issue that can affect anyone at any age or stage of their lives. Feelings of loneliness have been demonstrated to have wide ranging consequences for those effected. and has been shown to lead to depression across all ages, as well as cognitive decline and dementia in older people. There is also the potential for serious physical health implications which have been compared to those of obesity or smoking.

We want a Scotland where individuals and communities are more connected and everyone has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships regardless of age, status, circumstances or identity. We see the role of communities as vital in achieving this goal, and have already began to empower them to make decisions that help them address their unique priorities. Because communities are so central to tackling this problem, it is important that the people who live in them get to have their say.

### **Why We Are Consulting**

We want to hear a wide range of opinions and views from Scotland's diverse people directly. Although we are arranging a number of engagements up and down the country, we recognise that people who might have an important point to make may not be able to attend.

Each and every one of us has a role to play in reducing social isolation, and your voice will help to shape the direction that the national strategy takes.

More information can be found at: <https://consult.gov.scot/equality-unit/connected-scotland/>

There is also a mailing list which will be used to share any developments and we would recommend you sign up: <https://scotland.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=613ee75aea0a406549aaa938b&id=5ac28c04d7&e=fe8a2fad3b>