



Linking Generations NI Food for Life Grants Christmas 2022 Report



Introduction

With funding support from the Soil Association as part of the Food for Life Get Togethers Project Linking Generations NI were delighted to be able to award 25 small grants, of £125 each, in late 2022, to enable intergenerational 'Get Togethers' across NI in the month of December. The grants scheme was launched on the 1st October 2022 to mark Positive Ageing Month in Northern Ireland.

This Food for Life 2022 grants scheme saw a great dedication by groups and settings to connect



generations to enjoy good food, enjoy each-others company and spread some festive cheer. The groups involved have all been resilient and versatile in developing creative plans to hold their varying Food for Life Christmas events.

So many new connections were made with a total of 1,780 participants, from nursery age to 80+, taking part in intergenerational activities! This report highlights the benefits and knock on effects have been huge for the people who took part, the community leaders who developed the activities and the groups/organisations and settings that hosted them!

Impact of Grants

The grants act as a catalyst to create sustainable connections bringing older and younger people together. The impact of these connections is detailed below but as well as creating new opportunities, it also builds confidence and expertise to develop and implement intergenerational projects.

We see the benefits across the board for those involved and it's great to see how one small idea and a connection with another group/organisation/setting can provide positive outcomes for the participants, learning for the organisations/leaders and, in most cases, sustained links between people and organisations who go on to work intergenerationally as a result.

This short evaluation report gives some feedback and statistics from this wonderful programme – (232 participants and 21 group leaders were surveyed)

Some Vital Stats!

Our evaluation responses show that through developing connections with people of another generation in their community and taking part in Food for Life intergenerational activity participants felt more connected to their community, welcomed and respected and were keen to engage in further intergenerational activity!

- **98%** stated that as a result of their involvement they now felt more connected to their community
- **99%** said they felt welcomed and well-treated
- **99%** stated that as a result they would like to do something with a different age group again

The Headline Findings for Groups & Participants

They told us about the practical benefits of taking part in the project:

- Opportunities for social connections are so important for people of all ages.
- The bonds they made were almost instant!
- We learnt how there is great bonding through food. People were more likely to try something that they had never eaten before.

Intergenerational Benefits

Reducing ageism:

- “When people of different ages join together, they have great laughs sharing memories”.
- “The ones I met it seemed we had a lot in common...and also learned new things from the older and younger generations which was quite interesting”.
- “That they often experience the same problems as myself”.

Lessening stereotypes:

- “They were more exciting than I thought. The people were lovely and very knowledgeable.
- “They liked to enjoy themselves like us but in different ways”.
- “The ones I met it seemed we had a lot in common. And also learned new things from the older and younger generations which was quite interesting”.

More Cohesive Communities:

- “I felt more connected to the community as the young people came in to see us”.
- “That everyone, no matter whatever their age, enjoys being part of their community”.

Mutual Benefits and Respect:

- “Loved working with younger age group and teaching them how I make soup”.
- “They knew a lot of things about our local area”.
- “The children were interested in the plants in the garden. They asked me questions. I love the garden and nice to see them interested too”.
- “The different jobs that everyone had and how a lot of people were still working even after 30 years”.

We loved the feedback from the Food for Life grants participants!



Comments from the Project Leaders about what they had learned included:



- “All ages need to feel how important they are to our community especially the older generation who feel they are surplus to requirements once they reach a certain age”.
- “The interaction between both groups where respect and consideration was shown”.
- “We learnt all the participants enjoyed being in each other’s community, they provided a mutual respect for each other and generally enjoyed being in each other's company”.
- “Opportunities for social connections are so important for people of all ages”.
- “The positive difference it made to the wellbeing and mental health of all involved”.
- “I was reminded of what great fun it was for generations to interact and build relationship”.

Feedback from the Project Leaders

The projects funded not only provided great learning for the young and old people taking part but also for those who planned, organised and delivered the initiatives, We have highlighted their feedback under each of the 8 core principles that our intergenerational work adheres to (Pinto et al, 2009).

1. Mutually and reciprocally beneficial - each generation participating learns with and from each other. Project leaders told us:

- Despite the challenges, it was lovely to see again how much the generations enjoyed interacting with each other.
- Although it took some time to plan activities that would suit everyone and to organise for the children and adults to attend at an agreeable time/day, it was worth it in the end. The joy in everyone's faces during the session was so lovely to see. They were all buzzing afterwards. The older people particularly liked hearing the young people perform.

2. Participatory - based on the aspirations and needs of those participating. Project leaders told us:

- No matter the age we all have links between us, spending time with each other and listening to their stories and songs. It has had a massive impact on myself which I knew it would as to see both generations linking together, it is nothing less than magical.
- The positive difference it made to the wellbeing and mental health of all involved.
- Opportunities for social connections are so important for people of all ages.
- The interaction between both groups where respect and consideration were shown.

3. Assets based - working with the generations to help them to discover their strengths. Project leaders told us:

- The project gave elderly participants a chance to develop their cognitive skills and draw upon their memory.
- I learned that children and adults alike can get nervous when using their learned language and meeting new people and that simple, interactive events such as these can be of huge benefit to all ages.

4. Well planned - project leaders told us:

- We learnt about making all the arrangements for the event to happen. We liaised with the schools to arrange suitable dates. Purchasing everything required for the project i.e. food, sunflower seeds, compost etc. We asked the photographer from the local paper to come along and take a photo. We have completed this evaluation of our event and we thank LGNI who have helped us through grant funding to complete these events.
- I was reminded of what great fun it was for generations to interact and build relationships. It helped to have several activities such as a game and quiz, where they could easily interact and talk to one another.
- I was reminded of how important it is to be flexible when it comes to planning these kinds of projects, particularly as we had to rearrange some dates due to scheduling conflicts with the school and care home.
- The fact that we also had a back-up plan in place was also obviously important as we weren't able to go ahead with the second in-person session due to the Covid outbreak in the care home.
- How to make the best use of volunteers to better serve a large number of people with their soup and wheaten over a relatively short period of time.

5. Culturally grounded - tailored to the individual needs, context and attitudes of those participating. Project leaders told us:

- Sustainability to be able to compliment activities and ensure flexibility in response to older people's views, interests etc.
- Virtually all the residents taking part were living with some form of dementia so we also had to accept the limitations that meant for how much they could contribute to the sessions with the children.
- We have learnt that everyone works at their own pace and will eventually get there by gaining confidence and experience from others in the group. Our group is going from strength to strength.
- That there are large differences between the older and younger generations, for example, in technology.

6. Strengthening community bonds - promote active citizenship. Project leaders told us:

- I would like to have the older people who we have now developed a relationship with, to continue to come into school on a monthly basis.
- The great benefit and appreciation of the elderly members, and how even with the age difference, it had generational impact.

7. Challenges ageism - Project leaders told us:

- Connections developed with a younger generation can help older adults feel a greater sense of fulfilment. In fact, linking older adults with young children and adults provided advantages for both groups.
- All ages need to feel how important they are to our community especially the older generation who feel they are surplus to requirements once they reach a certain age.

8. Cross-disciplinary -providing a vehicle for broadening the experience of professionals and encourage more inclusive working. Project leaders told us:

- I would like to have the older people who we have now developed a relationship with to continue to come into school on a monthly basis. It will take planning to fit their visits in around curriculum learning.
- I really want to explore activities integrated into curriculum – ‘World Around Us’ for instance.

LGNI are delighted that as a result of involvement....



Nearly all of the project leaders said they would like to deliver intergenerational activities again!
20 of 21 surveyed!



Foundations of Wellbeing

All Ages April always showcases fantastic work and gives evidence to support the impact of intergenerational approaches to address health and wellbeing, social isolation, loneliness and improve **Community Connections**. **100 %** of participating groups and individuals practiced at least one foundation for wellbeing:

Give:

- All projects involved an element of mutual volunteering: older people share with younger people and younger people with older.

Be Active:

- Many projects involved physical movement - dancing, singing, moving about displays and making things.

Take Notice:

- Participants may have taken more notice of the world because the event was out of the ordinary for them.

Keep Learning:

- Across the projects older people explained things like Christmas traditions, recipes and old games to young people who discovered these 'new' things and in return helped older people learn about their lives and re-discover the enthusiasm of youth.

Connect:

- Participants connected with new people of different ages and expressed huge desire to keep connecting.

The evidenced outcomes of **Food for Life Christmas grants** activities and alignment with the Foundations of Wellbeing also contributes to the building of an **Age-friendly Northern Ireland** particularly within the themes of respect and social inclusion and social participation. Considering the number of schools and education settings involved, they make a considerable contribution to the **Department for Education's Every School a Good School Policy** by supporting the establishment of school links with the community. The high numbers of Care Home settings involved aligns Food for Life outcomes with the achievement of The **Department of Health Care Home Standards** relating to Contact with Family, Friends and the Local Community.

The Food for Life Christmas Activities!

Articlave District Community Association

We held an intergenerational Christmas lunch for 40 residents from the village. We brought together senior residents along with some of the teenagers from the village. We had some Christmas music playing in the background and we had a quiz which was well participated in. We also had stocking templates in which the attendees filled in what they would have received in their stockings on Christmas mornings.

11 younger and 29 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: That a level of respect and trust is possible to be built amongst the senior and younger residents of the village. They all enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.



Brookeville Enterprises



On the last weekend before Christmas, we organised an event in the Services Club Ballymena, where our group, supported by the Club's Ladies Committee and Veterans Support group were able to bring to bring 70 people together on a Friday afternoon, to have a bowl of homemade soup, a piece of homemade wheaten bread, locally sources pate, cheese & biscuits, teas, coffees & pastries.

20 younger and 50 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: Everyone felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.

Fermanagh Fun Farm

We had a live nativity in the barn using real animals and members of the local community to perform. Members of the community performed and acted out the nativity story. The local primary school and members of the community sang carols tonight with music provided by a local brass band. Everyone then enjoyed some food together.

60 younger and 90 older people attended.

Benefits, what we learnt: Organisation and planning is key as it was difficult to get everyone together at the same time to practice.



Building Ballysally Together

Building Together
Ballysally
Community Hub

We held a Christmas event with 6 young and 6 older individuals where they came together to have a Christmas dinner and dessert. We mixed the seating arrangements, so it gave a chance for individuals to have conversations with people of different age ranges. This was free of charge to reduce barriers of individuals taking part and had positive impacts in which

individuals engage in conversations about family, technology, their past and the younger individual's future.

5 younger and 7 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: Those taking part were more connected to other ages groups in their community. Reminded of what great fun it was for generations to interact and build relationship. It helped to have several activities such as a game and quiz, where they could easily interact and talk to one another.

Dungiven Regeneration Club

For this project we decided to run a Christmas themed craft event with a light lunch.

We started of this event with everyone coming in and meeting up which was lovey as serval people hadn't seen each other in sometime so that allow was great after a wee chat everyone got settled for their soup and sandwiches ,after this we set about organising and setting out the craft which was ceramic tile painting with Christmas stencils .it was fantastic watching everyone choose their design and colours and see how interested the different generations



where in each other's choice of stencil and colours. We finished of then with a cup of tea and a mince pie. This has definitely sparked a interest for us to run future intergenerational events following with the ceramics theme as we got our materials and catering costs for this event where lower than expected, we have purchased some clay to run another intergenerational with the rest of the money we are planning this event for February.

3 younger and 9 older participants took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: These type of events are very beneficial in any community organisations as not only do they open the eyes of young people to a different environment they also help older people provide a very positive more upbeat environment and was lovely just to stand back and watch the smiles and encouragement being shared.

Friends of Stewartstown Primary School



Our group brought pupils, parents, and grandparents together for Christmas crafts and food on Tuesday 20th December at Stewartstown Primary School. Children, parents and grandparents came together, had fun, learnt new skills and connected through participation in Christmas crafts activities. It was an inter-generational event with all generations connecting, sharing experiences and getting to know each other as they did craft activities together and enjoyed some festive food.

55 younger and 30 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: I was reminded of what great fun it was for generations to interact and build relationship. It helped to have several activities such as a game and quiz, where they could easily interact and talk to one another.

Gillygooley Youth and Community Development Association

We held a Senior Citizens Christmas Party on Saturday 3rd December 2022. Our Event consisted of the visitors arriving, being served a drink upon arrival & enjoying some music & dancing with a live singer. The singing then took a break while we served 'Afternoon Tea' which consisted of tray bakes, sandwiches, sausages rolls with Tea & Coffee. Singing then resumed for the remainder of the event, Santa came and gave out some presents and we ended the evening around 6pm. Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We plan to hold this event again in 2023.

7 Younger and 118 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: When required, all members of the community come together, work hard and ensure our events are successful for those attending.



The Glens Community Association



We held a Christmas Get Together, we tapped into the DRIVE Project and the Journey Project to bring young people together from across the Neighbourhood Renewal Area of Limavady and wider Limavady area. The Drive Project works with 5–13-year-olds from the Glens Community Association, RVRA Community Association and Coolestan Community Association. The Journey project is delivered in The Glens Community Association's Community house to 7–21-year-olds. We brought the young people from these groups and their families together in an intergenerational get together. We also invited our older service users who are either using our services through our craft groups, men's group or our outreach programme.

At the Get Together we provided a meal and entertainment for all to participate in, this would allow each generation insight into each other's company, benefit from shared experience and understand what they had in common with one another. Young people were able to watch and play old time games such as, Play Your Cards Right and older people were able to enjoy listening to the younger people singing in the

Karaoke. We also had a visit from Santa which was enjoyed across the generations.

Some of our older member volunteered allowing them to have a sense of purpose, developing their self-confidence and improving their mood and sense of belonging at Christmas time.

32 younger and 42 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: We learnt all the participants enjoyed being in each other's community, they provided a mutual respect for each other and generally enjoyed being in each other's company.

Santa's appearance pleased both young and old in equal measure and created an atmosphere of the magic of Christmas that everyone shared, he allowed everyone to relax. Young people enjoyed playing the older games and seeing the older people play " Play your Cards Right." We also discovered that young people equally enjoy singing traditional Christmas songs such as Jingle Bells as much as they do modern songs. This also helped create a better connection between the young and old.

St Comcille's Primary School



St.Colmcille's PS have been working with Galgorm Care Home over the past couple of years and during Covid. We have worked closely with Galgorm Care Home particularly through Linking Generations projects.

The day before BBC Book Day Lisa from Galgorm visited the school with bookmarks made by the residents for the pupils.

29 younger and 29 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: The pupils of St.Colmcilles will meet up with the residents of Galgorm Care Home. I would like to try some crafts like crocheting or knitting with the pupils and the residents.

Harpur's Hill Primary School

Our school is in the Heart of the community, so we invited the older members of the community to have a Christmas lunch with our Primary 7 children. We had hoped to have approximately 60 residents but due to viruses, Covid etc we only had 32. Nevertheless, it was a great success and our school choir entertained everyone as they sang Christmas Carols both during and after the dinner. The children and the elderly residents shared stories about their Christmas experiences and the toys they received. Our cook also made up some dinners which we delivered to those residents who we felt were in need of or would benefit from a hot meal.



This project was a great success and it is hoped we could run similar events during the course of the year eg Valentines day etc

35 younger and 6 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: The need to get the elderly residents out of their houses and into the community again following covid.

Jack Horner and Mother Goose Pre-School



Invited the Young at Heart Club to join us as our children performed the Nativity and to read stories to them.

We provided lunch that was supplied to us by an Outside Catering Company.

Staff thoroughly enjoyed the day and felt the warmth and pride of the members of the young at heart group for being invited to be part of the event.

55 younger and 85 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: We discovered that is good to reach out to the elders in our community as some of them are rurally isolated and were so grateful of being included.

Staff felt so good at being able to 'give' something to others especially at a time that is so happy for children but is not always a nice time for older people.

It was good to see them enjoy food and staff new that the group had at least one hot meal that day.

Holy Trinity, Dromore, Mother's Union

Because of illness in our Parish and an outbreak of Covid we did not get to hold our event until Sunday 22/01/23. This took the form of an "All Age Generation Sunday Lunch. We had 72 booked in for this event, elderly on their own, senior couples, young families with babies, primary age & secondary age so we had a great selection. Our Mother's Union branch early on Sunday morning prepared sandwiches & homemade soup in the Parish Kitchen. This was our first event catering in almost three years, and the buzz of conversation and laughter while preparing everything would have done your heart good, we had missed this so much.



During the lunch the hive of conversation between everyone was fantastic, people got up and moved around talking to those they hadn't seen in a very long time. For some there were tears and they had been struggling on their own with family living so far away. For those who didn't drive I myself organised getting them lifted before Church so that they didn't miss out. We had a craft that a lot of the young people got involved with including some of the adults, and the young people even enjoyed making the snowy owl for our very senior people who weren't just as mobile on their feet.

13 younger and 56 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: How important it is to build up people's moral, confidence and gently remind everyone that we are all there to support each other and reach out in times of need. All ages need to feel how important they are to our community especially the older generation who feel they are surplus to requirements once they reach a certain age. Getting people together of all age groups helps us to appreciate each other and learn how respect and mannerism to each other is easy carried.

Improved mental health due to social interaction. Participants got to take home their bespoke candle to use in their homes. It is very interesting to get different generations together and listen to their stories.

Kirlish Ulster Scots Association

This project, the first of its kind run by Kirlish Ulster Scots Association was a resounding success. The 4 different groups as outlined in the application were set up with 10 participants of different ages in each group. The children and teenagers were so keen to learn and get involved in preparing and making the different foods alongside the elderly participants, who explained the different ways some of this food was prepared and made years ago, when there weren't the same catering facilities as we have today. The entire project was overseen by three members of the committee, who have experience in cooking and health and safety issues.

The event was an excellent success with a total of 54 people in attendance.

21 younger and 33 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: The benefits of the project were both young and old having the opportunity to participate together.

Little Treasures Play Group

This project was planned and introduced to the children as an extension to links within the environment. Before the visit the children were introduced to the purpose of the visit - familiar with what was going to take place.



- Who might be there.
- Made a list of questions to ask
- Comparing Christmas - foods, presents, dinner
- Made a list of foods to buy, make and bring up to the visit
- Practiced songs that were going to sing

During the visit the children and the Daffodils went into small groups where they interacted, made Christmas decorations and foods. It was a joy to watch the interaction between both groups, the kindness and consideration of the Daffodils to the children, They patiently supported the children to make logs, adding decorations and making and decorating cupcakes. During the activities they asked the children questions about themselves, playgroup and Christmas. The children confidently chatted to them and presented the Daffodils with a log each. Both groups sat down to a Christmas tea party and sang songs together. This is when the question-and-answer sessions took place. A brilliant and worthwhile topic that I hope will be carried through at other times of year.

21 younger and 15 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: The interaction between both groups where respect and consideration was shown. The patience of the Daffodillers. The joy on all their faces as they sang together and exchanged information.

Magilligan Community Association



We discussed the project with our Thursday Morning Drop-in group and we decided that we would hold a Christmas celebration. To encourage as many young people as possible to take part we held the event on the last day of school before the Christmas break, which is a half day and our primary school children do not receive a hot lunch that day. The local playgroup is next door and the children called in after playgroup also. Our older people were members of our Senior Citizens Lunch Club and also part of our Craft Group.

We prepared stew and the everyone helped to prepare leek and potato soup at our Soup Disco where we played music and chatted as we chopped! Following our meal, we decorated gingerbread people and there was great conversation and interaction between our generations. We also did some Christmas Crafts using resources from Linking Generations. Our older people enjoyed the company of the children, and we discussed what happened at Christmas in past times in Magilligan. Overall, the experience was very positive and we would love to hold another event in the future.

8 younger and 17 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: We learnt how there is great bonding through food. People are encouraged to chat whilst doing and it creates a great atmosphere when we are able to give back something. People gained skills from the cooking activity and recipes were swapped. People were more likely to try something that they had never eaten before.

Maine Fold Tenant's Association

We arranged a Christmas Quiz for the resident's, school children and also members of the wider community, including the Randalstown over 50s group and members of Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum. The morning began with the quiz which saw teams made up of both the adults and children. After the quiz was finished and the winners announced, we then crafted for each other a Christmas Turtle Dove to exchange. Following this the school children then sang some Christmas carols for everyone. The morning was finished off with lunch being served for everyone who had attended. The benefits of this morning were immense for everyone, the interaction between the children and adults was fantastic and lots of new friendships have been made. We are planning for the seniors in the early part of the year, to go along to the school and have a Boccia morning with the children followed by tea and coffee. We have strong connections established with the school and look forward to building on the relationship.



10 younger and 30 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: Extending the event out to the wider community as well as fold residents was a huge success.

Thornfield & Woodgreen Residential



We had 3 small group get togethers. Our first session was a 'get to know you' and allowed the children and adults to become comfortable with one another, choosing different activities such as bracelet making or creating Christmas crafts using wool. We bonded together over hot chocolate, tea and biscuits.

7 younger and 3 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt:

The benefits for the children who are quieter, I was so surprised that certain children had the confidence to go and start a conversation or help an older person. The bonds they made were almost instant!

Milverne Residential Care Home

Millverne Residential Care Home and Health and social care students from the South West college came together to reminisce about Christmas past and the residents told the younger people what it was like at Christmas time for them and what they got as presents and how they decorated the house and how what they had to eat and how they prepared it without electricity. This stunned the young people as they were brought up with electricity. The students also told the residents in the care Home about what their Christmas's are like and what they were getting for Christmas.



This all took place over a cup of tea and soft drinks as well as some festive food. Both groups benefited from this get together as it brought two different groups together that would not normally meet up and both sides had an enjoyable time together and it has allowed us to get connected with a different age group which we can now keep in contact with and we have plans to meet up again

soon to discuss a different topic. There was a mutual benefit for both groups as they learnt things about Christmas that they otherwise would not have known. The residents had said they really enjoyed seeing the young people which made them feel connected to the community around them and have been asking since when are they coming back again!

13 younger and 17 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: We had covid in the home at the time but visitors were allowed in and all the students had to wear masks. This was a bit of a hindrance as it was harder to communicate but we did our best and both groups did enjoy themselves and both sides learnt from each other.

Tubrid Vaughan Bowling Club

This was a get together with all the bowling club members of which the younger members help organise the Christmas outing. This was the first Christmas event since 2019 for all the members. As quiet a lot where shielding and from early spring 2022 people have been gradually returning to the Monday night bowling. And this social occasion has helped to focus the elderly members of the distance and achievement they have made. Increasing confidence in getting back to a normal way of life once again. And building on the relationships of the younger members. Giving them a sense of achievement. In transferring knowledge and life skills.



7 younger and 20 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: The great benefit and appreciation of the elderly members, and how even with the age difference, it had not generational impact. The older members emulated an increased level of enthusiasm throughout the event. And in doing so lifted their spirits. And a great good feel-good factor. Which emulated to the younger members. And a great sense of achievement.

The Vibe Youth Club

On Saturday 10th December we organised a Linking Generations Christmas Party which brought together members of the Tuesday Break Retirement Group and young people from The Vibe Youth Club. Everyone was evenly divided around tables to ensure a mixture of ages at each. The event began with a welcome and short game around the tables called "Stop the Bus" with a Christmas theme. After this we enjoyed some food together, including scones, short bread and traybakes. Following this some of the young people helped to prepare a short Christmas table quiz finishing with a short thought spot & round table discussion, on our favourite bits about Christmas.



There was very positive feedback from both younger and older people involved, and many remarked on how this was a unique opportunity to connect with those from different generations. This was a continuation from a similar event which we organised last year and we hope to run an intergenerational coffee afternoon in the Spring. Encouragingly, the young people also chose to visit a number of the elderly people the following evening for some outdoor carol singing. A lovely touch!

21 younger and 28 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: I was reminded of what great fun it was for generations to interact and build relationship. It helped to have several activities such as a game and quiz, where they could easily interact and talk to one another.

Woodgreen Health Care / Willow Tree Lodge

We invited the children and leaders from Calvary Pentecostal Church to Willow Tree Lodge and the children performed their Nativity Play for us. We also had a 'Carol-Oke' Sing Along and dancing, Party Food and we exchanged hand-made Christmas gifts and cards. It was such a fun event and the first time we have brought our groups together, everyone got on really well as if we had known each other for years and we are already planning another get together going bowling. One of the leaders at the church has volunteered to dress up as Santa and visit Willow Tree's residents as a surprise next week and we now have a regular church visit scheduled at Willow Tree every week. All in all it was a very uplifting and joyful experience for everyone involved and made such a positive difference to the residents of Willow Tree and also the children and leaders of the Church.



20 younger and 20 older people took part.

Benefits, what we learnt: The positive difference it made to the wellbeing and mental health of all involved. We feel more connected to other ages groups in their community.

New-bridge Integrated College

Pupils at New-bridge Integrated College Banbridge accessed this small grant as a starting point to developing intergenerational activities in their school. The sixth form strategy group reached out to grandparents, a local care home and older people in the local community to invite them to attend a Christmas event with dinner and activities in the school. The event was really successful with everyone having a lovely afternoon taking part in Christmas crafts and enjoying festive music and a



Christmas dinner in the school canteen. For many of the older people it was the first time they had been in a school in many years! The BBC even came out and covered a story of the event on the TV news. The successful event was used to engage with the older people as to what future projects and activities could be organised for the rest of the term. Pupils went on to develop three further projects with other age groups in the school including a Knit & Knatter activities with grandparents and local older people and a Pebble Art project with local care home residents.

Approximately 30 older people and 25 young people took part

Summary



All these fantastic Food for Life projects have been inspirational, inspiring and testament to the commitment of local communities building intergenerational and Age-friendly communities. They took place as part of the Soil Association's Food for Life Project which encourages people of all ages to get together to plant, grow and eat food as a way of community wellbeing. This report shows that a little bit of funding goes a long way when added to the existing resources and assets in our communities. We hope to see more groups and individuals coming together to share, recognise and value the contribution of all the generations who live here. A big thank you to all of the people, organisations and settings across NI that made the activity in

this report happen! We could not do the work we do without these Intergenerational Champions!

Linking Generations Northern Ireland