

Final report on the Machars Cluster Intergeneration programme

Prepared by Port William Community Development Trust, August 2013

The project was conceived as a development of the youth clubs in the South Machars to involve the older generation with the young people of the villages. The youth clubs have been running successfully in the villages of Garlieston, Kirkinner, Sorbie, Isle of Whithorn and Port William for a number of years but new ideas are required to keep the young interested and continue to support the youth clubs. The suggestion was made that there should be greater interaction between the young and old so a programme of activities was devised, this was that the young could show how new technology worked such as mobile phones with many other applications beyond being used for telephone calls and the use of computers to access the internet and use for online shopping etc.

The result was that in each of the villages, evenings were arranged where the young were shown how to make soup, meatballs, burgers and general food preparation, things that they ate but had no idea how to make, in return the older people were entertained with computer games and the mysteries of modern technology.

To start the project the youth workers employed by Port William Community Development Trust who organised and ran the youth clubs in each of the villages during the week, sort the help of older people in each village to come along and take part in an evening session. This took time and quite a number of public meetings was required to convince everybody that it could be of benefit to all.

The youth clubs not only had the paid youth workers to organise activities but were helped out by volunteers who assisted in the many activities. The funding to pay the salaries of the youth workers came partly from Dumfries and Galloway Council who have for many years helped Port William Community Development Trust to operate the youth clubs known as the Cluster Group. Further funding is raised in the villages but more is always needed and this year Dumfries and Galloway LEADER Programme gave funds to promote the intergeneration programme. When applying for funding it is always difficult to put a cost to all the time spent on a programme spread between a number of villages, the figures were submitted at the time of application and now at the end of the first year the time given by volunteers as "in kind" has been far greater than planned as everybody considers the intergeneration programme worth supporting and so the cost of the paid youth workers has been less than anticipated.

The local press has covered the evenings of intergeneration and published photographs and reports of the various activities. The feeling is that a good start has been made to get people of different ages together and have fun in doing unfamiliar activities together. It is hoped that more and different activities can be organised in the future to help to bring the different generation together.