

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi



Analysis for Policy



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Social Research Number: 24/2019

Publication Date: 24/05/2019

# Review of key mechanisms in intergenerational practices, and their effectiveness at reducing loneliness/social isolation

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

**OGI** © Crown Copyright Digital ISBN 978-1-83876-335-0

# Review of key mechanisms in intergenerational practices, and their effectiveness at reducing loneliness/social isolation

Author: Nia Bryer, OB3 Research and Janine Owens, University of Sheffield

Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

For further information please contact:  
Social Research and Information Division  
Knowledge and Analytical Services  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff

Email: [Research.HealthAndSocialServices@gov.wales](mailto:Research.HealthAndSocialServices@gov.wales)

## **Table of contents**

Glossary .....	2
Executive Summary .....	3
1. Introduction.....	12
2. Study Methodology.....	14
3. Background .....	17
4. Literature Review.....	22
5. Fieldwork findings: organisations working with sub-groups .....	32
6. Fieldwork findings: intergenerational interventions .....	36
7. Fieldwork findings: enablers and barriers to intergenerational practice .....	58
8. Conclusions and recommendations.....	73
References.....	80
Annex A: Academic and grey literature reviewed .....	82

## **List of figures**

Figure 3.1: The intergenerational contact continuum .....	20
Figure 6.1: Eight principles of Intergenerational practice .....	56
Figure 8.1: Intergenerational practice outcomes .....	74
Figure 8.2: Intergenerational practice key mechanisms .....	76

## **Glossary**

<b>Acronym/Key word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
BAME	Black and Minority Ethnic
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
GWT	Generations Working Together
IP	Intergenerational Practice
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Welsh Government's programme for government, *Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021*, sets out a commitment to 'develop a nationwide and cross-government strategy to address loneliness and isolation'<sup>1</sup> as part of its strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of the population. In support of this commitment the Assembly's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee undertook an inquiry into loneliness and isolation, the results of which were published in December 2017. As part of its inquiry, the Committee received evidence on the benefits of intergenerational contact between children and older people and concluded that 'the evidence we heard on intergenerational contact ... can sometimes be more beneficial than contact with one's own age group'<sup>2</sup>.

The report recommended 'that the Welsh Government undertakes an evaluation to assess the impact of intergenerational contact on people experiencing loneliness and isolation. If the evaluation highlights benefits of such contact, the Welsh Government should ensure best practice in this area is rolled out across Wales'<sup>3,4</sup>.

Intergenerational practice is often commonly defined using the Beth Johnson Foundation's definition:

'Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contribute to building more cohesive communities.

Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and the older have to offer each other and those around them'<sup>5</sup>.

Whilst intergenerational practice can take many forms it is possible to place activities on a continuum from a low to a high level of intergenerational contact as set out below:

---

<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government *Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021*, p.8

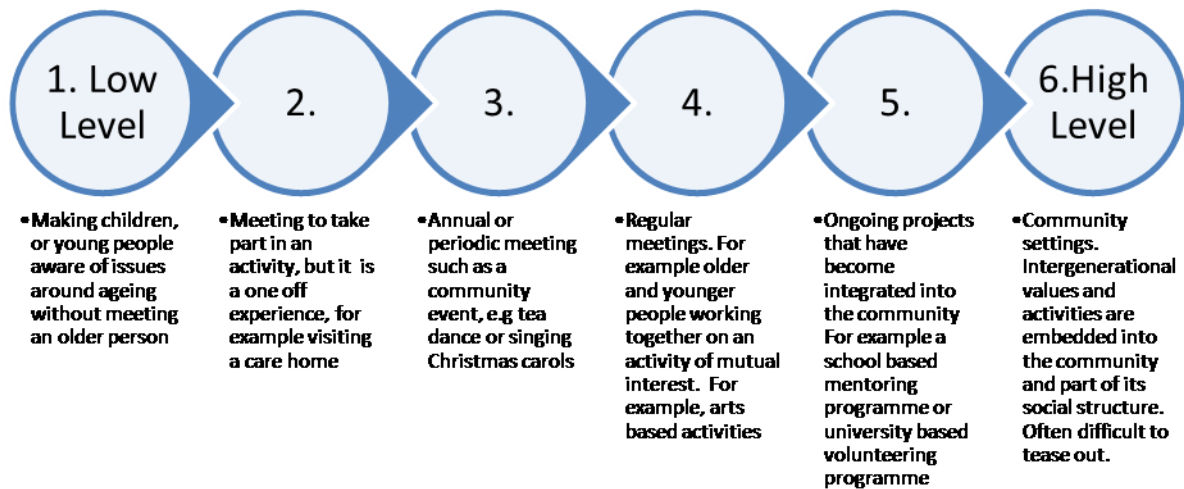
<sup>2</sup> National Assembly for Wales Health, Social Care and Sport Committee (December 2017) *Inquiry into loneliness and isolation*, p.39

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p.39

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Government officials took the view that a review, rather than an evaluation, would be a more appropriate approach as this would allow for good practice across a larger range and number of initiatives to be identified which would draw upon existing evaluation findings where available.

<sup>5</sup> For instance as used by [Generations Working Together](#)

## The intergenerational contact continuum



Source: Adapted from Kaplan (2004:7)<sup>6</sup>

### Aims and objectives of review

OB3 Research, in conjunction with the Centre for Loneliness Studies, University of Sheffield, was appointed by the Welsh Government to undertake a review of key mechanisms in intergenerational practices, and their effectiveness at reducing loneliness and social isolation.

The review aimed to:

- identify the key mechanisms (barriers and enablers) by reviewing available literature on intergenerational practice that focuses on tackling loneliness and social isolation and interview key respondents who are involved with intergenerational programmes
- inform policy development by illustrating key enablers and barriers, using case studies of intergenerational programmes in Wales and/or elsewhere in the UK
- identify whether there are subgroups within society for whom intergenerational programmes are particularly effective and ineffective in reducing their loneliness and social isolation.

<sup>6</sup> Kaplan, M, (2004). Toward an intergenerational way of life. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*. Vol. 96 (2): 5-9.

The review was also tasked to offer recommendations:

- on practical lessons that could feed into future guidance on setting up intergenerational projects aimed at reducing loneliness and social isolation
- for policy that focus on enablers of intergenerational programmes that are successful at reducing loneliness and social isolation as well as key barriers that prevent the reduction of social isolation and loneliness in such programmes.

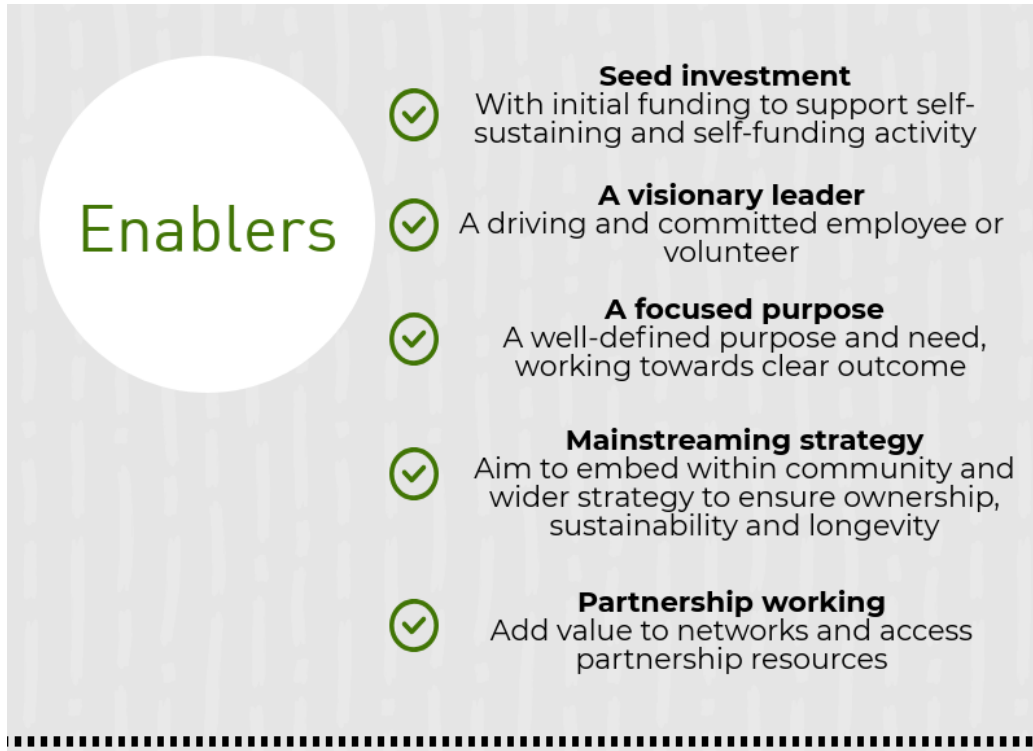
## **Method**

The review involved:

- an inception stage, which included an inception meeting with Welsh Government officials and preparing a refined methodological approach and project plan
- desk based research, which involved undertaking a state-of-the-art review of the latest published and 'grey' literature, and grouping and tabulating the key findings
- preparing research instruments to inform the fieldwork with key informants and representatives involved with intergenerational activities and case studies
- identifying intergenerational interventions and selecting a sample for inclusion as case studies within the review
- undertaking phone interviews with representatives from across 13 intergenerational initiatives and reviewing, where available, relevant evaluation material on these
- undertaking phone interviews with two organisations with a specific national intergenerational remit
- undertaking interviews with 14 key informants, including 11 organisations who were approached to provide evidence on the experience of particular sub-groups
- synthesising the findings of the fieldwork and desk-based research and preparing a peer-reviewed final evaluation report.

## Key findings

The evaluation found that the key mechanisms in terms of enablers and barriers to delivering successful intergenerational practice are:







## Other considerations

- Participants are mutually interested in activity
- Allow for good quality relationships to develop
- Prior preparation and ensuring understanding of recipient group
- Participants shape activity
- Activity has purpose, specific need and clear outcomes
- Participants have equal access to engage and benefit
- Voluntary participation
- Support from intergenerational officer or network
- Continued hand-holding for groups
- Ongoing evaluation of outcomes

The review found that the most common outcomes that intergenerational initiatives claim to achieve were:

## Common outcomes for all



**Fun and enjoyment**

**Fulfilment and enrichment**





**Challenge stereotypical attitudes**

**Friendship & relationships**





**Increased understanding**



### Reduced isolation and loneliness

Improved wellbeing, positive mood and raised spirit, pride, quality of life

Improved health (mental and physical)

Opportunity to engage in follow on activities

Live independently at home for longer

Improved access to services

Confidence

Self-esteem

Behavioural change

Skills (social, communication, gardening, creative arts)

Knowledge (e.g. local history)



Reduced isolation and loneliness

Improved wellbeing

Improved health (mental and physical)

Affordable housing

## Community outcomes



Improved  
community  
cohesion &  
connections



Reduced  
community  
tensions



Increased  
sense of  
belonging to  
community

## Conclusions

The review concluded that intergenerational practice can be considered as a continuum of contact between different generations which varies from low level interventions such as raising awareness of ageing issues through to high level intervention where intergenerational activities are embedded into community settings as a natural part of its social structure. The majority of the case study interventions considered as part of the review fell into the medium level category of interventions and predominantly included distinct activities which involved regular sessions between older and young people as well as ongoing projects that had become integrated into the community. Very few of the highest level interventions were included in light of the difficulties in identifying them as a result of being fully embedded into the community.

It was found that many intergenerational practice interventions claim to reduce loneliness and social isolation. In some cases, the original main outcome was not to reduce loneliness and/or social isolation but it became a by-product of the intergenerational work. In other cases, reducing loneliness and social isolation was the initial focus and intergenerational work became a by-product of the initial approach. Broadly speaking, case study interventions were found to make a greater contribution to reducing social isolation than loneliness. Embedded and longer-term

interventions were also considered to have the potential to make the greatest impact upon levels of social isolation and loneliness.

Short-term intergenerational projects, particularly those which are reliant upon project funding, are at greater risk of being unsustainable. It is possible that these types of interactions could be more damaging for older people and leave them feeling more isolated at the end because they have no access to replacement activities. For some projects that survive past the initial intervention and become owned and embedded into communities there is frequently a lack of evaluation to draw and identify which aspects are most successful and which areas need adjusting.

The review found that some groups are more inclined to participate in intergenerational initiatives than others, with women more inclined to do so than men. The review also found that at a broad level, regular group based intergenerational activities are more likely to be focused on bringing together older people and children whilst community based initiatives (such as choirs and social groups) are more likely to recruit a broader range of participants by age and offer multigenerational opportunities. The review found some examples of successful initiatives which were targeting specific audiences and these included young professionals, refugee and migrants and dementia patients.

## **Recommendations**

The review offers eight recommendations for the Welsh Government to consider in terms of future policy relating to intergenerational practice. It is recommended that:

- Intergenerational activity be included as an implementation mechanism within the Welsh Government's proposed strategy on loneliness and isolation
- Intergenerational practice be considered in its widest sense and be considered within the context of policy areas such as housing, planning, education, social justice and community development. The Welsh Government's strategy on loneliness and isolation should consider how intergenerational practice could be fully embraced and embedded in existing or new policies i.e. how new developments or spaces can be used by different generations

- The Welsh Government considers the case for establishing a national body to drive and support intergenerational developments as well as to advocate the case for intergenerational planning across key policy areas
- Such a national body (or otherwise) puts in place an appropriate support framework for intergenerational practice enablers, practitioners and volunteers, building on existing good practice and resources and which includes guidance, training and peer support
- Consideration be given to proactively identify, enable and support the roll-out of successful UK initiatives (such as Homesharing UK, Family Cares and the Good Gym) to specific settings or areas within Wales
- The Welsh Government considers the feasibility of establishing an intergenerational seed fund or micro-financing to support activities which have the potential to be mainstreamed and sustained post funding
- All intergenerational practices adopt ongoing evaluation of their provision so as to provide meaningful evidence on their impact upon reducing loneliness and isolation
- Practitioners in Wales keep abreast of international developments and good practice relating to intergenerational practice by engaging with national and international communities of interest and conferences.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In November 2018, the Welsh Government appointed OB3 Research, in conjunction with the Centre for Loneliness Studies, University of Sheffield, to undertake a review of key mechanisms in intergenerational practices, and their effectiveness at reducing loneliness and social isolation.
- 1.2 The specific requirements of the review were to:
- identify the key mechanisms (barriers and enablers) by reviewing available literature on intergenerational practice that focuses on tackling loneliness and social isolation and interview key respondents who are involved with intergenerational programmes
  - inform policy development by illustrating key enablers and barriers, using case studies of intergenerational programmes in Wales and/or elsewhere in the UK
  - identify whether there are subgroups within society for whom intergenerational programmes are particularly effective and ineffective in reducing their loneliness and social isolation.
- 1.3 The review was also tasked to offer recommendations:
- on practical lessons that could feed into future guidance on setting up intergenerational projects aimed at reducing loneliness and social isolation
  - for policy that focus on enablers of intergenerational programmes that are successful at reducing loneliness and social isolation as well as key barriers that prevent the reduction of social isolation and loneliness in such programmes.
- 1.5 The methodology adopted involved desk-based research including a literature review of intergenerational intervention. It also included fieldwork with key informants and representatives from selected case study projects.
- 1.6 This report is presented in eight chapters as follows:
- chapter one: introduction to the report
  - chapter two: an outline of the study methodology

- chapter three: sets out the background, the policy context and definitional issues
- chapter four: reviews the latest published and 'grey' literature on intergenerational practice and social isolation and loneliness
- chapter five: presents the findings of the fieldwork with key informants from organisations working with particular sub-groups
- chapter six: presents individual summaries of the 13 intergenerational interventions case studies and an overview of the work of the two national intergenerational organisations
- chapter seven: presents the findings of the fieldwork with case studies and other contributors involved with intergenerational practice on the key enablers and barriers to successful intergenerational practice
- chapter eight: presents our conclusions and recommendations for future Welsh Government policy and practice.

## 2. Study Methodology

2.1 This chapter sets out the method used for undertaking the review and discusses the issues, which arose when undertaking the study.

### Method

2.2 The review, which was undertaken between December 2018 and March 2019, involved the following elements of work:

- an inception stage, which included an inception meeting with Welsh Government officials and preparing a refined methodological approach and project plan
- desk based research, which involved undertaking a state-of-the-art review (as outlined in the typology of reviews by Grant and Booth (2009))<sup>7</sup> of the latest published and 'grey' literature, and grouping and tabulating the key findings. This included using Google, Google Scholar and Web of Science to extract peer and grey non-peer reviewed literature to access the latest information and any informal evaluations of recent work in Europe and the UK. It also involved selecting and agreeing upon the search parameters. The key terms used were: social isolation, isolation, marginalisation, social exclusion, social inclusion or loneliness as well as intergenerational, intergenerational practices, intergenerational interventions, intergenerational living or intergenerational interaction. The criteria used for article selection was research based on intergroup or intergenerational contact/practices; qualitative research and work focusing specifically on Wales and contact between adolescents or younger people (minimum age 11 years old) and older adults
- preparing two semi-structured discussion guides to inform the fieldwork with key informants and representatives involved with intergenerational activities and case studies

---

<sup>7</sup> Grant MJ, Booth A. A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Info Libr J.* 2009 Jun;26(2):91-108.



- identifying in excess of 70 intergenerational interventions (mainly UK but also international projects) and selecting a sample for inclusion as case studies within the review. The sample was selected so as to focus on initiatives which aimed to address loneliness and social isolation and had evaluation evidence to consider, offered a cross-section in terms of geography with a focus on including Welsh and other UK initiatives, covered a wide range of activities/themes and offered the perspective of specific sub-groups
- undertaking phone interviews with representatives from across 13 intergenerational initiatives and reviewing, where available, relevant evaluation material on these
- undertaking phone interviews with two organisations with a specific national intergenerational remit (Generations Working Together Scotland and Linking Generations, Northern Ireland)
- undertaking a total of 14 phone interviews with key informants. These included 11 organisations who were approached to provide evidence on the experience of particular sub-groups (black and ethnic minorities; older people; carers, those in care and care leavers; children and young people; young parents; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people; disabled people and refugees and asylum seekers)
- preparing this report to include our conclusions and recommendations for future policy and practice.

### **Methodological considerations**

2.3 There are several methodological issues that merit consideration when considering the findings of this research:

- The literature review of academic and ‘grey’<sup>8</sup> publications revealed that very few set out evidence on the impact of intergenerational activity on addressing social isolation and loneliness. In total 11 academic publications and 16 publications in the grey literature were considered

---

<sup>8</sup> Grey literature refers to non-academic publications such as reports, working papers, evaluations, project literature etc

within the desk research. In the main, these publications focused on the benefits and challenges of intergenerational work

- Feedback from associations representing particular sub-groups of the population had very limited knowledge of any intergenerational interventions which were specifically focused upon their client group, be that within or outside Wales
- Three of the initial case studies selected for inclusion within the review were not in a position to contribute to the research and were substituted with alternative initiatives.

### 3. Background

#### UK Policy Context

- 3.1 Tackling loneliness and social isolation has become an increasing policy concern for both the UK and Welsh Government in recent years, largely due to the rise in people reporting feelings of loneliness and social isolation as evidenced via a number of studies and reports such as those commissioned by Age UK and the British Red Cross.
- 3.2 In a joint report commissioned by the Co-op and the British Red Cross in 2016<sup>9</sup>, it was found that over nine million people across the UK felt lonely 'often' or 'always' and that it affects people of all ages, not just older people. Indeed, the report acknowledges that there is widespread literature available on the causes of loneliness in later life but that less is known about other groups such as young new mums, individuals with mobility limitations or health issues, individuals who are recently divorced or separated, individuals living without children at home, retirees and those who have suffered a recent bereavement. The research found that the causes of loneliness 'are often complex, multi-layered and mutually reinforcing'<sup>10</sup>. The report offers an overview of the services and support available to people experiencing loneliness and found that they tended to prioritise older groups, and were often one-off interventions which could not be sustained and lacked informal support.
- 3.3 One of the recent key drivers in tackling loneliness at the UK level has been the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness<sup>11</sup>, established as a cross-party Commission of MPs and charities following the tragic murder of the MP. In its call to action the final report of the Commission sets out future recommendations which need to be implemented in order to tackle the fact that over 9 million adults consider themselves to be lonely often or always. The Commission's work recognises that loneliness is not only an issue for

---

<sup>9</sup> Kantar Public (December 2016) [Trapped in a bubble: An investigation into triggers for loneliness in the UK](#)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p.6

<sup>11</sup> Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness (December 2017) [Combatting loneliness one conversation at a time](#)

older people but that it can also affect disabled people, parents, carers, migrants and refugees as well as young people. The report requests that a UK wide strategy for loneliness across all ages be developed and acknowledges that in Wales such a commitment is already in place. The report also recommends that an innovation and spread fund be established specifically to simulate innovative solutions to tackling loneliness and to scale-up and spread 'promising approaches to reaching out to isolated lonely individuals'<sup>12</sup> although no specific mention is made of intergenerational approaches.

- 3.4 In January 2018, the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport announced a programme of work on tackling loneliness and this led to the publishing of a strategy for tackling loneliness across England in October 2018<sup>13</sup>, which incorporates many of the Jo Cox Commission's recommendations. It sets out an ambition to build 'a culture that supports connected communities' and although does not make a specific reference to supporting 'intergenerational' practice the strategy does recognise the importance of supporting 'grassroots opportunities to strengthen local social relationships and community ties'<sup>14</sup>.

### **Welsh policy context**

- 3.5 The Welsh Government's programme for government, *Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021*, sets out a commitment to 'develop a nationwide and cross-government strategy to address loneliness and isolation'<sup>15</sup> as part of its strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of the population.
- 3.6 In support of this commitment the Assembly's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee undertook an inquiry into loneliness and isolation, the results of which were published in December 2017. The findings of this inquiry were intended to inform the Welsh Government's proposed loneliness and isolation strategy. As part of its inquiry, the Committee

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p.18

<sup>13</sup> Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport, (2018). *A connected society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness – laying the foundations for change*. London: HM Government.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p.52

<sup>15</sup> Welsh Government [Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021](#), p.8

received evidence on the benefits of intergenerational contact between children and older people and concluded that ‘the evidence we heard on intergenerational contact ... can sometimes be more beneficial than contact with one’s own age group’<sup>16</sup>.

- 3.7 A key recommendation offered by the report, which paved the way for the commissioning of this study was ‘that the Welsh Government undertakes an evaluation to assess the impact of intergenerational contact on people experiencing loneliness and isolation. If the evaluation highlights benefits of such contact, the Welsh Government should ensure best practice in this area is rolled out across Wales’<sup>17, 18</sup>.

### **Defining intergenerational practice, loneliness and social isolation**

- 3.8 Whilst there are a number of definitions and descriptions offered for the term intergenerational practice (IP) one of the most commonly cited definition is that offered by the Beth Johnson Foundation:

*‘Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contribute to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and the older have to offer each other and those around them’<sup>19</sup>.*

- 3.9 IP can take many forms, but it usually contains a range of processes that are linked together to build positive relationships between generations with the outcome of mutual benefit for all involved. Improved community cohesion can be an initial outcome but research identifies that the impact can also be much wider. For example, a reduction in social isolation and negative stereotyping which benefits older and younger people alike as they gain awareness into the lives of one another.

---

<sup>16</sup> National Assembly for Wales Health, Social Care and Sport Committee (December 2017) *Inquiry into loneliness and isolation*, p.39

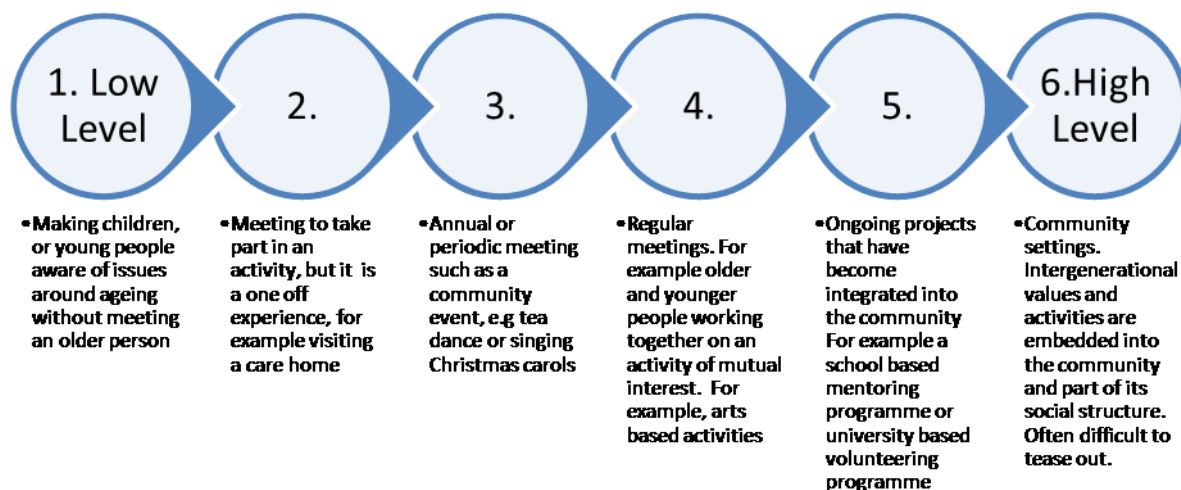
<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p.39

<sup>18</sup> Welsh Government officials took the view that a review, rather than an evaluation, would be a more appropriate approach as this would allow for good practice across a larger range and number of initiatives to be identified which would draw upon existing evaluation findings where available.

<sup>19</sup> For instance as used by [Generations Working Together](#)

3.10 IP may also be said to take place on a continuum with a low level of intergenerational contact at one end and a high level of contact at the other, as set out at Figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1: The intergenerational contact continuum**



Source: Adapted from Kaplan (2004:7)<sup>20</sup>

3.11 The constructions of IP range from settings which promote tokenism which means they display little or no interaction between generations, to ideal settings whereby intergenerational values and activities are integrated and embedded into the processes and structure of society, accommodating all ages and interests. This type of setting potentially leads to more cohesive and inclusive communities.

3.12 For this study, the following definitions were adopted:

- ‘intergenerational interventions’ as any activity where individuals from different generations interact (i.e. not only children and older people) including any intergenerational activity involving specific sub-groups such as black and ethnic minorities, people living with Alzheimer’s type dementia and people with hearing impairments
- ‘loneliness’ as the gap between what a person desires in terms of social contact and their actual level of social contact. Moreover, it is about the

<sup>20</sup> Kaplan, M, (2004). Toward an intergenerational way of life. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*. Vol. 96 (2): 5-9.

quality of their relationships. Loneliness is not a choice and it can take a long time to lessen feelings of loneliness

- 'social isolation' as being about the number of contacts in a social network, not about quality. People may choose to only have small networks and social isolation can be overcome quickly by expanding the number of people in a network.

## 4. Literature Review

- 4.1 This chapter sets out published and 'grey' literature on intergenerational practice and its impact on social isolation and loneliness.
- 4.2 Within the academic literature, there are many examples of intergenerational practice (IP), many of which claim to reduce loneliness and social isolation. Some could be classified as ongoing because they revolve around shared learning, for example work on reminiscence particularly around historical events such as World War 2, or oral history projects such as the Morecambe Bay Lives project<sup>21</sup> which have younger and older people working together regularly over an extended period of time and after funding has finished. All activities serve to reduce social isolation and sometimes older participants use the activities as a springboard to expand their social network further within the community. This has the additional potential of reducing loneliness.
- 4.3 Whilst projects like these have mutually beneficial outcomes, in order for them to succeed the people involved need to have a vested interest in the activity and the cultural context of younger and older people should guide the design and shape of any intervention<sup>22,23</sup>. Another learning point is that understanding the different skill mix and level of knowledge people have is important for facilitating intergenerational work. For example, when younger people work with older people with dementia then an understanding about dementia is useful for younger people to be able to adapt their interactions<sup>24</sup>.
- 4.4 Involvement in IP is also a matter of choice and to gain benefits from activities everyone involved needs to understand that they are active, rather

---

<sup>21</sup> [Morecambe Bay Lives](#)

<sup>22</sup> Clark, M., Murphy, C., Jameson-Allen, T., and Wilkins, C., (2016). Integrated working and intergenerational projects: A study of the use of sporting memories. *Journal of Integrated Care*. Vol. 24(5/6):300-312

<sup>23</sup> Teeter, B., (2016). Intergenerational Programmes to Promote Active Ageing: The Experiences and Perspectives of Older Adults. *Activities, Adaptation and Ageing*. Vol. 40(1):1-19.

<sup>24</sup> Galbraith, B., Larkin, H., Moorhouse, A., and Oomen, T., (2015). Intergenerational Programs for Persons With Dementia: A Scoping Review. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Vol. 58(4):357-378.



than passive participants. One example is reducing conflict between older and younger people in Greenwich run by the Children's Society in conjunction with the residents of the community<sup>25</sup>. Conflict between older and younger people was reduced as a result of the work, a toolkit was produced and some schools embedded it into their Personal, Social and Health Education [PSHE] curriculum, but sustainability of the work past the lifetime of the project was an issue.

- 4.5 Digital and social exclusion is an increasing issue for older people. Many services are moving online and older people are missing out on opportunities to participate and also to connect with friends and family through Digital Technology. Improving older people's digital skills whereby older adults are paired with younger mentors in a cyber-seniors programme was an example of reverse mentoring with younger people mentoring older people<sup>26</sup>. This particular study suggests that reverse mentoring decreased social isolation for older people, increased their self and digital confidence and developed leadership skills through interactions with younger people with younger people gaining in confidence throughout the process.
- 4.6 Further intergenerational work on mentoring places older people as subject mentors, for example enabling younger people to make decisions about their future through interactions with and support of an older mentor<sup>27</sup>. Younger people gain from these interactions because they can speak to someone who has specific knowledge of the area they are interested in and in many cases provide links to work experience, or visits to industry.
- 4.7 Other work on intergenerational mentoring has been carried out in the USA with younger people between the ages of 6 and 18 living in single-parent households<sup>28</sup>. Many of these do not have significant contact with the absent

---

<sup>25</sup> Children's Society (2009). *The Children's Society's Greenwich Intergenerational Project*. London: The Children's Society.

<sup>26</sup> Breck, B, M., Dennis, C, B., and Leedahl, S, N., (2018). Implementing reverse mentoring to address social isolation among older adults. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Vol. 61(5):513-525.

<sup>27</sup> Hunter, K., Wilson, A., and McArthur, K., (2018). The role of intergenerational relationships in challenging educational inequality: Improving participation of working-class pupils in higher education. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*. Vol.16 (1-2):5-25

<sup>28</sup> Larkin, E., Sadler, S, E., and Mahler, J., (2005). Benefits of Volunteering for Older Adults Mentoring At-Risk Youth. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Vol. 44:(3-4):23-37.

parent or live in no-parent households where grandparents or extended family fill the parental role. These young people are also more likely to be economically disadvantaged, have a poor academic record, chronic absenteeism, have poor or unacceptable social behaviour, or who experience low self-esteem, teen pregnancy; and drug/alcohol or substance abuse. Similar work has been carried out in the UK<sup>29</sup> within primary schools with older people as volunteer mentors and supporters<sup>30</sup>.

- 4.8 Whilst there are obvious positives from mentoring for both older and younger people, success frequently depends on the quality of the relationships. The aim of mentoring is not specifically to reduce social isolation or loneliness for older people, but reports do indicate that there are benefits for both parties involved in the mentoring relationship. Interventions like these are also a means to bring generations together and it is sustainable; enriching the lives of everyone involved. They are also a means by which schools and other educational institutions can achieve their goals of engaging with the wider community, promote community cohesion and enrich the learning environments of their students by widening their engagement. Some of the challenges involved are keeping the volunteer levels at an optimum, ensuring that training equips older and younger people to cope with more challenging situations and that they have the necessary support.
- 4.9 Other intergenerational work reported in the academic literature involves a series of arts, schools and community projects that benefit older and younger people in different ways by reducing social isolation for older people and increasing confidence in younger people, reducing age related stereotyping and creating more cohesive communities<sup>31</sup>. Much of the arts-based work revolves around short-term (6-10 week) interventions, needs funding to operate, does not exist beyond the funding period and often fails

---

<sup>29</sup> Hatton-Yeo, A., (2006). Intergenerational Programmes: An introduction and examples of practice. Stoke-on-Trent: Centre for Intergenerational Practice, Beth Johnson Foundation.

<sup>30</sup> Siddiquee A., Kagan, C., de Santis, C., and Ali, R., (2008). "We can find ourselves in them, and they can find themselves in us" [Evaluation of Intergen: Intergenerational Understanding, Wellbeing and Social Capital. Independent report](#) by Manchester Metropolitan University. Accessed 19/02/2019.

<sup>31</sup> Hatton-Yeo 2006, Siddiquee et al, 2008, Martin, Springate and Atkinson 2010, Blandon 2017

to be formally evaluated, so there may be a doubt about the benefits of these particular types of interventions. The most fundamental outcome for all the projects was that everyone enjoyed the activities. Younger people gained from perceptions of older people and this in turn enhanced their relationships with their own grandparents. They also gained in terms of more enjoyment in learning and improved communication and social skills. Older people experienced a reduction in social isolation, an increase in well-being, increased opportunities for involvement in other community activities and a sense of pride at being recognised by younger people in the local community. More general outcomes were greater community cohesion.

- 4.10 With the academic and grey literature, challenges for intergenerational work were ensuring that projects were appropriate and maintained the interest of younger and older people<sup>32</sup>. Sometimes involving younger people with challenging behaviour, or both younger and older people who were more socially isolated was demanding because they were difficult to reach. There were also safeguarding issues because everyone needed a disclosure and barring service check [DBS]<sup>24, 33</sup>. Challenges experienced by successful interventions include not underestimating the complexity of carrying out this type of work and ensuring there is careful planning and preparation, not only for the interactions but also finding a suitable venue, sorting out transport, length and duration of sessions. There were also issues around understanding the needs of the participants, making sure they had mutual or shared interests and tailoring the activities appropriately. An important point was that there needed to be a key figure/leader with the capacity to drive the project forwards, make others aware of the benefits and perhaps begin to embed the work in the community by involving external partners and mainstreaming the activities. Having an intergenerational officer at Local Authority level was seen as beneficial because they could act as a point of contact and refer people or co-ordinate work. They could also be

---

<sup>32</sup> Martin, K, Springate, I., and Atkinson, M. (2010). Intergenerational practice: outcomes and effectiveness.

NFER.

<sup>33</sup> Homeshare UK (2018). [Annual Report 2017-2018](#).

involved in effective and strategic planning which looked at how realistic the proposed work was and level of funding necessary.

- 4.11 Making Bridges with Music which took place in Torbay, England can be used as an example<sup>34</sup> of a short-term project that has managed to achieve sustainability past the lifetime of the project. Children from preschool nurseries, carers and older people were initially placed together in an intergenerational pilot intervention using music and the arts that ran for 6 weeks, with participants from 5 months to 100 years of age in three care homes. As a direct result of the evaluation and recommendations from the pilot study, the project was taken over by Torbay Council and rolled out to 20 care homes which are now engaged in partnerships with early years providers. The evaluation of the pilot project indicated that there were challenges to consider. For example, for the care home managers and intervention team, there were initial concerns about health and safety, use of space, extra work and who to invite to the music sessions. There were also issues around safeguarding around children interacting with older people and also monitoring older people with behavioural problems who had contact with children. 'Making the right choice' was also something that needed careful thought and became an essential element when deciding who would fit in well into an intergenerational session.
- 4.12 For the artists and musicians, deciding how to engage such a diverse group at the same level in a small space was challenging and needed careful thought. For example, the height differences between adults and children meant that sitting at tables was preferable for the activities. There was also the issue of levels of tiredness for older and younger people and limiting the length of the sessions to take this into account.
- 4.13 The evaluation identified that the benefits of the pilot were that older people experienced an increase in well-being and mood changes, registering satisfaction and happiness increases across sessions. Children were assessed as increasing their verbal and interpersonal skills, whilst simultaneously developing more confidence, possibly as a direct benefit of

---

<sup>34</sup> Blandon, C., (2015). Making Bridges with Music. University of Plymouth

the one-to-one attention from the older person. The intergenerational sharing of older nursery rhymes and games and more modern games and stories gave both adults and children insights into their social worlds both past and present.

- 4.14 The Next Generation (2018) was a report based on a series of case studies on creating intergenerational solidarity. It advocated that every nursery, childminder, toddler group and children's centre should link with an older people's care home or housing scheme and vice versa to reduce the social isolation of older people and reduce stereotypical attitudes.
- 4.15 A level of social accountability was suggested in that every primary and secondary school should engage with older people in the community from hosting older volunteers and services to linking with care providers. This had the aim of improving interactions between older and younger people and enabling older people in some cases to feel as if they still had a use within society.
- 4.16 Rather than meeting in schools or nursing homes, it was suggested that communities should explore spaces where older and younger people could meet and share activities and experiences. So for example, gardening or allotments were a space where meetings could take place and growing vegetables or fruit became the focus or sewing and craft clubs were set up. These activities enhanced skill development whilst engaged in activities in which all parties shared an interest.
- 4.17 The final and perhaps most important point in the report was that every local authority should have a strategy for building communities whereby meaningful mixing becomes a part of everyday life. This would aim to reduce the necessity for short-term unsustainable intergenerational projects because the structure of society would be altered to take into account the everyday needs of different members.
- 4.18 One issue that was flagged up was that some activities needed careful moderation because stereotypical views of older and younger people could actually be reinforced rather than reduced<sup>24</sup>. For example, older people taking part in activities with younger people whose behaviour was viewed

as 'out of control' and immature, reinforced views that younger people were undisciplined and threatening. There were also instances when younger people viewed older people as being unwilling to listen to them. This led to perceptions that intergenerational work could only succeed if the 'right' groups of people were chosen to participate in activities and the danger of stereotyping could be controlled in this way. One of the other dangers of stereotyping is that it can actually reinforce behaviour consistent with the stereotype<sup>35</sup>.

- 4.19 Other short-term intergenerational projects, for example the World War 2 reminiscence<sup>36</sup> and then World War 2 medley of songs between older and younger people run by Goldies Cymru have evolved from intergenerational interactions into different types of interactions between older people. This has led to libraries across South Wales, in conjunction with Goldies Cymru, hosting daily singalong sessions to reduce social isolation amongst older people<sup>37</sup>.
- 4.20 Alternatively, there are projects which began with increasing well-being and decreasing social isolation and loneliness as key aims but then evolved into intergenerational work. One example of this is HENPOWER which used caring for hens to reduce social isolation and improve mental health and well-being. The work then moved from looking after hens in the community or care homes to roadshows at schools. This increased intergenerational interaction and young and old people learnt from each other whilst engaged in looking after the hens. The school egg incubation programme came from the intervention. HENPOWER provided a different and more positive perspective on how older people were perceived by younger people and enabled younger people to think about the positive aspects of older people<sup>38</sup>. Challenges for this type of work were that leadership was

---

<sup>35</sup> Dijksterhuis A, Bargh JA. (2001). The perception-behavior expressway: Automatic effects of social perception on social behavior. In: Zanna MP, [Ed]. *Advances in experimental social psychology*. Vol. 33. San Diego: Academic Press; pp. 1–40.

<sup>36</sup> Teeter, B., (2016). Intergenerational Programmes to Promote Active Ageing: The Experiences and Perspectives of Older Adults. *Activities, Adaptation and Ageing*. Vol. 40(1):1-19.

<sup>37</sup> [Goldies Cymru: time after time](#)

<sup>38</sup> Cook, G., Cook, M., Thynne, E., and Chandler, C., (2013). *An evaluation on 'HENPOWER': Improving Well-Being and Social Capital in Care settings*. Gateshead: Equal Arts.

necessary for success, staff needed training, initial funding was necessary and volunteers with hen keeping skills were needed to support the initial work with older people.

- 4.21 There are also volunteer driven projects which focus on reducing loneliness for older people in care homes by having one-to-one interactions with a younger volunteer who reads to the older person, takes them to places of interest, or just chats<sup>39</sup>. The volunteer driven projects are reliant on the available time of the volunteers, the schedules that care homes keep, whether or not the matched relationships work, or a series of matches need to take place before suitable volunteers are found who can effectively develop the interpersonal relationship with the older person. Transport is an issue that comes up time and time again, even for those care homes who have access to their own minibus, because extra staff are often needed to act as drivers and assist residents out on any planned visit. Leadership, supervision and volunteer support were also essential parts of successful intergenerational work.
- 4.22 There are of course other forms of intergenerational interactions. Examples are the Humanitas Deventer project where whilst studying in the Netherlands and in exchange for free rent, some students volunteer to give 30 hours of their time and act as 'neighbours' to older people with dementia living in nursing homes<sup>40</sup>. Since 2011, students from the English Department at the University of Exeter have also been encouraged to train as volunteers and involve themselves in a reading project where they are sent out to a large number of care homes across Exeter. Their aim during the visits is to read poetry, plays, and short stories, or spend time chatting. The projects have not been formally evaluated to identify the gains for older and younger people alike.
- 4.23 In Ireland students living with older people in exchange for tasks and reduced rent has been expanded to young professionals as well, but this is linked more to the rising costs of housing and the lack of available and

---

<sup>39</sup> Watmough, E., Begault, M., and Ceolin, C., (2017). *Action on Loneliness in Care Homes: An intergenerational project*. London. Magic Me.

<sup>40</sup> [Why some Dutch university students are living in nursing homes](#)

affordable housing for younger people rather than as a way of reducing social isolation, although it can be a way of making older people feel useful and reducing levels of loneliness<sup>41</sup>. From 2015-2018, Age UK was involved in the Homeshare project<sup>42</sup>. This was where older and younger people were screened and ‘matched’, with the younger people agreeing to take on ten hours a week of household tasks or providing company<sup>43</sup> (Homeshare UK 2018).

- 4.24 These practices could be said to aim to reduce social isolation, but not necessarily loneliness because the interactions are dependent on the quality of the relationships between older and younger people. They are not without their issues either because difficulties can arise for non-family members choosing to live together because of different values and a lack of awareness of the others’ needs. To alleviate these issues counselling or mediation services were seen as important to assist people with relationships. For others it was suggested that financial safeguarding schemes needed to be put into place to protect the assets of all parties involved. One thing that much of the literature agrees on is that society needs to be building communities that are inclusive of the needs of a range of people, not merely housing estates for families.

### **Concluding comments**

- 4.25 The evidence from the literature review points to successful intergenerational practice being associated with activities which have a clear purpose and direction; aim towards embedding the activity within the community to ensure ownership, sustainability and longevity; are driven by a leader with a vision; as well as have initial funding but either become self-funded or secure access to other sources of funding.
- 4.26 Many intergenerational practice interventions claim to reduce loneliness and social isolation. In some cases, the original main outcome was not to reduce loneliness and/or social isolation but it became a by-product of the

---

<sup>41</sup> [New Irish company matches lonely older people with students and professionals looking for somewhere to live](#)

<sup>42</sup> See Case Study I

<sup>43</sup> [Age UK: homeshare](#)



intergenerational work. In other cases, reducing loneliness and social isolation was the initial focus and intergenerational work became a by-product of the initial approach. Short-term, unsustainable intergenerational projects could be more damaging for older people and leave them feeling more isolated at the end because they have no access to replacement activities. For some projects that survive past the initial intervention and become owned and embedded into communities there is frequently a lack of evaluation to draw and identify which aspects are most successful and which areas need adjusting.

## **5. Fieldwork findings: organisations working with sub-groups**

- 5.1 This chapter presents the findings of the fieldwork with key informants from organisations working with, or supporting particular sub-groups.
- 5.2 In all, 11 organisations representing the interests of particular sub-groups were interviewed. These included organisations who could offer a view on the experiences of black and ethnic minorities; older people; carers, those in care and care leavers; children and young people; young parents; LGBT people; disabled people and refugees and asylum seekers. There was a consensus across the organisations interviewed that these groups were more likely than the general population to experience loneliness and social isolation.
- 5.3 Only one of those interviewed was aware of specific intergenerational initiatives which were specifically focused on addressing loneliness and social isolation issues amongst their client group, be that within Wales or further afield. In this case the examples provided were initiatives between care homes and primary school settings.
- 5.4 Despite this, one organisation observed that their approach of supporting young parents via a volunteer network of 'mentors' could be viewed as such, given that volunteers were mostly from an older generation than the beneficiary. In this case, the volunteering intervention was helping to address issues of social isolation and loneliness experienced amongst young parents. Another organisation provided details for an intergenerational project they had delivered which had brought together older people and care leavers, although there was not specific emphasis upon using this project to address issues of loneliness and social isolation. In this case the project had been short term and involved two facilitated events with the objective of raising awareness and understanding of each other and reducing any stigma associated with older people and care leavers.

- 5.5 One organisation provided information on a befriending scheme which was specifically focused on the needs of the LGBT community, albeit this operated in England<sup>44</sup>. Another provided information on a community housing scheme where people offered accommodation within their homes to destitute asylum seekers. A third highlighted the existence of advocacy services for older people in one part of Wales, which was designed to help tackle loneliness and isolation issues faced by those aged over 50 living in rural areas and who had little or no access to mainstream services or support.
- 5.6 In the case of refugees and asylum seekers it was observed that intergenerational contact was ‘very much the norm’ for any event arranged by some communities for their own community group. For instance, it was argued that ‘intergenerational interaction happens naturally within the Sudanese community in Cardiff’ without it needing to be created artificially. However, it was recognised that other, more recently settled refugees who tended to be dominated by young, single men were less likely to be exposed to natural intergenerational communities. There were currently no known intergenerational initiatives focused on developing contact between refugees and asylum seekers with people from outside their own nation community.
- 5.7 In a similar manner it was reported that social networks for LGBT people often included intergenerational contact: ‘social groups typically include a fairly wide age bracket ... not by design but rather by default’.
- 5.8 Despite their lack of awareness of intergenerational provision, most interviewed organisations were broadly supportive of the concept and argued that such provision could potentially help address issues of loneliness and social isolation experienced by their target groups. In some cases, it was observed that it would be relatively straightforward to incorporate intergenerational practice into organisation’s existing working

---

<sup>44</sup> The [LGBT Foundation](#) operates in Manchester and runs befriending services for LGBT people living in the Greater Manchester area.

practices and models e.g. by incorporating intergenerational working into volunteer led approaches.

- 5.9 It was argued that intergenerational activities could also serve to help address and improve understanding between different age groups, thereby contributing to better community cohesion. It was also suggested that intergenerational intervention could serve to provide enrichment experiences, particularly where it could be used effectively to bridge different cultures.
- 5.10 For disabled people it was argued that there would be value in exploring how older disabled adults could mentor young disabled people as part of an intergenerational approach with the objective of sharing experiences and learning and helping young people to learn to deal and respond to discrimination issues.
- 5.11 One contributor voiced concerns about intergenerational activities however, particularly given the prevalence of work around the ‘care home for four year olds’ model which was considered to focus on ‘linking captive audiences’. It was argued that whilst such activities were ‘laudable, they’re not getting to the nub of the issue which is loneliness and isolation within our communities. ‘I’m aware of many initiatives that do marry up between primary schools and residents in care homes or set up a choir, and yes there are benefits for older people and for the children from the interaction. That’s wonderful, but there is a sense that we are avoiding the difficult issue of really tackling loneliness and social isolation in a meaningful way’. This contributor argued that ‘whilst inter-generational activities in day centres is all very well and good, the reality is that more and more of these spaces are being closed’. It was argued that the concept of intergenerational practice needed to be approached in a much broader sense and should move away from being concerned with ‘interventions’ to ‘spaces where intergenerational activity can occur naturally – an information hub, a leisure centre – and then re-design and reconfigure these spaces so that they can accommodate activity across, for and between generations’.

5.12 In terms of good practice for engaging particular sub-groups within intergenerational interventions it was commonly observed that participants would feel safer accessing initiatives which had been designed by them and for them. It was also considered important that existing support networks and communication channels be utilised to reach and recruit specific target groups. One key challenge identified (particularly for refugees and asylum seekers) related to linguistic barriers whilst another (particularly for disabled people) related to communication and access to initiatives.

## **6. Fieldwork findings: intergenerational interventions**

6.1 This chapter sets out summaries of the 13 case studies of intergenerational interventions included within the review, drawing upon interviews undertaken with key representatives.

6.2 The sample of case studies was selected from a wider mapping exercise of intergenerational provisions. Over 70 different interventions were identified in total: some were single projects or interventions whilst others were programmes of intervention, often delivered by an organisation which was focused on intergenerational activity. Each intervention was classified into one or more of nine categories, although some assumptions were made as to the nature of some activities to allow for this categorisation:

- Homesharing (particularly young people/students and older people)
- Co-location of nursery and older people's care settings
- Visits/activities between nursery or schools and older people's care settings
- Learning and education
- Creative/performing arts and storytelling
- Digital and IT
- Physical activities
- Various
- Other

6.3 The sample was identified so as to offer a cross-section of initiatives by their nature i.e. at least one initiative from the nine categories set out above was selected. Priority was given to those initiatives where it appeared that a focus was on addressing loneliness and social isolation and where grey literature and information (e.g. evaluation studies, project reports etc) was readily available. The sample selected also took location and scale into consideration: a deliberate attempt was made to include a small number of

projects based in Wales and to include initiatives which operated at a local and national level.

6.4 Of the 13 case studies included within the review:

- Three operated specifically in Wales
- Two operated at a UK level with some provision available in Wales
- One operated in Ireland
- The remaining seven case studies operated in England.

6.5 The majority of the intergenerational activities included in this review had a focus on developing relationships between children, who were either in day care nurseries or schools, and older people, typically within day centres or care homes, via structured, regular sessions. Some of these were focused on particular themes, such as the creative arts. Other intergenerational activities involved developing relationships between young adults or teenagers and older people and adopted more fluid and innovative approaches based on themes such as physical activity, home sharing and social or community events.

6.6 In terms of the case study profile:

- Six were organisations/initiatives whose sole remit was intergenerational provision whilst intergenerational practice was one aspect of provision made available by the other seven
- Three of the case studies were exclusively focused on creative art based intergenerational activity, whilst art formed one important element of activity for a fourth case study
- Nine case studies were mainly focused on supporting intergenerational activity between children and older people, with much of this taking place within structured sessions at schools and care homes. One of these was a multigenerational project. One case study focused specifically on teenagers and older people whilst the remaining three case studies focused on young adults and older people.

- 6.7 In terms of case study representatives, 15 people were interviewed in total. Their roles varied from Chief Executives (two), Project or Business Development Managers (eight) or local/initiative co-ordinators or leaders (five). Where information was available, case studies also considered documented feedback from participants and staff (including teachers and case home managers).
- 6.8 This chapter also provides information on two national intergenerational organisations who contributed to the review, operating in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

### **Intergenerational intervention case studies**

#### **A. Digital Heroes: using children and young people's digital skills**

The Digital Heroes initiative is part of the Welsh Government's Digital Communities Wales project delivered by the Wales Cooperative Centre, a not-for-profit co-operative organisation which operates in Wales. One objective of the Digital Communities Wales project is to recruit and use volunteers to deliver digital training and share digital skills with others. On facing difficulties recruiting adult volunteers to the project, the Wales Cooperative Centre developed the concept of Digital Heroes, whereby children and young people are recruited through schools and other community groups such as Guides, Scouts and Police cadets as volunteers to provide digital inclusion support to older people within their community. To date, some 1,400 primary and secondary aged school children have been trained to help others use digital technology. The approach adopted varies from one area to another but typically involves a youth group or school visiting and supporting residents at care homes or hospital wards (e.g. dementia wards). Visits are flexible and focus on the interest of the older person e.g. accessing the internet to listen to music, undertaking research, making contact with friends or family etc. Once young people have been trained and links established, the project withdraws its involvement with the scheme and as such their sustainability is subject to the group or school's commitment.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

No formal evaluation evidence on the impact of the project upon loneliness and isolation is available but feedback from a representative suggests that whilst this outcome was very much a by-product for the project initially it has since become



a fundamental one. The engagement between older and younger people around devices such as iPads and laptops helps to establish one to one relationships. Young people develop skills and confidence. The project also contributes to increased digital skills and knowledge amongst older participants, which they are able to apply on an on-going basis, including using their skills to maintain contact with friends and family via social media or other methods such as Skype.

### **B. Grŵp Cynefin: intergenerational practice by a social housing provider**

Grŵp Cynefin, a parent body for two subsidiaries, Canllaw (Eryri) Cyf. and Conwy and Denbighshire Care and Repair, is a social housing provider operating across north Wales and north Powys. One of their main aims is to improve the health and wellbeing of tenants and the wider community. Having read the research around the benefits of intergenerational work Grŵp Cynefin embarked on an intergenerational programme in 2017 to (amongst other aims) reduce the social isolation and loneliness of tenants.

Grŵp Cynefin arrange and co-ordinate sessions, inviting primary school children to their local Extra Care Housing Scheme. Weekly sessions consist of craft activities, folk dancing, singing, reading stories to each other, playing games, and much more. Sessions are typically led by school teachers although some sessions have also been led by professional musicians. Sessions are being delivered across north Wales including in Bala, Ruthin, Denbigh, Holyhead, Penrhyndeudraeth and Llangollen. Some 30 tenants and 60 children come together on a weekly basis to participate in intergenerational activities.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

Whilst no independent evaluation study has been undertaken to explore the impact of the provisions delivered by Cynefin, delivery partners have contributed to an evaluation session which concluded that the outcomes secured for participants were worthwhile and should be sustained. Consultation with tenants has shown that 100 per cent of those who had participated in intergenerational activities had enjoyed taking part and all thought that they should be continued.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that tenants report feeling happier, more confident and less lonely. Feedback suggests that the sessions help improve wellbeing and

raise tenants' spirits as well as providing opportunities for children to share skills and develop their social skills.

### **C. Gwynedd Council: Intergenerational Co-ordinator**

Gwynedd Council explored the potential of intergenerational activities through the 'Care Share' pilot project in 2016. Children from a local nursery came to an older people's Day Centre in Caernarfon for a week-long experiment. The children and older people were encouraged to bake cakes, crafts, sing together and play. It became apparent that this scheme had a huge potential to tackle loneliness and social isolation.

Gwynedd Council was keen to build on this and, in May 2018 they created a post of Co-ordinator to develop intergenerational work in Gwynedd. The post is funded via the Integrated Care Fund. The Co-ordinator facilitates contact between care homes and their local primary school, arranging weekly visits for a pilot period of six weeks. Older people and school children undertake activities together such as art and crafts, showing how to use an i-pad and gardening. The number of participants vary from one group to another with the largest consisting of 15 children and 10 older people.

The intergenerational approach has also since been extended to include an FE college. The activities have included beauty students offering treatments for older people in the local care home and IT students offering support with tablets and smartphones. People who live at home are also able to come into the college for a meal prepared by the catering students.

Once the care facility and school have initial support to start, they see how easy it is to maintain and continue with weekly visits.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

Self-evaluation of the intergenerational provision has been undertaken. This has involved capturing feedback via discussions with participants (school children and older people), staff at schools and care homes as well as questionnaires to staff and parents. The feedback from the self-evaluation has shown that the approach is successful in bringing people of all ages together within a community. It found

that provision helps develop confidence and the social skills of the children and they learn about local history. There are many positive benefits for both sides, for little cost. It has improved the quality of life for the older people, enriching their lives, bringing much joy and happiness. Individual case studies have been prepared which document these positive changes experienced by older people.

#### **D. The Good Gym: volunteer runners who visit isolated older people**

The Good Gym was set up in Tower Hamlets, London in 2009 as a company limited by guarantee (a not-for-profit company). It works on the basis of a community of runners who meet up and provide social support visits to older people and manual labour for community projects. Runners will volunteer their time for social-purpose activities via three ways:

- Coach Runs – regular weekly runs by volunteers to visit isolated older people (referred to as Coaches)
- Mission Runs– these are one-off tasks for older people such as support with DIY or gardening
- Group Runs – volunteers run as a group to help community projects locally

The first two approaches described above are specifically related to the aim of reducing social isolation. The Good Gym also aims to bring communities together and motivate people to get fit. The Good Gym currently operates in 48 cities across the UK. In Wales they have a community of runners in Cardiff established since May 2017. There are proposals currently underway in Newport and Bridgend too. The organisation receives funding primarily via local authorities but also relies on input from member donations and corporate partnerships.

The Coach Runs are specifically to those older people (defined as over 60s) who have been identified as socially isolated or lonely. These individuals are identified by partner organisation referrals. All the Good Gym operations are coordinated from a central office in London and via a public web link to each of the locations. Members are recruited via the website and social media. In Cardiff there are now 200 members of the Good Gym and 16 pairings with a Coach have been made so far. In total (across the UK) the Good Gym has undertaken 132,275 good deeds to date. It has over 30,000 registered runners and over 3,000 members. In

Cardiff, the Good Gym has undertaken 2,657 good deeds, 246 coach runs and 90 mission runs to date.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

An independent evaluation<sup>45</sup> of the Good Gym found that older people who received regular weekly visits from runners reported positive outcomes in terms of their emotional isolation. It was reported that ‘they [older people] appreciate someone who listens to them and gives them the ability to speak about emotional topics’ and ‘rather than the quantity of social contacts, the depth and quality of the interaction with their runner is the key to achieving positive outcomes’<sup>46</sup>. The initiative was found to be successful in reaching older people who felt socially isolated and lonely. Older people visited felt happier and 98 per cent considered their runner a friend. Average scores for social isolation and frequency of feeling lonely both improved: on a scale of 1 to 4, the average scores for social isolation improved from 2.44 at the baseline stage to 2.74<sup>47</sup> at the follow-up stages whilst the average scores for the frequency of feeling lonely improved from 2.11 to 2.58<sup>48</sup>. More individuals scored their life satisfaction as high or very high after six months of seeing a Good Gym runner. Further positive outcomes identified included ability to stay in their own house for longer, increased active mental engagements, inspiration to take up new activities and improved attitude towards younger people.

#### **E. Acorns ‘n’ Oaks<sup>49</sup>: Pop up playgroups in care homes**

Acorns ‘n’ Oaks was established in July 2017 as a not-for-profit community interest company and runs weekly play sessions for toddlers and preschool children, in care homes for the elderly. It also provides support and advice for people who want to set up a local playgroup within a care home and to care homes who would like to welcome a playgroup into the home. At the time of

---

<sup>45</sup> [Good Gym Evaluation](#)

<sup>46</sup> [Nesta: Good Gym Evidence](#)

<sup>47</sup> Individuals were asked to rate how much contact they’d had with people they like and rate their social situation as being 1. I have little social contact with people and feel socially isolation; 2. I have some social contact with people, but not enough; 3. I have adequate social contact with people; and 4. I have as much social contact as I want with people I like.

<sup>48</sup> Individuals were asked how often they felt lonely with the following scoring system: 1= often, 2 = some of the time, 3 = occasionally, 4 = hardly ever and 5 = never

<sup>49</sup> [Acorns ‘n’ Oaks](#)

fieldwork, Acorns 'n' Oaks supported 20 groups across Wales, the Bristol area and Yorkshire.

Participation within playgroups is completely voluntary and each group is led by a volunteer leader. Parents are expected to bring along toys to the care home and they are advised about a basic format for each group. Regular groups are held within care homes, attended by the same parents and children (up to 5 years old) on a weekly basis. The format of sessions are similar with most groups starting with a song to introduce everyone. Everyone brings and shares a few toys. There's also a snack time, where the home provides parents and children with refreshments. Care homes have recently been required to contribute a small fee of £25 per month to participate in the scheme in order to cover administrative costs.

The aim of each playgroup is to decrease depression and loneliness and improve the mental health and wellbeing of older people. Parents get an opportunity to socialise, contribute back and engage with the older community. For the children it develops their social skills, confidence and communication. It builds relationships between the generations and gives an opportunity to share knowledge. Playgroups bring people together to form a community and remove social barriers and provide opportunity for older people to reminisce about their younger years.

Tŷ Llandaff Care Home in Pontcanna, Wales has linked up with Acorns & Oaks and run a weekly play group at the home. Positive outcomes have been observed amongst residents including improved happiness and wellbeing and residents look forward to the regular visits.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

No formal evaluation of the initiative is available but anecdotal evidence points to increased wellbeing and happiness amongst older participants as engagement with young children leads to a new lease of life and interaction with adults is considered to be a stimulating experience. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that interactions helps to bridge gaps between young and older people within the local community.

## **F. Alive<sup>50</sup>: enriching the lives of older people living in residential care**

Alive is a charity established in 2009 and based in Bristol. Alive facilitate activity sessions for older people across 350 care homes and day centres in Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset, Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. The charity's remit is wider than intergenerational work in that they deliver meaningful activity sessions for older people and train care staff to enhance older people's wellbeing. Alive receives the majority of its funding from trusts and foundations but has recently started to charge care homes a small fee for services.

Their intergenerational work is focused on facilitating links between schools and care homes. This typically involves making logistical arrangements and allocating a facilitator to arrange the sessions. The facilitator will discuss the activities which older people would like to engage with and plan a series of sessions on themes such as gardening, digital, arts and crafts. Weekly sessions are attended by a small group of between 6 and 8 children from a nearby school who are most likely to benefit due to lack of confidence or social skills. A similar number of older people will also attend.

### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

Whilst an evaluation<sup>51</sup> of Alive's approach has been conducted it does not focus on the charity's intergenerational work. It did however recommend that Alive made greater links with the wider community, which resulted in intergenerational provision. Older people involved in intergenerational work do complete questionnaires and the feedback on their experiences is positive. In terms of outcomes achieved, it was reported that older people reported an increased sense of purpose as well as an increase in joy and happiness due to the sessions being an enjoyable experience. School children were reported to benefit from developing social skills, improved self-confidence and an observed calmer behaviour as a result of their participation.

---

<sup>50</sup> [Alive Activities](#)

<sup>51</sup> Newson, W. and Daykin. N (2015) 'The Alive! Difference: An evaluation of Alice! Workshops and training'

### **G. Dulwich Picture Gallery: intergenerational art for young female migrants and older women**

Dulwich Picture Gallery is a charity based in London recognised as the world's first purpose-built public art gallery, founded in 1811. Their recent intergenerational pilot programme 'Reframing the Muse' aimed to connect refugee and asylum-seeking teenage girls aged between 11 and 17 supported by the Baytree Centre in Brixton with socially isolated, older women in the Southwark area. The six week project involved older women and young girls exploring a female art collection together to examine how women were portrayed within the work. The sessions were facilitated by a professional photographer and supported by two volunteers who worked at the Gallery. It was funded by the Women of the Year Foundation. Participants were recruited via organisations who were already in contact with potential participants.

The group collaborated to create their own photographic responses to the theme of female representation in the Collection which were then put on display in an exhibition. The photographs highlighted that being a woman can provide a profound common ground that supersedes age, race, culture, language, and even time.

The project has since come to an end although Dulwich Picture Gallery continues to deliver community engagement projects such as Connections which works with older people with early-stage dementia and their primary carers; the Good Time: Ageing Well programme designed to combat social isolation amongst older people and Together through Art which supports older adults living with mental health issues.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

There is no formal evaluation evidence available on the gallery's intergenerational work. In terms of outcomes, it was reported by an interviewee that intergenerational activity increases the wellbeing of participants, gets people connected with each other as well as more involved with the gallery and other volunteering opportunities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the scheme raises the confidence and self-esteem of participants, challenges stereotypes through a creative experience, celebrates the achievements of older people and helps to improve the English of the younger participants.

## **H. FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology)<sup>52</sup>: art as a medium for intergenerational practice**

FACT is a leading visual arts organisation, established in 2003, based in Liverpool which supports, produces and presents world-class visual art that embraces and explore creative media and digital technology. It has a core programme of intergenerational work, funded via the Celebrating Age Fund (Arts England) which involves primary and secondary schools and a core group of some 30 older people who will be supported to go into schools every other week to work with school children on an arts project for a period of four months. The artwork will be displayed in an exhibition at FACT.

In addition, FACT will also arrange thematic intergenerational projects and one recent example is the WomXn is Work project which was funded by the Eleanor Rathbone Fund. WomXn is Work explored women's working rights and addressed aspirations for the future through the revisiting of the past. Over the course of eight weeks, the project was facilitated by an artist with a group of women and non-binary people made up of students, mothers, carers and teachers in participation.

### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

There is no evaluation evidence available for FACT's intergenerational projects but feedback from the organisation's representative suggests that the provision addressed needs such as social inclusion and loneliness, using arts as a platform to share and challenge perceptions. Older participants were considered to be keen to share their experiences as the city of Liverpool has such a strong history and the younger generation really enjoy taking part and learn so much.

## **I. Homeshare UK: connecting homesharers with householders**

Homeshare UK is the umbrella body that manages the network of Homeshare schemes in the UK and RI. They provide support and advice to anyone who would like to start a Homeshare scheme. The schemes are run independently by third party organisations and span all sectors including charities, social

---

<sup>52</sup> [Fact](#)



enterprises, local authorities and private sector companies. Homeshare Scheme providers pay a membership fee to join the network and access support. Having previously operated on a small scale across the UK, Homeshare has grown in recent years with 357 schemes registered by the end of 2018. Some 900 people are involved with the schemes (450 matches) to date. The scheme is not yet operational in Wales although Cardiff Council are in the process of establishing one.

Homeshare brings together people with spare rooms with people who are happy to chat and lend a hand around the house in return for affordable, sociable accommodation. Together, 'Householders' and 'Homesharers' share home life, time, skills and experience. The younger person is able to live rent free whilst providing the older person with companionship and around 10 hours of practical support every week. This is a flexible arrangement and can include duties like cleaning, cooking, gardening, accompanying to appointments or shopping. Local Homeshare Schemes providers undertake appropriate safeguarding checks, match people who have registered, monitor progress and provide support. Providers charge a minimum monthly fee (averaging £140 to £160) to both the householder and homesharer. Placements usually last between six and twelve months but can be longer or shorter.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

The Homeshare pilots have been independently evaluated with a scoping report, interim report and final report<sup>53</sup> outlining the effectiveness of approaches and activities. The evaluation found that in terms of the benefits of the approach householders reported improved wellbeing (specifically in mental health), increased companionship which reduced loneliness and isolation, access to practical help with household tasks which enabled them to maintain their independence at home. For homesharers the benefits were identified as access to affordable housing provision, better quality accommodation than they would otherwise have been able to access and intergenerational learning and sharing of skills. More broadly the evaluation also reported that a further benefit related to costs avoided to health and care services. The enablers identified included Homeshare scheme support, maintaining personal space, open communication and regular activities. Challenges include sharing space, escalation of

---

<sup>53</sup> Social Care Institute for Excellence (2018) Evaluation of the Homeshare pilots Final Report

householder need, timing of support and conflict resolution. It was reported by an interviewee that the initiative focuses on reassuring people and their families that it's a trusted and safe option. It was also observed that the Homeshare model is increasingly being recognised as a preventative approach that meets the needs of people with low level support needs.

#### **J. The Cares Family: connecting and creating communities of young professionals and older neighbours**

The Cares Family includes North London Cares (opened 2011), South London Cares (2014), Manchester Cares (2017) and Liverpool Cares (2018). The Cares Family is a group of community networks of young professionals and older neighbours which facilitates intergenerational activities for older people (over 65, and predominantly over 80) and transient young professionals (in their twenties and thirties) in rapidly changing cities. They focus on those two groups at a time of division and misunderstanding across the generations. The Cares Family's work seeks to:

- Reduce loneliness and isolation amongst young professionals and older neighbours alike
- Improve all neighbours' connection, skills, belonging, purpose and power in a rapidly changing world
- Bring people together to bridge the gaps across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides.

They run three programmes to achieve this:

- Social Clubs which are group activities bringing older and younger neighbours together for activities such as dance parties, choirs, film nights, cultural trips, quizzes and themed gatherings
- Love Your Neighbour to allow for the sharing of stories and experiences on a one to one basis, often within individual homes
- Proactive outreach – identifying older and younger neighbours and inviting them to be part of their local Cares community, which is considered to be an unique aspect of the model

Since first established, the Cares Family has built a network of over 6,000 older people and over 6,000 young professional people. The model is perceived to be effective because it appeals to people most at risk of loneliness including those who live alone, older people over 80, people in social housing and transient

young professionals. It is also a two-way model in that both older people and young professionals stand to benefit from being involved.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

Evaluation studies<sup>54</sup> have shown that the model is effective in reducing isolation (73 per cent of older people involved agreed). The project has been specifically designed to increase the number of social interactions between older neighbours and volunteers thereby directly addressing issues of isolation, which is largely caused by the absence of social interactions. In terms of addressing loneliness, the evaluation found that it was more difficult to evidence that a community-based intervention was successfully addressing loneliness 'because it is possible to increase the quantity of their social interactions whilst not necessarily increasing the quality or type of those interactions in a way that the individual desires'<sup>55</sup>.

Despite this, the evaluation concludes that the provision will help to reduce loneliness 'at least to some extent'<sup>56</sup>.

The theory of change model presented in the final evaluation sets out five key outcomes which the intervention can expect to achieve:

- Reduction in isolation
- Improved wellbeing
- Increased feeling of belonging in the local community
- Living richer lives
- Building bridges across social and generational divides

#### **K. SKIPPKO: arts based intergenerational activities**

SKIPPKO is an arts organisation established some 30 years ago and which works with communities in Leeds and Yorkshire. The organisation works in community settings, whether these be geographical or communities of people with shared experiences or personal situations to promote understanding and support individuals to enhance and develop new skills. Their activities are delivered by experienced artists and facilitators. The organisation is primarily

---

<sup>54</sup> See Chris Clarke (2014) [North London Cares - Impact Evaluation 2011-2014 Executive Summary](#) and Renaisi (2016) [North and South London Cares: Evaluation and development through the Centre for Social Action Innovation Fund](#)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.p.18

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.p.19

funded via project funding from funders such as Heritage Lottery Fund, Awards for All and various foundations.

They tend to work in deprived areas where people lack skills, confidence and feel isolated to encourage an understanding of each other's lives, culture and heritage. Their work aims to challenge stereotypes and has brought together groups of people who would not otherwise have come into contact naturally.

Many of the arts-based projects are intergenerational in nature and are different, targeting a specific group within the community and run over a specific period of time. Typically, each project initially involves separate activities for both participating groups to allow them to gain confidence before both groups are merged to work with two experienced facilitator artists. Projects usually involve a group of 10 to 12 people working on a piece of artwork for an exhibition, which contributes to a sense of purpose and achievement. Some of these intergenerational art activities take place within local primary schools, where school children and older people collaborate to create an artwork. Others take place within community centres, libraries, museums and vacant retail or commercial property.

In one case the intergenerational project involved a group of grandparents who were raising their grandchildren working with a group of young mothers to explore the impacts of motherhood and parenting. A Shared Place intergenerational photography project started in Autumn 2018, in partnership between local school parents with Holbeck Elderly Aid. People of all ages came together for a year-long photography project in Holbeck to explore digital and traditional 35mm photography, including developing prints in the dark room, visits to photography exhibitions, curating their own exhibitions, and creating images for Holbeck Elderly Aid's Instagram and Twitter feeds.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

SKIPPKO has not formally evaluated its intergenerational activities but feedback from a representative of the organisation suggest that the positive effects upon participants include improved wellbeing, reduced isolation, increased confidence, feeling part of the community and creation of lasting friendships.

## L. Magic Me

Magic Me is an arts based registered charity and company limited by guarantee based in London. It was founded in 1989 and aims to bring generations together to build stronger and safer communities. It runs projects which bring together young people aged 8 and over with adults aged 60 and over, usually on a weekly basis, to become involved with a wide range of visual and performing arts activities including photography, music, writing, printmaking and drama. It co-ordinates intergenerational activity between older people including those living in care homes and sheltered accommodation with school children, frequently working directly with local primary schools.

Examples of recent intergenerational projects between school children and older people include:

- *Decorum*: projects bringing together school age girls and older women from the community to make films about what good behaviour meant for women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Each project was led by a professional artist to stimulate conversation and creative responses to the theme. Films were showcased at local venues with live interactive elements for the public to join the debate about good behaviour
- *Quality Street*: this project involves bringing together three generations of residents within an area to create new connections through art projects, celebrations and street festivals. The aim is to increase happiness and wellbeing by celebrating and showcases all ages within a community
- *Reflections*: this project brings together children from a primary school with residents from a local care home to jointly participate within a 10 week programme. The focus of the project, led by artists and musicians, is on exploring the theme of reflection, and how identity is formed using music, storytelling and drawing
- *Outside In*: this project involves primary school children and older people from the local community working with a storyteller and visual artist to exchange stories and share experience of home. The sessions involve creating storyboards, comic strips and poetry writing which are brought to life in a comic book poster.

Most of Magic Me's projects typically involve around 10 children and 10 older people and are held on a weekly basis, with one project involving a primary school usually taking place over a school term period.

In 2010, Magic Me responded to a need from care home residents who highlighted the loneliness and quietness experienced during the evenings within these settings by establishing the Cocktails in Care Homes initiative. This initiative is targeted at volunteers aged 18 and over, often young adults on their way home from work, who attend monthly cocktail parties across 16 London care homes. Each party is arranged by a team of around 10 volunteers whose role is to socialise, serve drinks and chat with residents. Volunteers often work within locally based multinational businesses, who offer financial support to these events. They are typically held on Wednesday or Thursday evenings during early evening. Feedback from care homes suggests that the mood and atmosphere in homes is brighter and lighter for days after the event.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

Magic Me project case studies and reports<sup>57</sup> provide a detailed narrative of the various delivery models and the identification of good practice and lessons learnt across different approaches. These reports highlight the value of intervention in helping to improve understanding between communities and different generations. Feedback from an interviewee on behalf of the organisation suggests that addressing social isolation is a fundamental aspect of Magic Me's approach.

---

<sup>57</sup> For instance Magic Me (2009) 'Our Generations: Report on a three year programme of intergenerational arts projects in Tower Hamlets East London April 2006-June 2009' and Magic Me (2013) 'Wild Wild Women'

### **M. Choir of Ages: coming together to sing<sup>58</sup>**

The Choir of Ages is an intergenerational choir made up of 80 older people, children and young people ranging in age from seven to nearly 90 from all walks of life in Donegal, Ireland. The choir is called 'Ceol le Chéile' which means 'coming together to sing'. Established in March 2018 the choir's first performance took place in July of that year. It is run by an employed co-ordinator at Donegal County Council and forms part of the Council's Age Friendly Programme aimed at promoting the well-being of older people and helping them to feel socially included within their community.

Transport arrangements are made available for people to attend and the choir typically meets late Friday afternoons at the Letterkenny Institute of Technology. The initiative is funded by Healthy Ireland, Donegal County Council, Local Links Bus, Creative Ireland. There is also in-kind support from the Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal Library Service and Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

#### Evidence of impact on loneliness and isolation

There is no evaluation evidence available on this initiative and the impact upon loneliness and isolation is anecdotal in nature. The choir provides an opportunity for building positive relations between children and older people. By its nature it is also an uplifting and therapeutic experience for participants. Older people report the experience as being fun and an opportunity to build friendships and develop confidence. Amongst the participants' comments captured by the initiative are 'it's something to look forward to'; 'I feel part of something good'; and 'if it was just children, or just adults, it wouldn't be as good: because its children and adults together, it's perfect'. Benefits of being involved are considered to include improved wellbeing, mental health, physical health, self-esteem and improved feelings of belonging.

---

<sup>58</sup> [Choir of Ages](#)

## **National intergenerational organisations**

### *Generations Working Together, Scotland*

- 6.9 Generations Working Together is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation initially established in 2007, as the Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice which was developed as a partnership programme of 12 organisations. It was initially managed by the University of Strathclyde and Community Service Volunteers and directed by a steering group and funded by the Scottish Government. It was later re-branded as Generations Working Together (GWT) and in 2015, it secured charitable status.
- 6.10 The charity works to achieve three key outcomes – to operate as the nationally recognised centre of excellence to support the integration of intergenerational work across Scotland; to ensure young and older people are more respected and included in their communities and as a consequence enjoy enhanced health and wellbeing; and that people at local, regional and national levels understand intergenerational approaches and integrate this into practice and policy to create positive change.
- 6.11 The charity is involved in delivering a wide range of provisions including:
- The facilitating of local networks to support officers and volunteers involved in intergenerational activities
  - Delivery of intergenerational training courses to practitioners, including the provision of the online International Certificate in Intergenerational Learning course in partnership with the University of Granada
  - Annual national conferences focused on intergenerational activity
  - Direct provision of intergenerational activity including:
    - The Generations on Screen project involving care homes and primary schools to produce short films across the generations



- The Connecting Generations project to recruit and train older volunteers to support young people with literacy and numeracy skills within schools
- 6.12 GWT receives funding from a range of sources including the Scottish Government as its main funder, Voluntary Action Fund, the National Lottery's Awards for All and Learning Link Scotland.
- 6.13 The facilitation of local networks forms an important aspect of GWT's work and plans are underway to reduce the number of networks from 22 to 15 in the near future, in order to strengthen each one. These networks meet between two and four times a year and provide an opportunity for practitioners and volunteers to share good practice and build their understanding of intergenerational practice. They are attended by practitioners from nursing homes, schools and nurseries involved in intergeneration provision and are supported by a GWT employed development officer.
- 6.14 GWT has set out eight principles of intergenerational practice which informs and underpins its approach to intergenerational work. These are set out at Figure 6.1:

**Figure 6.1: Eight principles of Intergenerational practice**

- Mutual and Reciprocal Benefit: all participating generations should gain benefit
- Participatory: participants should be fully involved in sharing the activity and feel a sense of ownership
- Asset Based: build on strengths for success, understanding and mutual respect
- Well Planned: create positive changes which are an addition to naturally occurring processes
- Culturally Grounded: to account for the needs and attitudes of different cultures which will differ from one area to another
- Strengthens Community Bonds and Promotes Active Citizenship: Emphasis upon positive connections with the aim of building stronger, better connected communities
- Challenge Ageism: opportunity for both young and old to explore who they are and to gain from each other
- Cross-disciplinary or Inter-disciplinary: broaden the experience of professionals to become more involved in working in an inclusive way

Source: Adapted from Generations Working Together 'Learning Through Intergenerational Practice'<sup>59</sup>

6.15 In terms of outcomes secured, addressing loneliness and social isolation is one of several outcomes secured via GWT's intergenerational practice. Other common outcomes include addressing community tensions, building trust between different community groups, challenging myths and attitudes between generations, improved literacy and numeracy skills and addressing local needs.

*Linking Generations, Northern Ireland*

6.16 Linking Generations was established in 2008 in Northern Ireland to promote intergenerational practice. Initially funded by one local authority as a pilot initiative it later became part of the Beth Johnson Foundation but retained

---

<sup>59</sup> [Generations Working Together](#)

its own brand and identity. The organisation employs five post holders, one of which is a full-time member of staff. Linking Generations operates largely via project funding and has received funding from the Big Lottery Fund and the Arts Council via its Arts for Older people Programme in recent years. It does not receive any core government funding.

6.17 Linking Generations delivers a number of intergenerational projects including:

- EngAGE projects which bring together older people from local groups with young people in colleges with the aim of building more cohesive and safer communities as well as breaking down barriers between generations
- The Singing Generations competition for younger and older people to come together to rehearse and record a Christmas carol. A small financial prize was awarded to the best three performances.

6.18 The organisation also administers a small grants scheme of up to £150 on occasion, awarded to support intergenerational activities. At the time of drafting this report Linking Generations were processing a small grants scheme for activities which were intended to take place during April 2019. It had awarded similar levels of funding during April 2018 when funding was awarded to 49 of 77 applicants.

6.19 Linking Generations also support practitioners and volunteers via area networking sessions. These sessions are also intended to provide information on successful intergenerational work and how Linking Generations can support organisations.

## **7. Fieldwork findings: enablers and barriers to intergenerational practice**

7.1 This chapter presents the findings of the fieldwork with case studies and other contributors involved with intergenerational practice on the key enablers and barriers to successful intergenerational practice. It also considers the involvement of particular sub-groups within intergenerational practice and fieldwork contributors' views on future policy and practice.

### **Key Enablers**

7.2 It was frequently reported that intergenerational provision doesn't necessarily require significant funding support as the activities themselves tend to be low cost in the main. The main area of investment was considered to be staff costs such as development workers, project co-ordinators as well as professional facilitators (e.g. artists commissioned to run sessions) although smaller amounts of funding are required for additional elements such as transport and equipment.

7.3 It was also commonly observed by case study representatives that most intergenerational provision has been stimulated either by an organisation or an enthusiastic and committed individual (be they a paid for employee or a volunteer). For instance, one case study initiative (Acorns 'n' Oaks) was established as a direct response to the founder taking their child to a nursing home to meet a relative and observing the positive response from other residents to the visit. This spurred them on to establish a playgroup at the same nursing home, inviting other families to join. Another case study initiative was established by an individual who took up running in order to visit an isolated older man, which paved the way for the establishment of the Good Gym.

7.4 It was also frequently reported that intergenerational activity should have a specific purpose, which responds to local and social needs. It was argued that the activity should not be 'something which is done for the sake of it' (case study<sup>60</sup>).

---

<sup>60</sup> Quotes from case study representatives are presented anonymously.

7.5 Several case study representatives thought that intergenerational intervention worked well when it offered an opportunity to add value to existing networks. Several case studies mentioned the importance of working in partnership with other support organisations who have a specific remit of working with groups such as carers and older people. This, it was argued, aided recruitment, particularly given the challenges associated with persuading vulnerable or isolated people to get involved with initiatives in the first instance.

7.6 A number of case study representatives involved in the delivery of intergenerational sessions (e.g. involving children and older people participating in a series of defined activities) highlighted the following guiding enablers as being important:

- *Prior preparation*: Preparing participants and informing them about the needs of the recipient group e.g. informing children about dementia and its effects. Aligned to this it was also reported by some case studies that conducting separate sessions with participating groups at the outset to develop confidence and put them at ease was important
- *Developing relationships*: Ensuring that sessions allow members the opportunity to network informally so that meaningful relationships can develop before activities get underway. Aligned to this it was observed that securing mutual respect between participating groups and ensuring that participants feel safe were also important
- *Sense of purpose*: Projects need to have a clear focus, purpose and structure with participants working towards a common objective or output e.g. working towards an exhibition. Longer term projects should work towards disseminating and sharing outputs produced in a public space e.g. exhibiting artwork at a gallery, performing a production or singing at a local community festival. One case study had found that older people preferred well-structured intergenerational activities which were stimulating (and argued that activities with older primary school children rather than young children were more likely to offer this)

- *Mutual interest*: Ensuring that activities are focused on participants' interest and that participants have an input into the design of sessions. This it was argued by one case study was particularly important where sessions were led by a professional e.g. an artist, to ensure a sense of ownership and empowerment
- *Equal access and benefits*: Projects should be equally accessible to both young and older participants in that the chosen 'theme' appeals to both groups. Interventions should place equal value on the contribution of both young and older participants, acknowledging that both young and older participants can act as the 'coach' in their turn e.g. children sharing drawing skills, adults sharing reading skills.

7.7 It is more difficult to identify common enablers for other types of distinct intergenerational initiatives as each project is fairly unique in their approach. One such project, the Homeshare UK, identified four key enablers which are home share scheme support, maintaining personal space, open communication and regular activities. Another, the Good Gym, highlighted key enablers as being a functional website to allow for the registration and matching of participants, partnership working and focusing on urban settings.

### **Challenges and Barriers**

#### *Logistical challenges*

7.8 Several case study representatives highlighted the logistical challenges of delivering intergenerational activity. Transport in particular was considered a major issue given the need to bring together two groups to a joint event e.g. transporting groups of children to an older people's home and transport costs associated with individual older people who did not have access to transport themselves. Transport costs need to be considered - some case studies were able to provide funding to cover this (e.g. the Cares Family who subsidise bus or taxi transport to encourage people to attend group activities) whilst others (e.g. Magic Me) did not. In one case study an intergenerational activity involving a school and care home could not

continue post funding as the school could not afford the transport costs involved.

7.9 Another logistical challenge was considered to be the timing for group sessions and one case study working with teenage young people and older people found this to be a hurdle. Aligned with this it was also noted that schools, particularly secondary schools, had other competing demands on their time, which restricted their ability to engage in intergenerational activity and release children to participate. Consequently, some cautioned against placing too much emphasis upon schools as the only method of recruiting young people and advised that school engagement must be manageable from their perspective and accepting of the fact that their involvement may be on 'an on and off basis' due to other priorities. One case study representative observed that participating schools 'rotated' groups of children in order to minimise the time spend out of classroom whilst another reported that schools used it as an opportunity to stretch more able and talented pupils.

7.10 On the positive, however some contributors observed that schools were becoming more responsive to intergenerational work given the focus upon volunteering within the Welsh Baccalaureate and the upcoming changes to the education curriculum in Wales which was thought to place a greater emphasis upon communication and life skills. One Welsh case study had already experienced this positive outcome given the involvement of one secondary school within a deprived community now securing good outcomes for their Welsh Baccalaureate qualification for participating young people.

7.11 A third logistical challenge mentioned by case study contributors was that some projects could only operate within a highly populated area. The Good Gym was highlighted as an example given the need for running distances between the runner and older person to be manageable.

#### *Upfront planning effort*

7.12 Several case studies reported that the intergenerational activity required more upfront planning and recruitment effort than they had anticipated. One

case study for instance reported that they had been required to spend more time persuading groups to get involved given the challenge of encouraging schools and care homes to come on board. In this case the role of an independent broker to facilitate links and get the provision underway was considered instrumental. Promoting intergenerational interventions to older people had also been a challenge for one case study, not least because individuals didn't consider themselves to be 'old' and didn't consider the activity appealing. The amount of work involved in establishing a digital intergenerational project was also considered by one contributor to be greater than other types of intervention and additional time and resources had been required to get this underway.

#### *Group hand-holding*

- 7.13 Several contributors mentioned that their intergenerational provision required more hand-holding of groups than was originally anticipated. In one case study where the intergenerational work was one element of the organisation's remit, more time had been spent on supporting schools and care homes with the activity: 'it's been more resource intensive than we expected, but we've kept it going due to the outcomes we're achieving'. In this case, where the intergenerational activity was considered to be a means to an end, limited resources has meant that the organisation has been unable to extend the offer of intergenerational activity to a wider audience and work with a wider range of youth based organisations.

#### *Sustainability post funding*

- 7.14 Another common challenge identified by contributors involved with intergenerational provision related to the long-term sustainability of activities post funding. This was particularly the case for projects led by organisations dependent upon project funding income whereas possibly less so for other initiatives which had developed more organically by champion volunteers. A number of the case study representatives reported that the role played by the organisation or co-ordinator had been instrumental in stimulating and arranging intergenerational activities but that for sessions to sustain in the long term without their input a number of



elements needed to be satisfied. These included having in place a local volunteer or champion, the group or setting taking ownership of the activity and that strong links and relationships be in place between both groups.

- 7.15 Several contributors argued that project level funding only serves to encourage short-term solutions and that funding is better targeted towards staff time and capacity, particularly given that event based initiatives are fairly low cost interventions.

#### *Safeguarding participants*

- 7.16 Safeguarding participants has been a particular challenge which intergenerational projects have had to overcome and has been a particular issue for home sharing initiatives with homesharers, householders and the families alike concerned about safeguarding. Significant effort is deployed to reassure people and their families about the steps taken to ensure the safety of participants. The resources allocated to the screening, matching and monitoring of each home share is significant.

#### **Engaging and supporting sub-groups**

- 7.17 A small number of examples were identified of intergenerational projects that were actively targeting and recruiting sub-groups like women, ethnic minorities, disabled people or those from LGBT communities. Other than older people and children, the main sub-groups actively targeted by a few case studies included teenage asylum seekers and refugees, dementia patients and young transient professional people.
- 7.18 It was frequently noted that it was easier to engage participants on a group basis in settings such as care homes or schools where there is somewhat of a 'captive audience'. One case study reported that whilst it had been fairly easy to target and secure the participation of care home residents it had been more challenging to extend the provision to private housing tenants.
- 7.19 Some case studies reported that they were engaging a diverse ethnic profile of participants simply due to the demographic profile of the communities, which were being targeted whilst others reported that they had found it more difficult to connect with specific BAME groups due to

weaker links with these communities and networks. One case study reported that they had to overcome linguistic barriers as a result of working with participants from diverse cultures.

- 7.20 Some contributors involved with intergenerational work suggested that activities tended to attract more women than men although more men were reported to have been involved in some activities focused on themes such as photography.

### **Outcomes of intergenerational practice**

- 7.21 It is important to note that the fieldwork undertaken for this review did not involve any primary research with intergenerational initiative participants and that the evidence used to identify the benefits and outcomes achieved has been based on feedback from case study representatives and other documentation (e.g. project reports and promotional material, website resources etc.) accessed.
- 7.22 Contributors to the fieldwork observed that intergenerational provision can achieve a broad range of benefits for participants, of which reducing loneliness and social isolation is an important one. In terms of the evidence around how intergenerational activity has helped to reduce social isolation the fieldwork revealed that the interaction within structured, sessional activities between children and older people within care homes is considered 'a real change' and a wonderful experience which generated immediate social interactions. However, questions were raised about the intervention's long term value in terms of addressing loneliness. It was strongly argued that for any change to be meaningful, the relationship between the school (or other setting) and care home must be sustainable rather than a one-off or short-term intervention.
- 7.23 Several case studies argued that their interventions were in fact contributing to a reduction in social isolation amongst participants. In the case of one digital inclusion project this outcome was not intended because 'reducing social isolation was a by-product initially for us, but now I would actually say that it is the strongest outcome'. This was attributed in part to the fact that the digital device (e.g. an iPad) was stimulating direct

discussion between a younger and older person which allowed them to develop a personal relationship. It was also the case that older people, in embracing social media to contact family and friends, were able to use their new skills and knowledge to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

7.24 Case studies which involved supporting ongoing and sustainable relationships (such as those focused on home sharing and those which had a clear focus on embedding community engagement on a sustained basis) were more likely to offer anecdotal evidence for how their intervention was helping to address social isolation on an ongoing basis. Provisions such as sustained social events and befriending activities were thought to be particularly effective at helping to increase the number of social interactions between isolated participants.

7.25 Fewer case studies were able to provide robust evidence for how their interventions were contributing to a reduction in loneliness. Case studies which were able to identify these outcomes included the home sharing initiative as the co-sharing of a home was considered to have the potential to address loneliness experienced as a result of living alone. Other case studies which thought that their initiative was reducing experiences of loneliness targeted participants who lived alone. The Care Family case study is a good example of this in that the intervention has been found to help tackle loneliness experienced by both older people and young transient professional adults.

7.26 In addition to addressing loneliness and social isolation, the other most commonly cited benefits experienced by those involved in intergenerational interventions were thought to be:

- Being able to participate in a fun and enjoyable experience, despite some being anxious or concerned about doing so initially. It was reported that participants looked forward to participating in events or sessions as they are joyous, happy and enriching experiences:

‘It is so heart-warming to see the children and residents singing along to the songs and doing all of the actions. The residents smile from ear to ear as they watch on and it becomes a room full of giggles. Our

residents can now look forward to them visiting us every week' [Care home manager]

- Developing friendships, particularly within initiatives where participants have been given the opportunity to develop close one to one relationships:

'Bonds have been created between children and tenants and they enjoy each other's company' [Care staff at housing provider]

- Improved understanding of the 'other' group: it was reported that group sessions helped to challenge stereotypical attitudes towards both older and younger generations, including removing fear of young people and combating issues of ageism. In one particular case study it was argued that preparing children to meet with dementia patients had led to an improved understanding of this health condition. Feedback from one parent involved in a case study project where children visited a care home:

'He has really enjoyed going to [care home]; it is something that he looks forward to every week. [Name of child] talks about his experiences, it promotes conversation, he feels important going ... He has said that he loves going because he makes new friends and was very sad to say goodbye. He has said he was lucky to go there.'

- Improved confidence and increased self-esteem: this was thought to be particularly relevant for children and young people whose confidence developed over time by attending the sessions and on occasion was reflected back in school settings

'One of my favourite sessions was when a pile of wonderful costumes arrived in the studio space, which had the amazing effect of breaking down any remaining barriers within the group - shyness dissipated, the younger girls gained confidence, donning medieval costumes and taking on different personas and performing for the camera.'

- Improved wellbeing – it was observed that older people involved in sustainable and longer-term interventions reported an improvement to

their wellbeing e.g. Homeshare UK participants. Improved wellbeing was perhaps more immediate and short term in nature where interventions were sessional in nature

‘Choral singing has been shown, over many, many studies, to improve people’s wellbeing, their mental health, their physical health, their self-esteem, their feeling of belonging...and that’s what’s so special about a choir like this.’

- Gaining new skills e.g. it was frequently observed that older and younger participants alike gained new skills as a result of being involved in creative arts sessions and digital related sessions. Some new skills gains were considered to be generic (e.g. communication and social skills) whilst others were specific (e.g. photography and performing skills). In one case it was suggested that young people had been enthused to consider a career in the health and social care sector as a result of being involved.

7.27 Other specific benefits were identified by some case study projects including improved health and fitness (e.g. Good Gym) and access to low cost accommodation as well as costs avoided to health and care services (e.g. Homeshare UK).

7.28 Some of the benefits gained were considered to be more at the community level and included improved community cohesion and connection. Intergenerational activity is considered to bridge a gap between young people and older people within a local community. One case study representative observed that as a result of their intergenerational activity ‘people walking past each other in their community are more likely to stop and talk ... they’ll recognise a face’. Another case study (the Cares Family) was specifically focused on improving neighbour’s connections and bringing people together and found that intervention led to older people feeling better connected to other people and felt closer to the community whilst young professionals equally were likely to develop a greater connection to the community and appreciate older people.

## **Key messages for future practice and policy**

7.29 A number of observations were offered by fieldwork contributors about how intergenerational work within Wales could be guided by good practice. It is important to note that many ideas suggested apply to intergenerational work in its broadest sense and are not exclusively focused on intergenerational provision which is focused on addressing loneliness and isolation issues.

### *A strategy that supports intergenerational work*

7.30 Contributors welcomed the Welsh Government's intention to develop a cross-government strategy on loneliness and isolation and believed that intergenerational activity should form a key implementation mechanism for its delivery. The policy context in Scotland was considered to be similar to that of Wales in that a social isolation and loneliness strategy has recently been launched<sup>61</sup>. Intergenerational activity is a prominent theme within the strategy and is considered a tool for helping to achieve a number of key priorities. It is frequently referenced in the context of piloting innovative housing solutions for older people by 'testing intergenerational and other co-living arrangements to meet housing needs and reduce social isolation and loneliness'<sup>62</sup> as well as promoting intergenerational dialogue to tackle shared challenges and prevent exclusion and isolation and 'develop intergenerational practice' which will 'encourage contact between people of all ages'<sup>63</sup>.

### *A national driving force*

7.31 It was recognised by several contributors that Wales currently lacks a national organisation to drive and support intergenerational provision although a few examples were identified whereby this was happening at a local level (e.g. Gwynedd Council) or regional level (e.g. Aneurin Bevan Health Board). It was suggested that Wales could benefit from having a national intergenerational initiative, as currently exists in Scotland and

---

<sup>61</sup> [A Connected Scotland](#)

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid* p.9

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid* p.53

Ireland, with a specific remit to initiate and support intergenerational developments. Aligned to this, it was also noted that local enablers or drivers were important in stimulating provision at a more local level and that these posts were already in place in some areas of Wales.

#### *Roll out successful models*

- 7.32 Some of the case study models (e.g. Homesharing UK, Family Cares) which are currently not active in Wales have the potential to be rolled-out within specific settings or areas within the country, as has already happened with the Good Gym model. For instance, Homeshare UK provide providers with the necessary structure and resources to establish and manage a local scheme. The Cares Family model could also be applied to a city setting such as Swansea or Cardiff. Others which are already active within Wales, particularly the Good Gym, have the potential to be embedded further within new areas. These models rely heavily on collaboration with key partner organisations and (in the case of Family Cares and Good Gym) rely on social media to recruit participants. It was noted that in these ‘franchised’ type models co-ordinating intergenerational activity remotely is challenging and therefore good partnership working is critical.

#### *Funding*

- 7.33 Contributors had a strong opinion that funding for intergenerational work should be provided on a long term basis and aimed at supporting activities which had the potential to be sustained over the long term as opposed to funding one off or short term activities. Furthermore, some suggested that funding would be better targeted towards interventions that add value to existing networks or approaches as opposed to being stand-alone activities.
- 7.34 Some contributors argued that it would be helpful for the Welsh Government to make available a specific funding stream to support intergenerational work and that funding be awarded in line with good practice. It was frequently observed that intergenerational interventions can be designed and moulded to meet many policy outcomes and that as a

result, funding applications are often tailored and shaped to fit specific funding needs and requirements.

#### *Supporting intergenerational work*

7.35 There was a unanimous view that intergenerational activity required an appropriate support framework which included guidance, training and peer support. Elements of this type of provision are currently available to those working and volunteering in the sector outside of Wales (e.g. in Scotland and Northern Ireland) and include:

- Information, guidance and support: this includes access to toolkits on how to design and implement intergenerational activities. A wealth of tools and resources are already available in this respect including those produced within Wales e.g. Ffrind i Mi<sup>64</sup> and a toolkit currently being developed by Gwynedd Council as well as toolkits produced by other organisations e.g. GWT<sup>65</sup>
- Access to a peer network of intergenerational practitioners and volunteers in order to access good practice and share experiences. In Scotland this type of network is facilitated by Generations Working Together
- Training provision, particularly geared towards equipping volunteers and practitioners with the appropriate skills to work outside of their comfort zone and bridge generational issues. Volunteers or staff who work on intergenerational programmes tend to be comfortable dealing with one group of people (i.e. older people or young people) and not the other.

#### *Ambition and innovation*

7.36 Several contributors to the fieldwork thought that whilst there are many tried and tested approaches to traditional intergenerational work involving children and older people based around collaboration between care homes and nursery or school settings, there are fewer examples of more ambitious

---

<sup>64</sup> [Friend of Mine](#)

<sup>65</sup> [Generations Working Together](#)



or innovative approaches to intergenerational practice. Contributors suggested that future intergenerational work could be highly ambitious in its nature and reference was made to current developments in Scotland such as developing an intergenerational learning campus and an intergenerational dementia village.

- 7.37 Many contributors thought that it was important for Welsh Government to support a mixed approach to intergenerational practice, recognising that some solutions were better geared towards meeting the needs of participants in rural and urban areas. It was suggested for instance that digital intergenerational projects were appropriate for those living in remote areas whilst other models required a populated town or city to work effectively.

*Wider policy*

- 7.38 Several contributors believed that there was a need to ensure that intergenerational approaches were being embedded into wider policy and considered within policy areas such as housing, planning, health, education and social justice. For instance, it was suggested that it would be valuable for planning policy to consider how public spaces could be used to meet the needs of different generations. By way of example, two contributors observed that when developing community assets such as new day centres, information hubs or leisure centres, key organisations such as housing associations and local authorities should be considering how the needs of more than generation could be accommodated within the development. This wider advocacy and advisory role could be undertaken by a lead intergenerational organisation (discussed above).

*International awareness*

- 7.39 It was also considered important that Wales kept abreast of international developments relating to intergenerational practice. The fieldwork identified several international conferences focused on intergenerational practice including:

- Generations United (USA)<sup>66</sup>
- Working Together (Scotland).

7.40 Furthermore, it was also reported that intergenerational conferences were taking place within Wales already, such as that being arranged in north west Wales during April 2019 by two case study organisations, Gwynedd Council and Cynefin.

---

<sup>66</sup> [Generations United](#)

## **8. Conclusions and recommendations**

8.1 This chapter offers our conclusions on the key enablers and barriers to successful intergenerational practice. It also presents our recommendations for future Welsh Government policy and practice.

8.2 Intergenerational practice can be considered as a continuum of contact between different generations (as set out in Figure 3.1) which varies from low level interventions such as raising awareness of ageing issues through to high level intervention where intergenerational activities are embedded into community settings as a natural part of its social structure. The majority of the case study interventions considered as part of this review fall into the medium level category of interventions and predominantly included distinct activities which involved regular sessions between older and young people as well as ongoing projects that have become integrated into the community. It is perhaps not surprising that so few of the highest level interventions were included given the difficulties in identifying them as a result of being fully embedded into the community.

### **Intergenerational practice outcomes**

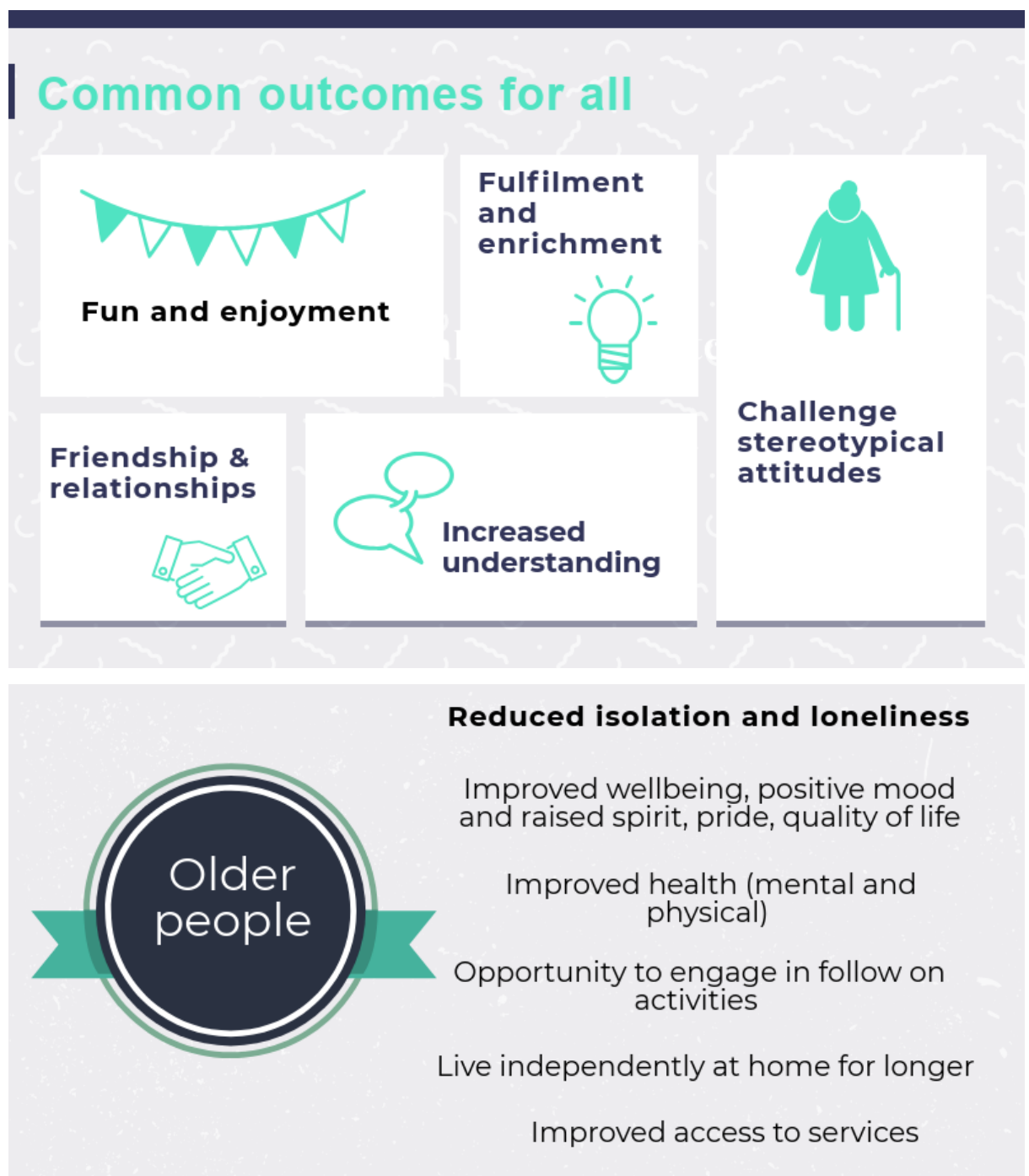
8.3 Many intergenerational practice interventions, identified via the academic literature as well as the fieldwork, claim to reduce loneliness and social isolation. In some cases, the original main outcome was not to reduce loneliness and/or social isolation but it became a by-product of the intergenerational work. In other cases, reducing loneliness and social isolation was the initial focus and intergenerational work became a by-product of the initial approach. Broadly speaking, case study interventions were found to make a greater contribution to reducing social isolation than loneliness. Embedded and longer-term interventions were also considered to have the potential to make the greatest impact upon levels of social isolation and loneliness.

8.4 Short-term intergenerational projects, particularly those which are reliant upon project funding, are at greater risk of being unsustainable. It is possible that these types of interactions could be more damaging for older people and leave them feeling more isolated at the end because they have

no access to replacement activities. For some projects that survive past the initial intervention and become owned and embedded into communities there is frequently a lack of evaluation to draw and identify which aspects are most successful and which areas need adjusting.

8.5 Figure 8.1 sets out the most common outcomes that intergenerational initiatives claim to achieve:

**Figure 8.1: Intergenerational practice outcomes**




Confidence

Self-esteem

Behavioural change

Skills (social, communication, gardening, creative arts)

Knowledge (e.g. local history)


Reduced isolation and loneliness

Improved wellbeing


Improved health (mental and physical)

Affordable housing


**Community outcomes**



Improved community cohesion & connections



Reduced community tensions

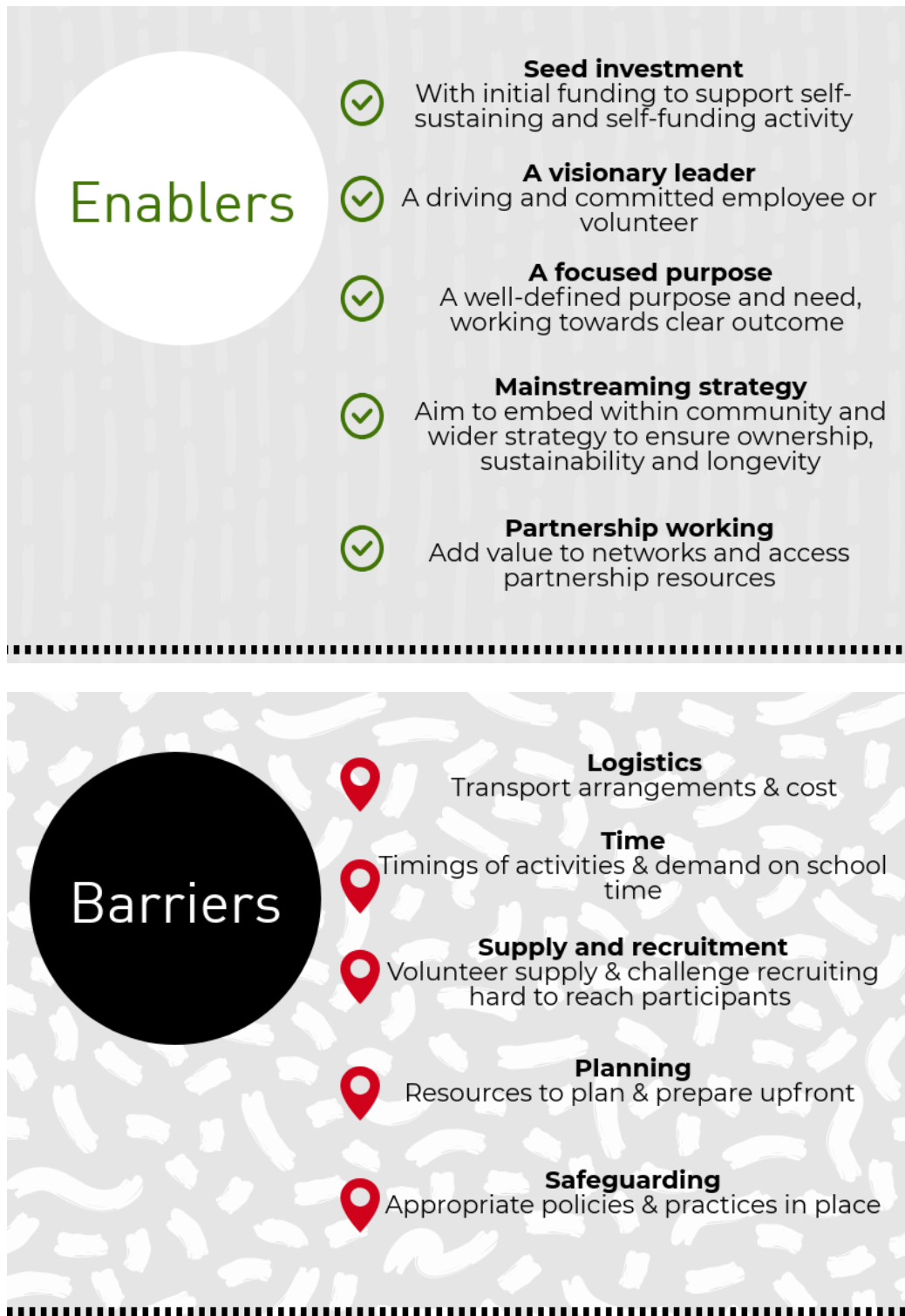


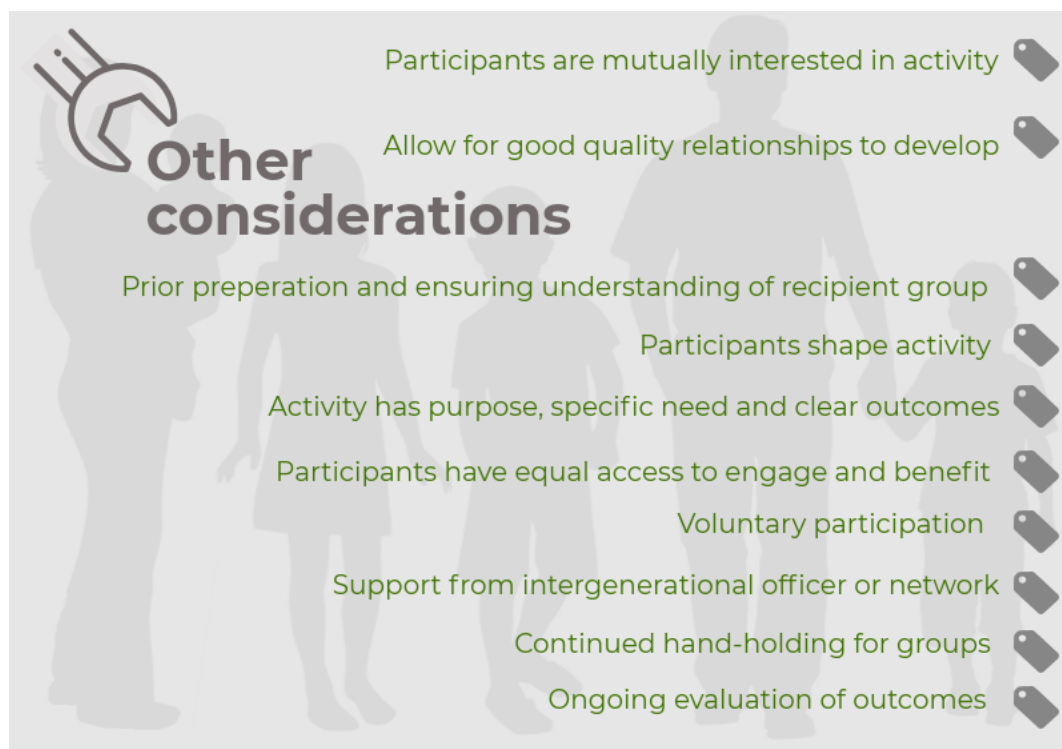
Increased sense of belonging to community

## Intergenerational practice key mechanisms

8.6 Figure 8.2 summarises the key mechanisms which need to be considered when delivering successful intergenerational practice.

**Figure 8.2: Intergenerational practice key mechanisms**





### **Sub-groups within intergenerational practice**

- 8.7 This review has found that some groups are more inclined to participate in intergenerational initiatives than others, with women more inclined to do so than men. The review has also found that at a broad level, regular group based intergenerational activities are more likely to be focused on bringing together older people and children whilst community based initiatives (such as choirs and social groups) are more likely to recruit a broader range of participants by age and offer multigenerational opportunities. The review found some examples of successful initiatives which were targeting specific audiences and these included young professionals, refugee and migrants and dementia patients.
- 8.8 Feedback from contributors suggests that it is usually easier to recruit participants from group settings such as care homes and schools and that it is more difficult to recruit hard to reach individuals and groups. Some initiatives have adopted less traditional methods to recruit participants more broadly from community e.g. using social media as the main mechanism to do so.

## **Recommendations**

8.9 In addition to the practical guidance set out above we also offer some key recommendations for the Welsh Government to consider in terms of future policy relating to intergenerational practice.

Recommendation 1. Intergenerational activity should be included as an implementation mechanism within the Welsh Government's proposed strategy on loneliness and isolation.

Recommendation 2. Intergenerational practice should be considered in its widest sense and be considered within the context of policy areas such as housing, planning, education, social justice and community development. The Welsh Government's strategy on loneliness and isolation should consider how intergenerational practice could be fully embraced and embedded in existing or new policies i.e. how new developments or spaces can be used by different generations.

Recommendation 3. The Welsh Government considers the case for establishing a national body to drive and support intergenerational developments as well as to advocate the case for intergenerational planning across key policy areas.

Recommendation 4. Such a national body (or otherwise) puts in place an appropriate support framework for intergenerational practice enablers, practitioners and volunteers, building on existing good practice and resources and which includes guidance, training and peer support.

Recommendation 5. Consideration be given to proactively identify, enable and support the roll-out of successful UK initiatives (such as Homesharing UK, Family Cares and the Good Gym) to specific settings or areas within Wales.

Recommendation 6. The Welsh Government considers the feasibility of establishing an intergenerational seed fund or micro-financing to support activities which have the potential to be mainstreamed and sustained post funding.



Recommendation 7. All intergenerational practices adopt ongoing evaluation of their provision so as to provide meaningful evidence on their impact upon reducing loneliness and isolation.

Recommendation 8. Practitioners in Wales keep abreast of international developments and good practice relating to intergenerational practice by engaging with national and international communities of interest and conferences.

## References

- Blandon, C., (2015). Making Bridges with Music. University of Plymouth.
- Breck, B, M., Dennis, C, B., and Leedah, S, N., (2018). Implementing reverse mentoring to address social isolation among older adults. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Vol. 61(5):513-525
- Children's Society (2009). The Children's Society's Greenwich Intergenerational Project. London: The Children's Society.
- Clark, M., Murphy, C., Jameson-Allen, T., and Wilkins, C., (2016). Integrated working and intergenerational projects: A study of the use of sporting memories. *Journal of Integrated Care*. Vol. 24(5/6):300-312.
- Cook, G., Cook, M., Thynne, E., and Chandler, C., (2013). An evaluation on 'HENPOWER': Improving Well-Being and Social Capital in Care settings. Gateshead: Equal Arts.
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. (2018). A connected society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness – laying the foundations for change. London: HM Government..
- Galbraith, B., Larkin, H., Moorhouse, A., and Oomen, T., (2015). Intergenerational Programs for Persons With Dementia: A Scoping Review. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Vol. 58(4):357-378.
- Grant, M, J., and Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information and Libraries Journal*. .Vol. ;26 (2):91-108.
- Hatton-Yeo, A., (2006). Intergenerational Programmes: An introduction and examples of practice. Stoke-on-Trent: Centre for Intergenerational Practice, Beth Johnson Foundation.
- Health, Social Care and Sport Committee (2017). Inquiry into loneliness and isolation. Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales.
- Hunter, K., Wilson, A., and McArthur, K., (2018). The role of intergenerational relationships in challenging educational inequality: Improving participation of working-class pupils in higher education. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*. Vol.16 (1-2):5-25
- Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness (2017). Combatting loneliness one conversation at a time: a call to action. London: Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness.
- Kantar Public (2016) [Trapped in a bubble: An investigation into triggers for loneliness in the UK](#). Co-op and British Red Cross. Accessed 21/02/2019.

Kaplan, M, (2004). Toward an intergenerational way of life. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*. Vol. 96 (2): 5-9.

Larkin, E., Sadler, S, E., and Mahler, J., (2005). Benefits of Volunteering for Older Adults Mentoring At-Risk Youth. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. Vol. 44:(3-4):23-37

Martin, K, Springate, I., and Atkinson, M., (2010). *Intergenerational practice: outcomes and effectiveness*. London: NFER

Siddiquee A., Kagan, C., de Santis, C., and Ali, R., (2008). "We can find ourselves in them, and they can find themselves in us" [Evaluation of Intergen: Intergenerational Understanding, Wellbeing and Social Capital](#). Independent report by Manchester Metropolitan University. Accessed 19/02/2019.

Teeter, B., (2016). *Intergenerational Programmes to Promote Active Ageing: The Experiences and Perspectives of Older Adults*. *Activities, Adaptation and Ageing*. Vol. 40(1):1-19

Watmough, E., Begault, M., and Ceolin, C., (2017). *Action on Loneliness in Care Homes: An intergenerational project*. London. Magic Me.

## Annex A: Academic and grey literature reviewed

### Academic Literature

Authors	Date	Country	Title of publication	Publisher	Type of study	Outcome
1. Breck, B, M et al.	2018	USA	Implementing reverse mentoring to address social isolation among older adults	Journal of Gerontological Social Work. Vol. 61(5):513-525	phenomenology	Older adults paired with younger mentors in a cyber-seniors programme. Reverse mentoring decreased social isolation for older people, increased their self and digital confidence and developed leadership skills in younger people. Limitations are that the sample size was too small to reliably infer a cause and effect relationship.
2. Clark et al	2016	England	Integrated working and intergenerational projects: A study of the use of sporting memories	Journal of Integrated Care. Vol. 24(5/6):300-312	Case study	Reminiscence and sharing are key values and improves communication between generations. It reduces social isolation. People need to have a vested interest in the activity for it to succeed. Understanding the skill mix and level of knowledge people have is important to facilitate intergenerational work; e.g. understanding about dementia. Funding an issue and queries around sustainability.
3. Cook, C and Bailey, G	2013	England	Older Care Home Residents Views of Intergenerational Practice	Journal of intergenerational Relationships. Vol. 11(4): 410-424	No methodological basis, merely 'qualitative' because it used interviews	Getting together on everyday tasks allows for more natural interactions between older and younger people. Maintaining intergenerational connectivity requires support

						Intergenerational initiatives increase QoL for older people, exchange life skills and give a sense of purpose. Care home staff need training to prevent physical and communication impairments becoming a barrier to participation.	
4.	Galbraith, B., Larkin, H., Moorhouse, A., and Oomen, T	2015	Intergenerational Programs for Persons With Dementia: A Scoping Review	<i>Journal of Gerontological Social Work</i> , Vol. 58(4):357-378	Scoping Review	Intergenerational work with people with dementia to reduce social isolation and improve QoL. The type of program had less of an impact on positive outcomes than if the activity was meaningful for participants and supported shared opportunities for relationship building and growth. Issues with outcomes used to measure goals and many studies too small to make meaningful conclusions.	
5.	Grignoli et al	2015	Europe	The Development of a European Model for Intergenerational Learning : GUTS (Generations for Using Training for Social Inclusion 2020)	Regional Review. Vol. 11:109-125	Report	Analysis of 7 countries using intergenerational learning to reduce social exclusion of older and younger people.  Co-creation of learning was the most successful area with older and younger people benefiting. For some groups social media groups were set up and existed long after the interventions had finished. Understanding, empathy and skill development all occurred and social exclusion was reduced. The limitations were that many projects failed to evaluate the quality of learning and interactions that had taken place.

6.	Heenan, D.,	2011	Northern Ireland	How local interventions can build capacity to address social isolation in dispersed rural communities; A case study from Northern Ireland	Ageing International. Vol. 36: 475-479	Case study	Reporting on the work of a locally based active ageing group: 'Young at Heart'. Needs of people should be placed at the centre of interventions and they should be part of building them. Ownership was a key factor in the success of programmes. Intergenerational contact brought joy and joint learning in the form of computing lessons was led by younger people. Older people felt more integrated in the community as a result.
7.	Hunter, K., Wilson, A., and McArthur, K	2018	Scotland	The role of intergenerational relationships in challenging educational inequality: Improving participation of working-class pupils in higher education	Journal of Intergenerational Relationships Vol.16(1-2):5-25	Case study	Intergenerational mentors assisted younger people with making decisions about future careers. Programme needed support for mentors to develop skills in dealing with young people who may have additional life issues. Age specific support provides encouragement and develops imagination in younger people.
8.	Hunt, C., Dowrick, C., and Lloyd-Willaims, M	2018	England	The role of day care in supporting older people living with long-term conditions	<a href="#">Current opinion in supportive and palliative care</a> . Vol 12(4): 510–515	Review of intergenerational work	There is limited evidence of the value or benefits of intergenerational provision for people living with long-term conditions. The review recommends robust research which uses meaningful outcome measures.
9.	Santini, S et al	2018	Italy	Intergenerational Programmes Involving Adolescents, Institutionalized Elderly, and Older Volunteers:	BioMedResearch International	Action Research	"Let's Regenerate" action-research project to enhance intergenerational ties through shared activities. Key learning points are that Intergenerational programmes add to institutionalized older people's well-

			Results from a Pilot Research-Action in Italy			being, reduce social isolation and enable older people to feel they have a use and purpose. Younger people become more aware of issues like elder abuse and realise that older people have an intrinsic worth and community solidarity is of importance.	
10.	Teater, B	2016	England	Intergenerational Programmes to Promote Active Ageing: The Experiences and Perspectives of Older Adults.	Activities, Adaptation and Ageing. Vol. 40(1):1-19	Case Study	<p>Cultural context of younger and older people should design and shape interventions.</p> <p>Involvement in an activity is a choice made by people and they need to be active agents rather than passive participants.</p> <p>Challenges to participation need to be considered to promote inclusion. Promotion of programmes needs to occur within health and social services as preventative interventions. All activities served to reduce social isolation and some participants used the activities as a springboard to expand their social network, reducing loneliness.</p>
11.	Walters, T	2016	Wales	Learn Together Cymru: Pan-Wales Intergenerational Learning Project	Journal of Intergenerational relationships. Vol. 14(2):146-150	Report	Learning together reduced social isolation. Recruitment and training of volunteers needed close co-ordination.

## Grey Literature

Name	Length of time running	Location	Aim	Type of interaction	Evaluation evidence	Limitations
1. The Care Homes Reading Project, University of Exeter	Since October 2011	Exeter England	Aim is to use university students as agents of change, strengthen community links and reduce social isolation.	<p>Students were trained volunteers from the English department at University of Exeter.</p> <p>Reading Project where student volunteers are trained and sent out to a large number of care homes across Exeter. They visited residents regularly, reading poetry, plays, and short stories, or spent time chatting.</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>Scheme has won an award; September 2015 'Points of Light' winner.</p>	<p>Reliant on student volunteers and one main lead from the School of English. Relationships are temporary not permanent. Does not appear to have done anything since it won the Points of Light award in 2015.</p> <p>Older people may have benefited at the time.</p>
2. Making Bridges with Music	01/05/2018-01/10/2018 5months	Torbay England	Aim was to reduce isolation; improve sense of self-worth and self-esteem for older and younger alike; increase community cohesion. It also aimed to assess whether there was an increase in well-being.	Children from preschool nurseries, carers and older people placed together in an intergenerational pilot intervention using music and the arts that ran for 6 weeks with participants from 5 months to 100 years of age in 3 care homes in Torbay.	<p>2017 Claudia Bandon University of Plymouth.</p> <p>The Arts Observational Scale (ArtsObs Scale) was used to assess whether there was an increase in <b>well-being</b>. There were also focus groups with the intervention team, and one-to-one interviews with care home managers, older people and children. Outcomes were that mood changes registering satisfaction and happiness increased across</p>	<p>Challenges of the intervention: For the care home managers and intervention team, there were initial concerns about health and safety, use of space, extra work and who to invite to the music sessions.</p> <p>'Making the right choice' became an essential element to decide who would fit in well in an intergenerational session.</p> <p>For the artists and musicians, deciding how to engage such a diverse group at the same level in a small space was challenging and needed careful thought.</p> <p>Short-term intervention which was then taken on by Torbay council who now have 20 care homes engaged in partnerships with early years providers.</p>



					sessions in both sets of older participants. The sessions provided a conduit for musical heritage; young children were exposed to old songs and nursery rhymes, older people were exposed to new songs and games. Young people's communication skills improved.	
3.	'Time after Time' intergenerational programme	England and Wales  Goldies Cymru	Reminiscence projects in which older and younger people come together to talk about the past. Oral history projects have sprung up and WW1 and WW2 projects to educate young people alongside a dedicated website Also works on here are also WW1 easy-to-sing Medley's which have been specially written for <a href="#">Goldies Cymru</a> and sessions involving music and meeting children in their primary schools and engaging in singing sessions. The aim is to reduce social isolation.		Evaluation Teater, B., (2016). See No. 5 in list of academic literature	Spin out for some of the work is that Libraries across South Wales are working with Goldies Cymru hosting daily singalong sessions to reduce social isolation amongst older people.
4.	The Next Generation: how	2018 onwards reviews	England, various sites and	Provided a series of case reports of evidence for 20 national and local	Case reports	Key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every nursery, childminder, toddler group and children's</li> </ul>

	intergenerational interaction improves life chances of children and younger people	of initiatives	case studies	organisations about building intergenerational solidarity			<p>centre should link with an older people's care home or housing scheme and vice versa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every primary and secondary school should engage with older people in the community from hosting older volunteers and services to linking with care providers</li> <li>• Communities should explore spaces where older and younger people can meet and share activities and experiences</li> <li>• Every local authority should have a strategy for building communities whereby meaningful mixing becomes a part of everyday life</li> </ul>
5.	Housing Learning and Improving Network [LIN]	2015	England and Scotland	Review of intergenerational housing	Intergenerational housing between older people, students and professionals to reduce social isolation	Viewpoint on research carried out	Key points are that housing needs to have the ability to be adapted so the concept of multigenerational lifetime homes such as Beveridge Mews in London needs further consideration. For non-family members choosing to live together then counselling services were seen as important to assist people with relationships alongside financial safeguarding schemes to protect assets.
6.	Hatton-Yeo Intergenerational Programmes examples of practice	2006	England and Wales	Overview of a series of projects done in England and Wales and examples of good practice	Series of intergenerational projects from learning how to use mobile phones, oral histories, creating art, older people mentoring in schools, media skills, discussion groups,		<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social isolation was reduced for all activities as community cohesiveness improved</li> <li>• There needs to be a key figure who drives the intervention</li> </ul>

				remembrance groups, and GCSE citizenship courses.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project volunteers from media intrusion</li> <li>• Discuss clear contracts so partners could commit and deliver</li> <li>• Make evaluation an integral part of the project</li> <li>• Give all participants a say in the shape of the project</li> <li>• Communal spaces that are big enough for everyone are important</li> <li>• Work with smaller numbers to improve the quality of interactions</li> </ul>
7.	HENPOWER	2013	England	Use of hens to reduce social isolation	Uses of animals to increase confidence and reduce loneliness in older people. Moved towards intergenerational interaction through hen keeping	Evaluation	<p>HENPOWER reduced social isolation and increased mental health and well-being. Moved from looking after hens in the community to roadshows at schools. This increased intergenerational interaction and young and old people learnt from each other whilst engaged in looking after the hens. School egg incubation programme came from the intervention. HENPOWER provided a different and more positive perspective on how older people were perceived.</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership was necessary for the project to succeed.</li> <li>• Staff needed training.</li> <li>• Funding was necessary.</li> <li>• Volunteers with hen keeping skills were needed to support the work</li> </ul>

8.	Martin, K, Springate, I., and Atkinson, M. Intergenerational practice: outcomes and effectiveness . NFER.	2010	England	5 projects evaluated: football, knife crime, arts and crafts, personal social and health education [PSHE], living history. 2 in schools, 1 in a football club, 1 in a drop-in centre and 1 in a health centre. There were various specific project aims from reducing stigma around stereotypes and perceptions of older and younger people to well-being.	Various but all depended on interaction between older and younger people whilst engaged in an enjoyable activity	Evaluation	<p>The most fundamental outcome for all the projects was that everyone enjoyed the activities. Younger people gained from perceptions of older people and this in turn enhanced their relationships with their own grandparents. They also gained in terms of more enjoyment in learning and improved communication and social skills. Older people experienced a reduction in social isolation, an increase in well-being, increased opportunities for involvement in other community activities and a sense of pride at being recognised by younger people in the local community. More general outcomes were greater community cohesion.</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring projects are appropriate and maintain the interest of younger and older people</li> <li>• Involving younger people with challenging behaviour was difficult</li> <li>• Involving younger and older people who were more socially isolated was an issue because they were harder to reach</li> <li>• Difficult to engage sufficient numbers of older people because they had concerns about working with younger people</li> <li>• Potential of negative outcomes and reinforcing entrenched stereotypical views</li> </ul>
----	---	------	---------	--	--	------------	---

- 
- Safeguarding issues because everyone needed to be DBS checked

Key Features for success:

- Not underestimating the complexity of carrying out this type of work and ensuring there is careful planning and preparation
  - Having a key figure/leader who could drive the project forwards and make others aware of the benefits. Intergenerational coordinators were necessary to ensure sustainability of the activities. Having an intergenerational officer at LA level was seen as beneficial
  - Planning and organizing the event; finding a suitable venue, sorting out transport, length and duration of sessions
  - Understanding the needs of the participants and tailoring the activities appropriately. Having a mutual or shared interests for all involved was crucial as well as involving all involved in the design and focus of the activities
  - A hands-on approach was essential to challenge misconceptions and rules agreed from the outset
  - The ratio of older to younger people was a key and in many cases one-to-one work was seen as more successful
-

							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective strategic planning was crucial alongside sufficient funding and a realistic view as to what could be achieved.</li> <li>• Involvement of partners and being able to mainstream activities was seen as critical for sustainability.</li> <li>• Vital that any staff involved have the experience and knowledge to deal with unexpected situations</li> </ul>
9.	Digital Inclusion in Health and Care in Wales. Wales Co-operative Centre	2018	Wales	Case summary and roadmap for digital inclusion in Wales for all citizens	Case study example of younger people teamed with care homes showing residents how to use tablets	report	Case study within the report illustrates how learning together can reduce loneliness and social isolation, increase well-being for older people and improve communication skills for children. Recommendations are that digital inclusion needs to move from the margins of health and social care to mainstream use for planning and delivery.
10.	Magic Me and Action on Loneliness in Care Homes	2016	England	Series of projects addressing loneliness and social isolation for older people in care homes from 2010-2015	Various	report	<p>Key findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matching older people effectively with younger person essential</li> <li>• One-to-one work more effective</li> <li>• Allowing people to meet with numerous others until a match was found</li> <li>• Social events did not engage people who were socially isolated</li> <li>• Retaining volunteers difficult because of external factors (life, jobs etc)</li> </ul>

							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional challenges for the volunteers arose and they needed support</li> <li>• Volunteers felt they need some background on the person in terms of updates on their well-being so they could tailor their visits</li> <li>• When working with people with dementia volunteers felt they needed more training and information on the condition</li> <li>• Taking the structure and processes of the home into consideration for volunteers visiting (e.g. residents going to bed early when volunteers could only visit after work)</li> </ul>
11.	Children's Society Greenwich Intergenerational Project	2009 Report from 3 years of a series of projects.	England	Series of projects focusing on group activities with older and younger people	Followed a consultation approach with local communities who chose the ways in which they wanted to participate	Report Stages evaluated by private company. Not available for public access.	Conflict between older and younger people reduced as a result of the work but sustainability of the work past the lifetime of the project was an issue.
12.	Our Voices. The experiences of people ageing without children	2016 Beth Johnson Foundation report	England	Exploration of older people without children		Report	Advocates intergenerational programmes and activities in order for older people to have the possibility of engaging with other generations
13.	Generations Working Together Craft Cafes	2014 ongoing	Scotland	Craft cafes set up for older and younger people to interact and also families		Reflection report. No formal evaluation has been carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal atmosphere improved interactions between older and younger people</li> </ul>

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement came from mutual interests</li> <li>• Older people started to take more interest in the wider community and become more engaged with other activities</li> <li>• Family members were less worried about their loved ones</li> <li>• Older and younger people developed skills related to areas of interests and younger people learnt from older people who had specific skills, e.g. jewellery making</li> </ul>
14. Homeshare UK	2018	UK	Homesharing for older and younger people	Low level support for both older and younger people. Series of case studies and overall review	Evaluation report	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the householder being able to continue living in own home for longer</li> <li>• Reduction in loneliness</li> <li>• Providing affordable accommodation</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeshare still only attracts people who can 'self-fund'.</li> <li>• Restrictions imposed by mainstream legislation and policy notably in relation to social housing, benefits and council tax continue to impact on wider take-up of the service and limit the breadth of potential outcomes achievable.</li> <li>• There are still large areas of the UK and Republic of Ireland not well serviced by Homeshare particularly Northern Ireland,</li> </ul>



						<p>Scotland, Wales, the North East and South East.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is still a lack of formalised referral routes from health and social care professionals to Homeshare providers.</li> <li>• The escalating needs of older householders may mean they need more support than can be offered through a home sharing arrangement</li> <li>• Homeshare is still relatively unknown amongst key potential supporters including; health and social care professionals, local authority front line staff and older people themselves.</li> <li>• Safeguarding is still the key concern cited by potential referral agencies.</li> </ul>
15. From <a href="#">generation to Generation.</a>	2008	England (Manchester)	<p>Series of intergenerational programmes but the schools [Intergen] appears to be the most successful. Older people go into schools and provide mentoring and support for younger people</p> <p>Aim is to reduce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underperformance &amp; low aspirations of pupils</li> <li>• Loneliness and isolation of older people</li> </ul>		<p>Evaluation 2008 By Manchester Metropolitan University: Asiya Siddiquee, Carolyn Kagan, Carla de Santis and Raheela Ali. "We can find ourselves in them, and they can find themselves in us" Evaluation of Intergen: Intergenerational Understanding, Wellbeing and Social Capital.</p>	<p>Overall Intergen is seen as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• valued and trusted by head teachers and their colleagues</li> <li>• value for money</li> <li>• a means to bring generations together that works, is sustainable and enriches the lives of everyone involved</li> <li>• a means by which the schools can achieve their goals of engaging with the wider community, promote community cohesion and enrich the learning environments of their pupils</li> <li>• providing other direct benefits as the service brings the cluster schools together enabling them</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of flexible part-time jobs for retired people</li> <li>• Lack of local opportunities for the two groups to collaborate</li> <li>• Hostile intergenerational stereotype</li> </ul>		<p>to share good practice, costs, promote community cohesion and support teachers to develop new skills and knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• valued by the <i>Intergeners</i> (the volunteers) as a means to engage with their communities</li> <li>• something with which schools and older people wish to continue to engage with</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the schools to find ways of sharing good practice to support the School Staff Coordinators, who have an important role in the successful involvement of the Intergeners in school</li> <li>• Finding simple ways of getting Key Performance Indicators so they are not a burden to anyone and ensure that all stakeholders will receive feedback at least once a year on the impact of the service.</li> <li>• Ensure the training and support services provided for Intergen coordinators are maintained</li> <li>• Keeping volunteers levels optimum</li> </ul>
16. <a href="#">Alive</a>	2019 Ongoing work that has been in	UK	Series on intergenerational projects that concentrate on creating relationships between older and younger people with a	Web site, with case studies no evaluation	<p>Outcomes are that engagement reduces social isolation.</p> <p>Issues with community engagement for older people in care homes:</p>

---

operatio  
n since

series of activities;  
Access all ages is about a  
series of arts based  
activities such as painting:  
paint pals, ipals which is  
about engaging older  
people with technology  
and younger people  
teaching and supporting  
them.

- Transport is an issue that comes up time and time again, even for those care homes who have access to their own minibus, because extra staff are often needed to act as drivers and assist residents out on any planned visit.
  - Supervision and volunteer support essential
-