The Role of Intergenerational Initiatives in Reducing Fear of Crime (To Include Supporting the Social Integration of Older People with Disabilities)

Desktop Research undertaken by The Centre for Intergenerational Practice
Commissioned by the Community Safety Unit
Northern Ireland Office

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Introduction

1. When the word “intergenerational” is used very often any activity that entails younger and older people being in the same place is assumed to be included as an example of “Intergenerational Practice”. However, there are a number of elements that need to be in place before it is appropriate to call something “Intergenerational Practice” (IP). This is more than a semantic distinction and reflects the need to ensure quality standards are met and the fundamentals, including mutual respect and an exchange of experience and learning which are equally valid, are explicit in the planning and always present in the engagement that flows from this. The participants should also have a degree of ownership. While Intergenerational Practice has wide applicability, it is not a cure all and over-ambitious claims for its capacity to produce ‘change’ are to be avoided.

2. A lack of clarity may have resulted from an exponential growth in intergenerational activity, developing at such a rate that the more reflective and analytical aspects have struggled to keep pace. It is important, however, that practice, theory and research achieve a symbiotic relationship (Journal of Intergenerational Relations (JIR Vol.4 No.1, 2005, Bernard M. “Research, Policy, Practice and Theory”). There can be some confusion also over terminology when using the terms ‘programme’ and ‘project’. Some of what I will subsequently include as programmes are referred to often as projects by those involved, including funders. Some discussion of how to determine what a lifetime project might entail is also included.

3. In Britain the Beth Johnson Foundation, under its Chief Executive Alan Hatton-Yeo, was funded by the Community Fund and Lloyds-TSB to promote intergenerational work and ideas across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to establish a Centre for Intergenerational Practice (CIP). An Advisory Group was established and David McConnell (then with ACNI) has been a member since its inception. This link has proved to be very significant.

4. In countries where intergenerational work was developing, it was felt that building relationships across national boundaries was important and in 2000 the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes
was formed, with the Beth Johnson Foundation based in Stoke acting as secretariat. A quarterly Journal, the “Journal of Intergenerational Relations” was developed, published by the Haworth Press and the Joint editors are Prof Sally Newman (USA) and Prof Mariano Sanchez (Spain). David McConnell has been a member of the Editorial Board since 2004.

Intergenerational Practice, Community Safety and Fear of Crime

5. The extent of fear of crime within the older community is disproportionate to the level of crime against older people, which means that factors other than crime come into play in creating and fostering it. It follows that this fear can be reduced by actions not directly addressing it. Facilitating greater social contact, which is not of itself necessarily either a community safety measure, nor aimed directly at reducing fear of crime, can in fact reduce that fear. For example, the degree of social isolation experienced by many older people (and others) is generally associated with higher levels of concern.

6. Older people’s fear is often associated with an unfounded perception that the vast majority of young people pose a threat. It also follows therefore that affording opportunities for the two groups to learn more about one another, whether the focus of the engagement is on safety, or some other area, can also help to reduce fear within the older community. However, such engagement requires careful planning, otherwise the result could make things worse – there is considerable evidence that merely bringing groups together who are in conflict, or who are suspicious of one another, can actually be counterproductive.

7. Taking this wider view is important, because there is a possibility that Intergenerational initiatives that aim to address this issue will focus exclusively on older people’s fear of the young and therefore only on the need for young people to have greater respect for the older people. If and when this happens it distorts the purpose of intergenerational engagements. In fact Research by Durham University on IP suggests that young people are less likely to be consulted about issues and in this sense may be more marginalised than older people.
8. Indeed there is something of a paradox between the conflict at community level and the nature of wider intergenerational relationships. If asked, most older people will say their grandchildren are generally well behaved and show respect – although they may also refer critically to their children’s child-rearing practices. If most grandparents have this view how can most young people pose a threat or risk? It is also the case that there is an element of ‘historic amnesia’ regarding youth offending and wayward behaviour and also with respect to the activities of today’s older people when they were young.

9. When we consider the wider context, intergenerational ‘compacts’ are part of the glue holding society together. Consider, for example, the fact that successive generations of working people pay for the pensions of those who are retired; of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child, which is a commitment by successive generations of adults of all ages to protect children, who in their turn will assume a similar responsibility, and; the number of older people who volunteer and work with children and young people’s organisations and in the process gain a great deal from the experience. In recent years, due in part to the ageing population and the debate concerning the costs associated with this, there are concerns that some of these ties may be in danger of weakening. These examples serve to remind us of what the consequences would be if they did and of the importance of intergenerational initiatives generally, to ensure this does not happen.

**Intergenerational Practice in Northern Ireland**

10. Intergenerational Practice was introduced to Northern Ireland through the Millennium Awards. These were fairly generous awards made to older people who put forward proposals for intergenerational projects. The fund holder was Age Concern. Proposals made in Northern Ireland were assessed by a local panel. A similar process occurred in England Scotland and Wales. Proposals that passed this hurdle went to a UK panel for final consideration. It was anticipated Northern Ireland would receive about 12 awards. In fact 42 were successful. Age Concern NI (ACNI) felt this initiative should not end with the ending of the Awards and following the first Intergenerational Conference in Northern Ireland set up a Steering Group in 2002 of interested individuals to continue to
support intergenerational projects. However, while some funding was forthcoming for individual projects, none was secured for strategic development. The Steering Group was initially broadly based, but in the absence of funding the active membership declined over the years. Fortunately contact had been made with the Beth Johnson Foundation and this continued with the relationship growing stronger over time.

11. ACNI’s championing of Intergenerational Practice after the end of the Millennium Awards was very important. Had the organisation not done so, it is extremely unlikely IP would have survived. It was also a weakness, however, because it meant IP was seen as part of the older people’s agenda and also because many saw it as part of the ‘respect’ agenda. As a consequence young people’s organisations were slow to become engaged.

12. Funding was eventually secured in Belfast from 2006 through the Belfast Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) and for Ards, initially through the local Health Trust and the Council and subsequently through the Community Safety Partnership. This enabled a Development Worker to be employed for the first time and additional significant funding from Community Safety Unit and Atlantic Philanthropies will enable a second Development Worker (part-time) and an Administrator (part-time) to be appointed. This funding will facilitate strategic developments outside Ards and Belfast. By this time ACNI had indicated it was no longer in a position to continue to coordinate and manage the work and in 2008 the Centre for Intergenerational Practice assumed that role. Intergenerational Practice has never been in such a strong position in Northern Ireland and it is opportune to review its history and potential now.

Intergenerational Practice and Social Policy in Northern Ireland

13. When those engaged in the formation and implementation of public policy refer to “young people” and “older people” (or more likely “the elderly”), to whom are they actually referring? Do they have Paul McCartney in mind, or High Court Judges? It is not an age, but an image of a person characterised by a series of negatives describing physical appearance and mental capacity that they often have in mind. Similarly
when referring to the young (NI Youth Forum membership is open to people up to the age of 25), in mind is a particular group of young people associated with the phrase ‘anti-social behaviour’. Both age groups are seen as a problem to be addressed and they in turn feel no one listens to them. These are the people who are likely also to be a focus for intergenerational initiatives in the area of community safety.

14. The Steering Group established in 2002 met Martin McGuinness who was Minister for Education. He expressed interest in IP, but soon after this the NI Assembly went into its long suspension and momentum in the political sphere was lost. During this period administrations in England, Scotland and Wales became more interested in the potential of IP and began funding its strategic development. These outcomes were due in no small measure to the intergenerational agenda being driven by BJF/CIP. Despite some inventive developments in Northern Ireland, therefore, IP remained without funding.

15. Until 2008, staff at ACNI continued to promote IP whenever the opportunity arose. A series of articles were written for a number of publications. Presentations were given at a range of events as diverse as a major conference on Nursing and another on good practice in community safety initiatives for older people. Following the latter discussions took place with the Youth Conference Service which resulted in a Service Level Agreement. This entailed ACNI supporting an older victim during the conference, or representing their views and wishes regarding restorative actions. A programme was also devised which entailed the young person engaging with older people. Over the period of the SLA being in place ACNI was only involved in a very small number of conferences and the programme was only fully completed once – so it could not even be evaluated. The Centre for Intergenerational Practice has subsequently agreed to provide support at conferences, but to date has received no requests to do so. It would seem therefore that ‘crimes’ against older people are not generally being committed by ten to seventeen year olds and the issues between the two groups are more related to older people’s perceptions and street behaviour which may stop short of criminality.

16. The first official policy document in Northern Ireland referring to the value of Intergenerational Practice was Ageing in An Inclusive Society. The second was the draft Community Safety of Older People policy. To
date these are the only two that refer specifically to it as an instrument of policy. It has also been promoted during Age Awareness week since its inception and the extent of this focus has grown over the years. Attempts last year to organise events to mark the first European Day of Solidarity between Generations (29 April 2009) were unsuccessful. This was due to a number of factors, including the short time frame and over optimistic assessments regarding potential support within it.

**Intergenerational Programmes and Projects in Northern Ireland**

**Intergenerational Programmes**

17. Intergenerational programmes are generally built around a number, or series of projects. Funding includes an amount for the employment of a worker to coordinate it. An advisory or steering group generally oversees its progress, including awarding grants. Funders may or may not wish to have a hands-on approach. A Development Worker will provide support at all stages of planning and for the duration of individual projects and will be responsible for ensuring each project meets the requirements identified. The Development Worker will make regular reports to the Steering Group on progress. Individual evaluations are usually a condition of receiving funding, with a percentage of the grant withheld until this requirement is met. Their duration clearly depends on funding. A final event, or celebration, bringing representatives of the various projects together, often marks its conclusion and a final report/evaluation is also produced.

18. Age Concern Millennium Awards: These were funded through the Millennium Commission. They were won by people over 50 who submitted proposals for intergenerational projects and who successfully passed the assessment procedure. Two hundred and four were funded. As already indicated there were 42 in Northern Ireland, with 140 award winners and over a thousand young people involved. These included sporting and cultural activities, teaching rural crafts, environmental preservation, musical expression and community festivals. Many of them, although not having a direct community safety focus would, none the less, have addressed such issues indirectly. A number did have such a
focus, including: Kilcooley Community Garden; Building Bridges (Belfast) and Millennium Friends (L’Derry), with the older volunteers working with a school for teenagers with EBDs (Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. David Savage from ACNI oversaw the programme in NI. He described a number of his experiences. These included: attempts to revive Sandy Row Boxing Club; a teenage drop-in centre on Garvaghy Road; Ballymoney where, following the tragic death of three young boys in a sectarian firebomb, the award winners wanted to create a community garden; Loughrea, near Newry which resulted in the Young at Heart group combining with the local primary school to produce a concert. The Millennium Awards were independently evaluated and this, essentially qualitative analysis was very positive. Following the end of the awards ACNI held a conference for participants in early 2002, with support from BJF/CIP, the Health Promotion Agency and the Abbey Community Fund. The key areas for success identified at the conference were, disseminating good practice, sustainability, partnership, training and resources. In subsequent discussion, it was suggested that an Intergenerational Forum be established – and hence the NI Steering Group was born – and that “we should... be working towards a situation in which we are not seeking resources and commitment for individual... projects, but rather one in which the practice of intergenerational working is mainstreamed”. This aim set thinking here in the intergenerational vanguard!

19. Northern Ireland Screen-Education: This was an Intergenerational Film project and formed an element within the ‘Renewing Communities Programme and Action Plan’. It ran from 2006-2008 and was working exclusively in North Belfast. It sought to provide technical, artistic and educational support to allow intergenerational groups in deprived areas of Belfast to use digital technology to examine aspects of local history. Nine intergenerational films and one digital story were produced. There were 234 participants – 115 older people and 119 younger people. The evaluation states that “Intergenerational understanding and respect was increased”, with both groups learning more about using digital technology and the project team also gained valuable insights into the process of working in deprived communities. In fact the evaluation details a number of hurdles that had to be overcome in achieving success. One of the staff involved in the programme described it as one of the most valuable pieces of work she had been involved in.
A City for All Ages: This programme was funded by Belfast Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) between October 2006 and March 2008. It was evaluated by Deloitte – although the interim report which deals specifically with the intergenerational work is a better source of information on it than is the final report. The programme was managed by ACNI and BCSP provided funding of £40,000, with matched funding of £10,000 from Belfast Charitable Society-Clifton House. A Steering Group was established, and a Development Worker appointed. The community safety issues addressed include, a focus on young people in the ‘at risk’ group, older people’s fear of crime and isolation, attitudes and perceptions, a general lack of understanding of safety issues and a lack of mutual respect. The report states groups reported a reduction in fear of crime amongst older participants, greater mutual understanding and improved relationships and a raised awareness of IP in the wider community (these sentiments were echoed at a seminar in April 2008 with group leaders/facilitators). The Deloitte Report also suggested a need for a strategic approach and concluded, “The intergenerational project has successfully piloted a model to support local community groups across Belfast to partake in intergenerational activities all of which were aimed at reducing fear of crime among participants”, adding that any future model should follow a similar pattern. BCSP has continued to fund intergenerational initiatives, but ACNI withdrew from managing the work from April 2008 and the CIP has acted in that role since then. A total of 15 projects were funded during the first period, with a further 17 since then. A training seminar was also funded and in the latest application process, October 2009, 21 applicants were competing for 10 grants. Where funding comes from CSPs the application process requires the applicants to explain the community safety element in the proposed project.

**BELFAST 2006-2008 “A CITY FOR ALL AGES”**

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<td>St Vincent’s School/Clifton House Residential Unit/Mullen Mews Sheltered Accommodation</td>
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<td>Include Youth</td>
<td>Oasis Centre</td>
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<td>Age Concern East Belfast and Castlereagh</td>
<td>Colin 50+</td>
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<td>Retired Teachers</td>
<td>Tar Anall</td>
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<td>North Belfast Older People’s Community Safety Partnership</td>
<td>Newhill</td>
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<td>Belfast City Council/Age Concern NI</td>
<td>Denmark Street Community Centre</td>
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21. Ards Intergenerational Project: This project/programme began in January 2008. It followed on from three pilot projects in the area, that had been funded through the Ards Community Safety Partnership (ACSP). Funding for the subsequent programme came from South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and the Council, who each provided £10,000. A Development Worker was employed for 18 hours per week and six projects were completed by January 2009. The model used was essentially the same as the Belfast model. This was evaluated by Lynn Johnston, who was originally employed in the area and was a member of the Steering Group, but who subsequently won a Ph D scholarship at QUB to study Intergenerational Practice. Her report echoes the Deloitte report, but also stresses a number of additional points. These include a concern that initiatives such as these are driven by key people within the Steering Group which leaves it vulnerable if they move on; that it afforded new ways of working for groups in local neighbourhoods; that participants should play a role in planning and that ‘buddying-up’ can enhance building relationships. ACSP has provided funding which has enabled the work to continue and as in Belfast there has been an increase in interest, with 16 applications for 10 grants in October 2009.
NEWTOWNARDS 2009-2010

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<td>Kirkiston PS/Cloughey Community Assoc</td>
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Further Information on all these projects is available on the website at [www.centreforip.org.uk](http://www.centreforip.org.uk)

22. Comber Primary School IT Programme: This offers basic IT training to older adults and women returning to the workforce. Pupils in primary 6 (10 years old) are the facilitators and the IT teacher oversees the work. This resulted in the school winning two awards earlier this year. An O2 Its Your Community Award and also the Schools ETC Award (Extending to Communities). During the 4 years of the programme some 300 adults and 48 young facilitators have been involved. The principal has said the older people benefit from a non-threatening environment and the young people become more confident and independent. It also dispels some of the misconceptions about children. This project is actually ‘multigenerational.

23. Bangor/North Down Age Concern: This programme has been funded by the local Council. It has a limited budget and is still in process of development, but has secured continuation funding for more projects this year.

Intergenerational Projects

24. Intergenerational projects are single initiatives, generally take place over 3 or 4 months and funding is for the project only. It may be an add-on to the work of a public sector worker, community worker or teacher. Some have had formal evaluations, some more informal, while others have not had any. While it is tempting to regard these as inherently less significant than programmes there is a body of research that suggests the quality of the engagement is as important as the quantity (JIR Vol.5 No.4 2007 Hannon and Gueldner). The following list gives some detail on single projects here, but there will inevitably be omissions as new projects are
being discovered all the time. However, it does give an indication of the range that has been undertaken.

25. Opportunity Youth and the Older People’s Art Network are working together and this is funded by the CSU and will be evaluated. The young people included in the OY scheme require support during the transition from school to work.

26. YO Larne: This was funded by Homefirst Community Trust and was developed by the Health Promotion Service as a Mental Health initiative. The participants lived in Antiville estate. The partnership supporting it included, Homefirst, Youth Justice Agency, NHSSB and ACNI. A member of staff and an older volunteer from the Community Care Centre facilitated the project. It was externally evaluated and as ever comments from the participants reflect the learning and enjoyment that they experienced. “Sticky lollies were the best bit – I felt like a girl again” and one of the younger people said her dream within the group was... “to help the older women in the group to achieve their dreams too”, with the final comment from the evaluator that “No social policy initiative could ask for more”. The support group continued to meet and it was hoped that the older people would continue, but with the aim of establishing a project through which they would provide support to young single mothers on the estate who were in difficulties. This did not happen. One of the reasons was that the Senior Health Promotion Officer (Young People), who had secured the funding for the original project and had been a strong advocate for it within the Trust, went on extended maternity leave. This reflects the point made above in Lynn Johnston’s evaluation of Ards.

27. Banbridge CSP: This project brought together younger and older people who developed a community safety story which led to the creation of Story Boards. These told of a crime against an older person – but she was ‘saved’ by a young ‘hoodie’. The project ended with a presentation in the Council Offices and the idea was that the Boards would move around different venues. It was interesting because the focus of such projects is often the young developing more respect for the old. With this, however, it was the stereotyping of the young that was challenged.

28. Engage with Age: Engage with Age works with the older community in East Belfast and Castlereagh. This project involved WWW (a group of 12
older women) and pupils from Cregagh Primary School (12 pupils, including two from the Hearing Unit). The groups met on Thursday mornings and there was a community safety element included. This session included a Sgt from the PSNI and was based on the NIACRO Community Safety Audit of 2001. Outcomes included a breaking down of stereotypes and more positive contact between young and old when they met subsequently in the community. Links with the school were to be maintained. The strength of this project was that participants lived in the same neighbourhood and would continue to see each other. It met a real need therefore.

29. Newtownabbey Senior Citizens have also embarked on a project, which will include an engagement between older people and the young people they claim are causing them concerns and problems.

30. Northern Ireland Youth Forum: The Forum organised an Intergenerational Debate on a Bill of Rights for NI. This was the winner of the first Youth Council NI Intergenerational Award and the following two were runners-up. NIYF is currently organising an intergenerational debate in the Senate Chamber in Parliament Buildings.

31. Ballybeen Action Project: An intergenerational quilt was created and in the process “the participants developed tolerance and friendship” as they progressed.

32. Rosemount Youth Forum: The Youth Forum initiated a series of meetings with older residents affording them an opportunity to voice fears and concerns.

33. Strand Primary School/Age Concern East Belfast and Castlereagh/Belfast Central Library: The focus for this project was WWII. After a get to know one-another session, the groups went to the Belfast Central Library. The older people reminisced about their WWII experiences. The young people made notes and then put the stories onto computer. Library staff edited this material and it was placed on the BBC website.

34. Wellington College/Aquinas Grammar School/OFMDFM/ACNI: These were very specific engagements around consultation on proposed
legislation. These were, the EU Age Regulations and the proposed Single Equality Bill for NI. They took place in the Long Gallery in Parliament Buildings. The school students were 6th Form politics students and the older people were active on older people’s issues. The students had briefing sessions on the legislation and at the event some 24 students and a similar number of older people worked their way through the key aspects of the proposed legislation in round table discussions. With each having a number of participants from both age groups. The result was included in the formal consultation process. For the schools this afforded an opportunity to engage in a real process rather than ‘mock’ events and the groups found a significant level of agreement. This intergenerational consultation model could be used for other consultations.

35. Caledon Healthy Living Centre asked ACNI to provide age awareness workshops. It was not clear if sufficient funding would be forthcoming for this to be followed by a project, although that was the intention. Given that Caledon is a small village/town most people would assume ‘everybody knows everybody else’. This proved not to be the case. There were three sessions: one with the young people; one with the older people and; one joint session. The process was evaluated by the older person’s coordinator and even with this brief engagement changes in attitude were recorded. Of course these would be lost or weakened without follow-up.

36. A number of other projects entered for the Youth Council’s Intergenerational Award, which was introduced in 2009. Information on them is basic, but they include Ballysally Youth Club, Galroc Youth Group, Information on them is basic, Youth and Age Limavady, Cregagh Youth Centre and Cruse Bereavement Centre-Ask the Experts.

‘Lifetime’ Projects

37. If the term ‘lifetime’ is taken literally to mean for an entire life span, then the intergenerational compacts referred to above are achieving this. Indeed it could be said to reflect the ultimate aim of, not only IP, but also the United Nations, which talks of building a society for all ages as the aim of its global strategy on ageing. If it is taken to refer to long term
projects continuing uninterrupted for a significant number of years, although not necessarily with the same participants, no such examples are to be found in the history of intergenerational practice in Northern Ireland – although some may have the potential to do so. Such projects would be expected to deliver a significant legacy, reflecting more long term change among and within the participants. Some recent development may fit this category in time and there are examples from elsewhere, some of which could be replicated here, having been adapted to meet local circumstances. The following are offered as indicators of the range of possibilities. The resource requirement is not made explicit, but may be inferred from the brief descriptor.

38. The most complete concept of a lifetime intergenerational programme is “Local Authorities for All Ages”. This entails a conceptual framework that includes not only relationships, but also the environmental elements that need to be in place in order for it to be achievable. A number of British Cities have committed to the principle and have begun to develop policies to start them on the road. The CIP is a key driver in this and an attempt should be made to persuade the Councils here to, at least, explore the commitment necessary to become “Councils for All Ages”.

39. Developing curriculum material for schools: The advantage of this is that once developed it is available to a large number of people and given modern technology it can deliver maximum outcomes for minimal input!

Neighbourhoods: The aim of this module is to “reduce fear of crime in rural areas. The project was funded under the EU Peace and Reconciliation Programme 2000-2006 Under Measure 2.7 Building Community Capacity. It was developed by Belleek District Community Safety Partnership. It uses a then and now approach and there is a DVD and guide for teachers/facilitators. It has the novel and effective tool of having older people dressed as ‘hoodies’!

CCEA (the Curriculum Council for NI) has a science module for Key Stage 3, years 8-10, ie lower secondary school, titled, Age and Ageing. While it obviously deals with the science of ageing, it also asks students to consider related social issues.

Bridging the Gap: This has been developed very recently, by a group of retired teachers in Belfast. It examines a range of issues and suggests a
number of ways in which young and old can meet together. It is for year seven pupils (the final year of primary school in NI), but could be used more widely. It will be on the CIP website and have a direct link from the CCEA website.

40. Mentoring in schools:

Year Seven Intergenerational Mentoring Project: This, BJF/CIP programme was developed across a Local Education Authority in England and has been independently evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University. This evaluation is on the Centre for IP website.

RSVP: This is the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme of CSV – Community Service Volunteers. Some 4,000 older volunteers (50+, with no upper age limit) work in schools. The average volunteer participates for 5-6 years, but some for as long as 18 years. Although it says it operates across the UK it does not operate in NI at present (VSB ran RSVP here for ten years with funding from DHSS but this ended when DSD changed the funding criteria. A group do meet as RSVP but are not connected to the British RSVP. VSB and VDA run a programme called “Unlocking Potential”).

Intergen: This programme has been running since 1999 and “creates robust partnerships between schools and older people in local communities throughout the UK” (not though in NI). It has been externally evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University and this evaluation suggests friendship and contact extends beyond the confines of the school.

However, the engagement of older people in education “needs to have clear objectives, be carefully planned and evaluated, if it is to make any lasting and significant contribution to the lives of the participants” (JIR Vol.3 No.4 2005 McConnell).

41. Homeshare: This is a programme that matches an older person with a young person. The young person will go to live in the older person’s home and in return for reduced rent undertake to provide practical support. This trade off provides low cost accommodation for the young person and enables the older person to remain at home, secure in the knowledge that help is at hand for both day to day things and in emergencies. “Our research proves that Homeshare is an excellent way
of promoting mutual help and solidarity between generations. Homeshare helps to prevent and fight against the social exclusion of older and younger people (JIR Vol.1 No.3 2003 Kriechemeier and Martinez Roman).

42. Full Circle: This operates in Oxfordshire, mainly in primary schools and has been running since 2000. It provides weekly lunchtime activities and support to young children who will benefit from nurturing experiences. Schools must agree to participate for a number of years and the children will remain in a group for at least six months. The older people benefit in a number of ways, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Full Circle claims its success is due to “the long term nature of the work”.

43. Murmur: This is an audio documentary project that collects and presents stories in a particular location. Some stories are anecdotal, some historical. They are recounted by former residents of the area (often older people), but “once heard, these stories can change the way people think about the place”. There are projects in a number of countries, including Ireland. It was one of the projects in the Bealtaine festival for which Age and Opportunity has responsibility (this is an Arts Festival which runs during May each year and features older people engaged in Arts across the Republic). It is supported by government, but has not extended to NI. Stories were collected about the Dublin Docklands area which has been extensively redeveloped. This could be considered for the Holy Land area of Belfast to enable the young transient population an understanding of the history of the area.

44. Magic Me: Based in Tower Hamlets, Magic Me specialises in creative projects bringing together young people 9+ and people over 55 from diverse cultures and ethnicities. Its Director Susan Langford has some 20 years experience in the work and was one of “Britain’s Everyday Heroes” in Gordon Brown’s book of that name. He said Ms. Langford has developed “a powerful model that is breaking down prejudice, building connections and touching lives”.

45. Hope Meadows: This is an “Intentional Intergenerational Community”, a neighbourhood for adoptive families and older adults, a place where the three generations care for and learn from each other. “It is based on the belief that much of what makes a community a good place for older adults also makes it a good place to raise children”. Its philosophy is
totally at odds with the increasingly popular concept here of separate accommodation and gated communities and it suggests one can have significant health problems, but still age well. The challenge is whether its ideas can be translated to non intentional communities and if so, how?

46. Closer to home, St Vincent’s Centre in Belfast which first became involved in 1999 continues to provide intergenerational experiences for its students. The school, whose students have EBDs (Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties), engages with residents from Clifton House and with Mullen Mews (sheltered accommodation for people with Alzheimer’s disease). In 1999 Valerie Pitman was looking to develop a service module for the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award for young people who are offenders, or who are at risk of offending. ACNI were looking to develop Intergenerational work with a similar group. The result was a collaboration between the three and the project plan that was devised remains the basis for all further developments.

47. Art Generations: This was based in Elmgrove primary school in East Belfast. It was funded by National Lottery via the Arts Council. Classes were organised on Saturday mornings and funding enabled the programme to buy in professional artists and to employ a manager/coordinator. It ran for two years.

Other Activity

48. As indicated above ACNI staff wrote articles, spoke at conferences, taught lessons in schools, attended seminars to raise Intergenerational issues and responded to inquiries with advice and information. More recently Lynn Johnston has obtained a scholarship to undertake a Ph D at QUB in Intergenerational Practice, funded through Atlantic Philanthropies. In 2004 David McConnell was the Intergenerational Guest Speaker for Adult Learners’ Week in Australia, as the theme was ‘Intergenerational Learning’. This was recognition of the quality and extent of the intergenerational initiatives undertaken here.
Intergenerational Practice, Multiple Identity and Disability

49. ‘Multiple identity’ refers to the fact that people can be identified in a number of ways. An older or younger person may also be male or female, be identified (labelled?) by race or ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, political view or beliefs. In an intergenerational project or programme the multiple identity of participants may occur naturally with the make-up of the participants. It may be the focus for the engagement, may arise incidentally in the course of the engagement or be planned to address a particular issue or issues. As an element of multiple identity is always present, perhaps it should be explicitly acknowledged in the planning and engagement that flows from it.

50. In NI a number of people with a disability have been included in intergenerational projects. In most cases this has been older people with dementia and/or mobility problems many of whom were/are in either residential or nursing accommodation. St Vincent’s, for example, links with both Clifton House residents and also with Mullen Mews, sheltered accommodation for people in the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease. As these older people are in sheltered accommodation they may not have the same fears as those in the community. However, the young people who attend St. Vincent’s are at risk of becoming known to the criminal justice system and already have involvement with a number of government agencies.

51. The first project with a particular focus on disability in NI was with a group of young and older people who are deaf. This had a focus on the changing nature of deafness over several decades. It was funded through the BCSP programme and could be a model for other initiatives involving people with disabilities. However, we are beginning talks with RNID to develop a more long term project and to include people with normal hearing. This is an area of important potential development for intergenerational initiatives that should be explored and developed. It could be the focus for a training seminar with people with disabilities and those who work with and for them.

52. A web search uncovered an initiative in Wales by Scope which is aimed at creating more volunteering opportunities for older (50+) people with disabilities from Black Minority Ethnic communities, including working
with and for young people. It is a three year project and will end in 2010. Learning gained in this would be of significant interest to groups in Northern Ireland. There is also a project in Leeds involving PHAB which included young people with physical disabilities, hearing impairment and some who were blind, which produced a video, but it appears only young people developed this. Some intergenerational projects refer to disability where the intergenerational element is often the parent child relationship and the focus is on communication, between, for example, hearing parents and deaf children. Others have minimal participation from those with a disability, one referring to 10% of young people with disability would in practice have meant one or two.

53. A great deal of mentoring happens informally within families and with friends. Formal mentoring/befriending is planned through a structured programme. Intergenerational mentoring, involving young and old is perhaps most commonly young people visiting and befriending older people who are socially isolated, frail and who may, or may not, have a disability. Or conversely older people assisting young school students. A local example is VSBs scheme. A number of schools have pupils visiting older people in residential accommodation, but the intergenerational element may be dormant, with the emphasis on helping the older residents rather than the mutuality of IP. This is not to suggest it is not valuable, merely that it has a different emphasis. There are also some examples of younger people with or without disabilities mentoring other young people. Evidence of intergenerational mentoring where one or both of those involved has a disability (the same or different) is more difficult to find. This also applies to group mentoring projects.

54. If the scope is widened to consider multiple identity generally, there is more evidence for some ‘identities’ than for others. Consider the issues that would surface if an intergenerational project was suggested around sexual orientation with a group of older gay men. Public discussion has tended to focus on people of the same sex parenting and this is still a controversial issue. Neither Stonewall nor the Rainbow Project Belfast had any reference to Intergenerational work.

55. Women live longer than men and many older people’s groups are predominantly female. Apart from longevity, it is clearly difficult to attract men and there is evidence that they see these groups as female dominated and generally interested in and engaged in activities mainly of
interest to women. There is also evidence that the pattern of volunteering between the sexes is different. This is reflected in the fact that in most intergenerational projects in NI older women have been in the majority. A number have been exclusively female, although the younger age group tends to have a more equal gender balance. Given that most crime is committed by men, this would suggest efforts be made to examine ways in which to engage more older men generally in IP and in particular older men with previous experience of the criminal justice system. There are some 30,000 ex-prisoners who had ‘Troubles’ related offences some of whom, at least, could be persuaded to engage with young people at risk.

56. In other parts of the world a great many projects and programmes have either had a specific focus on race and ethnicity, or have included participants from diverse backgrounds simply because of the ethnic mix in neighbourhoods. Northern Ireland had only one settled ethnic community of a significant size for many years, the Chinese community, with an older population. (There is also a very small older Jewish community). Some representatives have suggested there is a degree of intergenerational conflict between the older Chinese community and the younger people who have lived here all their lives and absorbed local culture. More recent immigration has created greater diversity, although most are not older people, so an intergenerational engagement here would include children from immigrant families and local older people. In fact one of the Ards projects did just that, as a number of the children in Donaghadee Primary School are from the Philippines.

57. Some projects from elsewhere may illustrate possibilities here. Magic Me has developed very successful projects involving younger and older women. The older women are white Londoners, but the majority of the young are Bangladeshi. They have worked together on women’s history and produced an excellent calendar a few years ago. In Spain a group of native older people were recruited and trained as story tellers. They learned the traditional stories of immigrant communities and told these in schools to mixed native and immigrant children to help break down hostility and make the immigrant children feel valued.

58. A number of projects here have been cross-community, either by design, or because this reflected the make-up of the participants. Generally these have not had a cross-community focus, but a few have addressed
political issues. One involving younger and older women made submissions to the Human Rights Commission, and the debates on proposed legislation have been detailed already.

**Potential Funding Streams**

59. In a review of funding for Intergenerational Practice (Tabea Schlimbach), BJF identified broad categories of funders. Trusts and Local Government were the most frequent funders of those in the survey. They remain a potential source of funding here. Since then, the Scottish Executive and the UK government have become major funders, although the latter is for England only. The Welsh Assembly continues to fund an Intergenerational Strategy for Wales. This means, in effect, that Northern Ireland is the only jurisdiction in which IP is not being funded by the Administration. The recent Showcase event in Parliament Buildings, hosted jointly by the Older People’s Advocate and the Commissioner for Children and Young People has raised the profile of IP. The NIYF Debate in the Senate Chamber (26 November) will add to this and these should be capitalised upon. The European Union Day of Solidarity Between Generations also affords an opportunity to embed IP still further and raising the profile is an important adjunct to securing continuation funding.

60. Atlantic Philanthropies and the Community safety Unit funding will enable would-be practitioners to access advise, training and support during the project. One full time and two part time staff will be employed until the summer of 2011. Long term, sustainable, funding needs to be secured to continue the work after that.

61. Belfast and Ards CSPs continue to fund projects in their respective Council areas, but they have become victims of their own success as more and more groups apply for funding and only 50% of applications were met in the latest round. Other CSPs have funded individual projects and this remains a potential source of funding.

62. It is also possible to develop and deliver a project without any additional funding. Where there is separate funding/resources for older and younger people’s groups/organisations this could be pooled. Schools
could deliver elements of the curriculum by including local groups of older people. Community groups could adopt a policy of building an intergenerational component into their approach. Churches have older and younger people’s groups and could bring them together for a range of activities.

63. Some Potential Funders:

Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI) manages a “broad Portfolio of grant programmes and the website gives details of each, which are open for applications and which are closed at present (including Peace II).

Red Nose Day Funding Programme UK is open to not for profit organisations. It includes young people aged 11-25 and Local communities as eligible and a new programme for older people is due to be launched soon.

Children in Need has 4 deadlines each year on 15 January, April, July and October. It offers small grants up to £10,000 over up to 3 years and over £10,000 also for up to 3 years.

Lloyds TSB Foundation has been affected by the Banking Crisis. The NI Foundation has changed its criteria. The maximum grant is now £5,000 and only groups with less than £250,000 turnover may apply. It supports social and community needs and education and training. The next closing date is 08.01.10.

Abbey Charitable Trust targets education and training, financial advice and community regeneration. It works through partnerships including local Abbey staff and pensioners and local charities.

The Big Lottery and Heritage Lottery are both sources of large and small grants. “The Big Deal” is managed by Youthnet and is part of the Young People’s Fund Programme. It has grants of from £500-£2.5k.

Carnegie Trust has funded projects with/for young people and its criteria include democracy and civil society and rural community development.
The Allen Lane Foundation offers small grants to small organisations and its focus is on marginalised/unpopular groups and includes older people. Applications including significant numbers from more than one of the target groups stand a better chance.

Prince Charles has taken a personal interest in IP and the Prince’s Trust is another potential source of funding.

The Wakeham Trust gives small grants to small groups £75-£750. The common thread is for “Empowerment. It donates to groups who do not employ staff and only gives to charities or to a charity acting as a host for the grant.

The Peter Cruddas Foundation supports disadvantaged and disengaged young people. Organisations need to be a registered charity or an individual or organisation supported by a charity.

Grundvig is part of the European Life Long Learning programme and to be eligible a project needs to include participants in more than one country. Northern Ireland is not a priority at present as it is not an underrepresented region.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has invited applications for Intergenerational Pilot Projects, with three key areas as relevant criteria: Environment; Migration and intercultural Issues, and; isolation and loneliness. The closing date for applications is 30 November and there are 20 grants of up to £30,000 each available.

Needless to say, all these trusts and foundations receive more applications than they can fund. Full details may be obtained on their respective websites. The CIP has an e newsletter which includes information on funding opportunities and this can be accessed by becoming an associate, which does not incur a fee. Address www.centreforip.org.uk. There are also websites offering advice an information on funding.
Models of Good Practice

64. There are certain key elements that must always be present to ensure a project or programme can be said to be a model of good practice. These include the following.

- The project is based on the needs of the participants.
- It should be supported by a planning group.
- Appropriate Child protection/vulnerable adult procedures must be followed.
- It should have clear aims and objectives.
- Establishing mutual respect by the participants is essential as is the fact that learning be a two-way process.
- It should have a procedure that enables change to be measured; this can be qualitative.
- It prepares the participants for the engagement. This will often entail single identity work, which may require more than one session with each or either age group.
- The first joint session should aim to provide a positive experience and an environment in which friendships can begin to develop.
- The participants should be involved in the planning at the various stages of development and as the project progresses.
- To facilitate this, training, advice and support should be available from a person experienced in Intergenerational Practice.

65. The Centre for Intergenerational Practice website has examples of good practice that reflect these general principles and various reports and evaluations of projects and programmes in Northern Ireland also highlight them. The NI page on the CIP website is being developed to include this kind of advice and information.