



Between the Generations In Wales

Raising the Profile of
Intergenerational Practice

March 2007

For Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales



Foreword

Intergenerational Practice (IP) is an innovative response to the issues raised by the progressive ageing of the Welsh population, more than 28 per cent of which will be over the age of 60 by 2020. It is, therefore, a vital strand of the Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Older People in Wales, which aims to encourage a coordinated and effective response to this issue through collaboration between different community partners, such as the Welsh Assembly Government, local government and the voluntary and private sector. The strategy makes a specific commitment to developing intergenerational linkages in Wales and I was, therefore, delighted to approve the Beth Johnson Foundation for Assembly funding of £87,000 over three years to develop and implement a Welsh IP strategy. While IP is being developed strongly in a number of areas of the UK, I believe that this will be the first time that it has been linked to a national strategy.

The Cymru Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CCIP), through its work with the Beth Johnson Foundation, has already developed an impressive range of local IP approaches and projects – a sample of which are outlined in this booklet. Hard work has been rewarded with tangible progress and visible results: intergenerational work in Wales has already contributed to the breakdown of harmful stereotypes by providing a framework for the young and old to adopt an active role in helping themselves and their own communities, together. Both generations benefit greatly from such active community involvement. Older people are adopting a mentoring role, providing regular, supportive adult contact to younger people, who often find themselves lacking sufficient personal and academic guidance in today's society, while research shows that such contact provides significant benefits for the physical, emotional and mental health of the older people themselves. IP is a relatively new approach to current social problems and has tremendous potential. This booklet not only provides clear examples of best practice for others wishing to explore intergenerational possibilities but also highlights the ways in which this potential is actually being realised, here in Wales, today.

John Griffiths

Deputy Minister Health and Social Services

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The **Institute of Welsh Affairs** seeks to promote quality research and well-informed debate on social, economic, constitutional, environmental and cultural issues affecting Wales. An independent body, it is funded by a range of individuals and organisations. For more information about the institute, its publications or membership, please contact: IWA, 1 Museum Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BD. Tel 029 2066 6606 or e-mail wales@iwa.org.uk

The **Wales Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CCIP)** was established in May 2004. It is an initiative of the Beth Johnson Foundation, funded by the Wales Assembly Government, and administered and hosted by the University of Glamorgan. The Centre aims to support the development of Intergenerational Practice (IP) throughout Wales and sees intergenerational approaches as an effective tool in promoting sustainable community development and in reducing social exclusion. For more information about the centre please contact Angela Fish, CCIP, University of Glamorgan, Pontypridd, CF37 1DL. Tel 01443 482372. Email ccip@glam.ac.uk

Acknowledgment

We are grateful to Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales for the generous support they have given towards the publication of this report.

ISBN: 1 904 773 192

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Angela's interest in intergenerational work began almost ten years ago when her role as Community Education Manager at the University of Glamorgan together with teaching in the community and in schools led her to develop a project which is still running. Links with the Centre for IP at the Beth Johnson Foundation created the opportunity for engagement at policy level and in 2004 to the launch of the CCIP

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Introduction

Intergenerational Practice: Reconstructing the Community

For a number of years EU Cohesion Policy, the Lisbon Agenda and anti-age discrimination directives have reflected the increasingly urgent need for solutions to problems of demographic ageing and social exclusion throughout the European Union. Wales is no exception and is currently the only UK country to have formulated a specific response to the issue of ageing: the Strategy for Older People in Wales. At the other end of the generational scale, the National Assembly for Wales aims to tackle the social exclusion and disengagement of young people by “boosting the participation of children and young people across a range of dimensions in community life”.¹ However, significant barriers exist between such theoretical goals, however worthy, and their practical realisation.

With an estimated 28 per cent of the population likely to be over the age of sixty by 2020, it is vital, in the interests of Wales’ future prosperity, that older people be allowed to play as full and active a role as possible in all aspects of social, cultural and economic life, for as long as possible. The fragmentation of contemporary communities makes it all too easy for older people to become socially inactive, isolated and overly reliant on state and family support. Many of those actively seeking work find themselves prematurely excluded from the job market on the grounds of age or lack of transferable skills and appropriate training.

Young people encounter considerable obstacles, too. A disadvantaged background can force many into a vicious circle of negative expectations, under-achievement and a culture of state dependency. Large numbers leave education early with little or no qualifications or training, resulting in unemployment and social exclusion. There is a clear need to engage and mobilise these excluded groups. Wales cannot afford to waste such vast quantities of human capital.

As Gweneira Raw-Rees, Older People’s Strategy Co-ordinator for Ceredigion, suggests: “We should make greater use of older people’s knowledge and skills in schools. They could act as mentors to young people lacking support at home, or even enable schools

¹ The Learning Country. Introduction

to offer subjects to students that would not usually be available. ... This could give older people a new lease of life.”

Intergenerational Practice (IP) aims to provide a coherent and unified response to such issues of social exclusion and disengagement across the generations. The Cymru Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CCIP) defines IP as “purposeful, mutually beneficial activities that promote greater understanding and respect between generations and help to build more cohesive communities”. CCIP, was established as part of the Welsh intergenerational strategy, by the Beth Johnson Foundation in 2003 as part of the National Assembly commitment to the development of intergenerational links under the Strategy for Older People in Wales. IP is gradually spreading nation-wide, as agencies and organisations experiment with it as a new social policy instrument.

The broad principles of IP can be employed in response to a range of issues. The Write-On! Learning Through Life Project, based at Glamorgan University in Pontypridd, (Case Study 3) was initially designed to draw educationally marginalised groups back into a ‘purpose-built’ learning environment. Participants were provided with an opportunity to gain the transferable skills and knowledge required for further education and employment. In so doing, the project aimed to fulfil a broader aim: through learning together and helping each other, socially excluded individuals would be reintroduced into active community life and negative age-based stereotypes and prejudices would gradually fade away. Older participants would benefit from the younger participants’ knowledge of technology, for example, while the mentoring role of older participants would help to boost the communication skills and self-confidence of educationally disadvantaged younger people. On the other hand, the intergenerational projects run by MASE (the Music and Sound Experience) in Conwy and the Theatr Fforwm project in Ceredigion (Case Studies 1 & 2) aimed more generally to counteract a rise in crime among younger people and deterioration in intergenerational relations in the community.

Different aims correspond to different activities and mediums. The Write-On! Learning Through Life project was moderately prescriptive in its pilot year in terms of the nature of activity chosen. In order to promote uptake of learning opportunities the dual goals of the project were reflected by the two components of the activity: one session dedicated to ‘employability’ skills and one to the sharing and recording of life experiences as a group, putting theoretical knowledge gained during the first session, such as presentation and IT skills, to the test. MASE and Theatr Fforwm used drama and music activities to bring different groups in the community together. Theatr Fforwm used the

writing and performance of short plays by mixed-age groups to explore conflicts and tensions between older and younger people in the community and initiate discussions around the subject. As with the Write-On! Learning Through Life project, MASE intergenerational schemes have tended to focus on the process of sharing life experiences. The interaction and teamwork engaged and stimulated the older people while increasing the self-esteem and confidence of the younger people, who often had a history of academic, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Every project requires different generational groups to engage with one another and to work together on a shared project, with mutually beneficial results.

When evaluating the different intergenerational projects, the relative success of each one depends not only upon the extent to which an initiative has fulfilled its original objectives but also upon the lasting legacy that it leaves. If a project allows honest and genuine dialogue to take place between generational groups, for example, creating a more harmonious and cohesive community, that is undeniably a huge achievement, but how does the project ensure that this is still the case months, even years later? The durability and overall effectiveness of a project depend upon two key factors: the presence of a built-in follow-up strategy at the planning stage and the extent to which participants share a sense of ownership of the project.

With regard to the first factor, evidence shows that a shift in mind-set amongst both project organisers and, crucially, funding bodies is essential. The jump must be made from an isolated 'one-off' project mentality to an understanding that, if a project is to have a lasting impact, it must be planned as an ongoing initiative. It would seem that a general preference among funding bodies for 'one-off' projects is a significant barrier to project continuation. An example of successful, planned continuation is the Re-verb arts initiative run on a continuous basis for and by past participants in MASE projects.

When participants were able to influence the planning stages and the evolution of a project, their sense of project ownership was naturally greater than when projects were designed and then presented to participants as a *fait accompli*. Active participation in the design and development stages led to participants taking steps to continue a project independently beyond the official duration period, thus reinforcing and maintaining the progress made by the project itself. Two examples from the IWA/CCIP booklet illustrate this. The training element of the Write-On! Learning Through Life Project was largely pre-planned and prescriptive in the pilot year. Problems with retention during this phase were later attributed to the separation of the two generations during the training

component of the project and the training/practical split. It is important to point out that it is often a lack of flexibility on the part of funding bodies that inhibits project organisers' ability to consult properly with potential participants. However, this project has continued on a much more flexible basis in subsequent years, supported through the University of Glamorgan's intergenerational programme. Based on participant feedback, the aims have shifted to focus more on community relationships and combating stereotypes, with an emphasis on learning through doing rather than a formalised training programme.

This first example contrasts sharply with the Rap Drama project organised by MASE. Inclusion of the theatrical dimension of the project was driven entirely by the participants, indicating a high level of participant influence on the development of the project. A sense of cohesion has remained between participants after the project and this group is now pushing for the establishment of a community drama group. Clearly, since the principal aim of an intergenerational project is to encourage individuals from different generations to engage with and learn from one another, the formation of such a strong group rapport is the ultimate proof of success. Such striking results can only be gained through consultation.

As Erica Woods, Director of MASE, insists: "If someone comes to me and says "I want to do such-and-such with these groups", I say, "No, unless that comes from them, I'm not prepared to do that. I want to meet these people and find out what they want. How do they perceive their needs?""

Rapport development between participants is another subsidiary issue stemming from the need to establish a sense of project ownership amongst participants. MASE intergenerational projects are unique amongst the projects studied for the IP booklet in that a programme of social events are built into the project timetable before the actual project itself is due to take place. Examples include the World War II themed 'tea-dances' that preceded work on the War Years project (an intergenerational theatre project based on the idea of time-travelling back to the World War II era). Such events allowed the members of a group to get to know one another in a relaxed, informal setting before they began to work together on the project itself. An established group rapport is extremely useful later on. In other projects where such measures have not been taken, the generational groups can continue to operate separately and tensions can even develop – undermining the most fundamental goals of the project. For example, when organisers plunged straight in with just three rehearsal meetings leading up to the

Theatr Fforwm performances, tensions quickly became apparent between the two generational groups. Older participants were shocked and frustrated by the bad language and short attention span of the younger participants and even threatened to withdraw from the project altogether.

However, the future appears bright for IP. An impressive quantity of pioneering projects has already taken place across Wales, of which those selected for this IWA/CCIP handbook represent just a sample. It is hoped that the lessons learned by project coordinators so far will help to improve the quality of intergenerational work across the country by contributing to a growing knowledge base in this field and that case studies will provide examples of best practice to inspire and inform. IP is not based upon any new or revolutionary ideas. It merely aims to reverse the progressive fragmentation of communities that is a sign of our times. It achieves results in countless crosscutting policy areas by reinstating the vital community links that we once took for granted.

International and UK Perspectives

Alan Hatton-Yeo

Director, Beth Johnson Foundation and Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CIP)

This chapter is based on a previous paper given to the Committee for Social Cohesion of the European Council on October 13th 2005 by Alan Hatton-Yeo.

Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities that 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 young and old have to offer each other and those around them.

(Centre for Intergenerational Practice (2002))

The end of the twentieth century found a world that had become increasingly diverse and complex. Shifting trends in urbanisation, technology, industrialisation, health and social structures meant that many of the paradigms and belief systems that policies and cultural systems had been based upon had been, and continue to be, subject to tensions and realignment. One consequence of these changes has been that across the world, the need to maintain or develop social cohesion has become increasingly important.

The world is diverse and culturally rich and there can be no expectation that those ideas and initiatives linked to social policy will necessarily have a broad applicability. However, when UNESCO² had the foresight and prescience to bring together leading representatives from ten countries from around the world to discuss intergenerational practice and programmes, and the relevance of these to social policy, they could not have predicted the degree of resonance that would be achieved for all participants and, by implication, for the future development of intergenerational work around the globe.

² Hatton-Yeo, A. and Toshio Ohsako (Eds), (2000) UNESCO, Intergenerational Programmes: PublicPolicy And Research Implications: An International Perspective, Introduction (p1)

Although no commonality of experience could be assumed there were significant common trends that were identified:

- An increase in life expectancy and consequently increased numbers of older people. This demographic shift was apparent for all countries. According to the UN such a rapid and ubiquitous growth has not previously been seen in the history of civilisation.
- Changing economic and welfare patterns, with the consequent risk of older people being seen as either a burden or less valuable or respected than in previous generations.
- Changes and realignments in the structure of the family, often exacerbated by the need for mobility for individuals engaged in economic activity, which have actual or potential significant consequences for social policy.
- The promotion and development of the Life Long Learning movement.
- Changing relationships between the young and old often characterised by a lack of understanding of each other.
- A need for social policy to be rooted in engaging the whole community in a way that is both positive and recognises the mutuality of the relationships of different groups to one another.

In the UK over the last seven years there has been an increasing recognition of the need to look systematically at intergenerational relationships in their different dimensions. Factors that have contributed to this include:

- The impact of the changing demographic structure of our society and the recognition that the active engagement of older people has positive benefits both for their own health but also for the communities they live in.
- An increasing recognition that in many areas the young and old have become distanced from each other and this has been accompanied by a loss of respect and understanding which has had a negative impact on relationships between the two groups best illustrated by the increased fear of crime described by older people.
- The changing shape and structure of the family that has impacted on the assumed traditional support structures offered by family members and which necessitates a reappraisal of the role of grandparents in significant numbers of families. For instance, there is an increasing incidence of grandparents as prime carers and support needs to be developed to enable them to carry out this role.

- The increased emphasis on community development and regeneration mean that effective ways have to be found to ensure that the young and old are properly included in these processes as potential assets who can be part of solutions and not just seen in terms of problems and difficulties.
- The need to develop crosscutting approaches that are inter-sectoral and able to benefit a broader range of individuals and groups. By its nature intergenerational practice (IP) cuts across many of the traditional service boundaries and provides a mechanism for collaborative practice.

The generations have become progressively disconnected from each other at an individual, family and community level due to a number of circumstances that has meant that the natural relationship between them has been affected. These disconnections include smaller families, geographical distance between family members, divorce and single parent households, and different expectations of working women.

Alongside these changing family patterns has been the development of age-segregated activities and living arrangements that have further distanced the old and young from each other. This has been further exacerbated by the way that policies and services are normally developed around target groups or issues that are by their nature disjointed and discriminatory. The aim of intergenerational work is to find ways to develop and strengthen relationships and consequently become a powerful agent of social change with benefits to the whole of society, and the middle generation has an important part to play in enabling and supporting this intergenerational exchange to take place.

The intergenerational relationship is significant for a number of reasons:

- It recognises that everyone has the capacity as human beings to learn and grow throughout the whole of the life span.
- It breaks down the structures in society which perpetuate the fact that chronological age, at both ends of the life span, often excludes people from the mainstream activities; in addition the young and old are not seen as contributing to the economy and are, therefore, commonly described in terms such as burden.
- It promotes a sense of social responsibility as a citizen because older people are able to support and nurture the young, while the young recognise that older people can become frail and need care as they age.
- This social responsibility promotes communities that support and value all of their members in a culture of respect and mutual understanding.

- It sees the young and old as active, participating members of their community contributing to the overall well being of those around them and creating more cohesive and healthy communities.
- It acknowledges every human being's need for reciprocity, giving back something to others, at a time when the opportunities for this to occur within families have diminished.
- It demonstrates the mutual benefit that each group gains from the exchange and breaks down the barriers of perceived power between them.
- It creates a synergy that strengthens and supports the young and old and so enables them to make changes that benefit everyone.

There has been historically, within the UK, an established tradition of the young learning from the old in their role as respected elders or through structures such as apprenticeship schemes and trade guilds. This is now much reduced. Within the UK there is a strong recognition of the potential for the old to benefit the young and of the need to rebuild bridges and contact between the generations. However, the conceptual understanding of why this is important, how it operates and what it can achieve is still in its infancy.

This development of understanding has been fortunate in being fuelled by work elsewhere in the world, particularly the US and Europe. In the last seven years a considerable amount of intergenerational activity has been undertaken and a feature of this is that project organisers are now attempting to evaluate and disseminate their findings to a wider audience. However, university research departments are only just beginning to recognise this as a field of study and one that does not tidily fit to the traditional sectoral approach of both universities and government.

Behind the development of many intergenerational programmes has been an increasing recognition of the need to develop volunteering opportunities for older people, both to strengthen current social provision and in recognition of the value to older people and their communities of their being engaged in life-long learning processes and of the resource that they represent.

A wide range of programmes now exists within the UK. Bringing young and old together does not, however, automatically bring positive and beneficial exchange. If not properly facilitated and planned, activities may confirm or exacerbate prejudice.³

There are many indicators that the government and society in general are increasingly receptive to an intergenerational approach that seeks to be an agent of social change.

Examples include:

- Citizenship is being introduced into the school curriculum to develop social responsibility in young people.
- Social exclusion is being addressed and inclusion promoted with resources being directed towards these objectives.
- Law and order reforms demonstrate the need for people to live in safer communities.
- A changing approach to governance is attempting to bring lay people into the decision-making processes of organisations in order to influence and shape the directions of services to best fit their needs.
- Increased emphasis on planning for and responding to the demographic changes resulting from greater numbers of older people and fewer young people, as illustrated by the Strategy for Older People in Wales.
- The recognition that the quality of the communities that people live in and the nature of the status and respect they enjoy within those communities have an important impact on the overall health and well-being of the individual and of societies

This has led to an increasing recognition of the importance of looking at the issues of growing older through an intergenerational focus, for the following reasons:

- Older people are recognised as having a valuable role in society serving youth in a way that the middle generation cannot.
- They can receive service from youth that recognises the responsibility of others to support elders when the process of ageing requires care.
- It fills the need of the older generation to nurture the young and to pass on their experience of life to the benefit of future generations.

³ Hatton-Yeo, A. and Toshio Ohsako (Eds), (op.cit) p54

- It develops an understanding among the generations of what it is like to be old and seeks to dispel the myths and fears.
- It leads to greater respect for older people and recognises their contribution in striving towards a better society.
- It removes the fears and prejudices that older people have of the young and builds on a safer and more civilised society for all.
- It allows ageing to be recognised as a continuum throughout life with different phases and transitions that are all of equal value.

1993 was the European Year of Solidarity between the Generations and in Europe there was an increasing recognition that a distance had been growing between young and old people. At the same time the so called demographic time bomb was receiving much interest in the media, with increasing concern about people living longer and whether society would be able to afford this economically. Some writers began speculating about a generational war, with the young and old competing for resources. It was this European Year that awakened the Beth Johnson Foundation's interest in intergenerational practice. Sadly, as with many such initiatives, the initial interest raised by the 1993 activities soon dwindled, but it left behind a number of organisations that began to consider the matter in more detail over the following years.

Among these was the Beth Johnson Foundation, and in 1997 it launched three small-scale projects to begin to understand intergenerational practice and what its potential was. During this period the foundation became increasingly involved in international intergenerational work and this helped to shape its thinking and understanding. The Foundation became the UK founder member of the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes (ICIP), which the Foundation still hosts, and co-published in 2000 the previously mentioned joint study with UNESCO of International Intergenerational Practice that looked at intergenerational practice in ten very different countries.

As the Foundation continued to develop its own evaluated practical projects and to work with other partners across the UK, it became increasingly convinced that for IP to be properly developed it needed to have a centre of expertise that could act as an advocacy organisation, gather evidence, develop the conceptual understanding of IP, produce policy papers, organise training and consultancy support and provide the focal point for future development. It was out of this belief that funding was obtained from the (then) National Lottery and the Lloyds TSB Foundations for England and Wales to establish the

UK Centre for Intergenerational Practice in April 2001. In the context of this chapter it is important to understand that the United Kingdom now has devolved administration and so it is necessary to discuss the UK as being made up of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland all of which have differing degrees of autonomy and decision making powers.

Developments and Context in Wales

Angela Fish

Director, Wales Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CCIP)

From the beginning, the Centre for Intergenerational Practice sought to influence key policy makers. In Scotland, a seminar was given for key civil servants that led to their supporting a national conference and to including intergenerational practice as a necessity in key policy documents. In Northern Ireland, a very strong Intergenerational Educational Strategy Group was established that has had a strong influence on local policy, particularly in respect of community cohesion and citizenship. In England, the government has funded a number of intergenerational programmes and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has undertaken a research study into intergenerational approaches to community cohesion.

However, the most powerful example of Government involvement in Intergenerational Practice has been in Wales. Following comprehensive consultation, the Welsh Assembly published its Strategy for Older People in 2003 and this set out a comprehensive framework to address the issues of an ageing society over a ten-year period.

Its aims were:

1. Tackle discrimination, promote positive images of ageing and give older people a stronger voice in society.
2. Promote and develop older people's capacity to continue to work and to learn for as long as they want, and to make an active contribution in retirement.
3. Promote and improve the health and well-being of older people
4. Promote the provision of high quality services and support which enable older people to live as independently as possible
5. Implement the strategy with support funding to ensure that it is a catalyst for change and innovation across all sectors.

In this strategy the Welsh Assembly recognised the importance of the communities, relationships and environment that older people lived in, to their own and to Society's health.

As a consequence, WAG commissioned the Beth Johnson Foundation to carry out a feasibility study for the development of an intergenerational strategy for Wales. One of the key starting points for this was a conference, facilitated by the University of Glamorgan to: engage with people across Wales, and to:

- bring together key policy makers, practitioners and researchers to establish a baseline understanding of IP
- identify existing practice in Wales
- explore the potential of the approach to be integrated into existing priorities to enable the proposal to draw on other funds, such as those for regeneration and community development
- enable practical projects to be initiated.

In the workshops there was strong, general encouragement for the intention to support the development of intergenerational work. Delegates acknowledged the potential to develop opportunities for the young and old and to build more cohesive communities. However, they stressed the need to make sure that terms used, such as intergenerational, had clear definitions, and that this conference was to be seen as the starting point for discussion and consultation towards developing a strategic approach towards intergenerational work in Wales.

It was also recognised that although there was already a great deal of intergenerational activity being undertaken, in many cases it might not be labelled by the practitioners and participants as intergenerational work. It was agreed that, as a starting point, it was essential to undertake an audit of activity in Wales. It was also stressed that developments should build on existing/current practice rather than be seen as something completely new. CCIP is currently compiling a data-base of intergenerational projects across Wales and chapter two presents three of the completed case studies. Additional information can be found in the new, UK Intergenerational Practice Guide, 'Intergenerational Programmes – An Introduction and Examples of Practice', which contains a wide range of case studies provided by organisations from across the UK.⁴

⁴ The guide can be downloaded from the Centre for Intergenerational Practice website at www.centreforip.org.uk

Other feedback highlighted the need for a suitable vehicle for the dissemination of information and sharing of good practice, and engagement with young and old people to include their views and priorities, and it was agreed that the establishment of a Centre for IP for, and in, Wales would provide the appropriate means to meet these needs.

Following the inaugural conference, the Foundation carried out a scoping exercise to establish the needs and requirements for a Welsh Centre for Intergenerational Practice, as an integral part of the strategy for IP for Wales, and invited Higher Education Institutes across Wales to declare any interest in hosting the Centre. WAG agreed funding to the Beth Johnson Foundation to develop a Welsh Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CCIP) and this was launched at the University of Glamorgan in April 2004. An advisory group was established and the initial meeting was held in July 2004, followed by the formal launch of CCIP at the conferences, *Best Practice & Future Challenges*, in South and North Wales in September 2004.

The Centre sees intergenerational approaches as an effective tool in promoting sustainable community development and in reducing social exclusion, and its goals⁵ are to:

- support and promote IP across Wales through the running of an annual conference
- produce three newsletters a year
- facilitate free, and in-house training
- provide a support framework for those involved (or potentially involved) in intergenerational work
- gather evidence of the benefits of intergenerational practice
- disseminate the outcomes of projects across Wales
- support local practitioner networks to share experience and expertise
- foster UK and international links
- provide commentary on the potential of IP to address key policy areas

The importance of building a documented knowledge base on IP in Wales was also foregrounded at the 2003 conference. Consequently, work is in progress to develop intergenerational modules in conjunction with academic programmes. For example, in collaboration with the University of Wales, Lampeter, accredited modules on

⁵ Details of CCIP training, conference reports and newsletters can be downloaded from the website: www.ccip.org.uk

intergenerational work have been developed as part of their distance learning programme, and will be accessible in 2007.

Lampeter also organised a residential conference in September 2004, specifically designed to bring older and younger people together to develop their own and shared agenda, and to develop their understanding of each other. The conference was successful in achieving its aims of highlighting:

- perceptions of different ages learning together
- individual fears about getting older
- how generations can work together to improve local communities

To stimulate discussion further, and to try to identify the similarities and differences between generations in Wales, the theme of the 2005 CCIP conferences was, *Try to See It My Way: Young People's Perspective of the 21st Century*, and details of the proceedings can be found in Chapter Four.

CCIP is currently providing a range of courses for practitioners and managers, based on identified needs from conference delegates and through the Network of Associates. Topics covered are:

- Introduction to Intergenerational Practice
- Project Planning and Management
- Preparing Successful Funding Applications
- Facilitation
- Evaluation

The Centre plans to expand/update these over the next few years as we believe that training is the key to current and future developments and will play a significant role in the promotion and support of IP in Wales.

Intergenerational Practice has not only captured the imaginations of practitioners and academics but has also succeeded in capturing the political imaginations of Welsh Assembly ministers and officials. Alan Burge, Head of the Assembly's Community First Unit, speaking at the inaugural conference of CCIP, stated that Intergenerational Practice had a strong contribution to make to the Communities First projects in Wales and commended the work that had already been done in this area.

The establishment of CCIP and the work carried out by those active within this field may also help in providing a positive lens through which to view current demographic changes in Wales. Whilst there has been a considerable focus on the potential problems that can arise from an ageing population, Intergenerational Practice suggests, to the contrary, that through its engagement with younger generations, an ageing population can actually produce outcomes that can be of great benefit to the development of an active community ethos in Wales.

This is not to say however, that IP will provide a 'golden' solution. As delegates at the CCIP conferences identified, whilst there is much good practice to celebrate in Wales, significant barriers remain. For example, the long-standing issue of sustainability and the short-term nature of much current funding which can often bring about an unnecessarily early end to many valuable projects. Work also remains to be done in breaking down long-established negative stereotypes held about both the old and young in society. Time scales and resources must also be further adapted to support the work of these projects adequately if Wales is to reap the long-term benefits.

However, the development of CCIP puts Wales in a strong position to address these issues. For, as with most social practices, it is only through the creation of a supportive and progressive environment where innovation flourishes that the work of Intergenerational Practice will thrive in Wales.

Case Studies

The Music and Sound Experience (MASE) Intergenerational Projects

Grace Bennett, Institute of Welsh Affairs

Organisation	The Music and Sound Experience (MASE)
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1. Introduction

1.1 Aims and Objectives

MASE is an independent, charitable organisation that aims to improve young people's lives and unite communities through music, sound and performance. These activities are designed to:

- Increase social inclusion
- Increase active interest in live music
- Improve social skills
- Improve self-worth
- Increase potential for self-help through popular music
- Enable a cross-section of the community to work towards a common goal

As an organisation, MASE endeavours to

- Work in partnership with the appropriate groups, organisations, agencies and individuals (see below)
- Provide access to well-equipped facilities and quality resources
- Provide safe, affordable and accessible projects, events, activities and resources
- Provide appropriate training and information to facilitators and participants

MASE works with the following social partners:

- 'Alternative Education'
- Social Services
- Youth Agencies
- 'Help the Aged'
- Police
- Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP)
- Housing Associations
- Youth Offenders Teams (YOTs)
- National Health Trust – Arts in Health
- Young Carers groups
- Local communities across north Wales

MASE works peripatetically across north Wales and also has two community music centres which have project/rehearsal/performance space plus first class recording and broadcasting facilities.

1.2 A response to a troubled intergenerational relationship

Several of the intergenerational projects run by MASE came about as a response to high levels of youth crime and youth disengagement. They have also, in many instances, sought to address the troubled relationship between young people and the rest of the community, in particular, its older members. An example is Llanrwst in the Conwy valley: in this instance, MASE was invited to participate in public meetings organised by the police, as an intergenerational actor. This is a fairly typical scenario created by MASE's proven ability to work constructively and effectively with both the younger and older sections of the community and to encourage dialogue.

1.3 Why was it intergenerational?

MASE intergenerational projects aim to include the whole community and to promote empathy and understanding between the generations through purposeful, mutually beneficial activities, using the mediums of music, sound and performance.

2. MASE Intergenerational Projects

2.1 Project Descriptions

For the Life As A Teen – The War Years project in Llanrwst, MASE successfully applied for funding that became available through Home Front Recall to celebrate the end of the Second World War. Further funding was generated from the Conwy Strategy for Older People (managed by Conwy County Council). MASE used this project as an opportunity to bring together younger and older people in the community. The project was designed to explore how wartime experiences in Llanrwst were specific to that town, building a bridge between the generations through a shared connection with Llanrwst itself. As with a number of villages and small towns, the community is highly divided and entrenched prejudices exist with regard to different age groups and different areas.

A mixed-age group was gathered together. The young people were encouraged to think of their own questions for older people about life during the Second World War and rehearsal question and answer sessions were held with the young people and the facilitators, ahead of visits to a residential home to speak directly to the older people. As an icebreaker, MASE organised a series of 'tea-dances'. The venue was decorated with flags and bunting and the younger people helped to prepare a tea and serve refreshments. After the tea, there was a sing-along and dance session, with the younger people joining with the older generation in singing various wartime songs and dancing with them. Video footage was taken of the events.

Selected groups of young people carried out informal interviews and the group set about writing a musical on the theme of Life as a Teen during the War Years. The musical itself was based around the idea of 'time-travelling': a teenage girl from present day Llanrwst was transported back in time by an older participant to see what it would have been like to be a teenager in Llanrwst at the time of the Second World War. She travelled back three times – at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the war.

Another intergenerational project developed and carried out by MASE was a 'rap drama', Teula Tales, which illustrated the issues being addressed by Conwy County's Healthy Conwy Strategy. The project involved the whole community in a Communities First area. MASE worked with a mixed-age, cross-community group to develop a rap theatre performance. This launched the strategy and was performed live in front of an audience.

Other broadly intergenerational projects run or to be run by MASE include International Days, the Penmaenmawr Theatre Project (in addition to plans for a community radio station to be based in the new community music centre in Penmaenmawr) and Impact, a project that will involve producing DVDs showing how certain types of behaviour affect families and other sections of the community. Representatives from the entire community will be interviewed about specific issues and scenarios, such as living with drug and alcohol abuse and addiction, and the impact of a child going into care. It is hoped that this project will encourage empathy between different sections of the community, encourage more responsible behaviour and, at the same time, greater understanding of difficult family and social situations.

2.2 Outcomes

During the tea-dance stage of the War Years project, it became clear to the organisers that there were already huge benefits for both age-groups: the young people gained in confidence and self-esteem when they saw that they could work together to produce something so positive and change the lives of some other members of their community even if in just a small way. The older people very much enjoyed the change of scenery and benefited hugely from the mental stimulation brought about by interaction with the other participants and through engagement with the activities that had been laid on. The Rap Drama project left a lasting legacy in the form of a community drama group that is still in existence and looking to establish itself further.

2.3 Successes

In the case of the War Years project, the series of tea dances held before the interviews were particularly effective as an ice-breaking exercise. They allowed a rapport to develop between the younger people and the older people and both parties felt less threatened and intimidated when the interviews took place as they had already had an opportunity to get to know one another in a relaxed setting. Regarding the actual production itself, the time-travelling element encouraged empathy and understanding between the two generations, removing the generational barrier to a certain extent.

The War Years project made a significant contribution to breaking down stereotypes and negative preconceived ideas that existed between the different generations. Through the process of sharing memories and experiences, the younger people gained an insight into

the lives of the older generation and enabled the much older generation – those who had lived in Llanrwst during the war years – to see the younger people as “human beings” and helped to counteract the fear and suspicion of groups of teenagers shared by many of the older people.

The Rap Drama project united the community as all participants contributed, actively participated and, most importantly, enjoyed the activity. Age became a secondary issue as all participants were united by their common goal. The success of the ‘Rap Drama’ project is clear from the participants’ ongoing enthusiasm for follow-up projects. Although no follow-up project has, as yet, been established, participants are constantly requesting assistance from MASE to enable them to set up their own community drama group. The fact that the group cohesion and motivation has remained reflects the success of this project in uniting people from diverse sections of the community.

2.4 Difficulties Encountered

Unfortunately, the initial sources of funding will not cover the continuation of the tea-dance initiative that formed such a successful part of the War Years project, yet, the organisers feel that continuing the initiative is vital to reinforcing its benefits for the community. A lack of awareness among funding groups and organisations of the importance of continuation of such community projects and of concrete follow-up strategies creates difficulties for intergenerational project organisers. The focus of funding bodies is invariably on isolated, ‘one-off’ projects rather than sustained, ongoing initiatives.

There were some difficulties organising meetings and rehearsals with the whole group in one place at one time for the ‘rap drama’ project. This probably made the project more expensive in terms of resources than it needed to have been. Additionally, owing to the changing dynamics of the group and the enthusiastic ownership of the project by the group, the script and performers were constantly changed right up until the day of the performance.

2.5 What has changed as a result of the project?

As a result of the War Years project, older people were able to leave the residential homes, where they had become a little isolated from the rest of the community, and benefit from interaction with younger people. The young people could, in turn, learn

from the experiences of the older people and gain self-confidence and self-esteem from having produced something so positive. The project has helped to break down negative and inaccurate preconceived ideas that the different generations previously harboured with regard to one another.

Through the Rap project the community spirit was re-inforced and the community took great pride in its achievement and gained greater self-confidence and esteem. It was a very positive all-inclusive experience for all.

2.6 Conclusions

MASE feels that the success of all of its intergenerational projects has depended very much on its willingness (and the willingness of their partners) to consult and to listen to the views of the people involved. MASE has learnt that each project must be tailor-made to the needs of the participants, that there must be a sense of ownership of a project among the participants and that organisers must put preconceived ideas aside.

MASE also emphasises the importance of having a concrete follow-up strategy for every project that begins (e.g. Re-verb, which is open to all past participants in MASE projects). Participants often feel frustration when a project is working well and then suddenly terminates due to an inadequate follow-up strategy or, more often, lack of ready funding. However effective a project or initiative is short term, without continuation it cannot accrue long term benefits. A long-term perspective is essential.

2.7 The Way Forward

MASE is hoping to continue with the tea dances in the future – as a project in its own right, as they worked so well. Funding will, however, need to be secured, if this plan is to materialise. The finishing touches are currently being added to the new Community Music Centre in Penmaenmawr, which will provide the base for the Community Radio project, as well as an affordable and accessible venue for community music events: it is even equipped with its own recording studio. It is anticipated that the new radio station will be run by a cross-section of the community and that this initiative will not only encourage a sense of community cohesion but also create links between the Quarry Villages of Conwy County – Penmaenmawr, Dwygyfylchi and Llanfairfechan.

3. Resource Materials

Video footage

Interviews

MASE project documentation.

Intergenerational 'Theatr Fforwm', Ceredigion

Grace Bennett, Institute of Welsh Affairs

Gweneira Raw-Rees, Age Concern Ceredigion

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Policy Setting

The Ceredigion Strategy for Older People (managed by Ceredigion County Council) aims to encourage initiatives that bring the generations together within their communities for their mutual benefit. This is in accordance with Objective 4: Valuing Older People in the Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy for Older People in Wales: "To develop approaches in Wales that will promote the image of older people and ensure greater understanding and respect between the generations".

The aim of the Ceredigion Intergenerational Theatr Fforwm project is to produce theatre presentations which highlight the real issues and identify the real needs of younger and older people within the community with the intention that discussions will lead to the development of actions to meet those needs.

1.2 Youth disengagement and an elderly population living in fear: a coordinated response.

Penparcau is a Communities First area with some difficulties in terms of community safety, crime (amongst the younger population) and intergenerational relations in general. The youth centre was closed, due to vandalism, while recent changes in the

road layout have created new potential sources of tension. For example, a new pedestrian tunnel leading to the park area has inadvertently created a potential hotspot for crime and certainly, from an older person's perspective, has generated fear, owing to the perceived increased risk of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour among younger people. It was felt that Age Concern's Theatr Fforwm activity could be used effectively to initiate discussion between the older and younger residents in the area in an effort to help the different sections of the community to live more harmoniously together and to contribute to the well being of the community as a whole.

1.3 Intergenerational Aspect

Theatr Fforwm is a mechanism designed to initiate honest and genuine dialogue between the generations. Rehearsals, performances and discussions bring the generations together to work in partnership and to achieve mutual understanding and respect. Funding came from both the Strategy for Older People and Communities First, reflecting the two-fold goal of the project: to bring about constructive and mutually beneficial interaction between the disengaged younger population and a vulnerable and isolated older population, feeling under constant threat from the former.

2 Theatr Fforwm Ceredigion

2.1 The Project

Ceredigion's intergenerational activity builds on the existing Theatr Fforwm Ceredigion initiative that has been successfully run by Age Concern Ceredigion for older people. The Ceredigion Strategy for Older People provided financial support to Age Concern for the development and capacity building of Theatr Fforwm Ceredigion (£14,000 in 2004/05 and £8,000 in 2005/06). A partnership between Age Concern and Communities First in the Penparcau area was initiated and financial support (£2,000 for 2004/05) provided to Age Concern to develop intergenerational theatre activity. The Strategy for Older People co-ordinator sought formal partnerships, in this case as a means of utilising Communities First financial resources to support the initiative, Theatr Fforwm. Such partnerships were created with a view to initiating other projects along the same lines.

A partnership between Age Concern, Communities First and the Local Authority (Strategy for Older People and the Youth Offending Team (YOT)) was established. The financial support provided by Communities First paid for an intergenerational training

day in the South Aberystwyth Communities First area in April 2005, which produced two new actors and three facilitators. This was followed by a performance in August 2005, after three rehearsal meetings. Facilitated by Ceredigion's Strategy for Older People co-ordinator, two volunteers from Age Concern and five young members of the YOT Preventative Activity project presented genuine scenarios, based on incidents that had actually taken place in the area. The audience consisted of approximately 45 older and younger people from the Penparcau area in addition to Age Concern, YOT and Communities First personnel. The performances were followed by an in-depth discussion during which the facilitator asked the audience a series of questions designed to stimulate discussion.

The performance consisted of two scenes:

Scene 1: Distressed Old Ladies

This is written from the perspective of older people, where two 'old' ladies are enjoying a cup of tea at home. They are disturbed by a group of young people playing football outside. The children damage the flowerbed and a difficult situation arises where insults are thrown at the 'old' ladies, as they tell the children to leave them in peace.

Scene 2: Excluded Youngsters

This is written from the perspective of young people, a group of 'youngsters' who are portrayed as having nowhere to go to socialise. They get pushed from the bus shelter to the chip shop, from the chip shop to the local grocery store and finally to a friend's house.

2.2 Outcomes

As a result, a lively discussion took place, involving both age groups as well as the representatives from the various organisations involved. Issues were portrayed from the perspective of both the younger and older participants. In the first scene, the audience saw how older people perceive younger people, their fear of crime and their vulnerability, younger people's disregard for the needs of older people for peace and quiet and an apparent lack of respect among younger people towards older people and their property – often reflected in language use. In the second scene, the audience saw how the social needs of younger people often failed to be met, older people's disregard for the feelings and needs of young people and the general lack of respect for young

people that exists in the community. Such issues were openly discussed in an atmosphere of security and mutual respect.

2.3 Successes

The presence of the support workers, the strategy co-ordinator and Age Concern officers proved to be invaluable during the preparatory stages of the project. When tensions arose between the different age groups, they were quickly resolved thanks to honest, 'persuasive' dialogue, mediation and open discussion. The performance itself was well attended - by around 50 people from within the community. It provided a forum for the exchange of views between and within generations in a controlled environment. The honest and genuine dialogue that took place between the participants and the audience was perhaps the greatest success of the project. The amateur theatre sketches provided an unthreatening medium for communication and proved to be highly inclusive: indeed, it is significant that everyone participated in these discussions. Young people, who would not normally be given the chance to voice their views, were able to speak openly and used this opportunity to draw attention to the need for more trained youth workers. The discussion session following the performance allowed a variety of ideas for future intergenerational activity to be floated as well as highlighting various solutions to ongoing social problems.

2.4 Difficulties encountered

Three rehearsal meetings had been held before the performance in August 2005; these meetings proved to be problematic in terms of the relationship between the older and younger people involved. The older people were unhappy with the bad language being used by the younger people and by their short attention span and at one point even threatened to withdraw from the activity. There were also difficulties within the young peoples' group.

2.5 What has changed as a result of the project?

Among those directly involved in the project, preconceptions about the attitudes and outlooks of particular generations were turned on their heads: the mixed-generation audience felt more sympathetic towards the children in the first scene, even though this scene had been designed to encourage sympathy with the older people. While much

work remains to be done, bridges have been built: older people voiced their support for young people while the young people expressed their views highly effectively through the medium of drama. During the rehearsal process, and in the final performance, genuine understanding, empathy and relationship development had replaced some very strong negative perceptions of young people, held by some of the older people in particular. An initially negative and almost hostile atmosphere was replaced by a much more positive one, shown by participants' eagerness to continue with intergenerational theatre work in the community and by their contribution of ideas with regard to future activities.

2.6 Conclusions

The voiced need for qualified youth workers fully supported and lent momentum to the Communities First (Penparcau) bid for funding to employ a full-time youth worker. Dialogue highlighted certain changes that needed to be made in order to resolve ongoing problems in the community: it came to light, for instance, that a large amount of 'anti-social' and disruptive behaviour among young people stems from the lack of a safe recreation area and accessible after-school activities for young people without transport or parental support. A consensus was also established around the need for mutual respect and understanding between the generations. Finally, discussions highlighted the need for a community centre and for regular, organised inter-generational activity as a means of undermining negative and often inaccurate stereotypes. The group welcomed the idea of an inter-generational 'forum' and possibilities for educational activities involving both younger and older people were discussed.

2.7 The Way Forward

The intergenerational theatre project dealt with a need for improving communication between the generations and had positive results. The project coordinators were very pleased with the organisation, development and results of the project. It was decided that the project would be carried out in the same way in the future, given that it had worked so effectively. Indeed, the organisers are interested in expanding this project to include residents in other areas of the county.

Resource Materials:

Scenario scripts

Discussion responses

Amateur video coverage

Interview with Gweneira Raw-Rees.

The Write-On! Learning Through Life Project

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1 Background

1.1 Uniting the Community through Education

The aim of this project was consistent with the University of Glamorgan's strategic goals, notably "to advance, within the wider international higher education context, the economic, social and cultural priorities of Wales", ⁶ and also fulfilled the commitment listed in its mission statement to "serve the community of Wales". ⁷ The objectives and strategic goals of the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CeLL), established in 1999, built on these broader principles, emphasising the need "specifically to target people, who for various reasons may have been marginalised from the university sector", such as:

- young people in full-time education, lacking the confidence to progress to post-16 study
- educationally-disadvantaged school-leavers
- older, community-based learners

These combined goals provided a basic remit for the Write-On! Learning Through Life Project, which aimed to:

⁶ University of Glamorgan Strategic Plan 2001-2005

⁷ University of Glamorgan Widening Access Strategy for 2001-2005

- improve inter-generation communication
- improve community cohesion
- counteract negative stereotyping regarding 'other' generations through a process of researching and recording common life experiences
- inculcate a culture of lifelong learning

1.2 A strategy tailored to the needs of South Wales' communities

The Write on! Project aimed to respond to specific problems stemming from social, economic and demographic change in South Wales, in order to increase uptake of learning opportunities by local people of all ages. ⁸ Areas of particular difficulty included:

- a low percentage of the adult population engaged in learning activities
- significant barriers to accessing learning for many disadvantaged groups
- high levels of social alienation amongst young males ⁹
- a large number of Third Age learners with the potential to make an active contribution to their local communities and yet lacking real opportunities to do so

In the development of the project, specific barriers to participation were identified, with regard to the target groups. For younger people, these included:

- a cycle of low or negative expectations resulting in under achievement
- a culture of dependency – many young people are, or expect to be, third generation unemployed in their families

The project rationale was consistent with the Welsh Assembly's view that "none of these problems will be overcome without the closest collaboration between schools together with further and higher education, training providers and employers".¹⁰

⁸ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2000), prepared by the Index Team, Oxford University

⁹ Newidiem (2000), An Economic Analysis of Rhondda Cynon Taff (prepared for RCT Borough Council)

¹⁰ Welsh Assembly Government (2000), The Learning Country, pt 81

Older people also faced specific barriers when attempting to access support to proceed to further education, take up employment opportunities or make an active contribution to their local communities. Such barriers included:

- age
- negative educational/employment experiences
- finance
- location and timing
- forced or voluntary redundancy leading to negative perception of self-worth, leading into the cycle of dependency
- industry-specific training combined with an inability to maximise the potential of transferable skills
- reluctance to access new/further education or training

The benefits of such a project for the ageing population of Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) – the location for most of the project activity – are two-fold: not only does the Write-On! Project offer opportunities for the integration of older people within their communities but, as the Carnegie Research Project has shown, mentally stimulating activity can maintain health in the Third Age Group and reduce dependency on Social Services.¹¹

Write-On!'s development took these issues into account and sought to engage schools and individuals from local communities in a collaborative project. Recognition of the importance and relevance of personal experiences was key, particularly with regard to the older target groups, as well as their contribution to the regeneration of their communities and better intergenerational relations. Overall, Write-On! constituted a coherent, intergenerational response to barriers faced by both older and younger people to education, employment and participation in community activity.

1.3 From social segregation to community cohesion

The project aimed to provide younger and older people with an opportunity to overcome negative age-based stereotypes and to work together to build a more cohesive community while gaining new, transferable skills. Where older people were concerned, the motivational issues were dealt with by presenting the project in a non-threatening

¹¹ Carnegie Trust (1993), *Inquiry into Life, Work and Livelihood in the Third Age: Final Report*

manner as a way to contribute to the community and build a more secure future for everyone. The project was designed to provide both generations with an opportunity to gain skills such as self-reliance, flexibility and breadth of knowledge, in particular by nurturing competence in transferable skills, such as communication, in all its forms.

The Write-On! project was developed in response to the growing prominence of issues such as demographic ageing and social exclusion at both national and European levels. EU Cohesion Policy, the Lisbon Agenda and anti-age discrimination directives have all contributed to raising the profile of ageing and social exclusion as policy issues while simultaneously encouraging crosscutting regional solutions.¹² The National Assembly for Wales is the only UK country to have formulated a specific response to the issue of ageing, which has taken the form of the Strategy for Older People in Wales; at the other end of the scale, the Assembly aims to tackle the social exclusion of young people by “boosting the participation of children and young people across a range of dimensions in community life”.¹³ The Write-On! project sought to address these aims.

1.4 An Intergenerational Learning Experience

The Write-On! Project aimed to capitalise on the social as well as the economic benefits of lifelong learning by using this medium to tackle the social exclusion of both younger and older people and the general lack of community cohesion. The project was designed to bring these two groups together, in an effort to fulfil the objectives of the National Assembly for Wales in this domain, while allowing flexibility to adapt to the needs and potential levels of contribution of both generations. It was also essential to consider the potential benefits for each group: it was decided that this intergenerational, experiential approach would highlight participants’ transferable skills and engender a sense of self-worth: the first step on the road to equality. Subsequently, there would be a greater level of respect between generations and an appreciation of the diversity and value of lifelong learning.¹⁴

¹² Baker, R & Ferry, M (2006), ‘Regional Strategies, Demographic Ageing and Cohesion Policy Priorities’ in *Regions*, Vol 2, No 1.

¹³ Welsh Assembly Government (2000), *The Learning Country: Introduction*

¹⁴ Adamson, D, Dearden, H & Castle, B (2001), *Community Regeneration: Review of Best Practice*

The advantages of the project were presented slightly differently to each group in order to reflect the fact that, although both groups could expect to benefit, they would do so in different ways. For the older generation, emphasis was placed upon the practical value of sharing experiences and contributing, not only to the development of the younger generation but also to their community as a whole - and in terms of their own well-being. For the younger people, the project was presented in terms of opportunities for individual empowerment in terms of:

- the dynamism they could bring
- their input regarding the design of the project
- their knowledge of technology – and the opportunity to share it in an innovative and applied way
- taking control of their future

2 The Write-On! Learning Through Life Project

2.1 Project Framework

During the pilot year (2001-2002), six groups were established. The groups met for two hours a week for 30 weeks. Each group, composed of approximately 12 – 15 younger people (aged from 13 – 18 years) and 7 – 12 older people (45 years plus), was allocated a facilitator from the university team who stayed with them throughout the project. According to the conditions imposed by European funding, every session was divided into two parts, each lasting for one hour. The first was dedicated to the development of employability and communication skills, while the second was dedicated to a practical activity involving the researching and recording of common life experiences as a group. This choice of activity was intended to offer both generations an equal opportunity to engage in discussions.

The moderately prescriptive training programme allowed the two generations to access certain elements, such as information and communications technology (ICT), separately over the first few weeks in order to allow the adults to acclimatise to the new environment and to one another. The groups were together from the start, however, for the practical session and only the theme of Schooldays had been predetermined. The subtopics (for example, uniform, food, discipline, buildings) and methodology for researching and recording data (e.g. libraries, internet, photographs, stories, tape recordings) were discussed and agreed during interactive group activities, as the project

organisers wanted the groups to assume ownership of the practical element of project from the outset. Subsequent themes have been Being a Teenager; Leisure through the Ages; Heroes, Idols and Role Models', and Food and the Environment.

The groups were also encouraged to investigate different ways of locating, collecting and recording data, and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of both traditional and electronic methods. Those participants lacking ICT experience were introduced to the world of PCs with a specific emphasis being placed on the application of skills, such as searching the Internet and producing PowerPoint presentations, to the practical element of the project. Each participant developed a personal portfolio while also contributing to a group end product. Examples include posters, oral presentations, scrapbooks, games, collages, stories, plays and poems.

Over the past five years, the project has run in six different venues throughout RCT and in one in Merthyr Tydfil. Comprehensive schools and local communities have been involved in the recruitment of participants. In total 365 individuals have taken part; generally, the ratio has been 3:1 female: male and also younger: older each year. The project is now in its sixth year and variables such as group contact time and the inclusion of specific target groups (e.g. sheltered housing residents) are being experimented with.

2.2 Outcomes

Individuals were helped to identify their own strengths, weaknesses, concerns and expectations and encouraged to set goals for future development by self-assessment exercises and group work analyses. For the younger participants, these assessment exercises were carried out in conjunction with the schools. Such exercises helped empower participants, showing them that they had a part to play in shaping their own future. Adult participants, often initially reluctant to participate in such exercises, became involved through helping others and found the experience enjoyable and useful from a personal angle. This is clearly advantageous for both age groups, as the younger people benefit from the interaction and advice, while the adults find it easier to participate in activities that later prove to be helpful to them, via a mentoring role. This is a clear benefit of the intergenerational approach.

By the end of the pilot phase, improvements had been made in skill levels in both age categories and all groups shared a sense of ownership of the project, having participated

in its development and progression. Younger participants gained confidence in communicating and in preparing and giving presentations to a variety of audiences – skills that are clearly transferable to their academic studies. Some older participants also stated that they felt more confident about speaking out at public meetings or making presentations for or to community action groups.

The strengthening of the partnership with schools during the pilot phase drew many more staff into the project than the immediate project facilitators. Staff found that the project complemented the focus on wider key skill development. In a similar vein, the pilot phase proved to be a success as numerous relationships were developed with adults from local communities and community interest groups. Additionally, many participants agreed to act as ambassadors for the project in the future and a significant number have returned to subsequent years of the project.

2.3 Project highlights

The development of a range of games, from ice-breakers and energisers through to more sophisticated communication and negotiation exercises has worked exceptionally well. The tea break also provided a welcome opportunity to interact in a more unstructured, informal way. Positive features of this project have included:

- development of intergenerational friendships
- enthusiasm and commitment of participants and project team
- wealth of material collated e.g. artefacts, photos, stories, poems, paintings, plays and music
- acknowledgement that learning can be an enjoyable process

2.4 Areas of Difficulty

The main problem encountered during the pilot phase (2002-02) was retention. Three key causes were identified: the overall length of the project, the training/practical split – the younger people reported that they found the first hour boring while the adults often failed to see the relevance of such activities to themselves – and, finally, the separation of the two generations for training during the first few weeks. Other difficulties, which have continued to affect the project, include:

- A lack of ICT resources at school venues

- Recruitment, regarding the adults in particular
- Poor accessibility for adults – stemming from either a lack of private transport or the inaccessibility of venues using public transport (despite the introduction of free travel for pensioners on buses in Wales). In an effort to overcome this barrier, a car-share/ lift system has been used wherever possible.

2.5 The Wider Impact of the Write-On! Learning Through Life Project

The project is now in its sixth year and, to date, its outcomes have had a far-reaching impact. Direct and indirect benefits for Glamorgan University have included:

- a raised profile for Intergenerational Practice (IP) and its benefits for HE and the wider community
- the establishment of an interdisciplinary focus group for IP, which has increased the opportunities for curriculum design, research and funding
- the strengthening of the University of Glamorgan/Centre for IP (at the Beth Johnson Foundation) relationship
- membership of the International Consortium for IP (ICIP)

Benefits for the Project Team included:

- opportunities for personal development
- a level of IP expertise enabling project design modification in response to identified issues or concerns

As a result of the experience of and feedback from the pilot year, the need for a number of changes to this project was recognised. Such changes included:

- integration of training and practical elements
- introduction of at least one preparatory session with each generation prior to meeting
- reduction of the total length of the project
- development of an accredited route for those interested and eligible
- development of a series of games, based on the theme and followed up with discussions on the underpinning rationale, to replace the more formal training approach

Feedback from the participants has highlighted their overall enjoyment of the project, in particular, the sharing of views and experiences with a different generation and, for the older participants, observing the growth in confidence of the young people. A recurring theme in the feedback has been that the project provides 'opportunities': to do, to experience and to try. Participants reported improvements in:

- confidence
- communication skills
- presentation skills
- team-working skills
- broadened horizons
- new perspectives
- fulfilment of personal goals
- meeting those belonging to a different generation, with whom they might never usually come into contact

2.6 Supporting evidence

A number of strategies have been employed to gather feedback from participants, partners and facilitators, including questionnaires, group evaluation exercises/activities, journals and overviews, facilitator logs and ongoing verbal communication and enquiry. Formal questionnaire evaluation, carried out anonymously, resulted in a 44 per cent response from the pilot year up to over 80 per cent in subsequent years. The increase has been attributed to the fact that, initially, the evaluation forms were distributed by post whereas subsequently they have been distributed during the final session. The proportion of participants judging that the project had met their needs or expectations, adequately through to fully, has risen from 83 per cent to 96 per cent, reflecting the positive impact of changes made. Negative responses generally focused on the issues discussed in the Areas of Difficulty section 2.4. Partner schools have acknowledged that the project has significantly benefited the students; and improvements have been reported in areas such as communication, learning strategies, teamwork, personal awareness and self-confidence.

2.7 Conclusions

The key lessons learnt have been:

- the importance of preparatory sessions re: guidelines, expectations
- the need to keep the two generations together – separate training sessions during the pilot year proved to be a mistake
- the need for greater flexibility
- the need to address the question of accreditation

While the project was non-assessed during the pilot, requests for an accredited option led to the development and validation of two modules at HE foundation level in 2001. Of the 90 participants eligible to access this accredited option, only 17 have refused to date – citing other commitments or existing HE/ professional qualifications as their reasons. A progression has been made from a formal but non-assessed structure to a more flexible arrangement that offers participants the option of assessment. This approach encourages engagement from people with a wider range of abilities as individuals can make the decision regarding assessment later in the project when confidence levels have risen.

Limited success in the recruitment of adults through large mail shots indicated that direct contact, such as group talks and informal chats, is by far the most effective method of reaching potential learners. The use of participants themselves as ambassadors for the scheme has proved to be especially useful. The current strategy for the project, therefore, channels information through community partners and via members of the community in contact with potential participants. Such an approach ensures that target groups have the opportunity to talk to project staff and has so far shown itself to be the most effective recruitment strategy for older learners.

2.8 Changes to be made

Taking the experience of the past five years into account, it is clear that in order to increase participation and continually widen access, there is a need for diversification of delivery through experimentation with different formats, especially in relation to the length of the project, accessing funding for transport and development of a wider partnership network with the voluntary sector, and also agencies working with younger and older people in particular.

3. Resource Materials

Many of the materials have been designed by the project team themselves, based on the following resources:

- British Telecom
- Talk works Course
- Teachers' support materials
- General communication and citizenship materials

www.bteducation.org/joint/

BBC:

www.bbc.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise

www.bbc.co.uk/wales/education

Other useful sites:

www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/index-new.htm (virtual teachers' centre)

www.teachingzone.org/index/htm (free materials for teachers, used to support PSHE and Citizenship)

Particularly useful book:

T.Bond (1986), Games for Social and Life Skills, Stanley Thornes Publisher Ltd

CCIP 2005 Conference Report

“Try to See it My Way: Young People’s Perspective of the 21st Century”

Angela Fish, University of Glamorgan

Nia Seaton, Institute of Welsh Affairs

Grace Bennett, Institute of Welsh Affairs

The UK government launched its Respect agenda at the beginning of the year in an effort to tackle anti-social behaviour. The agenda’s initiatives include plans to extend the use of the controversial Anti-Social Behavioural Orders (ASBOs). While many claim that ASBOs are a necessity, others are concerned that such terms and policies further entrench negative stereotypes of young people.

Try to See it My Way, a line from a famous Beatles’ song, was the title of the Cymru Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CCIP) 2005 Conference. The conference aimed to encourage delegates to deconstruct negative generational stereotyping and highlighted a number of ways in which young people could be integrated more effectively into their communities.

An address on the Welsh Assembly Governments’ flagship Extending Entitlement Strategy, a key speech at both the north and south Wales conferences, sought to promote the rights of young people from the ages of 11-25 years.

Extending Entitlements

In a markedly different approach to that of the Respect agenda, Extending Entitlements seeks to engage with young people by protecting their rights and celebrating their successes. This policy shares a common goal with intergenerational work, in that it aims to break down the negative imagery often associated with young people.

“The Welsh Assembly Government has moved away from the problem orientated, negative and controlling emphasis which characterises much wider policy towards young

people, and has instead established a policy framework that embodies a positive view of young people " ¹⁵

As highlighted at the CCIP conference, the strategy suggests ten key entitlements that should form the basis of all service provision and interactions with young people. These include,

- The right of young people to participate and have an impact on policies that directly affect them.
- The entitlement to education, employment and basic skills that will "open doors to a full life".
- Personal support, advice and counselling in appropriate formats.
- Recreational, outdoors and socialising opportunities in safe environments.
- Easy access to services that are responsive to young people needs. ¹⁶

As explained by the speakers, it is hoped that young people themselves will be the key drivers of this strategy. These entitlements are mainly delivered at a local level by the Young People's Partnerships but also form part of many other Welsh Assembly Government initiatives aimed at helping young people. These policies include the school councils' initiative where children are given a voice in decisions and events in their schools, the Clic online national project that offers advice and information for 11-25 year olds and many other strategies.¹⁷

As the speakers at the conference highlighted, while there is much work to be done to guarantee these entitlements, they represent a key step in recognising the importance of young people's contribution to Wales. In his recent reaction to the Respect agenda, the First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, noted that the term, Respect agenda, would not be used in Wales and while some of its elements would be introduced in Wales, the Assembly Government would generally be taking a different approach.¹⁸ He argued that in Wales the use of ASBOs has been viewed as a more negative approach and as a sign

¹⁵ Haines et al "Extending Entitlement - Making it Real" Welsh Assembly Government 2004 p.3

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ For a copy of the conference report, speeches and further information on CCIP events see www.ccip.org.uk

¹⁸ " Morgan raises respect tensions" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/default.stm> January 10 2006

of failure as opposed to a success.¹⁹ Instead, it is hoped that extending young people's entitlements will offer a more positive approach to tackling the problems facing young people and generate higher social capital for Wales in the future.

Funky Dragon

A clear sign of young people's desire to participate was highlighted by the contribution of Funky Dragon members to the conference. Funky Dragon is the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales. Funky Dragon was established in 2003 to give young people an avenue for participation in the decision making process. It consists of 100 delegates who represent different localities and special interest groups in Wales. The organisation also has a website that offers an interactive forum in which all young people can have a say and offers information and guidance on issues that are important to young people.²⁰

At the conference Funky Dragon representatives were able to highlight the issues that are currently of most concern to its members. These were ASBOs, recycling and renewable energy, the Welsh language, disabled and female access to sport, public transport and the minimum wage.

The work of Funky Dragon also mirrors the work of other organisations that create forums in which young people participate such as the Electoral Commission and Cewc Cymru, which run model Assembly sessions and debate championships. The aim of Funky Dragon and these other organisations is to improve perceptions of young people by giving young people a louder voice to counteract the negative media stereotyping. They hope to empower young people and create partnerships between younger and older people in Wales to produce more positive outcomes.

In essence, although perhaps not consciously, these organisations and the entitlement strategy are also engaged in intergenerational work and practice. By encouraging a more positive view of young people and by allowing young people to have a say they are opening up lines of communication between different generations which is the first step to developing intergenerational relationships.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ To access the website www.funkydragon.org

Intergeneration in Practice

This was particularly highlighted in the intergenerational practice workshops held for conference delegates. Delegates, Funky Dragon representatives and pupils from a local school participated in workshops that aimed to demonstrate the similarity of experiences and preferences between different generations. Workshops focused on people's experiences and preferences about food. The aim of these workshops was to demonstrate the kind of activities involved in intergenerational work and to build the confidence of participants, develop relationships in the groups taking part, ensure communication between different generations and to explore common and different life experiences.

Participants were able to gain a practical insight into the positive effects of the workshops and enjoy the lively sessions. It demonstrated to people how these basic communication techniques could form the basis of more formal partnerships between younger and older generations.

Afternoon workshops tackled, in-depth, three of the key issues for intergenerational practice and young people in Wales. The workshops covered the themes of

- stereotypes
- crime
- the problems of geography for Wales

Stereotypes

This workshop addressed the very real issue of negative stereotyping in the media and in communities. It attempted to examine how stereotypes are created and reinforced and the workshop encouraged participants to reflect on the traditional stereotypes of younger and older people.

Through deconstructing the ways we look at each other, the workshop agreed that modern day media play a great part in reinforcing negative stereotypes. Participants

were surprised to discover the similarities between the stereotypes of younger and older people but acknowledge that some significant differences remain.

The outcomes were extremely positive. Delegates were surprised at some of their findings but made positive suggestions for change, such as the need for greater partnerships between younger and older people in society and the need for an advertising campaign for intergenerational practice that did not rely on stereotyping.

Crime

The second workshop tackled the topical issue of crime and fear of crime. One of the key issues addressed by this workshop was the issue of ASBOs: what they meant, whether they worked and the different perceptions of them.

In discussions of crime and the fear of crime delegates strongly agreed that stereotypes and myths once again played a substantial role. A key recommendation from the group was that an education campaign should be set up to dispel myths and encourage a better understanding of policies such as ASBOs. It was also agreed that community policing was integral to safer communities.

At the end of discussions delegates agreed that community partnerships might create a good platform from which all generations could engage in meaningful discussions about their fears. Most importantly, this partnership could tackle the fear of crime that is often responsible for the mistrust between generations.

Geography

Barriers created by geography are a significant factor for intergenerational work in Wales. The first issue highlighted by the workshop was the problem of transportation in rural areas. While the issue of transport is a problem for any intergenerational project, it is of particular significance in rural areas where public transport is more limited and the costs of transportation higher. There was also concern about the facilities and activities available in rural areas as compared to those available in urban areas of Wales.

Despite geographical barriers it was suggested that the need for intergenerational practice is particularly strong in those rural communities where a large number of older

people have moved into the region. In these areas there is no natural relationship between the old and the young and, therefore, intergenerational relationships are less likely to develop without intervention.

The geography of communities and community tribalism were also mentioned as an issue for those working in intergenerational practice. Often there is great reluctance among participants to attend an event in a different area or to embark on cross-community working. Some of the delegates believed that this is symbolic of the ways communities are governed and financed. In some cases a history of hostility between different communities is seen as the dividing factor.

Bringing communities together on issues that affect them all, such as safety issues, recreation areas and IT, could help to bridge these divides. It was agreed that in these situations intergenerational work could be essential to creating a learning culture amongst people from different areas.

Conference Conclusions

In general, it was recognised that both older people/adults and younger people have a responsibility to deconstruct the current media stereotypes and promote positive views of each other. The importance of recognising young people's positive contributions to Welsh life was also noted as being a significant step forward.

The desire from all to forge stronger partnerships between the younger and older generations through intergenerational practice was clearly articulated. Delegates had welcomed the opportunity to gain practical experience and knowledge of intergenerational practice.

A general consensus from the workshops was that further promotion of community based initiatives on crime, recreational areas and other common issues could prove a successful strategy for enhancing the relationship between generations. Conference delegates concluded that the negative media publicity of young people has added greatly to the fear of crime and generated mistrust in society. Although delegates thought that major change would be unlikely, they strongly urged everyone to put pressure on the media to generate positive publicity and messages.

In conclusion, it was recognised that intergenerational practice has a key role to play in building better community relationships, and in engendering a culture of trust and respect between all generations in Wales.

The Way Ahead

Alan Hatton-Yeo and Angela Fish

The preceding chapters have attempted to highlight global, national and local attitudes and approaches to IP. We are now at a stage where IP can play a major role in shaping this, and future society. However, it is necessary to keep reminding ourselves why it is important to promote and engage with IP. The UNESCO report (2000)²¹, gives an international perspective on the positive effects of IP

a) on society

- IP contributes to a culture of peace through its empowerment of young and old people to promote social cohesion and solidarity, the unity of the generations and intergenerational collaborations.
- IP aims at improving the lives of all generations – children, youth, and older adults by reducing generational conflicts or competition that may be the result of scarce resources among the generations.
- Intergenerational family caretakers are making a significant economic contribution by providing care or support for grandparents who may be in need of care or who may be caregivers for younger family members.

b) on lifelong learning

- An IP approach provides a smart and dynamic way to enrich the learning and teaching processes in and out of schools by mobilising the resources available through education and human service agencies more effectively.
- IP promotes lifelong learning abilities throughout the lives of older persons, for example, by encouraging them to participate in training programmes for skill development, and learning with and from youth about how to use and apply acquired knowledge related to information technology.
- IP helps older adults who are at risk of being excluded from society and having a lonely life without family, to achieve a sense of worthiness through volunteering and other intergenerational services

²¹ UNESCO (2000), *op.cit*, Chapter 2, pp 9-17

- IP can reduce the workload of teachers once a well-organised IP, assisted by older adults, is installed.
- IP helps school authorities to bring the school learning closer to the reality of life through the life experience older adults bring into the school – their community based experiences, wisdom, and reality-tested/proven knowledge, advice and information.
- IP can also accelerate the acquisition of life skills by young learners through their interaction with older adults who can be skilful helpers in dealing with personal, social, intellectual and occupational knowledge.
- The school-based IP, designed to assist classroom teachers, can better meet the individual needs of learners as the provision of such IP facilitates a one-to-one learning situation as well as individualised care and attention for pupils provided by IP personnel. Pupils can be assisted by well-trained older volunteers who can cope with personal and social problems.
- IP partners can also provide pupils with adult role models through direct interaction with adult volunteers in school who provide academic, social and emotional supports.
- The school-based IP also makes possible interactive and reciprocal transmission of culture from the old to the young – this interactive passing of legacy is a valuable cultural role of lifelong learning.
- IP stimulates school-community co-operation that often leads to the donation of additional funds and resources from various community bodies, such as local business, foundations, and community learning centres.
- IP encourages both the young and the old to learn about ageing and human developmental issues in schools and out-of-school and, by doing so, they become more aware and sensitive to pertinent economic, social, political and cultural issues on human ageing.

c) on health

- IP in general promotes the social participation and active ageing of senior citizens. Active ageing is a counter-measure to increased health care costs due to population ageing. Young people's energy, freshness and exuberance can have positive effects on older adults, which may help keep them healthy, preventing health problems and facilitating speedy recovery from illness or injury. This leads to affordable/reduced expenditure of medical and social care costs.
- Paid IP jobs or volunteer opportunities in IPs for older adults help this population maintain good health.

- IP can create jobs for older persons who provide service to young people, thereby reducing probability of poverty and consequent deterioration.
- IP designed for care-giving services to older people who need professional assistance (particularly of long-term care) creates jobs for young and middle-aged people.

To strengthen the quality of IP in participating countries, strategies were suggested to strengthen their existing models. However, as the level of IP differed in each country, the strategies recommended to strengthen these programmes also differed, but those most consistently in-line with UK practices agreed on the following:

a) Networking

To achieve more collaboration in the implementation of IP among partners, networking of agencies and specialists in effective networks permits the exchange of, and sharing of, information on IP and can be a catalyst for the development of more IP at the local, national and international levels. Networking enables various organisations and specialists to share good practice, provide technical support, help agencies solve programmatic problems and develop ideas for grants to help sustain or expand the existing IP. The International Consortium of Intergenerational Programmes (ICIP) is an example of a networking body at the international level.

b) Evaluation

Evaluations integrate information that reports the overall effectiveness of these models and their impact on older adults, children, youth, and professionals involved in the programmes. Several types and levels of evaluation were identified: external or internal, comprehensive or specific, multi-programme or single programmes. Recommendations for comprehensive, multi-programme levels of evaluation were by the UK and the U.S. Effective evaluations can be used to justify continued programme funding and to expand or replicate effective models, locally or nationally.

c) Training

IP generally contributes to the employability of both young and old workers. In the UK, training recommendations generally focus on professionals who need skills to develop, manage and evaluate programmes effectively. However, there has been a significant

increase lately in mentoring and other programmes which offer older volunteers the opportunity to undertake training before, or during, IP activities.

d) Research

There is a clear need for systematic research that examines the social value of IP; the level of access to all ages for intergenerational learning opportunities; the impact of lifelong learning; the difference between rural and urban intergenerational programmes, and the effect on learning, growth and quality of life for children, youth and older adults. As IP projects grow around the world, it will be essential to undertake more international comparative studies on public policy development, legislation and cutting-edge IP projects. These should aim to provide public policy-makers with a solid research-based knowledge and to legitimise further efforts to build-up the national capacities of IP and implementation.

Future Needs Assessment

Intergenerational Practice has already achieved a considerable impact within the UK. However, IP is still at a relatively early stage in its development within Wales. To achieve the potential that it appears to possess, a number of elements need to be in place to promote its future growth. These include:

- The systematic development of research and evaluation to give hard evidence as to the value of the approach.
- The development of accredited training for professionals involved in associated fields to promote their development and status.
- The bringing together of people involved with IP in the Wales to promote its development strategically at all levels within the UK.
- The development of networks to share good practice and technical support.

Given the necessary support and promotion, IP is potentially one of the most significant means available to address many of the social problems and difficulties we currently experience in Wales. The challenge that faces us now is to continue to build the structures and strategies to achieve this potential. To this end, and in line with the Centre for IP, CCIP, continues in its aims to:

- be the focal point for the development and dissemination of intergenerational practice in Wales
- promote the conceptual understanding of intergenerational practice
- maintain an active understanding and involvement in the development of international intergenerational practice

The establishment of CCIP, the conferences, and this publication, mark a significant step forward for IP in Wales. However, we will only be able to take the next steps with the continued support of the people of Wales. From the interest and participation so far we thank all those involved.