Intergenerational projects for the LGBT community

A toolkit to inspire and inform

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Acknowledgements

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Foreword
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Anecdotal evidence has always told us that contact between older and younger lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people is overwhelmingly absent. It features rarely in family contexts, which are the primary source of most people's intergenerational relationships, such as between grandparents and grandchildren. More formally, there are few organised contexts in which older and younger LGB and T people have the opportunity to meet. The consequences can be disquieting, with an absence of any kind of intergenerational support or positive older role models.

At Age UK, we have a proud history of promoting intergenerational work and a growing reputation for our equalities work with lesbian, gay, bisexual and, increasingly, transgender people in later life. So we have long felt that bringing the two together in an LGBT intergenerational project was an idea whose time had come.

We are very pleased to have worked in partnership with the International Longevity Centre - UK, our funders Pfizer Inc and vinspired, and three groundbreaking projects in Leicester, London and Stockport to bring our shared intergenerational ambitions dynamically to life. Through heritage, arts and social support activities they have helped enhance mutual understanding between older and younger LGB and T people and developed rewarding intergenerational relationships.

This resource shares the learning of those projects. Fortuitously, it coincides with the publication of Stonewall's ambitious new research into the needs and aspirations of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in later life, which highlights the much greater likelihood of LGB people ageing alone and without intergenerational contact. We hope therefore it will provide ideas and practical examples, not only to encourage support for older people but also to foster a more positive sense of the future among younger LGB and T members of our communities.

Introduction

This toolkit aims to inspire you to create an intergenerational project for the LGBT community and take you step by step through the process of running a potential project. Based on the experience of running the first project of its kind in the UK, we want to share our knowledge and provide some practical tips and tools to help you run your own project.

In late 2010 Age UK and ILC-UK, with the support of vinspired and Pfizer, embarked on a programme to explore the potential of intergenerational work within the LGBT community. The projects aimed to bring older and younger members together and did so through the medium of arts, advocacy and history to share and learn new skills, improve understanding between younger and older people, foster mutual support and celebrate shared heritage.

The intergenerational projects were delivered in partnership with local Age UKs (Camden, Leicester and Stockport) and Gendered Intelligence (Camden), Leicester Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Centre, and Stockport Youth Services. The projects also enlisted the help of other institutions including the Central School of Speech and Drama, the University of Leicester and the University of Salford to support their aims.

This toolkit is designed to provide you with the building blocks to understand the importance and potential of intergenerational working for the LGBT community, but also, provide you with the foundations to run a project of your own. Aimed at practitioners, but also policy makers and educators, the toolkit not only includes essential information on this aspect of intergenerational practice but offers a practical framework to help you plan your activities in this field.

It will cover: how to develop a process model (project identification, aims and objectives proposed outcomes) to help set up an LGBT intergenerational project, planning considerations including recruitment of staff and participants, timing and length of sessions, location and resources, implementation and management, and monitoring and evaluation. It also aims to be a gateway to a range of resources to support and inform project planning.

Set out in an accessible and easy-to-read format, this toolkit hopes to dispel any myths or misapprehensions surrounding LGBT intergenerational projects and instead provide a road map to help steer you through the intergenerational journey by sharing our knowledge and expertise. By communicating these messages through the form of case studies, top tips, and easy to read text, we hope this toolkit will be accessible to practitioners and policy makers alike.

What is an intergenerational project?

An intergenerational project, also known as intergenerational practice, has been described as something which:

"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."
Beth Johnson Foundation Centre for Intergenerational Practice.

The term "intergenerational practice" is used to represent a range of activities and approaches which often have diverse objectives, ranging from achieving educational outcomes to reducing social isolation. However the common thread with any intergenerational work is the desire to bring members of different generations together.

Why are intergenerational projects important?

There is increasing evidence of deterioration in the state of intergenerational relations and growing misunderstanding and feelings of alienation between members of different generations.

Polling carried out by the ILC-UK in 2008 and reported in the paper, *The State of Intergenerational Relations Today: A Research and Discussion Paper,* revealed most people agreed that outside of their families, a natural part of the ageing process is for older people to become disengaged from younger people (with young people in the 16 – 24 age bracket most likely to agree or strongly agree (over four-fifths)). Additionally, 55% of respondents agreed that outside of families, people of different generations generally find it difficult to communicate. Meanwhile many younger people perceive the older generation as distant and a group with whom it is hard to relate to. This lack of mutual understanding can breed suspicion and mistrust.

As the numbers of older people in our society continues to grow, it is important both for individual wellbeing and for the purposes of community cohesion to try to stem generational separation.

What is the underlying goal of intergenerational projects?

Compared to other community projects, the emphasis of intergenerational projects is on promoting understanding and respect between people of different age groups. However this can rarely be achieved simply through gathering two sets of people in the same room. Rather, there needs to be some form of meaningful interaction based on the resources which can otherwise go unrecognised between people of different generations, whether it is skills, knowledge, experience or simply social capital. A range of supplementary beneficial outcomes can be achieved from well-planned intergenerational exchanges.

Why do we need intergenerational projects for the LGBT community?

The potential of intergenerational LGBT work is significant. The evidence shows younger and older LGBT face distinct challenges and potential discrimination in everyday life. We also know the opportunity for younger and older LGBT people to interact and understand different stages of the life course has been historically limited.

Younger and older LGBT groups may share many of the same concerns and experiences, in particular:

- Higher risk of mental ill-health, including loneliness, depression and substance abuse.

- Greater likelihood of having a lifestyle which poses risks to health, including engaging in risky sexual behaviour, in addition to elevated cigarette and alcohol consumption.

- Experiences of marginalisation within families, communities and wider society, and in the worst cases bullying and harassment.

- Greater reliance on non-familial sources for social support or assistance than is the case among non-LGBT people. Among younger people this may equate to relying on, for example, teachers more frequently for social support; among older people this may equate to relying on, for example, carers for social and/or other support. These non-familial sources may not necessarily be sympathetic to their sexual or gender orientation. In addition, traditional familial sources of support may not be available due to strained relationships or lifecourse pathways that do not involve family formation.

- Poor responses from service providers, such as health, social care and educational institutions, whether it is in the form of overt discrimination or unsympathetic treatment.

Obviously, intergenerational projects cannot solve all the problems facing older and younger members of the LGBT community. However given that effective support seems to be missing for so many older and younger LGBT individuals, building bridges between the generations as a mechanism for developing new forms of support and solidarity appears to make sense. In addition, since certain detrimental prejudices are firmly embedded within the community, the value of intergenerational work in breaking down stereotypes is hard to ignore.

Unfortunately, there is not a great body of research on the value of intergenerational projects targeting the LGBT community, simply because there have been so few projects. The Age Project, run by ILGA-Europe and IGLYO aimed to give voice and visibility to younger and older LGBT individuals, explore the commonalities and differences between the two groups and assess the potential for intergenerational dialogue.

In the UK, the Age UK/ILC-UK LGBT Intergenerational Projects have been ground-breaking in strengthening the evidence base for this work. From the projects we know younger and older participants value an intergenerational approach.

It's an eye opener for the older ones because they're not used to this gay stuff - for the older population they're not used to being out, gay, being who you want to be with no controls. And there's an element of wariness from older people but the workshops are breaking this down and kind of saying it's okay to be …..spangly!

Project worker, Camden project

It has certainly given me a lot of confidence as well, working in a group and with younger people and other older people, different gender people.

Older lesbian woman, Camden

Interviewer: What do you hope to get out of this project and especially from the contact with older LGBT people?
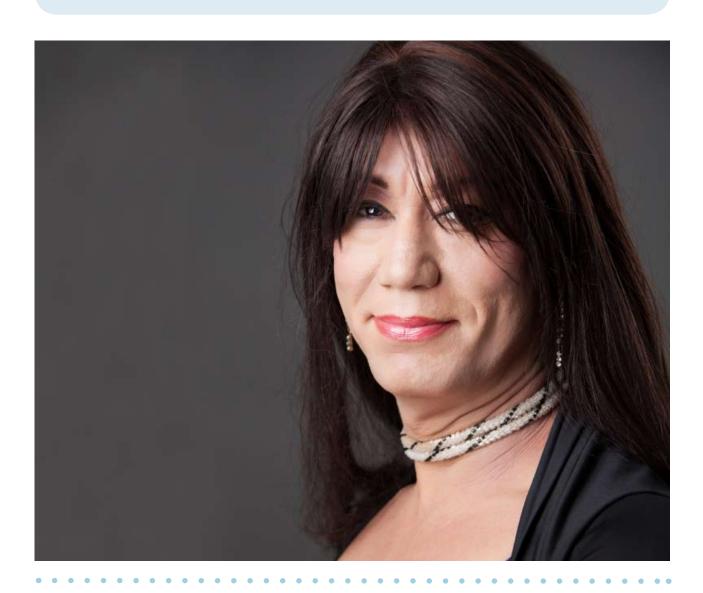
Respondent: Understanding properly what it means to be a gay man.

Younger gay man, Leicester project

Intergenerational projects can:

- **For younger LGBT people provide a space where young people can talk to older people about common experiences.** For example, the opportunity to discuss lifecourse issues that are specific to LGBT people, such as coming out.

- **Provide role models for younger LGBT people by meeting older people who are comfortable and confident in their identity and who are simultaneously successful in their working lives and personal relationships.** The majority of young LGBT people do not report having an older LGBT role model.

- **Provide a space where any negative generational perceptions can be challenged.** Some younger participants in the projects reported that they held negative views of older LGBT people before the projects began. From the perspective of older LGBT people, the projects allow older LGBT people to learn about the diversity of sexual and gender identities that exist among younger LGBT people.

- **Help prevent and overcome a relatively high degree of loneliness and social isolation among older and younger LGBT people, by bringing them together.**

- **Provides an alternative forum for debate and support for younger and older LGBT people to discuss their common needs as service users and the discrimination or barriers they may face in accessing services.**

- **For older LGBT people, intergenerational projects can provide a space where older people can interact socially with younger people.** This can help to improve the confidence of older people in communicating with younger people, which may be of particular value given that service providers are likely to be of a younger generation.

- **For younger and older LGBT people, intergenerational projects can be a useful way of bringing different identities across the LGBT spectrum together**, where historically projects may have worked with one group in isolation.

- **Intergenerational projects, regardless of methodology, allow younger LGBT people to learn about LGBT history directly from older people.** This can lead to a greater appreciation of the liberties currently often taken for granted, but also can highlight the challenges that remain in terms of breaking down wider societal prejudice and misunderstanding.

- **Intergenerational projects can be a method for strengthening the visibility of the LGBT community in wider societal terms.** Bringing older and younger people together to work on a community project can highlight the diversity, but also the cohesiveness of the LGBT community, to the wider community at large. The output from an intergenerational project can form an accessible community resource allowing non-LGBT people to gain an understanding of the LGBT community.

- **For older and younger LGBT people, intergenerational projects can help participants understand, construct, and share their experiences of identifying as LGBT.**

About our LGBT intergenerational projects:

	Camden (London)	Stockport	Leicester
What?	Arts workshops	Advocacy related to local services focusing on five key areas: • homelessness and housing • workplace and education • health and healthcare • hate crime • alcohol and drugs	Interviews conducted by younger people with older people to discuss LGBT history
Who ran it?	Age UK Camden (Opening Doors) and Gendered Intelligence	Age UK Stockport, Stockport Council Youth Services: the Base, a youth group for LGBT younger people up to the age of 25	Leicester LGBT Centre
Where?	Central School of Speech & Drama	'The Base', existing LGBT youth group location	Leicester LGBT Centre and participants' homes (with younger participants paired with a member of support staff)
How long?	Four full days on alternate Saturdays	One evening a week for six months	Training sessions then two to three interviews scheduled for one evening a week
What did they do?	A series of arts workshops, with younger and older people working together on traditional and multimedia art pieces. The focus for the art work was on the relationships between age and identity.	The group received training in research methods from University of Salford, completed questionnaires and participated in a workshop and focus group. The group decided themselves to also run a 'speed dating' style workshop to share their experiences with local services.	The younger people were given training by staff from the History department of Leicester University. They were then asked to conduct two to three interviews with older people.
Anything else?	Volunteers with particular technical and artistic skills worked along with the management team to help with the production of multimedia art pieces.	The project resulted in the University of Salford developing a LGBT toolkit for social support to outline the challenges facing LGBT.	The results were made into an exhibition to celebrate LGBT heritage at the local library.

Camden Intergenerational project

The intergenerational project in Central London (Camden) was led by Age UK Camden (Opening Doors) and Gendered Intelligence. Opening Doors is a project run by Age UK (formerly Age Concern Camden) that specifically engaged with older LGBT people in Camden and other boroughs in Central London. Gendered Intelligence is a community interest group that works with young transgender people to offer support and advice, and has a specific focus on the use of arts.

In Camden the intergenerational project was carried out through a series of four arts workshops aiming at challenging stereotypes and social isolation faced by older and younger people across London, and fostering relationships between them in a creative way. The project brought together older LGBT people who mainly identified as Lesbian or Gay together with younger people who identified themselves through a wide spectrum of sexual and gender identities.

The workshops were held in the Central School of Speech & Drama between October and November 2010, and consisted of four all-day sessions that took place on alternate Saturdays. A final arts exhibition showcasing the work of the project to friends, partners, press and the LGBT community took place in December, and a further celebration event involving some project participants took place in February 2011.

The number of participants numbered around 20 for each workshop and an estimated 30 individuals were involved overall. Participants were involved in photography, video and sound installation and traditional media workshops trying to investigate the relationships between age and identity. The participants were asked to share stories, to explore key milestones in their lives, and to describe the historical context against which these developments occurred.

Stockport intergenerational project

The Stockport intergenerational project was developed as an advocacy and research project to explore and communicate the needs of the LGBT community to the local service providers and beyond. In doing so, the project aimed to involve different generations of LGBT people in developing local policies in the workforce, education and health care. The research element of the project focused on five key areas: homelessness and housing, workplace and education, health and healthcare, hate crime and alcohol and drugs.

The project was delivered by Age UK Stockport (formerly Age Concern Stockport), along with Stockport Council Youth Services, and specifically 'The Base', a youth group for LGBT younger people up to the age of 25. The project also involved developing links with academics at University of Salford.

As part of the project, two researchers were recruited to train participants in research methods and techniques, which resulted in a questionnaire. The questionnaire also served as the basis for follow up qualitative work in the form of a focus group and a workshop that brought service users together with service providers. A 'speed dating' workshop, where older and younger participants were brought together, was developed in addition to planned activities, which consisted of younger and older people sharing information on their experiences with service providers, and other issues and experiences. The research results also formed the basis for a drama piece, consisting of a number of small scenes aimed at highlighting the challenges experienced by both younger and older

LGBT participants. This was presented at the final February event. An LGBT toolkit for social support was also developed by Salford University (Speier 2011) that outlines the challenges facing LGBT and the response needed by service providers.

The project began in September and was due to end in December, but continued until the final event celebration event that took place in February. The attendance of the sessions varied between 25-28 participants (15-18 younger and 10 older people) with a core group of 10 people always present.

Leicester intergenerational project

The LGBT intergenerational project for Leicester consisted of a local LGBT history project. The project was delivered by Leicester LGBT Centre, a voluntary organisation established to support the local LGBT community in Leicester city which also provides county wide support to Leicestershire and Rutland.

The Centre recruited younger volunteers to help interview older members of the local LGBT community. The aim was to record changes in everyday life over the years, to bring younger and older LGBT people together, and to enable both generations to interact with the aim of improving their understanding of the LGBT history. The interviews were intended to create a snapshot of life for older LGBT people and to record changes in terms of personal, community, health, social and political scenes. The intergenerational component was specifically intended to dispel prejudices and pre-conceived ideas held by both older and younger members of the local LGBT community.

Recruitment began in November 2010, and continued throughout the project. The project began with a number of training sessions that included mainly young LGBT volunteers. These training sessions were delivered by academic staff from the East Midlands Oral History Archive, based at the History department of Leicester University. The sessions provided training in research methodology, the use of the recording equipment and interview techniques. The interviews were conducted, usually at the home of an older LGBT person, with a young LGBT interviewer paired together with a member of support staff (either a member of staff from the Centre, or from Leicester University).

The ultimate aim of the Leicester project was to create an exhibition to celebrate the LGBT heritage to be displayed at the local library; some of this information was displayed in the final celebration event. However, the aim of the project expanded as the project received news of continued funding from the Big Lottery fund, enabling the project to continue for a further three years.

For more information on any of the projects, please read the evaluation report, available from the ILC-UK website: http://www.ilcuk.org.uk/

How to run your own LGBT intergenerational projects

Planning and Preparation

While it may appear a daunting task to run your own project, the success of the projects show that it is possible. With the right planning and preparation, you can make sure your project can deliver tangible and beneficial outcomes to both the younger and older LGBT community.
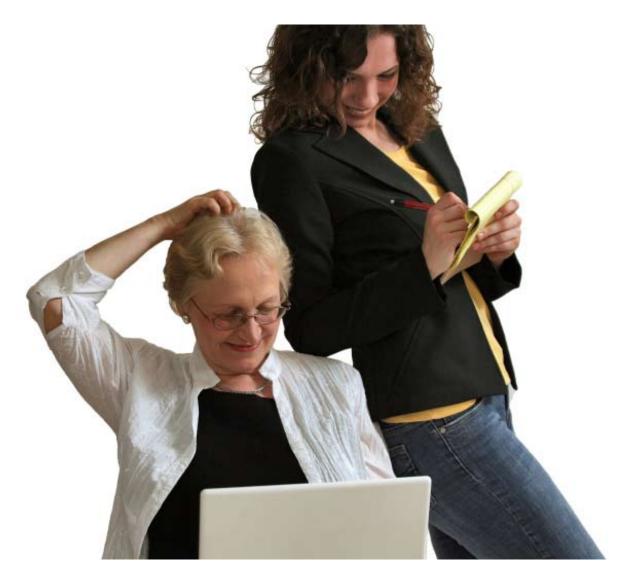
You do however need to plan and be prepared and work through all of these key questions before you start:

So to start with you need a vision, to inform this vision you need to ask yourself:

1. Why do you want to run an LGBT intergenerational project?

2. What makes your project an 'intergenerational' project?

3. What type of intergenerational project (see box for ideas) do you envisage?

4. How will your approach and method improve outcomes for the LGBT community?

5. Does your approach and method match the needs of the local LGBT community? Should you undertake a needs assessment first?

6. What is your overarching aim?

7. What are the steps to meeting this aim?

And then consider the more practical side of things:

8. How will you involve stakeholders in shaping the overarching aims and objectives?

9. Who will you work with?

10. Do you need a partner organisation?

11. How will you recruit participants, volunteers and staff? How will/can you ensure that the activity is accessible to all members of the LGBT community regardless of identity/ physical mobility/ethnicity/socioeconomic status/other factors? Do you need different methods to recruit different age groups?

12. What additional logistical resources will you need to run the project?

13. What is your organisational structure? Who will deliver the project? Is any further training required?

14. Where are you going to run and hold the project? How will participants travel to the project? Can participants access the project in terms of location, cost of travel, and compatibility with participant schedules of work/education/other activities being held?

15. How will you fund the project?

16. Have you budgeted for all possible costs and included a contingency?

17. What is the future sustainability of the project?

18. Have you carried out a risk assessment for participants and staff? Do any participants and/or staff need CRB checks?

19. Have you considered any ethical problems you may encounter?

20. Have you identified any other potential risks that may compromise the success of the project?

21. How will you provide any additional support to participants who may require it?

22. How will you manage participant expectations?

23. How will you manage the project? What are the key milestones?

24. How will you monitor and evaluate the project?

25. Have you set a realistic and achievable time frame to set the project up, deliver and implement the project and then monitor and evaluate it?

Types of intergenerational practice

- Education, training and learning. This could include: literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, senior universities, knowledge exchange.

- Mentoring, this could include: intergenerational support, services and consultancy.

- History and reminiscence, this could include: oral history, preserving cultural heritage and work with contemporary witnesses.

- Mediation, this could include: problem/conflict solving, prevention of violent behaviour.

- Arts, this could include culture, theatre, play, music, crafts.

- Advocacy and research including conducting local needs analysis and engagement activities with service providers.

- Media education, this could include Information and Communication Technologies.

- Social inclusion/participation, active citizenship, charity fundraising.

- Employment and career mentoring.

- Health and/or Social Services.

- Environment and environmental protection.

- Travel, excursions and leisure time.

- Sports and activities: including team sports (orienteering, bowls) and activities (quizzes, chess).

- Community development and intergenerational living.

Location, Location, Location

One of the key considerations when contemplating running an intergenerational project is exactly where it will take place, while choosing the 'right location' may seem an easy process, you do need to consider a few hidden pitfalls.

Use space that is neutral – Bringing groups together that traditionally may not be comfortable in each others company will be aided by choosing a neutral space which no participant or groups of participants would feel overly comfortable or conversely awkward.

Use space that is accessible - Older people may have mobility issues, so you need to make sure the location is not only accessible when they arrive, but that actually older people can get to the venue. For younger and older people, accessibility may also involve ensuring that travel costs for participants are kept to a minimum, and for some activities may involve paying some travel expenses.

Phase 2

Use space that has good public transport links, is well lit and feels safe – This is arguably important for both younger and older people, who are particularly reliant on public transport. Some older people may also be potentially put off if they deem the location to be unsafe or badly lit for example in terms of street lights.

> We made sure the older participants knew how to get there and got taxis and what not to and fro. Certainly from an accessibility point of view it's great. Older people who can't get on the tube we've sorted out transport…
>
> **Project worker, Camden project**

Recruitment and Retention

The recruitment and retention of participants, staff and volunteers will be critical to the success of the project. Some key questions to consider from the outset:

- Do you have a clear management structure?

- Are roles clearly defined from the outset?

- Will you be recruiting members of staff and/or looking for volunteers?

- Do you have sufficient recruitment, training and support structures in place for staff/volunteers?

- Do you have sufficient recruitment, training and support structures in place for participants?

- Are you clear on your target participants?

- Where and how will you recruit your participants?

- How can you ensure participants stay committed to the project?

Key Learning Points for recruitment and retention

- Ideally, projects should try to recruit a diverse set of participants in terms of age, gender identity and sexual orientation. Some projects may choose to recruit specific groups from within the LGBT community to meet specific aims and objectives; however, those included in the Age UK/ILC-UK projects benefitted from recruitment from across the LGBT spectrum. Recruitment from across the LGBT spectrum will enrich any projects in terms of outcomes for participants.

- Allowing participants to self-define as 'younger' or 'older' precludes the need to impose age restrictions. However, in some cases, a lower limit may be needed if the project is to involve 'young people' and not 'children'.

- Have you made special provision to recruit participants from BME groups, who may be some of the hardest to reach groups particularly for older LGBT participants? Similarly, have you made provision to recruit disabled participants

or others from marginalised groups? While it may not be possible for projects to recruit representatives from each group due to the composition of the local LGBT population, the opportunity to participate should be available to all participants regardless of background.

> I prefer to mix with all kind of people - I can't stand to mix just with trans people –I like to have a more balanced perspective.
>
> **Older transgender woman, Stockport project**

- Some projects may be reliant on a local 'gatekeeper' for recruitment of sufficient numbers of participants. A gatekeeper in this sense is an individual or partner organisation with good existing links with local LGBT groups and networks. Projects that do not have good pre-existing links with younger and older LGBT groups may experience difficulties in recruiting participants. Your project will benefit from being based within an LGBT centre that hosts younger and older groups, or through being staffed by those with good links to existing older and younger networks.

- Working across the LGBT spectrum may be an approach that is unfamiliar to many LGBT people, particularly older LGBT people. Provisions may need to be made and reassurances given to ensure the participation of older LGBT people in future work. This may include assurances that the participation of older people may not be included in subsequent publicity of the project, and that their contribution remains anonymous.

- Bringing the 'L', the 'G', the 'B' and the 'T' together is an approach that is unfamiliar, particular for older LGBT people. Particular encouragement may need to be given to ensure the participation of older people.

- To ensure the participation of older LGBT people especially, you may need to guarantee anonymity, for example in subsequent publicity.

- In some cases, older participants who are involved in on-going projects involving young people aged 16-17 (and younger) and who are classified as 'service users' may need to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. For some older gay men, this can prove problematic on the basis of convictions received when homosexual acts between two consenting men was illegal (see case study p.20). In some cases, the law may require additional supervision on projects although this is an area subject to change: for up to date guidance on when CRB checks are needed please consult guidelines issued by Volunteering England/WCVA (Wales). Other arrangements occur in Scotland (disclosure) and Northern Ireland (see resources on p.33).

> I was quite pleased really because I usually only choose to socialise with women and lesbians. So I was quite pleased that I was doing this because I was just stretching myself a bit. I found it okay, because it's not in your face because you're both focussing on something you do and it's not turned into a big thing or anything.
>
> **Older Lesbian Woman, Camden project**

- In order to maximise retention, try to plan your activities on weekends and evenings, and so they do not clash with other activities that may involve older or younger LGBT groups. For activities taking place with a large number of student participants, term times and exams may affect retention. Similarly, older people may also be engaged with a number of existing activities and commitments, and timings of activities should be scheduled around these where possible. Activities will need to take places at times and at a frequency that will encourage everyone's participation. The time and frequency of sessions will differ between projects that take place over a relatively short period of a few months, compared to those which may have longer term funding and aims. Longer-term projects may choose to integrate existing older and younger networks on a regular but relatively infrequent basis.

> At a workshop in Tower Hamlets for instance I learned that there's no Bangladeshi word for gay a lot of cultures don't have a concept. Certainly men will get off with men and women with women but there's no concept. Some of the cultures are notoriously homophobic. So recruitment from BME has been difficult.
>
> **Project worker, Camden project**

- Consider the best way of reaching your target participants for example through existing LGBT networks, through word of mouth, targeted mail drops and social networking sites, particularly for younger LGBT people. The most expensive recruitment methods do not always achieve the best results, and traditional word of mouth may be the best recruitment method in many cases.

Risk assessment and ethics

Risk assessment is an essential part of any intergenerational project, you need to consider and identify any possible risks or harm that may be generated during or as a result of the project. Here, the notion of risk assessment refers to the health and safety of participants and staff/volunteers; later we consider potential obstacles to successfully completing the project.

Health and Safety

- You will need to decide whether Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are needed when bringing together older and younger participants. This will very much depend on the nature of the activities, age of the younger participants, and how the intergenerational project fits in with existing activities.

- Parental consent may be needed for some young people in terms of their participation, their involvement in publicity, evaluation and monitoring activities, or any offsite trips.

- You will need to conduct a risk assessment in terms of the location in which the activity will take place. This should be conducted bearing in mind that the location will host

both younger people and older people, who may have particular mobility needs. You should check whether you have insurance, a health and safety policy and adequate risk assessment in place for your activities as appropriate. You may need to ensure that a qualified first aider is onsite and a stocked first aid box is available. Further guidance for Voluntary Organisations is available from the Health and Safety Executive.

> I think people who are not involved in a project like this one do not realise how difficult it is to put it in place and to set up interviews. Things do not happen as people expect. I think in this project, compared to the other ones I have done before, it is easier to find people who want to be interviewed, but the errors related to lack of sensitivity are much more acute. But we have taken precautions, maybe unnecessary ones in some cases.
>
> **Project worker, Leicester project**

CASE STUDY

Challenges of running Intergenerational work with the LGBT community – Criminal Record Bureau checks

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are used to check on the criminal backgrounds of workers and volunteers. Checks include spent and unspent convictions and other cautions, reprimands and final warnings given by the Police. CRB checks are requested when volunteers have regular contact with 'vulnerable clients' including children and young people either aged 18 years and under or aged 16 years and older. Where young people are "beneficiaries" or "service users" or "clients" or "recipients of services", CRB checks are needed for volunteering adults who are in regular contact with those under the age of 18. However, where young people are themselves volunteers, CRB checks are needed for volunteering adults who are in regular contact with those under the age of 16. Please note that this guidance refers to the situation in England and is subject to change – anyone planning a project should either visit the Volunteering England website or the relevant agency for full details.

CRB checks may be needed for some intergenerational projects, for example, if older people are in regular prolonged contact with young people aged 16-17 years. In some cases, older gay men may not be eligible to work with younger people due to a criminal history involving sexual offences. Convictions included those for homosexual acts between gay men that took place before 1967. While, it wasn't until 2004 that offences for consensual sex between two men were repealed in the United Kingdom, past crimes remain on record for many. Until a change in law (see clause 82 of the Protection of Freedom bill, which may change the situation in the future) having a criminal record for homosexual offences that took place before 1967 is likely to impede on the participation of some older gay men on intergenerational projects, and represents a challenge to intergenerational work among the LGBT community. A source of advice on this issue is the charity Galop.

Ethics and guiding principles

Working with older and younger LGBT people who self-select into the projects generally hold no additional ethical concerns. However, some guiding principles should be maintained including the following:

- Participation should not be obligatory. It would be expected that participation would generally be free of charge.

- Participation should be an option for any potential participant regardless of background, and provision should be made where possible to accommodate the health and mobility needs of older people. For pragmatic reasons, participation may need to be restricted on the basis of age, or for those participants with serious conditions such as severe dementia; however, to restate, every effort should be made to accommodate the specific needs of potential participants.

- Every effort should be made to inform participants of the nature and likely course of the activity in full before participants commit.

- Activities should be structured around other (known) activities where possible, to ensure equal opportunities to participate.

- Activities should be responsive and adaptive to group and individual needs. In extreme cases, this could mean referring a participant to another service provider.

- Projects should aim to establish a bond of trust and a safe environment between participants and staff/volunteers.

- Prime consideration should be given to the safety and wellbeing of participants. This should be monitored continuously.

- Participants should be allowed to influence the direction of activities and the talents, skills and opinions of participants should be respected.

- The wishes of participants in terms of participation and consent to be involved with different stages of the activity should be respected. This includes the right to privacy and anonymity of participation.

- Any information collected by activities on participants should be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). Activity leaders should ensure that only essential information is collected. The purpose of collecting each piece of information should be made clear to participants, and no participant should be compelled to provide monitoring information to ensure participation on the activity (except in the case of CRB checks or equivalent, or for parental consent).

- Activities should ensure the promotion of social justice and ensure respect for difference and diversity.

- Project staff/volunteers should respect the boundaries between personal and professional relationships.

- Project staff/volunteers should recognise the need to be accountable to participants to ensure that the project is delivered to the best of their abilities.

- Project staff/volunteers should be appropriately trained.

- All activities should promote fair and just behaviour between participants and between participants and staff/volunteers. Project staff/volunteers should be prepared to take measures to deal with those who do not respect fair and just behaviour.

Delivery, Implementation and Avoiding Problems

You are now ready to open your doors to participants. Forward planning and effective recruitment are key to success in delivery. Despite that, do not be afraid to be flexible as the project starts off, and as it continues. At all stages (but particularly the beginning), it is important to allow participants the opportunity to shape and contribute to the project, so listen to what they have to say- both their ideas and opinions. This turned out well in Stockport for example, with an additional unplanned activity added to the project as a result of participants' initiative. Intergenerational work is about equal participation and mutual respect, so keep an open mind about the project's direction.

Here we run through some key points on running different projects, as well as troubleshooting on potential challenges in the delivery of your project.

Key Learning Points for running intergenerational projects using different methods

- Each of the projects used different ways of bringing younger and older LGBT people together, working towards an outcome that would be accessible to the wider LGBT community and beyond through the production of an art exhibition, a local LGBT history exhibition and archive, and the production of a toolkit for LGBT people and service providers.

- All three projects succeeded in creating a platform where views and experiences could be shared.

- While a number of participants reported improved confidence and abilities in terms of mixing in social situations, a number also reported that longer projects were needed if social relationships and friendships were to develop between younger and older people.

- Short-term projects may therefore be most suitable to create platforms for dialogue between older and younger people, and serve as a pilot for longer-term projects. Longer-term projects can be more ambitious in terms of setting outcomes based around social support and social relationships.

- Both short-term and long-term projects can improve participants' social skills and knowledge, such as raising participants' confidence, which can be developed further through other work.

- Both short-term and long-term projects can form the basis of further intergenerational work among the LGBT community, and can represent an alternative way to raise the visibility of the LGBT community.

- Participants across all three projects were enthusiastic about the intergenerational component of the projects, and felt that this added a new dimension to understanding issues facing LGBT people.

- All three projects were successful in facilitating groups that intersected on age, gender identity, sexuality and behaviour.

- The use of arts in the Camden project, and the range of different media available, was perceived by participants to be a particularly attractive and interesting medium. Arts projects may therefore attract a good deal of interest from groups within the LGBT community.

- In the Leicester project, the specific focus on oral history, with younger LGBT people directly collecting these histories, was a particularly effective method for highlighting the gains made in civil liberties for LGBT people, and for highlighting some of the challenges ahead.

- The research and advocacy project conducted in Stockport resulted in greater dialogue between service providers and the LGBT community, both young and old, as well as in a toolkit that will help guide service providers as to the needs of the LGBT community.

- They use of different methodologies also presented individual challenges, the majority of which were overcome through adopting a range of strategies, some of which are outlined in the next section.

How to avoid problems

Running an intergenerational project is not without practical issues and potential problems; however it is possible to circumvent many of these with careful planning and preparation. Examples of practical problems encountered in projects may include difficulties with recruitment, lack of interest or fear of the unknown for potential participants, protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Within the LGBT community, there are specific issues which may also hinder the success of intergenerational project work: prejudice and stereotypes of respective generations (such as a perception of the older generation, particularly older gay men, as being predatory), the invisibility of the community (e.g. repression of sexuality in older LGBT people, inaccessibility of groups despite greatest need) and a lack of common ground, given the dramatic changes in the environment for LGBT individuals.

While it is beyond the scope of this toolkit to foresee all individual challenges that may be encountered in future projects, we outline some of the pragmatic strategies used by the individual projects to overcome challenges and potential challenges.

Challenge	Description	Solution/Success
Potential sensitivity of topics covered in sessions	Much of the content of the activities was based on the life course experiences of older and younger LGBT. This included difficult and sensitive topics.	All projects described induction sessions, where participants helped to create 'safe' environments where all agreed to help create and preserve an atmosphere that allowed for freedom of expression while preserving respect for others. Setting these 'ground rules' through a 'working contract' helped participants gain confidence to participate fully.
Difficulties in attracting one particular group	The use of arts as a methodology was not a universally popular choice among older gay men.	The project adopted additional recruitment activities specifically with older gay men's groups to ensure representation. This included a presentation of the project in a 'recruitment night' at an older men's group. The project did attract older men to participate.
Difficulties in attracting older people	The arts project initially focussed on arts through new media. This was not universally popular with older participants.	The project expanded its scope of arts to include more traditional media such as painting and song writing. The project did successfully attract a large number of older people; many of these, having arrived at the project, went on to work with younger people on arts projects using new media.
Difficulties in attracting younger people	The use of oral history was perceived as unattractive for much younger participants (for example aged 16-17 years).	The project staff/volunteers provided additional support for the youngest participants and were in more frequent contact with these participants in between sessions. This helped retain some of these young people on the project.
Maintaining a balance between training and fun	Each project incorporated an element of training that could compromise the enjoyment of the project in the absence of a balance.	The Stockport project, for example involved a good deal of academic involvement from a local university which was perceived as being quite dense in content by some participants. However, the project also employed novel methods such as a 'speed dating' style exercise where participants traded experiences with service providers, which served to balance the training element.

Some potential obstacles and challenges are harder to predict; for example, a partner organisation's funding was severely compromised which threatened the successful completion of the project, and certainly compromised the sustainability of the project. Such risks posed by external factors are difficult to predict, although careful planning and identifying potential risks from the outset, and exercising a good deal of creativity to overcome challenges, will help the project meet its aims and objectives.

> Sometimes it is incredibly difficult and they do have a lot of reservations and so if it is just set up in a structured and sensitive way it can be potentially really really positive because it can actually break stereotypes and make people feel they are allowed to talk about gender, sexuality and attraction, especially with people of different ages.
>
> **Project worker, Camden project**

Project Management and Evaluation

Project Management and Monitoring

This next stage involves placing the project in 'real time', insomuch as all the tasks and activities, need to be sequenced and then placed against real calendar dates and times. It is akin to budgeting which is the setting of 'real' or expendable money against tasks and activities. When you developed your project you will have had an idea about the pathway, or stages, you expected the project to follow. The actual completion of tasks and activities will form key 'milestones' or markers within your project. Regular monitoring will enable you to see if the project is on track and if not give you the chance to take any necessary steps to address any problems when they arise. Equally there may have been things that happened unexpectedly that may show a better way to do things and these need to be identified and acted upon.

Key milestones will provide people who are undertaking agreed tasks and activities with simple and quick mechanisms of reporting back to either you or into the project team. These mechanisms can include a phone call, an email, a report at a weekly meeting, detailing where their particular activity is up to, whether it has been completed and any additional action and costs that might be incurred to complete it.

Evaluation

If you are to demonstrate the efficacy of your project you need to be able to demonstrate what has changed because of your work, and specifically whether the activity achieved the outcomes it set out to achieve. The aims and objectives set out at the beginning of the project will help shape the evaluation and help to form the questions you need to address.

How will you go about evaluating or measuring the success of your programmes? The type of method you use to evaluate your project will very much depend on the nature of your project in terms of number of participants, duration of the project, and

even type of activity; funding requirements may also dictate the type of evaluation method employed. Examples of evidence that can be used to evaluate the success of an activity can include those listed below. As a general rule, methods that involve the collection of data of a more numeric format (quantitative methods) are better suited to larger projects while those that examine the process by which outcomes are achieved and their meaning to participants (qualitative methods) can be used for smaller projects or to supplement the evaluation of larger projects. Long-term projects may need to implement a performance management system.

Less formal and more participatory evaluation methods are also commonly used to evaluate projects, particularly to assess progress mid-way through a project. Such methods could be as simple as asking participants to describe their mood at the end of a session and to discuss the highlights of the session or areas of concern. While these methods are useful to highlight any potential problems as the project progresses, they may not necessarily represent the best tools to use to conduct a full evaluation without combination with another method.

Evidence that can be used/collected to evaluate a project

Participants' feedback sheet

Recorded evidence & statistics

Produced materials/objects

Monitoring Reports

Questionnaires

Check-lists

Diaries

Press/media coverage

Case Studies

Interviews

Focus groups

In evaluating the projects included in this toolkit, we developed the following overarching key questions to guide the evaluation.

1. Did the individual projects meet the overarching objectives of the LGBT intergenerational projects?

2. Did the projects meet their individual project objectives?

3. Did the individual project format alter performance according to overarching performance indicators, and did the project type-location choice work?

4. Did the projects show an equal impact among older and younger participants and were there any other differences by socio-demographic characteristics?

5. Which elements of each individual project should be retained and which should be changed in the future?

6. What lessons can be learned for future projects working with different generations of LGBT participants in terms of project recruitment, delivery, outcomes, aims, and monitoring and evaluation?

Key Learning Points: Evaluating LGBT Intergenerational work

- Aims and objectives should be clearly set at the beginning of each project. Setting these early on will help shape and steer the direction of the project. These are usually pre-set before the evaluation begins.

- The evaluation should be integrated into the project early on, whether this represents a final or mid-point evaluation. The evaluation should consider the method of delivering the project, and reflect this in the evaluation tools, particularly in creating a system of performance management.

- Specific funding requirements may mean that a number of items of information need to be collected that do not necessarily reflect the project content. This may mean that additional measures need to be taken to ensure that participants are informed as to why the information is needed. This may require further information from the funding body themselves.

- The use of social media could be successful in evaluating projects in the future. This could include the use of Facebook, text messaging, smartphone applications or Twitter.

Celebration events and Communication

At the end of your project, it's a good idea to have a plan for a celebration event for participants. The event will give them (and you!) a chance to reflect on the work you've done together, what improvements and changes have happened or simply to admire the fruits of your labour. You could include funders and people who have worked on the project as well. If appropriate, participants may want their family and friends to see the work they've been doing.

The type of event you can do will depend on your project and its outcomes. If the ultimate aim of your project is something physical, like an art collection, you could combine the presentation of those results with your celebration.

CASE STUDY

Final events for an arts-based project - Camden

The project in Camden held a final arts exhibition showcasing the work of the project in December just as the project ended. Friends, partners, press and members of the LGBT community were invited to view the pieces created and learn more about the project. They also had a further celebration event at London Zoo, jointly with participants from the Stockport and Leicester projects as well, a few months after the end of the project. The final celebration event consisted of presentations and speeches from the leads of all three projects, as well as contributions from the supporters of the project and a notable member of the LGBT community.

Some things to think about for your event:

Timing The event could be held as the final session of your programme (although bear in mind that you'll have to include this in your planning) or a short while afterwards.

Location Big or small, public or private? Could you get a community centre or church hall if you're on a tight budget?

Who? Is this going to be a small get-together of your participants for a pat on the back, or will it be bigger? Family and friends, open to the public or press?

Activity Do you want to give out certificates? Have photographs taken?
Give people a chance to view what the participants have produced?

Speakers You could offer your participants a chance to talk about their work, ask a funder to say a few words, get a local VIP to hand out certificates.

Display The participants' work, your materials promoting your cause or any other outcome, like a toolkit as produced in the Stockport project, should be well displayed.

Finance Catering, location, printing costs: it all adds up so make sure you've got a budget for it!

Communication

Having a celebration event can do more than simply ending your project on a positive note. You might want to think about using the event to promote your work and its benefits in order to secure future funding and support.

Communication is key to success here, so have a look back at the evaluation section and think about how to get across what you have achieved.

A few tips

- Think about what your project's unique selling point is - what makes it special?

- Contact your local papers and radio stations with some prepared notes about the project, what you've been working on and the positive impact it's had on your participants.

- Think outside the box for coverage - are there any relevant local or national groups who might be interested and could promote your work, for example through an internal newsletter? If you've used social media in your recruitment or elsewhere, publicise the celebration event on that too!

- Ask participants in advance if they'd like to be involved (or not!) in any media coverage. You will know if you have willing volunteers for interviews or people who will object to having their photo or name printed in the paper.

How to create an intergenerational project

Creating an intergenerational LGBT project can be fun and rewarding, and of great value to LGBT communities and beyond. Remembering the following (POSSUMS) can help to guide your work:

P - Planning. A project is only as good as its planning and this includes setting appropriate aims and objectives. Ensuring that objectives adhere to being Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) is a good place to start. This is also the stage to ask the difficult questions of why you are planning to carry out the project – is your project responding to the needs of the local LGBT communities?

O - Obstacles (Identification). This is part of the planning stage and involves considering all of the obstacles that could be encountered during the course of the project. This should also include assessing the safety of all participants and staff/volunteers involved in the project.

S - Strategize. This follows on from above and involves devising strategies to ensure that your project is a success. It is the process of ensuring that you are not only clear on what you hope to achieve and why, but also how you will go about delivering the project. If in doubt, consult and discuss with experienced local LGBT workers, youth workers, or older person workers. Alternatively, for questions about health and safety or any statutory obligations you may have in creating an intergenerational project, you should consult the relevant bodies.

S - Set into practice. Having planned, identified the potential obstacles, and strategized on how to overcome potential obstacles and how you will carry out the projects, it is time to set the project into practice (the fun bit!).

U - Under observation! As the project progresses you should regularly monitor the success of your project. Are you on track? Are you achieving your key milestones? Is there anything you need to change to ensure that the project works for all the participants?

M - Make sense of it all. As the project draws to a close, you should evaluate the success of your project. Did the project achieve what it set out to achieve? What do the participants feel? What would you change if you were to replicate the work and which parts would you keep?

S - Shout and celebrate! It's time to draw your project to a close and celebrate your achievements. It's also time to put into place a communications strategy so that the key messages from your project reach a wide audience.

Top tips

Pay a lot of attention to recruiting, supporting and properly embedding trans people into a project so it doesn't properly become another example of so called LGBT that's doesn't have any good and proper good inclusion of trans people.

That's my overriding concern about all of this kind of work. Having been in youth settings looking at diversity and gender and there's no trans people there. And I've been to LGBT youth groups who say they don't have any trans and they actually do they just haven't come out as trans.

Project worker, Camden project

So, you want to run an LGBT intergenerational project? Here are some final top tips and things to remember from project leaders to get you going:

1. Even the best planned projects and activities can take longer than anticipated. It is always a good idea to incorporate some fallow time into projects to allow time to catch-up on any unexpected delays.

2. Creating a safe space where participants are free to express their opinions and respect each other is critical to the success of an intergenerational project. Drawing a working contract is one step that can be taken to create such a space, and effective facilitation will also allow a safe space to develop. If participants are to share their personal experiences, this can only happen in an environment of trust and respect.

I wouldn't advise anyone to do a project like this unless they are working with a company who already works with LGBTQ people in some way. I am not saying they should not try, but I think it's good to have had experience in some way with LGBTQ people and to be used to social and community settings.

Project worker, Leicester project

3. Focussing on an outcome or goal is a useful way to bring people of diverse identities, backgrounds and ages together. But:

4. It is important to focus as much on the process as on the product. It's not just about the final shared goal but also about the discussions and personal experiences of every single participant.

5. Recruiting staff or volunteers with a diverse set of skills, with different backgrounds and experiences, will help to ensure that the projects succeed and ensure that the needs of different participants are accounted for.

Planning a proper time scale and make sure you have outcomes that you want out of it especially for the sustainability of the project.

Project worker, Stockport project

6. For all projects involving younger and older LGBT people, but especially those aiming to ensure adequate representation from across the spectrum, it is necessary for the projects to involve either individuals or groups with an established network of contacts, essentially a gatekeeper, to facilitate the involvement of people who may otherwise be difficult to locate or who may otherwise be reluctant to participate.

> What I got is that younger people want to grow together and are interested in what we have to say and that we are normal human beings.
>
> **Project worker, Leicester project**

7. For projects aiming to represent the LGBT community, it is important to involve all groups. Traditionally, transgender and bisexual groups have largely been neglected in projects aiming to represent the LGBT spectrum. In the three projects that are included in this toolkit, the participation of younger and older transgender people was perceived as being particularly valuable.

8. Groups and participants need a sense of ownership over the project. While it may be tempting to meticulously plan each stage of the project, some leeway should be incorporated to allow participants to influence the direction of projects.

> Confronting how it was and comparing how easy it is now, people can boost their confidence.
>
> **Younger gay man, Leicester project**

9. Don't be afraid to bring in external expertise. All the projects featured here did involve either individual experts or built partnerships with institutions to ensure that participants received the training they needed to reach the project's goal.

10. The project should reflect the needs of the LGBT community in terms of recruitment strategies, type of project methodology used, and goal of the project. Some prior knowledge is therefore needed as to what would best meet the needs and circumstances of local people. While involving younger and older people simultaneously on projects can restrict some options in terms of project methodology adopted, the intergenerational aspect can help to open many more doors that would not otherwise be available to a project only working with either younger or older LGBT.

> People have been really moved, shifted the way they are and were really much empowered by the project and really saw this opportunity to focus and be creative, to move forward and to take pride in who they are.
>
> **Project Worker, Camden project**

Useful resources

More information on these projects

Age UK: Our website includes a wide range of regularly updated information about our services, campaigns and policy influencing work. It also has a dedicated section for professionals working for and with older people, or on ageing issues, with a series of specialist resources and reports. Please visit: www.ageuk.org.uk

Potter, C., Bamford, S-M. & Kneale, D. (2011) *Bridging the Gap: Exploring the Potential for bringing older and younger LGBT people together*. London: International Longevity Centre.

Age Concern Stockport (2011) *Gays into the future: A Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Intergeneration project to communicate the support needs to service providers*. Stockport: Age Concern Stockport.

Phillips, M. & Knocker, S. (2010) *Opening Doors Evaluation: The Story So Far.* London: Opening Doors http://www. openingdoorslondon.org.uk/resources/ Opening%20Doors%20Evaluation%20 Report%20-%20FINAL%20-%2022%2002%20 10%20%282%29.pdf

Kneale, D., Serra, V., Bamford, S-M. & Diener, L. (2011) *Celebrating Intergenerational Diversity An evaluation of three projects working with younger and older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people.* London: International Longevity Centre.

LGBT websites

Gender Shift- including links to organisations providing support to LGBT http://www. gendernetwork.com/lgbtorganisations.html

Galop http://www.galop.org.uk/

LGBT http://www.lgbt.co.uk/

Stonewall http://www.stonewall.org.uk/

Intergenerational websites

Beth Johnson Foundation Centre for Intergenerational Practice http://www. centreforip.org.uk/

Magic Me – intergenerational arts projects http://www.magicme.co.uk/index.php

Age Exchange http://www.age-exchange.org. uk/index.html

Information on volunteering and participant checks

England – Volunteering England http://www. volunteering.org.uk/

Scotland- Central Registered Body in Scotland http://www.crbs.org.uk/

Wales – WCVA http://www.wcva-cru.org.uk/

Northern Ireland – Volunteer Now http://www. volunteernow.co.uk/

Examples of intergenerational toolkits

EU Eagle project toolkit for intergenerational activities http://www.eagle-project.eu/ welcome-to-eagle/the-eagle-toolkit-for-intergenerational-activities

Hants County Council Intergenerational Practice tool www.hants.gov.uk/rh/comm/ intergenerational-toolkit.pdf

Practical assistance

Information on Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure http://www.volunteering.org.uk/ resources/goodpracticebank/Information/ whencrb

Managing risk in voluntary organisations

http://www.hse.gov.uk/voluntary/index.htm

Reports

Guasp, A. (2011) *Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in Later Life.* London: Stonewall.

King, M. and McKeown, E. (2003) *The mental health and social wellbeing of gay men, lesbians and bisexuals in England and Wales*. London: MIND.

Lloyd, J. (2008) *The State of Intergenerational Relations Today: A Research and Discussion Paper.* London: ILC-UK http://www.ilcuk.org.uk/record.jsp?type=publication&ID=36

Paulick, S., (2008) *Report of the joint ILGA-Europe / IGLYO age project: intergenerational dialogue within the LGBT community* http://www.ilga-europe.org/content/download/12938/78009/version/1/file/FINAL.pdf

Academic articles

Meyer, I. (2003) Prejudice, Social Stress, and Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations: Conceptual Issues and Research Evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*. Vol. 129, No. 5: 674–697

Shippy, A., Cantor, M., Brennan, M. (2004) Social Networks of Aging Gay Men. *The Journal of Men's Studies.* 13(1):107-120

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