

Learning Snapshot: Working and Engaging with Men

Ageing Better is a test and learn programme funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

This learning snapshot details key findings and recommendations about working and engaging with men.

We collect information and insights from across 14 partnerships and use this learning to support service deliverers, funders and policy makers working to reduce social isolation in people aged over 50.

You can use it as a summary of the [full learning report](#), to share practical tools with colleagues and in teams, or include in your own presentations and briefings.

<p>1. Why focus on engaging with men? Men are particularly at risk of social isolation and loneliness. They are more likely to be socially isolated than women.</p> <p>Men have specific risk factors associated with the way their relationships develop, the role of the workplace and the role of their partners.</p> <p>The Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness estimated eight million men of all ages feel lonely at least once a week, with nearly three million reporting it as a daily occurrence.</p>	<p>2. What are the challenges? Men can become dependent on their partner for social contact, leading to increased levels of loneliness if they then lose their partner.</p> <p>Men can be trapped in gender stereotypes and more reluctant to seek help. Our programmes often engaged with men who were at a point of loss - retirement, redundancy or bereavement.</p> <p>Men also need to feel that a group/activity is for people like them - if men can't see themselves represented they may be less likely to engage.</p>
<p>4. So what can we do with this learning? We need to listen to what the men in our communities want and work with them to create activities for them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation is important. Projects with older male volunteers found that they engaged better with older men. • Older men may be more likely to participate in doing an activity, rather than attending something which is purely social. • Men tend to want to share their skills by showing others how to do something such as woodwork. • Men want the opportunity to dip in and out of activities and often find structured groups less appealing. 	<p>3. How can we engage better with men? Men can take time to engage so an ongoing activity that they can opt in and out of is better than the same one lasting a few weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a diverse range of activities on offer. • Put the focus on the activity itself rather than the social element. • Create opportunities for participants to give something back. • Provide a supportive environment. • Promote your group to men. Think about the language you use and promote it in the places that men in your area go; for example, pubs, working men clubs, health services, libraries, churches, mosques etc.