

# Community solutions to emerging loneliness:

## A service design solution

### Project Brief

Mental Health service aiming to reduce loneliness, which would be provided by a local city council or NHS. The project is addressed to young adults from 18-24 who are moving to achieve better social mobility, as moving for higher education or better job opportunities.

### Abstract

Loneliness is a growing mental health issue that is common in young adults in urban environments which can cause significant stress, lower quality of life, reduced self-esteem and isolation. Untreated loneliness can develop into more severe mental health problems which will lead to a mental health state that is harder to address and relieve.

### Introduction

My project aims to help the lonely individual in two phases; the first prompting the lonely individual to self-develop their social skills to the point in which they are able to create new friendships in a controlled and safe environment.

The second phase is to curate environments in which individuals are able to meet other in similar situations while enjoying a shared hobby or interest, under the supervision of a community champion.

# Phase 1

## Understanding the problem

The first step gets the individual to identify social issues that are preventing them from creating friendships and relationships themselves. These would likely include social anxiety, low self-esteem, hyper-critical bias of their own actions etc.

## Addressing social problems

Addressing social problems between the project and the individual

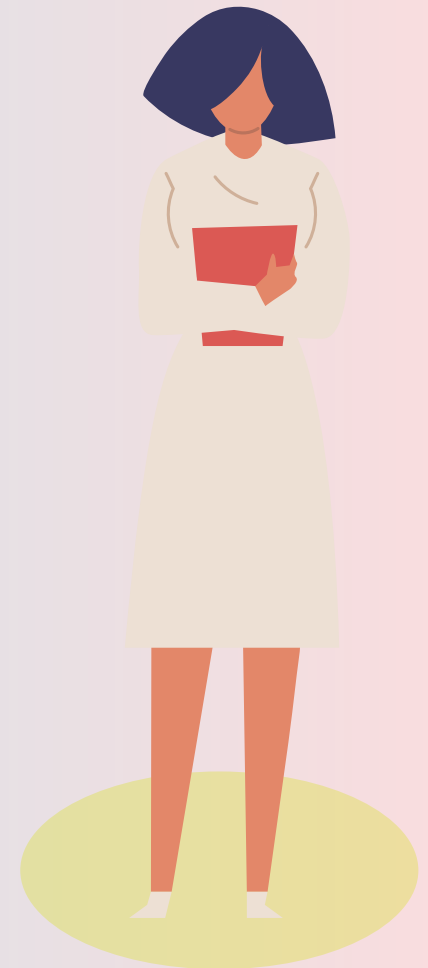
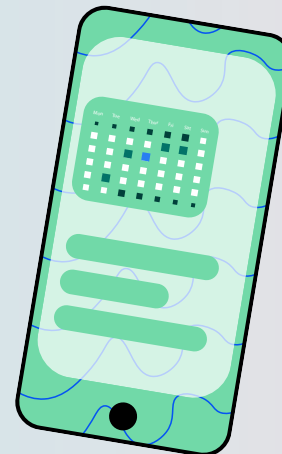
Once issues have been identified with the individual, the project offers two avenues.

The first being a recommendation to contact mental health professionals if the results deem the user to require professional help due to severe mental health issues. This ensures that the individual finds the correct and safest help as soon as possible.

The second route is to work with the App (as a touchpoint for the service) to self-develop. This is conducted through daily or weekly tasks, keeping track of the user's feelings through a mental health planner and helping the individual change their critical perception of their day through activities that encourage the user towards a different point of view

## Preparing the individual for social situations

As the user develops, the project will prompt the user to engage with Phase 2, meeting up with other local members of the community to create relationships with.



# Phase 2

## Community champions

The service design requires the recruitment of community champions which could be selected from existing hobby or sport events that run in the local community already. These existing leaders would be trained with the skills to identify severe mental health problems and provide the information and care as to have the user connected to the correct mental health service. Their main role would be to ensure that the environment is safe for lonely individuals to attend.

On top of this, the community champions would message the user as to arrange the attendance of the user by providing event times, travel help, but most importantly, a face to connect with and ties to the event. This provides a sense of worth to the user and the message that they are wanted to be there.

## Frome Model

Phase 2 has been designed to operate similar to the Frome model, in which the local NHS reduces their contact time between GPs and lonely individuals through social prescriptions. This means the user is recommended to attend local community projects that are tailored to allow community members to meet each other in a relaxed, non-medical surrounding.

This provides a benefit to both the NHS system through reduced man hours, as well as the user, through meaningful interactions in a social setting that provides greater results for them.

## Shared Interest and Hobbies

By using existing social community groups that operate around the subject of a certain hobby it can provide a talking point in which the individual can focus on and share their interests and experience with others. This will help them form relationships that have common ground and significantly increase the likelihood of integration into the group.

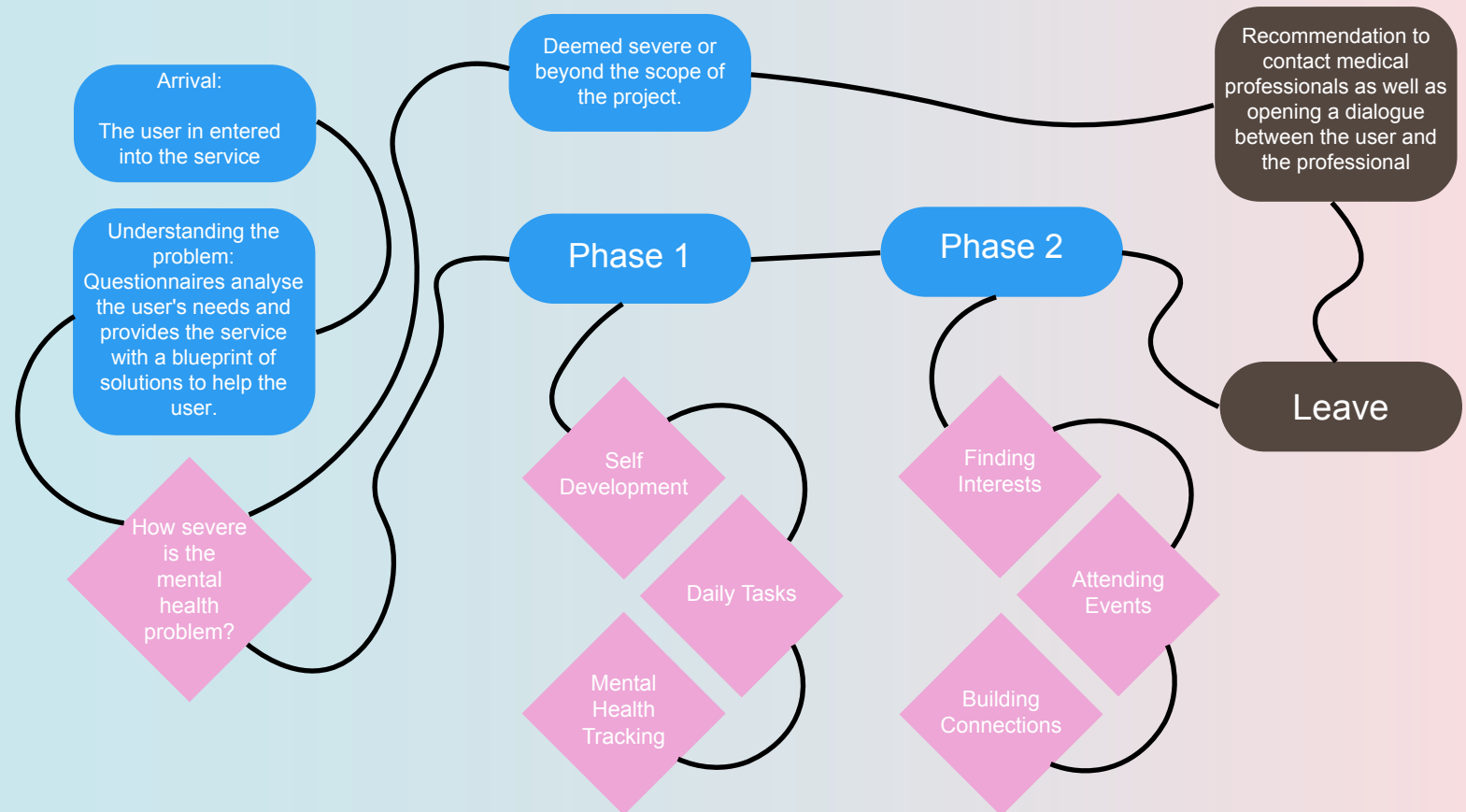


# The benefits of a low cost, low training solution

A service design project will reduce the contact hours required by mental health professionals and provide a solution to a modern-day problem in a community driven and much less medical method. A social problem solved by a social solution.

- Low training, allowing for fast integration of the project into a community
- Community ownership, providing a cause for communities to enact
- NHS supervision, ensuring patient safety and supervision for severe mental health cases
- Largely autonomous and delivered via an App as a touchpoint
- Builds on known success and enhances engagement

Basic Flowchart of proposed service design method.



## Further information

For further information about the service or research found during this project please contact Beau at [BeausmithHenderson@gmail.com](mailto:BeausmithHenderson@gmail.com)

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