

Building a Society for All Ages Draft Wales Intergenerational Strategy Briefing

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Background

In 2002 the World Assembly on Ageing adopted an 'International Plan of Action on Ageing' called the Madrid Declaration which states:

Article 14

We recognise the need to strengthen solidarity between generations, and intergenerational partnerships, keeping in mind the particular needs of both older and younger ones, and encouraging mutually responsive relationships between generations.

Wales was the first country in the world to incorporate the Madrid Declaration into National Policy.

In January 2003 The Strategy for Older People in Wales was published. A key action in the Strategy was to establish a development programme to promote intergenerational links.

Following the publication of the Strategy for Older People in Wales, the Beth Johnson Foundation was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to work with partners across Wales to support the development of intergenerational practice.

Prior to the formal consultation on the Intergenerational Strategy, a period of initial consultation with young and older people was undertaken. Both groups agreed the need to develop mechanisms to promote positive contact between young and old. Other key issues raised were:

- The role of the media in focussing on negative stories increasing suspicion between generations;
- Two-way respect across the generations;
- The need for young people to volunteer with more isolated older people;

- The need for older people to volunteer with young people to support them to improve their educational performance and build confidence.
- Equitable access to public transport.

Policy Areas

The Strategy aims to move from the current programmatic approach to a strategic approach where intergenerational considerations can strengthen existing strategies. The Welsh Assembly proposes to focus the Strategy on the following policy areas:

Ageism and Equality

Communities First found that widespread negative attitudes towards young people in communities and in local authorities is a major obstacle. At the same time ageism inflicts on older people too.

To challenge ageism, different approaches will be required:

- Ageism as a part of the Personal Social Education (PSE) syllabus in schools;
- Develop mechanisms that promote increased contact between young and old;
- Promote intergenerational volunteering;
- Develop existing models of intergenerational volunteering.

Communities First/Communities Next

Specific recommendations relating to intergenerational practice will be integrated into the next phase of Communities First:

- Explore the potential for intergenerational programmes to contribute to the wider development of social and community cohesion across all areas of Wales.

Community Focussed Schools

The community focussed schools approach recognises that schools need to work in partnership with others to address a range of targets and deliver on a range of agendas, e.g. community regeneration.

Continyou Cymru is developing a toolkit and resources to help the development of community focussed schools. The Welsh Assembly Government is developing a framework on intergenerational projects to complement this.

Community Safety

Fear of crime has a significant, detrimental impact on the general wellbeing of people.

Older people are particularly concerned about groups of young people who they see as posing a threat.

Young people are much more at risk of crime on the streets than older people and share many of the same concerns.

There is a need to build on the 'All Wales Youth Offending Strategy' which highlights the need to promote contact between the generations and joint working that promotes all of the generations feeling safer and more valued. It is proposed that this will be achieved by:

- Identifying existing examples of good practice and producing learning materials and training to disseminate this practice;
- Working with partners from the media to explore how a more balanced reporting on youth and older people may be achieved in the future.

Culture and Identity

All people regardless of age or background should have access to cultural activities. The Welsh Assembly believes that culture provides an ideal means for the young and old to share experiences and learn from and alongside one another. The Assembly proposes to publish a series of case studies of projects to inform a wider understanding of the role of culture in building better generational understanding.

Engagement and Participation

'Making the Connections' stresses the importance of engaging with our communities and citizens. The Welsh Assembly Government proposes to:

- Identify opportunities for collaborative approaches to intergenerational engagement and participation particularly linking youth forums and older person's forums;
- Seek to utilise the formal consultation on this Strategy as a mechanism to identify existing and new models to take this forward.

Environment Action Plan

The Welsh Assembly Government acknowledges the importance of the environment to people's health and wellbeing and the need to promote outdoor activities as an important contributor to Health Challenge Wales. To do this, the Welsh Assembly Government intends to:

- Produce Guidance for schools becoming eco-schools or developing green gyms on the ways to collaborate older people's groups and sheltered housing on working together for mutual benefit;
- Broaden the proposals for encouraging increased green volunteering by young people to widen recruitment to include older adult volunteers.

Grandparenting and Grandchildren

A working group commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to undertake a study of the role of grandparents and older kin in supporting grandchildren and receiving reciprocal benefits. The study will explore how the Parent Action Plan might take account of their findings. The Welsh Assembly Government hopes to establish a dedicated information section relating to grandparent on the Welsh Centre for Intergenerational Practice Website.

Healthy and Active Lifestyles

Although schools have an integral role in the bigger partnership to deliver sport and physical activity across communities, there is a need to invest in innovative ways to ensure that participation is sustained and integrated through to adulthood.

It is important that people of all ages become more comfortable with physical activity and raise their expectations about potential achievement. To improve the health of citizens there is a need to explore intergenerational opportunities for the young and old. The Welsh Assembly Government proposes to undertake a study to identify the opportunities for intergenerational approaches to developing healthy lifestyles.

In addition to this the impact of intergenerational work on a person's overall mental health and wellbeing needs to be considered.

Local Service Boards

The Local Service Boards were established as a result of the 'Making the Connections: Delivering Beyond Boundaries' document and bring together the key contributors to local service delivery to improve services and undertake joint action.

Intergenerational practice is cross sectorial and seeks to join up policy and practice. Local Service Boards will:

- Explore where intergenerational approaches may provide a way to promote service integration with improved efficiency and impact;
- Explore how cross generational engagement and participation can be integrated into these developments to give a clear voice from all of the generations in local planning.

Volunteering

The Russell Commission provides a blueprint for the promotion of volunteering by young people. 'Living Longer, Living Better' makes a strong case for the promotion and support of volunteering by older people.

There is a need to establish a working group to draw together all relevant partners to recommend how intergenerational volunteering can be systematically developed and sustained in Wales.

General

As Wales is one of the leading countries in the world in seeking to address intergenerational opportunities and concerns at a policy level, it is recommended that funding continues to provide the infrastructure to

support the action plan so that intergenerational practice is embedded into our whole approach to communities, citizenship and integrated Government.

Consultation Questions – Possible answers

Do you support the aspiration of the Assembly Government to develop a national intergenerational strategy? If yes what are the most important factors behind your views? If you do not agree with the need for this policy what are your arguments against it?

Neath Port Talbot CVS supports the need for an Intergenerational Strategy for the following reasons:

- Current services and policies which have intergenerational elements are fragmented and often are only applied to either younger or older people. We believe that this strategy will provide an opportunity for work to be undertaken more collectively and inclusively;
- The Strategy will bring together relevant policies which will influence and improve wider community development at a local and strategic level and provide a focus for purposeful activity;
- The actions incorporated in the Strategy are real and achievable given the current structures and will put policy into practice at a local level;
- The Strategy will provide the opportunity to highlight the contribution of all the Sectors makes in this area

Does the overall tone and content of the introduction accurately state why the policy is important and what it is trying to achieve? Are there ways you would like this adapted or strengthened?

The policy is very clear and readable and makes all relevant connections – there could perhaps be a stronger focus on the wider community and the role of partnership working to achieve the outcomes.

Considering the policy areas that have been identified for the strategy are there any you feel should not be included and are there any additional policies that you feel are essential to include?

Neath Port Talbot CVS agree that all policy areas mentioned should remain in the document.

One suggested policy addition would be to include Poverty as this has an impact on all generations and we feel that intergenerational activity could reduce this in terms of active citizenship and health and wellbeing.

Considering the recommendations that have been made do you feel that these are both realistic and broad enough in scope? Are there any amendments or additions you would like to suggest?

Firstly, we would ask if pages 18-21 constitute an Action Plan or whether the points are recommendations. If it is an action plan, we feel it should be time-bound and SMART.

It would be useful to suggest how the National Strategy will be implemented locally.

Overall, we feel that the recommendations are practical, could be realistically achieved and are well-linked to respective policy areas in the main body of the Strategy.

If you suggested additional policies are you able to say what recommendations you would wish to suggest for these policy areas?

Please feel free to add any additional comments or suggestions here?

Neath Port Talbot CVS welcomes the readability and accessible format of the Strategy. The document is concise and to the point whilst highlighting the key areas of intergenerational practice.

The size of the document makes it easy to distribute and consult upon. It will provide a useful focus for local intergenerational activity.

If you undertook any consultation activities in developing your response could you please briefly summarise these and in particular state the age groups consulted and whether the activities were intergenerational.

The document has been discussed at Voluntary Sector forums including the Elderly Forum, Children and Young People's Forum, Intergenerational Working Group and other relevant forums and networks.

Could you please give the name and contact details of your organisation to enable us to attribute you in the final document:

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