



Linking Generations
Northern Ireland

Intergenerational Christmas Small Grant Scheme 2025 Report



March 2026

Introduction

With funding support from the Public Health Agency, Linking Generations NI were delighted once again to be able to award 30 small grants of £125 each, in late 2025, to enable festive intergenerational activities to happen right across Northern Ireland in the month of December. The grants scheme was launched on the 1st October 2025 to mark Positive Ageing Month in NI and the response to the opportunity was overwhelming, with more than 65 grant applications received!

Impact of Grants

These grants act as a catalyst to create sustainable connections in 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 among facilitators to develop and implement intergenerational projects. Leaders in ten out of eleven Council areas put forward applications and nine of those had successful grantees delivering Christmas Connections activities within their borough.

So many new connections were made with a total of 1377 participants, from nursery age to 80+, taking part in intergenerational activities! This report highlights that 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!

This evaluation report also details the activities and feedback from those involved (181 Participants and 30 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 the Christmas Connections intergenerational activity, participants felt more connected to their community, welcomed and respected and were keen to engage in further intergenerational activity!

- **96%** stated that as a result of their involvement they now felt more connected to their community
- **94%** said they felt welcomed and well-treated
- **97%** stated that as a result they would like to do something with a different age group again



The Headline Findings for Groups & Participants

Intergenerational Benefits – What participants told us!

Reducing ageism:

- “They can have good fun and I've learnt from them - how to paint.”
- “That they are good fun to be with. They are just like us.”
- “It doesn't matter what age or size you are, you can always join into something or do anything you put your mind to.”

Lessening stereotypes:

- “I loved the friendliness of the youth when they sometimes get such bad press.”
- “Some of the young people were great wee workers and used great initiative.”
- “They are so helpful and knowledgeable . They have a lot of skills and experience to give to others.”

More Cohesive Communities:

- “I found out about different people and how they help out in the community.”
- “I loved talking to people I didn't know.”
- “I loved creating a festive piece of art with the local community. Lots of laughs and memories made.”

Mutual Benefits and Respect:

- “They are lovely; they bring fun and laughter and brighten up the place”
- “The children are so friendly and warm and cheer us all up. I love to see them visit”
- “Everyone having fun and laughing, as well as being a bit scared of the animals was funny and fun”

We loved the feedback from our Christmas Connections participants!



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

- “We learnt that everyone enjoys celebrating Christmas, regardless of age. We learnt that people really appreciate the sense of community that an event like this can bring and that bringing people of all ages together has benefits for the mental and social health of both young and old.”
- “This event provided a great social opportunity for our residents and the pupils involved, some of which have social struggles. Everyone got involved and enjoyed being together. I have seen the pupil’s confidence grow as they have spent time with our residents and some residents have been encouraged out of their room to socialise when they would not normally do this.”
- “I learned and observed how beneficial it is for our young people to engage with and make friends with those who are older than them. Everyone had fun together, confidence and self-belief within themselves improved and both our young people and elderly felt connected, part of a community and people who cared for and took an interest in them.”



LGNI are delighted that



Feedback from Project Leaders

The projects funded not only provided great learning for the young and older 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:

- *"Both age groups have really enjoyed working together. They've discovered lots of similarities between them, and the feedback has been very positive. It's also been a great opportunity for them to build their social skills and learn from one another."*

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

- *"They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Made new friends.; Found out things about a different age group."*

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

- *"Good relationships have been developed with two local primary schools and both Principals stated that they would like to continue and develop this relationship. The connectivity with LGNI is also very important."*

4. Well planned - project leaders told us:

- *"Building on the success of our Christmas Connections project, we hope to continue and expand our intergenerational work with Nightingale Care Home. As the care home is within walking distance of the school, pupils will be able to walk there safely and attend on a weekly basis. Planned activities include shared board games such as draughts and Snakes and Ladders, alongside joint art sessions where pupils and residents can work creatively together. The close proximity of the care home allows us to sustain regular after-school visits without the need for transport, making these activities both practical and sustainable. This will support ongoing relationship-building, encourage social interaction and help strengthen meaningful connections between generations throughout the year."*

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

- *“This project highlighted the importance of creating informal, welcoming spaces where intergenerational relationships can develop naturally. We learned that practical activities and shared social time, such as eating together, help participants feel more relaxed and encourage conversation. Using a familiar, non-school setting also supported better engagement from the young people.”*

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

- *“Delivering this project showed us the strong impact that simple intergenerational activities can have. We learned that music, shared celebration and personal interaction quickly break down barriers and build meaningful connections. Pupils gained confidence, empathy and a greater sense of responsibility, while residents responded positively to the joy and companionship the visits brought. Working closely with care home staff highlighted the importance of planning activities that are inclusive and flexible. We also learned that small gestures, such as handmade gifts and conversation, can have a powerful emotional impact. Most importantly, the project showed a clear desire from all involved for ongoing intergenerational engagement beyond Christmas.”*

7. Challenges ageism - Project leaders told us:

- *“The project highlighted the importance of social inclusion, community and valuing both young and old”*

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

- *“As a result of this project, Age Concern Causeway strengthened relationships with the local primary school, creating a valuable ongoing partnership for future intergenerational activities. New links were also developed with teaching staff, school leadership and families, increasing awareness of the Dementia Choir and wider dementia services. The event helped raise the profile of our work within the local community, leading to increased interest from volunteers and supporters. In addition, shared resources such as rehearsal space, musical materials and staff expertise were identified, which can be accessed for future projects. These contacts and supports will help us develop sustainable, dementia-friendly initiatives and expand intergenerational engagement moving forward.”*



Foundations of Wellbeing

LGNI's small grants scheme 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 **Christmas Connections 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 Christmas Connections grants outcomes with the achievement of The **Department of Health Care Home Standards** relating to Contact with Family, Friends and the Local Community.

The Christmas Connections Activities!

Scotch Street Youth and Community Centre



Intergenerational Christmas Connections Event, delivered in partnership between SSSCC and Richmount Rural Community Association, brought together young people and older community members for a warm and festive afternoon focused on storytelling, creativity and meaningful connection. Participants began with a story-sharing circle, where both generations talked about their Christmas traditions and what the holiday means to them. This activity opened up rich conversations and helped everyone realise how many similarities they share despite the age gap.

The benefits included: Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Made new friends.

5 younger and 13 older people took part

St Francis Primary School

We have a partnership with our friends in Manor Court for the past 2 years and go up every other Friday to visit them. We complete arts and craft projects together, play board games, chat etc. On Wednesday 10th December we shared an animal therapy session together with Allan from Wee Critters.

We got to hold and learn about a variety of animals and both the children and elderly enjoyed this experience. The smiles on their faces said it all as some of the photos show. The children were very patient and kind with the elderly residents and encouraged them to have a go even if they were hesitant. They said things like, 'if I help you will you hold it, we'll hold it together..'. Likewise observing the elderly trying to hold or pet the animals illustrated to our pupils the importance of giving everything a go and not to let fear hold you back. Many valuable life skills of being patient, resilient, encouraging others, supporting others were observed and learned by our pupils during this experience.



The elderly see our pupils as their grandchildren and love to sit and chat with them about their day and what they are doing. Likewise our pupils have become very attached to some of the residents and have developed a lovely friendship with them, looking out for them and making them gifts/cards to help make their day better. We plan to continue with our visits in 2026.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Made new friends.; Found out things about a different age group.

15 younger and 23 older people took part.

Killyhommon Primary School



P5,6,7 visited Drumcoo Day Care Centre and the Grann Nursing home. When there the children mixed with the residents, taking time to take to deliver personalised cards they made to all residents. This brought much joy to the residents of these facilities. Whilst there they also sang Christmas Songs which brought much joy to everyone.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

30 younger and 30 older people took part.

Stroke Warriors

The Stroke Warriors who are stroke survivors joined with students & tutors from the South West College youthscape + program. The 2-hour session began with seasonal fayre, the students helped serve the warriors & we ensured they sat at opposite sides of the table to facilitate conversations. Following this some students helped make up hampers for a Christmas Draw while others made Christmas crafts under the direction of a craft instructor. A range of crafts were available to try. While all were crafting, they had the opportunity to talk about what they were making & their Christmas plans. All were delighted to take their crafts home to decorate their trees. The warriors were chatting about future plans for the group, one being a fundraising coffee morning, it was agreed that the students would join with us that day to provide much needed assistance



The benefits included: Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.

12 younger and 14 older people took part.

Florencecourt Primary School PTA



The primary school children (approx 20) went down and sang Christmas songs to the residents in the Tilrey nursing home. Their teacher brought along instruments to help the residents get involved in the session. Within the session residents would be seen clapping their hands and singing along to the well known music. One resident in particular had a great chat with some of the children.

The session was proven very successful. Children developed empathy and compassion towards the elderly. The tilery was very grateful for the

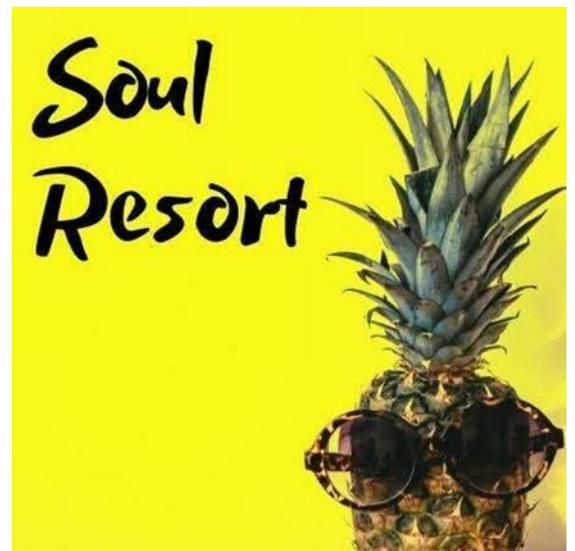
children coming down and providing entertainment for the afternoon.

The benefits included: Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Made new friends.; They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Found out things about a different age group.

20 younger and 20 older people took part.

Soul Resort

We invited a local Kint & Natter group to our Soul Resort club night, with the lofty ideas of teaching our young members to knit. It did not work; only about 4 teenagers were interested in the knitting , and as it turned out they had all knit before. But it was not a complete loss, our K&N group took great joy in watching and joining in some games including the table tennis, air hockey to unbelievably the football at walking pace. We had one group of young girls trying to get the K&N to understand the dance computer game, and the boys teaching them how to drive on the simulated racing game. The best was yet to come, before the refreshments, we set up a few question tables and answer group, but the question only went one way ..did you have a phone? What type of car did you drive? Was the computer very slow in the 1950? What is a black and white TV? Great fun was had by all, and some of our leaders realised how old the young people thought they are. The kids have no idea of what their elders got up to then they were young. The night finished off with Pizza and cups of tea; an enjoyable night for all!



The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.

74 younger and 10 older people took part.

Tyrella Primary School



I just wanted to share what a truly wonderful experience our Intergenerational Bingo Breakfast Morning was.

It was so special to see the community come together in such a natural and meaningful way. Watching the children and our older members of the community spend time together chatting, laughing, and enjoying each other's company was incredibly heart-warming. There was such a lovely atmosphere in the room, full of warmth, conversation and genuine connection.

Intergenerational care is so important to us, and mornings like this really highlight why. It was beautiful to see relationships forming so easily between the children and the elderly guests, reminding us all of the value of bringing different generations together and creating shared moments that benefit everyone involved. We definitely plan to hold another event in the near future for our community

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other age groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

34 younger and 11 older people took part.

Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership

Our project involved The Hens' Shed from Peninsula Healthy Living Centre, St. Patrick's Primary School, Ballygalget and Barrhall Residential Home, Portaferry. We purchased wooden treasure chests, Christmas Baubles and craft materials. Staff and members from the Hens' Shed went to the school and worked with the P7 pupils. The pupils did an amazing job decorating the craft items for each resident. They decorated them with paints, diamonds, stickers and wrote messages on them. We then all went to Barrhall Residential home. The pupils picked a resident each, introduced themselves and gave the gifts. The pupils then sang Christmas Carols and performed two songs from their Christmas Concert.

It was such a beautiful time together. The children were amazing chatting with each resident and discussing their likes and dislikes. The residents loved having the opportunity to chat with the pupils. The children and staff from St. Patrick's were fabulous with their singing and acting. The staff and residents from the home loved the morning of activities. The atmosphere was so inclusive and happy. A very enjoyable event.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other age groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

18 younger and 39 older people took part.



Ozanam Men's Shed



This project brought together young people attending Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) and older members of Ozanam Men's Shed through a series of shared, practical activities in a relaxed community setting. The groups initially worked together on Christmas craft activities, creating decorations and items collaboratively. These sessions allowed relationships to develop naturally over time, helping build trust, confidence, and mutual respect between the generations.

The project culminated in a Christmas Quiz, which opened with a shared breakfast. This informal start proved highly beneficial, providing a welcoming space for conversation and reconnection before the structured activity began. Both younger and older participants engaged enthusiastically, with many expressing how much they enjoyed the social aspect as well as the sense of achievement from working together. An unintended but positive outcome was the noticeable increase in confidence among the young people, who interacted more openly and comfortably with older adults in a non-school environment.

Overall, the project successfully promoted meaningful intergenerational contact, reduced barriers between age groups, and reinforced the Men's Shed as a safe, inclusive space. Based on the positive response, there are plans to build on this work through further joint creative projects and social activities, continuing to strengthen intergenerational connections within the community.

The benefits included: Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

6 younger and 15 older people took part.

Larne Care Centre

We are a care home for nursing care with dementia. We asked the local Primary School to come in for a Christmas party with crafts. The whole P7 class came in for the event.

It was fantastic to have the grant which enabled us to buy food for the pupils & residents

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

15 younger and 15 older people took part.



Windmill Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit

As part of our Christmas Connections project, Windmill Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit partnered with Nightingale Care Home to bring generations together during the festive season. Throughout December, P4-P7 pupils from our newly established school choir visited the care home weekly. The children sang a range of Christmas songs, creating a joyful atmosphere, and one pupil dressed as Santa Claus helped distribute handmade gifts and cards to all residents and staff, ensuring everyone felt included and valued.

The project involved Nursery pupils and P4-P7 pupils, school staff, residents of Nightingale Care Home and care home staff, with parents supporting preparation and participation. These visits provided meaningful opportunities for intergenerational interaction and helped address loneliness and isolation at a particularly sensitive time of year.

The benefits were clear for all involved. Pupils developed confidence, empathy and communication skills, while gaining a deeper understanding of kindness, generosity and community service. Residents benefited from companionship, festive enjoyment and emotional wellbeing, with many commenting on how uplifting the visits were. An unintended positive outcome was the strengthening of relationships between the school and the care home, with increased enthusiasm from both pupils and residents.

Following the success of this project, we plan to continue and expand our intergenerational work to include shared board games such as draughts and Snakes and Ladders, alongside joint art sessions and regular visits throughout the year to sustain these valuable community connections.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

58 younger and 47 older people took part.

Seaview Presbyterian Girls Brigade

Our 4 Seniors (girls aged between 11 and 13) decided to hold a Christmas evening of Craft and Chat and invite their older relatives and church members. They designed the invitations and posted on social media on the GB Facebook page. The Facebook post brought in a young family who had past connections with our GB which was lovely.

The benefits included: Learnt a new skill.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Made new friends.; Found out things about a different age group.; They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.

6 younger and 13 older people took part.



Kildress Wolfe Tones GAA

We held a Christmas Dinner for our Friday Social Group (a weekly get-together for Kildress older people) and Children from two local Primary Schools (St Joseph's Killeenan and St Mary's Dunamore) attended and sang Christmas carols, performed Irish dancing and presented personalised Christmas cards that they had made along with chocolate reindeers to those in attendance.

Feedback reflected that both groups thoroughly enjoyed the children's performance and the thoughtful cards and gift. Some actually stated that the children's attendance made their Christmas and reminded them as to what Christmas was all about. The school Principals stated that the children were very taken with how nice and appreciative the older generation were and would like to do something again for them.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

25 younger and 36 older people took part.

Spectrum Centre

11 of our young participants (aged 7-11 years) who go to Spectrum after school art club the Art Den met up with 8 residents from Winchester Court assisted living for a Christmas craft session and party. In preparation for the event, the young people made Christmas cards to give to Winchester Court people. As an organisation we have a great link with Winchester Court, which is only 5 mins walk from the Spectrum, we come together sometimes at Spectrum, we have outreach classes and events at their venue, but the most fun one is the intergenerational party at Christmas! We have found it gives the young people confidence in meeting new people and communicating, sharing and seeing those from an older generation as individuals with personalities and lives, not just some old Granny or Grampa. A few of our young people attended the event last year and were excited to see if the people they met were here this year again! In particular a lovely lady called Violet who may be small in stature but has a wealth of stories, a love of art and craft and a very kind and friendly nature. The residents of Winchester Court tell us they love the children coming as it brightens the place up, the craic is great and even if they don't feel able to take part in the crafts there's always loads of chat and fun and a bit of impromptu singing! There was loads of festive tasty treats which our ones helped serve to the residents with plenty left over for everyone to take home in a treat bag.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

11 younger and 8 older people took part.



Walker Memorial Primary School Parent Support Group

The members of the Open Door Club (local pensioners club in Castlecaulfield village) came up to Walker Memorial Primary School, Castlecaulfield, for an afternoon of tea and talents and singing from 2-4pm. The community bus dropped the club members to the school where they were greeted by some of the children and enjoyed a delightful afternoon tea. The children proceeded to perform a variety of their talents, including singing, playing musical instruments and dancing and gave some information on how they got involved in their chosen interest, when they practice or perform as well as any certificates or accomplishments they have gained.

The members of the ODC shared some stories of their talents and explained how there were not as many opportunities and clubs when they were at school. They all joined together in a sing along with our wonderful music teacher taking requests from both the children and ODC members. Both age groups really enjoyed learning about each other's talents and learning about what activities are available for children now compared to 60/70/80 years ago and how different school was. They valued the time spent with those they don't often see and hearing each other's perspective. This is the 3rd time the ODC and WMPS children have come together, and we hope to grow and strengthen our partnership and bond for years to come.



The benefits included: They felt more connected to other age groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

43 younger and 17 older people took part.

Slieve Dhu Nursing Home



Our programme is about Christmas Arts and Crafts with Hot chocolate Day. The children and resident made various Christmas Arts & Crafts together and they all enjoyed a cup of hot chocolate and various buns, crisps and sweet treats. Children also receive a party bag.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other age groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Made new friends.

18 younger and 30 older people took part.

Sunnymead Residential Home

For this particular project we had Killylea Primary School attend Sunnymead, the children and residents got to make a decoration for their Christmas tree. We ensured both resident and children got one each to keep so it would remind them of the activity. Our activities co-ordinator also keeps the session fun as she sings and plays guitar, this gets everyone involved and singing along. We have lovely refreshments for everyone including staff from the school during these activities. This project benefits all involved greatly - it gives the residents a sense of meaning, some of our residents have no family or family who live very far away and this gives them the interaction which they need. The residents thoroughly enjoy these intergenerational projects and it brings them so much happiness and joy. The children gain so much also, they may be away from the school setting but they still meet all the learning areas within the curriculum e.g. language, arts, PSE and world around us. Overall these projects are invaluable for all involved and we really hope to continue to work with the primary school if we are able to access more funding. It is so appreciated.



The benefits included: Found out things about a different age group.; Learnt a new skill.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Made new friends.

11 younger and 6 older people took part.

Omagh Boys and Girls Club

The young people participated in leadership training. Planned the event. Sent out invitations to Senior Citizens, Planned resources and a grocery list, ordered catering and set up for the event. The young people planned some entertainment. They served the lunch and tidied after the lunch. The young people socialised with the older people. Great personal and social development, overall emotional health and wellbeing, confidence building and social skills outcomes for both young people and elders.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

20 younger and 80 older people took part



Age Concern Causeway

Age Concern Causeway's Dementia Choir partnered with a local primary school to deliver a festive intergenerational Christmas carol service titled *Scones & Songs*. The event brought together people living with dementia, their carers, choir volunteers, school pupils and teaching staff for a shared morning of music, refreshments and connection.

The Dementia Choir and primary school children rehearsed and performed a selection of well-known Christmas carols, encouraging audience participation throughout. Pupils also spent time chatting with choir members over scones and tea, creating a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Family members, carers and members of the wider community attended, helping to make the event a true celebration of togetherness.



Taking part offered many benefits. For choir members, it boosted confidence, supported memory through music, and reduced social isolation. The children gained valuable insight into dementia, developing empathy, communication skills and respect for older people. An unintended but very positive outcome was the strong bonds formed between generations, with many children expressing a desire to stay involved and choir members reporting lifted mood and increased motivation following the event.

Building on the success of *Scones & Songs*, Age Concern Causeway plans to develop further intergenerational projects with local schools, using music and shared activities to strengthen community connections and promote dementia-friendly inclusion.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

25 younger and 28 older people took part.

Seaview Integrated Primary School PTA

Village Christmas celebration

Young and old making cards and decorations at the village light switch on Singing Xmas carols etc

What a great community we live in. So much knowledge sharing and compassion.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.

120 younger and 100 older people took part.



Tattyreagh GAA

The Golden Oldies group meet every Friday morning from 10 to 12pm. Various activities take place and the morning ends with tea and scones. Activities have included chair exercise programme, outside walking, gardening and day trips away. It was decided for the Christmas connections idea that the local primary school children would sing Christmas carols and play music. The money received from the grant was used to purchase refreshments and treats for the children. The event was evidenced through pictures displayed on Tattyreagh GAA Facebook page and on the Sacred Heart Primary School Facebook page. This morning activity was held on the 12th December and was a very enjoyable event where the young children and older members of our community came together.



The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

20 younger and 30 older people took part.

Lurgan YMCA



The Community Across Time programme engaged young people aged 14–18 in social action aimed at reducing isolation among older residents of Aughnacloy House. The programme successfully developed participants' communication, teamwork, empathy, and confidence through planning and creating care packs tailored to residents' needs.

Despite challenges, including limited engagement with budgeting activities and restrictions on in-person visits due to a respiratory outbreak, the programme adapted effectively to ensure young people completed their project and contributed meaningfully to their community. Participants demonstrated increased involvement over time, worked collaboratively, and expressed pride in their achievements. Overall, the programme met its intended

objectives by increasing participation, building practical life skills, and fostering positive community connections.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.

9 young people took part.

Mornington Community Project



Our event was a Christmas Dinner with the theme of a Christmas Carol 'Past, Present and Future.' Mornington aims to support people from young to old through all of our groups, projects and schemes in order to help them see the value in themselves and their help their prospects in whatever they do. To the dinner we invited our Oldest group of women called the rainbow group, who have been with us for 30 years since Mornington began, some of our older and young adult volunteers and our teenager group who meet on Wednesdays after school.

The aim of the event was to bring these groups, young and old, together in Christmas spirit to share in their experiences of Mornington and Christmas. We did this by leaving social questions on the table and the teens helped to serve the food out to the older people in the room. Some outcomes included the prospects of holding more regular senior social groups for the older participants to come to and there was some interest amongst the teens and young

adults to help with that. Overall, it was a successful event and we received lots of good feedback afterward.

The benefits included: Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Found out things about a different age group.

8 younger and 20 older people took part.

Prospect Private Nursing Home

Our residents took part in a Christmas wreath making session and Christmas party, as we were in lockdown due to illness we had to take the Christmas party room to room but the wreath making class was a group activity with roughly 12 participants. Each residents had a small wreath and a selection of baubles, tinsel, ribbons and seasonal embellishments to allow each resident to personalise their own how they wanted. Support and encouragement were offered when needed (using the hot glue gun). This activity was carried out in a relaxed environment with instrumental music in the background whilst everyone got to work on their wreaths. We also made Christmas cards in this session for those who did not want to make a wreath, using coloured card, stickers, stencils and pens.

The benefits included: Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.

12 older people took part.



New-Bridge Integrated College

At New-Bridge Integrated College, our Intergenerational Programme was designed to strengthen community connections while developing leadership and empathy within our pupils. Led by our Sixth Form students, the project brought together young people from Years 13 and 14 with older members of the local community through a range of meaningful activities including Knit & Knatter sessions, digital skills support, shared storytelling, community partnership visits and our annual Intergenerational Christmas Dinner. Pupils were responsible for planning, hosting and facilitating many of these events, ensuring that engagement was purposeful rather than tokenistic.

The project created genuine, sustained relationships between generations. Older participants reported reduced feelings of isolation and valued the opportunity to share their experiences, while pupils developed confidence, communication skills and a deeper understanding of respect and inclusion. An unintended but powerful outcome was the shift in pupil attitudes; many spoke about challenging stereotypes around ageing and gaining perspective on resilience and gratitude. The programme has strengthened our “share and celebrate” culture and reinforced our core values of being Ready, Responsible and Respectful.



Building on its success, we plan to expand the initiative through more regular community meet-ups, collaborative creative projects and increased pupil leadership opportunities, ensuring that intergenerational learning remains a central part of life at New-Bridge.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Learnt a new skill.; Found out things about a different age group.; Made new friends.

20 younger and 45 older people took part.

Angels Day Care

The day went well and we had fantastic fun with everyone joining in with Jo Jingles and having a great time painting, colouring and having snacks. The children affectionately call the residents Granny and Grandad and were excited on the walk to visit them. They enjoyed handing out cards and baubles and were so proud putting a Jo Jingles sticker on their jumpers.

The interactions were really sweet; the residents coloured in some sheets we gave out and gave them to the children to take home.

8 younger and 16 older people took part.



PRESCHOOL HAD SUCH A HEART WARMING VISIT TO THE AMBASSADOR NURSING HOME! WE HAD A JO-JINGLES SESSION WITH VICKY AND EVERYONE SANG CHRISTMAS SONGS, DANCED AND EVEN HAD A SNOWBALL FIGHT! THE CHILDREN HELPED GIVE THE RESIDENTS INSTRUMENTS AND GAVE THEM A STICKER AT THE END 😊❤️

Glenowen Court Residential Home

Glenowen Court is a residential home in West Belfast. We have capacity for 45 residents - elderly and those living with dementia. At the beginning of December we invited the children of Holy Child PS to come to the scheme for a Christmas Xtravaganza. We are currently taking part in an inter-generational programme with this school. On the day we arranged for Santa Clause and Mrs Clause to call to the scheme and meet the residents and children in our erected Christmas grotto. Everyone received a gift and got a photo with Santa and Mrs Clause. We sang Christmas carols and did some arts and crafts on the day. Everyone wore a Christmas jumper. It was lovely bringing together our residents and the children to celebrate the magic of Christmas and to bring the generations together to the enjoy the festive spirit.



The benefits included: Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Made new friends.; They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.

20 younger and 20 older people took part.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Enjoyed meeting people of a different age group.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Made new friends.

2 younger and 50 older people took part.

Ballykinlar GAC

We organised an intergenerational Christmas Celebration. Got additional funding from CDRCN and Newry and Mourne district council.

Children from the local primary school got food, and a selection box from this grant. They entertained us with a carol service and presented seniors with a bag of sweets.

It had a twofold aim, prevent social isolation and food poverty at Christmas.

The benefits included: They felt more connected to other ages groups in their community.; Had fun and enjoyed some festive cheer.; Made new friends.

20 younger and 50 older people took part.



Queenscourt Nursing Home

On 19 December 2025, Queenscourt Nursing Home held a Christmas party for our clients at a local function room. We had initially invited local school children to attend; however, due to timing constraints, they were unfortunately unable to join us. Instead, we were delighted to welcome residents from another nursing home and clients from local supported living bungalows for individuals with a learning disability.

The event included a disco with live music, creating a festive and inclusive atmosphere. A special visit from Santa ensured that every client from Queenscourt, the visiting nursing home, and the supported bungalows received a present.



Guests enjoyed a traditional three-course Christmas meal, followed by a mixture of classical and modern music. The afternoon and evening were filled with dancing, singing, and celebration.

Overall, the event was a great success, and it was evident that all clients thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to socialise, celebrate, and take part in the festive activities.

This event was particularly positive in terms of normalisation and social inclusion. It provided clients with meaningful opportunities to participate in a community-based celebration, which many may not have experienced in previous placements or home environments. Events such as this help to promote emotional wellbeing, enhance self-esteem, and support positive mental health by fostering a sense of belonging within the wider community.

Clients were able to meet and socialise with individuals from different services and interact with a variety of staff, further promoting inclusion, relationship-building, and community integration for all involved.



Summary

LGNI yet again have been completely overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and commitment shown by the 30 groups/settings that took part in this year's Christmas Connections small grant scheme, funded by the Public Health Agency.

Every event or activity has been inspiring and testament to the individuals behind them who are striving to build intergenerational and Age-friendly communities.

This report further shows that new groups and organisations are continuing to adopt an intergenerational approach to their normal activities; 31% of grantee's stated that this was their first experience of delivering an Intergenerational activity or event.

We continue to see more groups and individuals coming together to share, recognise and value the contribution of all the generations who live here and feel these small grant opportunities deliver a significant increase to the use of Intergenerational practice within communities, year on year.

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!



This report has been compiled by Linking Generations Northern Ireland. A massive thank you to everyone who took part and provided your feedback. We simply couldn't do the work we do without your support!