



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing Paper

Subject: Intergeneration – Generations Working Together

Director: Graeme Kane, Chief Operating Officer

Officer Responsible: Jon Wild, Community Development Manager/ Laura Thomas, Community Development Partner; Older People

Background and Reason for Briefing Note	Overview of Intergenerational practice and projects delivered by Cherwell District Council
<p>Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations. It contributes to building more cohesive and stronger communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them.</p> <p>As a local authority Cherwell District Council are proactive in taking an intergenerational approach to community projects and initiatives and see it as an important way of promoting understanding and developing connectedness within communities. We understand that younger and older people live as part of multigenerational/all-age communities and how this offers future opportunities for engaging all ages through our work.</p> <p><u>The benefits of intergenerational practice</u></p> <p>The benefits can vary according to individual project aims. These benefits can be realised at an individual level, by the wider community and also the organisations that represent them.</p> <p>Project evaluations tell us that participants report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-confidence • A sense of belonging in the community • Opportunities to influence local government policy and community planning • More positive perception of people from different generations by challenging negative stereotypes, breaking down barriers and including less fear between generations. • New skills development – Gardening, Cooking, IT and Creative Arts • Further participation in the community and a stronger sense of citizenship • Mutual understanding and increased sense of empathy between generations including the challenges that younger and older people face including isolation, and stereotyping • Increased awareness of the life cycle and life choices • To learn about history as a living, ongoing process 	

The benefits of organisations taking an intergenerational approach in communities can include:

- Identifying and delivering on issues and concerns raised in communities
- Understanding priorities of local people in local areas which can lead to safer neighbourhoods and more sustainable communities
- Achievement of strategic aims and objectives - Age Friendly Banbury, making Banbury a great place to grow old.
- Building working relations with various organisations through collaboration, sharing of resources, skills and learning
- To learn how to develop and document the results and impact of intergenerational exchange



Photographs taken at Older People's Day Celebration



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Previous/On-going Intergenerational Projects/Initiatives

Older Peoples Day Celebration.

In partnership with Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) and Banbury Young Homeless Project (BYHP) an event was held to celebrate international older people's day, with an intergenerational theme of skill swapping. We had many 'traditional' activities on offer which were showcased by older people to the younger people and vice versa with 'modern activities' being showcase from young people to the old. It was a very successful day seeing young people try their hand at knitting and older people graffiti, highlighting that whatever age we all have something to share and learn. Most importantly it broke down generational barriers and stereotypes and helped bridge the generation gap. Both organisations partnerships were sustained with them both hosting regular intergenerational games nights.

MR MOTs (Memories were Made Of This)

A multi-agency approach in partnership with Sanctuary Housing, Fusion Arts & North Oxfordshire Academy (NOA). This was a creative arts project working with NOA sixth form students and vulnerable older residents from a Banbury sanctuary housing scheme. The aim of the project was

to create relationships between the young and old, learn new skills and help reduce social isolation. The project engaged the generations by sharing each other's childhood memories with the final element of creating a piece of art to capture these and it being housed and showcased within their building. It was a fascinating project with both parties exploring their past, sharing stories and trying new art forms. An older participant said, 'it is so nice to mix with young people and learn new skills that aren't typically for older people'.

Full Circle

Working in partnership with Sanctuary Housing, Full circle and William Morris Primary School we took older volunteers weekly into the school to work with vulnerable young people on activities over lunchtime whilst sharing lunch and chat. The initiative builds strong nurturing friendships and a mutual understanding between both generations. Young people benefit from the friendships formed, gaining positive mature role models whilst the older volunteers shared their life skills and felt purposeful. Bonds of friendship were formed and participants felt more engaged with their community.

The project has great feedback from all parties involved; the success is being continued with developments to expand the initiative into St Leonards Primary School next.

Arch

A good example of intergenerational work across the whole district is with Arch, a charity that brings volunteers into schools to help a child to read. We work to promote and recruit older volunteers to give them a purpose within their communities and give something back to the next generation, while the younger people build their skills and life experiences and have positive interaction with an older, non-family, person

Groove Aerobic Lite

With grandparents being carers of their grandchildren in the school holidays, generally their interest and hobbies are put on hold. In partnership with Groove Aerobics, the Mill Arts Centre and Woodgreen Leisure Centre we host intergenerational Groove Lite classes throughout the holidays; enabling older people to continue their usual activities, promoting health and wellbeing across the generations, highlighting that exercise can be fun at any age. Young people join in and get the same physical benefit as well as seeing their grandparents in a new and social setting. There is value in sharing the experience.

Upcoming projects

Rusty Musicians and Rock Band partnership

A Rusty Musicians group has been formed in Bicester to mirror the successful Banbury programme. The Rusty's meet at Studio 2, the arts space managed by OYAP; working with Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership and their rock school we aim to create intergenerational jam sessions within the school holidays. This partnership programme allows all the participants to share and learn new skills and music, have fun and highlight that whatever age a common interest can bond people together.

The Hill

Once the development of The Hill has finished, we are looking at working in partnership with the Hill Choir, the Mill Arts Centre and the current Rusty Musicians in Banbury to have intergenerational music sessions sharing skills, music, interests and fun. We are hoping to develop a sports based equivalent session too.

Intergenerational Action Group

Working with OYAP, we are setting up an intergenerational action group, consisting of older and

younger residents in Bicester. The group will conduct consultation with Bicester residents on what the intergeneration needs are within the community and to set up and deliver sustainable intergenerational initiatives and projects from the outcomes of the consultation.

The Cherwell District Council Communities team will continue to embed intergenerational practice into all its work streams and encourage partners and organisations to share good practice and look at opportunities for all. The work of Age Friendly Banbury will allow all community partners to work together to make Banbury a great place to grow old and from this good practice can be shared across the district.

Completed by: Jon Wild - Community Development Manager Date: 13/08/2019
Laura Thomas - Community Development Partner; Older People

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