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The next generation:

how intergenerational interaction improves
life chances of children and young people



About

United for All Ages

United for All Ages is a 'think and do' tank and social enterprise that brings older and younger people together to build stronger communities and a stronger Britain. We focus on issues which affect different generations in different ways and which require solutions involving all generations – such as care, housing, work, technology and 'fairness for all ages'. Our approach is very much about creating solutions to big social and economic issues that bring generations together, rather than pitting generations against each other. We have published a series of policy papers addressing these issues including Mixing Matters and others featured in the appendices to this report.

Our policy work is supported by a range of practical initiatives that promote cross-generational action on these issues. In 2012 we co-launched Good Care Guide, a pioneering TripAdvisor style website that enables families to find, review and rate childcare and eldercare. In 2014 we launched www.downsizingdirect.com, encouraging older people to think about downsizing to a better home and providing practical support to enable them to do so, thereby releasing family-sized homes for younger generations.

United for All Ages' consultancy service works with policymakers, councils, charities, universities and companies to make 'a Britain for all ages' a reality. We work with a range of partners at national and local levels to promote, support and develop shared sites that bring older and younger people together such as the co-location of children's nurseries with older people's care and housing schemes. Our aim is for 500 shared sites with intergenerational care and housing to be created across the country by 2023, enabling older and younger people to mix and share activities and experiences. We are also working with schools, universities and colleges, housing associations and many others on developing shared sites. Our consultancy offers a spectrum of services – advice, research and development through to planning and implementation, making shared sites happen.

United for All Ages was set up in 2010 by Stephen Burke and Denise Burke who both have substantial experience in childcare and eldercare. Stephen was chief executive of two national care charities, Daycare Trust and Counsel and Care, and was leader of a London borough and vice-chair of the primary care trust. Stephen is chair and trustee of several national and local organisations working on housing, care, health, families and ageing. Denise led on childcare for Peterborough city council and headed up youth and childcare for the Mayor of London as well as being chair of BBC Children in Need for London and the South East. She is a childcare and early years consultant with local authorities, childcare providers and investors, and previously was CEO of smallsteps, the largest childcare provider in the Netherlands, and chair of the Poppy & Jacks nursery group in north-west England.



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The next generation

Introduction

At United for All Ages we like big challenges. That's why we have set out to improve care and housing, reduce loneliness and help develop 500 centres for all ages by 2023.

There is no bigger challenge than creating a better future for all our children and young people. The scale of the challenge is set out in this report as the next generation faces a crisis in childhood and beyond – from poverty to mental health, crime to family breakdown, educational attainment to work and housing.

We believe that these issues can be tackled by a wide range of action nationally and locally – not least by much greater intergenerational interaction between children and younger people and older people.

Mixing Matters, as our 2018 report's title said. More meaningful mixing can create opportunities for children and young people – from building confidence and communication skills to getting school ready and achieving potential to networking and social mobility.

Of course issues like poverty, housing and climate change need to be addressed by UK governments. But people of all ages can influence these by arguing and voting against child poverty, homelessness and global warming and being advocates for the next generation. Children growing up without many of the essentials in life are a stain on all of us and lead to division.

It's this division which we are determined to overcome in creating a united Britain. Bringing older and younger people together can increase mutual understanding and tackle ageism. By starting as early as possible in children's lives, we can change culture and attitudes for the long-term.

Intergenerational solidarity and relationships underpin this paper. It's full of great examples of how older people and how intergenerational interaction can particularly help children and young people towards a better future.

2018 has seen a tremendous growth in these and other intergenerational projects and growing awareness about how they can impact on big social and economic issues.

Much of the focus has been on the benefits for older people – from tackling loneliness and isolation to improving health, care and quality of life. These are critical to all our futures. But there are big benefits for children and younger people too.

Our challenge to Britain is to maximise those benefits for all of the next generation.

Research shows that there are lasting benefits of a good start in life. From birth and parenting to childcare and early education; from school and out of school activities to college, training and university; from opportunities at work to housing and health.

Given the concerns around social mobility, closing the attainment gap, improving school readiness and developing young children's language and literacy skills, intergenerational action could and must make a much bigger contribution to this agenda.

Every pound invested in the kind of projects included in this paper produces dividends across the life course of individuals and for our society as a whole. The return on relatively low levels of investment and the more fulfilled lives which result are why we need concerted support for early intervention, engaging people of all generations to help the next generation.

That support must come from government, nationally and locally; from charities and community groups; from younger and older people's organisations; from nurseries, schools and colleges; from older people's housing and care schemes; from businesses and employers; and from funders and investors.

United for All Ages is grateful to all the inspirational people and organisations that have contributed to this report.

More than twenty national and local organisations demonstrate how Britain could become much better for the next generation and for people of all ages. That is our challenge to every community if we are to build a stronger, more united country.

Stephen Burke, Director, United for All Ages

The next generation

Summary

Much of the media coverage of the growing number of intergenerational projects has focused on the benefits for older people – from improving health and care to tackling loneliness.

This paper focuses on the benefits for the next generation – children and young people who currently face a growing crisis of confidence, loneliness and anxiety, often fearful about the future, fragmented families, segregated by age, with cuts in services and financial support.

Intergenerational interaction between older and younger people can help address these issues – starting at an early age with nurseries and care homes linking, through schools, colleges and universities, to mentoring and community projects.

Giving children a good start in life, raising attainment, changing attitudes, solving tough issues and shaping the future are the key themes set out in this paper. Projects delivering on these themes can all help build confidence and empathy, develop cognitive and communication skills, improve learning and care, reduce ageism and increase mutual understanding to tackle divisions in Britain.

The key recommendations in the paper to maximise the benefits for the next generation and create a stronger country are:

1. Every nursery, childminder, parent/toddler group and children's centre should link with a local older people's care home or housing scheme – and vice versa
2. Every primary and secondary school should involve and engage with older people in their community – from hosting older volunteers and services to linking with care providers
3. Every community should explore opportunities to develop places where younger and older people can mix and share activities and experiences – creating 500 centres for all ages by 2023
4. Every local authority should develop a strategy for building communities for all ages where meaningful mixing is part of everyday life – involving local people and providers
5. Every children's and young people's charity and community organisation should look at how to solve tough issues facing the next generation through intergenerational projects
6. Funders should support projects that promote positive relationships building trust and understanding between younger and older people – working with the media to rid Britain of ageism
7. Investors should look outside the box of age-related silos to invest in imaginative co-located care, learning and housing schemes that bring younger and older people together
8. Government should support and promote mixing between different generations through intergenerational care, learning and housing, explaining why it's key to creating better services, stronger communities, a stronger Britain and an end to ageism

We can all create a better Britain for the next generation. There are big economic and social benefits for everyone involved - and our collective futures depend on making it happen.

The next generation

Children in need: supporting the next generation

It was more than ironic that a recent article by Gary Younge in The Guardian – ‘The British state has given up on the children who need it most’ (16 November 2018) – was published on the same day as BBC Children in Need’s annual appeal.

Britain’s children and families face a two-pronged crisis – a crisis in childhood problems and a crisis in the funding of children’s services. The cuts are short-sighted, storing up lifelong issues for children and for society.

We all have a responsibility towards the next generation – as the old proverb says: we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

People of all ages can do much more to support, nurture and invest in the next generation of children and young people. That’s why United for All Ages is promoting intergenerational mixing to create opportunities from an early age onwards – from building confidence and communication skills to getting school ready and achieving potential to mentoring and social mobility.

This section sets out why action is needed to tackle Britain’s growing crisis for children and young people. It’s in the context of Britain being one of the most age segregated countries in the world. By enabling younger people to mix with older people, we can break down those silos and begin to address some of the big social and economic issues facing our country.

Childhood in crisis?

All the main indicators about children’s and young people’s health, finances and well-being are going in the wrong direction – rising child poverty, a widening educational attainment gap, support for children with special needs failing, higher rates of mental illness, more looked after children, increasing violent crime, falling real wages and housing out of reach for most younger people. And the list goes on – exacerbated by a decade of austerity which has decimated local services and eroded financial support for families with children, all adding up to growing inequality and declining social mobility.

‘Childhood in crisis’ may seem to be an eternal theme to some commentators. But in 2019 the statistics are frightening if you are concerned about the future of children and young people, particularly those who are poor, ill or disabled – see the box below.

Philip Alston, the United Nations’ rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, concluded his recent fact-finding mission to the UK with a declaration that levels of child poverty are “not just a disgrace, but a social calamity and an economic disaster”, even though the UK is the world’s fifth largest economy.

Children and young people’s health and wellbeing are being eroded by a lack of secure jobs, a shortage of affordable housing and cuts in public services. The lack of funding for child and adolescent mental health services and for children with special needs is critical.

The House of Commons Science and Technology committee says that early intervention provision is too fragmented, with varying levels of support, focus on evidence, and success. It is calling for a new national strategy to ensure that the opportunity provided by early intervention to transform lives and save long-term costs to Government is seized fully, and by all local authorities in England. There is growing evidence showing the value of targeted support for children’s physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.

A crisis in confidence

United for All Ages’ previous reports have highlighted divisions in our communities and country – a divided ‘them and us’ society, with deep pessimism about the future among young people in particular. There is now widespread concern that things are getting worse, as the pressures set out above mount up on the next generation.

Underlying this crisis in childhood is a **crisis of confidence** – many children and young people are anxious and lonely, feel insecure and trapped and are fearful about the future.

Why mixing matters

The crisis facing the next generation might seem daunting. The scale of the challenges facing children and young people – as outlined above – are massive: loneliness, anxiety, lack of confidence, poor social skills, poor literacy and numeracy, cuts in services and support, and a lack of empathy and kindness.

Whether or not austerity has ended, the reality for many is challenging. But building resilience and confidence, having someone to talk to and developing communication skills can make a big difference for children and young people in a tough world.

Starting early is the key to changing our society and tackling ageism. The consequences of age segregation are manifold. Lack of connection fosters mistrust, suspicion and misunderstanding between generations. It also wastes the talents, skills and experiences of different generations. And we all lose out through the ageism and exclusion that result. United for All Ages believes more age-integrated activities in our communities can form the basis for rebuilding trust, confidence and mutual support between younger and older people across our society.

Not a time to be young and poor, ill or disabled, according to recent research

One in three young people are suffering from mental health troubles such as depression, negative feelings or inability to focus. More school-age children are struggling with their mental and emotional wellbeing, including problems sleeping properly.

One in 10 children aged 10 to 15 in Britain are often lonely. Children who receive free school meals, live in a city and report low satisfaction with their health or with relationships with friends and families are more likely to often feel lonely. Loneliness is more prevalent among younger children, aged 10 to 12 (14%), than older children, aged 13 to 15 (8.6%).

Less than one in five of children and young people (17.5%) are meeting official guidelines of more than 60 minutes of activity a day, every day of the week. A third of children (32.%) lead inactive, sedentary lives, doing fewer than 30 minutes of physical activity a day.

The number of children in care after being removed from their parents because they were at risk of abuse or neglect rose again in 2017, amid concerns over the impact of cuts and poverty on vulnerable families. There were 75,420 looked-after children in England, increasing steadily every year since 2008, when the total was about 60,000.

About 14 million people, a fifth of the population, live in poverty and 1.5 million are destitute, being unable to afford basic essentials. It is predicted that child poverty could rise by 7 percentage points between 2015 and 2022, possibly up to a rate of 40%.

Almost a third of the 3,632 Sure Start children's centres in England have closed since 2009 with more under threat. In the remaining centres, services for families have been "hollowed out" and are no longer within "pram-pushing distance".

Council funding for youth services has plummeted by almost two-thirds (62%), from just over £1bn in 2008-09 to £388m in 2016-17. Between 2012-2016, more than 600 youth centres and nearly 139,000 youth service places across the UK were lost.

Only 10% of white boys from the most disadvantaged backgrounds progress to higher education, while 82% of Oxbridge graduates come from the upper and middle classes.

The early learning gap between children in poverty and their peers has widened in half of areas across England. Poorer children have fallen further behind their classmates in 76 out of 152 local authority areas in England by the end of Reception. Parents in the most deprived parts of the country and on low incomes are also much less likely to use or be aware of 30-hour free childcare and tax-free childcare entitlements.

The number of homeless households in insecure accommodation in England has risen further, with more than 120,000 children in temporary homes, including bed and breakfast rooms and hostels. There were 82,310 households in temporary accommodation at the end of June 2018, up 5% on the previous year, and an increase of 71% since December 2010.

People aged 18 to 24 are the most pessimistic in the UK, with just one in seven thinking their age group has the most opportunity to move up in society. Just 13% of 18- to 24-year-olds believe their generation will go on to enjoy the best standard of living, and 12% believe they will be better off financially than older generations.

This paper looks at how mutual understanding and respect can be promoted by people of different ages mixing and communicating, working together and supporting each other. This can and does happen in a wide range of spheres, media and activities to help promote stronger bonds in our society, meaningful interactions between generations and social integration for all ages, highlighting that we are interdependent, social and unselfish creatures.

United for All Ages fundamentally believes that older and younger people have much more in common than anything that divides them. But judging by some of the interactions between individuals in social media and between national organisations in more traditional media and arenas, that doesn't always appear to be the case. Often we seem to be shouting at each other rather than listening and working together. Generations have been pitted against each other by the media and commentators.

Underpinning change in our relationships with other generations must be better communication between generations. That will help us to challenge stereotypes and myths, and promote understanding and trust. Intergenerational solidarity is about valuing each other, as well as acknowledging and capitalising on the potential of all, benefiting everyone in society.

This report provides inspiring examples of organisations and projects that are making a difference for the next generation through intergenerational action. These exemplars are grouped under key themes:

- Starting early
- Raising attainment
- Changing attitudes
- Solving tough issues
- Shaping the future

These themes reflect our belief that the next generation are 100% of our future.

From fresh pasta to fresh perspectives

Last year I heard how one Italian town was helping teenagers, and it has really stuck with me. Concerned about **teenagers' anxiety**, boys were encouraged to try out traditional pasta making with some of the older women in the community. Working on the pasta together there was no real pressure to talk about themselves, but rather a sense of acceptance as they contributed to the communal effort and achievement.

It's something we can learn a lot from. Whether it's grandparents or members of the local community, a strong relationship across the generations can be **a real anchor** for children growing up in today's hectic, 24/7, digital world. Offering children **time, companionship and a fresh perspective** to today's challenges can go a long way to building the confidence and resilience children so desperately need. It might not mean making pasta, but I think **mixing up the generations** has so much to offer young and older people.

Anne Longfield, Children's Commissioner for England

The next generation

Starting early

The first three years of children's lives are fundamental to how well they do throughout life. This is particularly so for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Yet recent years have seen a roll back in services for very young children as children's centres are closed or allowed to wither, and childcare services become more focused on those parents who can pay. Early intervention has never received the investment it requires to make a big difference in our society.

That's why United for All Ages has always believed in intergenerational work starting as early as possible. Getting the next generation involved at a young age will benefit each and every one individually and it will help shape our society for generations by changing attitudes towards ageing and older people.

The good news is that 2018 saw many more nurseries linking with older people's care and housing schemes. Those links range from regular visits to care homes by nurseries to the co-location of nurseries and childminders with care homes on shared sites where costs and benefits can be shared. At the same time there has been a huge growth in parent and toddler groups set up specially to visit care homes regularly. The benefits for young children and

for their families are described below. Parents love what their children are experiencing and also love the social engagement themselves.

These developments have often been inspired by media coverage. Interestingly the second series of Channel 4's Old People's Home for Four Year Olds, broadcast in autumn 2018, focused more on the benefits of the interaction for the young children involved in the TV experiment. As described below, this experiment demonstrated 'significant steps forward' in children's language, empathy, confidence and social skills.

Learning and cognitive development for children like this seems particularly powerful when grounded in the reality of meaningful activities and relationships with older people; and even more so when older people may not be regularly present in children's lives as families fragment and disperse. Ofsted has recognised the value of co-located intergenerational care in guidance issued to its inspectors in 2018.

Making these opportunities available to all children as part of their experience of childcare and early education is critical to their futures. As it is for the older people, families and staff also involved.

The many benefits of the UK's first care-home nursery

One year on from opening Apples and Honey Nightingale CIC, the many benefits of being situated within Nightingale House care home are clear.

Nursery children engage in **meaningful play** with elderly care residents through a programme of daily interactions including singing, baking, gardening, animal petting, arts and crafts, and eating together. Focusing on the Government's Early Learning Goals, activities are carefully planned by the nursery staff with valuable input from the care home's therapies, activities and care teams to be developmentally appropriate and accessible for both age groups.

Residents are the children's reading buddies, encourage mathematical skills in games sessions and share their life experiences. The therapies team measures the impact of our exercise classes on the residents and the nursery team have watched the children's communication and language skills and personal, social and emotional development **outstrip all expectations**.

The partnership has been positive for everyone: residents, staff, children and their families.

Judith Ish-Horowicz, Apples and Honey Nightingale

Positive early experiences

The first three years of a child's life have an incredible impact on their future development. Our brains are literally shaped by **our formative experiences** – the people we meet, the interactions we have, the behaviour we witness.

Making older people a regular part of young children's lives means that ageing, disability and conditions such as dementia become less scary, less 'other'.

Songs & Smiles is a music group for 0-4 year olds, their parents/guardians and care home residents. It's a valuable opportunity for little ones to interact with older people in a relaxed and uplifting environment, and it gives parents the chance to **model positive behaviour** towards people who may be going through significant challenges in their lives.

As one mum put it: "It's really important for me, in raising Max, to integrate with as many different people as possible and for him **to gain understanding from a young age** about being kind and helping others."

Louise Goulden, The Together Project

Invigorating young and old

I've worked at The ExtraCare Charitable Trust for the past ten years. As its dementia lead, in early 2018 I was fortunate enough to get involved in intergenerational practice. In all honesty I did wonder what it was all about... after all we are an older people's charity that has been developing large scale retirement communities around England for 31 years.

I've seen good older people's services and good younger people's services but rarely, in my role, have I seen the two groups together, let alone the outcomes. Fast forward a few months and intergenerational practice seems a lot less like a flash in the pan innovation and actually something that just makes sense. Incorporating intergenerational practice into what we do enhances the retirement village setting as **a space where relationships can develop and be the agent of change to invigorate the young and old**; a phenomenon best evidenced in the recent programme Channel 4's Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds.

Is it easy? Not at first, it's a whole new world of planning and assessing a different set of benefits and risks but clearly worth the challenge.

Examples in ExtraCare include students visiting Pannel Croft Village in Birmingham, working with the National Citizen Service where younger people gained experience by talking to residents, volunteering and **gaining confidence interacting with older adults**. At the younger end of the scale Longbridge Village Birmingham's weekly Stay and Play session which invites local children to come and take part in fun activities with residents has helped to create a **strong and vibrant community** within the village.

With enthusiasm driving intergenerational practice, these benefits are likely to continue contributing to our retirement settings as **more ageless spaces**.

Michael Spellman, ExtraCare Charitable Trust

Lighting up lives

Little Wrens Nursery opened in March 2018 on the same site as Wren Hall Nursing Home after staff at Wren Hall requested childcare be provided on site. This has reaped tremendous benefits for all concerned. Parents are more content having their children on site, children are keen to visit our 'ladies and gents', and our ladies and gents light up the minute the children arrive to see them.

Visits between Little Wrens and Wren Hall happen throughout the day. Some visits are planned, for example when joint cookery sessions take place, and others are more spontaneous when a child or older person requests to visit the other. Our ladies and gents seem to have a **new lease of life** appearing energized by the children's visits. The children have increased confidence and are so polite and respectful when with their older friends.

Anita Astle MBE, Wren Hall/Little Wrens

Grounded in the real world

A lot of the current discussion around intergenerational projects focuses on what it means for the older people involved - but while there's no doubt that such initiatives have an incredibly positive effect on those adults taking part, I do think the impact it has on the younger participants is **sometimes overlooked**.

These projects provide children with **unique learning opportunities**, whether that's the chance to take on the responsibility of 'looking after' an older person or to find out more about the world around them, perhaps by developing a new understanding of recent history - and, perhaps because it's not being imparted as a 'lesson', it grounds **children's learning in the real world** and gives them **the confidence to share** what they know too.

The chance to learn through play, experience and sharing stories should be prized however it comes about - but there's something particularly worth cherishing when that opportunity is open to two generations at different stages of life.

Neil Leitch, Pre-school Learning Alliance

Significant steps forward

In 2018 I had the great pleasure of being involved in an intergenerational care experiment that not only looked at the impact of this type of care experience on the older adults, but also on the children (Old People's Home for Four Year Olds on Channel 4).

There have been many studies that have documented the positive outcomes that can be gained for older adults when they are given the opportunity to co-exist alongside young adults, adolescents and children, but very few that focus on the **impact on children**.

There were ten children in our experiment, all aged three and four years old. They spent three months playing and interacting with the older adults five days a week. The children were assessed throughout the experiment using a number of assessment criteria. I specifically looked at levels of **well-being, language use and acquisition, social interaction and empathy**. I also asked the children's parent/carer to complete a weekly diary to note any subtle or significant changes.

The outcomes for the children were very positive. They all made notable progress during their time in the experiment, with some of them making truly **significant steps forward** in their development.

Alistair Bryce-Clegg, ABC Does Ltd and Old People's Home for Four Year Olds

The next generation

Raising attainment

One of the key benefits of investment in early education and childcare is setting children up to succeed at school and in later life. Teachers often comment that children who have been in nurseries are more 'school ready'. The latest evidence from early education and intergenerational projects in the USA suggests that their children are much less likely to need extra reading support when they start school.

Apart from school readiness, there are many other benefits of intergenerational projects interacting with the education system. The fragmentation of families means that many children are isolated from the practical and social support that older relatives can offer. Older volunteers can give time and attention in schools to help children with reading, pursuing their interests and developing confidence. Older volunteers can also ease the pressures on teachers to deliver the curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities.

Primary school-aged children who are confident and empathetic will be good communicators, which is so important for the next generation in our changing world. Interaction with older people who have time is also more likely to make for effective learning, whether it's history, hobbies or having fun. This sharing of knowledge and experience, life skills and traditions should be celebrated. Children who feel good about themselves will learn better.

Giving all children opportunities to engage with older people through their school is key to enhancing their life

experiences and networks and promoting social mobility. For many children the experience can be eye-opening and life-changing – as it is for the older volunteers.

As the examples in this and the next section make clear, such activities are also central to shaping and changing attitudes towards ageing and older people. Teenagers who understand and have empathy can challenge 'them and us' perceptions.

Intergenerational interaction needs to be extended throughout all schools, colleges and universities. Some schools visit care homes, some have older volunteers helping with a range of activities with pupils but there are many more opportunities across some 25,000 schools in the UK. Increasing the understanding of young people about the life experiences of older people, ageing and dementia are key in our ageing society. Like the USA, visits could be taken a step further, for example, by hosting permanent school classes in care homes to really cement relationships. Primary and secondary schools could also consider hosting services for older people for the benefit of all involved if they have the space to do so, like Downshall primary school in Redbridge. A growing number of university hubs are supporting students to get involved in tackling social issues in their local community, many through intergenerational schemes with mutual benefits. Student hubs could be developed at every university and further education college.

Transforming early education

Whilst there is a general awareness that intergenerational programmes have a beneficial impact upon older people, we should shout loudly and clearly that investing in the development of intergenerational programmes will also make a **significant difference for children**.

In the USA, in a similar culture of universal reduction in budgets for childcare, education and adult social care, intergenerational co-location is **transforming early education**.

As part of a Winston Churchill Fellowship, I visited intergenerational co-located settings in the USA and in terms of impact upon children they reported the following:

- An improvement in **language development, increased reading and literacy skills**
- Targeting vulnerable children built children's **self-esteem and confidence**, improving their well-being and ability to learn
- The development of **empathy and kindness**, valuing disability and difference, understanding the importance of the relationship that came from engagement with elders

Given the current focus in the UK around social mobility, closing the attainment gap, improving school readiness and a need to develop young children's language and literacy skills, intergenerational learning would make a significant contribution to this agenda.

Within Torbay we have used this knowledge to develop intergenerational programmes and start making this difference for our youngest children. We now have **twenty care homes engaging in partnerships with early years providers**. For one care home this wasn't enough, and they are now developing an intergenerational room that **childminders** will use on a daily basis, enabling the children to learn these important lessons from their elderly friends.

Lorraine George, Torbay council

Lorraine's report on intergenerational co-location in the USA is here

Outstanding partnerships

Intergenerational work is central to **meaningful activities** in Anchor's care homes, eight of which are rated **outstanding** by regulator, the Care Quality Commission.

Anchor's work with Busy Bees nursery, who visit Augusta Court, Chichester, weekly, is so successful that the two organisations hope to **expand this partnership** to other care homes.

Anchor's care homes continue to build **relationships with schools and nurseries**: Little Gems Pre-School visit Dawson Lodge, Southampton, and Big Top Nursery are a hit with Buckingham Lodge's residents in Aylesbury. K&O Childcare children and residents from Waterside care home, Peckham, enjoy taking turns reading story books to each other. And The Flying Start Nursery visit St Anne's residents in Saltash.

Elizabeth Court, Caterham, went one step further, starting a toddlers' group onsite. Named after the former barracks where the home is, Little Soldiers toddlers enjoy playing tea parties with residents who also love holding the newly born babies.

Children regularly visit Anchor's housing properties, such as Chirton Lodge, North Shields, whose Halloween party with Little Blossom Nursery was a great success.

Following the merger between Anchor and Hanover Housing Association, to form Anchor Hanover, it's likely **more children and older people will benefit** from the organisation's intergenerational work.

Jane Ashcroft, Anchor Hanover

Parents value children's growth

Friend In Deed has had substantial feedback from parents regarding the positive impact that our intergenerational schemes have on children of all ages, **from babies to teenagers**. We have seen children grow in confidence and develop their **social skills** and this is particularly noticeable in children aged between three to six years old.

One of our three year old little visitors, who is very anxious if not by his mother's side, surprised us all when he sat playing a game with a male resident for 20 minutes (on the first occasion that they met) before even noticing his mum was the other side of the room.

An eight year old little visitor told us that "visiting my older friends makes me feel happy and proud" while her mum commented: "I have seen the most beautiful and gentle side to her. She very naturally adapts her behaviour which enables her to communicate really effectively with the residents."

Other parents have mentioned children becoming gentler with family pets, showing more empathy towards school friends and **talking about older people and ageing more positively**. We believe that there are endless benefits to allowing people of different ages to interact and form friendships.

Following one of our projects to link a care home in Lowestoft, Stradbroke Court, with their local school, Pakefield Primary, the reception class teacher commented: "It bridges the gap and encourages children to see building relationships across the age spectrum as normal, beneficial and mainly fun. It encourages **respect, acceptance and valuing all people**. In our culture, unlike others, we seem to disregard the wisdom of our elders whereas our children open our eyes to the value of these relationships."

Kelly Lindsay, Friend In Deed

Connection, communication, curriculum

InCommon is a social enterprise bringing generations together. We boost well-being and tackle loneliness by bringing groups of primary school children into retirement homes to **learn from older people in their communities**.

Our Helping Hands programme links with **the school curriculum** to teach students about the stages of life, dealing with changes and how we all grow old.

Interactive learning with our older volunteers brings recent history to life for children with all different styles of learning. Through meeting new people from different generations outside of their usual classroom environment, students really improve their communication skills and grow in confidence.

Time and again we see **children's views of older people becoming more positive**, and friendships growing between the two groups. With evidence showing that ageist attitudes start to develop in children from as early as 6 years old, we believe that intergenerational connections can help change this for the future.

Laura Macartney, InCommon

Nuturing emotional intelligence

Full Circle has been successfully established in Oxfordshire for some 20 years. Older people, often at risk of isolation and also loneliness, are identified and invited to volunteer. In groups, they work with groups of pupils in schools; in a nutshell, young and old have fun together. It might be doing some gardening, or playing a game. Or it might be just eating and chatting. The key thing is that it is not curriculum time, and it is emphatically not about assessing academic progress. There is **something special about people reaching across the divide** of many years: a new version of the Generation Game indeed.

The school identifies pupils who it feels would benefit from this experience, perhaps because they have a **difficult family background or are struggling in some other way**. There are sometimes teething issues getting schemes going but once established every school we work with loves Full Circle, and speaks with passion about the positive impact they observe on their pupils. Many of the older volunteers feel it gives them something to get up for in the morning, and it also gives them company of others which they might not have otherwise from day to day. Full Circle works in both primary and secondary schools, though as the pressure of curriculum and syllabuses hots up it becomes harder to free up time. Perhaps the education system needs to look at how emotional intelligence is nurtured by these relationships. What is it that we **value in education and need in life**, after all?

Paul Cann, Full Circle

The next generation

Changing attitudes

Ageism is rife in our society. And divisions between older and younger people have grown in the last decade.

Bringing older and younger people together, strengthening bonds and tackling prejudice is why we launched in United for All Ages in 2010. Starting young before ageist attitudes set in is crucial to build trust between generations.

Growing up and living in an ageing society are massive opportunities for the next generation. Sharing experiences and activities together is a key part of mutual understanding and banishing stereotypes and myths. It's also a reminder of how much more we share – united by what we have in common, our pasts, presents and futures.

Friendships and relationships between different generations are a key part of any successful intergenerational project. These relationships can shape the lives of the next generation and the way they see the world.

There is so much that older and young people can and do share – from a lifetime of experience to practical support. Those relationships are often about common interests from football to cookery, technology to yoga, but they can extend much further. So why don't we invest more in what could be life-changing relationships? The confidence and support that a mentor or an advocate provides can make a huge difference and build lifelong relationships and positive support for partnerships between the generations. Sharing a home can also have huge mutual advantages for older and younger people.

We all bring different experiences to these relationships – sometimes we have seen it before, sometimes the world is changing faster than ever – not least as grandparent or grandchild. Core to all these relationships are the mutual contributions and benefits that make them a win-win connection.

Skills for life

A narrative has emerged of a generational divide between young and old. Much less is said about the **wealth of intergenerational projects** showcasing the real benefits that these initiatives can bring to older and younger people alike.

In my constituency of North Norfolk, the Holt Youth Project has allowed young people to engage in a range of community activities such as volunteering at the local Dementia Café (in partnership with Age UK Norfolk), hosting bingo sessions, and helping older people to use IT. The project is open to everyone, but they also work with people who have fallen out of education for a variety of reasons – including mental health problems – and have seen those children flourish.

These activities offer young people **lifelong skills** such as communication and leadership which will improve employability in a competitive job market, as well as nurturing **good civic values** of respect and social responsibility which will help to **strengthen intergenerational bonds** for years to come.

Norman Lamb MP, Chair, Science and Technology Select Committee

Something magical happens

When my two young children visit their grandparents, **something magical happens**. They become gentler, more receptive and open. They are lucky, both sets of grandparents are alive and close by. Occasionally they have met great grandmothers. Their eyes open wide in amazement, I enjoy watching them process the continuity of who they are and where they have come from.

For the elderly, these children bring sparkle. The abundant energy spills over to them. And the smiles they procure are hard to extract otherwise. They share their experiences, stories and wisdom. But they also get a chance to **stay up to date with the world**, as the children bring it indoors with them.

There are grand words for such projects, intergenerational interaction, cross generational learning. But bringing the young and the old together for me is about the **sum of the parts being greater**, and how such very different experiences and positions in the world create joy and belonging.

Shelina Janmohamed, Generation M: Young Muslims Changing The World

Friends for all ages

Children from our Sunflower Nursery in Cambridge make a weekly trip to Richard Newcombe Court, one of our Extra Care Schemes for older people, half a mile away. Over a number of visits, firm friendships have been formed and all have benefited greatly from the experience. The residents make a significant difference to the children's behaviour, and have **helped them to develop life skills** and to build their confidence. It's also good for residents - one said: "It's been lovely because I hardly see my grandchildren anymore as they live so far away. This really works; it's brought life to the place."

We also take part in a Befriender scheme, where 14-15 year old students from Chesterton Community College have received training, and then make weekly visits to our residents at Langdon House residential care home. Our residents, some with dementia, greatly enjoy their time with the young people. The young people report **greater confidence and patience** and feel that their older friends can offer support that friends of their own age can't.

As the Richard Newcombe Court resident says, these initiatives enable young and old people to interact. This is a really important experience as families are increasingly dispersed and so inter-generational contact within families is reduced.

Nigel Howlett, CHS Group

Voyage through life together

The Campaign to End Loneliness' strapline is "Connections in Later Life", reflecting the experiences of many older people served by the Campaign's founder charities. But we know that loneliness is **part of the human condition, whatever your age**. The researcher into loneliness, Professor Christina Victor, plotted out a 'U-shape age curve' of loneliness, with peaks of misery commonest in both youngest and oldest adults. Academic evidence verifies what we know in our hearts. **We are all in this together**.

This realisation stirred me to raise the funds for a musical commission to bring young and old together, to tell the old story of loneliness in a new way. 'The Voyage', composed by the leading choral composer Bob Chilcott, is 45 minutes of music and poetry about a journey across the sea, to be sung by young singers alongside older ones, with nine movements punctuated by haunting solo instrumental passages ('soliloquies'). Performed now on three continents, it is the most moving way of **bonding us together across the generations**.

Paul Cann, Co-Founder, Campaign to End Loneliness

The next generation

Solving tough issues

Unfairly perhaps but intergenerational activities are often seen as soft – nice to do, add-ons. Some may argue that tough times call for tougher measures. But as this paper has already shown, older people can help give children a better start in life and help raise attainment in schools, as well as changing attitudes between older and young people and tackling ageism. These are key issues if we are to address social mobility and inequality in the UK.

This section looks at other social policy areas where intergenerational action is making a difference for young people – from offending to health, and from poverty and sustainability to choosing better options in life.

Intergenerational action can reach any of the tough issues facing the next generation. What and how is only limited by our imagination and our ability to do things differently.

One example from the USA is the non-profit organisation, Friends of the Children, which aims to break the cycle of generational poverty by pairing professional mentors with children who are involved in the child welfare system. Implemented at 15 sites across the USA, the Friends of the Children model is rooted in research that indicates stable relationships with caring adults can pave the way for children to develop socially, emotionally and cognitively.

There are many social issues in the UK where we could benefit from a different approach – one that fosters confidence, meaning and opportunities, as well as promoting better lifestyles and ultimately good health. And for those children and young people without extended families, interaction with older people and their wisdom can open doors to new lives.

Positive relationships against poverty

Through research into extended schools programmes across London and the Cost of the School Day programme in Scotland, CPAG has found that when schools are being used as community venues **disadvantaged children can benefit from the diverse interaction** it generates with other age groups and individuals. Parents reported that attending a breakfast club before school not only provides children with an important meal, but also an environment where they can build personal relationships with older peers and staff members. Staff reported that by having an environment where children could open up to them about their lives, staff could better understand the challenges they faced and could therefore help to mitigate those challenges. CPAG research also found that running activities in schools for different age groups such as adult education classes and sports clubs can help foster **positive relationships between schools and the wider community**.

Alison Garnham, Child Poverty Action Group

Creating different futures

There has been a lot in the press recently about the benefits of interage connections for older people – you only have to see the joy on older people's faces living in residential care when a boisterous four year old sings a nursery rhyme and tries to cajole them to play hopscotch but what of the benefits to young people of being around the older generation?

When I was a child and a teenager I loved being with my grandmother. Whilst my mum was always busy and slightly careworn, **my grandmother had time and listened**. She was removed enough from me in age that I didn't feel that overriding urge you get with your parents to rebel, so I in turn listened to her and her very wise counsel. I have also witnessed my own mother give counsel to my children – about drugs, mental health issues – and reflected that they would never have taken that advice on board from me.

So **how does this translate to services?** I see volunteering such as the mentoring service in Oxfordshire for our youth justice service a great example of where this plays out in practice. Volunteers, often retired, give their time to mentor, teach and guide our young people caught in the youth justice system. They have supported young people to **go through difficult parts of their lives**, helped them to **build new skills and create different futures**.

Lucy Butler, Oxfordshire County Council

Healthy families fit for the future

Working with grandparents who've taken on care of their grandchildren, known as 'kinship carers', all of our family activities naturally have an intergenerational focus.

In 2018, Grandparents Plus was able to develop this further, launching a successful bid to Sport England to use intergenerational activity to **tackle the wider challenges** faced by kinship care families. In 2019, we'll roll out the first project of its kind in Teesside, in partnership with Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation and Teesside University, which will use an intergenerational approach to **increase the levels of physical activity** among kinship care families, together. Using a network of support groups, the project will foster and encourage healthy and fun approaches to exercise for all the family.

Crucially the equal beneficiaries of the project are both the carers and the children in their care – with the added bonus of **building stronger families** for the future.

Lucy Peake, Grandparents Plus

Mix and mend on Merseyside

Society today seemingly reflects a fast, ever-changing, replaceable culture where communities are not encouraged to **work together to solve problems** or even slow down to sit and have a conversation together. In an attempt to solve some aspects of this societal problem, an innovative trial was initiated with a nursery and family centre in Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University School of Education in January 2018.

The trial focused upon **the lost arts and skills of early childhood**, such as darning, knitting, weaving and mending items, reflecting a more traditional and sustainable society. The idea was to invite elderly residents from the community in a café setting to participate as the 'more knowledgeable other' and scaffold and support early years children and their families in teaching them these lost skills. In other research older people have tended to be more passive recipients of trials with children singing to them or engaging in simple tasks together. Whilst these are positive steps, the legacy trial results ensured that the elderly participants were leading the process, and therefore supporting a holistic approach to their care. However, interestingly a key element of the findings was that many older people are feeling socially isolated and having no purpose.

There are many benefits to all participants involved in the cafes. From a community perspective it brought everyone together and introduced new groups that would otherwise not have met. Older people found **a renewed purpose** that they felt was lost as a result of their families growing up and leaving and opportunities for social interaction alleviating their loneliness and isolation. The young families started to not only develop a more traditional, sustainable mindset but developed **new relationships within the community**.

Liverpool John Moores University is now in discussions with several authorities across Merseyside to trial the legacy cafes in a mixture of children's centres and dementia hubs. Liverpool City Council is the first to sign up for this intergenerational learning.

Diane Boyd, Liverpool John Moores University

Online now for a better future

Brightside's mission is to help young people make **confident and informed decisions** about their future. At the core of this is connecting young people with older and more experienced mentors via our online mentoring portal.

Designed for a generation of young people used to communicating online, Brightside's mentoring allows them to **interact with older and more experienced people in a virtual space** in which they feel more comfortable asking questions than meeting face-to-face. This is particularly **important for young people from more disadvantaged communities** who might not know older role models in professional careers such as law or medicine in their immediate social circle, and thus lack the informal advice needed to navigate confusing education and career options, and often the support needed to achieve their goals.

Brightside mentors currently work with over 10,000 young people a year across every region of England, using the internet to cross social, geographical and intergenerational divides and giving young people the skills and self-belief they need now to succeed in the future.

Anand Shukla, Brightside

The next generation

Shaping the future

Confident young people want to shape their own futures and the future of where they live, work and study. They also want a focus on the issues that affect them such as loneliness and different ways to interact with other generations to tackle these issues.

As Nesta sets out below, there are lots of new intergenerational projects, brimming with energy and ideas for the next generation. Rather than focusing on divisions and silos, they are all about building community and sharing opportunities and experiences.

Another example from Activate Learning involves students training to be the next generation of carers working with children and older people. By gaining an understanding of intergenerational work while studying and through their work placements, they will change culture and attitudes as they enter the care workforce with a new approach to their work.

The challenge is scaling up all these projects and reaching those who would benefit most.

Shaping the council's offer

Hammersmith & Fulham Council is determined to do things with residents, not to them. It wants residents, including young people, to actively shape the support the council offers.

H&F Youth Council, made up of young people who live, work, study or are looked after locally, is **giving young people a real voice** and involving them in decisions – a vital part of making the council's commitment to co-production a reality.

Knowing from their own and their peers' experience that **social isolation and loneliness dramatically affect young people**, the Youth Council made this issue a priority in their election manifesto.

The Youth Council recently took part in a digital skills workshop with older people, sharing IT skills and helping **break down barriers** between young and old.

They also undertook a Dragon's Den style event where they presented ideas for tackling social isolation and loneliness to councillors. H&F Council will now support the winners to implement their ideas.

Cllr Ben Coleman, Hammersmith & Fulham Council with H&F Youth Council

The Gift for post 16 learners

At Activate Learning we have developed a new intergenerational project, The Gift, to promote fun and friendship whilst **bringing three generations together**. As a group we are also developing the next generation of adult and child carers.

Both health and child care students are working hand-in-hand to provide inspiring and engaging activities for the older and younger participants. Students gain a **deeper understanding of the needs of both generations**, as well as they themselves becoming part of the social integration with different members of their own community.

The benefits of this project are numerous for all parties involved. For our post 16 learners they are **developing their core attributes** when planning and carrying out suitable activities. Students learn a greater understanding of empathy and communication skills. Students are confident at listening to both the adults and children involved and are able to make decisions to intervene for the benefit for all. Students encourage children and adults to relate with each other, which is the core aim of our project.

Finn Wyatt, Health and Social Care Level 3 year 1 student, comments: "By being involved in The Gift I have seen **my own confidence increase**. I enjoy seeing the relationships develop between the children and the residents involved. I am surprised to see how much the residents get from our activities and how they especially love messy play."

Karen Spencer, Diploma in Early Years Level 3 year 2 student, says: "Being involved in The Gift is a gift in itself. Not only do I get to see bonds grow further and further every time we do The Gift, we also get to see how the elderly and the children develop and how they help each other develop. Alongside all of this I make a bond with the children and the elderly. Being involved in The Gift has helped me as a student to expand on what I can do and give the children and the elderly and also what I can give to a nursery. It has helped me become more confident and more sociable. Being in The Gift is **the most rewarding thing** I have done."

Leah Bryan and Fiona Taylor, Activate Learning

Scaling up community solutions

Over the last few years, Nesta, alongside partners such as DCMS and the Big Lottery Fund, have supported a range of pioneering projects that are **growing practical solutions** that recognise the enormous value and power of intergenerational relationships. Our work has backed high impact **neighbourhood networks and volunteer projects**, across a broad variety of fields, that build connections for individuals and communities and create better outcomes.

Some exciting examples include:

- **Projects, that create reciprocal relationships and meaningful connections.** GoodGym, now works in 47 areas across the UK to support people to get fit while doing good in their local communities, including supporting young people to make regular runs to an older person, building a one-to-one reciprocal relationship. The Cares Family, recognises that older people can have deep roots in an area but few connections, living alongside young people who may have many connections but no deep roots. They exist to bring together these two groups to support and socialise with each other.
- **Projects that support grandparents and grandchildren in a changing world for families.** Deep Roots New Shoots, at the Eden project, is a pioneering new programme for grandparents and their grandchildren, harnessing the power of visitor attractions and cultural institutions, to enable grandparents to meet other grandparents, and help enable their grandchildren to thrive. Kinship Connect, from Grandparents Plus, aims to increase the support for kinship carers. There are clear benefits to children if they're kept within their family network, but kinship carers too often do not receive the support they need.
- **Projects that share knowledge and experience across generations.** Mentoring projects from In2Science, and approaches such as 1 Million Mentors connect young people to those with experience and connections, to help young people transition in adulthood and find their purpose. Grandmentors from Volunteering Matters works with nine local authority areas to match young care leavers with a Grandmentor - a grandparent like figure - as they transition to independence, supporting young care leavers to shape their lives.

We know that these approaches work - an independent evaluation of GoodGym found that GoodGym runners have a direct, positive impact on the older people they visit as well as a positive impact on younger runners' feelings of wellbeing. An evaluation of the Cares Family showed that as a result of taking part, 76% of older neighbours felt less isolated, while 98% of young people said they felt closer to the community.

Katy Rutherford and Carrie Deacon, Nesta

The next generation

Next steps - conclusions

2019 and beyond

We're ambitious for the next generation because we think it's fundamental to changing culture and attitudes in Britain. It's important that we start as early in life as possible, and that we're strategic in our approach to make this happen.

United for All Ages has the ambition of helping create 500 intergenerational shared sites by 2023. We're working with childcare providers and eldercare providers to audit their current intergenerational activities and identify opportunities. We are undertaking feasibility studies on co-locating childcare alongside eldercare and on implementing new schemes. We are hosting regional workshops in 2019 to support these developments.

We are also working closely with many of the organisations featured in this paper and previous United for All Ages papers and on our website to roll out and scale up innovative approaches that bring younger and older people together across the UK.

Nationally, there is growing interest in intergenerational interaction with a couple of Parliamentary inquiries due to report shortly. The All-Party Group on social integration is conducting an inquiry into intergenerational connection and there's a House of Lords select committee looking into intergenerational fairness and provision.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, has already given co-located care his blessing. This follows positive support from both Ofsted and Care Quality Commission, with several co-located providers being given outstanding ratings by CQC. A social care green paper is due to be published soon, and it is expected to endorse intergenerational care.

Locally, we're working with councils, encouraging them to bring their early years childcare forums together with their adult care forums, because many are still working in silos and very few providers provide both care homes and nurseries. We also need local authorities to use their planning and commissioning powers to think about co-location and to work with architects and developers on making that happen.

Our network will share lessons from developing schemes in the UK, like those featured in this paper, and from elsewhere in Europe, the USA, Australia, Singapore and Japan where this started. We're continuing to mobilise support and enthusiasm. Everything that's been happening has been driven by grassroots organisations with public and media support. The positive response to TV programmes such as Old People's Home for 4 Year Olds and to coverage of Apples and Honey Nightingale has been phenomenal.

Making it happen for the next generation – key recommendations

The many great examples in this report could help transform Britain for the next generation. We therefore call on policymakers and practitioners to maximise the benefits for the next generation and create a stronger country as follows:

1. Every nursery, childminder, parent/toddler group and children's centre should link with a local older people's care home or housing scheme – and vice versa
2. Every primary and secondary school should involve and engage with older people in their community – from hosting older volunteers and services to linking with care providers
3. Every community should explore opportunities to develop places where younger and older people can mix and share activities and experiences – creating 500 centres for all ages by 2023
4. Every local authority should develop a strategy for building communities for all ages where meaningful mixing is part of everyday life – involving local people and providers
5. Every children's and young people's charity and community organisation should look at how to solve tough issues facing the next generation through intergenerational projects
6. Funders should support projects that promote positive relationships building trust and understanding between younger and older people – working with the media to rid Britain of ageism
7. Investors should look outside the box of age-related silos to invest in imaginative co-located care, learning and housing schemes that bring younger and older people together
8. Government should support and promote mixing between different generations through intergenerational care, learning and housing, explaining why it's key to creating better services, stronger communities, a stronger Britain and an end to ageism

We can all create a better Britain for the next generation. There are big economic and social benefits for everyone involved - and our collective futures depend on making it happen.

Meaningful mixing everyday

At The Challenge we believe that improving social integration between people of all ages and backgrounds is of **profound benefit to everyone**. Therefore, it is vital when talking about intergenerational connection that we don't fall into the old trap of thinking in terms of the time and attention which older people need from younger people. In fact, when it comes to a central aspect of well-being such as loneliness, recent research from the Office for National Statistics has found not only that younger adults report feeling lonely more often than older age groups, but that poor familial and intergenerational connections are highly correlated with reported loneliness.

The Challenge's recent work with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration has highlighted some **great examples of intergenerational projects**, from Apples and Honey Nightingale, a joint nursery and care home, to The Cares Family, which connects younger professionals and their older neighbours through clubs and activities. These projects tend to share in common a number of features which are key to their success.

Indeed, research by Dr Libby Drury and colleagues has highlighted factors such as close contact and **a high degree of co-operation**, which sit at the heart of the most effective intergenerational projects. These findings closely match the Design Principles for Meaningful Mixing which The Challenge has developed from its expertise in designing and delivering programmes like the National Citizen Service and HeadStart, both of which actively encourage **high quality interactions** between young and old through their social action elements.

The challenge now for all of us is both to support and grow the excellent initiatives we already have and to apply our cumulative learning from these to a **broader range of services and everyday interactions** to ensure we are building strong and sustainable bridges between the generations.

Andrew Dixon, The Challenge

The next generation

Appendix

Mixing Matters: how shared sites can bring older and younger people together and unite Brexit Britain

Published by United for All Ages in 2018

Shared sites that bring older and young people together can help tackle some of the big social ills facing Brexit Britain – from poor health and care and loneliness to ageism and division.

Urgent action is needed to create 500 shared sites across the country by 2023 and end 'age apartheid' in Brexit Britain, according to United for All Ages in its Mixing Matters report published in 2018.

Britain is one of the most age segregated countries in the world, particularly for the oldest and youngest generations, says the report in its analysis of recent research. Age segregation has been growing in recent decades, exacerbated by trends in housing, work and community life. This has led to trust being halved between different age groups, growing loneliness amongst both young and old, and poorer physical and mental health. It has also been reflected in voting divisions between younger and older people in the 2016 EU referendum and 2017 general election.

Mixing Matters highlights the growth of shared sites – from the first 'care-home nursery' at Apples and Honey Nightingale in south west London and the first eldercare day centre at a primary school in Essex to increasing links between nurseries, parent and toddler groups and schools with older people's housing and care schemes. The report calls for 500 shared sites to be developed across the UK, where activities for older and young people take place alongside each other and together.

Experience in the USA, Singapore, Japan and elsewhere in Europe shows the benefits for all generations of shared sites where old and young can mix. These include improved learning and social development for young children, better care and quality of life for older people, more opportunities for families and care staff, as well as economic benefits for providers of childcare, housing and care.

In addition to creating more shared sites like care-home nurseries, Mixing Matters argues for other models of shared sites to be developed bringing young and old together:

- Opening up sheltered housing schemes to students in return for volunteering and support; expanding the

Homeshare scheme where older people let spare rooms to young people in return for practical support and companionship; and creating new purpose-built intergenerational housing developments

- Locating reception and year one classes for primary school children in care homes, as demonstrated by shared sites in the USA; and tackling stigma around ageism and dementia by school pupils visiting care homes as part of the curriculum
- Creative options for downsizing that free up family-sized homes for young people, including 'downsizing in situ' by sub-dividing larger properties owned by older people
- Developing more community hubs and community pubs where different generations can mix and share key community facilities that are 'more than a pub', supported by councils transferring assets to local communities
- Engaging the next generation of care and childcare students in intergenerational interaction through their college placements with providers of care for older and young people, thereby creating a lasting impact across three generations while promoting recruitment and retention for the hard-pressed care workforce

Mixing Matters features contributions from some twenty national organisations concerned about improving relations between the generations - ranging from Anchor and the Intergenerational Foundation to St Monica Trust and New Economics Foundation. They have all shared ideas and projects to bring younger and older people together through shared sites.

Writing in the report, Chuka Umunna MP, chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on social integration which is holding an inquiry into intergenerational connection, said: "There is growing political will to build bridges across a number of social divides, including age, which were brought into sharp focus by recent political events such as the EU referendum and the 2017 General Election. I believe our APPG's inquiry – through championing schemes and the exploration of new policy approaches – has the power to convert this growing political will into practical action."

A country for all ages: ending age apartheid in Brexit Britain

Published by United for All Ages in January 2017

Fairness for all ages: twenty radical ways to promote intergenerational equity

Published by United for All Ages in January 2016

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