



## All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration

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## Notes from Visit to Manchester – 21/06/2018

### Present (APPG members)

- APPG Chair – Chuka Umunna MP

### Present (others)

- One member of staff from the Chair's office
- Two members of staff from The Challenge (the Secretariat)
- Two members of Greater Manchester Ageing Hub : Paul McGarry and Jo Garsden
- Professor Stefan White and a group of students from Manchester School of Architecture
- Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, and staff from his office
- Cllr Rishi Shori, Leader of Bury Council
- Joanne Roney, CEO of Manchester City Council
- Pam Smith, CEO of Stockport Council
- Representatives from Greater Manchester's Older People's Network and Youth Combined Authority
- Alex Smith, CEO of The Cares Family
- A group of older and younger people from the Levenshulme area at the Manchester Cares event

### Session One: Manchester School of Architecture

- We watched a presentation by **Professor Stefan White** on the way researchers and students at the school are collaborating to promote "**intergenerational spatial inclusion**".
- This included a focus on the school's **PHASE research and delivery group** – standing for Place-Health Architecture Space Environment. 300 graduates from the school have now looked at age-friendly projects.
- Working across all eight of the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s domains, the group has developed a **Greater Manchester Spatial Framework**, promoting civic involvement, ageing in place, and inclusive processes.
- The group is collaborating with the **Greater Manchester Ageing Hub**, with the city region's Mayor, Andy Burnham, having set a target of **50 age-friendly neighbourhoods** over the next two years.

- Students are building trust in the local community through their research by feeding in ideas from a wide variety of individuals, making interviews a key part of their work, and training others to be co-researchers. For example, some students designed and built a playground in Blackpool alongside the local community.
- **Other student projects and ideas include:**
  - Looking at 23 different approaches to co-housing
  - Naturally-occurring retirement communities
  - Interconnected gardens to encourage intergenerational mixing
  - Creating “**modular inserts**” shared by properties, which give agency to occupiers over how they are used. Efforts would be made to ensure the occupiers of these properties would be from different economic backgrounds, e.g. those getting onto the housing ladder and those with equity.
  - Building windows within properties that look out onto a communal courtyard, fostering a community-oriented rather than competitive feel between properties.
  - A “**Plot Passport**” – enabling an extension to be added on for an entire plot, or additional homes to be built in the back garden.
- It was agreed that there is currently not enough thinking about how older people can continue to live in urban centres, and take advantage of the networks and services on offer, and continue to contribute to the life of the city.
- Providing **affordable homes for older people in urban centres** will help dispel ageist attitudes around older people hoarding big homes. Another idea to help do this is giving older people the option of continuing to live in their home but selling part of it, for example by building a new plot in the garden.
- There was a real emphasis on the fact that **integration is good both for people and economically** – it enables house size to correspond more closely to what different age groups want and need.
- We can’t force social mixing but housing can be designed in such a way that it is more likely to occur.
- We need a “**multi-disciplinary platform**” to bring together different actors to drive change. This involves a large involvement from the private sector, which necessitates creating the right platform for innovation.

## Session Two: Meeting with Andy Burnham and Local Council Leaders

- Having been introduced to **Paul McGarry** and **Jo Garsden** of the **Greater Manchester Ageing Hub** at the Manchester School of Architecture, we walked with them to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) at Churchgate House, where we met with:
  - **Andy Burnham**, Mayor of Greater Manchester
  - **Cllr Rishi Shori**, Leader of Bury Council, GMCA Political Lead for Young People and Social Cohesion

- **Joanne Roney**, CEO of Manchester City Council, GM Portfolio Lead for Young People and Social Cohesion
- **Pam Smith**, CEO of Stockport Council, Portfolio Lead for Ageing
- There was a large emphasis in the meeting on the way **devolution** has provided the platform for Manchester to draw on rich local thinking and address ageing issues, including intergenerational connection. E.g. health is included in the GMCA’s devolution agreement with the government, and the city region’s local authorities have prioritised protecting community projects as spending cuts have been imposed by Whitehall.
- The GMCA’s **age-friendly strategy** receives as much leadership time and focus as its transport strategy.
- Age-friendly policies don’t necessarily have to come from GMCA – they could also come from its 10 councils agreeing on a policy together.
- On **social care**, there needs to be an emphasis on the **social capital** of the people being cared for – visiting older people should not just be about making a cup of tea, but empowering them, strengthening their connections, and enabling them to flourish in a person-centred way.
- **Older people helping in schools** works really well – older people are re-engaged in education, get out of their home and into the local community, while younger people can learn from their expertise and experience, and receive more individualised attention at school. The **Experience Corps programme** in the US was cited as a good example of creating opportunities for older people to help in schools.
- There are also examples from the US of schools with an entirely intergenerational focus. E.g. **Intergenerational School – Buckeye Campus**, in Cleveland, Ohio, challenges traditional age-segregated models of education and embraces students of all ages. While this is a more radical option than enhancing intergenerational connections within the UK’s existing education model, it is an example that can provide further insight into how young and old can be brought together in a school setting.
- One idea generated at a workshop in Stockport was a “**university care home**”, in which there is a bit of residential care for older people, but where the overriding aim is to create a hub for connecting with older people.
- Intergenerational connection requires a “**whole-society approach**”, including private-sector innovation, third sector agility, Local Authority not-for-profit risk taking, plus academic input.

### Session Three: GM Older People’s Network (OPN) and Youth Combined Authority (YCA)

- We stayed in the same room in Churchgate House for a discussion between representatives from the GM Older People’s Network (OPN) and Youth Combined Authority (YCA). This was also attended by Andy Burnham, Cllr Rishi Shori, Paul McGarry, and Jo Garsden.

- The **OPN**, established in October 2015, has given a voice to older people which they previously didn't have, has set up projects, and helped to tackle local issues such as youth misbehaviour and LGBT rights.
- The **YCA's** creation was more recent, having been launched in February 2018. It brings together 40 young people to advise GMCA on issues affecting young people – 20 from local authority youth councils and 20 from other youth organisations.
- Members of the OPN have engaged with younger people through “**reverse mentoring**” to help them look for work experience, and enhance their networks and social capital.
- One issue for both the OPN and YCA is **outreach** – ensuring that they are representative of all older people and younger people respectively, and not only the small number of people who turn up to meetings and engage in local issues. A member of the YCA suggested more could be done to reach out to schools and colleges.
- While the OPN and YCA have enjoyed success in promoting the views and priorities of their respective age groups, there has as of yet been little interaction between the two organisations.
- It was suggested by some members that this was partly down to logistics, and finding the right time for both groups to meet – e.g. young people are at college during the day, while older people don't want to go out too late at night. Enhancing opportunities for older people to help at local schools was suggested as one solution, drawing on the successful model of older people helping in hospitals.
- One area where there could be strong intergenerational collaboration is the YCA's plan for a “**curriculum for life**”, providing young people with a firm footing for adulthood. Older people can share their experience on a range of issues, from financial matters to health and relationships.
- There are particular areas where younger people can assist older people, too, for example in the **use of technology**.
- Plus there are key areas of concern for both younger and older people, including **mental health, depression, and loneliness**. Much research has shown older people to be among the most lonely in society, while there has been a sharp rise in mental health problems among teenagers.
- It also has a crucial role to play in enhancing **skills and opportunities for young people**. A recent survey in Manchester found that four in 10 young people don't have hope for their futures – a stark contrast to older generations, who could help to inspire younger generations.
- Related to this, a member of the YCA spoke about a recent **Youth Employment Commission** by Youth Focus North West, through which older people discussed life opportunities and skills with younger people.

- At the end of the meeting, it **was agreed that the entire OPN and YCA would meet on a date in the near future**, to start a closer and more collaborative working relationship. That way, ageism across different generations can be tackled, and common solutions to a range of local challenges can be pursued.

#### Session Four: Manchester Cares ‘Making Music’ Session in Levenshulme

- We met with **Alex Smith, CEO of The Cares Family**, at Churchgate House, and travelled together to a ‘making music’ session put on at Levenshulme Inspire Centre in partnership with Manchester Cares – part of The Cares Family alongside North London Cares and South London Cares.
- Manchester Cares fosters **social networks of young professionals and older neighbours** through a range of activities, providing opportunities for socialising and supporting one another in a rapidly changing city.
- At the ‘making music’ session older and younger people chatted and shared experiences while playing a range of musical instruments together and creating different melodies.
- Those in attendance spoke of the way music brings people of different ages and backgrounds together, creating a sense of unity and oneness through a common passion.
- Particular benefits for older people were also highlighted, including the way music stimulates the mind and enhances the cognitive capacity of those living with dementia, and the way it allows people to express emotions and thoughts even when they aren’t able to do so through words.

#### Next Steps

- The APPG on Social Integration will be following-up on its visit to Manchester by visiting various other areas in the UK to learn about intergenerational connection, including the West Midlands, south London, and Bath and Bristol.
- Together with the invaluable insights gained from the visit to Manchester, these trips will help inform the interim and final reports of the APPG’s inquiry into intergenerational connection.
- Jo Garsden of the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub mentioned the possibility of hosting the launch of one of the inquiry’s reports in Manchester, and this is an offer the APPG are keen to explore.