



## Pilmeny Development Project

Intergenerational Trip to the  
Healthier Scotland Cooking Bus at  
Gardening Scotland Event  
Edinburgh  
Saturday 5th June 2010

# Evaluation Report



## Introduction

Pilmey Development Project (PDP) is a community development project based in Leith, Edinburgh since 1979. PDP primarily works with older people, young people and adults.

Following recent cooking pilot project with older men and intergenerational work, PDP was invited by Community Food and Health (Scotland) to participate in a cooking session in the Healthier Scotland Cooking Bus which was to take place as part of the Gardening Scotland show held in June 2010 at Ingleston Edinburgh. Community Food and Health (Scotland) provided help for us to hire community transport and to pay for a sessional youth worker. Focus on Food arranged for free entry to the Showground and of course to the Cooking Bus itself.

The Cooking bus is run by the 'Focus on Food' who aim to promote healthy eating and positive nutrition. It does this through practical teaching demonstrations in Cooking Buses which travel round the country providing classes for schools during term times and groups in local communities during school Holidays.

## Activity

PDP organised 10 local participants to take part: 4 older people, 3 younger people and 3 support workers.

A mini bus was organised from a local community transport project which was unfortunately 45 minutes late and caused a little panic as the session was booked for a specific time and there were fears the group would miss their slot!

Everyone was in good spirits beforehand, quite excited, but not sure exactly what to expect. The journey to the show ground was pleasant and quite lively, with everyone talking in anticipation as to what the cooking bus might be like and how the day's event might unfold.

One older person said *"I hope it's not going to be the cat sat on the mat"* and another added *"if it is, then we'll have to put them right!"*

The younger people asked the driver to put the radio on. The music choice caused some largely good natured banter, particularly from some of the older people who did not all appreciate this type of music!

The group arrived at the show ground just after 10.30am and went straight to the Cooking bus. This turned out to be a huge lorry, which folded out into a large well-equipped demonstration kitchen.

Everyone in the group was impressed and comments included:  
*"You could almost fit two of these mobile homes in here!"*

*“It’s got cookers, work tops, tables’ chairs, sinks, and it’s got the lot!!”*

The group all sat down round a large table inside the bus. The Cooking bus staff introduced themselves, spoke a bit about the Focus on food project and then, what the group would be cooking during the morning. They also said that the class was to be shown ‘live’ to the public outside on a large screen and that the bus was ‘miked-up’. This raised quite a laugh and comments included:

*“You’ll need to watch what your saying X, you’re on the camera!”*

*“It’s not me; it’s the children that’ll need to watch!!”*

One of the PDP support workers said: *‘In fact the atmosphere was so friendly, the teaching excellent and the recipes were so interesting and new to us all, the cameras were soon forgotten’*



The group prepared and cooked three recipes. Older people and younger people worked in small groups and showed each other what to do. They then sat round the table, discussed what they had just done together, and the tutor gave a demonstration of what they were to do next. This included:

- the correct way to prepare foods
- the correct way to chop vegetables
- points of nutrition
- Discussions on food in general.



There were discussions between recipe preparations. For example, the participants were taught the best way to chop vegetables and crack eggs and Spoke about the difference between a fruit and a vegetable. One older person remarked *“I never knew that the difference between a fruit and a vegetable was that fruit have seeds”*



The intergenerational approach enabled new skills to be learned and existing skills shared. For example, although the group at first automatically divided themselves in their peer groups, some of the older adults tended to grasp the techniques and finish the tasks more quickly, but they then went to work with the younger ones and help them.

*“That’s not quite right, when you’re chopping vegetables it’s better to arch your fingers over the front of the knife and hold the handle in your other hand like this. Bring the handle down like this. It might be slow at first but you’ll not cut your fingers and you’ll get faster”. (Older person helping two younger people)*

The session finished at around 12.40 pm.

By that time the group had each made a meal of savoury muffins, with kaleidoscope couscous and a rhubarb twist!



## Evaluation

The activity was evaluated informally through discussion and via a structured Session Evaluation form.

## Overview of the activity

This was rated 1 – very poor to 5 very good. A summary of the average scores is as follows:

	Rating	Comments
Transport	4	'bus 1 hour late!'
Venue	5	'cooking bus was great!'
Venue staff	5	'great', 'friendly', 'helpful'
Length of time	5	'fast moving', 'lots to do!'
Engagement of young & older people	5	'everyone really enjoyed'
Chances to repeat activity	5	'everyone is keen to do it again' young people want it to visit their school!

## Best Points from the Activity

- *'cooking three different things!'*
- *Good interaction with older folk and younger helping each other'*
- *'good organisation from the Cooking bus staff'*

## Areas for improvement

- Better communication with the community transport provider to tell us they will be late or if there is a problem.

## Informal comments included:

- *'The participation of young people and older people was very good – everyone took part and really enjoyed it' (support worker)*
- *'Fantastic – would love to do it again!'* (young person)
- *'I had a really good time'* (young person)
- *'loved it!!!'* (young person)
- *'fantastic event – everyone enjoyed the day lots!!!'* (young people)
- *'it was an enjoyable and informative day'* (older person)
- *It was a positive and very enjoyable piece of intergenerational work, which demonstrated that older and younger people can learn new skills and share old ones'* (support worker)
- The session overall was taught in a structured, yet a semi-informal way, which was appreciated by all ages and positively commented upon in their evaluations.  
*'The staff on the cooking bus were excellent'*  
*"We all learned from today. The women were not patronizing to anyone of any age.*  
*'It was not the cat sat on the mat!'*

All of the participants enjoyed the day, *'although the younger ones were beginning to get a little restless towards the end - perhaps this was the attraction of the bouncy castle they were looking forward to going on after the session!'* (support worker)

However perhaps this enjoyment can best be exemplified by the following quotes:

*"we've told the women that if they come back next year to get us back for another class, or maybe two!!"*

*"you've to go down and get an application pack to get the bus to come to our group. Ask Anne to get the bus to Leith!!!!"*

## **What has been learned?**

- We learned that resources are needed to do this type of work – but with a little financial, good planning/networking goodwill and 'help in kind' – it is possible to get older and younger people together in really worthwhile intergenerational activity.
- How much fun this type of activity can be!
- To ensure community transport provider communicates with us if there are problems picking up groups.
- Older and young people instinctively formed groups along peer lines initially. In future, we will match/pair up an older person with a younger person from the outset to ensure a real intergenerational interaction occurs from the beginning of a session or activity.
- One older man came in to the project the following week to tell us he learned what a smoothie was – 'I have seen them on the supermarket shelves – but never realised what it was, that it had fruit in it – or that they tasted so good!' We learned it is often the simple things that you don't think about – so we now plan to have some smoothie making intergenerational sessions!!
- The Cooking bus is great for all ages and we should try to organise it to come to Leith for a few days to develop intergenerational activity around healthy eating and cooking!!



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