Free Training and Information Sessions

Linking Generation Northern Ireland (LGNI) is currently planning new innovative training and information sessions to be held at the end of June.

The focus of these sessions will be on collaboration towards an ‘age-friendly’ Northern Ireland.

Once this information has been confirmed, you will be notified of the details.

Cross Border Activities

Access All Areas: A Diversity Toolkit’ is a free online resource provided by the National Youth Council of Ireland and Youthnet (NI). It is designed to embed diversity within youth groups and practice and contains practical advice on how to develop youth work with specific user groups. Linking Generations NI Manager Vicki Titterington contributed to a new chapter, Chapter 13, in this toolkit entitled ‘Working Across the Generations’ as a co-editor alongside Anne Walsh (NYCI), Ben Ewan (Youthnet), Keelin McCarthy (Age Action Ireland), and Cathrina Murphy (Postgraduate Scholarship Student, Dublin Institute of Technology).

This free online resource can be accessed via www.youth.ie/diversity and offers best practice advice on how to set up youth-led intergenerational projects, as well as providing successful examples.
Since 2009 29th April each year has been designated as the European Day of Solidarity between Generations. The objective of this annual day of celebration is to raise awareness of the importance of engagement across the generations and offer a platform to showcase good practice and activities that promote intergenerational solidarity. As always LGNI are involved in activities to celebrate this year’s EU Day of Solidarity between Generations.

This includes:

**Intergenerational Consultation on the Active Ageing Strategy for NI**
LGNI, Age Sector Platform and Northern Ireland Youth Forum Event
29th April 10:30am – Reception Room Belfast City Hall

**Intergenerational performance**
Rathenraw Youth Scheme and Rehability
Rathenraw Community Centre Antrim 29th April
7.45 – 9.15pm

LGNI held an open competition to award small grants to celebrate the day by bringing together people of ALL ages to discover what they have in common, share and learn skills, create dialogue and better understanding between the generations and of course have FUN! There was a great response with over 100 inquiries and 84 applications received. Unfortunately, we were unable to fund every application but it was decided to allocate 29 grants of £150 per group. Successful groups include:

- AEP Cityside Derry/Londonderry
- Ballyspallen Cricket Club Limavady
- Braniel Community Association Belfast
- Breakaway Blues Newtownabbey
- LOL@Chestnut Grove Belfast
- Damask Community Outreach Lisburn
- Erne Integrated College Enniskillen
- Fitzone Foundation Craigavon
- Forthspring Intercommunity Group Belfast
- FUSE Youth Ministry Portadown
- Groomsport Community Association
- Homestart Craigavon Lurgan
- Include Youth Newtownard
- Ligoniel Improvement Association Belfast
- Marrowbone Residents Association Belfast
- Millverne Residential Home Enniskillen
- Newtownabbey Seniors Forum
- Northside 50+ Club Derry/Londonderry
- Quilly Rural Development Group Domore
- Redburn Youth Group Holywood
- Rural Community Network Cookstown
- Saints Youth Centre & Good Morning Colin Belfast
- Star Neighbourhood Centre Belfast
- Steelstown BrianOg’s GAC Derry/Londonderry
- Sydenham Court Belfast
- WAVE Youth Services Ballymoney
- West Winds Residents Youth Newtownards
- Windsor Women’s Centre Belfast
- Women’s Aid Centre Belfast

For inspiration and further information on ‘European Day of Solidarity Between Generations’ see our website www.centreforip.org.uk/northern-ireland. Click on the drop down link to EU Day of Solidarity Between Generations for previous celebrations.
LGNI small grant awards

As part of LGNI’s training and small grant scheme additional groups have been awarded funding for intergenerational projects that address social justice issues. The successful groups all attended LGNI training making them eligible to apply for a small grant. There are various closing dates throughout the year for those wishing to apply. The most recent groups include:

*Cushendall Development Group
Cruse Bereavement*

G.A.T.E Project Presentation

LGNI’s friends the WEA are partners in this European project exploring active ageing using the life course approach including Intergenerational Learning. The main purpose of this project is to encourage reflection on active ageing and what this means for EU citizens.

More specifically through the project we will bring together older people from the member states to discuss what active ageing means to them. This will raise awareness of the importance of active ageing to help ensure that older people are able to remain in the labour market for longer, to prevent social exclusion by encouraging participation in their communities, and to help prevent dependency as people get older.

In January 2014 LGNI delivered a presentation on their work and highlighted Intergenerational Learning for active ageing.

Scotland conference

In March Lynn J and Ken attended the Generations Working Together conference (the Scottish equivalent of LGNI) in Scotland to present information about LGNI’s safer communities work. Around 150 people attended the event, which saw the launch of the latest Generations Working Together collaborative project with NHS Scotland entitled ‘Intergenerational approaches to health and well-being’. Lynn J presented the LGNI safer communities project at this conference (pictured right).
Age-Friendly update

Wales conference

The Age-Friendly Communities Conference in Llandudno in March 2014 showcased the success of the Ireland and Wales Age-Friendly Communities project funded through the Interreg 4A Wales Programme (European Social Fund). The focus of the project was to deliver intergenerational pilot activities in the County areas involved. LGNI presented their work in NI and Ireland with colleagues in Ireland to share learning and highlight best practice.

Age-Friendly Belfast Convention

As part of the Age-Friendly Belfast process Belfast Strategic Partnership held an Age-Friendly Convention for older people in Belfast City Hall on the 11th March 2014. The Age-Friendly summary plan was launched at this event for the period 2014-2017 and LGNI welcome its aim to build on extensive work already underway including: ‘Intergenerational Practice promoting positive working relationships between generations supported by LGNI and other organisations’.

An Age-friendly School Project

LGNI in partnership with Cregagh Primary School and Cregagh Community Association are delighted to have been awarded funding under the Belfast Strategic Partnership Age-Friendly Reducing Social Isolation Scheme. This funding will enable LGNI to work alongside Cregagh Primary and Community Association to develop and deliver a pilot project which will involve older people more often in the school calendar. The project will run until January 2015 and will focus on three keys themes: Age-Friendly Images, Age-Friendly Lives and Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods. Watch this space for more information or call Vicki at LGNI 02891813022.
Intergenerational poem

This is a poem written by Pat Lee who was recently involved in a small grant intergenerational project with Age Concern Causeway in Coleraine.

Two generations young and old come together for their views to unfold
Chatting with the rest of the group they begin to develop a conversational loop.
A conversation develops each week building trust and respect that’s what they seek
Quizzes, fun activities that’s what they do - it helps dispel myths and assumptions too.
Linking generations like a strong linked chain helps understanding grow and friendship remain
Chainlinks forged, friendships remain a cohesive community is what we gain.

Age Encounters

Age Encounters is a network of people from all sectors interested in ageing. In February 2014 LGNI and Queen’s University hosted the Age Encounters seminar, where Eddie Lynch from the Age Sector Platform presented their work on the Pensioners’ Parliament. Paula Devine and Gillian Robinson, both from the ARK Ageing programme, presented a new initiative in ageing research in NI.

In October 2013, ARK (a collaborative research project between UUJ and Queen’s) received grant aid from Atlantic Philanthropies to develop their ‘Ageing Programme’ which will run to December 2016. Their programme of work will transfer existing knowledge between the academic, policy and voluntary sectors, as well as identify and fill key research and information gaps. Given that their remit is clearly linked to the aims of Age Encounters, LGNI has handed over the coordination of this initiative to the ARK Ageing Programme. To register for future Age Encounters meetings or to obtain further information on how to get involved in any aspect of the ARK Ageing Programme, please contact Paula Devine. Tel: 02890973034 E: p.devine@qub.ac.uk

Pictured below Janet Carter-Anand (QUB), Eddie Lynch (Age Sector Platform), Paula Devine (ARK Ageing Programme) and Lynn J (LGNI) at the recent meeting of Age Encounters.
Update: WEA & LGNI Digital Age Project

The Digital Age Project is a 4 year programme between 2012 and 2016 funded by the Big Lottery to incorporate Information Technology (IT) into sheltered housing schemes across Northern Ireland. It will help residents to understand how technology can enhance their lives through improved communication, access to information and services, and hobbies and interests that reduce social isolation and promote a better quality of life. This is year 2 of the scheme and the 6 intergenerational projects listed below have now been completed. The remaining 4 of the target of 10 are in the process of being set up.

**Bessie Bell Court & Newtownstewart Model Primary School in Newtownstewart** used digital media to devise content and layout of a 2014 calendar, personalising it with favourite images and participants’ birthdays with everyone receiving a calendar. The residents continue going to the school for lunches on a fortnightly basis.

**Brennen Court & St Marys Grammar School, Magherafelt** worked together on a reminiscence photo album.

**Legion Court & St Marys Primary School, Banbridge** are creating individual reusable ‘bags for life’.

**Templer Court & Lurgan Junior High School in Lurgan** created personalised ‘bags for life’ using digital tools for creating images, words and slogans to capture feelings about themselves and the group. Every participant created a bag as a practical reminder of their project and time together.

**Somme Park & Lisneal College, Derry/Londonderry** created a digital time line and DVD with everyone contributing personal stories and highlights of their lives. They enjoyed showcasing this to the rest of the school.

**Slemish Court & Waveney Youth Centre, Ballymena.** Participants enjoyed getting to know each other through a series of ice breakers, conversations and working together in intergenerational pairs using digital photography and internet research to create content for a ‘Big Cook, Little Cook Christmas Edition’ recipe leaflet. They held their final session in the youth centre enjoying pizza and games together.
As a result of taking part, residents commented: “I have learned from the young people to be more confident and adventurous using a PC.” “I learned that if you show young people respect, they will return it.” Young people commented: “We have lots in common – we definitely think alike - I have learned to respect older people and to listen to them.” “I liked that the older people were friendly and listened to what we had to say.” Housing managers commented: “Residents have benefitted from social inclusion and respect and are now more confident and likely to interact with young people in the community. We have realised the benefits of intergenerational work and would be keen to continue to develop the links we have made with the school.”
Intergenerational Safer Communities Project Update

Picking up pace…supported by

We are six months in to this 18 month project and things are really picking up. We’ve had incredible support and enthusiasm from a whole range of people from the community safety family across NI. Neighbourhood officers and other higher level PSNI officers, MLA’s, PCSP members and staff have been amongst those who have expressed an interest in using intergenerational approaches to tackling community safety issues.

Workshops for PCSP members and other stakeholders

LGNI have hosted 3 workshops, 2 in January in Coleraine and Irvinestown (pictured below) and 1 in March (Castlereagh). Our first workshop was in the Bushtown Inn in Coleraine where approx. 60 members of Coleraine, Moyle, Ballymoney and Limavady PCSPs attended a 3 hour workshop and discussion session. In Irvinestown we had approx. 20 attendees from Omagh and Fermanagh PCSP and local community organisations. In Castlereagh Hills Golf Club we had around 20 people, including PCSP members, neighbourhood officers and a range of youth and community workers. LGNI want to acknowledge the support of the PCSP Managers from all of these areas in organising these workshops. Without this type of collaborative approach, this project will not succeed.

The purpose of these workshops is to:

- Provide information about LGNI’s ‘Intergenerational Safer Communities’ project.

- Give those present an opportunity to reflect on the potential of all-age approaches to contribute to building safer, shared and confident communities.

- Learn about the support that LGNI can provide in developing intergenerational practice within your group or organisation.

- Develop ideas to support/initiate intergenerational approaches in your PCSP area.
Examples of the support we want to provide include:

- Provision of training and development support
- Advice and guidance to clarify project ideas and sustain good practice
- Strengthening links between PCSPs and communities
- Outlining funding opportunities
- Facilitating linkages between age-specific organisations and groups

If you want any of this type of support, or have an idea for all-age working that you want to mull over with us, please get in touch. We want to help in whatever way we can and we look forward to hearing from you!

**Policing Conference**

LGNI staff attended the Northern Ireland Policing Board Conference on Wednesday 26th March in the Titanic building in Belfast. With the famous Titanic staircase as a back drop, Lynn J publically asked Chief Constable Matt Baggott and Chair of the NIPB, Anne Connolly to endorse the intergenerational approaches to community safety that promoted this project. Both Anne and Matt gave a thumbs-up to the work and kindly agreed to pose for a photo. Even passing MLA Gerry Kelly popped over to see what the fuss was all about! Pictured right Ken (LGNI), Anne Connolly (Chair of NIPB), Lynn J (LGNI), Matt Baggott (PSNI Chief Constable) and Gerry Kelly (MLA) at NIPB Conference.
Staffing changes at the Beth Johnson Foundation

Alan Hatton-Yeo has retired as Beth Johnson Foundation CEO after sixteen years at the helm. In addition to his work in England, Scotland, Wales and beyond, Alan was instrumental in the successful development of intergenerational work across Northern Ireland in general since 2000 and more specifically since 2008 when LGNI came to life. This input has included vital financial and managerial support as well as valued friendship.

Steven Robinson is the new CEO at the Beth Johnson Foundation bringing us over 25 years strategic and operational experience in the leadership of community and care programmes. Having also worked for many years within the YMCA movement, Steve is a strong believer in the power of cohesive communities and the importance of building a strength-based intergenerational society. Steve says, “The challenges and the opportunities with which the Beth Johnson Foundation wrestle are critical to the development of a truly mature society.”

We welcome Steve to the Linking Generations NI Team!!