



Talk/**together**: Open call for evidence

/Together is a new coalition that invites us all to help build a kinder, closer and more connected society, at a local and national level, and in the aftermath of COVID-19. It is a coalition that anyone can join, from community groups to the UK's best-known organisations.

/Together includes representatives from our major faiths; from the worlds of culture, the media and business; from charities and from sport. We have also built a strong group of experts, which includes organisations working with migrants and refugees, on inter-faith relations, inter-generational connection, loneliness, online civility and other areas relevant to healing social divisions. You can find out more about who is involved and who is supporting **/Together** on our website www.together.org.uk.

On 5th July, the birthday of the NHS, over 14 million people across the UK came together in a shared moment of thanks to those who had helped them through the crisis. **/Together** believes that moments like these, when we come together to focus on what we have in common, are an important part of achieving our aims of a kinder and more connected society. Now we want to find out how we can do more of this.

The **Talk/**together**** project is a national conversation that everyone can be part of - about what unites and divides us, and how we can help reconnect with each other. We want to find out whether the COVID-19 crisis has helped bring us closer together – and how we keep hold of that new community spirit into the future.

As part of **Talk/**together**** we are putting out an open call for evidence. We are asking organisations and individuals to think about the questions below and send in evidence to talktogether@together.org.uk. We are particularly interested to hear about initiatives that have been successful in bridging social divisions and building more connected communities.

Please don't feel you need to answer all of the questions below. We don't want to take you away from your essential work, so feel free to make your answers short. You can also film what you want to say on your camera, transferring the file by WeTransfer or posting on Twitter and tagging @togethercoalit.

The deadline for submitting evidence is Monday 30th November 2020.

Questions

1. Has the UK – including your local community - become more or less socially divided in recent years?
2. What social divisions worry you most and why?
3. What has been the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on social division and connection?

4. How can we keep hold of the community spirit that was manifest during the early days of the COVID-19 crisis?
5. Does volunteering help bring people together? How can we increase the proportions of people who give their time as volunteers, including among groups who are less likely to give their time in this way?
6. How can we make sure that social media is used for the good rather than being something that increases hatred and division?
7. What do you think business and employers should be doing to bridge social divides and bring people together? And what about schools and colleges, civil society and councils?
8. Are there examples of good practice or initiatives, that you would like to share, that you think have been effective in dealing with social division and isolation? We would like to hear about the reasons for the success of these projects.
9. What policy change or practical action would help bridge the social divides you are concerned about, both in our local communities and across the UK?