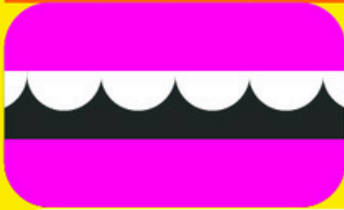


15-21 June

GIVING



LONELINESS



A

VOICE

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

Brought to you by



Marmalade
TRUST



Impact Report 2026



About Marmalade Trust, the hosts and founders of the campaign.

Marmalade Trust is an award-winning charity dedicated to raising awareness of loneliness and empowering people to make connections.

By increasing understanding that loneliness is a natural human emotion that we will all experience, we are able to reduce the stigma surrounding loneliness.

Loneliness is both a signal and an opportunity to increase social connections that enrich all our lives - Marmalade Trust projects have supported thousands of people to find new connections.

Launched in 2017, Loneliness Awareness Week is a global campaign dedicated to raising awareness of loneliness and creating supportive communities by having open, honest conversations.



Loneliness Awareness Week Theme 2026.

Acceptance

Loneliness Awareness Week exists to create long-term change so that everyone understands loneliness and feels able to talk about it.

The first step to talking about loneliness is accepting that what we are feeling is loneliness.

Acceptance recognises loneliness for what it is - a natural human emotion that is not pleasant to experience or feel - and empowers us to talk about loneliness without fear, shame, or stigma.

By giving loneliness a voice, acceptance can lead us to conversation - and conversation supports connection.

A theme based on research

In 2025, Loneliness Awareness Week focused on reducing the stigma through the tagline *Meeting Loneliness Together*. As part of this campaign, Marmalade Trust carried out research which found that while 82% of people said they have experienced loneliness, 62% had never told anyone.

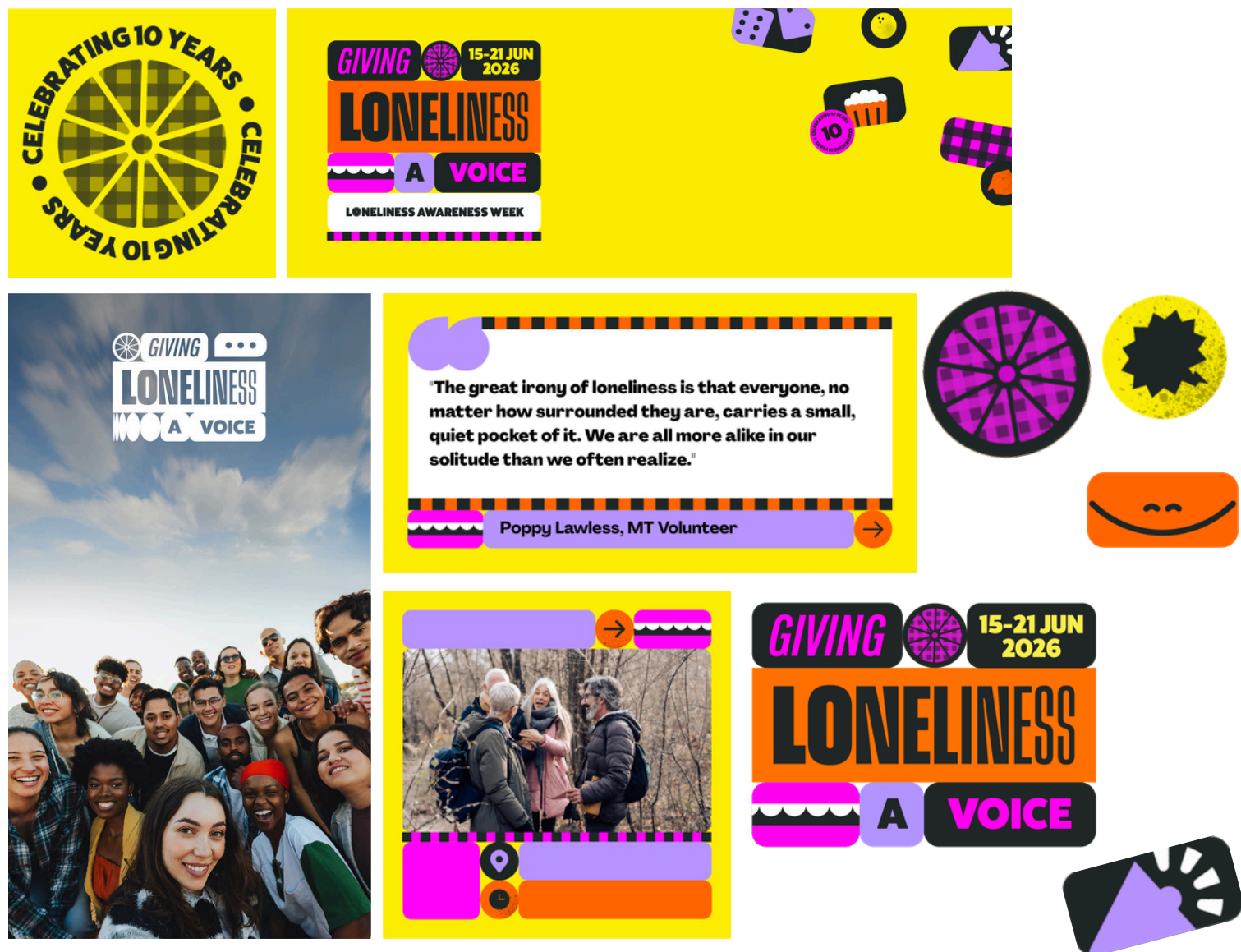
Many shared that internalised stigma held them back, including: feeling embarrassed (42%); fear of being judged (29%); and feeling ashamed (26%).

When asked what would help them open up, 40% said feeling confident they wouldn't be judged or labelled negatively.

By accepting loneliness, together we help to remove the feelings of shame that are keeping it hidden.

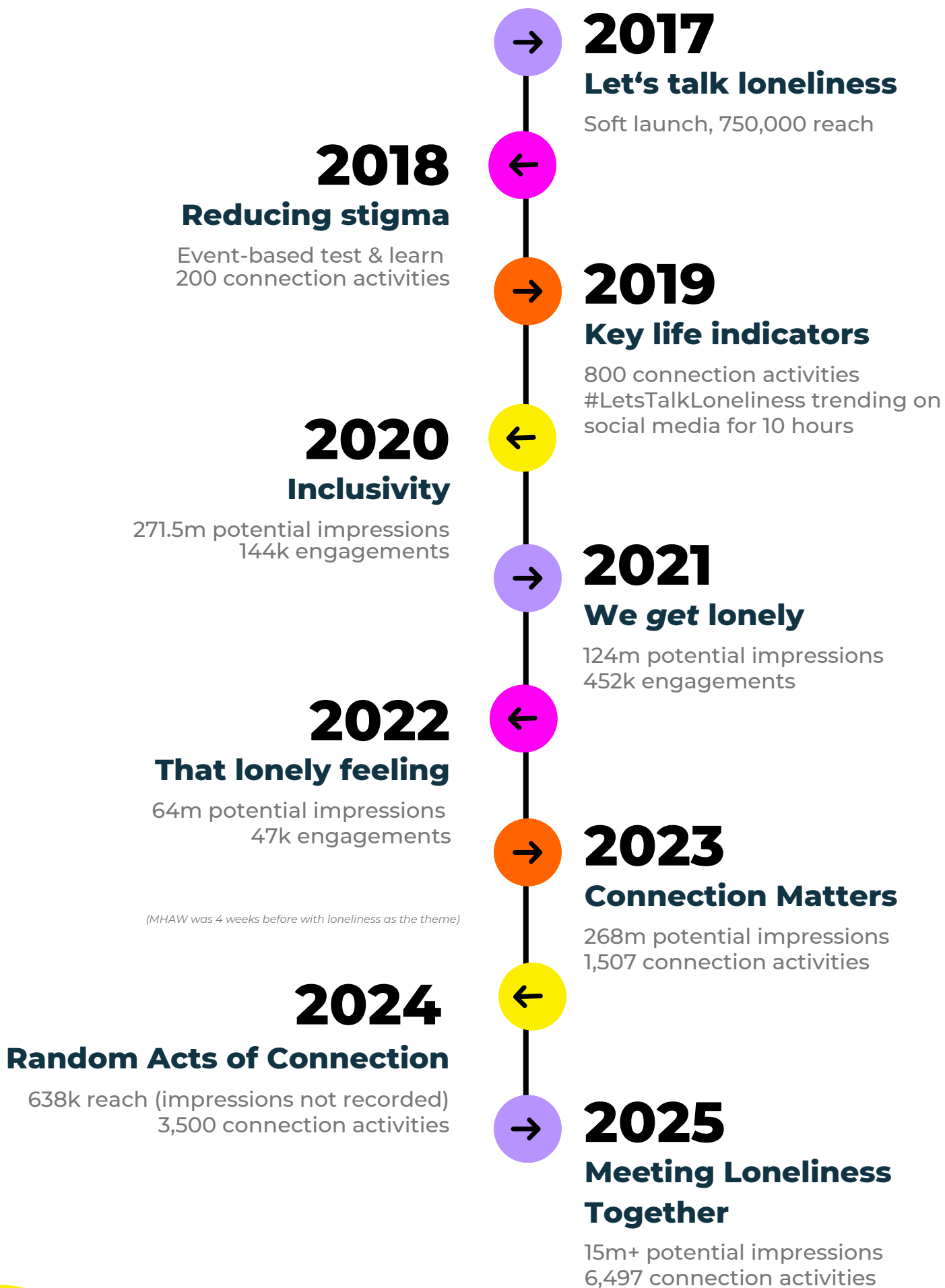
Giving Loneliness A Voice Assets.

Designed by Shaped By



To bring the campaign vision to life, Bristol-based design agency Shaped By once again provided pro bono support at a value of £32,000. They developed the campaign tagline and visual assets, focusing on bringing real life stories and experiences of loneliness to the forefront of the campaign. Their social media templates were designed especially to be linked to from the social media toolkit for event organisers.

Previous campaigns.



Partnerships.



Kicking off the campaign

To kick off, Campaign Manager Hannah Beatrice and Campaign Assistant Helena Toole ran free online introductory sessions, sharing the campaign theme and how to get involved, with more than 150 people attending live and many more watching the replay on YouTube.

The team also had hundreds more one-to-one meetings and phone calls with potential partners and sent more than 60k emails.

Campaign partners were encouraged to join us in #GivingLonelinessAVoice by starting conversations and joining or hosting connection-building activities.

Campaign objectives.



Raise awareness

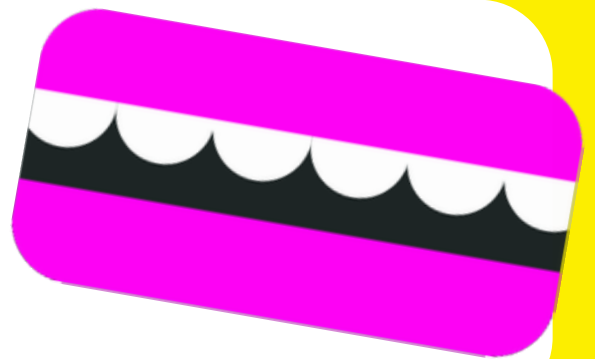
of the fact that loneliness is a natural emotion that we all experience, and of the work of Marmalade Trust

Reached 43M people across the world

Remove stigma

around loneliness by normalising conversation and sharing lonely voices

27.3M people reached through PR and 9.5M talking on social media



Drive participation

in real life connection activities and ways to get involved online, including Share an Orange

8,920 toolkit and resource downloads

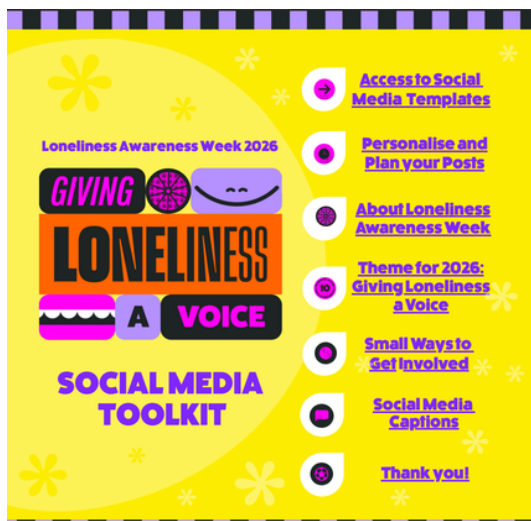
Encourage action

so people build meaningful connections with those around them

15,854 connection activities took place



How people took part.



Shared the campaign or started a conversation

Hundreds of people across the world from businesses, charities, schools and community groups used the social media toolkit filled with ideas and ready-to-use posts as well as post templates and campaign hashtags to spark conversations about loneliness.



Created connections

From law firms taking part in our first ever Share an Orange Day, to shopping centres featuring a wall of feelings - thousands of activities were added to the Connections Map, giving thousands more people the opportunity for meaningful connection and conversation.



Fundraised to support people experiencing loneliness

Coffee mornings, a dinner for 100 people and a connection event for singles run by Be Dating Beautiful were organised. Thank you to everyone who raised money to support people experiencing loneliness this year - through activities and donations made via the JustGiving page.

Headline impact stats.



15,854

Connection activities
across the world

61K

Website page
sessions

9.5M

Campaign impressions
on social media



Hundreds of people pledged to give loneliness a voice at events throughout the week including Minister for Loneliness Stephanie Peacock



Collaborative posts with influencers such as Lucy Edwards provided opportunities to expand reach

3.8M

People reached
through above the
line activity

27.3M

PR reach

43M*

Total campaign reach

*We used a different PR
metric approach
compared to 2025

Headline impact stats.



146,714

Actions on the website including clicks & downloads

8,920

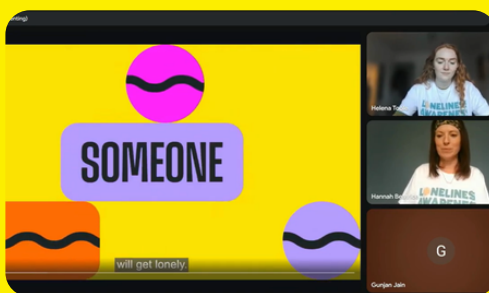
Downloads of campaign resources

£51K

Donations and gifts in kind made



Real stories were shared to give loneliness a voice



Webinars ahead of and during the campaign reached more than 274 people



London Borough of Haringey held their third annual Loneliness Awards



231K

Search impressions in Google

99%

Of conversations on social media were positive in sentiment.

9.5K

Views of our campaign hero film on social media

Global impact stats.



53

Countries searched for loneliness awareness week on Google

92

Countries visited the campaign website

12

Countries added events to the Connections Map



Two rural schools in Northern Ireland came together to sing and connect



Estonia held their second annual photo exhibition



Empty Chairs added events across the globe including Australia

37

Countries accessed the website resource page



USA

Is our second biggest fan on socials after UK

5

Presentations made to global associations (including Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection)



Post Campaign Survey.

94 respondents

92%

of those who held an activity started a **conversation with someone new** about loneliness



95%

of those who held an activity **felt more connected to others as a result**

100%

of those who held an activity **would recommend Loneliness Awareness Week** to others



89%

said they **liked this year's theme** Giving Loneliness A Voice



70%

understand more about loneliness following the campaign

95%

of respondents agree that Loneliness Awareness Week **is an important campaign**



10 Year Report and Calls To Action



To mark 10 years of the campaign we published the first ever Loneliness Awareness Week report. Looking back over 10 years of action. The report features the history of the campaign, shifts in society's attitudes towards loneliness, brand new quotes and observations from experts and clear calls to action for the Government agreed with Marmalade Trust by members of the Loneliness Policy Action Group (see below).

The report was announced as part of the campaign launch in a special event at the House of Commons, sponsored by our Corporate Partner Heineken. A few printed copies were available at the event thanks to support with printing costs from our partners at Sky. Leaflets were also available inside free glasses gifts from Heineken, featuring the calls to action and a QR code to download the full report.

Thank you to everyone who made this event and the publication of the report possible. The calls to action will now be taken forward by the Policy Action Group who will be working with Marmalade Trust and key stakeholders to push for improved strategic direction and action in Health, Technology, Employment, Communities & Spaces and Destigmatisation of Loneliness.

[Download the report here.](#)



Centre for Applied
Health & Social
Care Research





"Over the course of my career, I have watched loneliness evolve from an issue rarely discussed to one now recognised as a global public health concern. Loneliness Awareness Week has played an important role in raising visibility and understanding of one of the most significant social and public health issues of our time. Nonetheless, continued efforts are critical to ensure that social connection is recognised and prioritised as fundamental for the well-being of individuals and communities worldwide."

Dr Julianne Holt-Lunstad

"As a business rooted in social spaces, we see every day how much simple human connection matters, and how loneliness can affect anyone, at any stage of life. This is why we are supporting Marmalade Trust, Loneliness Awareness Week and the calls to action included in its 10-year report."

Sonia Thimmiah, Corporate Affairs Director, Heineken UK

"If Loneliness Awareness Week didn't exist, we'd have to invent it. As we enter another era of technological and economic change, we need to continue to show how loneliness is a personal crisis, a public health crisis, and a crisis for democracy. Loneliness Awareness Week is a vital pillar in that effort."

Alex Smith, Author, Only the Beginning: How the UK Made an Impact on Loneliness and How It Can Do It Again

"Marmalade Trust has undoubtedly been the leading influence in public education about loneliness, its impact on health and wellbeing, and actions to remedy it. But it's not just their campaigns that stand out: it's their willingness to share their knowledge, resources and expertise around the world and with our members. That's the real measure of their impact."

Jo Badcock, Co-founder and Board Chair, Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection

Research: Gen Z choosing digital substitutes over human connection

This year, we commissioned a UK-wide study of 2,000 Gen Z adults aged 18–29. It found that loneliness is an everyday experience for millions, with one in four turning to AI for companionship. Key findings include:

67% feel lonely at least once a week.

1 in 4 finds it easier to talk to AI than to a real person.

48% say social media makes them feel lonelier.

48% say home is where they feel most lonely.

65% have cancelled social plans to spend time online instead.

14% would rather turn to AI or a virtual assistant when feeling lonely.

74% sometimes feel lonely even when surrounded by others.

1 in 5 feel unsafe or unwelcome in public spaces.

45% would rather admit to feeling anxious than lonely.

58% worry loneliness will be worse for Gen Alpha.

45% say their mental health has suffered because of loneliness.

42% feel intimidated by small talk with someone they don't know.

27% say making or answering a phone call makes them anxious.

42% say loneliness has lowered their confidence or self-esteem.

44% feel lonelier than they did a year ago.

28% experience loneliness several times a day.

37% want more free and welcoming spaces to meet face-to-face.

18% say talking to AI makes them feel less lonely.



It highlights a very important issue and brings groups together to discuss how we can work together to reduce the stigma and build social connection."

*Lucy

I think there is still so much stigma around it. We need to not be afraid to challenge this."

*Sarah

Giving Loneliness A Voice was a great theme. I think anything we can do to show that loneliness happens to all of us at some point in our lives, and to normalise it/not be ashamed of it."

*John

It's such a valuable week where so many learn more about what loneliness really looks like in the modern age especially since Covid and how it's affecting the younger generations so much more now."

*Peter

I think it's so important for people to be able to understand what they are feeling in order to take action. So letting people know what loneliness is and what can cause it but also how to take action against this is vital."

*Joanne

It is important to talk about things that are not so obvious and that people may sit in silence with. If things are talked about more it takes the fear away."

*Tara

PR.

The campaign enjoyed more media coverage than ever before, reaching 27.3M (compared to 21.3M in 2025) including mentions across high profile platforms, broadcast, radio, magazines, and collaborations with well known influencers.



 the.independent & radhikasanghani
1.8M Followers



 **BBC - multiple stations**
Millions Listening



 **Max Dickins**
4.6k Following



 lucyedwards official
288k Following

Young shun social plans to spend life online

The Daily Telegraph
4 Jun 2026

Small Talk Social Interaction

Two -thirds of young people are cancelling social plans so they can spend time online, research shows.

The survey, commissioned by **Marmalade Trust**, of 2,000 adults aged between 18 and 29 found many preferred talking to AI over a real person. A quarter said talking to a chat-bot felt easier than speaking to a real person, while 14 per cent said they turned to AI when feeling lonely.

Meanwhile, some 65 per cent said they had cancelled social plans to spend time online instead.

More than four in 10 said they found small talk intimidating, while 27 per cent said



The Telegraph
633.2k Reach

The latest TikTok trend for Z? Admitting you have no friends

Behind the perfect skin routine, delicious meal for one and popular 'living alone diaries' highlight a loneliness epidemic

Lara Wildenberg

Skincare routine, changing into pyjamas, making themselves for one and watching television or a tablet in their freshly:

The genre of videos normalises -- and occasionally glamorises -- act of being alone and staying in, and [receive millions of views](#)

According to TikTok, there are 66,000 videos with the hashtag #livingalone



As many as 65 per cent of the 18 to 29-year-olds surveyed said they have cancelled in-person plans to spend time online instead

• [How lonely are we really? What the data says](#)

It is well documented that Gen Z are health-focused and of high costs are another barrier for many going on nights or



The Times
458k Reach

Influencers.

Collaborations with more than 70 experts, brands, influencers, and creators across different platforms helped bring new audiences to the campaign, alongside many others.



 **Becca Maberly**
40.7k Views



 **Dr_Radha**
13.3k Followers



 **Five Points, musicdeclares**
6.5k Views



 **Mental Health Foundation**
188k Following



 **borrowmy doggy**
174k Followers



 **theuzooffia**
5.9k Views
(Multiple reels)

Connection activities.

Here are just a few of the activities that took place across the world during Loneliness Awareness Week.



Launch at the House of Commons

Loneliness Awareness Week 2026 was launched at the House of Commons, attended by Stephanie Peacock MP, Minister for Loneliness, where we shared our 10-Year Impact Report and this year's calls to action, encouraging people and organisations to help build more connected communities.



Buildings lighting up

This year, 11 buildings and landmarks across the UK and Ireland lit up in support of Loneliness Awareness Week, helping to raise awareness of loneliness and showing solidarity with everyone who experiences it.



Share an Orange Day

10% of businesses, schools and community groups who took part in the campaign chose to take part in our new campaign activation, Share an Orange Day. Participants were encouraged to share an orange and take a moment to have a conversation. Our lesson plans and assembly resources focused on sharing an orange through cartoon character Pip.

Mood film at Cinemas

Cinemas across the UK and Ireland screened our campaign film. The film was also featured at Translink's opening at Saltwater Square in Belfast.





Loneliness in the Workplace Webinar

We led an online panel exploring the impact of loneliness in the workplace and how organisations can take action. Led by Jez Rose, it featured Amy Perrin OBE, Founder of Marmalade Trust, Nick Gulliver, Emmaline Rogers, and Pippa Moyle discussing wellbeing, leadership, and more connected workplace cultures.

Hachette UK Workshop

Our Founder, Amy Perrin OBE, hosted a Connection in the Workplace workshop with Hachette UK, exploring how small actions can build stronger workplace relationships. The session highlighted “random acts of connection” and celebrated their super-connector security guard, who helps create a more connected and welcoming office environment.



Knitting Together

In collaboration with Impact Alliance and BS3 Helping Others, this event brought people together for an afternoon of knitting and craft. Participants created figures, either in person or from home. These were later joined into a human garland, celebrating the importance of human connection and togetherness. This is now planned to continue throughout the year.



Kindred Community Dinner

Hosted by Kindred, this event brought 100 people together with one simple ask: attend alone. Over a three-course meal, strangers shared conversations and connections, creating a space to be present and meet people they may never have otherwise encountered.



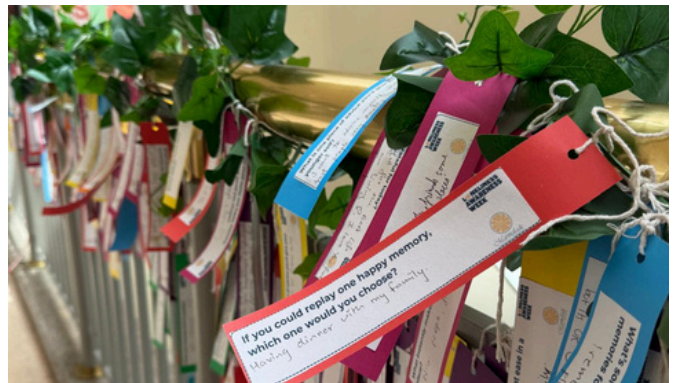


Transport for London, Camerados & Strangers in the City

The London Cable Car hosted Chatty Cabins, a Games Night in collaboration with Marmalade Trust and Strangers In The City, and a Public Living Room with Camerados. They also wrapped their cable cars in our branding for free.

Wall of Feelings

Exchange Ilford shopping centre hosted an interactive Wall of Feelings, offering conversation starter tags and giving visitors the opportunity to write and share their thoughts, encouraging community conversations.



Sky stalls

Sky supported Loneliness Awareness Week by displaying campaign posters and screening the mood film across their stalls and locations throughout the UK.

Connection Bouquets

Once again we teamed up with Direct2Florist who worked with their partners and members across the florist industry to place more than 1k Connection Bouquets across the UK and Ireland for people to find and share throughout the week - including this one next to Paddington Bear shared on social media.



Global engagement.

This year, we placed a greater focus on the global reach of Loneliness Awareness Week than ever before. It was amazing to see countries from around the world engaging with the campaign in unique ways.



Dubai

Loneliness Awareness Week reached new audiences in Dubai this year, with around 1,000 people taking part across a series of events including Chess & Connection Evening: Real Bonds Beyond the Board, business networking, RunForConnection, and a women's breakfast exploring "Why Deep Connection Is Getting Harder". Across the week, conversations highlighted loneliness as a shared lived experience and the importance of creating real human connection in a global city.

Canada

The What Matters to Hatters Coalition had a programme of free community events designed to reduce loneliness and strengthen connections in Medicine Hat. Activities included a Sidewalk Talk listening event, a screening of The Great Disconnect, a "Chatty Table" social space, and a Brews and Board Game Night, alongside shared resources and connection-focused campaigns across the community.



Grab a Cookie, Have a Chat!
Join us
June 15 from 12:00-1:00pm
@ Giant Chess Piece on 2nd Street
Downtown, Medicine Hat

Everyone welcome!



Capitol Hill

Organised by the Foundation for Social Connection Action Network, in partnership with Marmalade Trust and the Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection, the Global Loneliness Awareness Summit brought together leaders, researchers, policymakers, and advocates in Washington, D.C., to advance collective action on loneliness. A special video message from our Founder, Amy Perrin OBE, was also played during the programme.

Thank you to everyone who took part.

Loneliness Awareness Week 2026 was hugely successful in raising awareness, normalising conversations and reducing stigma, but only because so many individuals and organisations chose to support the campaign. We could not do it without your support, so thank you so much!

We would also like to thank the following consultants who were integral to the campaign's success:

- Shaped By
- HEINEKEN UK - Marmalade Trust's corporate charity partner
- Sky
- Big Bang PR
- Di9ital
- My Kind of Marketing
- 42 Group
- Kai Design

Be the first to hear more

Stay connected and be the first to hear more about our plans for Loneliness Awareness Week in 2027! Sign up to the newsletter [here](#) and follow us on social media for regular updates, campaigns, projects and plans:



For more information about our work, visit our websites:

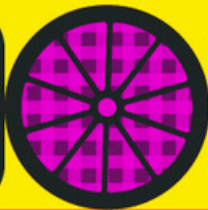
- > [Marmaladetrust.org](https://marmaladetrust.org)
- > [Lonelinessawarenessweek.org](https://lonelinessawarenessweek.org)

Contact us

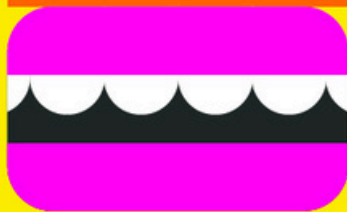
If you'd like to get in contact with our team directly, send us an email at info@marmaladetrust.org. We'd love to hear from you.



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