

OLDER PEOPLE AND DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

Professor Rose Gilroy

School of Architecture, planning and Landscape

Newcastle university

r.c.gilroy@ncl.ac.uk

@profroseg



Impact of neighbourhood deprivation on disability free life expectancy

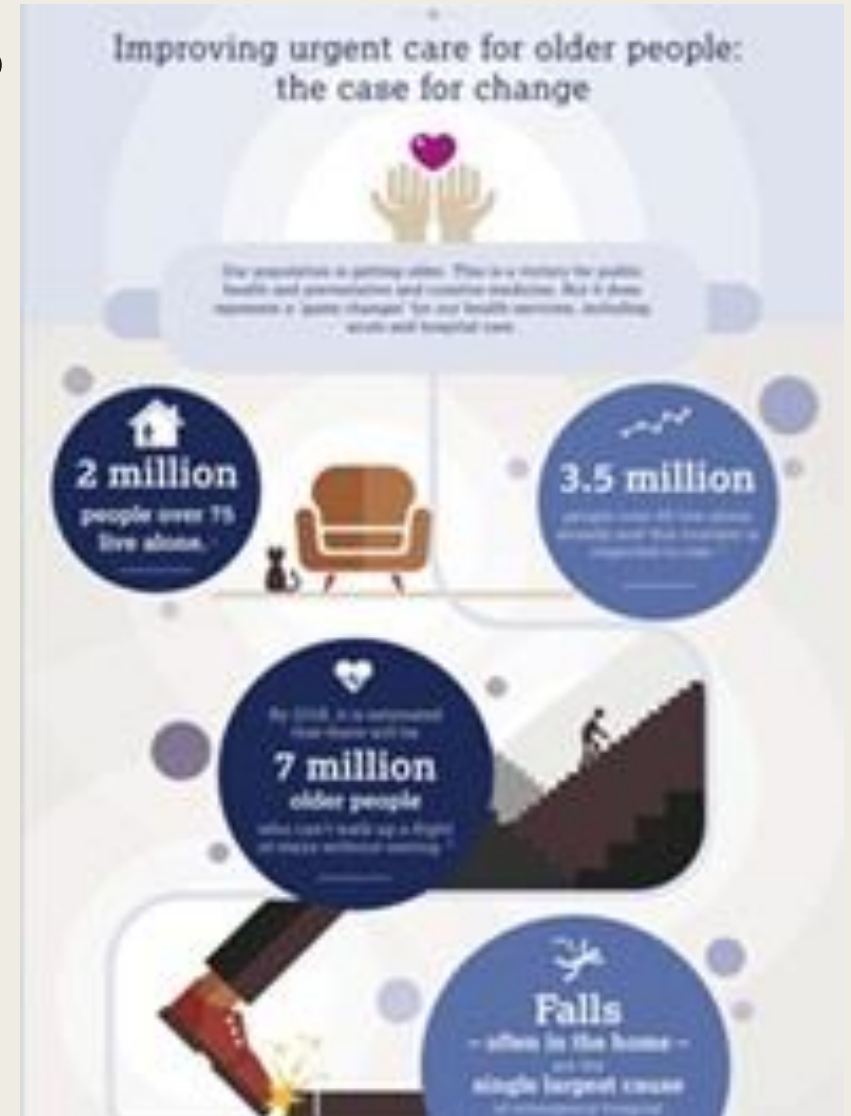
Marmot Fair society: Healthy Lives. 2010



Health draw down of older people in deprived neighbourhoods

Older people in deprived neighbourhoods

- have the highest call rates to NHS Direct [Hsu, Bath, Large, Williams, 2013]
- are significantly more likely to experience mobility difficulties than those in less deprived. The reasons are unclear [Lang, Llewellyn, Langa, Wallace, Melzer, 2008]



The `Inevitable` contraction of public services?

- In the UK (and elsewhere) central government presents the hollowing out of the state as an inevitable consequence of globally created and nationally experienced austerity.
- Experiencing “a process whereby existing forms of association, organisation, identity and creativity are forcibly channelled into the private domain so that value can be siphoned off or extracted anew” (Phillipson, 2012)
- Risks of exclusion arising from public sector withdrawal disproportionately weighted towards groups who are vulnerable through individual or social and community factors

Neighbourhood churn

High turnover can negatively affect place attachment by undermining social networks and by eroding trust and feelings of safety and security

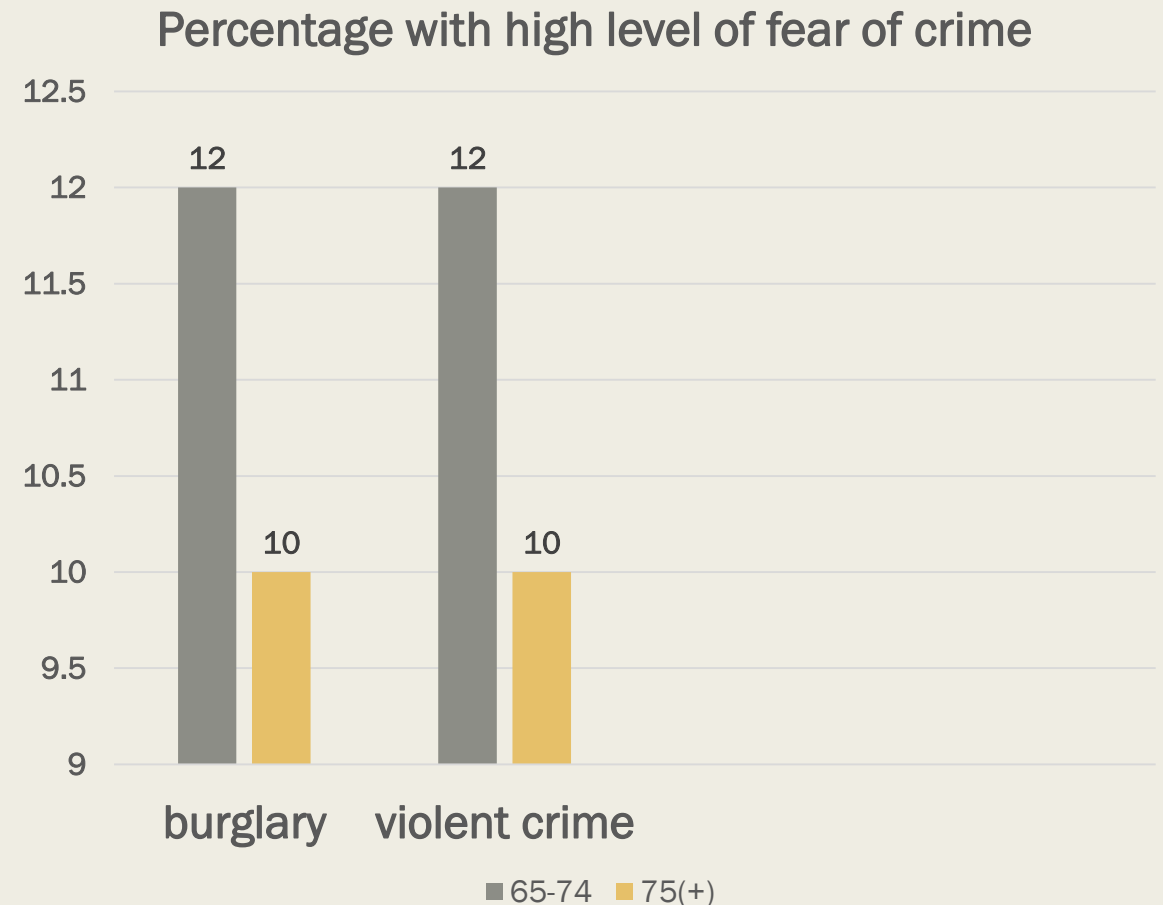
[Livingston, Bailey and Kearns, 2008]

- **Assured shorthold tenancies**
- **BEDROOM TAX – 500,000 AFFECTED**
- Restrictions on length of social housing tenancies
- **Pay to stay**

When you live alone, life happens outside but...

Living in unsafe neighbourhoods makes people reluctant to leave their homes or get to know their neighbours that contributes to deprivation

[Kotecha, Arthur, Coutinho, Bartlett, Frew, Gilroy, Taylor, 2013]



Source: AgeUK 2016 Age Profile

Decline in everyday services: impact on `20 minute neighbourhood`

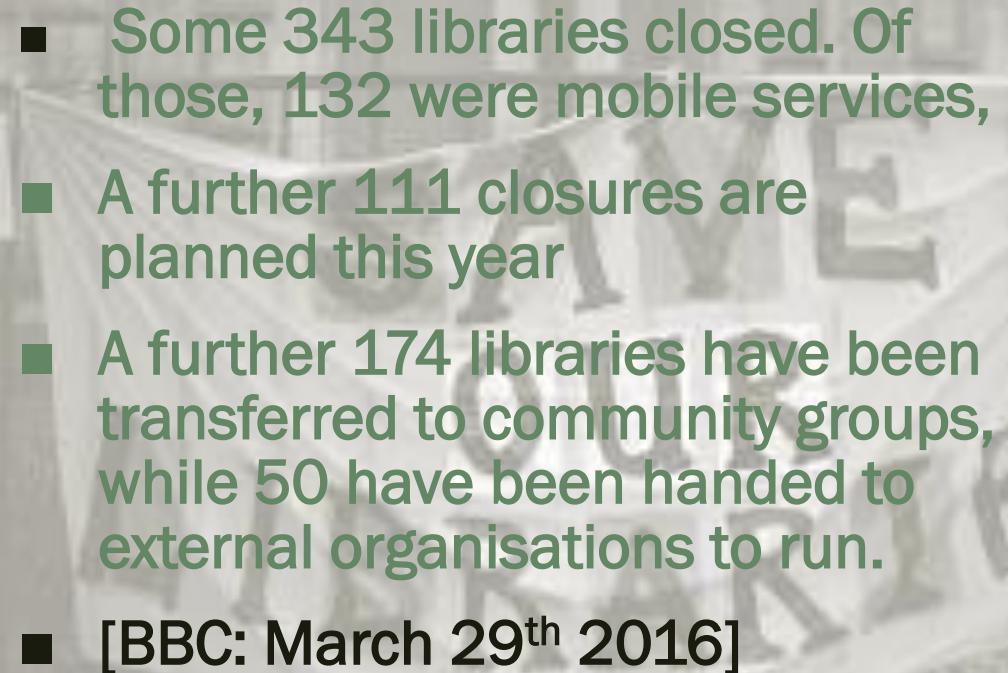
- 2,000 bus routes cut, altered, or withdrawn 2010-2015
- 2,500 bank branch closures expected by 2018
- Rise of the `toxic high street`



Community Participation

Participation in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community ... allows older people to continue to exercise their competence to enjoy respect and esteem and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships

[WHO Age Friendly City Guide 2007]

- 
- Some 343 libraries closed. Of those, 132 were mobile services,
 - A further 111 closures are planned this year
 - A further 174 libraries have been transferred to community groups, while 50 have been handed to external organisations to run.
 - [BBC: March 29th 2016]

How older people feel about their immediate physical and social environment may be more significant to their mental well-being than any objective area-level measure of deprivation

WHAT HELPS?

Community

- Being together with other people
- Community cafes & drop-ins
- Informal relaxed ways of coming together
- Access to transport
- Transport needs to be flexible
- Enough time & good information
- Training for carers
- Communication between volunteers, volunteer groups & communities

Education

- School

Services that are more holistic

- Extra care & other services can help people stay connected & involved

Being clear about needs & wants

Listen first

At first I was giving him support, then I realised he was helping me!

Finding & making use of volunteers

Mental Support

UP

Noticeboard

Not A One Way Street, June 2011, graphics by Ren Mendonça

But they'd [old people] see the same people each week and it gives them the chance to talk to different people because they need to get out and if there is somewhere to get out and obviously if they haven't got the money to go out then that's their breaking point. And a lot of them they can't obviously go very far either

[National Audit Office]



Conclusions

- Any age friendly strategies including housing need to address issues of inequality.
- Good quality housing is not enough to deliver a good quality of life. Neighbourhood context and a supportive infrastructure of every day life needs to be in place.
- If the public sector cannot, or will not, provide then how do we work creatively with different partners including business to deliver what is needed?