



## Platforms for Ageing Community Engagement–Exchange and Enterprise

### Update on Activities:

Welcome to the seventh and final issue of our newsletter. All regions involved in PLACE-EE continue to be affected by the COVID19 pandemic. While restrictions have differed across the regions all project activity has been online and virtual. We were excited to host a range of closing events in September and October. These events were organized to coincide with Positive Ageing month and with Limerick Life Long Learning Festival. They provided an opportunity to launch the Transnational Cultural Heritage Archive and work with partners to promote the project and feed in to important debates about older people and technology.

### Where are we now?

All outputs and deliverables are reaching completion. Promotion of the project and dissemination is ongoing with new outputs published. The networks and relationships developed are being maintained. Given the success of the project to date the partners are exploring longer term sustainability.

### This issue will:

Highlight the new promotional outputs and will summarise the closing events. Partners give their final reflections.

### Thank You:

The team at Ulster University thank our partners, participants and all who engaged with us on this exciting and timely project.

Participants in Limerick workshop 2019.



## Closing events and outputs.

### Podcast: Technology, Older People and EHealth

In this podcast Professor Gerry Leavey, Ulster University, explains how PLACE-EE worked and what older people said they need in relation to IT. Colette Leeson, Department of Finance Northern Ireland and Director - Digital NI Enabling Programme shares what government are doing to help improve older peoples skills so that they can access services. Sylvia McCarthy, Age Friendly Ireland describes their work and presents some of the programmes they have initiated with older people across Ireland. In this COVID time improving access to and confidence with IT will be essential to helping older people feel less isolated and ensuring they can access health and other services.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZqFjchARoA&t=17s>

### Webinar: Digital Archiving of Cultural Heritage—the involvement of older people and intergenerational approaches

The PLACE-EE Webinar, Digital Archiving of Cultural Heritage: The involvement of older people and intergenerational approaches took place on Friday 2 October 2020. Speakers include: project participants - Lilah Graham, Northern Ireland; Mar Sveinsson, Iceland; Mary Cronin, Ireland; and project worker Maria Pahlberg, Sweden. Guest speakers Vicki Titterington, Linking Generations NI and Lynsey Gillespie, Making the Future project, PRONI; Roger O'Sullivan Institute of Public Health Ireland gave the concluding comments.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YitpOF40700&t=11s>



## Transnational Cultural Heritage Archive - Now live!

The Archive was launched in September. A short video showing how the Archive was created and how to search it is now available. In the Archive you'll find videos, photographs, music, songs and stories and you can search by region, language and text. It is a unique collection of items across the four PLACE-EE regions and well worth a visit.

<https://place-ee.informatik.umu.se/>



## PLACE-EE Partners—Final reflections



On a cold, wet and windy morning back in 2017, we joined a group of strangers in Ulster University for our first transnational meeting of the partners on PLACE-EE. What was to develop over the next three years, we couldn't have foreseen. Connections were made, friendships were forged, lots of very enjoyable work was undertaken and the three years of the project just flew by. Lots of preparatory work took place to ensure that when we began engaging with the older people and teenage students in our demonstrator area, everything would flow smoothly.

There were highs. Like our first morning working on the Acorn Tablets that were gifted to the older participants or the evening we attended Desmond College to present engagement awards to two students who took part in the PLACE-EE project. There were lows too, although not many. The dreaded claims, and all the reams of paperwork that went with each one, Fiona's emails reminding us about our turn to lead on social media, or telling us our report for the newsletter was due, and the ensuing panic to get it done and to make it sound interesting.

In short, we loved every minute of the three-year process. We saw older people change and grow. Confidence levels rose, laughter was present at every workshop and event we held, and the students found new respect for the older participants, seeing their more worldly partners on the project in a new light. They learned about history, politics, social awareness and the great positives to be had from communicating with another generation.



It was a pleasure and a privilege to work with so many people with whom we will stay forever in our hearts. To our colleagues from the other countries, we send our very best wishes for all your future endeavours, to Gerry and the team in Ulster University, we thank you for your guidance, leadership and support over the three years.

*"We must distance right now, but we have never been closer."*

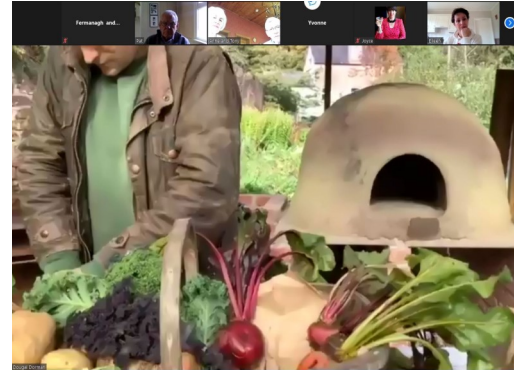




The Fermanagh and Omagh District Council PLACE-EE Project comes to a close with a flourish, a crescendo of learning, laughter, a mastering of technology, a lessening of loneliness and connecting with others. October saw the project provide

older citizens in the Fermanagh and Omagh catchment area with 13 online courses (135 training places). Courses ranged from Growing Winter Veg with Dougal at the Colebrook Estate Walled Garden to exploring the Northern Ireland Digital Film Archive with Ann, Mandala Art, Painting with Watercolours, Felting, Decoupage, lectures on local history, introductions to Genealogy and Storytelling.

Participants undertaking the art classes received packages containing all the materials needed to complete the course, while those participating in the 'Grow Your Own Veg' course received compost, seeds and propagating trays.



*Getting on zoom was quite tricky for me as I don't have Wi-Fi, I just have data on my phone. The first morning getting on took a long time, I'm sure Joanne was glad when we connected, however she was very patient with me, and I am thankful to her for introducing me to zoom. I have learned four new skills and I am going to miss my classes as they were great company. The equipment we received was second to none. **Gwen, Lisnaskea***

Over half of the participants received one to one training on Zoom, and it was wonderful to watch them returning to the courses each week without outside assistance. Many have now gone on to join other online courses, being run by other organisations, and as PLACE-EE comes to an end, it is gratifying to know that our participants will be less likely to face isolation due to their new found technical skills and confidence in this digital age.



FJARÐABYGGÐ

In 2016, Fjarðabyggð received an invitation to participate in an Arctic project on "smart aging communities". The municipality of Fjarðabyggð accepted the invitation and became a participant in the project now named PLACE-EE.

Fjarðabyggð is a small municipality of seven townships and 5000 individuals. Because of our small size we often looked with admiration (and a little envy) at what our partners in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Sweden could do when we were lacking the infrastructure or capacity to do the same. But the small size of our community and proximity of our organizations also has multiple benefits that worked in our favour.

An example of a project we are particularly proud of is the creation of summer jobs for young people, with emphasis on creative work with our senior citizens in the spirit of PLACE-EE.

We agree with Jóhanna, one of our elderly participants, when she says: *"Participating in PLACE-EE has been very beneficial for us and I think it would be for other older people. I think it should be offered in other municipalities"*. Our participants, both young and old, enjoyed the collaboration as shown in our video recordings of them describing their experience of the project. Those stories still give us goosebumps and justify the importance of continuing the PLACE-EE project in Fjarðabyggð.

We feel blessed to have made many new friends and colleagues in the other participating countries. We have benefitted from their experiences and their involvement in various related projects. We would like to thank everyone for their patience, support and for giving us new ideas and teaching us new ways of working and seeing.

Drawing from what we learned in our participation in PLACE-EE Fjardabyggd successfully applied for special funding from the Icelandic government, through the Ministry of Health, for supplementary projects in adult social work. COVID-19 means it is very important to re-start the social work of senior citizens, as most elderly has been in self-contained isolation. Fjardabyggd hopes that PLACE-EE and these additional projects will help reduce social isolation of senior citizens and increase their well-being.



**Skellefteå  
kommun**

At Skellefteå Kommun we have enjoyed participating in the PLACE- EE project. Over the course of the project we have found the value of an intergenerational approach in senior care.

Our seniors loved meeting with young people and it was fantastic to see the relationships that developed between them in the workshops. We had brilliant discussions about identity, place and history for the cultural archive. We learned the value of technology and our young people were incredibly patient when teaching our seniors how to use new apps and programs.

We were also able to provide our seniors with the opportunity to try virtual reality (VR). The experience was a fun way to bring the two groups together and a great way to show our seniors new technology.



The Covid-19 pandemic has cast a dark cloud over our work and made it harder as we can no longer bring young and older people together. Perhaps the silver lining is that issues around loneliness and isolation have been highlighted in the collective consciousness and more effort will be made to combat them through technology and intergenerational work.

Going forward, we hope to build on the Place EE project and incorporate aspects of the work into our senior care. We now offer VR systems in our care homes as an option for dementia care. We are trialling other innovative technologies and we are thinking about how we can use intergenerational approaches in the future.

For further information  
please contact us via:

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