



Alternative Futures

Our strategic plan

2013 – 2016

*"We are becoming dangerously used to speaking and thinking of an ageing population as a problem, a burden on public purse and private resources alike... As things stand, **more than half the over 60 population** are involved in some sort of formal and structured **voluntary** work; over half of the population believes that this is part of what they should aspire to in later life, and a third are willing to take part in informal volunteering. These facts are of basic importance. It means, quite simply, **that a majority of the older population are ready to do what they can, unpaid, to support the fabric of society**; they are doing exactly what we expect responsible citizens to do."*

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams

*House of Lords Debate on 'The place and contribution of older people in society'
(14 December 2012)*



1. Executive Summary

We are:

A Highland-wide network of local voices, joined to represent the interests of the 77,000 people of the Highlands who are over 55. .

We aspire to be independent, well-informed and therefore credible; and above all, to truly empower the voices of senior citizens across Highland.

Senior Citizens are:

In the majority, independent and active, in a family setting, until at least their mid-seventies. For those over 65, almost half volunteer; one in ten work; and nine-tenths require no long-term care. Many more seniors have a significant caring role, than are cared-for by the state.

We value the ability of senior citizens to:

Build communities that care; safeguard their human rights through collective advocacy of and evidence from local experiences; and fulfil their aspirations and enhance their well-being.

We act to:

1. Ensure that our voice is heard and impacts decisions that affect us, by:
Bringing together the voices of its membership; strengthening relationships with public resource-holders; informing decisions at key Committees; and
Continuously promoting and encouraging the concept of the "user as commissioner" at all levels of decision making.

2. Collectively advocate for vulnerable older adults to ensure their human rights are respected, by:
Promoting the power of human rights to challenge decisions and practices; promoting the Protection of Vulnerable Adults legislation and policies; raising issues and advocating solutions using a human rights approach; and
Where necessary, using the Protection of Vulnerable Adults legislation for individual cases.

3. Inform, support and achieve positive action for change by:
Gathering evidence for change, from information from its members; HSCN's Action Research programme; and robust research from other bodies, particularly focussing on user experience;



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Providing proposed action for change, based on evidence.

4. Celebrate our contribution to communities by:

Publicising activities and services by senior citizens in our newsletters and website; and encouraging senior citizens to provide information on the activities and services they are undertaking for the community.

5. Share good practice in enabling well-being by:

Highlighting case studies of good practice; and assisting in developing active research and social accounting for such projects, to demonstrate their benefits to fund holders.

For members, we seek to:

Develop as a peer-support network, encouraging members to help other members with issues; work through a physical and virtual network of local forums, where possible working through existing local forums; and encourage members to come together annually, to agree the direction and management of the organisation.

With partners, we seek to:

Achieve our and partner objectives by making ourselves bigger; work together on joint awareness-raising and campaigns; and share information and resources for mutual benefit.

With our stakeholders, we seek to:

Ensure that the older person is at the centre of decision making about public resources; build relationships and work with our members and partners to inform decision making at every level; and inform policy makers and public resource-holders to act to help seniors improve their well-being;

"nothing about us, without us"

Our resources:

Our most important resource is ourselves. We are an increasing part of the 77,000 people over 55 in Highland (one-third of the population), and we commit skills, experience, and time to achieving our aims.

We continuously seek other impartial sources of funding to carry out our work.



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Our campaigns are:

Getting Care Right

To improve Highland Senior Citizens' wellbeing through improved choice, access, quality, and timeliness of provision;

To redefine "preventative care" from keeping people out of hospital, to keeping well, and reducing our chances of needing any form of care.

Making Ends Meet

To raise awareness of the hidden issue of poverty in later life;

To impact policy and procedure decisions which discriminate against poorer senior citizens.

See, Hear, Now!

To ensure that the impact of loneliness is documented and included in all decisions on services and their procurement;

To increase long-term, consistent funding for user-commissioned provision that reduces loneliness.

We measure success by asking:

What have we done to improve the wellbeing of Senior Citizens in Highland, today?

Is HSCN geographically and socially representative of Senior Citizens in Highland?

Does HSCN represent and empower all of its members' views?

Is HSCN having a beneficial impact on decisions?

Campaigns

Is awareness of the human rights of vulnerable senior citizens, increasing?

Is age-related poverty, increasingly represented in the media, in key committees and reports?

Is loneliness, included in more decisions regarding services for senior citizens?

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