ARK Ageing Programme: visiting fellow

The ARK Ageing Programme’s first visiting fellow is Dr. Nancy Henkin. Nancy is the founder and Executive Director of The Intergenerational Centre at Temple University in Philadelphia. We are delighted to welcome Nancy and have been working with Paula Devine from ARK to ensure her time here is well spent. If you want to meet Nancy, please give Lynn Johnston at LGNI a call on (028) 9181 3022. Alternatively, there are two additional key opportunities detailed below.

‘Beyond the silos: An all-age approach to strengthening communities’ will take place in Holywell-Diverse City Community Partnership, Derry/Londonderry on Friday 3 October from 11am - 1pm. This is an interactive event where Lynn Johnston from LGNI and Nancy (alongside Michelle Menice from Cooperation Ireland) will discuss their experiences of Intergenerational Practice in relation to uniting communities.

‘Collaborating Towards an Age-Friendly Northern Ireland’ will take place on Tuesday 7 October from 9.30am - 4pm in Belfast City Hall. This event is designed to spark ideas and promote thinking about what ‘age-friendly’ might mean for us here in Northern Ireland, especially as we begin to embrace our own ageing demographic and move towards concepts of community planning next year. It will contribute to the production of a policy paper by The ARK Ageing Programme.

The morning session will involve presentations from practitioners across the region including Alison Clyde from Generations Working Together in Scotland; Dr Alan Hatton-Yeo from Communities for All Ages in Wales; Susan Langford from Magic Me in England; Keelin McCarthy from Age Action Ireland; Sarah Wetherald from Age-Friendly Ireland and Liz Harper from Age & Opportunity. LGNI’s Vicki Titterington and Sarah McWilliams from Juniper Consulting will be giving an overview of current activities and the most recent evaluation of our work. Dr. Nancy Henkin will provide a keynote address.

If you would like to attend, please email caroline.rice@qub.ac.uk. For further information, please contact Lynn Johnston at LGNI lynn.johnston@bjf.org.uk.
European Day of Solidarity Between Generations: 29 April

The 29th of April 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. This year – as always – LGNI were involved in activities to celebrate this EU Day.

An intergenerational drama performance was held at the Rathenraw Community Centre in Antrim as a collaboration between Rathenraw Youth Scheme and Rehability. In addition, an ‘Intergenerational Consultation on the Active Ageing Strategy for NI 2014-2020’ took place at Belfast City Hall. This event, jointly supported by LGNI, Age Sector Platform, Northern Ireland Youth Forum and OFMDFM, brought 30 younger and older people together to discuss and provide their views. LGNI Manager Vicki Titterington said: ‘Too often in society the generations are pitched against each other and can be victims of negative stereotyping. By promoting intergenerational civic participation, LGNI feels that through a collective voice, older and younger people can influence decision making that affects their lives.’ For a full report of the day’s proceedings please click here.

LGNI also awarded small grants to bring people of ALL ages together to discover what they have in common, share and learn skills, create dialogue and better understanding between generations and, of course, have fun! Over 100 inquiries and 84 applications were received. Unfortunately, we were unable to fund every application but it was decided to allocate 29 grants of £150 per group. To see what the groups got up to, click here. For inspiration and further information on ‘European Day of Solidarity Between Generations’ see our website www.centreforip.org.uk/northern-ireland.
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. The most recent groups include:

*Youth Action with COSTA (Dungannon)*
*Sticky Fingers Arts (Newry)*

Intergenerational Toolkit

Belfast City Hall will launch Age-Friendly Belfast's first intergenerational toolkit and guide on 1 October to celebrate International Day of Older Persons. LGNI have provided expert support and advice on good practice as part of the development of this toolkit which has also been endorsed by LGNI Manager Vicki Titterington.

‘LGNI fully endorse the production of this toolkit which follows on from many years of collaborative work with Belfast City Council, Belfast Partnership groups and Belfast communities. Good intergenerational practice is based on people of all ages working together to create understanding, respect and strong vibrant communities. LGNI see this toolkit as a useful resource for those interested in using an intergenerational approach to developing Age-Friendly communities within Belfast and beyond. We all live as part of multigenerational communities within which all members have a very important role to play. Intergenerational work is an opportunity to connect these roles making communities a better place for people of all ages.’

The toolkit and guide has been shaped, designed and developed by Belfast City Council Youth Forum and the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum and offers tips, guidance and support to effectively plan, implement and evaluate their own intergenerational projects.

The intergenerational toolkit and guide will be available from October 2014. To obtain a free copy of this resource please contact the Age-Friendly Belfast team on (028) 9050 2073 or download the resource at [http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/Seniors/age-friendly-belfast.aspx](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/Seniors/age-friendly-belfast.aspx)

Images of West Winds

Since last September, LGNI have been working alongside Belfast Exposed on a photography project with residents of the West Winds estate in Newtownards. West Winds Development Association asked us to get involved to help them deliver the project which worked with West Winds Women’s Group, the Primary School and The Shack youth club.

Participants and partners got together in June to view the final exhibition, which was displayed in the Ards Arts Centre.
Digital Age Project Update

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. This includes access to information and services, hobbies and interests leading to reduced social isolation and a better quality of life. Year 2 ended in June 2014 when LGNI had set up 10 intergenerational projects listed below by linking sheltered housing residents who had completed the original 10 week Digital Inclusion course with local schools/ youth groups.

Bessie Bell Court & Newtownstewart Model Primary School  
Brennen Court & St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt  
Templar Court & Lurgan Junior High School, Lurgan  
Somme Park & Lisneal College, Derry/Londonderry  
Legion Court & St. Mary’s Primary School, Banbridge  
Slemish Court & Waveney Youth Centre, Ballymena  
The Milewater and Currie Primary School, Belfast  
The Old Manor House & Tonagh Primary School, Lisburn  
Stronge Court & Clounagh Junior High School, Portadown  
Glenbrook House & St Brigids College, Derry/Londonderry

Participants enjoyed working together using office publisher, power point, digital photography, photo editing, cut out studio, scanning and wordle to research and produce content for resources such as calendars, personal timelines, recipe booklets, digital photo albums and ‘bags for life’. Unfortunately three of these groups were unable to complete their projects due to the WEA going into administration, but are being encouraged to develop and build on the links they had already made.

WEA (Workers Educational Association - original lead partner of the project) unexpectedly went into administration on 4 June 2014. This meant that all programmes, including the Digital Age Project, had to immediately cease. LGNI and the other Digital Age Project partners are keen to organise and deliver the remaining two years of the IT and intergenerational sessions, with LGNI as lead partner. Meetings have taken place between the project partners and the Big Lottery who are now considering the proposal to award LGNI remaining funding. Watch this space!
Age-Friendly School Update

This project commenced in April 2014 with funding from the Belfast Health Development Unit. The Age-Friendly Schools project is part of their grant scheme designed to reduce social isolation. The purpose of the project is to run a pilot programme with Cregagh Community Association to promote the idea of an age-friendly school and to develop better links with older people in the area while promoting Cregagh Primary School as a hub for intergenerational engagement.

Participants got to know each other through a ‘getting to know you’ session, a fun sports activity session (working in mixed age teams) and a joint lunch session before the end of term. Everyone is looking forward to meeting up for more joint age sessions in the future. This will include creative IT activities to enjoy together as well as learning about other joint interests, culminating in a celebration event.

To date activities have included:

• Photo launch of project – included in 2 local papers;
• Three planning meetings held attended by LGNI, school teachers, a community representative and youth worker;
• Hosting of 2 single age sessions;
• One joint age session held (First joint session between younger and older participants to discuss age friendly and ideas for moving project forward (attended by 7 older people and 30 younger people);
• Two intergenerational activities sessions held: A sports activity with 27 young people and 8 older people taking part in intergenerational teams with medals presented for taking part;
• A lunch and bingo session that involved 23 younger and 35 older people working together to make fruit skewers and no-bake traybakes for pudding was followed by a game of bingo and prizes.

These sessions were attended by the School Principal and Vice Principal as well as teachers, community representatives and a local Councillor. The next activity sessions are planned to begin 30 September with input and support from the Department of Finance and Personnel ‘digital champions’.
Intergenerational Safer Communities Project Update

LGNI Regional Development Workers Lynn Johnston and Ken Irvine have been making connections with members of the Policing and Community Safety families all over Northern Ireland. Ken has been out talking to Derry, Dungannon and Strabane PCSPs at private meetings. Our work benefits greatly from the community connections that PCSP members have.

Given the turbulent waters facing PCSPs and local government staff in the next 12 months, we are particularly grateful to those of you who continue to remain committed and just ‘get on with it’! Thanks to all of you who have taken an interest in all-age approaches and welcomed the support we can provide. We are stronger together.

NIPB Youth Advisory Panel

In June Lynn Johnston presented to the NI Policing Board’s Youth Advisory Panel about the activities of the project to date. Policing colleagues at the meeting expressed particular interest and we have since met with PSNI neighbourhood officers in North and West Belfast to talk about how intergenerational approaches can assist in building PSNI relationships within communities.

Out and about across Northern Ireland: Cabbagepatchers, Warrenpoint

Through the funding for the Intergenerational Safer Communities Project, Linkning Generations NI supported The Cabbagepatchers ‘Tidy up Tuesday’ initiative. This innovative and volunteer-led project engages younger people referred from the Youth Justice Agency and Jobs and Benefits Office in community gardening. ‘Tidy up Tuesday’ sees younger people volunteering to tidy up local gardens of people who, for a variety of reasons, are less able to do their gardening. Lynn Johnston is pictured below accepting a gift from project participant to say thanks for LGNI’s support. David Ford, MLA and NI Minister of Justice, visited the Cabbagepatchers and received a warm welcome from the rest of the volunteers, patrons and partners.
A Stitch in Time in Ballybogey

Steven Phillips, Independent Member of Ballymoney PCSP had attended LGNI’s workshop in Coleraine in January. Lynn and Steve met and through some very easy conversations, Benvarden Craft and Friendship Group and Killymoyle Primary School got together every Thursday from May through to the end of June to get to know each other and learn craft skills together. Local PSNI officers and PCSP staff also supported the project.

Other Activities

Lynn Johnston has been working with Stephanie Rock from Armagh PCSP and Michelle McDonald from Start 360, bringing younger and older people together in Armagh City. We hope to get the group back together in the Autumn and work to build a project idea together. Through conversations which took place at LGNI’s workshop in Castlereagh, the idea of an intergenerational golf project was suggested. Gareth from Castlereagh Safe and Well and Roy from Castlereagh Golf Course hope to bring the idea to life in the near future. Coleraine PCSP have decided to fund Coleraine Youth Group & Coleraine Free Presbyterian Church Senior Citizens Group for their proposal ‘Teens & twenties down the decades’.

Lynn Johnston is providing some support to the project and will be attending the launch on 18 September. If you want to have a chat about an all-age approach to a local community safety issues, please contact Lynn or Ken on (028) 9181 3022.
The project met weekly from February to June and produced a quilt showing the history of Fintona that will hang in the community house and be available for schools to teach children about their area. The group have written a short description of each section of the quilt that will be a useful teaching aid. All agreed that this was a successful project and that it should be the forerunner of other similar projects. The neighbourhood officer praised the project as a great ‘beginning’. The Chief Superintendent was very keen to know when there would be another similar project. Watch this space!

Cavanleck Community Association (Enniskillen)

The ‘From seed to flower we’ll grow’ project addresses issues regarding fear of crime and a sense of mistrust between generations. Apart from a community house there is a lack of facilities in the area. This gardening project taught older and younger people the whole cycle of planting and growing window boxes to brighten up the area and bring some colour to the community. It provided interaction and brought a sense of pride and helped participants take ownership of their area and build trust between the generations. This programme was initiated by a local Councillor who is a member of the PCSP. The Neighbourhood PSNI Officer along with a tutor were involved by giving guidance and direction.
The LGNI Team are very proud of our Lynn J! She has been awarded a Doctor of Philosophy from the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work at Queen’s University Belfast. The title of Lynn’s thesis is ‘You’re just used to it’ - Intergenerational Relationships: A Neighbourhood Case study. Lynn presented her research at the British Society of Gerontology’s conference in September this year as part of a symposium from Queen’s and hopes to get academic papers published in the near future. If you want to know more about her research, give her a call at the LGNI office.

Congratulations Dr Lynn, PhD!