

2019 theme – Intergenerational Working – all ages working together

Keep Scotland Beautiful has chosen to link in with the growing popularity of intergenerational projects, working with the charity Generations Working Together this year for our 2019 theme and focus for groups taking part in Beautiful Scotland and It's Your Neighbourhood. The following guide has been created by [Generations Working Together](#) (Scotland's intergenerational charity) to explain the concept of intergenerational projects and to give you ideas of how to start your own.

What is intergenerational practice?

Simply put, something that connects two groups of ages (normally younger and older people together at least 20 years apart) in a mutually purposeful way and as a result has both benefits for the participants and for the community. The projects are normally grassroots and can take place in any community setting. Most of the projects have volunteer involvement in some way, but the key is that they can be adapted to a community or group.

A good description of intergenerational practice is given below:

“Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes 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: Beth Johnson Foundation, 2001.

What are the benefits of bringing younger and older people together?

These projects have grown in popularity due to changing lifestyles and the loss of community connections. This has led to age segregation and the loneliness. By bringing generations together we are tackling these issues and creating a world where age barriers are broken, and generations of all ages are respected. Some of the benefits of being part of intergenerational project include:

1. Improved health and mobility
2. Increased sense of wellbeing and connection
3. Friendships are developed leading to less loneliness and isolation
4. Increased feeling of safety in the community
5. A growing respect for the environment and built heritage
6. Learning and passing on skills
7. Taking part in intergenerational projects can be fun

It is very important the projects are evaluated throughout, this can include questioners, verbal feedback, photos and videos.

What are examples of intergenerational projects?

There are many examples world-wide as intergenerational projects have been running since 1970s, many shared regularly on Generations Working Together's website: <https://generationsworkingtogether.org/case-studies/> or social media accounts: Facebook - www.facebook.com/GenerationsWorkingTogether/ and Twitter - <https://twitter.com/GenerationsWT>.

Some specific projects in Scotland include:

- **Cycling Without Age** - A project that started in Denmark has spread to Scotland in 2017. It brings younger and older people together by training younger people to be trishaw 'pilots'. These pilots then pick up older people from the community and take them around the local area to build friendships, increase wellbeing and to appreciate cycling. Bikes are specially build to support older people with any mobility problems. <https://cyclingwithoutage.scot/>

- **Newbyres Nursery and Care Home** – Nursery children and older care home residents come together weekly and take part in activities that include gardening, playing games and creating art. www.newbyresnursery.com/
- **Connecting Generations** – Generations Working Together – An intergenerational officer brings older volunteers into schools to improve children’s literacy and numeracy. These volunteers support the children but also gain meaningful connections and conversations which connect them to the area. Additionally, projects such as community lunches and reflective garden design have happened as a result. www.tcsoa.com/Information/Intergenerational-Work/
- **Inverclyde Buzz** – Schools are brought together with older volunteers to create meadows and transform their local areas. Children can learn about the environment and bees as a result. <https://scotlandsnature.blog/2018/02/23/creating-a-buzz-in-inverclyde/>
- **Raploch Intergenerational Community Garden** - A shared space for younger children and older people to come together to garden, chat and learn from each other. www.raplochcorner.org.uk/

How does this relate to environmental projects and Keep Scotland Beautiful?

All the above projects have an environmental aspect to them, whether that’s gardening together or cycling. Intergenerational projects with an environmental component can be a great and practical way to enjoy the outdoors, for children to learn vital skills such as gardening and to improve our health and wellbeing while also caring for our environment and our community. Due to the grassroots nature of many of these projects, they can be tailored to what you would like to change or improve – the key thing is the intergenerational connection.



What do you need to think of when starting or developing a project?

You need to think about an idea or an issue in your community, as well as key stakeholders and funding opportunities. Think about how this project will change the community for the better and, if needed, discuss current ideas with possible participants or groups in your area such as schools, local groups and care homes.

Ensure that the project is right for your area and start small. Remember that you can always grow your project later and this will be easier with more participants and volunteers. Also think about the current projects you are doing or ones you have done in the past and whether there can be an intergenerational aspect to them (for example if you have a community garden, how do you ensure both younger and older people are involved).

The best way to get a project off the ground is to research ones already running and to learn from them. Don’t be afraid to ask organisers questions or share your ideas. Create a plan and intended outcomes. Remember to think about evaluation too.

Who can help?

Generations Working Together is a national member lead charity with over 2,700 members and can help by providing advice, networking opportunities and training for anyone in Scotland who wishes to start or is running an intergenerational project. To keep up to date please join as a free member on: <https://generationsworkingtogether.org/join/>. For training, please have a look at the training page; training runs both online and offline and includes CPD hours: <https://generationsworkingtogether.org/events-training/>.

To share any projects please email beautifulscotland@keepsotlandbeautiful.org and contact Kate Samuels, Communications and Policy Assistant on: Kate@generationsworkingtogether.org. For general enquiries about Intergenerational Working please email: office@generationsworkingtogether.org or call 0141 559 5024.

Beautiful Scotland and It's Your Neighbourhood – all ages working together

Here are a few ideas for inspiration (thank you to all of the 2018 groups and volunteer judges/assessors who contributed):

- Run an intergenerational environmental quiz, scavenger hunt or a growing competition e.g. two or more groups which include younger and older people grow some vegetables from seed and see who manages to achieve the largest vegetable – great for photos and encouraging all ages to get involved.
- Encourage parents and grandparents to get involved if you already work with schools.
- An example from IYN group – [Friends of Granton Castle Walled Garden](#): recent work with Craigmoynton High School pupils has led to the idea of some of our older group members going into the school to chat about their involvement in safeguarding and restoring Granton Castle garden. Older adults from different cultural backgrounds also help with sharing their skills and knowledge at practical session in the garden.
- Work with other allotment holders who are of all generations to hold a combined celebration event and to share expertise.
- Engage with the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) to find out if there is any joined up working your group could do with schools.
- School children could work together with the community with gardening tasks and this could include older people – the older often have gardening tips, experience and stories that they can share.
- An example from Scottish UK finalist group – [Brig in Bloom](#): “Our group did a great project getting youngsters to talk to older members of the community to learn about life in the past. This was then converted into sound bites and presented as a musical - truly cross-generational. In addition, it gave older people - especially perhaps those in care homes - the chance to impart their knowledge as to how things were in days gone by, especially relevant in terms of what wild flowers etc. used to grow where.”
- Link up schools with older volunteers to help find local gardening projects (perhaps in adopting local spaces that need a little TLC).
- An example from Beautiful Scotland group [Kinnesswood in Bloom](#): “We have a big project planned with the local school, involving interviewing, filming and doing art work with local people of all ages.”
- Approach sheltered housing/residential care homes to see if they need any assistance with gardening (you could get youngsters involved) or offer to run a workshop for residents/day visitors – potting up seedlings/window boxes, creating Christmas wreathes etc. This could equally work well in a nursery/school/after school club/uniformed group setting.
- Encourage young people to take part in our [Young Reporters Scotland](#) competition – get them to speak to your group members and explore the work of your group before writing up a report/submitting a video (they could provide your group with free publicity!).
- Host a [One Planet Picnic](#) or a [Clean Up event](#) for people of all ages in your community .
- Dedicate a section of your community garden as an ‘all ages working together’ bed or have ‘all ages working together’ planters – lots of hints and tips can be shared.

If your group has a Facebook page or Twitter account, please link up with us so we can ‘like’ and help promote the work of your group. Our Twitter is twitter.com/ksbscotland; and Facebook page is www.facebook.com/KSBScotland. Please use #BeautifulScotland or #ItsYourNeighbourhood to help spread the news of the celebrations.

