



Isolation

# How Oak Engage combats isolation in the workplace



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## Introduction

The rise of hybrid working since the pandemic has offered employers and businesses a [whole raft of benefits](#), not least the better work life balance that hybrid working can offer employees. Hybrid working is a [key indicator](#) for people looking for new roles. However, this does mean that employees are more likely to experience isolation with an increased amount of time spent away from their office and colleagues.

Workplace isolation can occur when employees feel disconnected to their colleagues or employer. We'll look at the key causes of workplace isolation and how Oak can help by offering increased support to all employees, by building a better culture and engaging your workforce.

**This whitepaper will cover various aspects of workplace isolation and the solutions including:**

- Isolation that occurs from a hybrid work environment
- Isolation caused within the office
- Oak's Solutions to workplace isolation
  1. Timeline
  2. Mobile access
  3. Hubs
  4. Employee Recognition
  5. Reporting & Insights

## Isolation causes within the workplace

Isolation caused by dispersed working environments may be the most familiar and prominent version of isolation in the workplace that employees currently face. With such a large increase in businesses adopting a hybrid model over a short space of time, businesses who may have seen very little employee isolation previously may now be experiencing a rise in employees becoming more isolated.

Awareness around mental health in the workplace has thankfully risen in prominence since the pandemic. More people are now open about sharing concerns and issues they may be experiencing. If you're experiencing more people discussing topics like this then a knee jerk reaction can simply be to revert back to more office based working and increasing time spent in the office which some businesses are [keen to do](#).

However this isn't likely to solve the issues. Workplace isolation isn't restricted to employees simply working on their own in a different location to their colleagues or having a different work pattern because of this. Just as much, isolation can occur within office spaces, through things like age differences, work cliques, overall company culture or poor onboarding and induction processes. While hybrid working may be the most obvious effect, the cause can be rooted deeper within the organisation and be caused by;

### 1 Lack of communication

When employees are not encouraged to communicate with one another or there is a lack of opportunities to do so, it can lead to feelings of isolation.

### 2 Organisational structure

Certain organisational structures can create isolation by separating departments or teams, making it difficult for employees to interact and collaborate with one another.



### **3 Discrimination, harassment and work cliques**

Employees who are subjected to discrimination or harassment may feel ostracised and isolated from their colleagues. Workplace cliques can also cause isolation when individuals are excluded from conversations and feeling left out of both work and social activities.

### **4 Personal factors**

Employees who are introverted or shy may have a harder time connecting with others in the workplace, leading to feelings of isolation. This can lead to those individuals becoming more reclusive and absent within the workplace.

### **5 High turnover**

Frequent turnover can create a sense of instability and disrupt the social dynamics in the workplace, leading to isolation among employees. Changes to team dynamics can cause issues and anxiety for people who have been within the same company or in the same job for many years. These changes to team dynamics can lead to isolation when employees feel they cannot connect and engage with the rest of the team.

### **6 Lack of recognition**

When employees feel that their contributions are not valued or recognized, it can lead to feelings of disengagement and isolation.

## Solutions

Oak Engage offers solutions that improve connectivity with your employees, break down barriers and highlight your company culture, increasing productivity engagement and connectivity to you and your employees.


Oak Engage goes beyond operating as simply 'an intranet' and document management system (although it does these things exceptionally well). It contains a whole host of features designed around a better employee experience and social features to integrate your workforce wherever they're based and whoever they are.


## Timeline

Oak is based around our central timeline feature which can be added to homepages to keep all employees connected and involved with the day-to-day goings on in your business. Anyone from anywhere in the business can post and upload to a timeline to keep colleagues updated with news, stories, updates and more. With the ability to like and comment, the timeline features encourages two way communication in a relaxed environment to further gather pace and uptake within your workforce.


Less formal than email or other communication channels it can help to initially break down barriers for employees and adds a social media feel to updates. Your employees already know how to use it, so it's not another system that they need to learn before they can interact with it, leading to a lot of people not bothering on how to use it. Oak is easy and simple for all users.


## How Oak combats isolation in the workplace

 Stephens Timeline


 **John Thurston**  
6 days ago


[John Smith](#), well done on the Q1 finance presentation, some great insights and data.


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 **Mason Moorfield**  
6 days ago


We have some brilliant suggestions coming in via the [employee feedback](#) form - thanks to those that have submitted feedback.


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 **Marie Theaker**  
2 months ago



Check out our latest company update from last week, let me know if anyone has any questions!

 3 [View Post](#)


 My News



06 March 2023

**2023 Office Guidance**


We've updated some of our policies and office guidance for this year.



20 February 2023

**Cycle Challenge**

Read how the employees of Oak got on with the cycle challenge round Northumberland.



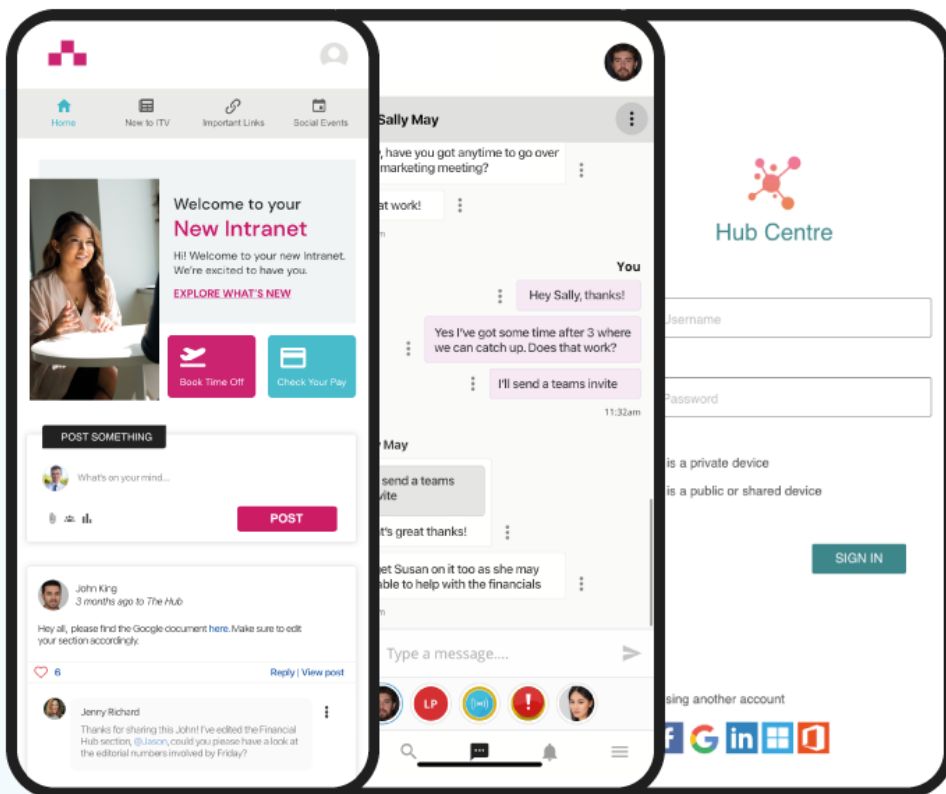
18 February 2023

**Wellbeing Initiatives**

Find our tips and tricks to improve your wellbeing whilst working remote.

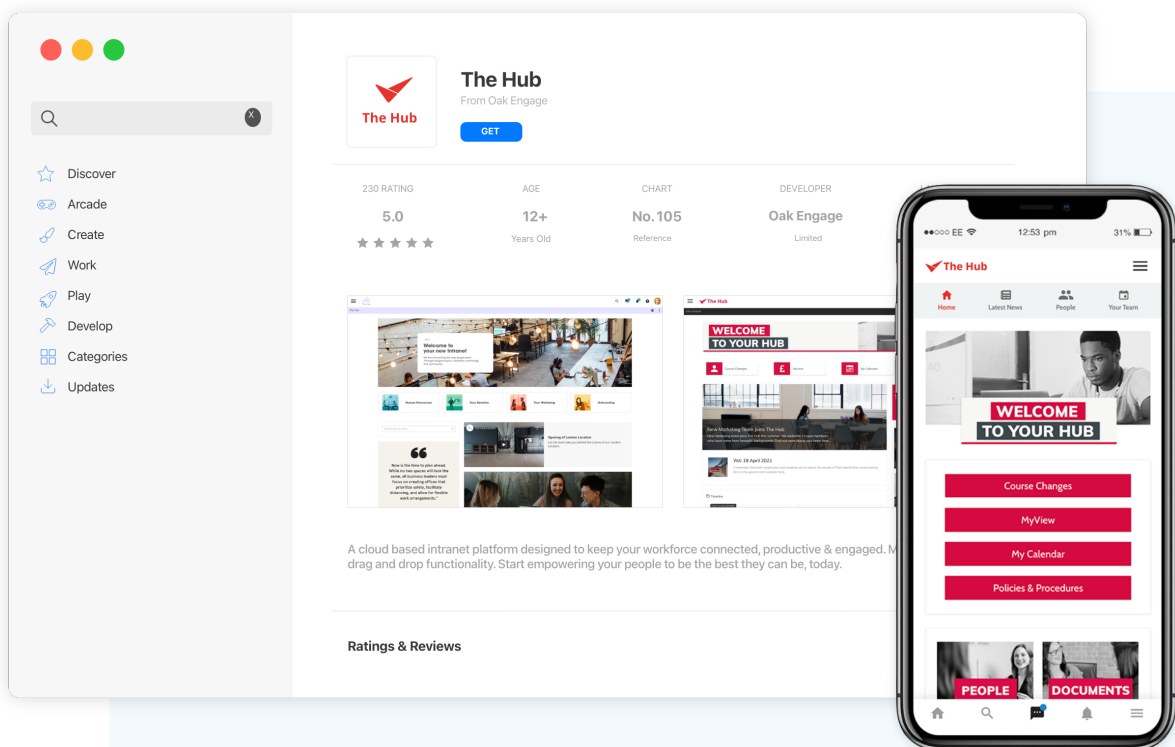
## Mobile App

A mobile application is vital for employees in today's climate. So many businesses are operating with a mix of employees who are desk based and deskless, and some who are mobile i.e. not always at their laptops or computers. Utilising a mobile app makes sense to keep everyone connected for news and updates through easy access and push notifications as delivery methods. When we approach the social aspect of what Oak can offer to combat isolation it's not just 'another channel' for messaging to get lost within but a lifeline to being connected to your team and colleagues. It allows you to keep connected, wherever you are or whenever you want. Knowing you have the ability to check something on the move, connect to a friend or more can have a big impact on keeping employees engaged and less like they're working alone.



With the Oak app, not only is it fully customisable both to your needs with what features and functionality can be displayed within it, it's also fully branded for your business becoming an extension of your values and culture. This in turn creates a fully immersive experience for any employee accessing the app. With a hybrid workforce, creating a really good app experience becomes a new office space for all employees keeping them aligned when they're out of the office.

From a business perspective, the app is fully secure and available from the app store with 2-factor authentication. Employees are able to download the device to their own devices, meaning no large outlay costs of providing work mobiles for an entire workforce to maintain high levels of security.

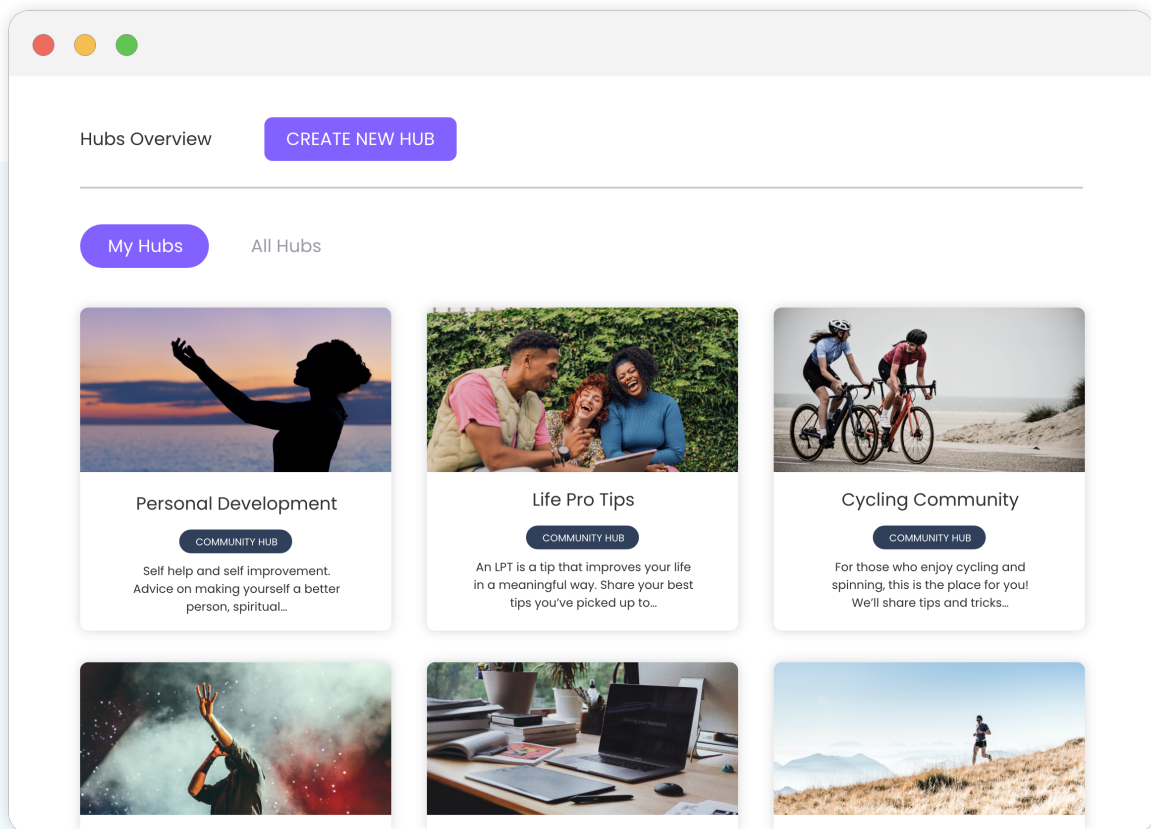




# Hubs

A powerful tool within Oak's toolbox are collaborative spaces known simply as 'Hubs'. Hubs can be open or closed groups that have great use for colleagues to come together to work on collaborative projects. If the employees working together are dispersed then Hubs provides a virtual meeting room where you can share and access information and documents for your needs.

Hubs have much more flexibility and potential though, there's no limit on what you can set a hub for. We see companies using them for running clubs, book clubs, gaming societies and more. Whatever you need a hub to be, you can make one.

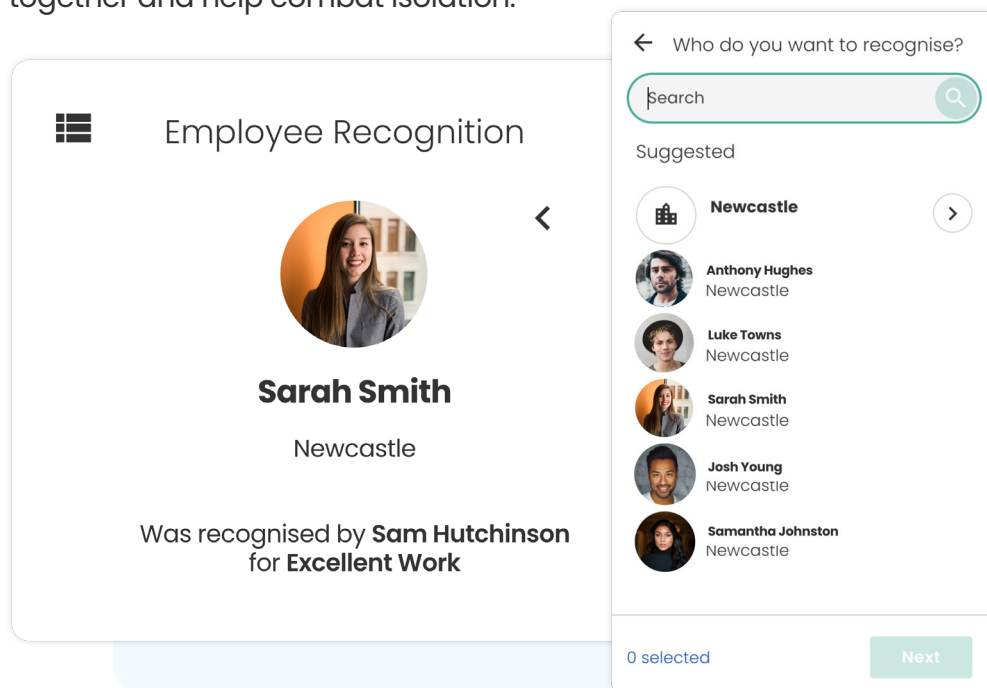


As we spend so much time within our working environments, naturally friendships do build. However in larger organisations, it can be harder to find people who share the same interests as you, this can be compounded with hybrid working as you might not even meet certain people depending on when you're in the office.

Hubs enable your employees to find others who share similar interests and come together increasing their wellbeing. A benefit of hubs is that by being virtual, they're a good place to help inclusion with people who may be quite anxious about joining groups or clubs. Rather than needing to attend in person, you can do so virtually and do a lot of things online, helping to break down barriers to get involved and also remain involved with work colleagues even when not in the office.

## Employee Recognition

Oak's Employee Recognition is a great way to engage and show appreciation to other employees within your organisation. This provides a simple and effective way for employees to feel valued and appreciated. Colleagues can easily show their appreciation to others with tailored messages, fostering a positive culture of appreciation and recognition. This can be a powerful tool to bring employees together and help combat isolation.

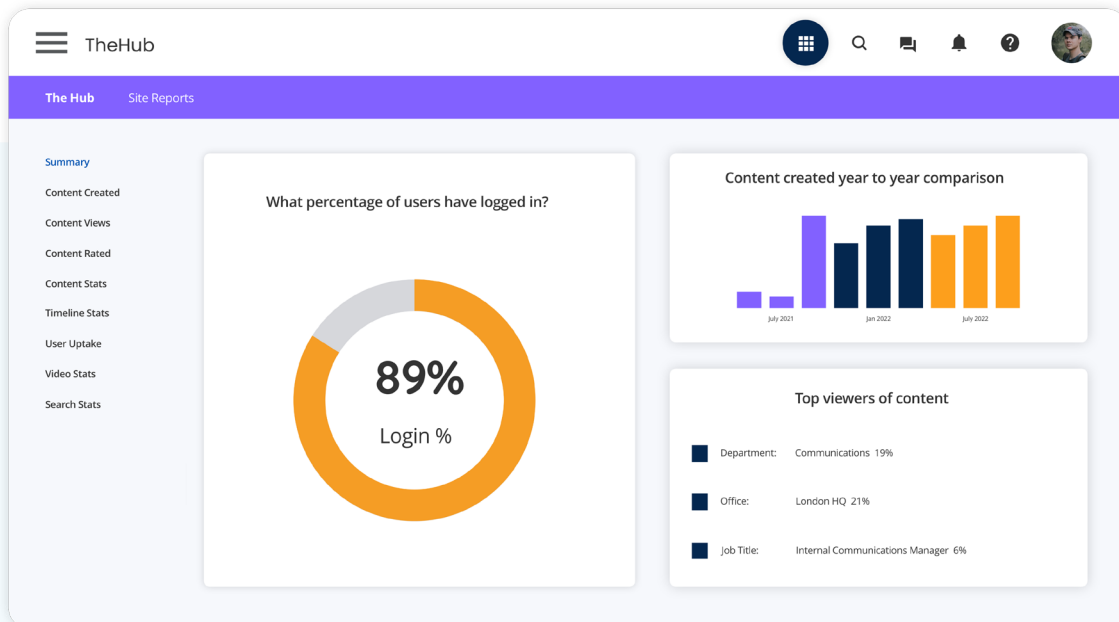


## Reporting and insights

While Oak offers huge flexibility on the tools that are available for employees, it also helps offer insight into how your workforce feel and what you can do as a business to help engagement, productivity and support wellbeing.

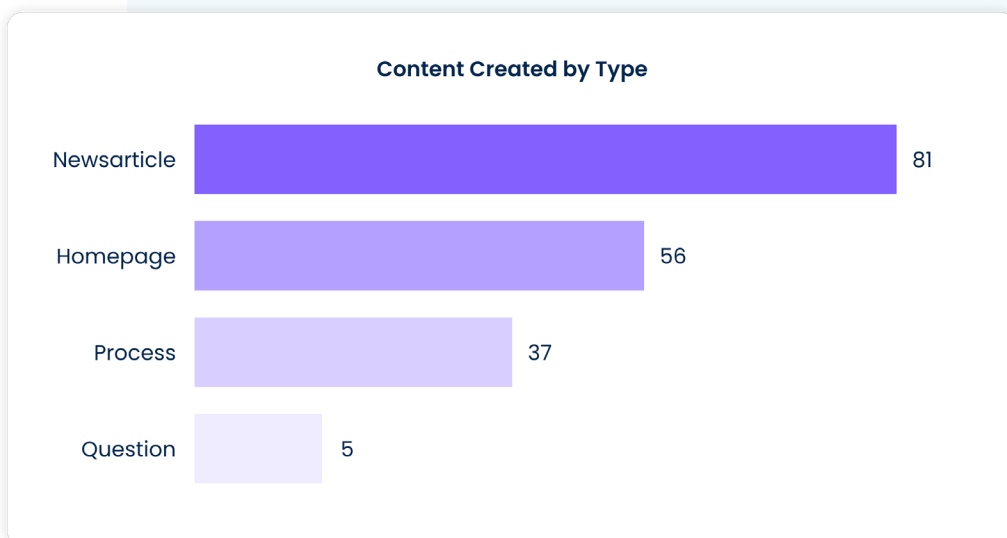
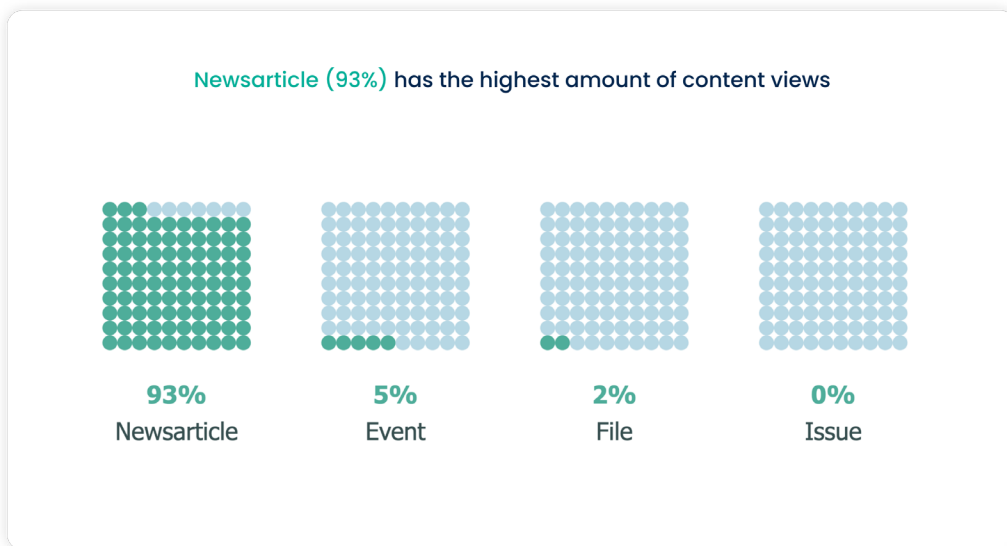
Oak's reporting offers leading analytics, tracks and proves that the right message reaches the right people. Measure when employees log in, how often they're using the system as well as reporting on all content including views, what's been created with specific details available per page / piece of content, all of which can be easily exported into excel tables for use outside of your intranet.

Create Feedback surveys to listen to your employees and gather real actionable insight into how they're feeling. Through this, you can enable meaningful change that will resonate with your employees and support the feedback they're giving you. If required, feedback can be kept anonymous to offer further confidence and security to your employees that they won't be singled out and it offers you a true view into how your employees are feeling.



You've gathered feedback and implemented change, but Oak also supports your business with quick polls. These can be added to homepages to measure how employees are feeling once change has been put in place so you can see the benefit of those changes and how it's affecting your employees for the better.

With these feedback tools being inbuilt into Oak you aren't relying on having to send out emails which may get lost within or inboxes or use third party apps and companies incurring more time and expense. By using these tools within Oak you're more likely to get data and insights from your employees as it's in one place and offers you a real time picture of the sentiment in your business.





To find out more about how Oak can support all your employees in and out of the workplace, book a demo.

[\*\*Book a demo\*\*](#)