Happy Holidays from Linking Generations!

Wishing you a happy and healthy festive season from the LGNI Team

LGNI evaluation

LGNI Manager Vicki Titterington and external evaluator Sarah McWilliams from Juniper Consulting met with Junior Minister Bell recently to discuss findings from LGNI’s most recent evaluation of The Atlantic Philanthropies funding. The report clearly highlights the positive contribution and applicability of intergenerational approaches to a range of policy agendas.

A celebration event is being planned for February which will be an opportunity to officially launch the report and also recognise the contribution of all involved. Please watch this space for more information or contact our office on infolgni@bjf.org.uk or (028) 9181 3022. Places are limited!!
LGNI at British Society of Gerontology conference

Lynn Johnston presented a paper at the British Society of Gerontology (BSG) Annual Conference in Southampton in September as part of a Queen’s University Symposium panel. The paper is entitled ‘Intersecting Ageism: age relationships and the legacy of the conflict in NI’. The Centre for Research on Ageing (CRA) at the University of Southampton hosted the conference which brings together researchers, practitioners, educators, policy-makers, students and other stakeholders.

BSG members are drawn from the social and behavioural sciences, including humanities, medicine, health, housing, social care and nursing. The BSG was established in 1971 and provides a multidisciplinary forum for researchers and other individuals interested in the situations and experiences of older people. They also focus on how knowledge about ageing and later life can be enhanced and improved. Please contact LGNI if you want to know more or would like Lynn to present/talk about her research.

Sofia Bulgaria visit

LGNI Manager Vicki Titterington represented LGNI recently at the ‘European Certificate of Intergenerational Learning’ (ECIL) conference ‘Learning to make a society for all generations’. This event was hosted by Association GENERATIONS in Sofia, Bulgaria. She spoke about recent activities of LGNI in Northern Ireland. More info about ECIL can be found at http://www.emil-network.eu/european-certificate.

During the event around 60 participants from different EU countries looked at ways in which intergenerational learning can be a powerful resource to strengthen communities and workplaces. Keynote speaker Dr. Alan Hatton-Yeo (former LGNI/Beth Johnson Foundation CEO) highlighted the importance of mutuality and relationships behind intergenerational practices which enable people to grow together and build meaningful relationships. Likewise, Dr. Hatton-Yeo stressed the need to develop structures (such as the European Certificate in Intergenerational Learning and Age-Friendly initiatives at all levels), while facilitating the setting up and sustainability of intergenerational practices able to break disadvantage cycles in our societies.
GREAT NEWS! We are pleased to announce that we are leading a new partnership that has allowed the Digital Age project to continue. The project has been officially up and running from 4th November 2014. The Digital Age Project is made up of Ignite IT, Zenith IT Solutions, NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education), NIFHA (NI Federation of Housing Associations) and LGNI. LGNI also works in partnership with GO ON NI. Our new partner Ignite IT will be solely responsible for delivering the free 10 week IT courses and additional Intergenerational projects.

The Digital Age Project (DAP) is a 2 year programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund to incorporate Information Technology (IT) into sheltered housing schemes across Northern Ireland. It will help older residents to understand how technology can enhance their lives through improved communication, access to information and services, and hobbies and interests to reduce social isolation and promote a better quality of life. There is also an opportunity for schemes to link up with a local school/youth group for an additional fun intergenerational IT project.

Any sheltered housing scheme with reliable broadband / wifi with a minimum of 8 older residents who are interested in taking part can contact Lynne Bennett on lynne.bennett@bjf.org.uk for further details.

Comments from older participants:

“I have learned how to listen and to talk to young people. Being in the company of a new generation is fun and it supported my learning experience.”

“I can now copy and send photos, do research, book holidays and find out information.”

For further details about this project and other LGNI work, please visit:

http://www.centreforip.org.uk/northern-ireland/digital-age-project
Age-Friendly Update

An Age-Friendly School Project

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. Previous activities have included a photo launch of Project, three planning meetings, two single-age sessions, joint-age sports activity and a lunch with bingo.

New sessions averaging 28 pupils and 8 older participants have included:

Three creative IT sessions with PCs, laptops and ipads were held using google to research facts about their individual dates of birth, even discovering how many seconds old they were and how old in dog years – this made for interesting comparisons! Everyone had a turn to use the Ipads to do research on the school and local area and take photos of group members and favourite places in and around the school. They experimented with text font, size, colour, layout and content to create their own word cloud ‘wordles’ that were printed off and inserted into individual photo frames with a group photo.

Two GO ON NI ‘digital champions’ from a local Argos store supported all 3 sessions and brought along ipads for everyone to try out. These were used to photograph favourite places in and around the school, use for research and create group photos, enhancing everyone's digital learning experiences. Everyone who took part was presented with their own GO ON NI ‘goody bag’.
Three drama /performance sessions took place on the lead up to the holiday season. After discussing and comparing Christmas traditions, and styles and costs of toys and gifts past and present, participants in intergenerational groups went on to devise new sequences to a Christmas poem. They had great fun rehearsing and creating actions for it before performing it to the whole school Assembly and to the Pensioners Christmas lunch.

Herbie, one of the older participants, celebrated his 90th birthday with a cake, a card made by the pupils and a rendition of ‘Happy Birthday’. He then made a speech to the whole group, thanking them and telling them about being pleased to have reached the age of 90! This reinforced the bond and connections the group has formed.

A performance of 'Twas the fright before Christmas' poem took place at the Cregagh Pensioners Christmas lunch. This was enthusiastically delivered by the older and younger participants of the Cregagh Age-Friendly School project.

A Christmas party is planned for 16th December and the project will conclude with a showcase event/evaluation in January 2015.

For more information on the project, please click here: http://www.centreforip.org.uk/northern-ireland/age-friendly-schools-project

or visit the School’s webpage at http://www.cregaghprimary.org.uk/intergenerational-project/
‘Belfast Healthy Cities’ award

LGNI were delighted that their Age-Friendly School project outlined above with Cregagh Primary and Community Association was shortlisted for the World Health Organisation Belfast Healthy City Awards 2014 under the category ‘Healthy Living’. The awards ceremony was held in November and although LGNI did not win, they were honoured to have it showcased at this event attended by a range of practitioners from across NI and further afield!

HASP Membership

Linking Generation’s Manager Vicki Titterington is now a member of Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) Board representing Linking Generations NI as an Intergenerational Practice expert. LGNI have been involved in the work of HASP including contributing to the Age-Friendly Belfast Intergenerational Toolkit and Guide, launched in October. More information about this toolkit can be downloaded as a resource at: http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/Seniors/age-friendly-belfast.aspx

Age-Friendly training

Belfast was the first city in Northern Ireland to join the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities – a city where organisations work together to make sure the quality of life for people is enhanced as they age. In support of this, LGNI delivered intergenerational training alongside Age-Friendly Belfast staff. The training was well attended and it is hoped that the enthusiasm generated during the session will lead to the development of lots of intergenerational projects.
Dr. Nancy Henkin, founder and Executive Director of The Intergenerational Centre at Temple University in Philadelphia, spent two weeks in Northern Ireland as the first Visiting Fellow of the ARK Ageing Programme (QUB/UUJ). The Intergenerational Centre was created in 1979 and works to strengthen communities in Philadelphia by bringing generations together to address critical concerns and create opportunities for lifelong civic engagement. For more information on The Centre, please visit [http://templeigc.org](http://templeigc.org).

LGNI were delighted to co-host Nancy’s visit and made good use of her time!

On 3rd October, Nancy and LGNI’s Lynn Johnston co-presented at ‘Beyond the silos: An all-age approach to strengthening communities’ event in Derry/Londonderry. This workshop was organised jointly by the ARK Ageing Programme and INCORE at the University of Ulster and was held on the new premises of Holywell DiverseCity. The presentations focused on the potential of all-age approaches to tackling community divisions, both at home and in the U.S. To view presentations and videos from Lynn and Nancy on the day, please click here: [http://www.ark.ac.uk/ap/events/silos/](http://www.ark.ac.uk/ap/events/silos/)

During her visit Nancy also took part as key note speaker in a joint LGNI and ARK Ageing Programme event on 7th October entitled ‘Collaborating Towards an Age-Friendly Northern Ireland’. Thanks to Belfast City Council Age-Friendly initiative we had use of the wonderful Banqueting Hall in Belfast City Hall and practitioners from Scotland, England and Ireland were welcomed by Lord Mayor Nichola Mallon. The event was designed to spark ideas and promote thinking about what ‘age-friendly’ might mean for us here in Northern Ireland and the applicability of intergenerational approaches. This is particularly relevant as we begin to embrace our own ageing demographic and move towards concepts of community planning next year. The afternoon session involved discussions in order to contribute to the production of a policy paper by The ARK Ageing Programme which will be published soon.
Finally, LGNI would like to thank The Cabbage Patchers for their hospitality when hosting a visit from Nancy during her stay. It was a great opportunity to share the amazing work in NI with her and show her how ‘intergenerational’ is done in Northern Ireland!

‘Appreciating Age’ launch event

LGNI Regional Development Worker Ken Irvine attended the launch of a report commissioned by the NI Commissioner for Older People’s office (COP) coinciding with the UN International Day of Older Persons on 1st October. The report reveals that the over 60s in Northern Ireland will contribute almost £25 billion to the economy over the next 50 years through volunteering, caring, childcare, replacement parenting and working.

The report, entitled Appreciating Age, attaches an economic value to contributions made by older people to highlight the positive roles they play across Northern Ireland. The report also considers the cost of older age-related spending, and subtracts these costs from the total contributions so as to give a true reflection of the net economic value older people bring to society.

The Commissioner Claire Keatinge said:

"Northern Ireland is a better and richer place because more of us our living longer and healthier lives than ever before. Older people work, volunteer, provide care and participate widely in community and family life, contributing significant social and economic value to life in Northern Ireland. These contributions often go overlooked, and too often we hear negative voices saying that older people are a burden on public expenditure."

An intergenerational approach to dealing with these issues is something that Linking Generations would support.
Intergenerational Safer Communities Project Update

Time is ticking on with this project and we are busier than ever, as the relationships we have been building start to really develop into projects and initiatives. We will be hosting an event in March next year to share learning and will be in touch in the new year with more information. It will be a chance to showcase the work that this project has enabled and learn through our collective experiences. For more information about any aspect of our community safety work, please contact our office on (028)91813022 or infolgni@bjf.org.uk.

Coleraine PCSP: Teens and twenties down the decades

Coleraine PCSP has supported the local Youth Club to work with Coleraine Free Presbyterian Church in delivering a project which brings people of all ages together. The group visited Crumlin Road Goal and worked together to create a booklet about the local area. They were advised about setting the project up and the first session was delivered by LGNI. The group celebrated the project ending at the start of December and plan to distribute the booklet in the local community.

Craigavon PCSP: The Elderberries and the Seven Derrys

Craigavon PCSP and LGNI worked together to deliver an intergenerational project with the Elderberries and the 7 Derrys Youth group in Aghagallon Community Centre. LGNI delivered the first session for the group and then they followed Craigavon PCSP’s project model, which engages with Sport Development and Arts Development Workers from the Council and also PSNI neighbourhood officers. The latter delivered a session where older and younger people took part in a role play to create empathy between the generations.
Participants received their certificates and very full goody bags at a ceremony in the Civic Centre at the end of November. This is the fourth time that LGNI have worked together with Craigavon PCSP to deliver a project. They attended a reception in Craigavon Civic Centre on Tuesday evening to celebrate the completion. Congratulations to everyone involved and the facilitators including PSNI and Sports Development and Arts Development staff from the Council.

The Intergenerational Safer Communities team have been busy meeting with a range of stakeholders in order to try to embed the work as they move to the end of the funding period for this project (due to finish at the end of this financial year). Pictured left, the team meets with Chief Inspector Emma Bond and Inspector Gaby Moran in Policing with the Community and with NIHE staff who work in Supporting Communities and their Community Safety team. Also pictured are PSNI training college staff Detective Constable Gareth McAlister and Chief Inspector Billy Dodds. LGNI is very pleased with the supportive comments and hope to build on them in moving community safety work forward.

**Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership : Feel Safe and Sound**

A very constructive meeting took place with Deirdre McCloskey and PJ from MEAAP to discuss all-age approaches to tackling fear of crime by building confidence. We were welcomed on to the steering group for this project and we are planning to host 3 short focus groups in the New Year to bring younger and older people together to seek their opinions as to how the fear of crime should be tackled using generations together. We are looking forward to working with Deirdre and the three PCSP Managers from Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne to do so. MEAAP has already undertaken a considerable amount of consultative research which has highlighted interest in an intergenerational approach to tackling fear of crime and we hope to be able to add value to this work.

**Ballymoney PCSP : Seniors information day**

LGNI attended Ballymoney PCSP’s event which was very well attended by local older people. A range of organisations and agencies were present and discussions were held with local people about the services available in the area for older people. Picture right Lynn Johnston with Michael and Cathy from Ballymoney PCSP.

**PSNI Training College, Garnerville**

LGNI’s Ken Irvine meeting with an enthusiastic young student officer about intergenerational approaches to tackling fear of crime amongst older people during a visit to the Garnerville PSNI Training College.