



Bringing Generations Together

Leeds' Intergenerational Approach

Harmonious Leeds



“Intergenerational opportunities have given...more tolerance and respect in the classroom”

(Teacher)

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Harmonious Leeds

Health and Wellbeing in Later Life

1st Floor West, Merrion House, LS2 8QB


Phone: 0113 247 8237

Email: generations@leeds.gov.uk

Web: www.leedsinitiative.org

the Leeds Initiative

Local partnerships making things happen

A young woman with dark hair is looking intently at a large black poster. To her left, the profile of an older woman with blonde hair is visible. In the background, a woman with long dark hair is smiling. The setting appears to be an indoor event or exhibition with various displays.

**“It helps you with your problems and
it’s good because you spend time with
different generations”**

(Secondary school student)

Foreword

Welcome to 'Bringing Generations Together: Leeds' Intergenerational Approach'. Leeds is a diverse and vibrant city with people from all ages and all backgrounds. It is our aim, as a city, to build on the benefits of this diversity and provide good opportunities for everyone who lives here.

As a partnership, Harmonious Communities belief is that through working well together, as agencies and communities, we can create the conditions where people of all ages and all backgrounds can thrive.

We do know that as a society there are increasing tensions and that people of all ages report feeling isolated and undervalued. An intergenerational approach guides us towards addressing these issues – providing the opportunity for dialogue between generations to together face the issues that affect us all. Too often we approach issues of youth or age as though they are problems; through bringing generations together we have the opportunity to find solutions that can strengthen our communities and improve people's health and wellbeing.

Through the Vision for Leeds and our Strategic Plan we have clear priorities to achieve for Leeds. [Bringing Generations Together](#) identifies ways that intergenerational approaches help us achieve and enhance these priorities.

We welcome [Bringing Generations Together: Leeds' Intergenerational Approach](#) as a practical way forward that will help to truly make Leeds a city for all ages.



Councillor Richard Brett
Chair, Harmonious Communities Partnership
Leader, Leeds City Council





**“All generations can get on together —
we all have differences and we all have
similarities”**

(Older person, Building Bridges programme)

What is an intergenerational approach?

An intergenerational approach:

- brings people of different generations together to develop understanding, respect and trust;
- values the skills and experiences of people of all ages;
- strengthens communities by developing mutual cooperation;
- promotes good mental and physical health and reduces isolation and loneliness;
- supports a sense of belonging and citizenship and tackles the fear of crime; and
- raises attainment and develops the aspirations of all generations.

A woman with brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a yellow cardigan and a blue lanyard, is smiling and looking at a young child. The child is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt with pink floral patterns and pink pants. They are both holding colorful rings (blue and green) attached to a string. The background shows a clinical or educational setting with posters on the wall.

**“We all confided more,
giving a trustful feeling”**

(Older person, Building Bridges programme)

Why do we need an intergenerational approach?

People of different generations have become increasingly disconnected for many reasons, including smaller families, increased geographical distance between family members, divorce and separation, different patterns of work for men and women and the impact of migration¹. This distancing contributes to a lack of trust and understanding between people of different generations.

Leeds is a large and diverse city of more than 750,000 people, from over 130 nationalities and the population of our city is increasing and becoming more diverse. Leeds is a city of contrasts and inequalities, particularly between the densely populated inner city areas and more rural areas. According to the 2009 area assessment, an increasing number of people in Leeds feel that people from different backgrounds do not get on well².

In 2008, the first [Leeds Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) was published, detailing the future health, social care and wellbeing needs of the population of Leeds. Priorities for Leeds include:

- **Our ageing population:** Leeds has an increasing number of people who are living longer and we must respond positively to these changes.
- **Children's health:** we need to ensure that children and young people are healthier.
- **Neighbourhood needs:** there are existing inequalities between individuals and neighbourhoods which we must address.

An 'intergenerational approach' can help meet these needs by promoting opportunities for people of different generations to come together; to reclaim trust and mutual cooperation and positive aspirations. A recent analysis of over 120 intergenerational programmes in Australia (McCallum et al, 2006) identified sets of clear benefits for participants of all ages³. These included:

- an increased sense of worth and personal resilience;
- improved mental and physical health;
- enhanced sense of social responsibility;
- better attainment and attendance at school; and
- less involvement in offending and drug use.

Although traditionally intergenerational work involves children and young people and older people, a truly cohesive community is built when the skills of people from all generations are celebrated. Bringing people together of different generations may not solve all the challenges faced in Leeds, but fostering more ways for people to engage in, and shape their own lives and the life of their communities will be a vital in creating a strong, sustainable and harmonious city.

¹ Hatton-Yeo (2006) (ed.) *Intergenerational Programmes – an introduction and examples of practice*. Beth Johnson Foundation.

² Leeds Area Assessment (2009) <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/areaassessment/pages/default.aspx?region=56&area=373>

³ MacCallum, J., Palmer, D., Wright, P., Cumming Potvin, W., Northcote, J., Brooker, M., and Tero, C. (2006) *Community building through intergenerational exchange programmes: Report to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS)*, Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.



**“Older and younger people
are beginning to value one another”**

(Primary school teacher; Building Bridges programme)

Intergenerational approaches and Leeds: a history

Intergenerational approaches are not new to Leeds. We are fortunate to have some of the most well developed intergenerational initiatives in the UK. Over a number of years Leeds has seen a diverse range of intergenerational programmes, events and projects. Some of these have achieved national and international recognition, including a Eurocities Award for the Building Bridges programme for Primary schools. These projects, and the organisations that facilitate them, have been supported by the Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network since 2005. This network is particularly remarkable in being primarily a grass roots lead initiative which engages large numbers of practitioners and volunteers across the city. The Network has membership from over 190 statutory and voluntary organisations in Leeds and offers training, guidance and advice on intergenerational approaches. The Network is recognised nationally as a model of good practice.


In 2009, in response to increasing Government interest in the value of intergenerational practice, Leeds City Council commissioned a detailed study of the work of the Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network. This evaluation (*Intergenerational Approaches in Leeds, 2010*) identified that there needs to be increased strategic engagement with the benefits of intergenerational approaches and that intergenerational approaches be promoted as an effective tool to tackle key priorities and objectives for the city. *Bringing Generations Together* and the 2010/11 Action Plan for the Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network is our response to this evaluation (see Further Support, page 19).

The purpose of this document

This document aims to identify where intergenerational approaches can meet existing strategies and priorities and help Leeds City Council and its partners deliver effective action. The purpose of Bringing Generations Together is:

- i. to raise the profile of the effectiveness of an intergenerational approach;
- ii. to detail the underpinning philosophy of an intergenerational approach;
- iii. to identify how intergenerational approaches can be incorporated to deliver existing strategic and operational priorities for Leeds; and
- iv. to encourage strategic support from partners for community led intergenerational approaches taking place in Leeds.

At a time of broad global challenges affecting the economy, environment and population there is a need for innovative approaches to tackle issues at a local level. We need approaches that can be transformative and powerful and which allow us to achieve outcomes in effective and efficient ways. By adopting an intergenerational approach, we recognise that everyone is part of wider families, communities and societies. Intergenerational approaches encourage a collaborative mindset, supporting organisations to work together to achieve greater impact, with existing resources. By incorporating intergenerational approaches and principles in our work, we make the best use of and value the potential of individuals, whatever their age.



**“I’ve learned we can all share the same
laughter and the same problems”**

(Secondary school student)

What people of different generations say

Between October and December 2009, we ran six focus groups across Leeds involving people of different ages. We asked about their experiences of meeting with people of different generations and their views on whether bringing people of different generations together would be an effective approach towards improving community relations.

What are some of the difficulties facing 'intergenerational Leeds'?

Most people felt it was difficult to find 'natural' and meaningful opportunities to interact with people of different generations, other than within their family or if they had neighbours they got along well with. Issues of geographical mobility, feelings of social isolation, concerns that society has become increasingly 'untrusting' have all led to impressions that people of different generations, in general, might not always get along as well as they could. *"They (older people) are not very understanding, but we're not very understanding of them either"* (High school student).


What are some of the benefits in bringing people of different generations together?

Most people felt that when they did have the opportunity to interact with people of different ages, it brought significant personal and social benefits. These included learning valuable skills, respecting people, strengthening bonds between individuals and communities and improving resilience. Most people

saw intergenerational approaches as an exciting opportunity to strengthen solidarity and understanding between people of different ages. *"(Children) taught me a lot. You learnt a lot from their experiences of their home life...it taught me a lot about patience...they need your respect and that's something that really stayed with me"* (Older person talking about volunteering in a Primary school helping children to read).

How should we improve relations between people of different generations?

Most people recognised that although informal mixing between generations often happened naturally, it is important to also have specific opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds, particularly for those with no family or close neighbours. Intergenerational approaches seem to be more effective when people unite to take action around a common interest, even if they come from very different backgrounds. Increasing the opportunities for communication between people should be paramount and most people get involved with intergenerational activities because they are fun, thought-provoking and promote positive action. *"As students, we sometimes feel isolated from other communities (and want to feel more a part of Leeds)... we need to bring people of different ages together"* (University student).

A photograph of a woman with blonde hair and a man with dark hair, both smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The woman is wearing a blue t-shirt and the man is wearing a dark blue jacket over a teal t-shirt. The background is a red wall. In the bottom left corner, there is a quote in white text.

“Intergenerational practice ties together so many things for the community”

(Third sector worker)

Context

The wider context

This section briefly describes the context for the development of intergenerational approaches and how intergenerational approaches support the delivery of national strategies and targets.

The first formally described intergenerational programmes were created in North America in the late 1960s and 1970s as a result of the growing awareness that changes in society were leading to less interaction between older and younger people and an increase in negative age-related stereotypes. By the end of the 1990s the number of intergenerational initiatives started to increase dramatically in Europe in response to the emphasis upon social inclusion and active ageing.

A growth of interest in intergenerational approaches in the UK has recently been accompanied by Government acknowledging the relevance of bringing generations together to support the delivery of a number of national strategies. These include:

Building a Society for All Ages (2009)

Within 20 years, half of the adult UK population will be over 50. One in four children born today will live beyond 100. These are the result of successful increases in longevity and reductions in the number of children being born. Building a Society for All Ages, describes how we can respond positively to these changes, including changing attitudes to ageing, promoting a healthy and active life and challenging stereotypes. Examples of intergenerational approaches that support the achievement of these include:

- Sharing past experiences and establishing links between the past, present and future.
- Skill sharing including crafts, budgeting, information technology, art or drama (See Case Study 2 - Building Communication through Drama).

Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods - a national strategy for housing in an ageing society (2008)

As we grow older, the neighbourhood becomes an increasingly important factor in the quality of everyday life. Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods vision is about promoting and supporting the interdependency between older people and their local community. In other words, a lifetime neighbourhood is not just good for older people it should also have benefits for others, including children and young people. Intergenerational practice has the potential to support and contribute to that approach through:

- encouraging dialogue and action over a specific community issue, such as graffiti or crime (see Case Study 3 - Building Bridges);
- people of different generations producing a community newsletter to encourage a sense of belonging and ownership; and
- valuing skills of people of different generations through creative arts projects that make individuals feel worthwhile and part of an inclusive neighbourhood.

Putting People First - a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (2007)

Every locality should have a single community based support system focused on the health and well-being of the local population. Putting People First describes the vision for development of a personalised approach to the delivery of Adult Social Care. Key elements are:

- prevention;
- early intervention and re-enablement;
- personalisation; and
- information, advice and advocacy.

Intergenerational approaches support the delivery of Putting People First through:

- early intervention and prevention programmes, such as learning cooking and healthy eating— food is often an excellent way to begin dialogue and share important skills;
- encouraging dialogue and community action between generations, for example dealing with the fear of crime. This increases the likelihood that individual older people will feel supported and safe to remain healthy at home (see Case Study 3 - Building Bridges); and
- intergenerational walking groups, that encourage physical activity and improvements in health and self-esteem, an important element in prevention.

Living well with dementia - a national dementia strategy (2009)

Dementia is a significant and growing issue and this strategy provides the impetus for improvements to dementia services and addressing health inequalities in relation to dementia. Intergenerational working can:

- challenge the stigma associated with dementia through encouraging dialogue and opportunities for people to meet and be valued (see Case Study 1 - West Leeds Dementia Project); and
- encourage purposeful activity and stimulation that will help people with dementia sustain their mental capital, such as through talking about past experiences and sharing and developing new skills.

Building Brighter Futures (2007)

This sets out the Government's new priorities, plans and targets for children's services. Key elements of the Government's children's plan, which support the development of intergenerational approaches, include recognising the central role of parents and carers and investing in play and activities for young people, improving standards for schools and making schools part of their communities, through Extended Services. Intergenerational approaches can support the delivery of Building Brighter Futures through:

- literacy and reading projects – older volunteers supporting younger people to improve their reading ability;
- mentoring and befriending projects, including Secondary school children assisting Primary school children with school transitions to ensure ongoing engagement with education, older people supporting Secondary school children to share concerns and learn communication skills (see Case Study 3 - Building Bridges); and

- older volunteers sharing life experiences and parenting skills with younger parents (see Case Study 4 - Women's Centre and Intergenerational Family Learning).

For more detail about how intergenerational approaches can meet specific national targets and Public Service Agreements, see Appendix 1.

The local context

Intergenerational approaches work best when they are part of existing priorities and objectives. This section identifies local plans and objectives that intergenerational approaches can play a part in delivering:

Vision for Leeds (2004 - 2020)

The Vision for Leeds is the city's community strategy, which guides the development of Leeds until 2020. Intergenerational approaches can support a number of the key priorities for the Vision for Leeds, including:

- improve learning and achievement in schools (see Case Study 3 - Building Bridges);
- improve the cultural life of the city (see Case Study 4 - Women's Centre and Intergenerational Family Learning);
- regenerate areas and restore pride in all places (for example through environmental projects, such as community allotments, intergenerational projects tackling crime or graffiti); and
- provide a healthy start to life (for example through sharing cooking skills, generations taking part in physical activities together, mentoring schemes for young parents).

Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 - 2011

The Leeds Strategic Plan develops the Vision for Leeds further into a single delivery plan under eight themes. The main challenge is 'to create and sustain a sense of belonging amongst all communities'. Intergenerational work can support the following themes:

- Harmonious Communities;
- Learning;
- Environment; and
- Health and Well-being.

Intergenerational approaches particularly deliver on a number of Harmonious Communities priorities, including:

- **Increase the number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents.**

Intergenerational approaches can support the delivery of this priority through environmental projects which tackle specific issues in communities, such as graffiti; through encouraging intergenerational dialogue about solutions to crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour; through programmes which break down barriers and challenge negative stereotypes, both intergenerationally and cross-culturally. This could be achieved through skill and experience sharing, in areas such as IT, dance, older people volunteering to mentor students in schools, older volunteers coaching sports teams (see [Case Study 4 - Women's Centre and Intergenerational Family Learning](#)).

- **Increase the number of local people that are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery.**

Intergenerational approaches can support the delivery of this priority through intergenerational community forums, where people of all ages are encouraged to speak out about the issues that are important to them and decide action together to make positive changes.


- **Increase the sense of pride and belonging in local neighbourhood that help to build cohesive communities.**

Intergenerational approaches can support the delivery of this priority through programmes which celebrate our communities, sharing issues from the past and solutions for the future, celebrating the differences between people, as well as identifying the similarities. This can be achieved through creative arts projects that share traditional and contemporary skills, cooking programmes sharing food from different communities, community festivals, such as Beeston Festival or I Love West Leeds – bringing people together in celebration of the local area (see [Case Study 4 - Women's Centre and Intergenerational Family Learning](#)).

Vision for Leeds and the Leeds Strategic Plan are both being refreshed at the time of print, and due to be published in Spring 2011. Details will be published on the Leeds Initiative website: www.leedsinitiative.org

In addition to the Vision for Leeds and the Leeds Strategic Plan, intergenerational approaches assist the delivery of a number of local plans and priorities (see [Appendix 2 for further details](#)), including:

- Children and Young People's Plan (Building Brighter Futures in Leeds) and Every Child Matters;
- NHS Leeds Strategy (2008 – 2011);
- Cohesion and Integration Priorities (2008 – 2011);
- Brilliant Learning, Brilliant Learning Places (2009 – 2011);
- Older Better (2006 – 2011);
- Leeds Older People's Housing Strategy (2009 – 2012);
- Adult Social Care Business Plan;
- Youth Service Plan; and
- Regeneration Strategy (under development).



“I was walking home one night and I saw a group of lads and my heart stopped. When I got to them they said, ‘Night, Mrs M’”

(Older person)

Further support for intergenerational approaches in Leeds

The partnership group steering the integration of intergenerational approaches in Leeds is the [Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network](#). This is a sub-group of the Harmonious Communities partnership, part of the Leeds Initiative (see Appendix 3 for the governance and partnership arrangements of Harmonious Leeds).

The Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network is led by a partnership steering group, which includes:

- Leeds City Council – with representatives from Adult Social Care, Environment and Neighbourhoods, Children's Services and Education Leeds;
- NHS Leeds; and
- Third sector partners from the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

These partners recognise the value of intergenerational approaches and will incorporate them to meet both local and national priorities and to tackle difficult issues in Leeds.

To support this, in 2010/11 the Neighbourhood Network for All Ages will:

- Promote and embed intergenerational work across Leeds, using Bringing Generations Together as a tool;
- Provide support for new and existing groups to use intergenerational approaches;
- Identify where there may be tensions between generations in Leeds; and
- Map the impact of work that is bringing generations together in Leeds.

For more information about the Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network, or for a copy of the annual action plan, visit: www.leedsinitiative.org/generations or contact: generations@leeds.gov.uk

A photograph showing a young man in a dark tuxedo with a white shirt and bow tie dancing with an elderly woman with short white hair. They are in a formal setting, likely a school event, with other people in the background. The woman is wearing a dark jacket and has a small earring. The man is looking at her and smiling. The background is dark with some blurred figures of other people.

“The (intergenerational programme) is an outstanding example of cooperation between senior citizens and pupils”

(2008 Ofsted report for a Leeds Primary school)

Appendices

Appendix 1: National targets

This appendix details the national targets that intergenerational approaches support. Local areas are required to report to Government on their success in meeting these key national targets.

Increasing the number of children and young people on the path to success (Public Service Agreement 14). Intergenerational approaches can increase participation in positive activities, which improves the prospects of all young people, especially those from communities with a poor history of engagement and the 25% of young people who do not currently engage in any positive activities outside learning. Through participation, young people develop socially and emotionally, building communication skills, improving self confidence and esteem. This in turn increases their resilience, helping them avoid risks such as experimenting with drugs, having unprotected sex, or being involved in crime, as well as contributing to better attendance and higher attainment at school.

Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and wellbeing in later life (Public Service Agreement 17). This seeks to ensure that the specific needs of the older population are given due priority. The target group is everyone over 50, around one third of the population, which is a diverse group. However, a number of key aspects of independence and wellbeing have emerged from research and discussion with older people which link to the role intergenerational approaches can play. In particular, making a contribution to society and satisfaction with home and neighbourhood including, for example, the impact of factors such as fear of crime, and social isolation.

Promote better health and wellbeing for all (Public Service Agreement 18).

This Public Service Agreement is committed to delivering the best possible health and well-being outcomes for everyone, helping people to live healthier lives, empowering them to stay independent for longer and tackling inequalities. The ambitions set out in Our health, Our care, Our say create a health and adult social care service that genuinely focuses on prevention and the promotion of health and well-being. Cost effective, evidence-based and innovative approaches to supporting people to live independently in the community are a priority. Intergenerational practice has the potential to promote older people's wellbeing, principally through enabling them to make a positive contribution to their community and learn and share skills.

Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities (Public Service Agreement 21).

Intergenerational approaches can support the achievement of cohesion through promoting meaningful interactions between people from different backgrounds and by encouraging more participation in culture and sport. Active communities can be supported by increasing levels of formal and informal volunteering by people from both ends of the age spectrum, where members of the community work to meet local needs. At the heart of this active participation are community-based third sector organisations, often bringing different groups together and providing the platform to meet the needs of individuals and communities.

Make communities safer (Public Service Agreement 23).

Intergenerational approaches have the potential to tackle the crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour issues of greatest importance in each locality. This can help increase public confidence in the local agencies involved in dealing with these issues. Fear of crime is particularly strong amongst older people and much of this is based on stereotypical views of younger people. Breaking down these views and bridging the gap between the generations can therefore be very beneficial.

Appendix 2: Local targets

This appendix details the local plans and priorities that intergenerational approaches support.

Children and Young People's Plan (2009 – 2014)

The Children and Young People's Plan sets out priorities to improve outcomes for children and young people in Leeds. A key element of the vision is to 'make sure every child and young person has the opportunity to achieve their potential because every child matters'. This vision is achieved by integrated working, where 'everyone works together effectively to put the child and their family at the centre'. The strategy contains both immediate (2009 – 2011) and longer term ambitions for action (2009 – 2014). The priorities which intergenerational approaches support include:

- Improving outcomes for looked after children;
- Improving absence and reducing persistent absence from school;
- Providing places to go and things to do;
- Raising the proportion of young people in education or work;
- All children and young people are safe and supported in stronger communities;
- All children and young people are thriving in learning;
- All children and young people are safe and supported in stronger families; and
- All children and young people can enjoy life and have places to go and things to do.

Leeds has set ten priorities to achieve the national [Every Child Matters](#) agenda. Intergenerational approaches can help to achieve the priorities in an effective and sustainable way. The priorities support children and young people to:

- feel safe in their communities;
- feel valued by families, communities and schools;
- value peers, families and communities; and
- live in thriving families and communities.

The need for both young and old to feel safe, respected and valued runs through a number of Leeds local priorities and can be achieved through bringing different generations together to tackle fear of crime, improve aspirations and promote 'less risky' behaviour.

NHS Leeds Strategy

The NHS Leeds Strategy, 'For Better Health for All', sets out local priorities for delivering improvements in health. The aim of the strategy is 'to improve health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities and transform health services for the people of Leeds by working with others and being a leading edge organisation'. Of the six priorities for action and investment within the NHS Leeds Strategy, those that support an intergenerational approach, include:

- Saving lives and reducing health inequalities;
- Improving health and wellbeing and health care; and
- Responding to changing population needs.

Cohesion and Integration Priorities (2008 – 2011)

This recognition of the importance of connecting people to build community cohesion is brought out clearly in the 'Cohesion and Integration Priorities 2008 – 2011'. This makes specific reference to the opportunities for intergenerational and interfaith work to build better connected communities. It also notes the challenge posed by 'the tensions that result from the breakdown of relationships and communication between different generations sharing the same spaces and places' and goes on to note that 'active citizenship and community empowerment are crucial to building cohesion and integration'.

Brilliant Learning, Brilliant Learning Places (2009 – 2012)

Education Leeds was established in 2001 to take on responsibility for providing leadership and support to, and for challenging, all Leeds schools. From 2009 – 2012 Education Leeds have set the ten strategic objectives in Brilliant Learning, Brilliant Learning Places, of which the following five principally support an intergenerational approach:

- Children will have a good start and thrive in learning;
- Young people will be engaged and thrive in learning;
- Narrow the achievement gap for children and young people;
- Promote learning that supports children and young people to make informed choices; and
- Schools are at the heart of strong communities with places to go and things to do.

Older Better (2006 – 2011)

Older Better is the Leeds strategy to promote active and healthy life for older people. Its vision is:

'A life worth living for older people in Leeds is one where; they are respected and included; their contributions are acknowledged; and they are enabled to remain independent and enjoy as good mental and physical health as possible.'

The priorities of Older Better which support using an intergenerational approach include:

- Live in safe neighbourhoods;
- Be able to get out and about;
- Have access to learning and leisure;
- Be able to keep achieve and healthy; and
- Have the opportunity to maintain and develop friendships.




Leeds Older People's Housing Strategy

The Older People's Housing Strategy sets out how Leeds City Council will work in partnership to respond to the challenges of an ageing society and help deliver local and national objectives to help enable older people to maintain independence and receive support that meets their needs.

The strategy has seven strategic aims. Under the sixth theme ('Developing a whole systems approach to service delivery embracing health, housing and social care') intergenerational approaches are mentioned specifically, to enable housing services to contribute to wider aims of community cohesion.





“I was astonished at the quality of the experience for the class, which is really down to the involvement of the older people”

(Teacher)

Appendix 3: Case studies

Case Study I:

West Leeds Intergenerational Dementia Project

Purpose: An intergenerational programme in West Leeds, which connects older people in the early stages of dementia with Primary school children from two local schools. The programme is based on a 'circle-time' model, where intergenerational conversation is encouraged in weekly sessions, plus a range of activities including board games, craft sessions, word games, quizzes and bell ringing. Initially the conversations have a reminiscence theme, such as about World War II. The programme has now been running for two years and there are approximately 30 sessions per year with, on average, ten older and younger participants each time. The programme takes place in the school.

Programme Lead: Local voluntary sector organisation (Neighbourhood Network Scheme)



Outcomes:

- Capacity building in community service support for people with dementia.
- Providing choices of meaningful activities.
- Building confidence in the cared for and carers.
- Building skills and knowledge of staff and volunteers in the community.
- Using the communication skills of older people and children to give increased self-esteem and confidence.
- Improved perceptions of older people by younger people and vice versa.
- Using reminiscence as a way of giving recognition to the value of the lives of older people.
- Young people engaged and thriving in learning.
- Schools at the heart of strong communities.
- Tackling the social isolation of older people and their carers.
- Increase in the sense of pride and belonging in a local neighbourhood.
- Younger people valued by families, communities and schools.

Funding: National charitable foundation grant – now funded by Leeds City Council

How participants were recruited: Through the lead voluntary sector organisation, through a dementia charity and through the Primary schools involved.

Evaluation tools used: Project diaries, participant feedback after each session (using 'my word about today is...'), and participant and carer feedback overall. Project worker/teacher feedback.

Learning:

The nature of failing memory means it is both difficult to get people involved in any activity (e.g. I do not want to try anything new, I like to keep to a routine, I do not want to go out) let alone an intergenerational one (e.g. I am not interested in spending time with children, I find children too noisy). Once involved, failing memory brings additional difficulties. For instance, despite telephone reminders on the morning of the activity, people are not always in when transport arrives to pick them up. If people are in they have sometimes forgotten that you had planned to pick them up. Consequently we have worked with smaller numbers than we had hoped.

Case Study 2:

Communication between Generations through Drama

Purpose: An intergenerational programme in a Leeds City Centre cultural facility, which brings together older and younger people from disadvantaged or excluded backgrounds to work together in a drama context. The programme was based around the theme of communication. This was a five week programme, with weekly meetings, in 2009. 13 older people and 13 younger people participated and the programme was run by a freelance artist.

Programme Lead: City-wide cultural organisation

Outcomes:

- Improved health and wellbeing of participants.
- Improved self-esteem and confidence.
- Young people engaged and thriving in learning.
- Increased Skills in dramatic art.
- Improved perceptions of older people by younger people and vice versa.
- Reduced the number of younger people who are NEET (Not in education, employment or training).
- Younger people valued by families, communities and schools.

Funding: Leeds City Council and NHS Leeds

How participants were recruited: The younger people were recruited from schools inclusion units and six participants were classed as NEET. The older people were recruited from the older people's programme run by the cultural organisation. The younger people ranged from 14 – 19 years old and the older people were all over 55.

Evaluation tools used: Both informal and formal feedback sought from participants, using written feedback forms and verbal comments throughout the process.

Learning:

- A programme of this nature was a 'big two way trust process – a big ask'.
- Group dynamics matured over the course of the programme – there was a positive change in attitude and reduction in tension over the five weeks.
- Sharing food is a good vehicle for communication and relationship building.
- Public performances of the work helped to build relationships and pride in skills.

Case Study 3:

Building Bridges 2 (Secondary schools)

Purpose: To bring together Secondary school children (ages 11 – 18) and in particular Year 7 pupils, with local older people, to talk, build friendships and share issues. Using the Building Bridges 2 'circle-time' approach, which incorporates different activities and methods to encourage intergenerational conversations. Building Bridges 2 is a unique intergenerational programme for schools and was established in 2008 for Secondary schools, following the success of Building Bridges 1 in Primary schools. The Building Bridges model is unique to Leeds and has been internationally recognised with a 2007 Eurocities Award, for innovation in an era of demographic change. The programme ran weekly, with approximately 15 participants (eight pupils, five older people, two staff). The core group of older people and staff remained constant, the pupils followed the programme for an approximate ten week cycle, and then a new group of pupils was recruited.

Programme Lead: Adult Social Care, Education Leeds, independent consultant and a Secondary school in inner-city Leeds.

Outcomes:

- Improving attendance, learning and achievement in schools for many of the young people.
- Using the communication skills of older people and children to give increased self-esteem and confidence.
- All children and young people safe and supported in stronger communities.
- Older people feel safer in their neighbourhood.
- Tackling fear of crime.
- Increase the percentage of vulnerable people helped to live at home.

Funding: Partly Leeds City Council, partly funding from the Secondary school

How participants were recruited: Through the school and local voluntary sector organisations. The younger people were recruited to the programme either because it was felt they would benefit, or that they were keen to participate.

Evaluation tools used: Gathering feedback from participants using one-to-one discussions and also ongoing evaluation through the sessions.

Learning:

- The high school environment can be intimidating, therefore the older people were introduced gently, through coffee mornings and other preliminary informal social meetings.
- The success of any intergenerational programme is often dependent on the willingness and commitment of the staff involved and the willingness of the school to accommodate the timetabling implications.
- Many of the younger people benefitted as a result of being given time and space to learn how to express themselves.
- The older people also benefitted; they were pleased to have an input into the lives of local young people, they felt valued and grew noticeably in self-confidence.

Case Study 4:

Women's Centre and Intergenerational Family Learning

Purpose: This organisation runs a series of intergenerational initiatives based around developing family support. The initiatives have an intergenerational element at their core, supporting parents, children and grandparents to address the issues that they are experiencing, including keeping healthy and domestic violence. The activities used include:

- Grandparents programme – engaging extended families supporting literacy through libraries.
- Engaging fathers with their children's early years education – dialogue between men and their children.
- Allotment programme.

- Community cohesion- specific work around leadership and trust building with Bangladeshi young men/ women.
- Craft and sewing programmes.

Programme Lead: A voluntary organisation (Women's Centre), working with minority ethnic groups in North East Leeds.

Outcomes:

- Increasing male and extended families involvement with family activities.
- Raising young peoples aspirations beyond 'football and pop idol'.
- Trust building and community tension resolution.
- Increased community cohesion.
- Using the communication skills of older people and children to give increased self-esteem and confidence.
- Young people engaged and thriving in learning.
- Children and young people living in thriving families and communities.

Funding: Leeds City Council and BBC Children in Need

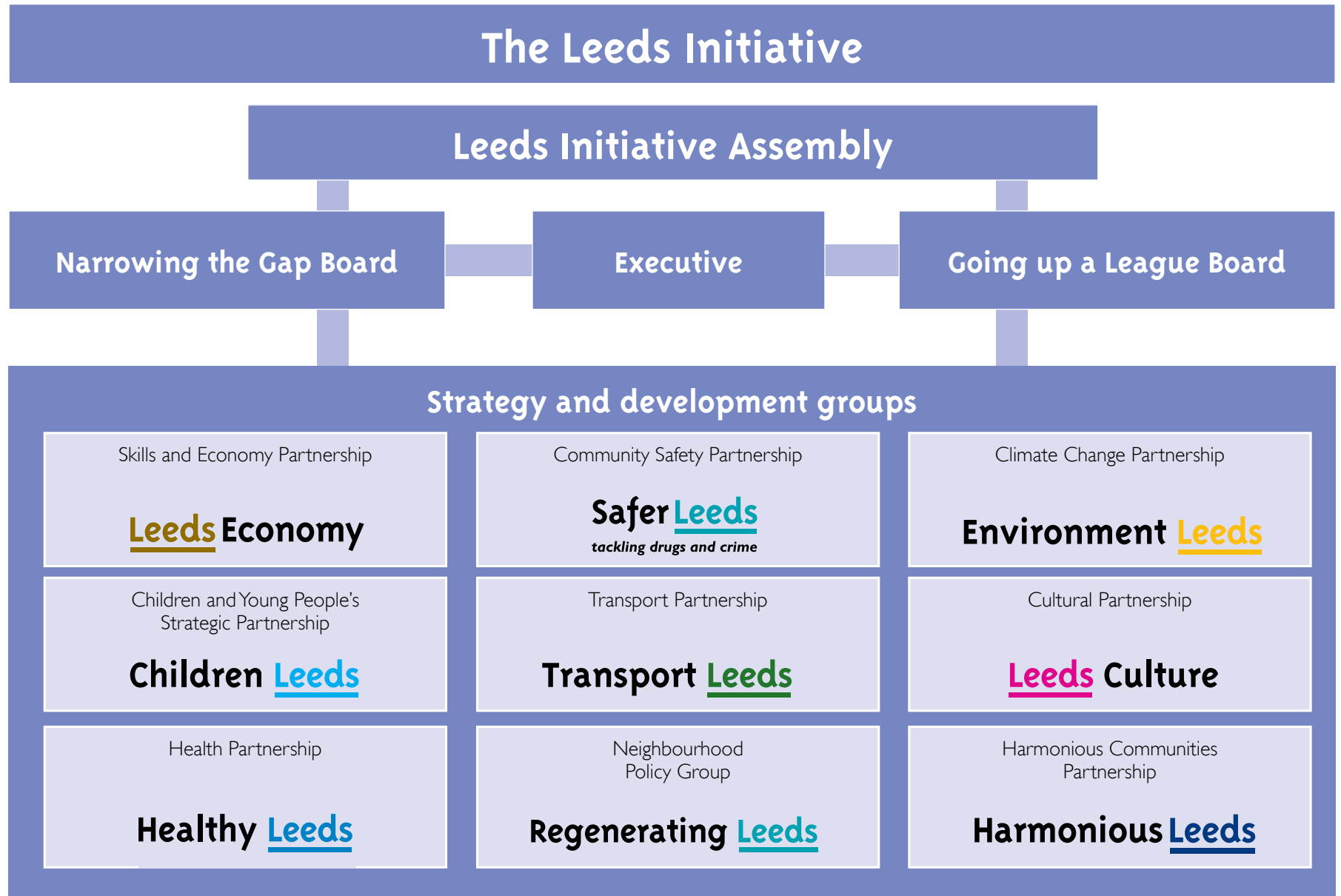
How participants were recruited: Through family support referrals to the Women's Centre.

Evaluation tools used: Individual feedback testimonies at the completion of programmes of work.

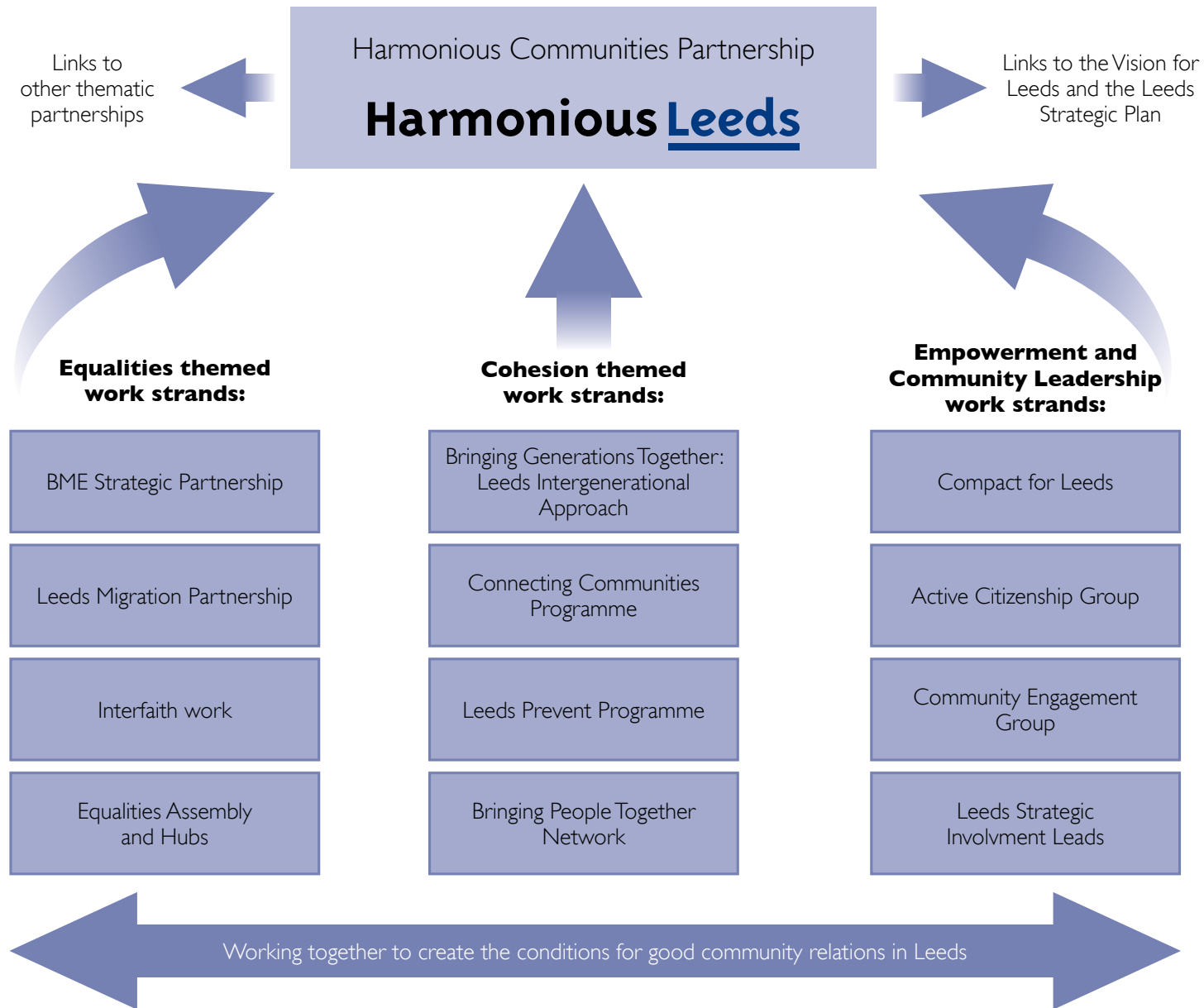
Issues encountered:

- Complexities around expected safeguarding children issues, particularly criminal record bureau checks can be challenging especially in the recruitment of volunteers.
- Language can be a barrier when working with black and minority ethnic elders in school settings.
- The involvement of men in intergenerational programmes have begun to bring a change in the way they are involved in family activities, as opposed to just being 'the wage earner'. This has a positive effect on children and young people and the family as a whole.

Appendix 4: The Leeds Initiative structure



The Harmonious Communities structure



Appendix 5: National and local strategies and plans

National strategies and plans

1. Every Child Matters: Change for Children (2004)
2. Our Health, our Care, our Say: A new direction for community services (2006)
3. Strong and Prosperous Communities – The Local Government White Paper (2006)
4. Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of adult social care (2007)
5. Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A national strategy for housing in an ageing society (2008)
6. Building a Society for All Ages (2009)
7. Living Well with Dementia (2009)
8. 21st Century Schools White Paper (2009)
9. Think Family Toolkit (2009)

Local strategies and plans

1. Vision for Leeds 2004 - 2020
2. Older Better 2006 - 2011
3. Leeds Climate Change Strategy
4. Leeds Mental Health Strategy 2006 – 2011
5. Cohesion and Integration Priorities 2008 - 2011
6. Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 - 2011
7. For Better Health for All: Leeds PCT Strategy 2008 – 2011
8. Safer Leeds Partnership Plan 2008 – 2011
9. Cohesion and Integration Strategy 2008 – 2011
10. Children and Young People's Plan (Building Brighter Futures in Leeds) 2009 - 2014
11. Brilliant Learning, Brilliant Learning Places 2009 - 2011
12. NHS Leeds Strategy 2008 - 2011
13. Carers Strategy for Leeds 2009 – 2012
14. Leeds Housing Strategy 2009 – 2012
15. Leeds Older People's Housing Strategy Action Plan 2009 – 2010
16. Leeds Regeneration Strategy (under development)
17. Leeds Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2009 – 2012
18. Leeds Food Strategy (refreshed strategy under development for 2010)



Appendix 6: Intergenerational publications and resources

1. Bernard, M., and Ellis, S.W (2004). *How do you know that Intergenerational Practice works? A Guide to getting started on evaluating intergenerational practice.*
2. Beth Johnson Foundation (2009) *Intergenerational Practice Policy and Performance: A Framework for Local Authorities*, Centre for Intergenerational Practice.
3. Beth Johnson Foundation (2009) *Evaluating Intergenerational Projects: A Practical Guide to Useful Resources*, Centre for Intergenerational Practice
4. Beth Johnson Foundation (2010) *Intergenerational Approaches in Leeds*, Centre for Intergenerational Practice.
5. Granville, G (2003) *A Review of Intergenerational Practice in the UK.*
6. Hatton-Yeo (2006) (ed.) *Intergenerational Programmes – an introduction and examples of practice.* Beth Johnson Foundation, Centre for Intergenerational Practice.
7. MacCallum, J., Palmer, D., Wright, P., Cumming Potvin, W., Northcote, J., Brooker, M., and Tero, C. (2006) *Community building through intergenerational exchange programmes: Report to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS)*, Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
8. Springate, I., Atkins, M. and Martin, K (2008) *Intergenerational Practice: A Review of the Literature.*
9. Taggart, L. (2010) *A City for All Ages, Consultation Exercise*, Learning and Development Options and Leeds City Council (with support from the Cities in Balance Project).
10. AGE: The European Older People's Platform: A website that contains a number of useful links and key documents relating to intergenerational solidarity on an international basis: www.age-platform.org

“We...recognise that (all) persons...should enjoy a life of fulfilment, health, security and active participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of their societies.

We recognise the need to strengthen solidarity among generations and intergenerational partnerships, keeping in mind the particular needs of both older and younger people, and to encourage mutually responsive relationships between generations”

(United Nations Madrid Declaration on Ageing 2002, Articles 5 and 16)

Harmonious Leeds

Health and Wellbeing in Later Life

1st Floor West, Merrion House, LS2 8QB

Phone: 0113 247 8237

Email: generations@leeds.gov.uk

Web: www.leedsinitiative.org

the Leeds Initiative

Local partnerships making things happen