

**Lanarkshire Intergenerational Network Meeting  
Conversations on the way forward  
Introducing Food for Life Get Togethers update  
On line via ZOOM**

**Date and time: Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019, 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm**

**Meeting Report**

**In Attendance:** Bella Kerr (GWT), Barbara Harding Heathy Valley, Jennifer McKinlay Machan Trust, Sandra McCrory Larkhall District Volunteer Group, Carolyn Hamilton North Lanarkshire CLD.

**Apologies:** Teresa Aitken, David Miller SAMH, Stuart Matson, Robert Piper Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre, Richard Bolton Forgewood Community, Laura Biggart Befriend Motherwell, Rowena Statt Anderson Bell.

**Evaluation**

This is the online link to our new evaluation. It will give you the opportunity to feedback to us. Please let Bella know if you have any issues accessing it. GWT appreciate your feedback and completion will allow us to fulfil the requirements needed for the Scottish Government's Research Project and will assist us in looking at our practice and how we can best support our network and members at these meetings. You may have already filled this in and if so Thank You and if not this is a reminder <https://forms.gle/XvhK3gouqpiVQb2c6>

**1. Apologies and introductions**

Quite a number of apologies seen above but also no schools or nurseries due to the current situation.

**2. Short discussion on Covid-19 and how GWT is working to help with practical examples on how to reconnect the generations.**

Bella explained to the group that Generations Working Together is committed to maintaining and developing friendships and connections across Scotland through IG activities and projects. GWT are delighted to say that with Scottish government backing, we are upscaling our activities and will engage with network members and local communities, to find practical ways to reconnect younger and older generations through technology, telephones, radio, television and paper. Bella encouraged people to share this information

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so that people could become members at [www.generationsworkingtogether.org](http://www.generationsworkingtogether.org) and share across our communities.

We know that the social distancing situation will continue for some time after lockdown and to help reconnect we will share:

A directory of activities (with safe and simple ideas for IG work)

Free online training for volunteers and organisations working with socially isolated and vulnerable members of the community.

GWT will provide additional support to care homes.

People held a discussion about where they are during Covid 19 and all attending were at home. We did a short introduction on what people had been working on. And how this has been adapted with people feeding in as follows:

**Carolyn from North Lanarkshire CLD** works with families and children and they are involved in IG work. Mainly gardening with CASE Cumbernauld Action with older people, they have carried out small amounts of work through the Drum Family learning centre and a nursery and this has shown to be good work for the community. They are fairly new to IG and are interested in finding out new ways to connect.

**Jennifer McKinlay The Machan Trust** worked with P1 to the end of secondary school. Jennifer is a part time volunteer co-ordinator and they are / were involved in a breakfast club, afternoon and over lunch time club, and games etc. The offer team building, reading, after school sports, football and Easter and Summer programmes its an initiative through South Lanarkshire council which is FREE. They generally cater for 80 children per day and some are attaining their Saltire award. The do work that involved intergenerational through the breakfast group and retired people offer other activities such as knitting, crafts, storytelling. Over the summer last year 2019 young people were teaching older people how to do the floss dance and Jennifer remarked that it was fantastic how the young and old linked together.

**Barbara Harding Heathy Valleys** just outside of Lanark reconnects by support older adults over 50. She is new to IG work and links in with a couple of local primary schools.

**Sandra McCrory Larkhall District Volunteer Group** - During Covid-19 it has been hectic and face to face has stopped. They have a call line Monday to Sunday and receive anything from 250 – 500 calls per week (the latter being more likely as the virus has remained) We have a variety of staff and volunteers from hoes and local groups, rainbow groups and community links other organisations. They cover food parcels, shopping, activity packs for families and older people. Notable that people's mental health is deteriorating, and the Covid-19 situation has compounded this even further. There are also activity packs for adults and Heart of Africa makes 100 meals daily to be delivered in communities to shielding and vulnerable isolated people. They keep an eye on malnutrition and look for signs and look at how they can add to what is going out with meals, maybe a wee treat extra. The IG work that they take part in is with a range of volunteers from late teens to early 80s, who work together. The service has been altered and the minibuses are used to deliver hot meals for

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Heart of Africa. Most of the funders have been flexible with the changes and the group try to cater for everyone as much as possible.

The group have concern going forward with lots of members self-isolating and shielding, and they do not know who will be fit to return to the service once it is safe to do so. They have tried to put them all on a call line trying to check up with those who are not available. Those who used to receive home care are now receiving hot lunches.

**Robert Piper** offered apologies for the Lanarkshire network and the following update. We closed Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre with the lockdown. Our staff that are allowed are working from home. Personally I'm busier than ever. Here's a summary of what I know is happening in Lanarkshire to respond to COVID-19 that might be of use to network members, If you know this already apologies for clogging up your inbox.

Our organisation (Utheo/Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre) was awarded funding in April from Scottish Government's Wellbeing Fund. Work is completed & funding spent. We have been awarded funding Scottish Government's Supporting Communities fund. Still to draw down the grant. This funding will support responses to COVID-19 in the Bellshill locality (Bellshill, Mossend, Holytown, Thorniewood communities). This work is being directed by [Supporting Communities partnership](#) group formed by councillors & agencies. They're operating out of Bellshill YMCA. Our organisation is a strategic partner. There's [a web page & social media](#) for local people to find out how to get help & how to join in with the coordinated approach. The group needs volunteers. Hope this info is of use. We're posting regular updates on [our Facebook page](#), well worth checking.

### **3. Connecting practitioners digitally – do you need help to connect?**

**Carolyn** informed group that the work they are doing with the early years to high school has ceased at present and all of the CLD workers are carrying out different roles in the community, such as foodbanks, working with key workers' children in family learning centre. They do work with vulnerable families although they do not work specifically with older adults. As far as online work is concerned they work across 6 localities and people are working all over with ideas such as youth work camping out or in, families of all different ages, extended families linking in this through social media.

Group held a discussion of people being isolated now as they are not part of a group and how the Covid-19 effect on this is worrying. People can have conversations over the garden gate and there is special concern of people living with poor mental health. The group that Carolyn works with has a closed face book page where they share gardening activities. However there are lots of people who cannot get involved because they are not on social media and this means they will have no access to any form of group communication.

Group also mentioned adult learning and computing classes that had been available for people with Digital North Lanarkshire, but all agreed that groups learn better by doing and it is hard to reach out to the most vulnerable through electronic means especially if they do not have either the technical devices or the internet connections.

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**Bella** suggested looking at SCVO mentoring project and this will be sent out with the directory that GWT has produced.

**Barbara** shared that they were the same and although they had some online work the older people were less capable and only when they were supported they were able to go online. They have tried technology and it was impossible to teach virtually as such they have opted for telephone calling. They had tried to get face time / ZOOM but it was an impossible task and after spending hours with one lady they decided not to pursue further. Bella explained that the story was echoed by people from Cowal Carers and from the Western Isles who had all had difficulties in getting older adults in the community to connect virtually.

Wellbeing packs have been sent out with a word search, a frys cream chocolate bar, hand cream, and this is through funders from Eat Well Age Well who agreed that this was ok. Once a month 'Nourish & Natter' some older adults used to attend and make up small snack boxes, something that is appealing and simple as they sometimes do not know how to make things. Hopefully over the coming weeks we can start to hold conversations from a distance over a wall.

**Jennifer** works with a team of 12 with 3 of them still working. They work within schools with volunteers who feed into the most vulnerable category. The schools are not keen to have volunteers into the school. The service at present sends out either emails or makes phone calls to 55 people per week. Jennifer is doing personal shopping for 3 people. The loneliness is showing.

All of the group expressed concern over the future and posed the following:  
We wonder what things will look like in the future? Age ranges? Shielding?

We touched on spaces and places and how the landscape is not as IG friendly to promote space for all. Community spaces such as benches in parks for older people. It was pointed out that there may be a reticence of parents not wanting older people near their children.

We also spoke about family relations and one member has her whole family living near her on the one street or area.

We spoke about connecting with our community and how spaces could help us to meet people we would not normally see older and more isolated people.

**Sandra** mentioned that in taking part in IG activity she notices that it is mostly female older participants who volunteered and that the older males looked on it with suspicion but it could be seen that they enjoyed the company of young people but stayed in the background.

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#### 4. Online training

- **What do your volunteers need to do IG work?**

All of the above discussions looked at the things that people know of or are involved in. People are happy to receive the information about GWT free on line training and any other resources that may be of use.

**Eat Well Age Well – Raising the issue of malnutrition training** it is free and would be really useful for anyone working with older people around food. It will take place on 43th June, if you are interested you need to sign up here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkf-uhrijorH9xPU5iNSqXB1mTfIQ6\\_-BX5](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkf-uhrijorH9xPU5iNSqXB1mTfIQ6_-BX5)

(If anyone has any questions about the training- the best person to contact is our Project Dietician- Jen Grant – at : [jen@eatwellagewell.org.uk](mailto:jen@eatwellagewell.org.uk) )

- **How can we get young people involved to share their digital skills?**

See all of above conversations.

#### **Other Activities and information to share from GWT**

**Big Lunch** – <https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/thebiglunchhomepage>

Please promote that on 6 & 7th June, nationally the Big Lunch will be taking place.

**T.O.Y. Project** – Together Old and Young. <http://www.toyproject.net/>

Check out the TOY Project as there are lots of resources online.

**Volunteers' Week 1st – 7th June** – what have you planned to say thank you to your volunteers?

**Clear Your Head** - <https://clearyourhead.scot/> This campaign is to help people destress and think about themselves, especially during these very strange times.

**Scottish Older People's Assembly** - <http://www.scotopa.org.uk/>

A voice for older people in parliament. Encourage your older peoples' groups to take a look at their website and participate.

The Connection Coalition - <http://www.connectioncoalition.org.uk/>

Food for Life Programme are looking for ideas from people and want to reach out and find out what they can do to help. They have a face book page set up if anyone wishes to connect [Food for Life Get Togethers Community](#).

#### **GWT membership and website**

Bella encouraged all in attendance to invite others to join the GWT network and to go on the website to join up. It is free and offers a real range of activities and ideas and share case studies and good practice. Bella also recommended that people sign up for the training.

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**Ideas for future network meetings - Moulding the needs of the area and themes for the Lanarkshire Intergenerational Network.**

Bella encouraged people to think what they would like from the network meetings.

**Next meeting:**

We hope to host some more small zoom meetings in a few weeks time and I will send out dates and we can look at the new resource directory and have further discussion.