



Wellbeing in Later Life Programme (WeLL)

Conversation Café February 16th 2022

GIVE & KINDNESS

Volunteer Scotland's evidence report

[Contribution of Volunteering to Scotland's Health and Wellbeing: 2020 – 2040](#)

highlights the **outstanding contribution of volunteering** in Scotland is achieved through:

- ⇒ Improving the health and wellbeing of 1.4 million volunteers
- ⇒ Supporting activities and sectors which foster health and wellbeing – eg sport and physical activities
- ⇒ Supporting Scotland's health and social care sector through the contribution of 200,000 volunteers



The household survey identifies two peaks in volunteering: younger people who wish the volunteering experience on their CV, and older people - some embracing lifelong learning.

Need to persuade organisations to develop training for people in their 50s as retirement preparation

Marion Findlay, Director of Services, [Volunteer Edinburgh](#) described the organisation's aim to inspire more people to volunteer so they can enhance their own lives, the lives of others and build resilient communities. The initial focus on mental health and supporting those facing barriers has now extended to pioneering ways for people to get involved and volunteer, partnering with communities to overcome adversity, tackling social isolation and loneliness, and improving health. She reported that Volunteer Edinburgh are only now seeing an increase in applications from older people to volunteer, post pandemic. They are also seeing the negative impact of lockdown on the physical and mental health of volunteers. This experience resonated with the WeLL Café participants.

We have been shocked at the deterioration in some of our members and volunteers through the impact of the pandemic and lockdown, with some unable to take up their previous volunteering roles

Ross Lamb, Services Manager, [Independent Age](#) described work underway to raise the profile of Independent Age in Scotland at all levels. He is applying an asset-based community development approach with the aim of supporting a small number of placed based projects involving older people as partners. Independent Age offer a confidential **Helpline: 0800 319 6789** for people age 65 +, their families and carers to access information on care and support, money and benefits, health and mobility.

Bella Kerr, Intergenerational Development Officer with [Generations Working Together](#) (GWT) shared examples of their intergenerational work and how this has had to adapt through the pandemic:

Collaborating with the Soil Association which included developing online training with Argyle Carers which won an award	Eating lunch together via zoom: older people joining school children which generated interesting conversations and laughs 😊
Older people reading stories online to classrooms of younger people. The children were captivated!	Intergenerational gardening projects involve schools, care homes, day care centres and many more
Older people and teenagers sharing skills at a Volunteer Centre	Working with Linwood Housing Association and school next door to grow plants

The difference to all involved is palpable. It's good for everyone's wellbeing

Intergenerational work is breaking down barriers between older and younger people which is positive as ageism can affect a person's health and wellbeing

Free membership to GWT to anyone living in Scotland

<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/membership/>

This month's Take Home messages:

- ⇒ *Sense of risk aversity in many (statutory) services re resuming face-to-face services*
- ⇒ *Seems like the larger the institution, the slower the move back to our previous lives...*
- ⇒ *Volunteers are losing confidence (mentally & physically) - and organisations have limited resources and capacity to provide the support they need to re-engage*
- ⇒ *We had to close down school projects. Two have opened up again but one closed completely and volunteers were left*
- ⇒ *Switch to digital has increased access to training but does not address the digital divide*
- ⇒ *Digital has brought people together – we need to think hybrid – but what is the cost?*
- ⇒ *SO looking forward to meeting people face to face.*
- ⇒ *It's all relational – good things happen based on good relations*
- ⇒ *Liked the session it is informal and easy*

Dates for Diaries:

Wednesday 16th March 2022: KEEP LEARNING

Well Co-lab 3: Wednesday 30th March 2022 10.00 – 13.00

Thursday 7th April 2022: REFLECTIONS & FEEDBACK (Please note date change)

Well Co-Lab report and flash reports are available at:

https://integratedcarefoundation.org/ific_hub/ific-scotland-programmes

Additional Resources

- <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/place-kindness-combating-loneliness-building-stronger-communities/>
- <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/kindness-emotions-and-human-relationships-the-blind-spot-in-public-policy/>
- The Place of Kindness: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgSVrl__mp4&t=1s
- The Practice of Kindness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP6G3y7EVJ8&t=491s>
- Independent Age Information and advice: <https://www.independentage.org/get-advice>
- Independent Age Helpline: <https://www.independentage.org/get-support/call-helpline>
- The Contribution of Volunteering to Scotland's Health & Wellbeing [Volunteer Scotland | Help Make a Difference through Volunteering](#)
- The Road to Recovery <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/research-and-evaluation/publications/covid-19-research/the-road-to-recovery/>
- What are the health & wellbeing benefits for volunteers?
• [benefits_twitter.png \(1100x628\) \(volunteerscotland.net\)](#)
- Optimising Health and Wellbeing Benefits from Volunteering (good practice for organisations)
[good_practice_for_engaging_and_supporting_volunteers.pdf \(volunteerscotland.net\)](#)
- Generations Working Together resources, case studies and ideas
<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/resources>
- Generations Working Together **FREE** online training courses
<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/training/online-training>