Social Isolation:
A Contextual Overview

SOCIETAL **FACTORS**

Socio-economic Drivers
Age
Gender
Sexuality
Disability
Ethnicity
Immigration status/
Proficiency in English
Educational attainment
Employment/
Occupational status
Income

COMMUNITY **FACTORS**

Political climate
Greater emphasis on individual responsibility, personalisation agenda etc

Economic context
Ongoing cuts to public sector budgets
Job creation and regeneration
Rising energy costs

Welfare reform
Introduction of 'universal credit' Restrictions on housing benefit entitlement

Local geography and condition of local environment
Is neighbourhood flat or hilly?
Condition/accessibility of pavements, benches, loos etc

Access to local shops, facilities and services
Distance and accessibility of local shops, facilities and services
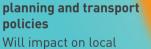
Access to public or private transport
Have own transport?
Distance/accessibility to public transport, frequency of service etc

Traffic levels
Fewer social connections in communities with heavy traffic levels

National housing, planning and transport policies
Will impact on local development, sustainability of communities etc

How safe is local neighbourhood?
Levels of crime, anti-social behaviour etc in neighbourhood

PLACES

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Genetics/hereditary factors
Overall health/mobility
Personality
Confidence
Personal resilience
Cultural background
Faith

Access to technology internet and social media
Technology can have both positive and negative effects in terms of tackling social isolation

Demographic and family change
People living longer
More people living alone
Divorce rates rising nationally
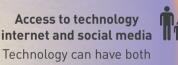Greater mobility – families/relatives more likely to live apart
Fewer people in caring roles than previously
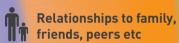Immigration and migration

Access to wider community/ neighbourhoods
Positive - Availability of social capital, for example, access to sports, recreational, faith, cultural groups and voluntary sector organisations active in local community
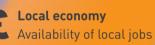**Negative** - A lack of community cohesion and community assets, or lack of awareness about what's available locally

Relationships to family, friends, peers etc
Connectivity and social networks. Preferences for type of contact can differ according to age etc, ie. either face to face, or through social media – Twitter/Facebook etc

Local economy
Availability of local jobs

Pension changes
Impact on standard of living

Media influences
Age discrimination, negative stereotypes
Social/media attitudes towards drugs and alcohol
Fear of crime more prevalent than actual crime

PEOPLE

Life Course Transitions
Early home/school experiences (ie. bullying at school)
Adolescence
Moving to a new area
Unemployment/redundancy
Teenage pregnancy
Single parent
Relationship breakdown/divorce
Financial pressures
Depression/mental ill-health
Long term limiting health condition/disability
Retirement
Being a carer for partner/relative
Death of partner/spouse
Homelessness/living in temporary accommodation
Living alone

LIFE EVENTS

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For further information contact **health@bristol.gov.uk**

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