

**ACTION**

**SEGMENTATION**

*Date:* 07 September 2020 *From:* Simon Ridley

*Deadline:* N/A

**SUMMARY**

1. We have considered the possibility of segmenting the population as an alternative to a full national lockdown, with the aim of allowing normal economic activity to continue amongst the less vulnerable whilst protecting the most vulnerable. Our analysis, and work done by SAGE, concludes we are unlikely to be able to deliver segmentation successfully. We therefore propose focusing on a softer form of segmentation where we would sharpen protection of the most vulnerable, using the lessons learned from shielding and our experience in care homes to protect the most vulnerable if prevalence rises, sharper communication on behavioural risk, and limiting social contact to keep suppressing the virus in the general population.

**WHAT IS SEGMENTATION?**

2. Segmentation in its strongest form means dividing society into two distinct groups based on criteria of risk (in its simplest form by age) and isolating the higher-risk group from the rest of society and enabling others to continue to live as normal a life as possible. Hard segmentation effectively creates a fully segregated society.
3. We are not set up to deliver a segregated society. It would require a complete overhaul in the delivery of public services to account for a parallel society, as well as economic support to large portions of the population for an indefinite period. It would also create a society that divides thousands of families, which would have long term societal and mental health impacts.
4. There are softer forms of segmentation that focus more on protecting the most vulnerable involving smarter shielding, sharper communication of behavioural and personal risk, tougher enforcement, and reducing social contact (See paragraph 10).