



Alone Together

**STUDENT**  
RSA **DESIGN**  
**AWARDS**



MARKETINGTRUST

“It is only in the  
context of  
each other that we  
are individuals”



# Why loneliness? (i)

It's all about **social capital**



“Social capital is a reserve from which all can benefit, enabling people to trust each other and giving them a greater inclination to do things for one another.”

“a ‘**credential**’ which entitles them to **credit**”

vs.



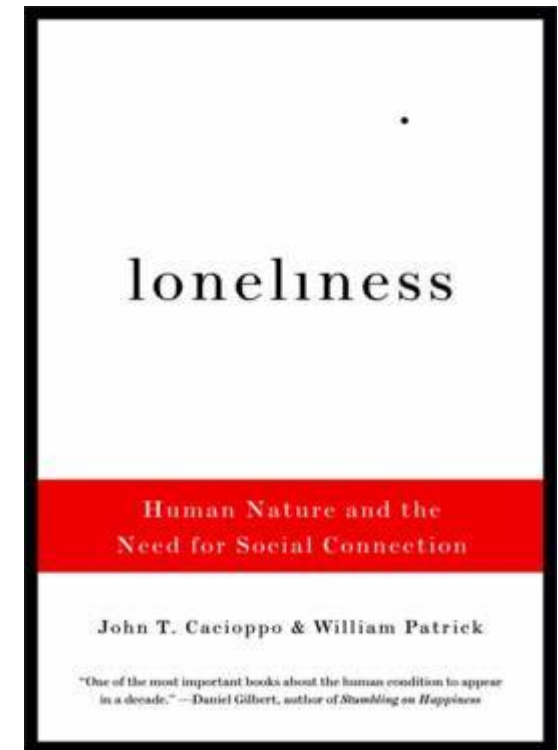
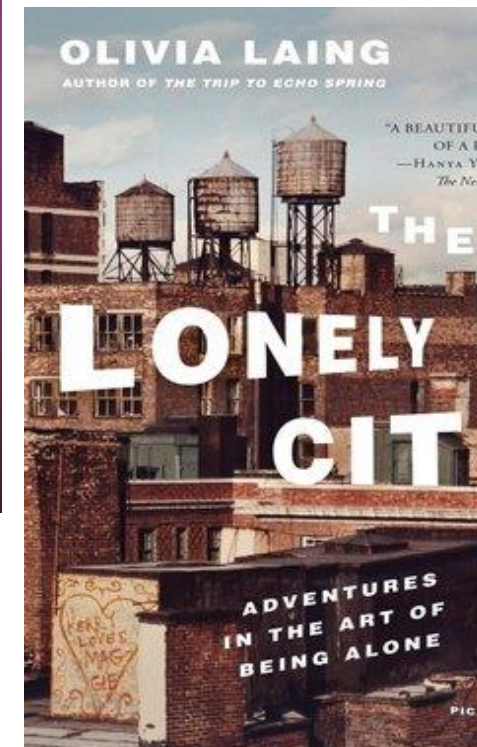
# Why loneliness? (ii)

Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport



**“** I am sure that with the support of volunteers, campaigners, businesses and my fellow MPs, from all sides of the House, we can make significant progress in defeating loneliness. **”**

Tracey Crouch  
Minister for Civil Society





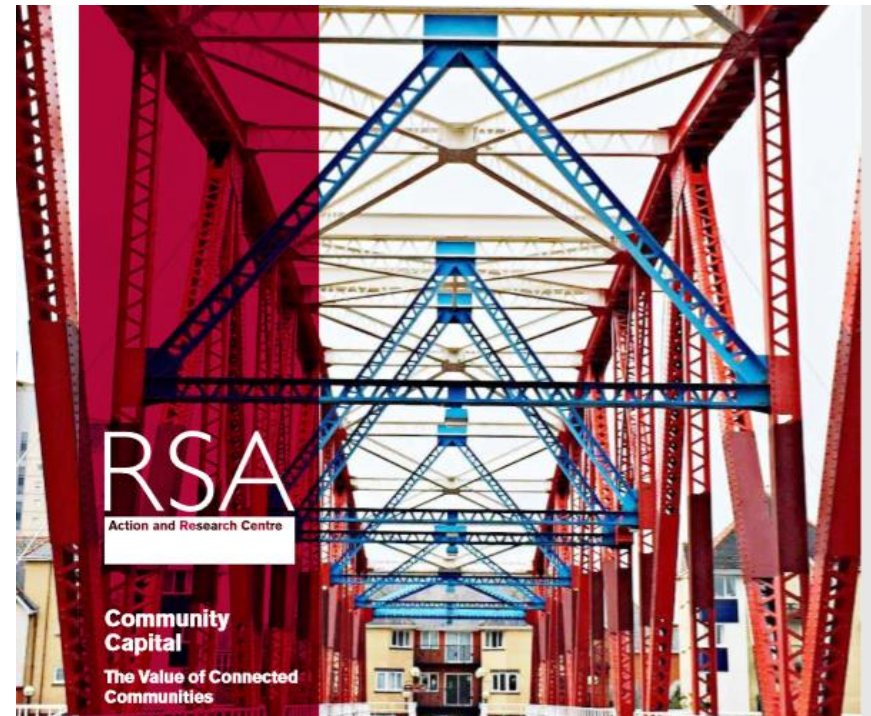
# Legacy of RSA work



## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

*How social networks power and sustain the Big Society*

Jonathan Rowson, Steve Broome and Alasdair Jones<sup>1</sup>  
September 2010



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## ALONE TOGETHER: WHO'S LONELY AND HOW DO WE MEASURE IT?

15th January 2018

Written by:



Tom Harrison

# Loneliness and social isolation (i)

**Loneliness** is defined as:

“The gap between someone’s desire for connection and the reality of their connections.”

Government Office for Science roundtable  
(Dec 2017)

**Social isolation** can be described as:

A lack of contact with family or friends, community involvement, or access to services. It can contribute significantly to the likeliness of experiencing loneliness but crucially, **its not the same thing.**



# What's the problem?

- Lonely people have a **20 per cent higher** premature mortality rate
- 3 out of 4 GPs say they see between **1 and 5** people a day who have come in mainly because they are lonely.
- **32 per cent** of those aged 16-24 reported that in the past 2 weeks they “often” or “always” felt lonely.
- **Nearly half** of those aged 65+ say that television or pets are their main form of company



# The brief

“Accounting for how different groups in society are affected by loneliness, design a way to reduce its impact on one of more of following: **physical health, mental health, or access to services.**”

STUDENT  
RSA DESIGN  
AWARDS

Think  
Differently  
About  
Design

## Alone Together

05

### Brief

Accounting for how different groups in society are affected by loneliness, design a way to reduce its impact on one or more of the following: physical health, mental health, or access to services.

### Background

– Loneliness can be defined as ‘the gap between someone’s desire for connection and the reality of their connections’ – in other words, a subjective feeling of a lack of connection to other people. It is possible to feel lonely when surrounded by a crowd of people, and it is also possible to be alone and not feel lonely.



# The approach

Encourage students to:

- Think carefully about the groups that are most at risk of experiencing **loneliness and social isolation**
- Think about how the solution might harness or increase **social capital** in between and within the groups that are most at risk
- Assess how **informal and formal social groups** that could help the solution be successful?
- Think about how students could take a **public health approach** to this challenge
- Use **international case studies** as well as successful UK initiatives i.e. North London Cares