

# intergenerational practice

a review of the literature

Local Government Education and Children's Services Research Programme

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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# Executive summary

This report focuses on the findings from a literature review of what is known about the effectiveness of intergenerational practice, conducted by the NFER for the Local Government Association (LGA).

## Intergenerational practice in the UK

- Intergenerational practice within the UK comprises a wide range of activities, including, in particular, school-based programmes, community projects, health-related projects, learning and knowledge development, as well as mentoring activities.
- Intergenerational practice in the UK varies from international activity in a number of ways, including a greater focus on school and community settings and a more limited focus on older adults with specific health problems (e.g. dementia) and gerontology and service learning (which are common in the US).
- The term intergenerational practice requires greater definition, in particular, in terms of the age of participants, but also to clarify whether activity is multi-generational as opposed to intergenerational, and whether intergenerational activity encompasses activities involving members of the same family.

### Outcomes of intergenerational practice

- Whilst the literature examined identifies some of the difficulties associated with evaluating the outcomes of intergenerational activities, it also highlights that effective intergenerational practice has the potential to generate positive outcomes for individuals and communities, as well as offering the possibility of contributing to a range of social policy agendas.
- There were four main outcomes that were experienced by all participants, both old and young: increased understanding, friendship and enjoyment and confidence.
- Outcomes specifically experienced by older participants related to health and well-being, reduced isolation and a renewed sense of worth, whilst outcomes specifically experienced by young

people related to the gaining of specific skills and increased self-esteem.

- Several outcomes for the wider community were identified, including improved community cohesion and the potential to address other community-related policy areas, as well as the diversification of volunteering and educational institutions becoming more involved in their communities.

## Key factors for success

Some of the key factors (e.g. funding, evaluation, and planning) relate to project management generally. Those requiring particular attention relate more specifically to intergenerational practice. It is important that:

- Projects take a **long-term approach**, with a series of activities allowing time for relationships to develop
- Staff have appropriate **skills and training** to deal with both older and young people, as initially staff may be skilled in dealing with one generation, but not the other
- There is **pre-preparation of participants** before they engage in intergenerational activities
- Activities are focused on **developing relationships** between generations
- Activities are **shaped by participants** and so meet the needs of all participants, whether older or young
- There are **mutual benefits** from activities, and that activities are appropriate to both generations.

## Discussion and recommendations

- There is a wide diversity of intergenerational practice in the UK, with activities commonly occurring within education, community development/neighbourhood renewal, and health settings. However, there is a lack of clarity around definitions of intergenerational practice.
- There is evidence in the literature that successful intergenerational projects have the potential to

deliver positive outcomes for participants (e.g. increased understanding, friendship) and for communities (e.g. community cohesion). There were clear success factors in the literature that were linked to the achievement of these positive outcomes. There was some evidence that if good practice in these areas was not followed, intergenerational practice could lead to negative outcomes for participants.

- The evidence base for the effectiveness of intergenerational practice is still weak. There is a need for more research to inform future policy and

practice and to demonstrate the credibility and effectiveness of the approach and, in particular, for more national UK research because context and policy issues differ from elsewhere.

- Given the potential outcomes both for individuals and communities, and the close relationship of these outcomes to current policy concerns, this would suggest that there is a need for greater strategic commitment to, and investment in intergenerational practice, as well as greater advocacy and promotion to ensure work progresses systematically and effectively.



# 1 Introduction

This report focuses on the findings from a literature review of what is known about the effectiveness of intergenerational practice conducted by the NFER for the Local Government Association (LGA).

## 1.1 Background

Intergenerational practice, referring to activities involving older adults and young people/children together, undoubtedly has a role to play in the social context of the UK today. The UK has an ageing population, as the birth rate has declined at the same time as people are living longer (Granville, 2002). Alongside this, there is an argument that older and younger generations are becoming increasingly disconnected due to changing family patterns, the breakdown of traditional community structures, age segregated activities and living arrangements, and policy interventions or services that target only specific groups (e.g. Granville, 2002; Hatton-Yeo, 2006). Intergenerational practice and activities can contribute to overcoming problems arising as a result of these social changes, and can also contribute to addressing policy priorities of the Government (Pain, 2005).

Interest in intergenerational practice and what it can achieve has grown amongst practitioners and policymakers in the UK and Europe since the 1990s (Abrahams *et al.*, 2007; Hatton-Yeo, 2006). The Centre for Intergenerational Practice now supports a network of over 850 organisations and practitioners engaged in intergenerational work (Hatton-Yeo, 2006). Some local authorities are also promoting intergenerational practice. For example, Manchester City Council has produced a report and an action plan on developing intergenerational connections (Manchester City Council, 2007).

However, it is suggested that there is still a limited and weak evidence base for the effectiveness of intergenerational practice in the UK (Abrahams *et al.*, 2007; Granville, 2002). Granville (2002), in a review of intergenerational practice in the UK, found that only a few projects had been evaluated externally, most

evaluations were internal and that some projects had not carried out a formal evaluation. There is a more developed international body of knowledge (e.g. in North America), but it cannot be assumed that the learning is always culturally transferable (Granville, 2002).

Intergenerational practice is understood in a variety of ways and there is no one universally accepted definition (e.g. Granville, 2002). For this study, the definition of intergenerational practice follows that of the Beth Johnson Foundation (BJF), referring to purposeful activities which are beneficial to both young people (normally 25 or under) and older people (usually aged over 50) (Hatton-Yeo, 2006).

## 1.2 Aims of the study

The overall purpose of this study was to carry out a literature review of what is known about the effectiveness of intergenerational practice. The review aimed to address the following research questions.

- What research on intergenerational practice has been carried out since 2002, with a particular focus on the UK, but also drawing on international evidence?
- What kinds of outcomes can be achieved through intergenerational practice and for whom?
- How do the outcomes for different groups relate to the social objectives present in government policy?
- What are the characteristics of effective intergenerational practice?

## 1.3 Methodology

This section includes the search strategy, identification of sources and analysis of the evidence.

### The search strategy

The initial phase of research involved three strategies to ensure that the review was comprehensive, and

contained the most relevant literature. The three strategies were:

- Searches of academic databases, relevant internet subject gateways and websites using the search term 'intergenerational' (details of the range of databases searched and the key words used are provided in the search strategy which is detailed in Appendix 1)
- Searches by EMIE at NFER of their on-line database of local authority documents (policy and guidance documents and documents published by local authorities) and web searches of local authority websites indicating involvement in intergenerational practice.
- Interviews with representatives from key English organisations (e.g. Beth Johnson Foundation, Age Concern England etc.) to discuss characteristics of the literature relating to effectiveness of intergenerational practice (e.g. scale, type of document), where such literature may be accessed (e.g. key websites, journals) and any relevant literature they are aware of.

In addition, in order to obtain as full a picture as possible of the effectiveness of intergenerational practice, a further research phase was initiated to build on the initial findings. Further identification of sources were sought via email requests to relevant individuals from local authorities, third sector organisations involved in intergenerational practice and academics with a research interest in the area. Relevant organisations and individuals were drawn from the Intergenerational Directory (CIP, 2007), as well as individuals identified through EMIE searches and from information provided by representatives from key organisations interviewed at the beginning of the research. In total, eight organisations provided documentation as part of this search. Finally, relevant literature was also collected from appropriate local authority, third sector organisations and research centres etc. via general web searches (see Appendix 1).

### Identification of the most relevant sources

The initial criteria for inclusion in the review were:

- empirical evidence published from 2002 to 2007
- literature related to the UK, or based on international experiences (only selected international

sources were used where they were thought to be particularly pertinent)

- literature cited as important by the key English organisations in the mapping phase of the research
- the fit between the definition of intergenerational practice in the literature, and the definition being used in the review.

A three-step selection process was applied to the identified literature, using the criteria described above in order to help identify the most relevant sources and findings. The main criteria for inclusion in the review were that sources contained information pertinent to the research questions. The three steps were:

- Search parameters identified references and abstracts, which were explored for their pertinence to the review. The full sources of items for possible inclusion were then requested from the library or downloaded from the internet.
- The quality and relevance of sources was considered. Information and findings from these publications were logged onto an Excel spreadsheet against a number of relevant headings (e.g. definitions, illustrations, outcomes and critical success factors of intergenerational practice).
- The most relevant sources were identified. This led to 43 key sources being summarised for the review.

### Analysis of the evidence

Initial searches of academic databases identified 2,553 sources in total. However, when the information provided in the searches (in some cases only the title and in others, a short abstract) was examined, it was evident that 284 sources related to intergenerational practice/programmes and were therefore relevant to this study. A further 115 documents were identified through the other search strategies implemented:

- EMIE searches: 69
- emails to relevant organisations/individuals: 29
- web searches: 13
- key stakeholder interviews: 4.

Detailed examination of these 399 sources led to the final selection of 43 sources fitting the required criteria. These sources were then summarised more fully into an agreed template (see Appendix 2), thereby capturing

information relevant to the review. The summary template utilised also allowed researchers to review the evidence in terms of the quality of the research. This was assessed by considering:

- the type of document, e.g. report, discussion paper, etc.
- author interpretations
- biases/caveats to be aware of
- corroboration or triangulation of sources.

Once the templates had been completed for each source, a coding system was developed and applied to each of the summaries. This process enabled the research team to account for the range of evidence, to locate the evidence in context and to draw out key themes across the different sources. As part of the analysis, documents were placed into one of three categories:

- UK research/evaluation (research studies or evaluations of projects with a clearly explained and robust methodology)
- other UK literature (e.g. internal project evaluations, discussion papers)
- international research/evaluation (research studies or evaluations of projects with a clearly explained and robust methodology).

Where appropriate (e.g. analysis of the outcomes), this distinction ensured that the key findings came from the most robust UK research evidence, supported by evidence from the other categories.

## 1.4 Overview of the literature sources

This section provides an overview of the 43 sources of literature selected for the review (more detailed

information is provided in Appendix 3). The sources were classified according to the intergenerational activities they described, the author, type of literature, the date of publication and their country of origin.

- The sources were classified according to the main focus of the **intergenerational activities** described. The main focus of the 43 sources included school-based activities, overviews of practice in relation to specific areas (e.g. community cohesion) and community projects (e.g. focused on community development and participation).
- The sources were classified according to their **authors** and these included academics at universities, organisations (e.g. charities) and local authorities.
- The **type of literature** reviewed comprised mostly of research studies and project evaluations, but also included other types (e.g. discussion papers, descriptive reports).
- The sources were classified according to their **date of publication** and all reviewed literature was published after 2001, with just under half of sources being published in 2006 or later.
- The **country of origin** of the majority of the sources was the UK, with only 11 international sources.

## 1.5 Structure of report

Findings from the review are presented under the following chapter headings:

- intergenerational practice in the UK
- outcomes of intergenerational practice
- key factors for success
- discussion and recommendations.

## 2 Intergenerational practice in the UK

This chapter looks at current intergenerational activities in the UK. Activities involving the young and old together are becoming increasingly prominent in the UK in the light of current policy concerns around issues such as community cohesion and social inclusion (Granville, 2002; Pain, 2005). However, intergenerational practice is much more developed in other countries, particularly the US, where there is a long history of intergenerational activities, specific policies promoting intergenerational activities and significant collaboration between organisations involved with young people and older people (Pain, 2005). As Granville (2002) writes, the lessons learnt from intergenerational practice in other countries are not necessarily transferable due to different cultural and policy contexts, and therefore it is unsurprising that intergenerational practice in the UK is distinct from that in other countries. This chapter explores:

- how intergenerational practice in the UK is defined
- characteristics of intergenerational practice in the UK
- examples of intergenerational activities in the UK.

### 2.1 Defining intergenerational practice

For this study, the definition of intergenerational practice that has been used follows that of the Beth Johnson Foundation (BJF). Their definition refers to purposeful activities which are beneficial to both young people (normally 25 or under) and older people (usually aged over 50) (Hatton-Yeo, 2006). However, it is clear from the literature that there is no one accepted definition of intergenerational practice (e.g. Granville, 2002; Raynes, 2004). Granville (2002) writes that:

*The term 'intergenerational' is in many ways a loose one. We need clarity over what the approach is and what it seeks to achieve that also values the rich diversity of approaches current within the UK. (p.1)*

One of the criteria for selection in this review was that the definition of intergenerational practice used fitted with the definition utilised in the review. Therefore, much of the literature reviewed utilised the BJF definition (e.g. Berridge, 2006; Deloitte MCS Ltd., 2007) or a very similar definition (e.g. Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006; Pain, 2005). However, the literature that took an overview of intergenerational practice in the UK suggested that there are three areas which need to be clarified in order to define intergenerational practice more clearly:

- The **age of participants** is important to ensure that two separate generations are interacting. Whilst BJF suggest that participants should be 25 or under and 50 or over, others suggest different ages. Pain (2005), for example, defines older people as those aged over 60. The majority of the literature reviewed did not make clear how 'older' and 'young' people were defined for the purposes of their projects.
- There is a lack of clarity regarding **multigenerational and intergenerational** approaches (e.g. Granville, 2002). A multigenerational approach includes the 'middle generation' (i.e. aged 25–50) in activities and, as such, is distinct from intergenerational practice. Yet, in some literature (e.g. Magic Me, 2005), the 'middle generation' were sometimes seen as participants in intergenerational practice. In intergenerational practice the role of the 'middle generation' is to facilitate the activities (e.g. Granville, 2002; Hatton-Yeo, 2006) and not to participate.
- Intergenerational practice does not involve members of the same **family**. However, only a minority of sources (e.g. Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006) made clear that their definition excluded familial relations. As Granville (2002) explains, when participants are related, intergenerational activity is less effective at challenging negative stereotypes between groups and therefore has implications for outcomes.

## 2.2 Characteristics of intergenerational practice in the UK

Intergenerational practice is very diverse, incorporating activities that involve different groups of participants, different types of settings, varied activities and with a range of aims. This diversity is demonstrated in Figure 2.1, which summarises the findings from the literature (including the international literature) on intergenerational practice. However, there are some differences between international intergenerational practices and intergenerational practice in the UK (an asterisk has been used in the figure to denote practices or settings which tend to be common internationally but not within the UK). The key differences are as follows:

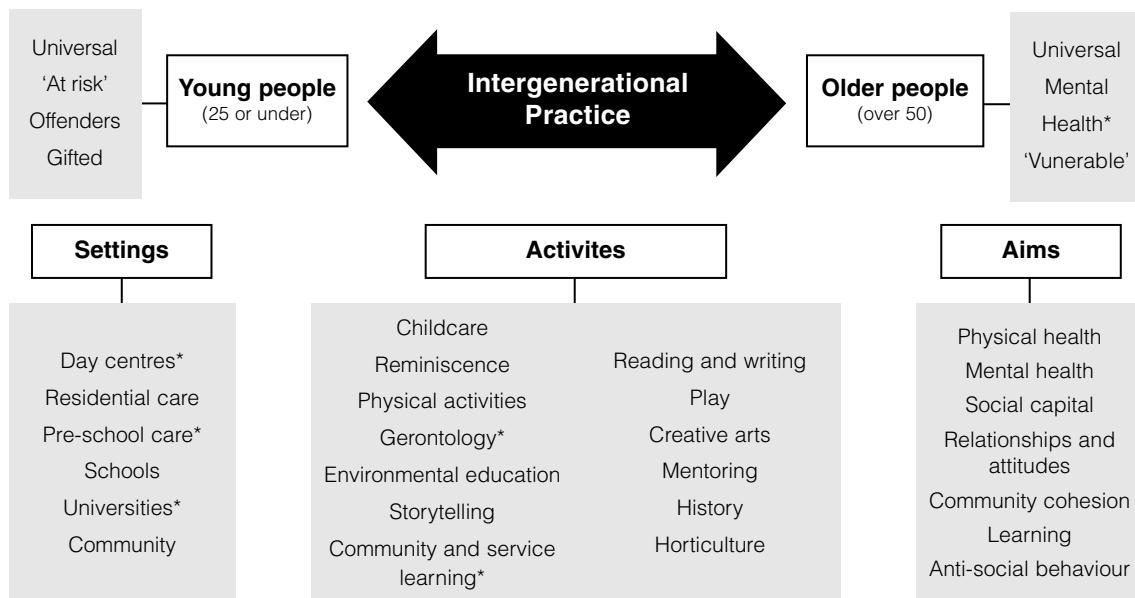
- The **participants** in intergenerational practice are similar, although there is less of a focus in the UK on using intergenerational practice to benefit older adults with specific health problems (e.g. dementia, mental health issues).
- The most common **settings** for intergenerational practice in the UK are schools, community venues and sheltered housing.
- The **activities** are similar, except for gerontology and community/service learning, which are only common in the US.

The **aims** of intergenerational practice in the UK reflect those of international practice, and relate to improvements in:

- physical health
- mental health
- social capital
- relationships and attitudes
- community cohesion
- learning
- anti-social behaviour.

The aims of intergenerational practice in the UK are characterised by Pain (2005) as relating to the promotion of well-being (e.g. through building relationships, changing negative attitudes, increasing community cohesion), as well as to the individual project (e.g. addressing anti-social behaviour, supporting the learning of participants). In some cases, where the main aims of the projects were addressed by getting young and older people to interact together, the actual activities taking place were of secondary importance (Pain, 2005). For example, a project that involved joint outings, and aimed to improve relationships between generations, understanding and well-being (Home First

Figure 2.1 Overview of intergenerational practice



\* denotes that examples are mainly international, not UK.

Community Trust, 2005) used the outings as a means of generating the interaction necessary to achieve the desired outcomes. In contrast, with an intergenerational cookery project focused on achieving health outcomes (McIntyre, 2007), the activity (learning about healthy cooking) was integral to achieving the outcomes.

In general, intergenerational practice in the UK is characterised by small-scale and intensive projects, rather than the large-scale programmes that can be seen in the US (Pain, 2005). There are three common fields within which the activities take place.

- **Education** e.g. intergenerational activities in the context of the 'Creativity, Action, Service' component of the International Baccalaureate (Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006); older volunteers mentoring 'vulnerable' children in need of support (Ellis, 2004b); older people discussing wartime experiences with children studying the period (Stanton and Tench, 2003); 'Philosophy 4 Children' delivered in schools with older volunteers supporting the pupils (Whitworth, 2007a and b).
- **Community development/neighbourhood renewal** e.g. 'The Big Together' in Camden involving local people in a range of different activities together in the community (Carter, 2007a); a project bringing young and older people together to explore their locality and its past, present and future (Langford and Williams, 2004); community action programmes bringing groups of older and young people together to identify issues of concern in their community, and influence decision-makers to make changes (NCICDP, 2005).
- **Health** e.g. an intergenerational cookery group involving having healthy lunches together, health and fitness activities (McIntyre, 2007); a project bringing young and older people together for activities that promote positive health and well-being, such as talks on healthy living and tai chi (Robinson *et al.*, 2006).

In the UK, intergenerational activities do not always comprise the whole of a project, but are sometimes just one element of it (Granville, 2002). For example, a project delivering the 'Philosophy 4 Children' programme in schools, with an added element of older adults as volunteers in the classroom (Whitworth 2007a and b) can be seen as having an intergenerational

element. The project delivered distinct outcomes that related to the programme itself (e.g. educational outcomes for pupils), as well as outcomes relating to the intergenerational element (e.g. increased understanding between generations). However, a project where older adults mentored young people in need of support (e.g. with academic achievement, offending behaviour) (Ellis, 2004a and b) can be characterised as an intergenerational project.

In summary, intergenerational practice in the UK is very diverse, and Granville (2002) suggests that it 'is not a single approach, but a style of working that can lead to many different activities and outcomes'. (p.26)

## 2.3 Examples of intergenerational activity in the UK

This section cannot give a comprehensive overview of the intergenerational activities happening in the UK, but it gives examples from the literature that are typical of current intergenerational practices. More examples are available in other sources (e.g. Carter, 2007a; Granville, 2002; Hatton-Yeo, 2006). The literature review found examples of intergenerational practice in the UK that related to the following areas, organised in rank order according to how many documents cited them:

- school-based programmes
- community projects
- health
- learning/knowledge development
- mentoring
- reminiscence
- creative arts
- social outings.

### School-based programmes

Two examples of school-based projects are provided. They include a project run in a variety of schools based on 'storyline' and older volunteers helping primary school children in school with literary and numeracy skills.

### **'Storyline' intergenerational activities (Stanton and Tench, 2003)**

Activities are run by a partnership of social services, schools and 'Bridging the Gap', a voluntary organisation who facilitate the project. They have been run in nurseries, primary and secondary schools, and involve older people from sheltered housing, alongside the school pupils. Activities use a method of teaching called 'storyline', adapted to make it applicable to intergenerational work. The principle is to set key questions, which become learning objectives, and a story which has (fictitious or real) characters and place. The questions provide a focus for discussion, debate and learning between generations. An example storyline is 'families at war', where participants would discuss life during World War Two. An extra element to this has been added to facilitate intergenerational learning. In the first session, where a group of older and young people meet, there are discussions and quizzes to address preconceptions about the other group before they start working together. As a result of the project, teachers reported that there were positive impacts on pupils' learning and there were also increases in confidence. Pupils reported that they enjoyed the older adults coming into the classroom and working with them.

### **Age and Youth (Hatton-Yeo, 2006)**

Age Concern in Kingston upon Thames has been working to bring together older and younger people for a number of years. The project is primary school based and recognises that older people have skills, talents, knowledge and experience which could be of value to the young. The aim is to mutually benefit both age groups emotionally and to provide a learning experience for the children. Older volunteers work with individual children or small groups to offer practical support in terms of literacy, numeracy and science lessons on a regular basis. As a result of the success of the project they have set up a mentoring scheme with another primary school in the area and are seeking additional funding to focus on further development.

## **Community projects**

Examples of community projects include two projects focused on young and older people working together to identify issues of concern within their community.

### **Newcastle Coalfields Intergenerational Community Development Project (NCICDP, 2005)**

The Newcastle Coalfields Intergenerational Community Development Project was funded by the Health Action Zone and the Primary Care Trust (PCT). It has two facets. Firstly, 'community action programmes' bring young and old together to work together over a series of weeks to identify issues of concern within their communities, and then influence decision-makers to make changes. Secondly, 'supporting role programmes', which are varied, and are used to introduce participants to intergenerational work before starting community action programmes or as stand-alone projects. As a result of the projects there has been increased social interaction between the generations and positive changes in attitudes towards each other. Activities have been relevant to a variety of policy areas and targets (e.g. community safety and regeneration).

### **Bigger Picture Project (Magic Me, 2005)**

The Bigger Picture Project was run by a company called 'Magic Me' in partnership with Tower Hamlets Mediation Service and a local secondary school. The main aims of the project were to enable young and older people in Stepney to gain greater awareness of one another's concerns and points of view, to discover mutual concerns and to examine areas of difference. The project was part of a ten-year redevelopment strategy in the area and involved work across three years. **Year one** was mainly outreach and development work to develop local partnerships, recruit artists and set up for the future. There were also workshops with secondary school pupils to explore their attitudes to the elderly. **Year two** consisted of workshops where participants used theatre, video and art to express themselves creatively, focusing on

community issues, solutions to local problems and the preparation for an event to showcase their findings to the community. **Year three** involved project workshops where participants presented the findings of the project and discussed intergenerational issues with school pupils who had not been involved with the project. Workshops linked into the citizenship curriculum and encouraged pupils to explore their roles as citizens.

## Health

Examples of health-related projects include one focused on health promotion and another focused on active ageing which encourages both generations to learn, contribute and engage with each other through a range of activities.

### **Intergenerational health promotion project (McIntyre, 2007)**

Each year of this project was developed and delivered by different Age Concern organisations that already had experience of intergenerational work. Mixed groups of older and younger people came together to raise awareness, share experiences and achieve mutual learning through a range of activities. In North Tyneside, sport and dance students taught exercise routines to older people living in sheltered housing, many of whom had very limited mobility and other health problems. Intergenerational healthy lunches and a cookery group brought together young people and tenants in a sheltered housing scheme to discuss nutrition. Outcomes from the activities included fitness and physical mobility improvements for the elderly and learning opportunities for students through the classes. The shared meals also provided social interaction and learning for both. In Kingston-upon-Thames, healthy eating seminar lunches were organised at the Active Age Centre, involving teenage pupils and older adult volunteers from the community. A pre-lunch seminar was structured around the menu for the

day and specific nutritional issues regarding a good/poor diet were discussed. For older people, outcomes included contact with others and friendship, gaining knowledge about nutrition and learning about young people. Younger participants found out about the lives of older people, and also gained confidence and self-esteem.

### **Active Ageing Programme (Robinson et al., 2006)**

The Active Ageing Programme is run by the PCT and other agencies, such as the Safer Schools Partnership, extended schools and housing services. The project is based in South Liverpool, one of the most deprived wards in the country, with high rates of teenage pregnancy, unemployment, crime and anti-social behaviour problems. Older people in the area had little or no access to health services and reported fearing anti-social youth behaviour. The programme involves 'vulnerable' older people (e.g. in sheltered housing) and two groups of young people from a local school who visit fortnightly. Meetings are facilitated by community nurses. Activities involve talks (e.g. health related, crime prevention, local history) and an hour of activity, such as tai chi and keep fit. The programme encourages both generations to learn, contribute and engage with each other. The participants are aware of, and are accessing, services that they would not have been aware of previously, and older people are becoming more socially active in the community. The older people go into schools and venues to meet with young people and share their memories in line with curriculum learning, which has helped to bridge the relationship gap and improve community relations in the area.

## Learning/knowledge development

The example of a learning-related project focuses on widening access to and increasing participation in lifelong learning in the Welsh Valleys.



### **The 'Write-on' Project (Fish, 2002)**

The 'Write-on' Project aims to widen access and to increase participation in lifelong learning in the Welsh Valleys, where a climate of high unemployment, low self-esteem, social fragmentation and a culture of dependency affects the prospects and outlook of the younger generations. The project offers opportunities for personal and professional development. It provides training to develop motivation, personal action plans and goal setting, as well as the development of skills in the areas of communication, media and technology, making presentations, citizenship and employability. The practical element of the project encourages both age groups working together to research and record their school experiences and to discuss areas of their life. Participants have enjoyed taking part in the project and tutors report increases in confidence and skills.

### **Mentoring**

The example of a mentoring project focuses on a range of mentoring activities which are aimed at passing on the skills and experiences of older adults to young people identified as in need of extra support.

### **Generations in Action (Ellis, 2004a and b)**

The 'Generations in Action' mentoring programme aims to recruit older adults to pass on their skills and experiences to young people in their communities who are identified as being in need of extra support. The volunteers work mostly in schools, but also in out-of-school settings. Examples of the different types of mentoring undertaken include: generic mentoring of children at primary and secondary level, providing specialist support in a subject area, volunteering in Pupil Referral Units and mentoring young offenders. Volunteers experienced health and well-being benefits from participation, as well as gaining new skills. They also diversified their volunteering, taking on more volunteering roles within their community.

### **Reminiscence**

The example of a reminiscence project focuses on pupils interviewing local residents about their World War Two experiences.

### **Camden 1939–45: A reminiscence theatre project with secondary schools (Carter, 2007b)**

In June 2005, pupils at Haverstock School interviewed 18 Camden residents about their World War Two memories and experiences. These included national and overseas experiences, as well as London ones. The interviews formed the basis for the resulting theatre piece. Contributions were made from Swiss Cottage Community Centre Older People's Project, Castlehaven Community Centre, Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre, Kingsgate Older People's Club and the African and Caribbean Elders Luncheon Club and Community Support Centre. A reminiscence theatre piece, inspired by these wartime memories and experiences of present day Camden residents, was performed at Swiss Cottage Library in November 2005 by students from Haverstock and Acland Burghley School.

### **Creative arts**

The intergenerational creative arts example focuses on five neighbourhood renewal areas and children working creatively with older people in a diverse range of media.

### **The 'Big Together' projects (Carter, 2007a)**

'Big Together' projects ran in five neighbourhood renewal areas of Camden. Local partners decided who to target as participants, what themes to choose, how to recruit, when to run their activities and which media to work in. This autonomy meant that each project was genuinely a product of the local area, reflecting local themes, concerns and ways of working. The projects involved children and teenagers from preschool toddlers to sixth form, meeting and working creatively with older people. The projects used a diverse range of media, including music, cooking, ceramics, drama,

video, poetry, mosaic making, film, drawing, photography, fashion design and gardening. Participants enjoyed the projects, and activities fostered community cohesion as participants interacted together and built relationships.

night party). The project culminated with the group putting on a play for family and friends. The project was judged to improve community relations, as well as increase confidence and improve well-being in participants.

## Social outings

The example of an intergenerational project focused on social activities involves participants planning and engaging in a range of social activities together.

### **Larne Intergenerational Project (Home First Community Trust, 2005)**

The project aimed to bring together up to eight younger and up to eight older people for a programme of shared activities over a four-month period. Its aims included the improvement of well-being amongst participants, the improvement of relations and increased understanding between generations. To start with there were sessions where the older and younger participants separately explored their perceptions of the other group, and then there were 'icebreaker' activities to encourage the generations to interact. Once they had got to know each other, the group planned and went on activities together (e.g. going for a Chinese meal, bowling, St Patrick's

## 2.4 Summary

The term 'intergenerational practice' requires greater definition, in particular, in terms of the age of participants, but also to clarify whether the activity is multigenerational (i.e. involving the 'middle generation') as opposed to intergenerational and the involvement of members of the same family (particularly since this is likely to be less effective in challenging negative stereotypes and therefore has implications for outcomes).

Intergenerational practice in the UK varies from international activity in a number of ways, including a greater focus on school and community settings and a more limited focus on older adults with specific health problems (e.g. dementia) and gerontology and service learning (which are common in the US).

Intergenerational practice within the UK comprised a wide range of activities, including, in particular, school-based programmes, community projects, health-related projects, learning and knowledge development, as well as mentoring activities.

# 3 Outcomes of intergenerational practice

This chapter focuses on the outcomes of intergenerational practice identified in the literature. Thirty-nine of the 43 sources described some outcomes from intergenerational practice. These comprised ten research/evaluation documents from the UK, eight international research/evaluation documents, and 21 other relevant documents from the UK (e.g. discussion papers, internal project evaluations). The difficulties associated with evaluating outcomes from intergenerational practice will be discussed, followed by an examination of the best evidence of outcomes.

Intergenerational activities, as Granville (2002) makes clear, are very diverse in nature and often are one part of other interventions (e.g. community development activities). Where the intergenerational practice is just one element of an activity, a distinction can be drawn between the outcomes arising from the activity itself and the outcomes that may be attributed to the intergenerational element. For example, Robinson *et al.* (2006) describe a project where older and younger people spend an afternoon together a week incorporating activities such as a quiz, talks and tai chi. One of the outcomes is the health benefits for older people arising from the tai chi. However, this outcome is linked to the activity itself, not the intergenerational element. Other outcomes reported from the project, such as increased understanding and reduction of negative stereotypes between the two groups, relate to the intergenerational element. This chapter focuses on the outcomes attributable to intergenerational practice.

In a review of intergenerational practice in the UK, Granville (2002) found that the evidence base for what works and why was limited, and that more research was needed to justify the claims made by practitioners. According to the literature reviewed here, the evidence base is still weak and this is especially the case with regard to the outcomes arising from intergenerational practice. Pain (2005) writes that evaluation of outcomes remains a difficult task for projects and that both 'hard' and 'soft' outcomes are difficult to quantify as they are

often diffuse and long term. Therefore, the outcomes below are best seen in the same way that Granville (2002) describes them, which is to see them as 'potential' outcomes from intergenerational practice, rather than 'proven' outcomes.

This section also outlines the best evidence for outcomes found in the literature and these outcomes are also summarised in Figure 3.1, which is set out at the end of this chapter. The outcomes emerged from multiple sources and, unless stated otherwise, were discussed to some extent in the UK research literature, the other UK literature and the international literature. The outcomes were categorised into those for:

- all participants
- older people
- young people
- communities.

## 3.1 All participants

There were four main outcomes that were experienced by all participants, both old and young:

- increased understanding
- friendship
- enjoyment and confidence.

### Increased understanding

As young and older people interacted and got to know each other, they gained a greater understanding of the other group, and negative stereotypes that they had held were challenged and overcome (e.g. Abrams *et al.*, 2006; Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006; Dorfman *et al.*, 2004; Jarrot and Bruno, 2007; McIntyre, 2007). Pain (2005) suggests that such negative attitudes are not difficult to overcome and what is needed is contact between the groups. The changes in attitude can be seen from participant comments:

*In my eyes, old people are moaning people but now, because I have been to [name of intergenerational project], I have realised that they are not. Actually, [they're] good fun.*

Robinson *et al.*, 2006 p. 65

*My views of young people have really changed through doing this. I've learnt a lot about how they think.*

Whitworth, 2007 p. 3

This greater understanding led, in some cases, to a reduction of misunderstanding and tension between groups, as they understood more about each other. For example, Whitworth (2004) describes a project involving young people and residents of sheltered housing, which engaged them in activities together. Following the project, the number of complaints to police from the sheltered housing regarding 'youth disorder' dropped significantly, as residents became more tolerant of young people.

Whilst greater understanding was a strong outcome, Pain (2005) makes clear that it would be wrong to assume that relationships between younger and older groups are always determined by negative stereotypes, and that therefore intergenerational activities are always appropriate and necessary.

## Friendships

As young and older people got to know each other they developed trust and friendships (e.g. Dorfman *et al.*, 2002; Jarrot *et al.*, 2006; NCICDP, 2005; Raynes and Rawlings, 2004; Robinson *et al.*, 2006). In some cases, older and young people interacted more outside of the intergenerational activities as a result, such as the young person below:

*Because we go to [name of intergenerational activity], we can talk to them outside of it as well, on the street. One of them lives in my road, so I talk to her more now. I'd say 'Hello' but I didn't really know her. But I get to know her now.*

Robinson *et al.*, 2006 p. 66

In other cases, getting to know some older people better led to young people having more interaction with older people generally and improving relationships with other older people outside of the project (e.g. Abrams *et al.*, 2006; Whitehead *et al.*, 2006):

*I live by some bungalows and there are grumpy people in them and when I walk past now I start having a conversation with this woman about her dog and before that I used to kick my ball over by accident and they would be like 'Get away!'.*

Robinson *et al.*, 2006 p. 66

## Enjoyment and confidence

In general, both older and younger people enjoyed participating in intergenerational activities, despite sometimes having anxieties or concerns about spending time with the other group prior to the project (e.g. CSC Regeneration and Research Consultants, 2007; Fish, 2002; Jarrot *et al.*, 2006; Pain, 2005; Salari, 2002; Evalucon, n.d.).

Participants gained increased confidence from activities. For example, young people felt more confident communicating with older people, and older people felt more confident to get out and interact with others in the community (e.g. Ellis, 2004a; Feldman *et al.*, 2003; Granville, 2002; Stanton and Tench, 2003). As one older participant in a schools-based project commented:

*I've gained increased confidence at mixing and speaking out. I used to be a good mixer but my current situation ties me to my flat most of the time.*

Whitworth, 2007 p. 11

## 3.2 Older people

There were three main outcomes specifically experienced by older participants in intergenerational activities. These related to health and well-being, reduced isolation and a renewed sense of worth.

There were outcomes relating to **health and well-being** for older people as they participated in intergenerational projects (e.g. Ellis, 2004a; Granville, 2002; Kaplan, 2002; Pain, 2005; Whitworth, 2007a). This was sometimes related to being more active as a result of participation (Kaplan, 2002), and involved fitness and mobility improvements (McIntyre, 2007), and/or positive impacts on quality of life arising from getting out of the house to be involved in activities (Ellis, 2004a; Whitworth, 2007a). Older people experienced a sense of **reduced isolation** as they went out to meet other people and participate in

activities, having the opportunity to interact with others and make friends (e.g. Dorfman *et al.*, 2002; Ellis, 2004a; Stanton and Tench, 2003; Whitehead *et al.*, 2006). They also gained a **renewed sense of worth** as they felt they were contributing to the lives of young people (Hatton-Yeo, 2007; Stanton and Tench, 2003). As one older person commented:

*[A Year 4 girl with behavioural difficulties] has been left to run wild on the streets with her brothers since she was about three or four. She finds it difficult at school but I get her to sit next to me and I tell her she's wonderful. She's really changed over this time and she takes part much more now.*

Whitworth 2007a pp.10–11

### 3.3 Young people

There were two main outcomes specifically experienced by young people participating in intergenerational activities. These related to the gaining of specific skills and increased self-esteem.

Involvement in some intergenerational projects had led to the young people **gaining skills**, such as communication and wider social skills (e.g. Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006; Kaplan, 2002; Robinson *et al.*, 2006). Where projects had involved intergenerational activities in schools, there was a suggestion that learning and academic performance had been improved, as pupils were helped with their work by older people, and gained skills and confidence through the project (e.g. Hatton-Yeo, 2007; Kaplan, 2002; Evalucon, n.d.; Whitworth, 2007b). Young people also gained **increased self-esteem** arising from their involvement in intergenerational activities (e.g. Granville, 2002; Jarrot *et al.*, 2006; Jarrot and Bruno, 2007; Whitehead *et al.*, 2006). For example, the self-esteem of young people improved as they were mentored by older people who provide a positive role model (Kaplan, 2002).

### 3.4 Communities

The literature indicated that the outcomes for individuals described above can have an impact at a community level (e.g. Granville, 2002; Pain, 2005). As Pain (2005) explains, although intergenerational

relations are part of the social make-up of individuals, they also affect the community through their impacts on social interactions, the use of public space and the degree to which individuals choose to participate in community life. Several outcomes for the wider community were identified from the literature, including improved community cohesion and the potential to address other community-related policy areas, as well as the diversification of volunteering and educational institutions becoming more involved in their communities.

There was **improved community cohesion** as relations between young and old improved, leading to greater understanding and interaction between groups in the community (e.g. Granville, 2002; Pain, 2005; Robinson *et al.*, 2006; Whitworth, 2004). Hatton-Yeo (2007) writes that that positive attitudes and beliefs about others in the community contribute to community cohesion, and to residents' willingness to participate fully in the community. He discusses evidence from Hong Kong which found that, where intergenerational projects were effectively implemented, intergenerational solidarity and social capital within communities was enhanced. Some literature also pointed to the *potential* for intergenerational activities to impact positively upon other **community-related policy areas** and to offer solutions to many social issues, including fear of crime, social exclusion, racial tensions, community safety, regeneration and the citizenship curriculum (Deloitte MCS Ltd., 2007; Granville, 2002; NCICDP, 2005), as well as the potential to build social capital and develop the capacity of communities (e.g. Granville, 2002; Moore and Statham, 2006). According to Pain (2005), 'intergenerational practice closely matches key government priorities, including social inclusion and cohesion, citizenship and community development'. Further, NCICDP (2005) advocates that intergenerational community development practice should be promoted as an effective means of addressing a range of policy agendas and providing a framework for whole-community working.

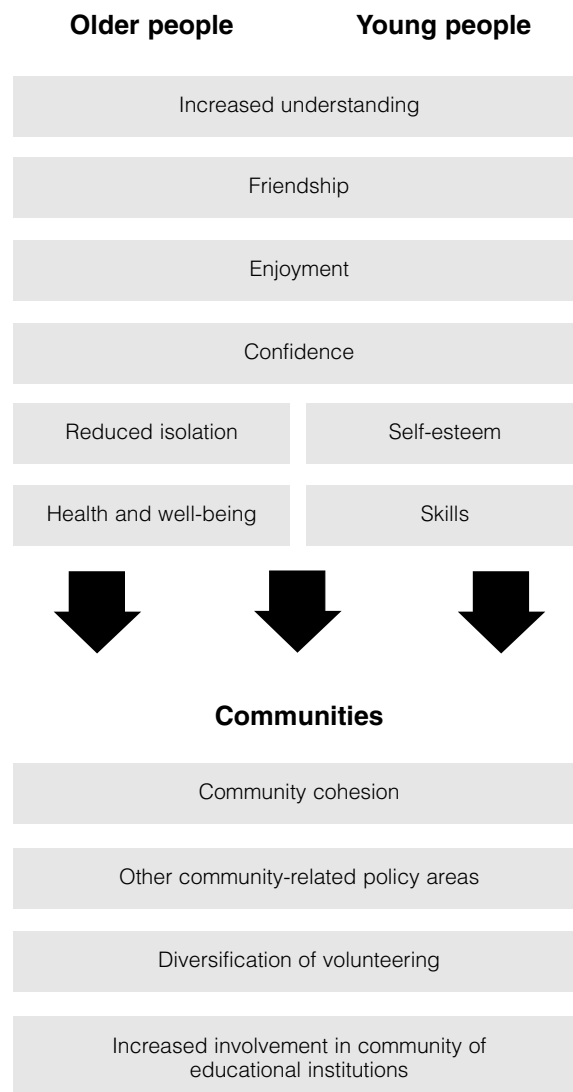
There was evidence of **diversification of volunteering** as a consequence of getting involved in intergenerational activity. Granville (2002 p. 4) writes that: 'The greatest benefit demonstrated to date [of intergenerational practice] has been to release the potential of older people to contribute positively to their community ...'. This is through the intergenerational

activities first, but older people often then volunteer for other projects in their community (Ellis, 2004a; Hatton-Yeo, 2007; Kaplan, 2002; Stanton and Tench, 2003). Where projects are education based, it is reported in the literature that **educational institutions become more involved in their communities**, as they start to utilise the skills of the wider community to help achieve educational objectives (e.g. Cohen *et al.*, 2006; Stanton and Tench, 2003).

### 3.5 Summary

Whilst the literature examined identifies some of the difficulties associated with evaluating the outcomes of intergenerational activities, it also highlights that effective intergenerational practice has the potential to generate positive outcomes for individuals and communities, as well as offering the possibility of contributing to a range of social policy agendas. Figure 3.1 provides a summary of the potential outcomes for participants and for communities.

**Figure 3.1 Outcomes from intergenerational practice**



## 4 Key factors for success

This section of the report focuses on the factors which are essential for the success of intergenerational practice. The literature highlighted that intergenerational practice has the potential to produce negative outcomes if it is not well managed (e.g. Gibson, 2006). Good practice is necessary to avoid these problems and achieve the potential positive outcomes (as discussed in the previous chapter) for both groups.

Analysis suggested that the key factors were common across different types of activity and across different cultures/environments so they have been written up overall and differences highlighted where relevant. Thirty-one out of the 43 literature sources examined made some reference to the key factors for success. Overall, they can be grouped under the following headings:

- sustainability
- staffing
- participants
- activities
- organisation
- partnerships.

### 4.1 Sustainability

Three particular aspects of sustainability were identified as important for the success of intergenerational practice within the literature.

- **Long-term approach:** in order for intergenerational practice to have real benefits, many authors stated that a series of contacts between the young and older people was necessary to allow time for relationships to develop and that 'one off' contact was less likely to be effective (e.g. Deloitte MCS Ltd., 2007; Gibson, 2006; McIntyre, 2007; Stanton and Tench, 2003).

- **Funding:** obtaining long-term funding was also considered vital for sustainability and therefore ensuring long-term success (e.g. Feldman *et al.*, 2003; Pain, 2005; Whitehead *et al.*, 2006).
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** it was considered important for the effectiveness of intervention (and therefore for sustainability) that programmes and activities were monitored and evaluated, not only for impact on the participants, but also the process and the activities (e.g. Ellis, 2004a; Granville, 2002; Moore and Statham, 2006).

### 4.2 Staffing

Four key factors in relation to staffing emerged as particularly important for the success of intergenerational practice from the literature.

- **Skills and training:** since intergenerational practice often took staff out of their comfort zone, training was considered essential. Staff were said to require the skills to deal with both young and older people and to demonstrate age-appropriate behaviour (e.g. Jarrott *et al.*, 2006; Robinson *et al.*, 2006; Salari, 2002).
- **Commitment and enthusiasm:** the commitment and motivation of the staff involved and the support of significant others (e.g. teachers and parents within school-based settings) was often reported to be a key factor (e.g. Feldman *et al.*, 2003; Krout and Pogorzala, 2002; Langford and Williams, 2004).
- **Time and availability:** a lot of individual staff time was reported to be necessary for effective preparation and planning. Staff therefore need to be allocated sufficient time to be involved (e.g. McIntyre, 2007; Whitworth, 2004).
- **Stability:** changes of staff and a high staff turnover were reported to be a barrier to effective intergenerational practice, particularly when activities took place within schools or colleges (e.g. Jarrott and Bruno, 2007; McIntyre, 2007).

### 4.3 Activities

Four key factors emerged as important with regard to the types of activities involved in intergenerational practice. It was reported that activities should be:

- **Shaped by the participants:** it was considered important for the activities to be planned around the participants and for them to have an active say in the activities. Activities need to be tailored to meet the needs of the participants and to be allowed to evolve rather than being predetermined (e.g. Epstein and Boisvert, 2006; Jarrott *et al.*, 2006; Magic Me, 2005; Pain, 2005; Salari, 2002).
  - **Participatory:** it was reported to be important for activities to be suitable, enjoyable and of interest to both the young people and the old people so that they can both participate and so neither group are 'onlookers' (e.g. Epstein and Boisvert, 2006; NCICDP, 2005; Pain, 2005; Salari, 2002).
  - **Varied and diverse:** it was also noted to be helpful if programmes were varied and used a diverse and creative range of methods of engagement in order to maintain participants' interest and enthusiasm (Krout and Pogorzala, 2002; NCICDP, 2005).
  - **Focused on developing relationships:** the literature stated that it was important that the development of relationships, strong friendships and understanding between the two groups was encouraged and facilitated by staff. Granville (2002) writes that negative outcomes can occur when insufficient attention is paid to the process within activities and consequently stereotypes are reinforced. It was considered important to challenge perceptions and to encourage participants to see how they could contribute to the activities (e.g. Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006; Epstein and Boisvert, 2006; NCICDP, 2005; Salari, 2002).
- suggested that establishing ground rules and preliminary exercises on stereotyping were important. Preparation also involved Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks on the adults, briefing them on child protection issues and establishing an agreed policy (e.g. James, n.d.; Langford and Williams, 2004; Pain, 2005).
- **Characteristics of the elderly volunteers:** it was considered important to find out the motivation behind volunteering and to enlist those who provide a good role model for young people, who can communicate and champion young people and who are matched to the activities and young people in terms of their attitudes and skills. The enthusiasm and commitment of the volunteers was also reported to contribute a great deal to the success of intergenerational activity (e.g. Ellis, 2004a; McIntyre, 2007; Stanton and Tench, 2003; Scott *et al.*, 2003).
  - **Ensuring mutual benefits:** it was said to be vital for all participants to be seen as equal and to ensure that the activities are meeting their aims so that they get mutual benefit out of the activities. The training of staff can be used to ensure that there are benefits for all (e.g. Cambridge and Simandiraki, 2006; Gibson, 2006; Evalucon, n.d.) For example, Salari (2002) says older adults were 'infantilised' in an intergenerational activity where the environment and activities were only suitable for the children, and Robinson *et al.* (2006) noted that young people disengaged from activities when they were only appropriate for older people (e.g. talks on local gardens).

### 4.4 Participants

Three key factors with regard to participants emerged as vital for the success of intergenerational practice within the literature.

- **Preparation:** careful preparation prior to intergenerational activities, enabling both young and older people to address their apprehensions separately, was considered vital. It was also

### 4.5 Organisation

The importance of effective planning was identified within the literature. Two specific aspects, timetabling and transportation, were particularly highlighted, with the former appearing to be especially identified in relation to community-focused projects.

- **Planning:** effective planning and organisation for intergenerational activities was considered vital, although it was said to be lengthy and time-consuming. This includes the development of a schedule of activity. If the programme is disorganised there was an indication that this can be a significant barrier (e.g. Granville, 2002; Langford and Williams, 2004; McIntyre, 2007).



- **Timetabling:** it was noted that lack of flexibility with timetabling could create obstacles to effectiveness of programmes for students in schools or colleges. In addition, competition for space within the curriculum for intergenerational practice was also raised, and therefore commitment from the school management and school staff was thought to be vital (e.g. Cohen *et al.*, 2006; McIntyre, 2007; NCICDP, 2005).
- **Transportation:** transportation was considered important because it could facilitate participants' attendance for activities, particularly given that older people might have a psychological reluctance to attend (e.g. Cohen *et al.*, 2006; Fish, 2002; Krout and Pogorzala, 2002).

## 4.6 Partnerships

The importance of developing effective partnerships amongst all the agencies involved was often cited as a key factor. This included the following elements.

- **Strategic involvement:** it was considered important for all the partners to be involved in joint planning, delivery and evaluation. This required structures from the top and clear roles and responsibilities (e.g. Granville, 2002; Magic Me, 2005; Whitworth, 2004).
- **Operational relations:** poor relations between partners were reported to be a barrier to effective practice, and strong relations between institutions a necessary requirement, for example, between school staff and staff in day care centres (e.g. Carter, 2007a; Gibson, 2006; Stanton and Tench, 2003).

## 4.7 Summary

A summary of the key factors for the success of intergenerational practice is provided in Table 4.1. Some of the key factors identified relate to project management generally, such as funding, monitoring and evaluation, and planning. Others are more specific to intergenerational practice (these have been highlighted in italics in Table 4.1). Particular attention needs to be

paid to them when planning intergenerational activities and it is therefore important that:

- projects take a **long-term approach**, with a series of activities allowing time for relationships to develop
- staff have appropriate **skills and training** to deal with both older and young people, as initially staff may be skilled in dealing with one generation, but not the other
- there is **preparation of participants** before they engage in intergenerational activities
- activities are focused on **developing relationships** between generations
- activities are **shaped by participants** and so meet the needs of all participants, whether older or young
- there are **mutual benefits** from activities, and that activities are appropriate to both generations.

**Table 4.1 A summary of the key factors for success**

<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Long-term approach</i></li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Skills and training</i></li> <li>• Commitment and enthusiasm</li> <li>• Time and availability</li> <li>• Stability</li> </ul>
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Shaped by participants</i></li> <li>• Participatory</li> <li>• Varied and diverse</li> <li>• <i>Focused on developing relationships</i></li> </ul>
<b>Participants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Preparation</i></li> <li>• Characteristics of the elderly volunteers</li> <li>• <i>Ensuring mutual benefits</i></li> </ul>
<b>Organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Timetabling</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic involvement</li> <li>• Operational relations</li> </ul>

# 5 Discussion and recommendations

This section draws together the findings of the review and sets out recommendations for the future of intergenerational practice.

## 5.1 Discussion

There is a wide diversity of intergenerational practice in the UK, with activities commonly occurring within education, community development/neighbourhood renewal and health settings. However, there is a lack of clarity around definitions of intergenerational practice, particularly in relation to the age of participants from the two generations, the involvement of family members from different generations and the role of the 'middle' generation in intergenerational practice.

There is evidence in the literature that successful intergenerational projects have the potential to deliver positive outcomes for participants (e.g. increased understanding, friendship) and for communities (e.g. community cohesion). There were clear success factors in the literature that were linked to the achievement of these positive outcomes. Some are related to good project management in general, whilst others are specific to successful intergenerational practice. There was some evidence in the literature that if good practice in these areas was not followed, intergenerational practice could lead to negative outcomes for participants.

The review also demonstrates that the evidence base for the effectiveness of intergenerational practice is still weak. There were few rigorous evaluations of projects in the UK, and there was a wide diversity in terms of what was evaluated and how evaluations were carried out. A consistent framework for evaluations, applied across different intergenerational activities, would help overcome this issue, allowing comparisons across different types of intergenerational activity. As pointed out in the literature (e.g. NCICDP, 2005; McIntyre, 2007; Raynes, 2004), there is a need for more research to

inform future policy and practice and to demonstrate the credibility and effectiveness of the approach and, in particular, for more national UK research because context and policy issues differ from elsewhere.

Given the potential outcomes both for individuals and communities, and the close relationship of these outcomes to current policy concerns, this would suggest, as also identified in the literature (e.g. McIntyre, 2007; CIP, 2005), that there is a need for greater strategic commitment to, and investment in intergenerational practice, as well as greater advocacy and promotion to ensure work progresses systematically and effectively. The work that has been undertaken needs to be drawn together and current work needs to build on this in a systematic way.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The literature examined suggests the need for:

- **more research** exploring the effectiveness of intergenerational practice in a UK context and demonstrating the outcomes from, and key factors of successful projects
- more work around the **conceptual development** of what intergenerational practice is and how it is defined
- **greater promotion** of intergenerational practice as a means of contributing towards a wide range of social policy agendas
- **greater strategic commitment** to intergenerational practice from the Government and other key stakeholders, and the funding support to underpin this
- a recognised **central advocacy and coordinating** function for intergenerational practice, which draws together and builds on work already done in this field.

# Appendix 1: Search strategy

This appendix gives more detailed information on the search strategy employed to find relevant literature.

## Academic database search

The most relevant eight UK and international databases were searched for literature. The main search terms were 'intergenerational' used with 'programmes' or 'practice'. This was then linked to the terms 'effective', 'evaluation' and 'outcomes' to narrow the search to more relevant reports. The eight databases searched were:

- *Ageinfo*  
Information service about old age and ageing provided by the Library and Information Service of the Centre for Policy on Ageing.
- *Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)*  
Index of articles from international English-language social science journals.
- *British Education Index (BEI)*  
References to 350 British and selected European English-language journals in the field of education and training.
- *ChildData*  
Database produced by the National Children's Bureau.
- *Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)*  
Digital library of education research and information sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.
- *International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) and Social Policy and Practice (SPP)*  
IBSS is one of the largest social science databases in the world. SPP covers areas such as public and social policy, public health, social care and community development. Content is from the UK with some material from the USA and Europe.
- *PsychInfo*  
American database produced by the American Psychological Association.

- *Social Care Online*  
The UK's most extensive database of social care information.

## Key stakeholder interviews

Four key stakeholder interviews were carried out, involving representatives from the following organisations:

- Age Concern England
- Beth Johnson Foundation
- Community Service Volunteers
- National Youth Agency.

## Web searches

Websites which were seen by key stakeholders as potentially holding relevant literature were searched. They included government and voluntary sector sites, some international and some focused on the UK. The websites searched were:

- Generations United [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)
- Department for Communities and Local Government [www.rmd.communities.gov.uk](http://www.rmd.communities.gov.uk)
- Age Concern [www.ageconcern.org.uk](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk)
- Magic Me [www.magicme.co.uk](http://www.magicme.co.uk)
- National Youth Agency [www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk)
- RSVP Scotland [www.csv-rsvpscotland.org.uk](http://www.csv-rsvpscotland.org.uk)
- International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes [www.icip.info](http://www.icip.info)
- Community Service Volunteers [www.csv.org.uk](http://www.csv.org.uk)
- Institute for Volunteering Research [www.ivr.org.uk](http://www.ivr.org.uk)
- Centre for Intergenerational Practice [www.centreforip.org.uk](http://www.centreforip.org.uk)

## Appendix 2: Summary template

<p><b>Title:</b></p> <p><b>Author(s):</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b></p> <p><b>Publisher:</b></p>	
<p><b>Category of source:</b> international evaluation/research; UK evaluation/research; other (e.g. illustrative, less rigorous evaluation/research etc.)</p>	
<p><b>REVIEW OF SOURCE</b></p> <p><b>Purpose/focus of literature</b> (e.g. as stated in abstract)</p> <p><b>Definition of intergenerational practice</b></p> <p><b>Illustration of intergenerational activity</b></p> <p><b>Outcomes from intergenerational activities</b></p> <p><b>Critical success factors of intergenerational practice</b></p> <p><b>Any specific recommendations</b></p> <p><b>Any other key findings, conclusions etc.</b></p>	
<p><b>DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE</b></p> <p><b>Area of focus of intergenerational activity</b> (e.g. education, art, music etc.)</p> <p><b>Region/areas</b> (e.g. UK, US etc.)</p> <p><b>Participants</b> (e.g. sample size, profession, gender, age, ethnicity, etc.)</p> <p><b>Method(s)</b> (data collection methods, instruments, etc.)</p> <p><b>When data collected</b> (also duration)</p> <p><b>Source/document type</b> (e.g. journal article, website, etc.)</p> <p><b>Key references</b></p>	
<p><b>REVIEW OF EVIDENCE</b></p> <p><b>Reviewer's comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the reported analysis adequate?</li> <li>• Are the author's interpretation supported by the evidence?</li> <li>• Is the analysis reliable and valid/plausible?</li> <li>• Are there any biases/caveats raised or to be aware of?</li> <li>• Is there corroboration or triangulation of sources?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Relevance to review</b> (high, medium, low)</p>	
<p><b>Date of review:</b></p>	<p><b>Reviewed by:</b></p>

# Appendix 3: Literature sample information

This appendix provides more detail of the literature sample.

## Intergenerational activities

The sources were classified according to the main focus of the intergenerational activities described. The main focus of the 43 sources was as follows:

- school-based programmes (10) e.g. programmes based in schools regardless of the focus of activities, including curriculum enrichment, 'Philosophy 4 Children' delivered with older volunteers
- overview of intergenerational practice (9) e.g. focused on outcomes in relation to community cohesion, youth disorder, fear of crime
- community projects (5) e.g. intergenerational projects focused on community development and participation
- joint day care setting (4) e.g. daycare centres where young children and older adults are looked after together
- health (3) e.g. mental and physical health, fitness activities such as tai chi
- service learning (3) e.g. a teaching method that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools and communities by apply academic skills to solving real-world issues, linking established learning objectives with genuine needs
- learning/knowledge development (2) e.g. attitudinal change and knowledge development amongst students and older adults by learning together
- mentoring (2) old people being used as mentors for young people at risk
- reminiscence (1) older people reminiscing with younger people about their lives
- creative arts (1) intergenerational community arts project
- child care (1) elderly volunteers are placed in childcare settings
- social outings (1) young and older people visit interesting places together
- outcomes from general intergenerational contact (1) study exploring impact of intergenerational contact in general on cognitive outcomes and stereotype threat.

## Authors

The sources were also classified according to the type of organisation within which the report had been written:

- academics at universities (20)
- other organisations e.g. charities, consultancy companies (20)
- local authorities (3).

## Type of literature

The sources were classified according to the type of literature.

- research study (12) e.g. testing the outcomes of an intergenerational activity on participants; case studies of intergenerational projects; studies exploring aspects of intergenerational practice
- project evaluation (9) e.g. using focus groups, interviews, questionnaires etc.
- internal project evaluation (7) carried out by project staff e.g. using monitoring information, evaluation sessions, observations, interviews etc.
- discussion paper (6) focused on intergenerational practice and e.g. community cohesion, youth disorder, fear of crime
- project report (4) e.g. descriptive accounts of activities
- literature review/review of evidence (3)
- practice guide (2) e.g. intergenerational practice; intergenerational reminiscence work.

## **Date of publication**

The literature sample was also classified according to the date of publication:

- 2002–03 (10)
- 2004–05 (13)
- 2006–07 (17)
- No date (3).

## **Country of origin**

In addition, the sources were classified according to their origin.

- UK (14)
- England (12)
- Wales (2)
- Scotland (1)
- Northern Ireland (3)
- United States (9)
- international (1) review
- Australia (1).

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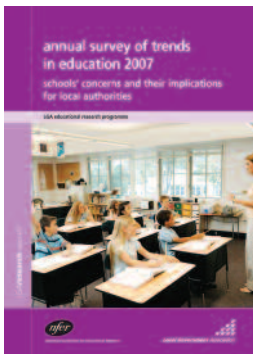
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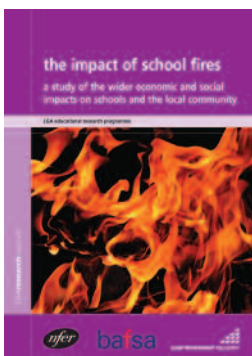
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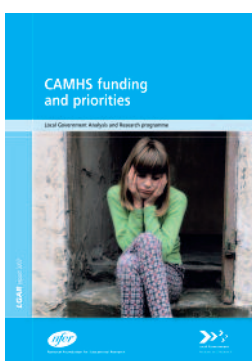
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Conducted by the NFER for the Local Government Association (LGA) this report focuses on the findings from a literature review of what is known about the effectiveness of intergenerational practice.

Interest in intergenerational practice and what it can achieve has grown amongst practitioners and policymakers in the UK and Europe, however, it is suggested that there is still a limited and weak evidence base for the effectiveness of intergenerational practice in the UK.

This report looks at:

- what research on intergenerational practice has been carried out since 2002
- what kinds of outcomes can be achieved through intergenerational practice and for whom
- how the outcomes for different groups relate to the social objectives present in government policy
- what the characteristics of effective intergenerational practice are.

With key recommendations and discussions, this research is important reading for all local authority staff, policy makers as well as practitioners promoting or undertaking intergenerational activities.