



# Intergenerational working: cooking up a storm

The latest of *Shetland Life's* series of features on projects that bridge the generation gap. Thanks to LAURA WHITTALL for passing on the information which was written by those involved in taking a school community cafe into a care home in Whalsay.

**I**n June 2017, Whalsay school secondary department established a community cafe, opening the doors and welcoming the community into the school.

It was then decided to further develop the pupils' skill set for life, learning and work, by taking the cafe into Fernlea Care Centre, enabling a wider audience to appreciate the vital role which this organisation plays within the community, in a relaxed and familiar way.

On Thursday 11th October, we held our cafe upstairs in Fernlea from 2-4pm. Pupils prepared a selection of delicious baked goods during their home economics lessons, as well as setting up and serving customers at the cafe. We catered for everyone, with gluten free and vegan items available, as well as fresh fruit to encourage healthy eating.

The cafe is giving pupils the opportunity to showcase food preparation skills learned within their home economics curriculum and build on key skills including literacy, numeracy, working with others, enterprise, ICT, hygiene and safety.

Pupils are able to implement their knowledge of Scottish dietary goals and healthy eating, nutrition, food intolerances and dietary diseases when choosing and preparing food items for the cafe.

This has encouraged interesting discussion in home economics lessons. The profile of home economics within the school curriculum has been highlighted and pupils are very keen to volunteer help and ideas.

We received further funding from

Education Scotland, through their Food for Thought initiative, which meant that we could hire the community minibus to make it easier for folk to get to the cafe as parking can be a bit tricky.

Unfortunately, this wasn't well used and there was gridlock outside Fernlea for most of the afternoon! Hopefully, people will remember about that next time and make more use of the bus service.

Pupils who have been involved in the cafe have said they now feel more confident when working with and talking to other people. They enthusiastically volunteered to help at Fernlea.

**Cara (S2)** said: "I really enjoy cooking and working for the community cafe and I really enjoyed when we held the cafe at Fernlea because we could speak to the old people and they loved having all the kids in."

"Before the cafe, we always baked for it, and that's a good experience as it helps us with our home economics too."

"I was clearing tables and also serving tea and coffee which I enjoyed because I love socialising with people. I felt very professional because we used pen and paper to take down orders which was fun."

**Maria (S4)** said: "I liked helping at the cafe in Fernlea because it's fun to do something out of school."

**Nina (S2)** said: "I learned a lot about communication and especially liked meeting people at the front door and welcoming them to our Fernlea cafe."

"I like speaking to the old people and also the workers."

**Magnus (S2)** kept everyone entertained with a medley of fiddle tunes all afternoon.

Laura Whittall from the Shetland Dementia Resource Centre in Lerwick has supported all the cafes and she has an excellent rapport with pupils, staff and community members and a very positive outlook, which rubs off on us all.

She assists pupils with set-up, serving tea and coffee and tidying up at the end. She has now trained all pupils in the first and second year in the Dementia Friends Scotland scheme during a PSE lesson.

By providing pupils, their parents and other community members with a positive focus for visiting our local care centre to attend the cafe, we hope that they will become more familiar with the staff and building so that if they have to visit relatives in the future, or have time to volunteer, they will feel more comfortable and confident.

The local care centre is one of the largest employers on our island, offering a variety of jobs and levels of responsibility, and pupils will feel more able to consider work experience placements in the care sector and senior pupils may be encouraged to apply for a Foundation Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care, as an option on S5 and S6.

The cafe was very well supported by our community and we raised £275 through donations for the Fernlea Hansel Fund. 