

engage in the visual arts

Professional Development Toolkit

Older People and Intergenerational Learning

This toolkit has been developed to accompany the engage Continuing Professional Development training seminar focusing on older people and intergenerational learning at the British Museum on Monday 10 May 2010.

It includes a strategy overview, suggestions for building partnerships and examples of good practice, including case studies from engage Cymru pilot research projects. In addition, it includes information about funders, useful links to research, journals and websites and further reading. The content expands on the learning and practice demonstrated during the seminar.

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“Access and participation in the arts are an essential part of our everyday wellbeing and quality of life”

-Rt Honourable Alan Johnson MP, 2008

Introduction

We in the UK are living through an enormous demographic change. This has now reached a tipping point with pensioners outnumbering children for the first time. A quarter of all children born today are expected to live to reach 100 years old.

(Source: Building A Society for All Ages)

The strategy for older people in England ‘Building A Society for All Ages’ (published in 2009) outlines the necessity for:

“A shift in attitude and behavior across society so that old age is no longer perceived as a time of dependency and exclusion”

Everyone, including galleries and artists, has an important role to play in helping bring about that shift in attitude, through developing relevant and meaningful programmes that break down barriers to older people accessing the visual arts, but which also help challenge negative stereotypes of older people. Indeed, galleries are well placed to promote lifelong learning, participation and social inclusion, all leading to improved wellbeing and enhanced quality of life.

This is a challenge, but also an opportunity for us all. Arts organisations working with older people as a specific group of active participants appears to be a recent phenomenon. It is hard to discern activity before the 1970s when it seems to have been one aspect of a larger movement to draw different sections of society into the arts, sometimes described as the community arts movement. (Source: Baring Foundation ‘Ageing Artfully: Older People and Professional Arts in the UK’ David Cutler)

engage Cymru (Wales) recently undertook a mapping report to ascertain levels of galleries and visual arts venues engaging with older people in Wales. It revealed that only 3% were proactively engaging with older people. Following this report, engage Cymru embarked on a Wales-wide research project involving six local authority partners to explore the role of galleries and artists in addressing key issues highlighted in the Strategy for Older People; and in particular access to informal lifelong learning opportunities; combating social isolation and loneliness and increasing health and wellbeing. The projects included a number of intergenerational projects, and some working solely with older people. Case study examples and key findings appear in a later section of this Toolkit.

Definition of ‘Older People’

The *Older People Strategy* in Wales and *Building a Society for All Ages* strategy in England define older people as 50+.

‘Older People’ can be broken down further. David Cutler in *Ageing Artfully* includes a description of a ‘Third’ and ‘Fourth’ Age. Third Age is used to denote an older person who remains physically and mentally fit and in full possession of all their capacities. Fourth Age suggests someone who has begun to experience significant limitation to these capacities. Beyond the fact that both terms are applied to older people they cease to be chronological. So, for instance, someone aged 90 in excellent health would be in their Third Age while another person could be 60, suffering dementia and mobility problems and be in their Fourth Age. Physical and mental health are not however the only determinants to a full life. So someone in their Third Age could feel that the arts are not open to them due to their class or ethnic background. These categories are not necessarily static though, someone can move back and forth between Third and Fourth Age due to changes in health.

Arts and Cultural Policy

There is no national policy framework for arts and older people. So, for instance, although Arts Council England has a specific policy for children and young people there is no comparable policy for older people. The Arts Council England does though have a policy on the Arts and Health, which has considerable relevance to some parts of this work. Similarly, the Welsh Assembly Government and Arts Council Wales have jointly published *Arts in Health and Wellbeing: An Action Plan for Wales*. The principles for a national policy can be inferred from anti-age discrimination legislation combined with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that ‘everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts’. (Source: Baring Foundation ‘Ageing Artfully’)

Building a Society for All Ages is the Government's strategy for how we as a society make the most of this change in demographics. It develops the Government's 2005 strategy, *Opportunity Age* which has now largely been delivered. It builds on a solid foundation of recent reforms to the pensions and health systems for older people.

The Strategy includes a £20m transformation fund which is intended to test new ideas and offer informal learning opportunities to everyone. The government will also develop a ‘Good Place to Grow Old’ programme with a national agreement to promote the importance of ageing issues at a local level. To assist with the delivery of this agreement, the government have created a UK Advisory Forum on ageing who will provide advice to Ministers. Beth Johnson Foundation are one of several organisations included in that Forum. Although the strategy doesn’t mention the role of the arts specifically, it does highlight the importance of lifelong learning and education opportunities and increasing potential for participation and social inclusion.

In addition a £5.5m 'Generations Together' programme will be created to fund twelve intergenerational projects across the Country to break down barriers and challenge negative stereotypes.

What is intergenerational practice?

Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities.

Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them.

Younger (under 25) and older (50+) people are the two groups most affected by ageist attitudes and when we talk about abuse, poverty, lack of political voice and marginalisation these two groups are the most affected. They are doubly disadvantaged if they are also members of other socially excluded groups.

Intergenerational approaches are an effective way to address a number of issues - many of them key government priorities - such as building active communities, promoting citizenship, regenerating neighbourhoods and addressing inequality.

The links between intergenerational practice, research and policy are key to the development of intergenerational practice in the UK and to the integration of intergenerational approaches in a range of policy arenas.

Intergenerational initiatives have direct impacts on those involved, as well as on their communities. Participants may feel increased self-esteem from being able to give to and receive from others. They can experience improvements in health and a greater sense of being valued members of their communities. Older people can provide younger people with positive role models both of engaged citizenship and of active ageing. Young people represent a link to the future for older people.

Intergenerational initiatives often fall into three categories:

- members of one generation supporting another
- people from different generations working together to address community issues
- people from different generations learning together

Why 'intergenerational'?

Many changes in society - such as increased geographic mobility - have led to generations frequently becoming segregated from one another - especially younger and older people. This separation can lead to unrealistic, negative stereotypes of whole generations and a decrease in positive exchanges between them. Yet these separated generations do have resources of value to each other and furthermore share areas of concern - for example, both young and old are often marginalised in decision-making that directly affects their lives.

Intergenerational projects attempt to bring the generations together again, improving

understanding between them, increasing the support they provide to one another, and ensuring that their voices are heard within their communities. (Source: Beth Johnson Foundation website)

engage Cymru (Wales)

Galleries engaging with Socially Isolated Older People

A mapping report in Wales by engage Cymru in 2009 revealed that only 3% of galleries and arts organisations were proactively engaging older people in their programmes. To address this shortfall, engage Cymru ran two training seminars aimed at both the gallery sector and agencies working on behalf of older people. Delegates were brought up to speed on government strategy for older people and action plan in Wales, and examples of best practice were shared. Following this engage Cymru piloted six action research projects in partnership with six local authorities; namely Swansea; Ceredigion; Carmarthenshire; Rhondda Cynon Taf; Newport and Gwynedd. The aim has been to explore what impact galleries and the visual arts can play in:

- Adding to older people's quality of life
- Helping to combat social isolation
- Increase interaction between groups
- Increase health and wellbeing
- Increase access to informal learning opportunities

Case studies and a report will shortly be available from engage website, www.engage.org.

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Increased social interaction between older people within the groups
- Increased sense of wellbeing after realising they can be creative
- Long periods of focus and concentration when people with dementia, who normally have long periods of confusion, are engaged in a shared creative activity
- Expressions of enjoyment from participants
- Lifelong learning opportunities for older people, as well as carers (carers are beginning to visit galleries for their own enjoyment in their own time)
- Improved communication between generations, particularly project involving Alternative Learning group of young people
- Participants and carers enjoy being involved in a group activity that has a sense of purpose and outcome
- Tasks seem to focus residents, they become calmer when engaged in activity
- Older people have learned new IT skills working with young people
- Increased sense of ownership of gallery and museum settings by participants
- All groups, without exception, keen for sessions to continue beyond timescale of project
- Care home residents who do not normally get involved in activities, are attending sessions regularly and look forward to further sessions

engage Cymru Case Study

Rhonnda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

"I can't believe I did that...its beautiful" (service user, Cwmni Dda Day Unit commenting on her artwork following gallery visit)

Who was involved?

- Artist, Louise Carey
- Service users, Cwmni Dda Day Unit (twelve in total, all with varying degrees/types of dementia)
- Senior Care Officer and Independent Living Support Worker, Cwmni Dda
- Head of Lifelong Learning, Rhonnda Cynon Taf (RCT)
- Outreach Learning, RCT
- Cynon Valley Museum & Art Gallery, Museums Officer

Outputs:

- Ten two-hour sessions with artist
- Two gallery visits; exhibitions by Neil Carol and Nick Comerford
- Ten practical art activities back at care home (two hours per week)
- Exhibition/celebration of work

Outcomes (project level):

- Increased social interaction between group
- Increasing periods of concentration
- Enjoyment by participants expressed both verbally and behaviourally
- Increased motor skills and dexterity
- Participants eager for next session
- Carers learnt new skills from artist which they will incorporate into activities beyond project
- Delight of participants in work they have created
- Carers now visiting the gallery independently with family and friends
- Further gallery visits planned for service users, beyond timescale of project
- Sense of pride and achievement in seeing their work exhibited in gallery setting
- Opportunity to share their outcomes with family members and other care staff
- Professional development for artist

Outcomes (strategic level):

- Importance of working in partnership with local authority in terms of sustainability
- Lifelong Learning Department recognise the value of informal learning opportunities and keen to spread this practice further across the County
- Welsh Local Government Association support and recognition of potential of this work, particularly from Head of Older People Strategy, Welsh Assembly Government
- Joined-up thinking between departments

- Sustainable relationships developed between gallery and local authority officers
- Good practice dissemination for gallery education sector
- Bangor University Dementia Care Services Research Department to use findings to develop bid to advance and develop this area of work

Challenges:

- Avoid projects taking place in mid-winter (snow and ice!)
- Artist and other stakeholders to receive dementia awareness training in advance of project
- Always involve a large range of activities and mediums to reflect needs and abilities of group. Simple printmaking techniques were introduced which were very popular as produced fairly instant results
- Select exhibitions carefully when planning projects, not all exhibitions will be accessible or suitable
- Always ensure plenty of seating in gallery visits (very important, and often overlooked)
- Always provide plenty of tea and cake to ensure an informal and interactive period
- Allow for drop out rate when working with frail elderly people; inevitable illness; hospital appointments etc.

Examples of good practice across the UK: galleries and arts organisations engaging with Older People

Below are a selection of arts organisations and galleries across the UK that are working proactively with older people. A full list can be seen on Baring Foundation 'Ageing Artfully' PDF document (see resources at end of Toolkit for website link)

The British Museum is encouraging older local people to visit more often and for shorter periods. They have found the key to doing this is about providing supported visiting to enable an enjoyable experience and not just encouraging people to visit and then leaving them to it. Supported visiting is part of an 'over 55' strand being developed with a core programme of assisted visits, called Fledging.

Cubitt Gallery works on a regular basis with a local over 55's centre in conjunction with two local primary schools. In its 'Insider Art' project, the Claremont project members visit Cubitt on a monthly basis and work alongside Cubitt-based artists in their studios. Recently a purpose built space has been created for the Claremont members to use as a drop-in studio to develop their own projects.

Digital:works is an arts and educational organisation. One of its projects was a commission from Poole Older People's Project (POPP) to teach a group of older people photographic skills and to create an exhibition. Several years later this has led to the group formally constituting itself, and with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, work is underway on an exhibition exploring working lives looking back over a period of 60 years. The local authority is a key partner and a dedicated website www.ourworkinglives.org has already been set up.

Fabrica received funding from Arts Council England South East's 'Rendezvous' scheme to research with older people how to remove the physical and psychological barriers that can impede their engagement with contemporary art. The research is ongoing.

National Museums Liverpool has run a number of projects with older people. In 2002 it worked with the Liverpool Housing Action Trust on the 'City Memories' project with older residents of dilapidated tower blocks. Some participants went on to volunteer at the now closed Museum of Liverpool Life. A 'time tunnel' was created as a permanent art installation in a new housing development. Reminiscence has been explored as a therapeutic tool for older people suffering brain injury or dementia. The social history collections have been used to trigger memory through the 'Stroll Through Time' programme.

The Serpentine Gallery has been involved for many years in work with older people. As part of its 'Learning Through Art' education programme, they provide special artist-led workshops for community groups, many of which are designed to increase access to the arts for older people through working with care organisations, day centres and community groups, such as Forrester Court Nursing Home, Open Age Project and Amberley Club.

Tramway runs visual arts workshops for women over 55. In August 2008 the group enjoyed an occupation of Tramway 2 where they developed a series of individual works exploring time, space and contemporary culture.

Developing intergenerational projects and work with older people- things to consider

Partnerships

Partnership working has been the key to successful and meaningful projects throughout the engage Cymru pilot research projects, particularly in terms of working with service providers for older people, and local authority officers who can identify groups of people who they feel could benefit from engagement. Agencies and organisations working on behalf of older people are also able to suggest or provide relevant training for artists.

“Arts organisations and service providers for older people mostly live in two different worlds. Given the pressures on both, this is not surprising but there could be great potential in more working together. There are a few examples of this at a more strategic level, such as the City of Manchester’s involvement with the Hallé and others and the presence of Equal Arts on a number of partnership boards in the North East of England.” (*Baring Foundation ‘Ageing Artfully’*)

Getting Started

There are many ways to get started. You may want to consider tying in with a national initiative such as ‘Full of Life’ or Older People’s Day 2010. ‘Full of Life’, a government initiative, is a celebration of the opportunities, achievements, and aspirations of older people and their contribution to our society and economy. Under the Full of Life banner, the government and other supporting groups are arranging a variety of activities. The main event is UK Older People’s Day, which will take place on 1 October to coincide with the UN International Day for Older People.

This is the fourth year that UK Older People’s Day has been celebrated in the UK and the theme for 2010 is ‘getting and staying active in later life’.

The aim for 2010 is to build on the successes of previous years. In 2009 there were over a thousand events in local communities throughout the UK. These ranged from theatre projects to tea dances; from fitness and healthy eating classes to forums on ageing. These events helped tackle the outdated stereotypes of ‘old age’ by bringing different generations together, which was the main theme for last year.

More information about Older People’s Day 2010 and how you can get involved will be provided over the coming months at www.direct.gov.uk The Full of Life toolkit is now available to download at www.dwp.gov.uk/fulloflife

Friday 1 October 2010 is UK Older People’s Day, see www.dwp.gov.uk/fulloflife for details.

In Wales, Age Cymru (previously Age Concern Cymru and Help the Aged) organise an annual festival called 'Gwanwyn' (meaning Spring) - A Celebration of Creativity in Later Life' (see web link below). During 2009 engage Cymru invited galleries to take part in Gwanwyn Festival by offering taster workshops, talks or activities aimed at an older audience who may not have visited galleries before. This proved very successful and galleries have now made contact with many more older people who they hope to continue working with.

Contact the Elderly is a national charity and organises monthly Sunday afternoon tea parties for people over 75 who live alone with little or no support from family and friends. One Sunday afternoon a month volunteers use their car to take older members to and from a volunteer host's home for tea, cake and companionship. Our hosts take it in turn to welcome the small group of older people and volunteer drivers into their home for a few hours. These Sunday afternoon tea parties are a lifeline of friendship bringing older people and volunteers together for an afternoon of stories, laughter and conversation. (Source: Contact the Elderly website www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk)

National Museums Scotland has introduced a pilot programme of monthly Sunday afternoon visits to museums and galleries in Edinburgh for lonely, isolated elderly people. It started in May 2009. The programme is being run in conjunction with Contact the Elderly. Volunteer drivers pick up participants from their homes and accompany them to different museums and galleries. There is strong emphasis on the social aspect of the visit, finishing with a chat over a final cup of tea. In Wales, Ruthin Craft Centre has recently made links with Contact the Elderly North Wales group and regular Sunday afternoon gallery visits are now taking place. Contact the Elderly have groups across the UK. See their website (address above) for more information.

Funding

Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK
www.pwwsolicitors.co.uk

The Big Lottery Fund is launching a new funding programme focusing on older people in 2010.
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

Baring Foundation
www.baringfoundation.org.uk

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
www.gulbenkian.org.uk

Rayne Foundation
www.raynefoundation.org.uk

Comic Relief
www.comicrelief.com/apply_for_a_grant/uk/olderpeople

The Tudor Trust
www.thetudortrust.org.uk

Generations Together

The £5.5 million 'Generations Together' programme will fund twelve intergenerational projects across the country to break down barriers and challenge negative stereotypes. Further details are to be announced.

Wales Assembly Government Community Facilities and Activities Programme
Up to £100k or £300k over three years.

www.wales.gov.uk/housingandcommunity

Organisations

Age UK www.ageuk.co.uk

Mission is to promote the wellbeing of all older people and to help make later life a fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

Arts for Health www.artsforhealth.org

Arts for Health at Manchester Metropolitan University is the UK's longest established arts and health organisation. With specialism in research, advocacy and development it is working with Arts Council England and the Department of Health and a range of partners to better understand the impact of creativity, culture and the arts on health and wellbeing.

Beth Johnson Foundation www.bjf.org.uk

The Beth Johnson Foundation is a national organisation that seeks to make a positive impact on the lives of older people, to gain recognition for the valuable role older people play and to challenge age discrimination through pioneering initiatives that bring together research, policy and best practice.

Equal Arts www.equalarts.co.uk

Equal Arts is the Northern Region's arts and older people's agency. They aim to improve the quality of people's lives in the North East by enabling older people to have access to high quality arts projects. Aims include:

- To improve older people's access to the arts throughout the region
- To help combat the isolation of older people through running participatory arts projects
- To work with partners to raise the status of the field
- To support and train artists to ensure good practice

Magic Me www.magicme.co.uk

Based in Tower Hamlets, east London since 1989, Magic Me's programme annually serves around 550 local people from diverse generations, cultures and ethnicities. They specialise in running creative arts projects which bring together young people (aged 9+) and older people (55+) for mutual benefit, learning and enjoyment.

Niace (National Institute for Adult Continuing Education) www.niace.org.uk
Aims to encourage all adults to engage in learning of all kinds.

U3A www.u3a.org.uk

U3A stands for the University of the Third Age, which is a self-help organisation for people no longer in full time employment providing educational, creative and leisure opportunities in a friendly environment. It consists of local U3As all over the UK, which are charities in their own right and are run entirely by volunteers. Local U3As are learning cooperatives which draw upon the knowledge, experience and skills of their own members to organise and provide interest groups in accordance with the wishes of the membership. The teachers learn and the learners teach. Between them U3As offer the chance to study over 300 different subjects in such fields as art, languages, music, history, life sciences, philosophy, computing, crafts, photography and walking. A typical U3A has about 250 members but could be as small as twelve and as large as 2000.

The U3A approach to learning is 'learning for pleasure'. There is no accreditation or validation and there are no assessments or qualifications to be gained.

Further reading and resources

Baring Foundation

Ageing Artfully: Older People and Professional Participatory Arts in the UK

www.baringfoundation.org.uk

Beth Johnson Foundation / Centre for Intergenerational Practice offers a range of publications and newsletters which include information on funding opportunities:

- *Intergenerational Directory* (January 2010) - a directory of people interested in intergenerational approaches and practitioners
- *Intergenerational Practice, Policy and Performance: A Framework for Local Authorities* - a publication supporting the development of intergenerational work www.bjf.org.uk

Contemporary visual art and identity construction- wellbeing amongst older people

Project funded by the cross-council New Dynamics of Ageing Programme

www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk/ . 'Contemporary visual art and identity construction- wellbeing amongst older people' is a two-year research project to be undertaken by Andrew Newman, Dr. Chris Whitehead and Anna Goulding from the International Centre for Culture and Heritage Studies, School of Arts and Cultures, based at Newcastle University.

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills

The White Paper, *The Learning Revolution*, was launched on 23 March 2009 and sets out the Government's strategy for informal learning:

http://www.dius.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/migratedd/publications//learning_revolution.pdf

engage

Information about all engage's activity and research can be found online at www.engage.org. Information about engage Cymru's projects is at www.engagecymru.org.uk or email info@engage.org.

The Government strategy for ageing in England

Building a Society for All Ages www.hmg.gov.uk/buildingasocietyforallages.aspx.

Beth Johnson Foundation sits on the Ageing Forum that developed this strategy, which is available online in PDF format. For a hard copy or to receive this document in an alternative format email allages@hmg.gov.uk

Magic Me

Our Generations report on a 3-year intergenerational arts programme in Tower Hamlets (2006-2009). Magic Me also offer a quarterly newsletter including projects, events and funding, reports, articles and publications. They can also offer CPD training. www.magicme.co.uk

Niace

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education www.niace.org.uk

Older and Bolder programme www.niacedc.org.uk (Wales)

Their Past, Your Future

The national intergenerational programme called 'Their Past, Your Future' funded by the Big Lottery and managed by the Museums and Libraries Association has to date awarded over £1 million to 120 projects since 2004. The second phase of 'Their Past, Your Future' ran until March 2010. Every project is different but all involve work with older and younger people exploring conflict. Hundreds of veterans have worked with thousands of young people to share their experience.

www.mla.gov.uk/what/programmes/past_future

Voluntary Arts Network

Voluntary Arts Network briefing paper *Older People and Voluntary Arts: Steps to Meaningful Participation* www.voluntaryarts.org/uploaded.map4912.pdf

About engage

engage is the National Association for Gallery Education, a UK-based international membership organisation. engage works through its members to promote access to, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts.

engage members are those who deliver learning programmes in the visual arts, including gallery educators, artists and artist educators, as well as students, teachers, curators, youth and community workers, policymakers and others involved in arts education and the visual arts.

Join engage to benefit from professional development support, access to ground-breaking research projects, resources and publications and a national and international network of peers.

www.engage.org/join