

## 'Picture This' Report 2010



Earlier this year, Generations Working Together had the idea to create an intergenerational project that they could take across Scotland. The aim was to expand their outreach to communities, organisations and schools in order to enhance, encourage, inform and include more people into participating and forming intergenerational groups.

GWT have an extensive source of contacts who are continually kept informed of developments and opportunities that communities can access surrounding intergenerational practices. This information is collected and passed on through our network partners who are based across Scotland and also through the GWT website.

Through collaboration with GWT, our network partners and community artist, Tessa Dunlop, a national arts program was devised. The project was taken on the road to ten different locations spread across Scotland. The aim of the project was to bring together already established groups, but of different generations. The medium of art was decided to be an attractive tool that could offer participation for everyone. No artistic ability was needed in being part of the day workshop, just the openness to discovering something new through getting crafty and creative with guidance from the artist along the way.

The project was promoted through GWT's website and general word of mouth. The network partners played an essential role in bringing the groups together in their communities. They made links with schools, youth and senior groups and sheltered housing organisations. Appropriate and comfortable creative spaces were found and booked and many locations helped out a great deal in bringing the day together.



The project received a lot of interest from many groups, and there were several applications from the same location. GWT worked hard to try and accommodate as many groups in the same area in one workshop, although in the end only ten locations, spread across the country could be chosen. For those who missed out, contact details were taken for inclusion in the next Picture This workshops, hopefully taking place over the winter.

The final ten locations were Parkhead (Glasgow), Leith, (Edinburgh), Barrhead (East Renfrewshire), Ness (Isle of Lewis), Kilmarnock, Kirkwall (Orkney), Creetown (Dumfries and Galloway), Ullapool (Highlands), Thurso (Caithness) and finishing in Aberdeen.

Every group we visited consisted of a mix of different generations from varying groups who were keen to get involved in their community. The workshops ran from mid April until mid June, and were a day-long event, running from 11am until 3pm, with a lunch included.



The artist designed the day with several ideas in mind for creating conversation covering certain local issues. The aim of the day was to bring different age groups together to simply have the opportunity to meet in a comfortable and familiar setting and for conversation to be freely generated through participating in creating artwork.

The overall goal of the project was to create a series of postcards that would be produced and sent back to all those involved. These would be a window into the world of the different communities and how they saw their area. The images would also depict how the participants had

learnt from each other from being part of an intergenerational experience.

The day started with warm up icebreakers, and a 'personality bingo' game that got the group moving around and trying to find out a little bit about each other. Individuals or friends who had arrived together were encouraged to take a brave step and mix with others, sitting at different tables with different age groups to their own. The groups then looked at maps of their area and were asked to highlight where they lived, where they did their shopping, places of interest etc. They were also shown old maps of the area and to try and see what had changed over the last 50 or so years. This worked really well and generated a lot of conversation on how places had changed due to industry, architecture and growth of areas.

The artist then showed the group copies of old and new recognizable images from the area, many where of buildings, parks, local attractions from present and past. Individuals chose a photo that they recognised and then created a stained glass tracing of the image. They used acetate and posca paint pens. This was a good introduction to getting the participants a little more confident with drawing. The results were very impressive and a lot mentioned that this was a really enjoyable part of the day.



The stained glass images were then stuck to the windows and the group broke for lunch. Everyone had a chance to see each other's artwork and to talk more about the actual photos they had chosen and why. The atmosphere was very relaxed and the group continued to mix over lunch rather than retreating back to their familiar age groups and friends.

During lunch the artist and community workers made sure everyone was feeling comfortable and if they would be happy pairing up with someone of a different age for the final second part of the day. After lunch people worked in groups of two to create a collage that depicted what they had learnt already from the day and also to add more images and words that showed how they felt about their area. Local media publications, newspapers, photos and collage materials were used to build up a picture of their views and thoughts.

Many of the participants had brought along a small trinket or photo that represented them. They openly showed each other what they had and why these personal things meant a lot to them. This was also another opportunity to get to know each other more. The items were photocopied and then used within many of the collages.



At the end of the day the collages were placed on the walls for everyone to see. This was great, as all those involved had been really engrossed in their own artwork for the afternoon, so many people were really impressed and surprised to see how others had created their own pieces. There was a great range of different pictures and a lot of hidden talents!

The final end to the day was evaluating how things had gone. Participants were asked to draw around their partner's hand and then cut it out. They then wrote down a few lines

on what they felt they had learnt and how they felt about the experience. These hands were then made into leaves and stuck onto a large banner of a tree. The tree represented the community and the different branches an directions one takes in life, but that we are all part of a strong trunk, a community that shares and crossed over and reaches for goals and aspirations together. This was a really nice way to end the day and to bring everyone back together to view what they had achieved as a group. Many people left the workshop feeling really happy and moved by the experience. Some who had been a little nervous or unsure about what the day would bring, left feeling inspired and more confident.

Without the support of all the community workers and staff, along with the open-mindedness of those involved, the day's workshops would never have been as successful as they were. Those who came along and those who put the events together really made the process work. They did it on their own and they did a brilliant job. Many new relationships were formed and future plans made to continue with intergenerational work. The idea to bring different generations together seems to be a fantastic way of including everyone and keeping all informed on what is happening in their area, this makes everyone feel that they have a part to play in creating and continually adding to their community.



*Tessa Dunlop  
Project Co-ordinator*