



Intergenerational England

Connecting our Generations for a Stronger Future



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regardless of age, as humans we are wired to connect. Our emotions are significantly influenced by the people around us.

When those bonds are strong and supportive, we thrive. If they become damaged or lost, we suffer. Whatever our age, our level of connection affects how we think and act. It is vital for our well-being.

As we grow, our passions and perspectives change and at different ages, we see the world from different angles.

Yet far from embracing this diversity, society often excludes people, deeming them too young or too old to make a meaningful contribution, do a specific job or even have a valid opinion.

Intergenerational England aims to bridge this gap.

We want to connect age groups, celebrate perspectives, and create spaces and communities where diverse experiences are shared, fostering dialogue to build a more inclusive society.

We aim to embed an intergenerational approach, a deliberate, thoughtful strategy harnessing the connections between and among people all through their lives. An approach that recognises the value of diverse experiences and meaningful interactions that transcend age boundaries.

There is enthusiasm, insight, and vibrancy in each of us. People of any age and at every stage of life all offer the ability to teach and learn from each other and the opportunity to do so is vital.

Intergenerational activity is not a new idea:

Its value is well understood in many countries and cultures. In many parts of the UK, too, many individuals and communities already benefit from initiatives that bring different ages together.

But it doesn't happen everywhere – and we are committed to changing that. Intergenerational England will work across society through local and national initiatives, events and advocacy work.

We aim to celebrate existing and emerging initiatives, working to change our society's mindset and create a world where each generation is not just valued individually, but where people of all ages collaborate naturally and instinctively.

Lets make this happen together.



THE CHALLENGE

Age is an increasing barrier in our society. Defining people exclusively by different generations – young, old and in-between – has been proved to promote disparity across communities in terms of income, education, places to live and countless other social opportunity.

Limiting such opportunity in this way is shown to negatively impact people's health – and ultimately fractures society.

This is already happening – and it's getting worse. Over the next 30 years, more people than ever will live on their own. By 2050 there will be 60,000 women over 80 without children – three times as many as there are now.

But isolation does not just affect the elderly. Research shows those most likely to feel disconnected and alone are aged between 16 and 35, while as many as 45% of children aged 10-15 years reported feeling lonely some or all of the time.

Older and younger people are connecting less, too. More young people live in urban centres, meaning age groups are unlikely to share the same neighbourhoods. For the first time, young people are growing up less likely than their parents to afford their own home, which forces them to rent elsewhere – exacerbating the divide. Today's children have only a 5% chance of living near someone aged 65 or over, compared with 15% in 1990.

This lack of opportunity for ages to mix is a social problem, with isolation impacting all age groups' mental and physical health. It is found to promote persistent, often negative generational stereotypes, leading to mistrust and anxiety. Recent research finds the proportion of adults "feeling anxious yesterday" is 32%, above pre-pandemic levels.

It is an economic problem too. A higher concentration of younger people results in a reduction in job opportunities. Age segregation also cuts the ability for young and old to care for each other, which pushes up care costs.

THE SOLUTION

Many of these challenges can be solved by thinking differently. By creating a society where all ages can contribute equally, and are valued equally. Whether it's work, education, training, health, social care, housing, sport, leisure or any other aspect of life, a truly inclusive intergenerational society removes

these restrictions and offers genuine opportunity for all. By engaging and valuing individuals of all ages, we naturally build cohesive, supportive, empathetic and thriving communities.





WHY INTERGENERATIONAL ?

Bringing generations together has a profound impact on lives. It's not just about bridging the gap between the younger and the older people; it's about recognising the value of every life stage in between. When we embrace a mindset that inherently includes, respects, and leverages the experiences and perspectives of individuals across all age groups, every person benefits.

An intergenerational approach across all layers of society connects people, reduces isolation, improves self-esteem and boosts individual and societal well-being.

But this isn't just about making people feel good. All the above result in very practical and economic benefits to individuals, communities and wider society.

Consistent intergenerational thinking reduces inequality, boosts inclusivity and builds trust and empathy between individuals and communities, leading to greater societal integration, reduced crime and other social problems, and increased diversity of thought and planning – all of which boosts prosperity.

Communities are more economically resilient. Public spending is more effective. A society that looks out for each other across generations results in a more efficient, productive and skilled workforce, greater employment opportunity, reduced social care costs and increased, sustained opportunity, which contributes to the whole of society.

“Across our lives we naturally engage with people who are like us – but that can create social distance between people who are not, a sense of ‘them and us’ across different ages or backgrounds. This can make people feel isolated, anxious or even threatened. Yet actually there is so much that connects us. We need an approach like Intergenerational England’s, that gives different generations more points of contact with each other, and reassurances about our fellow citizens.”

**SUNDAR KATWALA, Director,
British Futures Thinktank**

15%

increase in residents' perception of community cohesion in communities with active intergenerational engagement.

- United Nations Population Fund

72%

of young participants in intergenerational activities reported increased happiness and community awareness.

- Generations United

33%

decrease in symptoms of depression amongst adults engaged in intergenerational volunteering.

- The National Council on Aging

87%

of participants in intergenerational community programs felt a stronger sense of community belonging and connection.

-AARP

89%

of older adults participating in intergenerational programs reported feeling happier and more socially connected.

- Journal of Gerontology

20%

increase in employee job satisfaction in companies with intergenerational mentorship programs

- Society for Human Resource Management



THE PLAN

Intergenerational England will highlight and champion existing intergenerational activities, while creating and co-ordinating new ones. Our aim is to inspire and shape a society where individuals feel connected to each other, regardless of age, throughout their lives.

A society that empowers communities to create lasting intergenerational connections, where public services, governments, policy-makers, employers, businesses, educators, and social prescribers all embed intergenerational approaches into their thought and action. One where measuring intergenerational impact is a constant theme in academic research. A society where ultimately including, respecting and valuing of all ages means these benefits just occur naturally.

Embracing an intergenerational approach, using and

valuing the perspectives of all ages equally, will change all our lives for the better:

- People will feel more connected and have improved wellbeing throughout their lives
- Individuals and communities will be economically resilient and public expenditure more effective, bringing employment opportunities and creating safer, friendlier, more prosperous places to live
- Intergenerational approaches will be embedded, naturally across policies, services and systems

As well as sharing and championing existing projects, we'll back up our grass-roots initiatives by talking to policy-makers, lawmakers and national and local government agencies to ensure intergenerational thinking underpins all aspects of everyday life.



OUR PRIORITIES

We do understand, of course, that changing the way we all think and act will inevitably take time. However attractive the benefits of an intergenerational society, we cannot expect to change mindsets overnight.

Therefore it is important to prioritise areas where early action will have the most positive impact on the greatest number of people.

Once these are embedded, they will naturally begin to shape positive change for people of all ages and backgrounds in all our lives.

Intergenerational England is focusing on six priorities:



Health & Wellbeing

For example:
An Integrated Care Board would lead on commissioning and assessing intergenerational projects designed to facilitate hospital discharge and promote holistic health outcomes.



Social Care

For example: A national care home would introduce intergenerational activities and training aimed at enriching the lives of both residents and staff members.



Education & Youth

For example: Uniform Groups would introduce a specialised engagement program and badge to recognise and celebrate intergenerational service.



Housing & Planning

For example: Collaborative efforts between planners and developers would focus on the creation of a intergenerational communities on a reclaimed brownfield development site.



Research & Innovation

For example: A research project would explore new ways to understand intergenerational interactions, developing innovative methods inspired by diverse global models and cultural viewpoints.



Workplaces

For example: A company would implement intergenerational mentorship programs aimed at fostering knowledge exchange and mutual growth among employees of different age groups.

THE ACTION

Intergenerational England will join the dots, bringing together existing initiatives and new ideas and projects, fusing top-down strategies with bottom-up activities to make a tangible difference. As part of our targeted action plan, we will:

- Develop innovative research methodologies
- Engage policy-makers and lawmakers to support intergenerational approaches
- Run an annual public awareness campaign across digital channels and in-person
- Stage the intergenerational awards scheme to support best practice
- Work with organisations, across sectors to shape unique intergenerational approaches
- Build intergenerational networks that link community projects
- Provide educational resources for public, private and voluntary sectors
- Host conferences, forums and briefings for leaders across sectors
- Creating a set of principles to inform and inspire Intergenerational understanding
- Have the 'go to' website for intergenerational inspiration, influence and sharing

“There is so much that young people can learn from older people and vice versa, improving the quality of life and opportunity for both. And as those one-to-one benefits grow, that cohesion comes to shape and define communities. Yet we’ve allowed ourselves to become more individualistic and less community focused. Lots of policies are out there but none of it is joined up. Intergenerational England can pull everything together to benefit everyone.”

**BEN HOWLETT, CEO,
Policy Thinktank Chamber UK
and Former MP**



DEVELOPING PRACTICE

Intergenerational England will showcase and amplify existing exemplary practices, illustrating the profound impact of intergenerational connections across all echelons of society, from individual experiences to strategic advancements.

Here are some examples:

Graham, a retired teacher, was suffering from loneliness and withdrawing from society after his wife's passing and lockdown isolation. Encouraged by family, he joined an Intergenerational workshop linking care homes, older people, community members and local schools. The sessions gave Graham purpose; he bonded with eight-year-old Radhika (Nikki) over music and poetry. This new found excitement motivated Graham to volunteer weekly and lead intergenerational sessions supporting his local community. Graham's daughter admires his resilience, seeing his journey from grief to embracing new opportunities.



IMM (Intergenerational Music Making) is a pioneering, national not for profit organisation working to advance the mental & physical wellbeing of the young and older people, empowering communities to share their stories, through music and creativity. IMM brings the healing power of music to care homes, hospitals, schools and community groups aiming to cultivate inclusive & resilient communities, while providing opportunities for individual and community development. Through workshops, music therapy, training and creative social hubs, IMM aims to bring generations & communities across the UK together.



Intergenerational housing brings together people to enjoy the benefits of living among neighbours of all ages. Current housing provision tends to be highly segregated and unsuitable, isolating different age groups, leading to loneliness among both young and old, and exacerbating crises in special needs, care for older people and physical and mental health and social problems. But companies such as **Clarion Housing** have commissioned research and projects to sustain the intergenerational connections and embed 'age friendly principles'.



Generations Working Together (GWT) is a leading organisation in Scotland that helps bring different generations together. GWT provides valuable training opportunities for individuals who want to learn about intergenerational practice, and guidelines on how to design bespoke community projects. In 2020, it called for Scotland to become the first country where generations work together, coinciding with the Scottish Government Election in 2021.



“Every single day in the Scouts we see the sheer power of bringing different generations together. Our youngest member is four, our oldest is 94 and we all learn skills from each other, fostering mutual respect, empathy, understanding and social cohesion. We’re excited to help Intergenerational England show what can be achieved by all ages coming together.”

MATT HYDE, CEO, Scouts

CONNECTING ORGANISATIONS INCLUDE:

“As a society we need to change how we view age and remove the barriers and preconceptions about particular age groups. In bringing people together and valuing each other we give ourselves purpose, positivity and psychological well-being, which drives better cognitive ability and improves physical as well as mental health. Intergenerational England is excellent – its impact on individual and societal health is enormous.”

DR ADRIAN HAYTER,
National Clinical Director for
Older People and
Personalised Care, NHS
England.



Meet the Team

Our Team



Charlotte Miller
Co-founder



Emily Abbott
Co-founder



Jez Hughes
Consultant



Ingrid Abreu Scherer
Consultant

Our Trustees



Lord Syed Kamall
*Member of
UK House of Lords*



Dr Claire Fuller
*National Primary Care
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Sami Gichki
*Co-chair,
#IWill Movement*



Frederike Harms
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Consultant*

“We all have the same human things that connect us. Intergenerational England is about finding the moments in life which pull people together. And in passing on those individual experiences from one age group to another, that connects society more widely. As a society we seem to have got obsessed with the risks of helping each other and lost sight of the opportunities. Intergenerational England offers a chance to change that.”

**DAME JULIA CLEVERDON,
DCVO, CBE**



BECOME A PARTNER

Whoever you are, there is a role for you in Intergenerational England

Our vision is to change the way our society acts and thinks. Our aim is a fully inclusive society, a nation that promotes diversity of thought and experience, that truly values and embraces perspectives from people of all ages, all cultures, all backgrounds. This will embed new attitudes in how we do things, to create a better, more respectful, more thoughtful, society that works for EVERYONE.

The more supporters we have, the more stories we can tell. The more stories we tell, the more people we inspire. The more people we inspire, the more difference we make to individual lives. The more difference we make individually, the greater the impact on our society. The quicker we create a truly Intergenerational England.



Delivery Partner

Work with us to develop vanguard projects that demonstrate the social and economic benefits of an intergenerational approach.



Policy Partner

Work with us to connect with policymakers and lawmakers to remove barriers to intergenerational working.



Sector Partner

Use your professional experience and connections in health, social care, education, housing, recreation or other field to build intergenerational thinking in your sector.



Funding Partner

Help to sponsor and/or finance our initiatives and campaigns, or become a regular donor.



Research Partner

Share your intergenerational practice – we will promote and highlight your success. We'll develop innovative research initiatives with academic partners



Advocacy Partner

Look around your own community, your workplace, school, place of worship, club, sports team – how could we help you to bring people from across generations together?





Intergenerational England

Connecting our Generations for a Stronger Future

To Get Involved:

Website: www.intergenerationalengland.org

Email: info@intergenerationalengland.org

Together we can connect our generations for a stronger future

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