

Creative Connection: How the Arts Can Tackle Loneliness

 community manager  Updated at 12:16 05/20/2025  3 mins

Meeting Information

Event name	Creative Connection: How the Arts Can Tackle Loneliness
Time	May 19, 2025, 11:49 AM - 01:11 PM (BST)

Contact Details & Useful Links

Community Manager | [Aba Amihyia](#)
London Arts & Health | [Anna Woolf](#)
Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance | [Victoria Hume](#)
Arts Council England | [Jemma Channing](#)
Metal Culture | [Susie Thornberry](#)
Civil Society Consulting | [Natasha Ereira-Guyer](#)

[Arts & Creativity Group - Tackling Loneliness Hub](#)
[Creativity and Wellbeing Week 2025 Participant Survey](#)

Quick recap

The meeting focused on addressing loneliness through creative initiatives and community engagement, featuring presentations from various organizations and experts in the field.

Speakers discussed strategies, case studies, and research findings that demonstrate the positive impact of arts and cultural activities on reducing loneliness and improving wellbeing.

The discussion emphasised the importance of grassroots movements, community-led

programs, and the integration of creative health approaches in tackling social isolation and fostering connections among diverse populations.

Summaries

The meeting began with introductions and a discussion about the upcoming webinar, which was part of Creativity and Wellbeing Week. Anna, representing London Arts and Health, mentioned that 148 people were registered to attend, which was the highest attendance yet. The group discussed the format of the webinar, including a housekeeping session at the start, presentations, and a Q&A at the end. Anna also noted that there would be a short survey for feedback after the event.

Arts and Culture's Role in Reducing Loneliness

Anna presented on the topic of arts and culture's role in addressing loneliness, highlighting the work of London Arts and Health and its sister organization, the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance. She discussed the annual Creativity and Wellbeing Week festival and shared evidence from a 2019 World Health Organization commissioned study that found the arts can effectively reduce loneliness, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas. The presentation included case studies like the Knife Angel project and emphasized how creativity can address both the social determinants of health and symptoms of loneliness.

Creative Health and Social Connection

Anna presented on the role of creative health in addressing loneliness and isolation, highlighting evidence from various studies and case studies. She discussed how creative activities can build social capital, reduce health inequalities, and empower individuals to manage their own wellbeing. Anna also touched on the impact of lockdowns during COVID-19, which led to innovative uses of cultural activities to maintain mental health. She concluded by exploring how creative health can be integrated into healthcare systems to provide a holistic approach to care, particularly for older populations.

Arts for Loneliness Reduction Strategy

Jemma, representing Arts Council England, discussed their 10-year strategy "Let's Create" which emphasizes the importance of creativity in health and wellbeing. She explained their approach to tackling loneliness through the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund, which targets areas with high chronic loneliness rates by increasing volunteer opportunities and engagement in arts and cultural activities.

Jemma highlighted the unique value of creative activities in reducing loneliness, noting that they provide skills and a sense of connection that can continue beyond the group setting. The impact of these initiatives is being evaluated, with results expected to be shared with the hub in the future.

LGBTQ and Mental Health Initiatives

Jemma presented two case studies funded through the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund, highlighting projects that address loneliness among LGBTQ individuals and people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities. She shared the positive impact of these initiatives, including participant testimonials and the development of sustainable community programs. Jemma also provided resources and guidance for Creative Health National Lottery Project Grant applications and encouraged attendees to explore the Arts Council's Creative Health page for further information. Natasha, founder of civil society consulting, followed by emphasizing the importance of grassroots initiatives in promoting health equality and cohesion, expressing alignment with the values and outcomes discussed.

Overcoming Loneliness Through Community

Natasha discussed the importance of addressing loneliness as a priority, highlighting its link to health issues and its role in creating social polarization. She emphasized that community is the solution to loneliness and that creativity can be a powerful tool for creating community.

Natasha introduced 32 Steps to Togetherness, a grassroots movement aimed at building connections within and between communities. She argued that a hyper-capitalistic system contributes to loneliness by promoting individualism and competition, creating a vicious cycle of division and resistance to change. Despite the challenges, Natasha expressed hope that overcoming loneliness and building community connections can help break this cycle.

Natasha discussed the "32 Steps to Togetherness" tool and the "Togetherness Poetry Challenge," which uses storytelling and solidarity to empower marginalized communities.

Creative Initiatives Against Loneliness

Susie presented Metal's "Unlonely City" program, a 10-year initiative involving citizen assemblies, community-led initiatives, and a mass participation program to combat loneliness.

The discussion highlighted the role of creativity and community engagement in addressing social issues, with participants sharing ideas and resources for further collaboration.