

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Committee

26 August 2015

Services for Older People in Perth and Kinross

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report describes the range of services provided by Education and Children's Services (ECS) that benefit, or recognise the contribution of older residents within the area. ECS undertakes or contributes to a wide range of activities that aim to improve outcomes for people at all stages of life, collaborating with other Council services and partners. This report focuses on those activities of greater relevance to those in the later part of their life, meeting the needs and interests of this group, and in particular building community capacity and resilience, supporting physical health and reducing social isolation and poor mental health.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 In 2014, the population of Perth and Kinross was nearly 150,000, with those aged 50 and over accounting for 43% and those aged 65 and over comprising just over a fifth of the total population. The proportion of those of pensionable age varies significantly across the area, from 15% of residents in the Perth City ward up to almost 30% in Highland ward.
- 1.2 National Records of Scotland (NRS) projections indicate that the population aged 50 and over in Perth and Kinross is expected to increase by around 16,000 by 2037, an increase of 26%, which is higher than the rise predicted for the population as a whole. Both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy¹ for males and females in Perth and Kinross is consistently in the top 5 of Scotland's local authorities. Across Scotland, increased life expectancy is making degenerative conditions such as dementia, sight/ hearing loss and frailty more prevalent. Older single-person households are also becoming more common.
- 1.3 Education and Children's Services provide a wide range of activities across all of Perth and Kinross' communities. Understandably, early years and school-age education, as well as children and families social work are a substantial part of the ECS remit, and are the focus of around 88% of the Service's net expenditure. However, children do not live isolated lives and all our services have a broader focus on developing and supporting children and their families, including extended families, as well as the communities where they live.
- 1.4 The service undertakes or contributes to a wide range of activities that aim to improve outcomes for people at all stages of life, with other Council services and partners. To promote inclusion and opportunities for all, it is unusual for services

¹ an estimate of the years of life that will be spent in good health

to be targeted at particular age groups. However, this report focuses on where ECS contributes to the lives of those broadly in the second half of their life (over 50) as residents of Perth and Kinross. As well as being recipients of services, there is also an acknowledgement of the contribution that older people make to the area's communities and civil society.

- 1.5 Perth and Kinross has a strong tradition of community activity and many activities for older people are instigated and managed successfully by independent groups and organisations. Locality teams in ECS Cultural and Community Services support community members and groups to play a full and meaningful role to develop their neighbourhoods, inform local service developments and celebrate their achievements through Community Learning and Development (CLD).
- 1.6 ECS and other parts of the Council and its partners have a significant role to play in providing support to individuals and communities in the following ways which have particular relevance to older people:
 - Improving community capacity, resilience in periods of stress, inclusion and general good-neighbourliness.
 - Encouraging and supporting appropriate physical activity.
 - Reducing social isolation, loneliness and poor mental health.
- 1.7 ECS activities that contribute to these aims are considered by looking at the Community Planning Partnership's strategic objectives in turn.

2. CURRENT SERVICES

DEVELOPING EDUCATED, RESPONSIBLE AND INFORMED CITIZENS

Cultural and Community Services - Adult and Family Learning

- 2.1 The Learning Curve is a learning and resource base for Perth and Kinross Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnership/Literacies in the Community Project. Based at the AK Bell Library, the Learning Curve works with partner organisations to provide free adult learning programmes which are developed around learner's needs and interests and focus on activities to boost participants' confidence, employment prospects and health and well-being.
- 2.2 In 2014/15 nearly 1,000 learners accessed programmes through the Learning Curve with around 15% of these being aged 55 years and over. Amongst this age group the most popular activities were:
 - Skills Zone – providing the opportunity to learn basic computer skills, including how to get online; completing online forms; creating and updating CVs; and support with jobs search.
 - ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
 - Literacy and numeracy – where people get support they need to improve their reading, writing, number and thinking skills.

- 2.3 Adult & Family Learning is delivered throughout Perth & Kinross, providing community-based adult learning opportunities that are lifelong, life-wide and learner-centred. Priorities and actions are identified through Locality Plans, from Community Profiles and local Stories of Place, and cover a wide range of support and provision for vulnerable families, children and young people, and adults of all ages. Working in partnership with other agencies is key to extending and enhancing the range of learning and volunteering opportunities available, and this includes provision for over 50s.
- 2.4 There are ten Adult Education Associations across Perth and Kinross organised by volunteers, and supported by small grants from the Council to deliver a wide variety of informal learning opportunities. These are open to all but are enjoyed mainly by older residents. Classes vary across the associations but cover subjects such as yoga, dance, golf, art, crafts, upholstery, tai chi, languages and music. Each Locality has a Partnership, Network or Group that brings a range of agencies together to plan and deliver outcomes locally and act as an information hub – these are supported by ECS.
- 2.5 Cultural and Community Services (CCS) deliver a range of IT support in localities. Beginners computing classes are for adults to improve their skills and are designed to support people with little or no experience. They are for adults resident in Perth and Kinross and are delivered in various community-based venues free of charge. Older residents are keen but not exclusive attenders of these classes.
- 2.6 Perth College UHI offers a wide range of further and higher education courses, along with a comprehensive programme of short and leisure courses in the community. These have often been in partnership with Cultural and Community Services, responding to specific community needs or supporting Employability Skills eg drop-in sessions in Aberfeldy and Blairgowrie. Figures show that the number of students aged 50 and over has risen by 20% (7000 students) over the past 3 academic years.
- 2.7 Learning opportunities for older people in Perth and Kinross are not limited to formal learning opportunities, with opportunities for people to attend talks, events and exhibitions on a range of subjects, including those with local interest, at various ECS locations including libraries, museums, art galleries and other venues.

Intergenerational Practice (IP)

- 2.8 Intergenerational practice or activity describes activities, programmes and projects that consciously seek to bring young and older people together. IP is purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations (for individuals) and contributes to building more cohesive communities which can reduce isolation and break down stereotyping. ECS and a number of schools are active participants in the Perth and Kinross intergenerational network co-ordinated by Generations Working Together, the Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice. All schools are encouraged to develop IP and the topic was presented and discussed at the Headteachers/Deputes conference in Autumn 2013.

2.9 A range of IP activities are ongoing across the area and schools/ establishments, as exemplified here:

- Community Learning & Development - Adult & Family Learning organise a 'Reminiscence with Technology' group in Kinross, with tangible benefits for both the young and older participants.
- ECS and schools have been active contributors to the developing Strathmore intergenerational network.
- S6 pupils at The Community School of Auchterarder organised an Intergenerational Community Coffee Afternoon (and also presented about their experiences at a conference in Glasgow). Perth Academy has introduced a dedicated intergenerational session for all S6 pupils.
- Oakbank Primary pupils have built links with Ochil Care Home residents with a variety of activities that benefit all participants, from gardening to golf and Christmas carols.
- Kinloch Rannoch School organised an intergenerational scrapbook and "Walk in our Shoes" event.
- Balhousie Primary involved pupils in the North Perth Food and Drink Show, meeting and talking with people with dementia. The school also invites residents and neighbours to its summer Fete and BBQ.
- A large proportion of schools prioritise and undertake various community engagement activities, or extra-curricular activity, drawing on voluntary involvement from older members of the community.
- Libraries and Information Services run an annual 'Spring On-Line' programme where young people offer help and support to older residents with using devices and accessing on-line information. Evaluation feedback has shown it gives them the confidence and ability to use computers as part of everyday life, including using the internet, email and basic applications.
- 'Blethers in Ballinluig' started as a project in 2013, in partnership with the Healthy Communities Collaborative, to make residents more aware of the opportunities for learning and healthy activities through meeting on a regular basis. It supports residents to take up learning opportunities available in their community and through intergenerational activity. Through regular sessions the learners have undertaken a range of activities, trips and developed a close relationship with Logierait Primary School.
- Community writing projects, such as 'Life as We Know It' and 'BreadAtholl Brose', have successfully attracted external funding to create community publications, bringing together learners from all ages and stages in their learning to celebrate their locality and experiences of living in Highland Perthshire.
- The 'Living Communities Project', with the Gannochy Trust, brings people together to explore their communities and their heritage, promoting intergenerational co-operation.

PROMOTING A PROSPEROUS, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Libraries

- 2.10 Libraries play a central role in many communities, offering a multitude of opportunities for people of all ages. Along with the traditional library services, the 13 libraries across Perth and Kinross also provide access to computers and Wi-Fi; classes and workshops; events, talks and exhibitions in partnership with the museums and art galleries; and resources to explore and investigate both local and family histories in the area. There are also four mobile libraries that deliver services to areas and people who do not, or cannot, access the community libraries. All libraries have stock designed for wide accessibility by all users eg large print, talking books in a variety of formats and DVDs. Pensioners are exempt from hire charges.
- 2.11 Of all borrowers of books and other media over the 3 year period to the end of March 2015, 54% were aged 50 years and over. Amongst borrowers using the four mobile libraries, 77% (856 of 1,118) were aged 50 and over, with 35% aged 75 years and over. These figures highlight the popularity and importance of libraries in the lives of older people in Perth and Kinross.
- 2.12 Most of the events, classes and workshops run through the libraries in Perth and Kinross, are open to all, but some are specifically targeted at older people. The 'WOW' (Window on the Web) project sees volunteers take devices into residential and care homes to assist older people with accessing the internet. 'Silver Surfer' sessions which are held regularly provide tailored teaching to meet the needs of older people. Evaluation feedback has shown it gives them the confidence and ability to use computers as part of their everyday lives, including using the internet, email and basic applications. Whilst many of the classes, events and workshops held at the libraries in Perth and Kinross are extremely popular, detailed attendance data by age is not available.

Museums and Galleries

- 2.13 Recognised as a Collection of National Significance to Scotland, the collection held by the museums and art gallery in Perth and Kinross offers visitor's insights into the artistic, social and natural history of Perth and Kinross, along with items of interest from further afield.
- 2.14 Whilst entry to the museums and galleries in Perth and Kinross is free across all three sites, visitor research between May and October 2014 gives insight into the types of visitor to these facilities. Over a quarter (28%) of the visitors were aged 55 years and over, and were the second biggest group by age (after those aged 0-17).
- 2.15 Along with the exhibitions the museums and galleries, in partnership with the libraries, offer a range of classes, workshops and events for people to learn more about the collections and areas of interest. Developments are currently in place to improve the capture of basic visitor profile information in ways that do not detract from the visit experience. The Service is working to understand the various types of visitors (both resident and from further afield) and their needs and motivations to improve audience engagement and programming.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO LEAD INDEPENDENT, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIVES

- 2.16 Becoming older should not necessarily be associated with poor health or social care needs, but these factors become increasingly important in later life. Health and Social Care Integration represents a major shift in the way services are provided, especially to the older members of society.
- 2.17 ECS's key partner in the sector, Live Active Leisure (LAL), is Perth and Kinross's largest leisure provider, operating 16 leisure venues across the region, including swimming pools, gyms, sports halls and health suites. In December 2014, LAL had 3,453 individual members. Around 27% of these are aged 50 and over, with those aged 50-59 making up over half of this group.
- 2.18 Along with access to all the universal facilities that LAL offer, those aged 50 and over have access to a range of specialist classes designed for older users including chair-based exercise; social aerobics; and mature movers. Members aged 50 and over have access to all other classes, with activities such as yoga, tai chi and 'Stride for Life' health walks being popular with some older members. LAL staff also work with the Perth and Kinross Healthy Communities team to offer other tailored services for older people in their communities. LAL find that age is less of a determining factor in undertaking activity than an individual's motivation and ability.

Active Communities Project

- 2.19 In April 2013, LAL appointed a full time Physical Activity Co-ordinator for the Active Communities Project for a period of 2 years, using Change Fund resources. The project was directed to focus geographically in Highland Perthshire, establishing exercise groups directly related to the reshaping care agenda. The population focus was adults of retirement age and over, particularly those who are more isolated such as those resident in sheltered housing. The Healthy Communities Collaborative Team works closely with CCS Locality teams to identify and meet local needs, usually through the local CLD/Community Partnerships or networks for example: working with Highland Perthshire Cycling Project to learn and continue cycling; funding for indoor Kurling kits for local groups; funding for True Call boxes to address nuisance/cold callers.

Perth and Kinross Healthy Communities

- 2.20 Started in 2005, the 'Healthy Communities Collaborative' is a joint venture between Perth and Kinross Council, Perth and Kinross Community Health Partnership and NHS Tayside. Working with people in their own communities, the initiative not only works with Older People, but also those with physical and mental impairments and those with long-term illness, along with their carers.

- 2.21 Healthy Communities seeks to empower communities to help themselves. Rather than directing what is going to happen, the initiatives give communities a platform to raise local concerns and work collaboratively with professionals from various disciplines to address those concerns. Healthy Communities has three objectives for improving the health and wellbeing, along with the quality of life, of those they work with:
- Social Connectedness;
 - Physical Activity and Active Communities; and
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- 2.22 Currently 14 communities in Perth and Kinross have Healthy Communities teams working in them, having helped set up such projects as:
- Low impact exercise groups – specially tailored exercise for older and less physically able people;
 - ‘Stride for Life’ walks – health walks aimed at increasing the public’s physical activity levels;
 - ‘Men’s Shed’ – developed and run by men for men, giving men from the local community the chance to meet, share and learn new skills as well as chat over a tea or coffee. There is currently one Men’s Shed in Invergowrie; and
 - Directed learning – an opportunity for people to learn what they feel they need to know. Courses have included dementia awareness; fire safety training with the Fire Brigade; first aid training with the Red Cross; and healthy eating courses.
- 2.23 Again, not focused on specific age groups, the library service in partnership with NHS Tayside provide a ‘Books On Prescription’ service, utilizing extensive and focused collections of appropriate books or other written materials “prescribed” by GPs and other health care professionals to be read by the individual as self-help guides to living with and managing conditions such as depression, stress and anxiety.
- 2.24 The library service also provides services to some of the most frail elderly population through its ‘Books on Wheels’ service to housebound readers and ‘Books Aloud’ reminiscence and story sessions in residential and care homes, and on demand in other settings such as hospitals and societies². Mobile libraries visit sheltered housing and residential and care homes to provide library services to residents. Libraries and Information Services have recently received external funding to establish reminiscence groups in libraries so that the benefits of this activity can be extended to individuals not in formal care settings.
- 2.25 The library service offers many volunteering opportunities for retired members of the community, allowing participants to continue to make use of their skills, knowledge and experience, while giving something back to their communities. Opportunities include:

² Libraries are also involved with the national Living Voices pilot project that is using stories, poems and song in care home settings to engage and enliven groups of older people through conversation, creative activity and reminiscence.

- Providing the 'Books on Wheels' service to housebound readers, in partnership with the Royal Voluntary Society;
- Delivering 'Books Aloud' reminiscence sessions in residential and care homes in partnership with the Perth & Crieff branches of Soroptimists International;
- Delivering a book trolley service to patients in Perth Royal Infirmary; and
- Volunteering as Friends of the Council Archive, helping with research, recording and indexing and assisting with promotional programmes such as talks and publications.

2.26 Other parts of the service, including museums and galleries, offer volunteering opportunities for all ages.

Other ways in which ECS helps to understand and meet the needs of Older People

2.27 Cultural and Community Services provides strategic advice and support to the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership on Community Planning. This includes the establishment of a Community Empowerment Working Group as part of the CPP governance structure to oversee new ways of engaging with communities in local public service delivery, made more relevant by the introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

2.28 ECS has a role in ensuring the Council's services are appropriate and inclusive whilst responding to changing expectations of how citizens and customers interact with public services. By moving more services and transactions online, the Council can reduce costs and free up resources to target support more efficiently to meet the complex needs of our more vulnerable citizens and communities. The Council's digital strategy is in development but within it two key elements of relevance to the older generation can be identified:

- **Making it easy for people to interact with us online.** *We understand what people are trying to achieve when they use our online services. We allow the customer to decide how and when to communicate, use plain English and make information easy to find by reducing website "noise" and clutter.*
- **Digital inclusion: making sure that no-one is left behind.** *Some of our customers are offline, or are online but have limited online capability. We work to ensure that our online services build a more equitable, inclusive Perth and Kinross. We work to remove the barriers that prevent some customers from using our online services. We provide free of charge, accessible "assisted digital" services in person, webchat or over the telephone to help all customers take advantage of our online services.*

2.29 User testing of the Council website was last conducted in 2012 prior to its re-launch and participants included people of various age groups and abilities. Significant work has been carried out to ensure the website is as accessible as possible for all users to access, including people with visual disabilities using assistive technologies. IT services are committed to making the website as accessible as possible and it has been designed to follow the accessibility guidelines issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Adult and Family Learning staff in localities undertake a range of beginner's provision and drop-ins where learners can bring their own devices and get support and learning at their own pace.

- 2.30 Priorities and actions for Communities CLD teams are identified in Locality Plans from Community Profiles and local Stories of Place using local demographic information and relevant data. These cover a wide range of support and provision for vulnerable families, children and young people, and adults of all ages. Working in partnership with other agencies is key to extending and enhancing the range of learning and volunteering opportunities available, and this includes provision for over 50s. These are currently reported in terms of meeting locality targets and overall figures capturing numbers of learners rather than broken down into age categories, for example family learning records the number of adult and child family members where the adults can be older grandparents or kinship carers.
- 2.31 ECS also hosts the Corporate Research and Information function which has a key role in providing the local statistics and information on demographics and socio-economics to inform decision-making and service provision for the area's older generation.

Improvement Areas Identified

- Where practicable, all services aim to improve their capture of appropriate demographic and other information about customers, clients and service-users, to better understand the activity and needs of the older generation (and other population groups).
- Progress on these and other provision of services will continue to be reported as appropriate in the Service's Standards and Quality report and/or the combined BMIP and Annual Performance Report.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the contents of the report; and
- Endorses the improvement areas that are described.

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	No
Workforce	No
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	n/a
Strategic Environmental Assessment	n/a
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	n/a
Legal and Governance	n/a
Risk	n/a
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	n/a
Communication	
Communications Plan	n/a

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement/ Corporate Plan

- 1.1 This report relates to all objectives of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2013-23 / Single Outcome Agreement and Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2013/2018
- 1.2 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area: Inclusion and Equality

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 N/A

Workforce

- 2.2 N/A

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties. There are no proposals to be considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and therefore the report is assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

- 3.3 N/A

Legal and Governance / Risk

- 3.4 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Managers and staff within Education and Children's Service and its partners have been consulted and/or have contributed directly.

External

- 4.2 N/A

5. Communication

- 5.1 N/A

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.