



# Generations Working Together

**Intergenerational approaches to  
improving health and wellbeing**



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This briefing paper aims to answer the following questions:

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### Aim

The aim of this paper is to raise awareness of how intergenerational approaches can contribute to improving health and wellbeing. Generations Working Together provides support and information to enable community health groups, voluntary groups and other organisations see the value of this work and consequently be able to recognise the importance of intergenerational approaches for health.

This paper shares existing evidence and seeks to encourage further development of evidence gathering using intergenerational practice to improving health and active ageing which supports healthier lifestyles and greater personal independence, and reduces the social isolation of vulnerable groups.

### Introduction

We are living in a time of great change with greater geographic mobility, a change in family structures and a huge demographic shift towards an ageing population. By 2035 Scotland's population is projected to rise by 10%; however, this increase is not spread evenly across all age groups of the population.

Projections between now and 2035 predict that the number of people aged 60+ will rise to more than 1.7 million (46% increase on 2010). The number of people 75+ is projected to rise to almost 740,000 by 2035 (82% increase). The number of children aged under 16 is projected to increase by only 3% from 0.91 to 0.94 million in 2035. (1)

Population ageing is taking place in every country across the world. It is one of our most significant social challenges, but it should be considered an opportunity rather than a concern if we acknowledge the rich asset this releases for society. (2)

It can be argued that older and younger people are becoming increasingly disconnected due to age segregated activities and living arrangements; change to family patterns; breakdown of traditional community structures and policy interventions of services that target only specific groups. (3)

However, both groups have skills and resources of considerable value to each other and share many areas of common concern. Intergenerational activity is one way of addressing the issues that are key to all generations.

A review of the literature supports this analysis by demonstrating that intergenerational practice is effective in achieving outcomes, such as reducing stereotyping and ageism between generations; achieving some *Every Child Matters* outcomes for children and young people; improving the health and wellbeing of older people; and reducing loneliness and social exclusion, particularly among older people. (4)

# 1. What is health and wellbeing and how can we improve it?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as ‘a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.’ There are many factors that impact health and many can be influenced. The main determinants of health are well documented and the model widely cited by Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991) illustrates that many factors play a part in determining lifetime health and wellbeing. These include aspects such as poverty, poor housing, low levels of education and poor transport infrastructure. These can have a direct impact on both individual and community health. As well as individual factors, wider networks, such as those facilitated through intergenerational practice, can clearly play a role.

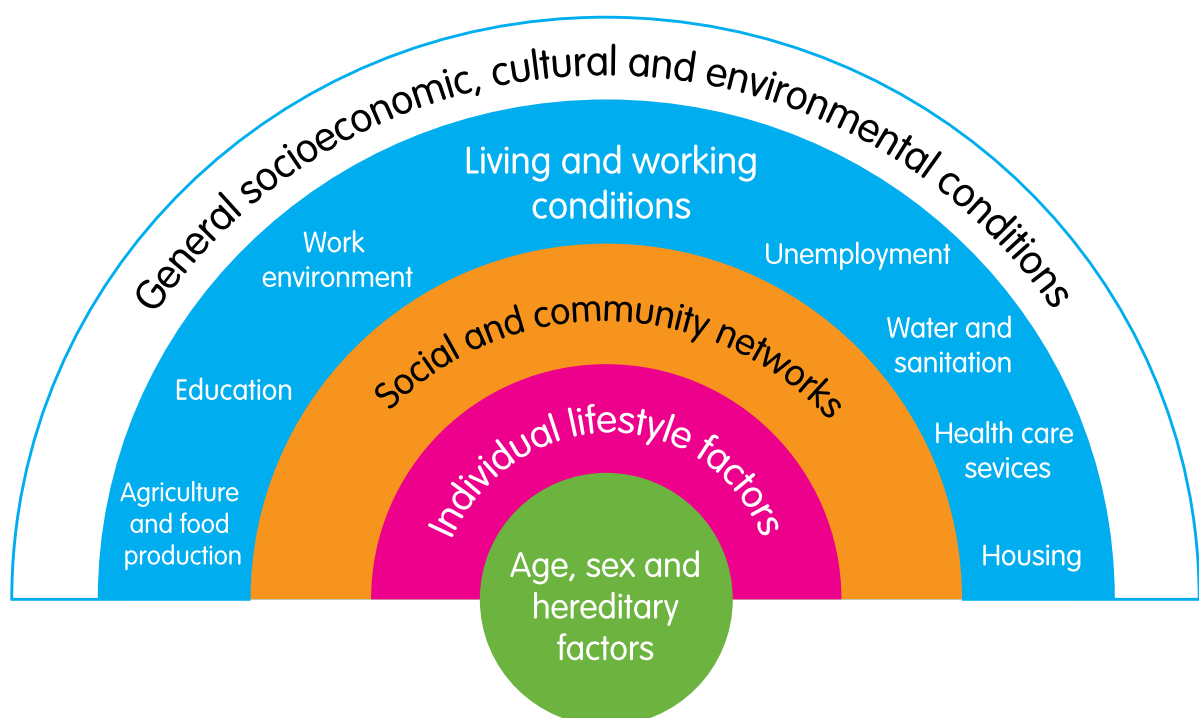
The Scottish Government aims to create a healthier Scotland by helping people to improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care.

There are 16 national outcomes that are outlined by the government. For the purpose of this paper the most relevant outcomes are:

- We live longer, healthier lives.
- Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it.
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

All 16 outcomes can be viewed at <http://goo.gl/mLyTha>

Over the past 20 years, health improvement has contributed to improving the population’s average health, but it may also have contributed to the widening of health inequalities as the most advantaged groups were better placed to hear and act upon health improvement messages.





Health inequalities are measurable differences in standards of health (e.g. unfair differences in health within the population across social classes or between population groups).

It is important that health and other inequalities are considered and addressed when planning to use an intergenerational approach.

While health and social care systems are crucial for older people, numerous determinants of healthy and active ageing lie beyond the health system. Some of these influence older people directly, for example living in a neighbourhood that is safe, where other people can be seen on the streets. This encourages older people to engage

more in community activities. But active ageing is a lifelong process, and these same neighbourhoods can also increase the likelihood of younger people being physically active. This is positive for younger people's health and helps to ensure that when they, too, transition to older age, they do so from a stronger base. (5)

Intergenerational practice provides a setting that can help to relieve isolation and involve people in community activities, contributing to improved general health and wellbeing. It can promote positive behaviours by sharing skills and creating safe environments for activities and exchanging life skills and experiences. This can be demonstrated in the project examples later in the paper.

## 2. What are intergenerational practice (IP) and intergenerational learning (IL)?



### **Generations Working Together (GWT) shares a strong affinity to this commonly used definition of IP:**

'Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promotes greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the different generations have to offer each other and those around them.' (6)

Granville (7) suggests that an intergenerational activity will involve younger people aged up to 25 working with older people aged 50 or over.

### **The European Map of Intergenerational Learning (EMIL) defines intergenerational learning as:**

'The way that people of all ages can learn together and from each other. IL is an important part of Lifelong Learning, where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge. Beyond the transfer of knowledge, IL fosters reciprocal learning relationships between different generations and helps to develop \*social capital and social cohesion in our ageing societies. IL is one way of addressing the significant demographic change we are experiencing across Europe and is as a way of enhancing intergenerational solidarity through intergenerational practice.' (8)

\* 'Social capital refers to connections among individuals - social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called 'civic virtue'. The difference is that 'social capital' calls attention to the fact that 'civic virtue' is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations.' **Robert Putnam.**

**The European Network of Intergenerational Learning (ENIL) defines IL as:**

*'A learning partnership based on reciprocity and mutuality involving people of different ages where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge.'* (9)

She makes a distinction from 'multigenerational working', which can also involve the generation between these two age groups. The Beth Johnson Foundation definition refers to younger people (normally 25 and under) and older people (usually 50+); however, Generations Working Together encourages projects and organisations to work across all generations.

Recent guidelines published by Generations Working Together Bringing Together Local Authorities and Intergenerational Practice in a Scottish Policy Context (2012) (10) details Pinto et al's (2009) (11) set of eight core principles which should be taken into account when adopting an intergenerational approach. These are: mutual and reciprocal benefit, generations participating, asset based, well planned, culturally grounded, strengthens community bonds and promotes active citizenship, challenges ageism, and cross-disciplinary.

When we consider the earlier definition of IP with its emphasis on mutuality, connection and shared benefit we can see that building intergenerational connectivity contributes to strong social capital and greater cohesion. (12)

Intergenerational work can unlock assets and experiences that younger and older people can offer each other and their

local community. Older people offer life experience, wisdom, talents and skills that are often forgotten, and a unique perspective within their local community. They make important contributions as family members, carers, volunteers and as active participants in the workforce. Longer life expectancy means a greater opportunity to contribute for longer to society. Young people bring a new and refreshing view of the changing world we live in as well as qualities such as energy, creativity and enthusiasm.

We need to change our thought processes from a deficit-based one of always looking for problems, such as loitering in parks and on street corners, consuming community resources, being threatening, and older people needing to be cared for, to instead take an asset-based view looking positively at the resources, experiences and knowledge that young and old people possess and have to share. Additionally, ageist stereotypes, such as portraying older people as being a burden rather than a resource have very often led us to



focus on short-term ways to minimise the cost of ageing rather than maximising opportunities for older people to contribute.

We must support people to live long healthy lives, create more opportunities for younger and older workers, enable older people to remain active in society and build an age friendly environment. Younger and older people need to be regarded as part of the solution rather than being the problem.

Dr Alan Hatton-Yeo MBE, advocates that when IP works well it can be a very powerful tool for change, but the reasons why it is essential also creates a challenge. Our society is planned around siloed age-segmented services that are often caught up in concerns over risk and regulations that create barriers to normal human interaction. (13)

The latter may create challenges within partnerships and projects. However, these can be addressed at the planning stage of an activity or project.

An Introduction to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme - This publication gives an overview of the scheme, explaining terminology and clarifying who needs to join. It also puts the PVG scheme in the context of intergenerational practice by providing relevant examples. (14)



The following GWT publication will help you to identify the risk and regulations in regards to the protection of vulnerable groups and the steps you may consequently have to take to address these.

Further information can be found at the following websites:

**[www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/)**

Central Registered Body Scotland (CRBS) at **[www.crbs.org.uk/](http://www.crbs.org.uk/)**

'Bridging the Generation Gap (2011)' details the journey of four IG projects in Scotland. Evaluations of the projects explore the benefits of IP within a youth work setting and the challenges and opportunities for effective IP. Findings show that IP can make a real difference to people even in a short time frame. Given longer term sustainable, funding and robust support and advice they believe that IP could lead to further significant and long lasting benefits. (15)



### 3. What are the drivers and opportunities for intergenerational practice to improve health in Scotland?



#### **There are a number of drivers for IP in Scotland and across Europe.**

All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population (16) identified six priority areas for strategic action; one is forging better links between the generations. Through this strategy, the government invited the public, private, voluntary, community, older and younger people's organisations to develop intergenerational work in their areas.

Four major areas were outlined including:

- public sector organisations – including NHS Boards, Police, Fire & Rescue and local authorities, creating opportunities for older and younger people to interact positively in their area, for example in classrooms and in the governance arrangements for schools, in youth work, in services for older people, and in sport, culture and leisure
- private sector – businesses working on how their older employees might help develop the skills and capacity of young people, both within companies and in the wider community
- voluntary sector – voluntary organisations developing further opportunities for older and younger people to work together and share experiences
- community – older and younger people seeking opportunities to contribute to the development of other generations, for example as role models, experienced working colleagues and as volunteers.

The Treaty of Lisbon made intergenerational solidarity an explicit aim for the functioning of the European Union. Further visibility was given to this goal through the launch, of a European day on intergenerational solidarity – this is held on 29 April every year. (17)

The European Union designated 2012 as the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. (18)

This initiative aimed to help create better job opportunities and working conditions for the growing numbers of older people in Europe, help them play an active role in society, and encourage healthy ageing and independent living. One of the main goals of the European Year was to reverse the idea that older people are a burden on society.

As Europeans live longer and healthier lives, governments are looking for ways to involve older people more in society and to keep them active. These changes could result in promoting the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of older members of society.

As part of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012 the Alliance Scotland held an Active Ageing conference. Conference participants, including those from older people's groups set out a series of solutions that they believed could assist in maximising opportunities for older people in their local communities and enable them to contribute in a proactive way.

One solution considers the role of intergenerational activity in facilitating and improving understanding between younger and older people.

These solutions are described as the twelve propositions for active ageing and can be found in the conference report on page 46 at the following link: <http://goo.gl/mrX1Eu>



There are further opportunities available where intergenerational approaches can contribute to the achievement of targets and outcomes:

- The Reshaping Care for Older People Programme, the Change Fund and a greater focus on preventative spend has created opportunities to bring together organisations, individuals and policy makers to develop strategic approaches to healthy and active ageing in Scotland. As well as benefiting participants and the communities, IP projects also support local authorities in meeting local outcomes, which are aligned to the National Performance Framework.
- The 2014 Commonwealth Games.
- Luminare: Scotland's creative ageing festival – [www.luminatescotland.org](http://www.luminatescotland.org)
- The aspiration to create an All-Age-Friendly Europe by 2020 - [www.age-platform.eu](http://www.age-platform.eu)

World Health Organization (WHO) defines 'age-friendly communities' as one that optimises opportunities for health participation and security as people age. In an age-friendly community, policies, services and infrastructure are designed to respond flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences. (19)

The Global Network of age-friendly Cities and Communities is taking practical steps to create physical and social

environments that foster healthy and active ageing. Edinburgh and Glasgow are both members of the UK Network of Cities affiliated to the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. <http://goo.gl/ZJtysP>

The Go for Gold Challenge targets the residential and care sector with a choice of challenges to engage older people and encourage them to become more active. The challenge will feature in the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan. The plan is to continue implementing the five physical activity challenges with partners across the care sector in Scotland (the Games Challenge, the Dance With Me Challenge, the Walk With Me Challenge, the Triathlon Challenge and Creating Your Own Challenge).

Participating local partnerships are looking to enhance the Go for Gold programme through developing the

themes of intergenerational activity and community engagement. To support those working in and with the residential and care sector, the Care Inspectorate Scotland and the British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health have co-produced a new resource called *Care about Physical Activity*. This resource aims to help care homes and their residents consider everyday challenges and move from structured events to regular physical activity.

<http://goo.gl/MCsxqM>

Living It up – is a digitally, enabled, thriving community of opportunities to support better health, wellbeing and active lifestyles in Scotland. Living it Up will provide better connections to information, products, services and the community to help you manage your health and wellbeing. These services can be delivered through familiar technology like a TV, mobile phone, games console, computer or tablet.

[www.livingitup.org.uk/](http://www.livingitup.org.uk/)



## 4. What are the challenges to younger and older people enjoying good health and wellbeing?



As mentioned earlier one of the great achievements of our time has been the increase in life expectancy over the past century. However, this has been accompanied by a growing inequality gap that has meant that more disadvantaged people are not only likely to have a lower life expectancy but also to live more years in poor health at the end of their lives. In 2003 the United Nations identified that one of the great challenges for our societies was to break the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage that was passed through the generations. (20)

Poor health, negative stereotypes and barriers to participation all currently marginalise older people, undermine their contribution to society and increase the costs of population ageing. Investing in health lessens the disease burden, helps prevent isolation and has broader benefits for society by maintaining the independence and productivity of older people.

In 2012, World Health Day (7 April), WHO called for urgent action to ensure that, at a time when the world's population is ageing rapidly, people reach old age in the best possible health and advocated

taking a life-course approach to healthy and active ageing. (21)

Social contact and relations with other people are thought to have a considerable positive influence on an individual's wellbeing and health. (22) Same age institutions and spaces, such as pre-schools, youth centres, sheltered housing and care homes can have the effect of separating generations. Young people and older people can miss out on opportunities for interaction, understanding and learning from each other as a result. The number of community buildings where there was a mix of usage across the ages has diminished as a result of closure of community centres, libraries and other public buildings.

A review of the literature on intergenerational learning involving young children and older people (23) highlights that intergenerational contact between young and old in public spaces has changed due to a growth in technology (IT and digital games), new family-work patterns, more children attending pre-school and after school care, a heightened awareness of risk and urbanisation.

Young children are now less likely to play on the street, in parks, villages and town centres and in other outdoor public spaces where traditionally different generations meet. The report goes on to say that research conducted by Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People found that only 5% of those aged over 65 years had any form of structured contact with local children. Almost 64% of the EU-27 (at this time the European Union had 27 member states) population (aged 15 and above) questioned agreed that there were not enough opportunities for older and younger people to meet and work together in associations and local community initiatives. (24)

We know that lower educational attainment and more limited employment opportunities are a high risk factor for less positive ageing later in the life course. Equally young people who lack

positive adult role models are more likely to be vulnerable to at-risk behaviours, such as substance abuse and bullying, than those who have positive support. Hatton-Yeo and Telfer demonstrate how intergenerational work can be life changing for young people and impact on their health and wellbeing across their life course. (25)

### Challenges

As has already been stressed, intergenerational work is built on an asset-based approach to building healthier better connected communities. Such an approach is essential to improving people's health and wellbeing by addressing challenges that face our population as they age. Some of the challenges to younger and older people to enjoying good health and wellbeing include loneliness, isolation and employment. These are discussed in more detail below.

### Loneliness and isolation

Social isolation is a well-known problem in later life, but young people can be equally affected via different roots, such as bullying, lack of social activities and economic issues.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Neighbourhood Approaches to Loneliness Programme documented that social isolation in later life is not just a risk factor for depression, but dangerous for physical health and mobility. (26) Research shows that loneliness has a similar impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. (27)

Negative perceptions of people with a long-term condition, such as dementia, can reinforce and exacerbate the loneliness and general lack of wellbeing felt by those with the condition and their carers.

To end loneliness the challenge includes breaking down the barriers that get in the way of relationships in later life – from sheer distance or physical constraints to impediments, such as the fear of crime or high cost.

It also means enabling new forms of relationships. (28) Intergenerational projects and volunteering can offer new opportunities when relationships end – such as when carers are bereaved, or children move away. Intergenerational relationships protect against loneliness.

### Employment

Despite the continuing economic downturn, it is predicted that UK employers will need to fill an estimated 13.5 million job vacancies in the next 10 years but only 7 million young people will leave school and college over this period. (29)

The Scottish Government recognises that staying in learning or training is the best way for young people to develop the skills they need to progress towards and into employment. Their aim is to enable all young people to access and progress in learning and to equip them with skills, knowledge and positive attitudes they need to participate and progress, where possible, to employment. (30)

There is a changing landscape for many young people who for the first generation can expect to be less well off than their parents. A positive educational outcome no longer guarantees a good job with economic and social outcomes. Recent evidence from the Princes Trust is highlighting the mental health issues associated with lack of employment and longer term security. (31) This generation is also caught between two stools of volunteering and gaining skills and the rigours of job seeker allowance.

Early retirement, underutilisation of older workers and loss of critical skills and knowledge will be significant problems in many parts of the economy, especially in education, health and industry. Project SILVER, an EU Lifelong Learning project coordinated by the University of Strathclyde, has focused on stimulating learning between generations in order to help organisations deal with the problems of an ageing workforce.

SILVER produced a toolkit that helps organisations introduce intergenerational learning (IL). The toolkit aims to develop

a unique holistic and inclusive approach for IL among knowledge workers, by addressing the difficulties of implementing it in an organisation. (32)

The toolkit is available for employers to access on the project website at [www.intergenerationallearning.eu](http://www.intergenerationallearning.eu)

The pilot confirmed preliminary research findings that workplace culture is vital to the success of intergenerational activity. Intergenerational learning tends to be more effective within organisations that value older employees and the company culture is one of trust and cooperation. Therefore, one of the key challenges facing employers is changing mind-sets and eliminating ageist attitudes. Intergenerational learning provides a mechanism for generations to work closely together and from this discover the benefits of being involved in other generations. Educating, informing and reinforcing key issues, such as the challenges presented by demographic change and the threat of losing valuable tacit knowledge from the organisation are areas worth highlighting.

To ensure growth and economic prosperity in the future, employer attitudes and view of older workers must change.

The SILVER project concluded that employers should take steps to demonstrate the benefits and highlight a concrete case for facilitating intergenerational learning in organisations. A key driver of organisations is competitiveness. Businesses want to out-perform the competition and gain competitive advantage. A business case is always a strong marker of achieving the buy-in of organisations. Intergenerational learning is based on the principle of all participating generations gaining benefit. By working together both groups also ensure that important skills are maintained within the organisation.

## 5. How can an IP and IL approach contribute to improving health and wellbeing?



Reviews have identified that using an intergenerational approach has the potential to generate positive outcomes for individuals and communities. (33) Projects highlighted in this paper have found that both older and younger people develop increased feelings of understanding, friendship and confidence. Younger people report increased self-esteem, new skills and knowledge helping them progress to positive destinations.

Older people experienced health and wellbeing benefits (often as a result of being more active through participation) as well as reporting renewed feelings of self-worth and a reduction in loneliness and isolation. These can lead to a reduction in visits to local GP surgeries, hospitals and other healthcare settings.

Several potential outcomes for wider communities have been identified, including improved community cohesion, diversification of volunteering opportunities, a renewed sense of achievement and educational institutions becoming more involved in wider communities. We can demonstrate that intergenerational practice contributes to many of the issues identified above through examples, such as:

### **Strive Befriending Service Intergenerational Project, East Lothian**

The Service in partnership with local voluntary and statutory organisations, developed volunteering services to support older people with low to moderate dementia needs to remain socially and physically active, and improve wellbeing in later life. The intergenerational project offers training to young people between the age of 15 and 20 as befrienders prior to visiting local care homes and hospitals.

**Outcomes:** reduced isolation and loneliness for the older people, reduced depression, a sense of wellbeing and new friendships between the generations. Younger people improved their communication skills and

created new friendships. (The project attracts a high proportion of young people who are interested in furthering their career in health and social care.)

Another example suggests better engagement with people who experience marginalised and isolated lives in a range of settings including at home, in residential care or in long-stay hospital wards.

### **Nestling Primary School, Shetland**

All 22 pupils (aged 5–11) are involved in visiting older people living on rural crofts every four weeks throughout every school session. There are 10 clients (aged 66–81) referred by the care centre and community care workers.

**Outcomes:** reduced isolation of older people on crofts, increased interaction between pupils and older people, reduced anxiety of sheltered housing occupants in relation to younger people and shared knowledge.

Technology and being part of the digital community can help address social isolation and loneliness and bring health and wellbeing benefits to both individuals and to society as a whole. However, an element of support is often required which can be given through an intergenerational project, such as:

### Tablets are good for your health (Renfrewshire Libraries)

This project aims to improve younger and older people's experiences of living together in their community using digital technology. Older people have more limited exposure to smart technology – the removal of barriers to access would in turn reduce isolation, improve communication and provide easier access to information.

**Outcomes:** Increased confidence and involvement within the community for older people, thereby lessening feelings of isolation; and increased awareness of current technology and of services within the community, including services supporting health and wellbeing. The project increased younger people's awareness of the value of older people's experiences, and increased their engagement with current technology, their awareness of the history of their local community and their sense of local community.



### Cool Computing for Couthie Customers

is another digital project in Aberdeenshire which involves senior pupils (aged 16–18 years) assisting older learners to use digital technology.

Evaluation highlighted that a number of pupils were able to discuss in great depth their volunteering role in both university applications and interviews and believed their volunteering had contributed to their acceptance onto their degree courses.

Another challenge is injuries among some older people, particularly falls, which can start a downward spiral in health status. However, the risk of falls can be reduced through a variety of interventions. This recent IG project shows one example:

### Age Scotland's 'Walk in our Shoes, Act on our Issues'

is an activity community groups and schools can do together to identify barriers to older people's inclusion in their neighbourhood, and to get support from local decision makers for removing these barriers.

It's particularly effective as a basis for intergenerational action. You can find out more about this in *'Walking in our shoes' in Argyll and Bute – A case study of cross-sectoral and intergenerational partnership.*

<http://goo.gl/NyNRKP>

Walking programmes can do much to improve physical activity levels and improve quality of life and life expectancy, particularly in areas in which high levels of health inequalities exist. Glasgow Health Walks, Social Return on Investment Analysis (2013) documents that for every £1 invested in health walks, £8 of benefits were generated for society. (34)



### Balerno Walking Project (Edinburgh)

Older people often do not feel safe walking on their own and feel isolated as a result of not getting out. This walking project involved all generations between the ages of 16 and 97 and highlighted the needs of older people. Many commented that they do not feel safe walking on their own and that the opportunity to walk in the company of the younger people is a major focal point of their week. The walks thus offer more than purely physical benefits, and clearly contribute to participant's health and general wellbeing.

**Outcomes:** positive impact on relations between the generations, greater feeling of wellbeing in older people, increased mutual respect and understanding between the generations, younger people developed better interpersonal skills.

### Musical Minds (East Ayrshire)

Musical Minds brings people with dementia and their carers, friends and family members together weekly for an afternoon of friendship and singing. The intergenerational aspect of this project was not planned or anticipated in the beginning, but it was expected that Musical Minds would be inclusive and vibrant, and embedded within the community. Through networking and new partnerships the relationships between the generations have developed with Kilmarnock College and an East Ayrshire Primary School.

### Parkinson's Self Help group (Motherwell)

This project aimed to raise awareness of Parkinson's and the role of carers among young people. In addition it was also important for young people to gain knowledge of the Parkinson's condition and understand how older people can still lead a positive lifestyle with the condition.

**Outcomes:** knowledge of Parkinson's in both generations increased, partnership working increased, awareness of young people's issues increased and negative perceptions reduced. The project successfully highlighted the positive lifestyle of group members, and enabled younger and older members of the community to meet regularly to share positive experiences and reduce negative perceptions often held of young and old people.

The above case studies and many others can be viewed in full at:

**[www.generationsworkingtogether.org](http://www.generationsworkingtogether.org)**



#### Further reading:

**The IntergenerationALL programme** funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation assembled a body of evidence clearly demonstrating that IP is a vital tool in continuing to build strong and cohesive communities, including the context of demographic change. The foundation supported 18 pilot projects (two of which were based in Scotland) to plan, test and implement their ideas for new intergenerational activities.

**Connecting Generations** – Relationship Scotland Family Mediation, South Lanarkshire (helping grandparents and grandchildren connect) <http://goo.gl/phYNce>

**Lambhill Stables Charity** – Restore and enhance the existing Lambhill Stables building as an important historical landmark and environmental amenity.

## 6. How can the impact of IP and IL be evaluated?

Evaluation has become an increasingly important aspect of IP management for organisations, staff and volunteers working in all sectors if they are to demonstrate the impact of their work. Evaluation enables projects to discover what works, what doesn't and how to measure the difference being made. This can help with project and business planning and lead to the delivery of better services. It also allows better reporting as organisations need to be accountable to funders, stakeholders and to the people who use their services. Projects that are not outcome-focused will find it extremely challenging to evaluate their worth and to evidence this.

Measuring an intergenerational project is about showing the value and success of the activities and partnerships and helping project leaders learn how it can be even better next time round.

**Tip:** By aligning project outcomes with the National Performance Framework Strategic Objectives your project will contribute to local priorities and outcomes identified in your local authority or other reporting frameworks, Single Outcome Agreement. This will strengthen future funding applications.

A number of resources are available to help gather the information required to show success.

1. LEAP for Health: Learning, Evaluation and Planning – this framework aims to help those who work in community health settings to plan and evaluate their work in partnership with each other and with members of the community they seek to help. <http://goo.gl/sxKhZP>

IG examples shown in full and on the LEAP diagram can be viewed at <http://goo.gl/peO6kK>

2. A series of guides aimed at encouraging and improving standards in evaluation of mental health Improvement are available at <http://goo.gl/vUG6A2>

The principles can easily be applied to other health outcomes given an appropriate outcome measure, including an intergenerational health project.

3. *How do you know intergenerational practice works?* and *Evaluating Intergenerational Projects* are resources produced by the Beth Johnson Foundation about developing, managing and evaluating intergenerational practice. These are available at <http://goo.gl/O0uT0B>
4. Other useful resources are available [www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk](http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk)

### Call to Action

We acknowledge that when involved in using IP, there can often be a feeling that it must be working as the project workers can see visible differences and benefits for the participants. However, there remains a need for more evaluation of intergenerational approaches to inform future policy and practice, and to demonstrate the effectiveness and credibility of the approach.

At the GWT Annual Conference in 2013, NHS Health Scotland invited those involved in this approach to consider the following issues:

- Need a focus on health inequalities – are we targeting the right people?
- Need more evaluation to inform future policy and practice.
- Need to demonstrate the effectiveness and credibility of the approach.

## 7. What tools and help are available to support the roll out of IP and IL?

There are a number of excellent resources, training opportunities and local networks available to guide and support practitioners, organisations and individuals to roll out and develop intergenerational work.

### Education Resource Pack

To support practitioners, GWT has produced a resource pack and training opportunities for educational establishments, which covers intergenerational learning and intergenerational practice. The pack includes:

- a guide to learning through intergenerational practice
- exemplar case studies
- a guide to the awards, children and young people can achieve – Amazing Things
- a guide to the awards adults can achieve.

### Guidelines: Bringing Together Local Authorities and Intergenerational Practice in a Scottish Policy Context (2012)

The document establishes the relationship between IP and Scottish National Performance Framework (NPF) Strategic Objectives.

The document describes how local authorities, other agencies and projects can align their outcomes with Scottish national priorities. It provides a useful resource for anyone wishing to use an intergenerational approach to developing an outcome-focused approach to meeting policy drivers and priorities. <http://goo.gl/sa0uiG>

### Bridging the Generation Gap (2011)

A report on intergenerational practice within the Youthwork sector can be read at <http://goo.gl/B7dsJJ>

### Designing Sustainable Community Action for Communities of all Ages (2012)

If you are thinking about or have begun

setting up a community project that engages people from different generations then this book will provide you with ideas, tools and advice to support you in making your IG project a success.

<http://goo.gl/qvZkfb>

### Training

There is a range of intergenerational training courses delivered throughout Scotland: introductory courses, training developed for specific groups, such as educationalists, youth practitioners, etc. and a slightly more in-depth course for trainers who can then cascade and share their learning with colleagues, partners and volunteers using the resources provided. Each course or session is designed for those who are keen to embed intergenerational approaches within their programmes of work.

<http://goo.gl/PtLwma>

### Local networks

Generations Working Together supports a network of almost 1500 member organisations that are actively seeking to be or are already engaged in intergenerational work. Twenty-nine local networks across Scotland support organisations, projects, groups and individuals, and provide opportunities for networking, training, and sharing good practice, skills, knowledge and information.

### Funding and sustainability

Appropriate funding sources can be a stumbling block for many projects. The majority of costs associated with intergenerational projects involve staff time, transport and venue costs. These costs, however, can be shared among partners utilising in-kind resources where offered.

Information on funding opportunities can be accessed on the GWT website and social media sites, Facebook and Twitter (links via our website).

# Summary and conclusions



Connecting generations is an approach which creates communities that nurture and support younger and older people. Intergenerational work aims to bring generations together to connect and build mutual interests and create new ways of relating and working together.

This paper describes the contribution that intergenerational practice can make to health and wellbeing and the Scottish and European drivers behind it. What is clear is, whilst there is some evidence for effectiveness in America, there is a clear need for projects using IP to further develop and share the evidence for this approach here in Scotland.

We have shared case studies that identify different intergenerational approaches and how local groups and organisations can make a significant impact in supporting age-friendly communities.

What should be noted is the significant potential for further development and the value of existing intergenerational work to individuals and communities across Scotland.

Generations Working Together will continue the focus on promoting intergenerational working to improve health and wellbeing through supporting the development of evidence for those already adopting IG approaches. We plan to continue to disseminate findings and will work to foster links and activities to benefit all of Scotland's generations.

Policy, reports and collaboration programmes	Description	Intergenerational case studies View the full studies at: <a href="http://www.generationsworkingtogether.org">www.generationsworkingtogether.org</a>
<b>Equally Well (2008)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the report of the ministerial task force on health inequalities.</li> <li>Reducing inequalities in health is critical to achieving the Scottish Government's aim of making Scotland a better, healthier place for everyone, no matter where they live.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graffiti Project</li> <li>Generations Growing Together</li> <li>Richer by Rationing</li> </ul>
<b>Good Places, Better Health (GPBH) (2008)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GPBH is about responding to the challenges we face in creating safe and positive environments which nurture better and more equal health and wellbeing.</li> <li>GPBH recognises that the relationship between environment and health is complicated, and creating safe and positive environments for health requires us to think, plan and deliver in new and more effective ways.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intergenerational Allotment</li> <li>Men in Sheds</li> </ul>
<b>Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol: A framework for Action (2009)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out a strategic approach to tackling alcohol misuse in Scotland. This paper recognises the need to change Scotland's relationship with alcohol.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intergenerational Consultation Event on Alcohol</li> </ul>
<b>Falls Prevention (Up and About: Pathways for the prevention and management of falls and fragility fractures)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aims to assist the planning and development of falls prevention services across Scotland. Focuses attention on the key stages of the journey of care of an older person living in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking in our shoes – act on our issues</li> <li>Balerno Project</li> <li>Angus Go for Gold</li> </ul>
<b>All our futures Long-term Conditions Collaborative (2008)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This collaborative is one of a number of initiatives within the Scottish Government that aims to improve the quality of care provided for people with long-term conditions and this generally, although not exclusively, involves older people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parkinson's Self Help Group</li> <li>Dot the Mouse</li> <li>Musical Minds</li> </ul>

Policy, reports and collaboration programmes	Description	Intergenerational case studies View the full studies at: <a href="http://www.generationsworkingtogether.org">www.generationsworkingtogether.org</a>
<b>Reshaping care for older people (RCOP): A programme for Change (2011–2021)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The RCOP programme helps older people remain independent and well so they can stay in their own home for longer. A key concept of this agenda is ‘co-production’ or involving service users in every level of design and delivery service.</li> <li>Older people are valued as an asset, their voices are heard and older people are supported to enjoy full and positive lives in their own home or in a homely setting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strive Befriending</li> <li>Caithness Befriending</li> </ul>
<b>Scotland’s Digital Future: A Strategy for Scotland (2011)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to, and use of, information technology can impact positively in many ways on the lives of older people. Scotland’s Digital Future is designed to help make Scotland a digitally inclusive society and to overcome the digital divide.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tablets are good for your health</li> <li>Cool Computing for Couthie Customers</li> <li>Get to Know your Techno</li> <li>ICT Community Project</li> </ul>
<b>Let’s Make Scotland More Active (2003)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the broad framework of objectives and priorities for the development of physical activity in Scotland. The strategy sets out the vision that ‘People in Scotland will enjoy the benefits of having a physically active life.’</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angus Go for Gold</li> <li>Balerno Project</li> </ul>
<b>Scotland’s National Dementia Strategy (2013–16)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy provides a long-term objective of transformational change and a more immediate focus on changes within the next three years.</li> <li>It builds on work achieved on the older 2010 version.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Musical Minds</li> <li>Football Reminiscence</li> <li>Dot the mouse</li> </ul>

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# Generations Working Together

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