



Centre for Intergenerational Practice

10th Anniversary Newsletter: 1st April 2011

Editorial

When the idea for the Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CIP) was first conceived in 1999 we could have had no idea on the journey we were about to embark. Having gained a then UP National Lottery Grant CIP formally launched on April 1st 2001. Today marks ten years since its inception.

From the beginning we aimed to build an evidence base and understanding of Intergenerational Practice (IP) to explore and understand what difference it could make to building a Society where all ages felt valued, respected and listened to, We also wanted to make sure that practitioners and volunteers also had a voice and could access the support, advice, resources, fellowship and validation that would help them to be as effective as possible. Our ultimate aim was to get policy makers to recognise the potential of IP to build better neighbourhoods and relationships founded on the assets of the generations when they are enabled to become connected.

These last ten years have been a wonderful journey. Some of the things we have achieved together are detailed later for the launch of our latest Guide. We both feel very proud to have had the privilege to work with so many great people these past ten years. We estimate we have supported many thousands of people in different ways over the years and you have all freely shared your learning with us and our networks.

We are now drawing breath and thinking what our priorities must be for the future. Whatever your views of the term Big Society there can be no doubt that IP is all about building a better connected society for all. We have already started a conversation with you our colleagues on what you want our priorities to be for the future. Please take time to help us shape CIP for the next period of its life and tell us what we can best do to help you.

This special tenth anniversary newsletter contains some great material, stories and news. We are also building this whole new legacy resource based on Generations Together and Inspiring Communities and the Scottish Government has confirmed its continued support for IP in Scotland. Most importantly it is a landmark in the development of something we all care about it and a great place from which we can go forward.

Please keep us updated on your intergenerational projects so that we can continue to pass on ideas and good practice. Our special thanks to everyone who has contributed to this special 10th Anniversary issue.

Here's to the future,
Best wishes

Alan & Louise

Alan Hatton-Yeo
Chief Executive
Beth Johnson Foundation

Louise Middleton
Manager, CIP

News and Events

Centre for Intergenerational Practice 10th Anniversary

“It has been my great pleasure to have been connected with CIP from its earliest days. In a careful and considered way it has achieved a major impact on the development of intergenerational work both within the UK and internationally. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with CIP into the future. Congratulations on ten years of solid achievement”

Baroness Sally Greengross, Chief Executive, International Longevity Centre UK - Chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Intergenerational Futures

CIP and Future Priorities

As we now scrutinise the past 10 years and consider the future, we hope that colleagues are able to assist us in forming future plans for CIP by telling us what priorities you would advise us to focus on in the future. Please contact Louise louise@bjf.org.uk or phone: 01782 844036 to discuss; we look forward to hearing your thoughts.

A Guide to Intergenerational Practice

The Centre for Intergenerational Practice launches its new resource, which marks the 10th Anniversary of CIP's founding by the Beth Johnson Foundation. The Guide introduces essential elements of IP and is a practical resource for those working in Voluntary and Community Sectors, Local Authorities and Central Government Departments. This Guide is intended to complement existing work and provide practitioners with overarching principles to IP; a range of guides and toolkits are also being developed by a number of the Generations Together (<http://www.centreforip.org.uk/england/generations-together>) and Inspiring Communities partners (<http://www.centreforip.org.uk/england/inspiring-communities>)

The new Guide can be downloaded free from the CIP website alongside further resources developed at a local level: <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/resources/toolkits-and-guides>

Introducing Beth Johnson Foundation's Youth Ambassador

Siana Bangura is a 19 year old from South East London. Two years ago she joined DareLondon, a pan-London youth advisory board. In this position she has helped scrutinise London Youth, Summer Uni London (now Futureversity) and the Greater London Authority's activities and practices to ensure that they continue to serve young Londoners as effectively as possible. Through DareLondon she has also had the chance to take part in a wide variety of external events. In 2009 one of the partner organisations, London Youth, was asked by the Beth Johnson Foundation if they could provide a young person to chair their National Intergenerational conference. Siana turned out to be the perfect choice. Although she was the first young person ever to chair the conference and had never done anything like it before, she wowed the audience of over 100 people. Her nerveless performance included a fantastic opening speech and an incredibly insightful summing up which referenced speakers from throughout the day.



In 2010, Siana was offered a place at Peterhouse College, Cambridge to read History and is now a first year historian at the university's oldest and smallest college. The Beth Johnson Foundation now work closely with Siana and are supporting her through her degree as a testament to Siana's performance at the conference. In return she now acts as their Youth Ambassador and is a part of the intergenerational advisory group, giving four days a year to help develop the intergenerational work of the foundation.

“Local government in Wales has benefitted tremendously from our partnership with the Centre for Intergenerational Practice. It has been important in drawing attention to groundbreaking intergenerational work taking place across Wales and also critically in linking Wales to intergenerational practice in the UK, Europe and beyond. We look forward to continuing the partnership into the future.”

Cllr Arnold Woolley, Spokesperson for Older People and Ageing, Welsh Local Government Association

Generations Together and Inspiring Communities:

Supporting the development and maintaining the legacy

A Legacy event was held on 1st February 2011 in London for partners of the Generations Together and Inspiring Communities programmes; the event was hosted by the Beth Johnson Foundation and Community Service Volunteers with the full support of the government funding departments for the programmes. The conference report produced following the event; ‘*Supporting the development and maintaining the legacy*’ is available to download from the Centre for Intergenerational Practice website: <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/england/generations-together/legacy-event-1st-february-2011>. Information and resources are also hosted on the Centre’s website pages for the two programmes, for further information contact: generations@bjf.org.uk / 01782 844036.

Intergenerational Practice: a development and support programme

The Ageing Well programme, in collaboration with the Beth Johnson Foundation Centre for Intergenerational Practice, has commissioned a new development and support programme to help councils design their approach to intergenerational practice.

We see this as a key opportunity for councils interested in intergenerational practice to participate. It also provides *Generations Together* [GT] funded areas with an opportunity to share their experience and learning as part of the GT legacy by working with wider areas to promote intergenerational practice. This is particularly relevant in the current climate of budget reduction and a radical shift in policy direction, calling for innovative and collaborative approaches to service design and delivery.

To find out how your council can take advantage of this **free** support offer and register an interest on the Ageing Well website following the link: <http://email.local.gov.uk/t/1944/19580/2041/0/> If you would like to discuss the programme in more detail contact Clare Batty, National Intergenerational Development Officer clare@bjf.org.uk

“Government must work with Civil Society” – Big Society film emphasises

This is the message of a unique short documentary film, *The Big Society: A View from the Frontline*, commissioned by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Launched in Westminster by the Prime Minister’s Big Society adviser Lord Wei, the film gave frontline managers and volunteers the opportunity to give their view of the Big Society.

Gulbenkian Foundation Director Andrew Barnett said: “We have heard a lot from policy makers and thinkers about the Big Society but very little from those who are working on the ground and the beneficiaries of their work. Five very diverse civil society organisations were asked: How do they connect to their communities? What do they think the Big Society means? What is their contribution to – and their big ask of – the Big Society?”

For further information, and to view the film visit the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, UK website: <http://www.gulbenkian.org.uk/news/news/147-The-Big-Society--A-View-from-the-Frontline.html>

“Building better relationships between generations, so everyone in a community benefits” sounds so obvious and natural, but it is much easier to say than do. CIP has spent 10 years unpicking the clichés and the myths, searching for the truths about intergenerational work, to best support individuals and communities who are trying to make it happen. The Centre’s hard work has pushed this issue up the political and social agenda and made sure it is taken seriously, rising above the cute photo opportunity. Congratulations to all the staff on reaching their 10th birthday, and thank you for your tenacity, flexibility and imagination along the way. My job would be harder if you didn’t exist.”

Susan Langford MBE, Director, Magic Me

The importance of intergenerational cooperation

Siana Bangura, BJF Youth Ambassador

In an age of uncertainty at best and a very damaging mentality at worst, we have forgotten the significance of working together to achieve and to make an impact.

It is no secret that there is a vast gap, at least in mindset, between my generation and the one directly above, due to a very detrimental ‘I know better than you’ type of philosophy. Age discrimination often goes overlooked, despite it being just as damaging as any other form of discrimination and we have identified the battle that still faces all of us – being able to appreciate each other’s experiences as worthwhile and something to learn from, whatever age we are. We do not stop learning but we do reach a point where we as adults also have to be able to teach. It is vital, if we really want to solve the problems of the present, that we learn from the past and that the older generation finds the balance between letting the younger generation make their own mistakes, advising and supporting, and being an example of good things to come. Equally important is the need of the younger generation to willingly accept that although times have changed, there are few issues that our parents’ generation did not experience and attempt to combat. The universal truth, I think it is fair to say, is that if everyone remembers what is was and is like to be a young person and hold that, then we have a place to start from with reference to bridging the intergenerational gap.

Join AGE campaign for more solidarity between generations: make the day a success!



The third European Day of Solidarity between generations on 29 April 2011 is getting closer and AGE is preparing its campaign to raise public and politic awareness and mobilise as many organisations and individuals as possible.

You will find information on the campaign dedicated page on AGE website and useful ideas, material, links and publications, as well as the official logo of the Day which you can use on all your relevant communication tools. Please send details about any activity that you are planning to organise to mark the event, so they can be posted on the AGE website and shared with a wide range of interested parties. Regular updates will also be published in the monthly newsletter CoverAGE, contact Anne Mélard for further information: anne.melard@age-platform.eu, Information and Communication Officer, AGE Platform Europe. We hope that many of you will join the initiative, which will hopefully contribute to make our society a society of all ages: <http://www.age-platform.eu/en/age-policy-work/solidarity-between-generations/campaign>

Royal Wedding Street Parties; an intergenerational date!

Streets Alive is anticipating that up to 2 million people across the country will follow the tradition of holding a street party for a national event. Activity on the Street Party website has rocketed to 1000 unique visits a day since the announcement of the Royal Wedding, which offers the opportunity to bring people together and meet neighbours through street parties; whether for small neighbour get-togethers, a proper street party or a street meet!

Streets Alive hopes that this year's events will result in an ongoing enthusiasm for street parties to be held later in the summer, or at any time, as a good way of building community spirit at street level through neighbours meeting each other. For further information, including a guide to organising a street party check out the Street Party and Streets Alive websites: www.streetparty.org.uk and www.streetsalive.org.uk

2012 European Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity

2012 will be the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations Action Plan on Ageing, which stated "Solidarity between generations at all levels – in families, communities and nations – is fundamental for the achievement of a society for all ages". Age Platform Europe is leading the campaign to promote active ageing and create a society for all ages! www.age-platform.eu/en

The proposed European Year is designed to serve as a framework for; raising awareness on the contribution that older people make to society, identifying and disseminating good practice, mobilising policymakers and relevant stakeholders at all levels to promote active ageing and calling for greater cooperation and solidarity between generations.

This is an opportunity to propose action to support active ageing across all sectors and in all policy areas to support the necessary changes to achieve a society for all ages and to find innovative solutions that are sustainable and fair for all generations. For more information on the EY2012 Coalition contact Alice Sinigaglia, Logistic and Campaign Officer, AGE Platform Europe, alice.sinigaglia@age-platform.eu or visit the website: <http://www.age-platform.eu/en/age-policy-work/employment-and-active-ageing/2012-european-year-on-active-ageing-and-intergenerational-solidarity>

'Awards for all Ages' – celebrating good practice and innovation

The Centre for Intergenerational Practice welcomes these new intergenerational awards, launched by the social enterprise United for All Ages. The awards aim to highlight the best projects and practice across the country bringing older and younger people together.

The 2011 Awards for All Ages have five categories: Centres for All Ages awards, Making the Case award, Leading the Way award, Showcase award and The United for All Ages award to an inspiring individual.

Award winners need to demonstrate how they have brought people of different ages together, integrated services, tackled difficult social issues cost-effectively and created stronger communities for all ages. More details of the categories and how to enter are on the United for All Ages website: www.unitedforallages.com closing date for entries is 31 May 2011.

CALL FOR PAPERS – Journal of Intergenerational Relationships (JIR) Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity in Europe

On January 2011, after a first reading of the Council's proposal, the European Parliament suggested that 2012 is designated as the European Year for Active Ageing - promoting solidarity between generations; as part of celebrating 2012 JIR is going to publish a

special edition on intergenerational work in Europe. JIR encourage papers that explore the connection between intergenerational solidarity and active ageing, both within and beyond the framework that EU institutions are setting around the European Year.

One of the main objectives of this special issue is to identify where we are in terms of social change due to intergenerational work compared with where we would like to get to in terms of sustained and systemic social change. Our hope is that some papers will include specific strategies and recommendations for where we need to go next after 2012 regarding the promotion of active ageing and intergenerational solidarity across Europe. To view the full information for the call for papers and the timeline for submissions go to the CIP website news page: <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/news/call-for-papers-journal-of-intergenerational-relationships-jir>

Role of intergenerational learning in environmental education

Call for case studies

Jessica Stewart is currently doing an MSc in Education for Sustainability with the London South Bank University. Jessica is now preparing her dissertation which would focus on the role that intergenerational learning could have in environmental education, and is hoping to use a case study approach. Jessica is looking for UK examples of projects which combine the two aspects of the topic; intergenerational learning and environmental education.

If you have been involved, are involved in or are thinking of getting involved in this kind of project and you would like to share information and experiences please contact Jessica direct: enuvp@hotmail.com

Criminal records regime review – phase one

Following announcements by the government to scale back the Vetting and Barring Scheme and criminal records regime to “common-sense” levels; phase 1 of the independent two-part review has now been completed.

10 recommendations have been highlighted to support changes to keep adequate protection levels in place, whilst supporting citizen opportunities. For further information view the Home Office Press Release (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/criminal-record-checks>) or for a summary of the recommendations and to download the full report go to the Home Office website page: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/criminal-records-review-phase1/>

Safe Network and online self assessment tool

The Safe Network recently launched its new set of standards. These include the following areas; safer staff and volunteers – recruitment, induction and supervision; and child protection. The standards are supported by an online self assessment tool and accompanied by online guidance materials. For further information visit www.safenetwork.org.uk

Northern Ireland

Linking Generations Northern Ireland Interim Evaluation

The Linking Generations programme is being independently evaluated and a short time ago the Interim Report was delivered. It runs to over 80 pages and is a very detailed, clear account and analysis of the work undertaken in Northern Ireland. The Report covers the period to the end of February and as a result the most detailed analysis is on the training seminars undertaken and also projects in the 09/10 year.

The Report compliments the Project Development Worker, Vicki Titterington, and feedback on the 2009/10 projects is positive and the indications are that this will be the case for 2010/11. Linking Generations Northern Ireland is managed by the Beth Johnson Foundation; the full news article is on the CIP website in 'news' as well as further information on the work in Northern Ireland: <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/northern-ireland>

Wales

Welsh Projects get a taste of the outdoors with BIG Funding

From a project to get young and old working together to develop a community garden in Anglesey, to sessions aimed at preserving and teaching people the skill of dry stone walling in Monmouthshire, a total of five Welsh projects have been awarded Lottery funding. The projects, all aimed at getting more people to enjoy the outdoors whilst protecting local wildlife, share in the £37,118 awarded under the latest round of the Big Lottery Fund's Community Wildlife programme. For further information visit the website: http://news.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pr_080311_wal_cw_taste_of_the_outdoors_with_big_funding?regioncode=-wal

Getting the community involved must not increase inequality!

Headlines around the Big Society dominate the media. These seem to principally concern the devolving of decision-making and the running of community facilities by an army of willing volunteers. The people of Wales have a strong tradition and history of challenging inequality. The pioneers of mutualism and cooperation looked to a better life for all citizens, one where all would benefit from education, better health and wellbeing.....

Read the full version of this interesting piece by Wendy Bourton, Chair of the National Partnership Forum for Older People in Wales and Alan Hatton-Yeo, Chief Executive, Beth Johnson Foundation, on the Bevan Foundation 'This is my Truth' website pages: <http://thisismytruth.org/2011/03/16/getting-the-community-involved-must-not-increase-inequality/>

Events

Age to Age – the Lewisham Intergenerational Festival

4th - 17th April 2011, London

Age Exchange has developed and is running the first Lewisham Intergenerational Festival to take place in April hosting events, exhibitions and activities across the Borough. Bringing different age groups together to share stories, experiences and learning is key to this festival. For further information please visit the Age Exchange website: <http://www.age-exchange.org.uk/projects/current/age2age2011/index.html>

Mentoring and Befriending Foundation National Conference 2011

Measuring up to the future, 17th May 2011, London

The conference aims to promote greater understanding of the current social and economic policy issues in relation to mentoring and befriending. It also provides the opportunity to explore new approaches and practical tools that will help to maximise opportunities in this new and challenging climate. Full details of the conference, including workshops/sessions together with names of speakers can be found on the website: <http://www.mandbf.org.uk/news/eventinfo/article/6398/37/>

Second World Homeshare Congress: Collaboration in Action

1 - 2 July, Cologne, Germany

The second world homeshare congress will bring together homeshare practitioners, academics, policy makers, and programme participants from all over the world to exchange ideas and learn from one another. Homeshare is increasingly seen as a vital means of supporting people in their own homes, meeting housing need and encouraging positive intergenerational relationships. For further information visit the website: www.homeshare.org

Rethinking and Revitalizing Intergenerational Connections

Generations United's 16th International Conference

26-29 July 2011, Washington, DC

This is an international intergenerational conference offering multiple opportunities for delegates to rethink their work, community, connections and society through learning about intergenerational programs, practices, policies and research from around the world. For all event details as well as the link for on-line registration, visit the website: <http://www2.gu.org/RESOURCES/Conference.aspx>

New Dynamics of Learning and Ageing:

Exploring the role of education in later life, 11th – 13th October 2011, Ireland

The Association for Education and Ageing in partnership with Age Action Ireland and the Workers' Education Association Northern Ireland is running its next international conference and training event at the Maynooth National University of Ireland.

The conference will aim to: Identify new areas of teaching and learning, especially through arts and creativity, Share good practice about older adults' learning and educational opportunities, Include the voice of the older learner, Preview the forthcoming EU year of older people (2012), Showcase the work of the conference partners and other contributors.

For further information, to register your initial interests in attending or submitting a paper please contact: Jim Soulsby, Development Coordinator, jim.soulsby@btinternet.com or check out the AEA website: www.associationforeducationandageing.org/

Resources

Age2Age Evaluation Briefing 2:

Findings from the first year of Age2Age grants in Cumbria

This briefing forms part of the programme evaluation of Age2Age. It focuses specifically on the first year of community grants awarded in Cumbria 2009-2010. The briefing begins with an overview of the programme, before describing the context of the work and what has been achieved so far. A discussion of the findings is then followed by key messages and learning from Cumbria: the document is available on the CIP website: <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/res/documents/publication/age2age%20Evaluation%20briefing%20CumbriaNovember%202010.pdf>

Journal for Intergenerational Relationships

The Journal is the only international journal focusing exclusively on the intergenerational field from practical, theoretical, and social policy perspectives. This unique global forum features information about the latest research and program development on intergenerational aspects of a range of global social issues and frontier topics in family studies from around the world. <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/WJIR>

Penn State's "Ideas for Intergenerational Living" newsletter

The March 2011 edition of Penn State's Intergenerational Programs and Aging "Ideas for Intergenerational Living" newsletter is now available to download free from their website: <http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu/Newsletters.html>

Welsh Local Government Association Older People and Ageing Bulletin

The latest WLGA Older People and Ageing Bulletin have some interesting intergenerational links and can be downloaded from the following website link:

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/english/ub/wlga-older-people-and-ageing-bulletin-word-march/>

Funding

Please find below some possible funding options for intergenerational projects:

John Ellerman Foundation

Social Welfare category has a focus towards "elderly people" and this area has a special focus on isolated, poor and lonely older people and specifically includes **intergenerational** contact and promotion of health and well-being. The Foundation will only consider applications from charities with a UK office that work, or have reach and impact, across England/UK. Most grants are for one and two years with a minimum grant of £10,000: <http://www.ellerman.org.uk/>

Wales - GwirVol Youth Volunteering Grants

The aim of the GwirVol Youth Volunteering Grants scheme is to support the delivery and promotion of a wide range of new volunteering opportunities in Wales, especially for disadvantaged young people (16 – 25). The scheme offers five different strands of funding with lots of opportunity for intergenerational projects. Grants range from £2,000 to £30,000 and the deadline for applications is the 8th June 2011: <http://www.sustainablefundingcymru.org.uk/fundingportal/11353/11356>

Quotes from friends and colleagues celebrating CIP's 10th Anniversary

"I have been in touch with CIP since its inception. It has been a decade in which CIP has led our joint effort to expand the intergenerational field. Nowadays, CIP has become an international lighthouse for anyone sailing the ocean of intergenerational issues and practices". Mariano Sanchez, Spanish Intergenerational Network

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"The expert advice and assistance from CIP at the Beth Johnson Foundation has been invaluable in helping us to create an innovative and effective body of work through our Ageing Programme. Their determination in tackling the hardest issues and working with some of the most excluded people shows they are able to punch above their weight to affect change while remaining true to their mission of building relationships across generations."

Annabel Knight, Project Officer, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK)

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"Congratulations to the Centre for Intergenerational Practice on achieving their 10th anniversary. The Centre's enthusiasm and inspiration has taken those involved in intergenerational work on a journey and I am very happy, proud and privileged to be part of that journey. I look forward with confidence to the next 10 years and wish them every success in their goal to place intergenerational work where it rightly deserves to be - at the forefront of social policy. In this way we will build not a bigger society, but most certainly a better one in which we can respect and share the positive values that both older and younger people contribute to our communities."
Ged Stanton, St Thomas More RC High School

Projects

Accredited Intergenerational Volunteering Hart Voluntary Action

Findings from a survey undertaken in 2009 revealed that parents of students attending Court Moor Secondary School, North East Hampshire were keen to see the school engaging more with the local community. In order to address this request from parents, the School sought the help of Hart Voluntary Action (HVA) in developing a programme that would enable the School's year 10 students to volunteer within the local community. Particular emphasis was to be placed on building links with older people in line with indicators from both central and local government about the value of mixing generations.

What a brief! As parents themselves, the team at HVA were well aware of the difficulties in engaging 14 and 15 year olds! What would motivate students already 'bogged down' with GCSEs to volunteer? Would it be cool? How could two vulnerable groups be brought together without a plethora of bureaucracy? What a challenge! What an opportunity to introduce volunteering to a future generation!

With increasing competition for student places in both further and higher education the team at HVA felt that student recognition was key to ensuring the necessary 'buy in'. Identifying an accredited unit award scheme – AQA (*AQA – The Assessment and Qualification Alliance), HVA developed two bespoke units for under 16 volunteering. Students completing the units would receive certificates recognising their understanding of volunteering and the volunteer activity they had completed; invaluable when attending an interview for a place at college or in the workplace.

Launched in December 2009, students were introduced to the programme via a Year 10 assembly followed by a series of group discussions; exploring what it means to volunteer, the personal benefits of volunteering and perhaps most importantly what constitutes a 'good' volunteer experience. Building from this, students were then offered a choice of volunteer activities to try, supervised by both HVA and teaching staff.

Take up to the programme was excellent; with a surprise in store for both the School and HVA alike- the number of students who already volunteered was significant! Most not realising that they were volunteering, it was just 'something I do!' -in most instances without any recognition; the AQA programme provided the mechanism to rectify this.



For those students not currently volunteering local voluntary organisations, with a little encouragement from HVA, proved receptive to providing 'taster' sessions in intergenerational activities. Feedback has been positive. Favourite roles include helping older people living in sheltered accommodation, experience the joys of 'on line shopping' and SKYPE! 'How can someone forget what to do from one minute to the next'? - was a regular question posed by students! Another activity witnessed a gaggle of lip-glossed girlyies learning from the expertise of an 80 year old lady in how to construct a 'runner bean wigwam'; hanging on her every word, their enjoyment truly showed as they hugged and kissed her goodbye! How do you measure that?

Organisations too have benefitted. Local council residential home, Thurlston House were keen to know when the students would be back as their residents took so much pleasure from the weekly visits. Sentinel Housing Association, reported changes in attitude. Previously they had experienced tension between the 'hoodie louts' on their way home from school and their tenants in sheltered accommodation. Post volunteering and 'hoodies' and tenants are waving to each other as the students make their way home from school.

This innovative volunteer programme delivered through a strong partnership of voluntary and public sector is now enjoying its second successful year. 2011 sees a 'new' group of students begin their volunteer journey, with 50 already referred to placements – there is a busy year ahead!

Sue Vincent, Volunteer Development Officer, Hart Voluntary Action
Civic Offices, Harlington Way, Fleet, Hants GU51 4AE
Tel: 01252 815652

Intergenerational Groups in Schools

Rowen Smith, Manager, Full Circle

Full Circle is a charity based in Oxford. It brings children and older people together throughout Oxfordshire, with the aim of nurturing understanding, respect and friendship between generations. We specialise in running intergenerational groups in schools and there are currently 14 different projects running in primary and secondary schools. Each group is run by a facilitator and, after setting the group up, Full Circle enables schools to take ownership of the group at an early stage.

Some of the key factors to Full Circle groups are the informality and nurturing aspects. Children are carefully selected by the schools and Full Circle recruits the older people involved from within the local community. Reasons for involvement vary tremendously. For children, they may be going through a particularly tough time at home or their levels of confidence and self-esteem may be quite low. For older people, they can often be fairly isolated or have experienced a recent bereavement. Sometimes, they just want to feel part of the local community or keep in touch with young people. In addition, people also take part specifically because otherwise they would not have such contact with a different generation.

In terms of the content of the groups, great emphasis is put on simply having a good time and enjoying each others' company but most groups spend time making things, playing games and discussing issues.



As always, it feels like things are constantly developing. Last year, we took on a third member of staff – Ruth Stavris, our Co-ordinator for Older Volunteers. Her role is to recruit and support our older volunteers. Our work has also recently been independently evaluated, which has been invaluable in helping to focus our plans and shape our future direction. This includes regular support groups for local projects, for older volunteers and facilitators and ongoing focus group sessions for older volunteers with a view to making an impact at a strategic level. We are also exploring having children and young people directly involved on our Management Committee and we are about to change the way we select schools for involvement by targeting school partnerships and working intensively across the whole partnership. In the longer term, we

are aiming to extend this beyond Oxfordshire and to work in other parts of the country. Another area that we are exploring further is adding a training element to our work. We have worked solely in the field of intergenerational work for many years now and are keen to share our experience and, in particular, our expertise at working intergenerationally in schools, with others. We celebrate our 10th anniversary in May 2011 and are currently deciding how best to celebrate!

Bringing different generations together seems to be so crucial to the well-being of individuals and communities and we are really pleased to continue to be at the forefront of this work as it becomes recognized and valued more and more. For further information about Full Circle, please ring us on 01865 246456, e-mail us at fullcircle@fullcircleoxon.org.uk and please do visit our website: - www.fullcircleoxon.org.uk

Wales

Generations Hand in Hand in Rhondda Cynon Taf

Imogen Baker, Acting Head teacher, Blaengwawr Primary School

Five years ago, our school launched an inter-generational project that pupils named 'Generations Hand in Hand'. Addressing perceived anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime was a major motivation in our initiative, one which links elderly residents from Maesyffynon Care Home and the young pupils at our school. We wanted to break down the barriers between the generations and to improve community relations, addressing misunderstandings and prejudice and build friendships that would promote a good neighbourhood spirit.



We quickly established links with a variety of agencies and with our community cluster worker. We worked closely with the local older people's mental health teams and Age Concern and set up a programme of visits by groups of year 6 pupils. Before starting our visits, staff, pupils and parents were visited by the mental health team to give them information about dementia and its impact on the residents. A contract was drawn up between the cluster worker and pupils and the project began with structured tasks linked to the history curriculum and World War Two. Each week a group of ten pupils visited, and still visit, the home accompanied by a learning support assistant.

Pupils were amazed when they returned to school with real World War Two stories and facts! They looked at artefacts and photographs etc. and looked forward to their weekly visits. It soon became evident that this project was having a very positive effect on the self-esteem and well-being of both pupils and residents and wonderful friendships were seen to form.

During the first year we began applying for funding to develop land between the home and the school and to make it into an outdoor classroom and environmental area that could be shared by pupils, residents and the wider community. A bid for £50,000 from the Big Lottery Fund was successful and work began. Our school and community were transformed. This project is now completely school-sustained and embedded in school practice. Staff and volunteers have developed new skills and knowledge from their involvement and parents have been engaged in issues around mental health, ageing and social care.

Many activities have been undertaken to enrich the curriculum for our pupils and to help both generations to listen and understand each other.

Listed below is just a snapshot of what has been done to make the project such a success:

- Pupils visit the home weekly to carry out a range of skills-based activities with the residents, thereby enriching their curriculum;
- Pupils keep diaries of their visits and put together a portfolio of work and events during each year;
- Residents are invited to, and attend, all our concerts and school events;
- Pupils and residents grow vegetables together – and make meals with them;
- A local sculptor worked with residents and pupils to make a seat for the outdoor area - this can be enjoyed by the whole community;
- Ruth Marks, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, visited our school to talk to all those involved in the project;
- Artwork created with residents has been sent to our link school in France;
- At the end of the school year, residents hold a party for us to celebrate our friendship and joint hard work;
- Relatives of residents compliment us on the positive impact of our visits;
- We won a 'Love Where You Live' Award for our community work.

It has been a real privilege to be a part of this project which has been mutually beneficial to all participants. We take great pride in its success and know that it will continue to thrive in the future: Imogen Baker, Acting Head teacher, Blaengwawr Primary School, Aberaman, Aberdare, CF44 6YP

***Don't forget! ***

If you would like to contribute an article or would like information promoted in the newsletter or on our website, we will be pleased to hear from you.

People reporting on their projects and experiences of intergenerational practice add value to our work and publications.

Please note the deadline date for inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter is:

24 June 2011

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