

Creating Intergenerational Communities Blog November 2024



Left to right: Danielle Meiklejohn, Rashielea Primary, Louisa Turner, GWT, Allys Ludlow, Trees for Cities

[Creating Intergenerational Communities \(CIC\)](#) is a programme to develop quality indicators of intergenerational good practice. The pilot is taking place in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and runs from January 2023 to July 2025, funded by the National Lottery Communities Fund.

Part of the learning from the programme is for intergenerational practitioners to know the intergenerational field (theory, research and practice) and as a result, some pilot projects participating in CIC attended Roselea Court Care Home in Stirling for a lived experience visit.

Roselea Court Care Home itself is not part of the CIC Pilot but did receive a Highly Commended GWT Excellence Award in 2024 for their ongoing work with Braehead Nursery where, together they aim to break down the barriers of age discrimination by finding shared fun and joy through

intergenerational activities and showing that age is just a number. Roselea Court engages with other age ranges too.

Participating CIC Pilots

Along with Louisa Turner from GWT, 3 CIC Pilot Project Leads were able to attend and took up the opportunity to practically trial the toolkit. The 3 pilots were:

- Michael Murphy, Activity Coordinator, [Menzieshill House Care Home](#), Dundee
- Danielle Meiklejohn, Depute Head, [Rashielea Primary](#), Erskine
- Allys Ludlow, Urban Tree Canopy Coordinator, [Trees for Cities](#), Glasgow

Practice in action

There were 8, 16–17-year-old young people from Stirling Academy who are taking an intergenerational physical education course with [Active Stirling](#). The course is delivered over 8 weeks where the young people learn about people from another generation before meeting them. The young people also undertake Dementia Friends training. During their preparation time the young people are tasked with learning how to help older people keep physically active, including a series of chair exercises. The young people then deliver the chair exercises to an older generation with music from eras which the older generation are familiar with.



As part of their course the young people visited residents in Roselea Court consecutively for two weeks. The session consisted of warm-up exercises delivered by Laura Taylor, Active Stirling, then exercises by the young people. Singing and conversation were also part of the session.

Prior to the session, 15 residents were excited to welcome the young people into their home. Their faces and eyes were bright with happy conversation of the anticipated session.



The residents became even more animated when the young people were demonstrating the exercises. The residents all participated in the exercises with expressions of delight in their actions and faces. The residents were able to follow all the instructions. The exercises included actions to – wash the windows, drive a bus, march to the shops, put away the shopping, clean your teeth, put on a light, etc. The mood was lighthearted with a sense of joy in the room.

A series of Scottish folk songs were sung such as Ally Bally, You Canne Shove Your Granny Off The Bus, Jeely Piece song, Singing Kettle and Donald Where's Your Troosers? The residents sang with gusto as they knew the words of old, the majority instinctively demonstrated actions to the songs of their own youth. The smiles and laughter after each song told a story of reminiscence, joy and happiness.

The young people were a little hesitant to join in as some songs were unfamiliar to them and some of the songs were completely new to the young people; this gave the opportunity for the exchange of learning as the residents were able to teach the young people something new.



There was then time for the young people to chat with the residents. The young people sat alongside the residents, making eye contact whilst they listened patiently, and exchanged news about their lives, past and present.

Some of the residents shared their past careers in the ministry, army, architecture and a local baker's, with the young people. All residents were interested in the young peoples' future life choices.

The young people amended their approach to the conversation if they spoke with someone who was hard of hearing. Each resident had the opportunity to speak with more than one person as the young people would chat briefly then move onto someone else.

The young people were initially shy then became more confident as they demonstrated the actions to the exercises. The confidence grew throughout the whole session. It was reported by Laura that at the start of the course these young people were extremely nervous and were nervous to visit the care home. Their anxiety was alleviated after the first week and the second week the young people entered the care home with an aura of self-confidence. The first week they travelled in twos whilst speaking with the older generation and the second week they were more independent and spoke individually to the residents.

Unexpected Outcome

Not only did the young people make connections with the older people in the care home, but the two of the CIC Pilot Project Leads made connections with one another and are planning some separate partnership work.

The IG Approach

The visit was a good insight into the IG sessions between the high school, Active Stirling and Roselea Court. Most of the aims of an IG approach were achieved. Unfortunately, due to the school's timetable the time to make real connections between the generations was limited to only two weeks. The time which the young people were present was also limited due to the young peoples' school timetable and travelling time. The session was 35 minutes with the young people in the room. However, this was long enough for the residents' concentration as they were tired after the session and quickly requested to go to their rooms for a rest when the session ended. The residents were of mixed capacity with some living with a dementia diagnosis.

We give thanks to Stirling Academy pupils, Active Stirling and Roselea Court Care Home for hosting us.