



Scottish Older People's Assembly
Scottish Charity Number SCIO 46520

Annual Report

For the Year ended 30 June 2017

Trustees Annual Report

For the year ended 30 June 2017

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with a financial statement for the year ended 30 June 2017.

Reference and Administrative Information

Scottish Older People's Assembly SCIO

Charity No 46520

Address

Hayweight House, 4th Floor

23 Lauriston Street, Edinburgh

EH3 9DQ

Current Trustees

Tom Berney Chair - U3A Scotland

Alan Sidaway Vice Chair - National Pensioners Convention

Diana Findlay Treasurer- Age Scotland and Scottish Borders Seniors Networking Forum

Betty Milton - City for All Ages, Edinburgh

Donald MacLeod - Highland Senior Citizens Network

Bill McDonald - Renfrewshire Seniors Forums

Rob Snodgrass - Grey Matters, Helensburgh

Eileen Wallace - Older People's Reference Group Stirling

John White – Dumfries and Galloway Seniors Forum

Other Members contributing to the Board

Mary Benson - West Lothian Senior People's Forum

Donald Bulloch - Seniors Together, East Kilbride

Katherine Burrows & Nicky Stones - LGBT Age

Alison Clyde- Generations Working Together

Ian Galloway - Scottish Council on Deafness and North Lanarkshire Deaf Club

Mike Lynch - Orkney Voices

Bashir Malik - Interfaith Association Scotland and Edinburgh

Sandra McGregor – Make it Happen Falkirk

Jimmy Miller – GMB Retired Members

Archie Noone - Alzheimers Scotland Dementia Working Group

Matt Hamilton & Jim McBrierty – Retired Police Officers Association Scotland

John Parkhill - Learning in Later Life Students' Association, University of Strathclyde

Alan Spinks - National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP)

Rohini Sharma Joshi - Trust Housing Association (Equality Scotland)

Christine Wilson - Human Development Scotland

Sandra Wilson – RNIB

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Charity is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (a SCIO). It was registered in its current legal form on 29 April 2016. The Scottish Older People's Assembly was delivered by the City of Edinburgh Council from 2011 until March 31 2016 and changed its form to become a SCIO on 29 April 2016. The trustees are its members and together with other members form the Board.

Appointment of trustees

The Board, which normally meets every two months are the charity trustees and full members. Membership of the Board is open to representatives of organisations involved in any aspect of promoting the voice and experience of older people which carries voting rights. Associate membership is open to other bodies (whether public sector or private sector) and to individuals which gives the right to attend members' meetings, but without voting rights.

Trustees were elected during the formation of the SCIO in April 2016. There must be a minimum of eight and a maximum of 18 trustees.

Objectives and activities

Charitable purpose

To advance human rights and the interests of older people, the equality and diversity of older people and of citizenship and community development for older people in Scotland, SOPA will influence legislation, policies and services applying to older people and organise a national assembly of older people per annum.

Activities

The charity prepared for delivery of its national Assembly by consulting over 900 older adults in many different ways to enable them to identify issues that are of most concern, and to devise and describe ways of addressing these issues. Conversations were held in 21

meetings around Scotland and one in Northern Ireland. The Scottish meetings included Aberdeen; Helensburgh; Galashiels; Saltcoats; Campbeltown; Tranent; Dumfries; Orkney; Kirkwall, Dalkeith, Motherwell - Lanarkshire Deaf Club Meeting, Age In Mind – Edinburgh; Seniors Together – Hamilton; Unison Welfare Conference – Clydebank; Visibility Glasgow; Scottish Council on Deafness; National Federation of Occupational Pensioners (NFOP); Edinburgh Macular Society; NI Commissioner for Older People – Belfast; WASPI Meeting; Soroptimist International, Edinburgh and with the Association of Teachers of Lip Reading, Perth.

The Westminster reception was hosted by Mhairi Black MP and dealt with the anomalies and negative effects within the current pension system, particularly those linked to WASPI. Christine Graham MSP hosted the Scottish Parliament reception that celebrated older people's contribution to democracy and how discrimination towards the older LGBTi community disadvantages them. Trading Standards Scotland in Partnership with SOPA delivered a third reception hosted by Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP. This event singled out some of the issues raised during the national Assembly relating to Scotland's National Outcome - "We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger". Our Assembly was held in the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament in November 2016 and was hosted by the Presiding Officer. Keynote speeches were given by the Minister for Social Security, the Chairperson of SOPA and 13 older people who represented member organisations. The afternoon session dealt with preventative issues and was hosted by Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP. 160 delegates attended the Assembly involving 67 different organisations from a wide range of equality groups. The majority were from the Central Belt, but Dumfries, Grampian, Orkney and West of Scotland were represented. We delivered a report on the Assembly and presented it to the Scottish Government. See our December newsletter for details. <http://www.scotopa.org.uk/2016assembly.asp> Efficient maintenance of our website and social media which includes all of our events and activities has doubled and boosted reaches and engagement with older people and stakeholders over the internet.

Achievements and Performance

Our activities have;- increased the number (7) of member organisations joining SOPA and successfully involved a number of older representatives who share protected characteristics; delivered successfully another well-received national Assembly in the Scottish Parliament Debating Chamber in which 160 older people from throughout Scotland participated; delivered two Parliamentary Receptions in the Scottish Parliament and one at Westminster enabling direct contact between older people and politicians; produced four newsletters and using our website and social media to promulgate progress on issues affecting older people, reaching several thousand older people by these means; providing the secretariat for three Older People, Age and Ageing Cross Party Group meetings and one joint meeting with the Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing and Mental Health; delivered a monthly article on older people's concerns for the 'National' newspaper, and enabled our members to contribute to many Scottish Government national policy development groups and Holyrood events.

Our strength is based on the participation of our 25 and growing member organisations who, in turn, represent in excess of 36,000 people. We are pleased that the effectiveness of our work and the outcomes we achieved have been recognised in the public and political arena. For example, Holyrood Magazine, which organises conferences, now routinely invites older people from SOPA to participate, when older people's issues are being discussed. Most recently four representatives of our membership organisations formed the panel of their conference on isolation and loneliness, and effectively recounted the experience of their members. When Archie Noone, SOPA and Dementia Working Group representative and the SOPA chair were invited to co-chair the Holyrood conference on "Supporting an Ageing Workforce" Archie spoke movingly about his personal experience of dementia and demonstrated that it does not prevent someone from making a positive contribution to society by good humouredly chairing a conference. In addition, our representatives from the Alzheimer's Scotland Dementia Working Group and from the LGBTi Age project feature in a short film produced by the Care Inspectorate to illustrate the new care standards.

As a result of Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP chairing the afternoon session of the Assembly, he requested that SOPA organise a reception in the Scottish Parliament. This was delivered in partnership with Trading Standards Scotland to highlight the importance of creating safer communities. Mr Cole-Hamilton said: "This was one of the most enjoyable events I've had the pleasure to host. I think we should make it an annual event. What do you say?!"

A post-assembly letter to Glenda Watt from Jean Freeman MSP, Minister for Social Security stated "I congratulate you and your colleagues on what you have accomplished during the past year to advance equality for older people and for arranging such a successful event."

Matters of concern raised by older people at the 2016 Assembly are listed below. During the year these issues and matters of concern have been dealt with by the Scottish Government in policy development working groups to which SOPA members attended.

Cost of living

Cost of living and supermarket pricing policy is difficult for many older people and although best prices are on line this is not acceptable or available to many older people. We are now exploring how we can work with the Retail Management of B&Q.

Care

Uncertainty of recruitment and retention of nurses from the EU. The EU working time directive for care staff is ignored as many care staff should not but do work split shifts.

Ensure older people have access to full range of mental health services

Scrutinise work of Integrated Joint Boards and engagement with older people

Eye care and visual support to be readily available to older people

Deal with the negative long-term effects of anti-psychotic medication

Address the variety of costs for personal alarm systems in different areas

Cuts in home care services and recruitment and retention failures of NHS personnel are a concern

Pensions

Pension anomalies within the system exist and many people are discriminated against and some ex-service personnel are not entitled to a pension

Support and Advice

People appreciate easily accessible local services

Home owners and private landlords require information on benefits

Prevention

Doctors recommend exercise and use of local sports centres but costs are prohibitive

Publicity is required on prevention of falls

Tackle the fear of crime

Train services should have trouble shooters

Citizenship and Age

Ensure good use of older people's experience and forums for older people should welcome people from African and other communities

Value and support grandparents and continue to tackle age discrimination

SOPA attended a sitting of the Scottish Youth Parliament in Edinburgh on 25 March 2017 where we discussed our continuing relationship, our common purpose in tackling discrimination against younger and older people and our wish to work together.

Financial review

The Scottish Government has provided our only source of funding from its Equality Funds. However, we successfully applied to the Big Lottery for £10k which will be utilised from 1 July 2017.

Reserves policy

The trustee's and members policy are to ensure proper accounting records are kept in accordance with all applicable statutory requirements. As the trustees are mindful to retain three months' worth of normal running costs in order to meet commitments and to cover any unexpected expenditure they will work to achieve this during the forthcoming year.

Plans for the future

The trustees and members intend to continue to develop the charity and its activities by advancing a fund-raising strategy in the forthcoming year.

Thanks

Sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to Glenda Watt, Avril Crossley, Rosa Ardia and all volunteers and partner organisations who have contributed to SOPA's development and activities.

Tom Berney



Scottish Older People's Assembly Chair

15 September 2017