CPC
CENTRE FOR POPULATION CHANGE

CONNECTING GENERATIONS

UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

The Poster, the Practice, and the Potential

Embracing the messiness of intergenerational relationships

Changing Intergenerational Relationships Project

University of Southampton

University of St Andrews

UNIVERSITY of STIRLING

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Resolution Foundation

LEVERHULME CENTRE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC SCIENCE

Examining the Intergenerational Perspective

Though intergenerational research draws on many disciplines, most research will start with a simple question: ‘what do *we* mean by intergenerational?’ The answer we choose will define our work, influencing every point in the process from applying for funding to sharing our findings.

It’s important to identify where these assumptions, and our drive to create neat, clearly defined, comparable insights can limit how we think about intergenerational practice, leading us to focus on:

- **Generational extremes** where the very young and very old come together
- **Curated interactions** where people from different generations are brought together for a specific activity
- **Intergenerational families** where we place our focus on specific family groups and ignore the communities around them

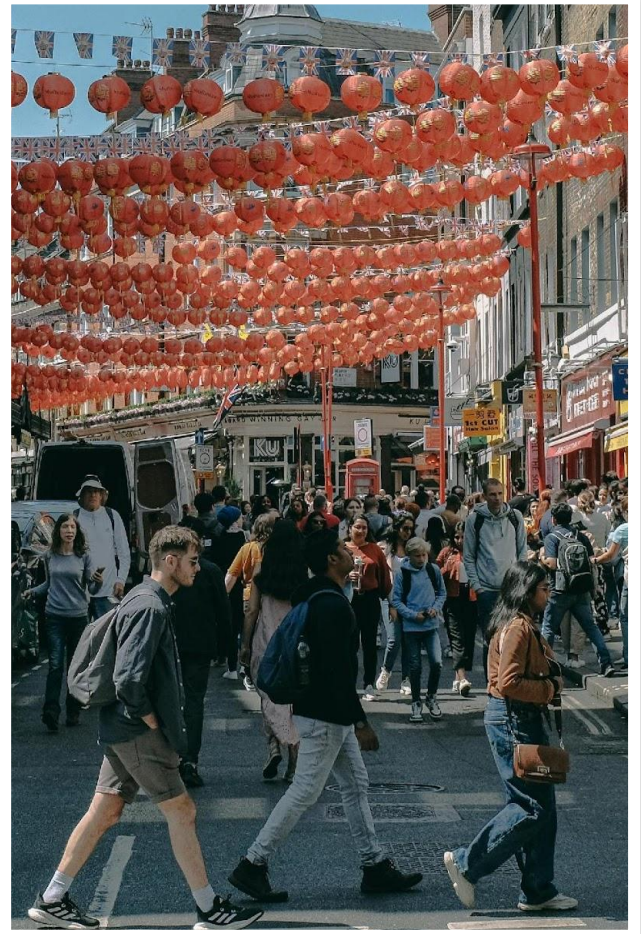
CIR Changing Intergenerational Relationships

Intergenerational Connections are Messy

Intergenerational life often thrives in the moments between and behind the ‘boxes’ we see, built on almost invisible practices where an older person might take in packages for their neighbour, or a community comes together to find a dog lost in the park.

Understanding the complex, fluid, and often contradictory intergenerational communities we live in forces us to ask different questions including…

- What interactions and connections do we miss when we focus on explicitly intergenerational spaces?
- What makes these connections work, and what disrupts them?
- Who has a seat at our intergenerational table, and who’s missing?
- How do wider forces shape and reshape our intergenerational connections over time?



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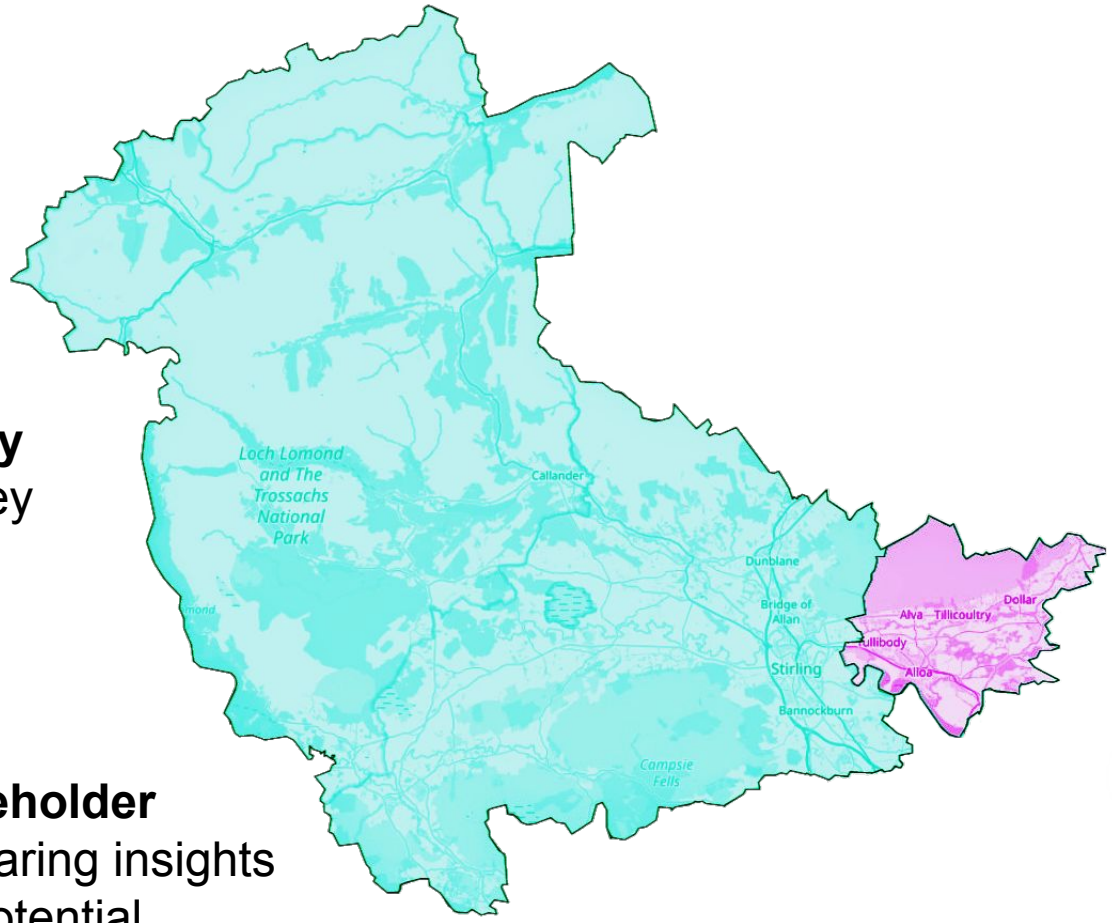
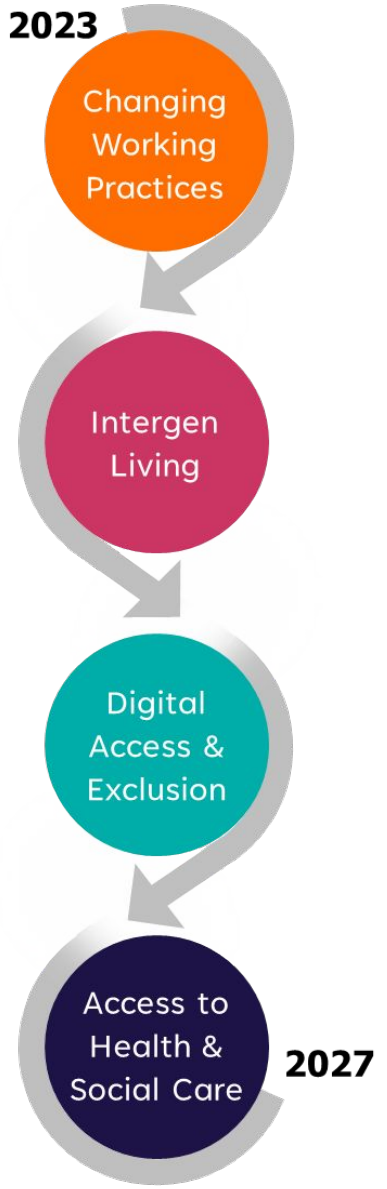
Exploring Changing Intergenerational Relationships in Place

Phase 1: **40 Life History Interviews** gathering insights from people in the region

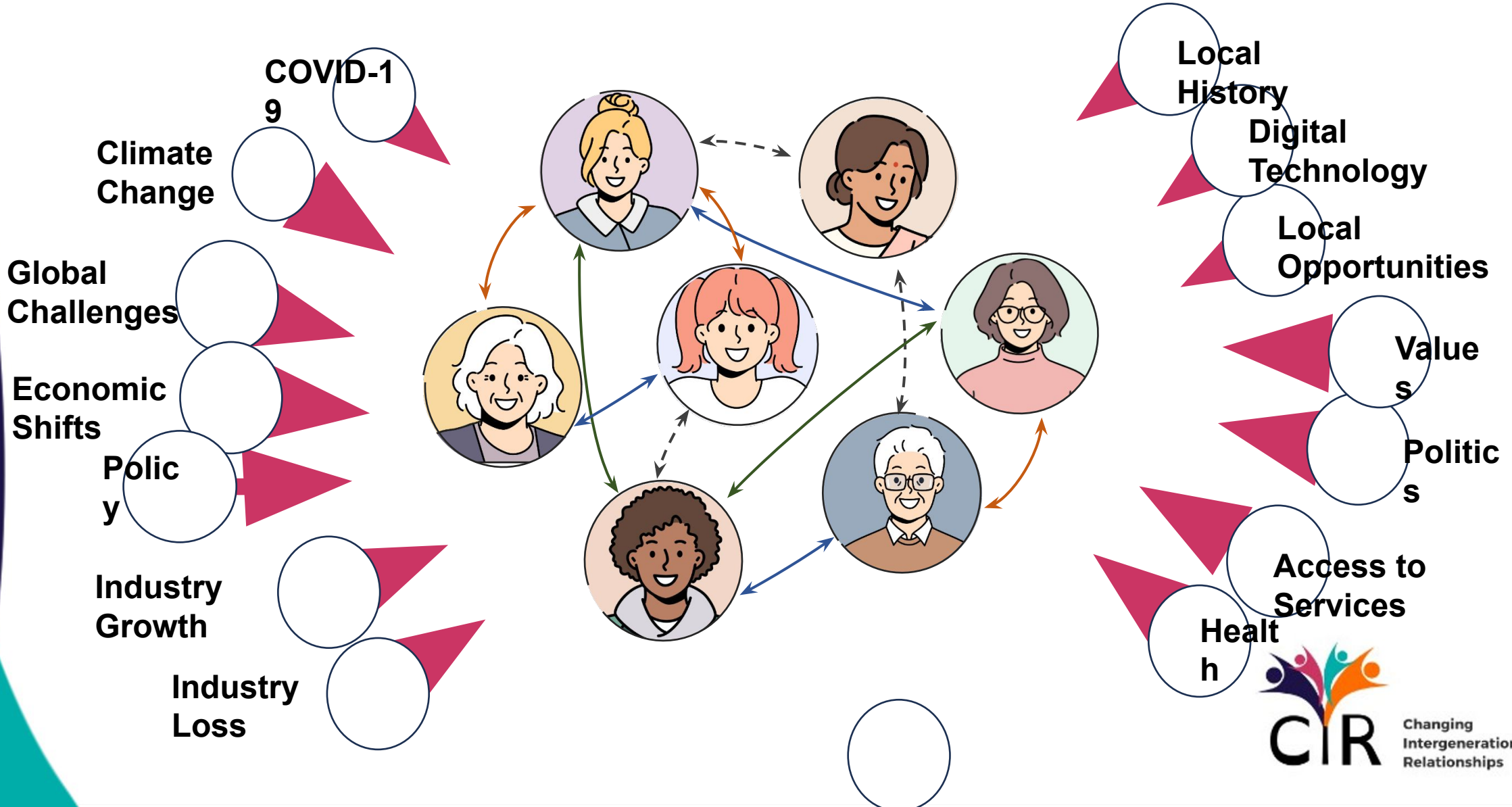
Phase 2: **10 Community Workshops** exploring key issues and identifying community goals

Phase 3: **5 Stakeholder Roundtables** sharing insights and identifying potential resources





Changing Intergenerational Relationships



CIR Changing Intergenerational Relationships

Early Insights from the CIR Project

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Our analysis reveals most generational tensions arise not from irreconcilable differences, but from people using different ‘maps’ to navigate the same changing terrain. Exploring these underlying factors can facilitate understanding both between generations and about generational divides.

Motivation & Work Ethic

Where participants often related rich intergenerational connections at work, but different perspectives around:

- The role work should play in their life
- What work-life balance should look like
- What rewards should come from working
- What success looked like

Support Around Work

Where the way participants discussed different approaches to health and disability at work in ways that highlighted different views on:

- Who could establish whether a need or problem was valid
- What made different actions or accommodations reasonable or unreasonable
- How they managed perceptions of others
- What they saw as fair or just

Thank You

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