



Linking Generations Northern Ireland

in partnership with the Youth Council
for Northern Ireland



Youth Work across the Generations

Project Report

June 2013

FOREWORD

In March 2012, the UK National Agency for the EU Youth in Action (YIA) Programme invited organisations with experience in delivering intercultural, youth and youth worker development training, to submit applications to work in partnership with their Regional Information Provider in Northern Ireland, the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNi), across a number of thematic areas, including Social Cohesion & Intergenerational Dialogue.

The Youth Council has for over 20 years been an ardent promoter and co-ordinator of International and North/South youth work programmes, particularly those which serve to target marginalised and difficult to reach young people. In its capacity as Northern Ireland Regional Information Provider for the YIA programme, the Youth Council was delighted to work in partnership with Linking Generations Northern Ireland (LGNI) in submitting this application. YCNi's role was to oversee the project management, whilst LGNI assumed responsibility for project delivery.

I am delighted to welcome this publication, which is the culmination of much hard work carried out by LGNI, and which presents the findings of the EU Youth in Action funded 'Youth Work across the Generations' project.

The Youth Council recognises the value of intergenerational work and the benefits that accrue for both young people and older citizens and is confident that the ideas for potential projects and partnerships stemming from this project will be taken forward by LGNI, both within Northern Ireland and internationally, to make Northern Ireland a region that both celebrates, promotes and affirms the importance of intergenerational work.



David Guilfoyle
Chief Executive
Youth Council for Northern Ireland

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INTRODUCTION

Youth Work across the Generations

The “Youth Work across the Generations” project was delivered by Linking Generations Northern Ireland (LGNI) and supported by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI). The project took place between August 2012 and March 2013 and received £19,053 of support from the European Union (EU) Youth in Action Programme.

Intergenerational Practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergeneration Practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them.

Beth Johnson Foundation, 2001

The project aimed to explore with young people and their organisations their understanding of social cohesion and intergenerational work. It also aimed to explore and understand better their attitudes towards the advantages and disadvantages of working with people of different generations.

The objectives were to:

- Share best practice and learning from across the UK on youth led intergenerational work;
- To facilitate an exploration of the attitudes of young people and their organisations to working with people of different generations and how this can contribute to social cohesion;
- To develop the knowledge and understanding of young people and their organisation of intergenerational work and its relevance to the youth agenda;
- To develop a set of priorities for ongoing partnership and project work; and
- To make an articulate and thoughtful contribution to the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity 2012.

There were three parts to the project; an initial planning meeting, an interactive facilitated two-day residential dialogue and a follow-up meeting to facilitate future work and networking.

Project Report

This report was commissioned by LGNI as part of the project. It provides:

- Information about the project and how it was delivered;
- Evaluation information from participants at the two-day residential; and
- Details of next steps that will be undertaken to support the intergenerational work ideas that were developed during the project.

Youth in Action Programme

Youth in Action is the EU Programme for young people aged 15-28 (in some cases 13-30).

The Programme aims to achieve the following general objectives:

- To promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- To develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- To foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- To contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field; and
- To promote European cooperation in the youth field.

The Programme supports a large variety of activities for young people and youth workers through five Actions:

1. **Youth for Europe** - encourages young people's active citizenship, participation and creativity through youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy projects;
2. **European Voluntary Service** - helps young people to develop their sense of solidarity by participating, either individually or in group, in non-profit, unpaid voluntary activities abroad;
3. **Youth in the World** - promotes partnerships and exchanges among young people and youth organisations across the world
4. **Youth Support Systems** - includes various measures to support youth workers and youth organisations and improve the quality of their activities; and
5. **Support for European Co-operation in the Youth Field** - supports youth policy co-operation at European level, in particular by facilitating dialogue between young people and policy makers.

Under Action 4, Sub-Action 4.3 supports the training of those active in youth work and youth organisations in this field, in particular project leaders, youth advisers and supervisors in these projects. It also supports the exchange of experiences, expertise and good practice between those active in youth work and youth organisations, as well as activities which may lead to the establishment of long-lasting, high quality projects, partnerships and networks.

The "Youth Work across the Generations" project was funded under Sub-Action 4.3.

Project Partners

The "Youth Work across the Generations" project was delivered by LGNI and supported by the YCNI. Both organisations have been working together for a number of years in relation to intergenerational approaches.

Linking Generations Northern Ireland

LGNI promotes and supports the development of Intergenerational Practice (IP) across the region by providing structured opportunities to bring different generations together, improving understanding and increasing mutual support. The vision is for an age-friendly society where everyone respects each other and has a voice and a role to play.

The broad aims of LGNI are to promote all-age approaches by:

- Developing and promoting opportunities to bring generations together and build capacity within communities to sustain this approach;
- Supporting the statutory, private and voluntary sectors to recognise the potential of all-age approaches and embedding within their strategies, practices and policies; and
- Encouraging, lobbying and influencing the government to provide support and commit to all-age approaches to address ageism and segregation in society.

LGNI is core funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies and additional funds support specific work-streams such as the Community Safety Unit of the Northern Ireland Department of Justice, the Big Lottery through a partnership programme with the Workers Educational Association, and Intergenerational Peace Building work with Cooperation Ireland.

In addition LGNI have also formed a very important partnership with the Age Sector Platform and Northern Ireland Youth Forum using the opportunity of the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012 to promote collaboration between generations at organisational and community level.

Youth Council for Northern Ireland

The Youth Council for Northern Ireland is a non-departmental public body established by the Department of Education in 1989. The Council's functions are to:

- Advise the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and other bodies on the development of the youth service;
- Encourage cross-community activity by the youth service;
- Encourage the provision of facilities for the youth service and facilities which are especially beneficial to young persons;
- Encourage and assist the co-ordination and efficient use of the resources of the youth service; and
- Assist the effective provision of administrative services by regional voluntary youth organisations.

Through the delivery of its functions and work programmes, the Youth Council seeks to champion the well-being, rights and participation of young people by:

- Supporting the development of effective youth policies and quality youth work practice; and
- Facilitating meaningful collaboration between youth organisations and all sectors with responsibility for young people.

European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations

The European Day of Solidarity between Generations takes place on 29th April each year and 2012 was the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012). Both afford an opportunity for public representatives, civic society and voluntary and community organisations to acknowledge the positive contributions made by the young and the old to building and sustaining cohesive and vibrant communities.

LGNI has used the opportunity of EY2012 to encourage policymakers and relevant stakeholders at all levels to take action with the aim of strengthening solidarity between generations. This Youth in Action programme is one initiative led by LGNI during EY2012 that explored the possibilities of youth-led approaches to intergenerational work. The outcomes and recommendations of this programme will hopefully contribute to future actions within the youth sector that will strengthen solidarity between people of all ages.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Aims and Objectives

The “Youth Work across the Generations” project aimed to explore with young people and their organisations their understanding of social cohesion and intergenerational work. It also aimed to explore and understand better their attitudes towards the advantages and disadvantages of working with people of different generations.

The objectives were to:

- Share best practice and learning from across the UK on youth-led intergenerational work;
- To facilitate an exploration of the attitudes of young people and their organisations to working with people of different generations and how this can contribute to social cohesion;
- To develop the knowledge and understanding of young people and their organisation of intergenerational work and its relevance to the youth agenda;
- To develop a set of priorities for ongoing partnership and project work; and
- To make an articulate and thoughtful contribution to the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity.

Participants

The project participants were recruited by LGNI. They were:

- Opportunity Youth;
- Include Youth;
- Northern Ireland Youth Forum;
- The Link;
- Youth Net;
- Rathenraw Youth Scheme (Antrim);
- Brooklands Youth Centre (Ballybeen, Dundonald);
- Opportunity Youth (Belfast);
- GLYNI (Gay and Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland); and
- Spring Chickens (local theatre company).

Project participants took part in various aspects of the project.

The Project

There were three parts to the project;

- An initial planning meeting;
- An interactive facilitated two-day residential dialogue; and
- Follow-up meetings to facilitate future work and networking.

Initial Planning Meeting

The initial planning meeting was organised by LGNI and held on 6th August 2012. It was attended by 15 young people and youth workers from the youth sector in Northern Ireland, including: Opportunity Youth, Include Youth, Northern Ireland Youth Forum, The Link and Youth Net. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a variety of topics around intergenerational work, look at the objectives of the project and develop a draft agenda for the two day residential. The meeting was externally facilitated. Based on this information LGNI made a number of changes to the plans for the residential.

Residential

The residential was held on 3rd and 4th November 2012 at the Corrymeela Community in Ballycastle, Co. Antrim. It was attended by 15 young people and youth workers and 18 older people. The residential was organised and facilitated by LGNI (Intergenerational Trainers) and they were assisted by visiting experts from Generations Together (Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice) and Wales 'Age Friendly Communities' programme, BNL Productions (who facilitated drama sessions and filmed the event) and an external facilitator.

Further details of the residential are provided in the next chapter.

Follow-Up Meetings

Following the residential the external facilitator contacted the youth groups to develop their intergenerational project ideas in further detail. The four project ideas are outlined in the table below and further details are provided in the next chapter.

Project Name	Issue to be Addressed
Rathenraw	Better relationships between older and younger people in order to build trust and safety
Opportunity Youth	Drugs and alcohol awareness and perceptions
Brooklands	Re-imagining of murals on the Ballybeen estate
GLYNI	Finding common ground between older and younger LGBT people through sharing stories



RESIDENTIAL

The residential was held on 3rd and 4th November 2012 at the Corrymeela Community in Ballycastle, Co. Antrim. It was attended by 15 young people and youth workers and 18 older people from:

- Rathenraw Youth Scheme – 6 young people and 1 youth worker;
- Brooklands Youth Centre – 3 trainee youth workers;
- Opportunity Youth – 3 young people and 2 youth workers;
- Spring Chickens – 18 older people from a theatre arts programme for older people.

Young people from GLYNI were unable to attend the residential, however participated at a later stage in the follow-up meetings.

The residential was organised and facilitated by LGNI (Intergenerational Trainers) and they were assisted by visiting experts from Generations Together (Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice) and the 'Age Friendly Communities' programme in Wales, BNL Productions (who facilitated drama sessions and filmed the event) and an external facilitator.

Key elements of the residential included:

- The development of a drama piece by the young people on their perceptions of older people;
- The participation in the residential by Spring Chickens –They presented a DVD about their work and participated in the workshop with young people;
- The facilitation of activities by LGNI staff in relation to thinking intergenerationally and developing intergenerational projects;
- The development of intergenerational project ideas by young people; and
- An evaluation session at the end of Day 2.

The full agenda is provided below.

Time	Activity	Description	Participants
DAY 1			
10.30	Registration and room allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to Corrymeela • Health and Safety overview • Residential guidelines • Room allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People
11:00	Ice Breaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice break activity - everyone to introduce themselves. Everyone to have prepared something to say a bit about what your organisation does as well as why they are here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People
11:45	Perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief on Drama piece • Break participants into smaller mixed groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People

Time	Activity	Description	Participants
DAY 1			
14:00	Perceptions Pt 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups come back together and display drama piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People Older People
14:45	Spring Chickens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring Chickens perform their piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People Older People
15.00	Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking intergenerationally What is intergenerational (IG) activity & small group work to consider what are the pros and cons of IG work? (thinking about the benefits and possible dangers) feedback to whole group. As one group – whose role is it to lead on IG work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People Older People
16.00	Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team building activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People Older People
18.00	Dinner		
DAY 2			
10:00	Moving Forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you want to take a youth led approach to intergenerational work? Working from an IG project to an IG approach. LGNI think an IG project is a good place to start: Present LGNI good practice guide. DVDs of other IG projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People
11.00	Moving Forward 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use project planning proforma to get each organisational group present to design a project, cost it, consider design, etc. Presentations of project plans, one to one interviews, filling out of forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People
12.00	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of evaluation forms and evaluation discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young People
13.00	Lunch / Depart		

Day 1 – Perceptions Drama Piece

Following an icebreaker activity, the young people worked together to develop a drama piece on their perceptions of older people. This was facilitated by BNL productions. The drama pieces developed by the young people took the form of scenarios that the younger people thought reflected attitudes and perceptions towards older and younger people. The scenarios included young people assisting an older person who had fallen, an altercation between a younger and older man in a supermarket and interaction between a young man and an older woman during a bus journey.

All of the above scenarios looked at issues between the generations such as mistrust, misunderstanding, empathy and fear but set the scene well for the weekend's work activities.



Day 1 Workshop

In the afternoon of the first day LGNI facilitated a workshop with the young and older people.

They were asked to form groups and to discuss:

- The pros and cons of intergenerational activity; and
- Ideas for intergenerational projects.

What are the Pros (Benefits) and Cons (Difficulties/Dangers) of Intergenerational Activity?

A wide range of pros and cons were identified during the discussions. These are summarised in the table below.

Pros (Benefits)	Cons (Difficulties/Dangers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing on/sharing knowledge, experience • Sharing common interests, pastimes, life stories, humour, skills • Learning new skills • Bringing communities together • Building confidence and self esteem • Friendships / getting to know each other • Lessons tensions • Taking away stereotypes created by the media • Breaking social norms and stereotypes • Reduced isolation and fear • Increased feelings of safety for older people • Good for both groups (young and older) • Builds good relationships • Mutual respect / encourages respect • Common goals • It can educate and advise young people • Building / developing trust • Helps to avoid misunderstanding / better understanding • Get advice (both ways) • Gain an understanding of each generation • Role models • A bit of fun • Educational benefits • Better communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building community relations outside projects • Access NI police checks • Transport • Timescales • Funding • Promotion of the initiative • Finding appropriate partners • Sharing good practice • Dangerous if not headed by a fully trained leader • A lot of work and planning • Reluctance and resistance – not all people will be willing participants • Effort required to do it and a lot of time • Could lead to friction due to lack of respect • Could increase misunderstanding (humour, habits etc) • Some may be inconsiderate towards older/younger people • Increased suspicion • Weather / accessibility • Older generation may need to learn to trust the younger generation • Possibility of young people taking advantage of the trust • Outdated attitude (by older people) towards young people • Peer pressure • Fear of change or risk taking • Attitudes / stereotypes • Political views/beliefs

Ideas for Intergenerational Projects

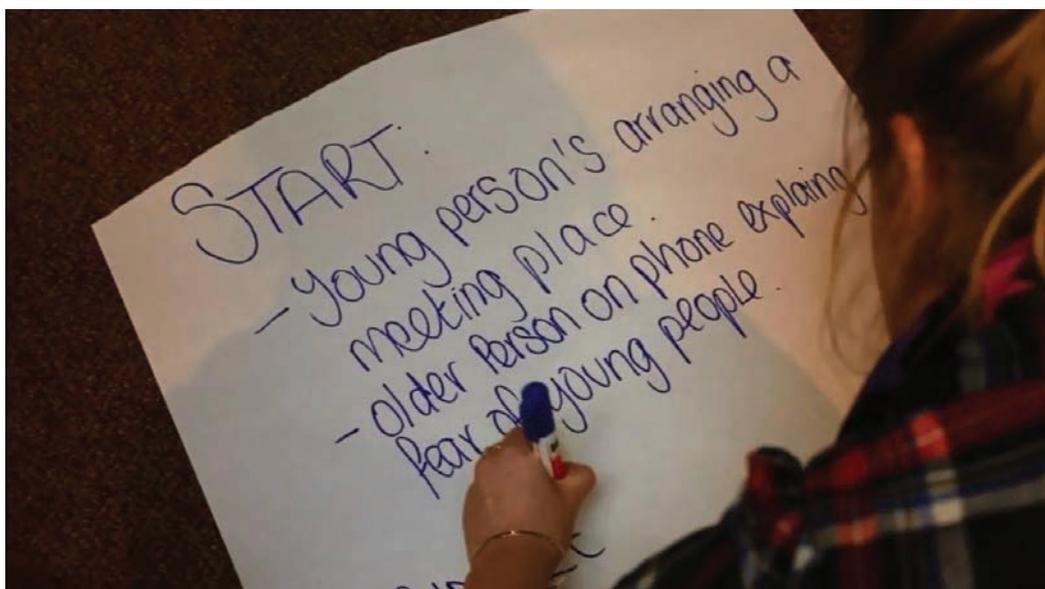
There were many ideas for intergenerational projects suggested during the discussions. Several focused on the sharing of hobbies and skills such as baking, cooking, music, games, dancing and fishing. Other types of projects suggested included:

- Technology projects – e.g. helping older people to use smart phones and computers;
- A community garden;
- Raising money for charities e.g. cancer, hospice;
- Storytelling;
- Sharing experiences / life experiences;
- Adopting a grandparent; and
- Cultural outings to museums and more modern facilities (e.g. W5).

Day 2 Workshop

The workshop on the morning of Day 2 was on the topic of “Moving Forward”. Facilitated by LGNI the discussion focused on planning intergenerational work and how, when, and what young people could do. A good practice guide was given to everyone and explained. The guide covered topics such as project planning, project aims, single identity work, the first session, duration of the project, evaluation and celebration.

Following a short break, young people then went back into their groups to discuss planning their own intergenerational project. They were given a worksheet to discuss and complete and were helped to do so by their youth workers and others attending the residential. The groups explained their projects to each other at the end of the session. The external facilitator advised that they would contact each group in a few weeks to develop their ideas further.



A summary of the information captured on the worksheet across all of the groups is given below. This worksheet was also completed with GLYNI participants at a later date and their information has also been included.

Planning your Intergenerational Project Worksheet	
Issue to be Addressed/ Objectives of the Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs and alcohol awareness and perceptions • Better relationships between older and younger people in order to build trust and safety • Re-imagining of murals on the Ballybeen estate • Finding common ground between older and younger LGBT people through sharing stories
Who will be on your planning group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Youth • Rathenraw Youth Scheme, Family Caring Centre, Council, Health Trust, Over 50's Group • Older people from the area – day care centre • Queer space/GLYNI
How will you recruit participants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word of mouth through parents and grandparents and groups they go to • Contact existing group of older residents. Trainees from Rathenraw Youth Scheme, local media • Through the community centre and existing links • Social media, social groups
What type of activities do you think might work for the objectives/priority areas your project will aim to address?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quizzes, bingo, board games, baking, arts and crafts, card games, drugs box (for drug and alcohol awareness) • Dance, drama, singing, something fun • Coffee morning • A trip together at the end of the project • Talking
Single identity and ice breaking sessions – what will these sessions include?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice-breakers: 2 truths and 1 lie, speed dating, alphabet game, Chinese whispers, penguin game • Single identity: life maps, personal development, computer games, discussion of stereotypes
Where will the project take place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Youth • Community centres, youth centre or coffee shop
How long will the project run for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-8 weeks

Planning your Intergenerational Project Worksheet	
What barriers might you face or anticipate this project may come against?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People not participating, stubbornness, putting up barriers, perceptions of each other, unwillingness, awkwardness • Weather, sickness, funding, keeping interest going, transport • Encouraging older people to come into the community centre
Evaluation and celebration activities/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation –certificates for participants • Evaluation sheets (beginning and end), a celebration to show what we've achieved, open night at the end • Presentations
What are the main benefits/outcomes for your organisation and participants involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of drugs and alcohol and each other, reduced fear, role models • Bringing the community back together, understanding and acceptance of everyone living and involved in the area • Mutual respect, empathy, common ground, knowledge about experiences
Publicity – how will you tell everyone about your project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posters, newspapers, radio station, leaflet drop, social media, social groups, word of mouth, media and communications manager
What support could LGNI offer this project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible help with facilitation as we haven't really worked with older people before • Help with approaching older people's groups • Single identity workshops • Training – for older and younger participants • Start up support - advice, venue, publicity, organising etc • Funding



Evaluation

At the residential participants were asked to complete a comment form in order to help evaluate the event. There were separate forms for older people (the Spring Chickens) and young people and facilitators. There was also a short evaluation session at the end of the event with young people, facilitators and experts. The results are summarised below.

Evaluation Form Results – Common Questions

	Older People ¹	Young People and Facilitators ²
Was the residential worth attending?	100% agreed it was	78% agreed it was 22% advised somewhat
What was the best part of the residential?	<p>The discussions</p> <p>Interacting with and chatting to young people</p> <p>The drama performances</p> <p>Meeting new people and sharing ideas</p> <p>Mixing with everyone especially young people</p>	<p>Meeting different groups and spending time with the Spring Chickens</p> <p>Meeting the older people and seeing their points of view on us young people</p> <p>Learning from others</p> <p>Getting to know more about different generations and organisations</p>
What did you learn about intergenerational work?	<p>That it's very worthwhile</p> <p>It keeps the mind open and informed</p> <p>That it means more than just young people doing activities around older people but it has to involve interaction</p> <p>That younger and older people can have projects they can do together</p> <p>It's helpful for both young and older generations</p>	<p>If you give young people help and guidance it will work</p> <p>That it can work if planned properly and the right people are involved</p> <p>It has a role within our community and society</p> <p>Easy to plan if we work together and we should be able to succeed</p> <p>How to develop what we are already doing and to bring it forward</p> <p>It's very easy to plan</p> <p>It needs a community to drive the passion</p> <p>It's ok and not a bad thing to meet people</p>

¹ 13 female, 3 males, aged between 40 and 88

² 10 female, 8 males, young people aged 15 to 24

Additional Questions Asked to Older People

	Older People
What did you learn about young people's views on working with older people?	<p>That they are surprised that older people are fun, and want fun</p> <p>That they are very willing and eager</p> <p>They have a similar outlook and problems</p> <p>That they can learn from older people</p> <p>They are keen to talk, to listen and to put forward their thoughts and ideas</p>
Before the residential how aware were you of intergenerational work?	<p>31% very aware</p> <p>44% some awareness</p> <p>25% not aware</p>
Have you been (or are you) involved in an intergenerational project?	<p>Yes – 38%</p> <p>No – 50%</p> <p>Did not answer – 13%</p>

Additional Questions Asked to Young People and Facilitators

	Young People and Facilitators		
What did you gain or learn about working with older people or different generations?	<p>How we can come together no matter what age</p> <p>I've learnt to make more of an effort with older people</p> <p>Not enough interaction (with older people)</p> <p>That the elderly can be good craic and are nice to talk to</p> <p>They are just as capable as us</p> <p>I was shown a different side to older people</p>		
How would you rate the information prior to the residential?	<p>22% Very Good</p> <p>28% Good</p> <p>33% Adequate</p> <p>17% Poor</p>	How would you rate the organisation of the residential?	<p>28% Very Good</p> <p>50% Good</p> <p>22% Adequate</p>
How would you rate the format of the residential	<p>28% Very Good</p> <p>61% Good</p> <p>11% Adequate</p>	How would you rate the facilitators?	<p>56% Very Good</p> <p>33% Good</p> <p>11% Adequate</p>
What could we have done better?	<p>Some more icebreakers to help the group get to know each other</p> <p>More active activities and more interaction with seniors</p> <p>Some more intergenerational activity time</p> <p>It would have been nice for the older participants to stay longer or have more interactive activities with younger participants</p>		

Evaluation Session with Young People and Facilitators

The evaluation session at the end of the event focused on three main areas. The comments for each area are summarised below.

<p>What did you think of working with older people....</p>	<p>Before Boring Complicated Nervous Difficult Lack of knowledge about how to make it work and bring people together</p>	<p>Now Something willing to do Easy Comfortable Now have the information to bring people together</p>
<p>What will you take away from the residential?</p>	<p>Learning from other organisations How to run an intergenerational project Bringing people together – you can do in your own community A lot of information and tips</p>	
<p>What should we change if we did this again?</p>	<p>More time with the older people Have the older people stay over Longer residential – 2 nights More time for people to get to know each other A drama piece with older and younger people together</p>	



NEXT STEPS

Following the residential in Corrymeela a number of additional activities were undertaken.

These were:

- Setting up of an LGNI Facebook page. This aims to help keep people up to date with LGNI's work activities and act as a portal for people to swap ideas, learning and future plans beyond the lifetime of this project;
- The production of a short film by BNL productions of the Corrymeela residential. This can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lse3rztmRsE>; and
- A telephone discussion with each project after the residential in order to offer support to projects to develop their ideas. Projects were also offered the opportunity to attend one of LGNI's free training sessions in 2013.

At the time of the report, further activities have been undertaken by some of the groups to develop their intergenerational project ideas further. Other groups are considering developing their project ideas in the future.

Following the residential in Corrymeela the Rathenraw group met with organisers of a local over 50's group who agreed to work with them on an intergenerational project. LGNI are providing continuing support with a view to initiating a project in the local area. The Brooklands group held an intergenerational dinner at Christmas and are also considering developing their re-imaging of murals project further.

The most successful outcome of the Youth in Action project has been the joining together of GLYNI, Queer Space and LGNI to organise 'The Big Gay Lunch' on the 29th April 2013. This event, supported by the Big Lunch Programme, brought together generations of the LGBT community using the Big Lunch idea as a method of kick starting dialogue and on-going engagement. The event was also part of the programme for the European Day of Solidarity between Generations on 29th April which included a 'Have Your Say' event in the Senate Chamber of Stormont Parliament Buildings organised by LGNI, Age Sector Platform and the NI Youth Forum. This event involved an intergenerational debate about mental health, safer shared and confident communities and ageism.

Conclusions

The Youth in Action project has explored with young people and their organisations their understanding of social cohesion and intergenerational work. The project also involved older people at the residential and helped to increase their appreciation of intergenerational work and of younger people. In addition the project also practically helped young people and their leaders to plan and undertake an intergenerational project. A range of ideas for projects were suggested and since the evaluation these have been considered further by groups, with one project taking place in the coming weeks.

The evaluation findings highlighted multiple benefits of the residential for participants (meeting new people, learning from others, getting to know more about different generations) and clearly showed the desire of older and younger participants to spend more time getting to know each other and undertake activities together. In additions there was learning from the residential for other intergenerational initiatives – 'Generations Together' and 'Age-Friendly Communities' in Wales.

In the coming months LGNI will continue to support the projects through advice, training, and the opportunity to apply for project funding.



This programme has been funded and supported by:



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