

# Scottish Older People's Assembly Newsletter



The Scottish Older People's Assembly is a voice for older people across Scotland

**Aug 2022**

Welcome to the Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) newsletter, please feel free to pass the Newsletter on to others! Or if you would like to be added to the mailing list contact [karen@scotopa.org.uk](mailto:karen@scotopa.org.uk)

## SOPA NEWS

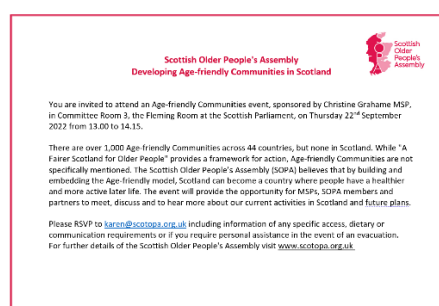
Our Co-ordinator Caroline Clark has recently left SOPA and is now working for the Eric Liddell Centre in a new and exciting role. We would like to thank Caroline and wish her well. SOPA have appointed an Interim Co-ordinator, Karen Moore through Bruce Tait Associates to help us until we can find a permanent new Lead Officer. The post will be being advertised soon and will be four days a week. If there is any interest from our Membership, please contact Karen in the first instance for a copy of the Role Description on [karen@scotopa.org.uk](mailto:karen@scotopa.org.uk)



## SOPA EVENTS

### SOPA Reception

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> September @ 1pm the SOPA Trustees are delighted to be hosting a Reception at the Scottish Parliament which is kindly sponsored by Christine Grahame, MSP. The SOPA Reception this year will focus on our work around Age Friendly Communities. We will share learning from across the UK and update attendees on SOPA's activities in developing Age Friendly Communities in Scotland. We hope to see you there.



### SOPA Assembly

This year SOPA is looking forward to welcoming all our Members, Associate Members and Guests to the Perth Concert Hall at 10.30am on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October for an inspiring and stimulating day. We are just in the process of finalising the programme, so watch your inbox for an invite very soon 😊



SOPA staff and Trustees at the end of February 22, held a series of four action group sessions which identified key actions to be taken forward. At the Assembly this year we would like as part of a Workshop to explore these a little further with our Membership. We would like your views on the following:

### Our Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

SOPA's Strategic Aims have been agreed as follows:

- To facilitate and empower older people to have their voices heard
- To influence policy and practice on issues relating to older people, age and ageing.

These aims link closely and build on SOPA's mission, objectives and the outcomes we are funded to deliver against. You can find out more on the SOPA website at:

<http://www.scotopa.org.uk/aboutus.asp>

### Priorities for the next year -we would like your views on:

It has been agreed that SOPA will focus on the following areas of work over the next 6 months, building towards our Assembly in October 2022.

**Age-friendly Communities** – see further information below. This work links closely with the **Older People's Champions** campaign and we will continue to support a network of Champions once positions are confirmed following the recent local government elections.

**Health and Wellbeing** - key areas where SOPA can influence policy will be a focus for the Health and Wellbeing sub-group. Our current priority is contributing to the consultation on the draft Strategy for Health and Social Care for Older People (see below for more information).

### Membership

SOPA has over 60 members including community groups, national campaigns and organisations, equality and minority groups and lifelong learning associations along with individual members. The combined reach of our members is estimated to be 40,000 older people across Scotland. We rely on the active participation of members to help us to represent a diverse range of views from older people from across the country.

Following a review of our members and our membership details, we have identified gaps in our current membership both in terms of diversity of representation and geographic areas. We will approach organisations that we hope may address some of these gaps. If you know of any organisations or individuals who might provide a positive contribution to SOPA, please direct them to our website or the contact details at the bottom of the newsletter

<http://www.scotopa.org.uk/becomeamember.asp>

The screenshot shows a webpage titled "The Scottish Older People's Assembly MEMBERSHIP DETAILS FOR ORGANISATIONS". It includes a section "OUR MISSION" stating the assembly's goal to give a strong voice to older people. Below this is "DOES YOUR ORGANISATION WORK WITH OLDER PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND?", which lists benefits of membership such as participation in meetings, influence on policy, and access to a network. It also includes a "MEMBER BENEFITS" section and contact information for the Scottish Older People's Assembly, including a website and a phone number. The page features a red and white color scheme with images of older people.

## Age-friendly Communities

Developing local and national networks and structures has been the focus for the Age-friendly Communities work to date. A multi-disciplinary Steering Group chaired by SOPA Trustee, Catriona Mason, has met regularly. The meeting in September will further develop a shared understanding of Age-friendly Communities in practice.

IncludeAge is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and aims to develop knowledge of the community spaces and places (local and virtual) that older people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and those who identify as LGBT+ use in their everyday lives. This will examine how they experience and navigate community inclusion and exclusion in order to better inform cross cutting inclusionary processes at individual, social, organisational and community levels. The project will work with people with lived experience and other key stakeholders to strategize on reducing inequalities in social and community participation for under-represented and diverse older people and to translate insights into recommendations for government policy and organisational practice.

Judith is the lead for this project which is co-led by Dr Mei Lan Fang (both from the School of Health Sciences at the University of Dundee) and we will be working with academics from the Universities of Wolverhampton, Hertfordshire and Edinburgh, alongside local practitioners and national advocates from Sleeping Giants, Dudley Voices for Choice, the National Development Team for Inclusion, the Intergenerational National Network, the Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities, Out of the Box, Opening Doors and REGARD.

Judith Sixsmith at Dundee University, is one of the Members of the Age-Friendly Steering Group and this new piece of research begins on the 5<sup>th</sup> September. If you would like more information, initially please contact Sheena Fontana [sheena@scotopa.org.uk](mailto:sheena@scotopa.org.uk)

Sheena Fontana, who is leading the work for SOPA on Age Friendly Communities, led a workshop at the [SCVO Gathering](#) on developing Age-friendly Communities in Scotland and has developed a flier to support this work and to promote Age-friendly Communities more widely.

SOPA as an affiliate of the [UK Network of Age-friendly Communities](#) is working in partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better to support communities to become more age-friendly and to support places in Scotland to join the UK network. There are already four areas in Scotland who are interested in joining the UK network, and Sheena is supporting them on this journey and developing learning and case studies to reflect the Scottish

context. For updates and more information see [scotopa.org.uk/age-friendlycommunities.asp](https://scotopa.org.uk/age-friendlycommunities.asp)

## Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People

SOPA held an online consultation session on the Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People on 17<sup>th</sup> May. Louise Scott from the Scottish Government's Older People's Health Team led the session, which was an opportunity to hear people's views on what's important for the future of health and social care. Key points discussed included preventative health and social care, including accessible housing; Age-friendly Communities; older people who are carers; and reaching minority ethnic communities. SOPA submitted a response to the Health & Social Care Strategy which closed in June 22.

## Older People's Champions – campaign update

Prior to the recent local government elections, 20 local authorities had an Older People's Champion in place, with a commitment from Councils to appoint after the elections.

Currently there are 16 Older People Champion's in place after the Elections. SOPA will continue to work in partnership with Age Scotland to support the network of Champions and have organised a date for a meeting of the Champions which is known as a Gathering – this is being held on 28 September at 11am – it is an online meeting.

If your area does not yet have an Older People's Champion, SOPA and Age Scotland can provide resources and support that can help persuade Councils to consider the role, including:

- [a draft Role Description](#)
- [a template letter](#) to contact your Council Leader
- the opportunity for interested Councillors to be put in touch with an existing Older People's Champion for a discussion about the role
- examples of successful Council motions from other areas
- more information about the campaign and why we believe the role is essential.

For further information visit Age Scotland's campaign pages at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/our-impact/campaigns/older-peoples-champions/> or contact [info@scotopa.org.uk](mailto:info@scotopa.org.uk)



## Save the Date! Scottish Older People's Assembly – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022

We are looking forward to hosting an Assembly later this year and we are making plans for an in-person event in Perth at the Perth Concert Hall on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Please save the date and further information will follow.

## SOPA TRUSTEES

SOPA is looking for new Trustees to join its Board. From November 2022 we will have five vacancies on our Board and would welcome new applications for new Board Members from our Membership or from outside. We would be very interested if you have skills or knowledge in Charity Finance, Third Sector Governance, PR, social media and Communications, Older People Issues and Legal experience.

For a Board Member Profile please contact Karen at [karen@scotopa.org.uk](mailto:karen@scotopa.org.uk) or for an informal discussion you can also contact our Chair, [diana.findley@btinternet.com](mailto:diana.findley@btinternet.com)

## New members

We welcome the following new members to SOPA and look forward to working with them:

- Cyrenians
- Robin Woodburn
- People Know How

We want our membership to be as representative and active as possible. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in becoming a member of SOPA, you can find out more on our website <http://www.scotopa.org.uk/becomeamember.asp>

## News from SOPA Member Organisations and Other External Organisations

### Robin Woodburn

I am campaigning for a better social-care system, with a focus on care-homes for older people. I was drawn to this after my experience looking after three elderly relatives, an aunt and my parents-in-law. I found that, while medical care was generally very good, support for social care was lacking. My aunt died aged 93, having finally had help at home for the very last week of her life. My parents-in-law couldn't get the help they needed, but fortunately for them had sufficient money for private care at home. Even then, getting care was very difficult. Among the excellent care-staff who looked after them, one moved to Fife because she could not afford to live in Edinburgh. Another wonderful woman left the care service altogether because, at a time of shortage of staff, she could not get enough hours to make a living. When my in-laws' live-in carer fell ill and had to give up, we could not find a replacement, and my in-laws moved into a private care home. This is, fortunately, a very good home, but it was a fluke we found it.

Since then, we have had many deaths of older people in care homes during the covid crisis, including the Home Farm, Portree, debacle. Now, with Brexit, care homes have trouble recruiting, and can lose staff to better-paid jobs in the NHS and elsewhere. During this time, most care staff have worked heroically, but remain badly paid. Their work and skills are largely uncelebrated.

I came across SOPA when looking for information, and Caroline Clark, at that time Co-ordinator, suggested I should join. I look forward to working with all of you who want to influence the place of older people in our society.

The Scottish Government has, to their credit, set in motion the move to a national care service, but improvements are slow in coming. I took part in the government consultations in autumn 2021 but was disappointed at the very low participation rates. To my astonishment, care staff -- the ones who know most about providing care in difficult circumstances -- are not expected to have views on what a good care service would look like, and nobody troubles to ask them. I am attempting to change that. I have a perhaps impossible dream that an alliance of care staff, care-home residents and their relatives could change all this for the better. If you would like to know more about what I'm doing, or you have advice to give me, you can contact me at [robin.woodburn@startmail.com](mailto:robin.woodburn@startmail.com)

## Cyrenians

Older People Active Lives (OPAL) service supports older people to increase their independence and well-being across the West Lothian area. We support those aged 60+, connecting them to our team of dedicated volunteers who offer encouragement, companionship and assistance. We offer a variety of options to those looking to re-engage with social, leisure and community activities.



Our *One-to-One* service accepts self-referrals and referrals from healthcare professionals. We match each referral to a volunteer who then supports the individual to re-connect with their community. This can include home visits, telephone conversations, outings to local cafés and walks, or supporting an individual in engaging with a local community group.

Our *Groups* are spread throughout the whole of West Lothian with a mixture of in-person and online meetings. With a current grand total of 16 groups we offer people the opportunity to meet others in their community and take part in activities such as singing, quizzes, cooking, local walks, a book club and much more!

For those people who are unable to, or prefer not to, attend a group in person or have a volunteer visit, we offer remote support through regular online groups, telephone befriending and monthly activity packs sent by post.



Our service is only possible through the help of our dedicated, reliable, and resilient volunteers. Without them, we would not be able to help those who truly need it!

## People Know How

### Who are we?

People Know How is a Scottish social innovation charity founded in 2013 on the principle that people know how to identify their needs and the solutions that will help them fulfil their potential and solve social issues. People often don't realise that they know how, and that's where we come in – unlocking ideas for a better future, today. We call this social innovation.



Our main offices are in Edinburgh, Scotland and we work primarily in Edinburgh and East Lothian, with all parts of the community including children, young people, families, adults and the elderly. Our team is incredibly international, receiving volunteers, interns and placement students (our VIPs) from all over the world.

We also collaborate and work in partnership with a large body of partners and stakeholders in running our projects and services and driving social change.

### What do we do?

People Know How aims to achieve three main outcomes:

- Ensure positive school transitions for all children and young people
- Eliminate data poverty through connectivity for all
- Establish social innovation in the public consciousness

## MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit University of Glasgow

The PACES study aims to understand more about the different factors that influence physical activity and social connections as people get older. They are currently looking for people aged 55-75 who

live in Renfrewshire or South Lanarkshire to take part in interviews about their experiences of physical activity and social connections following a major life change. The flier below explains how you can participate.

The PACES Study

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**Are you aged 55-75 and living in South Lanarkshire or Renfrewshire?**

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**We are looking for volunteers to talk to us about their experience of physical activity and social connections after a recent life change:**


- Retirement
- Loss of a family member/friend
- Moving to a new area
- Becoming a carer

Participants will take part in an interview with a researcher lasting around 60-90 mins and will receive a £20 gift voucher for taking part.

If you are interested in taking part or would like more information please visit our study webpage [www.gla.ac.uk/paces](http://www.gla.ac.uk/paces) or contact:  
email: [paces@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:paces@glasgow.ac.uk) freephone: 0800 389 2129

MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit



## Unforgotten Forces

SOPA is a partner in The Unforgotten Forces Consortium and the UF are delighted to announce that they will be hosting an Autumn Gathering on the **1<sup>st</sup> of November 2022**. Registration is open via Eventbrite and information is on the flier below:



**UNFORGOTTEN FORCES**  
Supporting Scotland's Older Veterans



Love later life

# Autumn Gathering

DATE ▶ 1st November 2022

TIME ▶ 10:00am-3:30pm

VENUE ▶ TBC

To register please visit:  
<https://UFAutumnGathering.eventbrite.co.uk>





## **The Older People's Strategic Action Forum**

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/older-peoples-strategic-action-forum/>

The Older People's Strategic Action Forum (OPSAF) was set up to ensure that the views of older people, those that support them, and their representative groups are heard. SOPA is a member of the forum and the next meeting is 27 October 2022.

The forum is chaired by the Minister for Equalities and Older People, Ms Christina McKelvie.

### Overall aims of the Forum

- To provide a forum for dialogue between the Scottish Government and older people and their representative organisations (older people's organisations) on the range of issues facing older people, assisting Scottish Government to develop and implement effective solutions.
- To enable Scottish Government and older people's organisations to work together to support communities to take action to address issues of importance to older people.

The agenda will be shaped by the experience and views of older people, with issues given substantive consideration and a clear focus on what action can be taken to address those.

The direct views of older people, gathered through representative structures will clearly be crucial. This will be supplemented by the views of those working with older people and statistical and other evidence.

## Consultation – Planning with People

**‘Planning with People’** (PwP) is published jointly by Scottish Government and COSLA, in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland – Community Engagement and The Care Inspectorate. An online copy of the guidance is available by clicking [here](#)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/planning-people/documents/>

We would like to engage with Scotland’s older people community to ensure that they have the opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions on health and social care service change/ design, hence why we would like to work with the SOPA Membership.

We have produced a questionnaire which is ready for online circulation. The questionnaire (or alternative method) will invite participants to offer feedback on HSC engagement, which in turn will help to develop services that are effective, safe, value for money and meet individuals’ needs.

Listening to the views of people who use health and social care services, and actively involving them throughout the process of planning care delivery, is a key improvement recommendation of the of the 'Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland' ([The Feeley Report](#)). Scottish Government and COSLA hope that your SOPA Members will participate in the questionnaire. If interested go to the link in the article or contact [karen@scotopa.org.uk](mailto:karen@scotopa.org.uk)

## Designing Homes for Health Cognitive, Ageing

[mary.njoki1@stir.ac.uk](mailto:mary.njoki1@stir.ac.uk)

Mary Njoki and researchers at Stirling University are working on an interesting project of Designing Homes for Health Cognitive, Ageing. The projects aim is to identify scalable and sustainable design improvements to homes

which provide support for healthy cognitive ageing, enabling us, as we age, to continue living in our preferred environments as we experience cognitive change.

The team are keen to talk to anyone over the age of 55 living in central belt or not more than an hour from central belt. We aim to understand how they use the spaces in their home, what they like and what they don't like which will be fed to Virtual Reality then to a real life model at Stirling giving indications of good examples of future homes as we age and remain in our space.

There are different aspects people can take part in and Mary can discuss other elements after the first part with participants, which is creative mapping interviews and takes about an hour.

If anyone is interested Mary's details are in the article.

### **Delayed Discharge Research**

Dawn Thompson has contacted SOPA, she is a Freelance Writer and Journalist. She would be delighted to hear from anyone with a relative who has spent extended time in hospital despite being fit to leave. We hear so much about delayed discharge and one of the best ways to highlight the issue is to talk directly to those affected. Dawn would like to write an article about the issues around Delayed Discharge and would like to bring a person centred approach to her piece.

Dawn Thompson 07787  
828093  
[dawnthompson@mail.com](mailto:dawnthompson@mail.com)

### **SOPA 2022 Dates**

- Trustee meetings (Tuesdays 1-3pm): 6 Sept 22, 6 Dec 22
- SOPA Members Meetings (11am -1pm): 1 Nov 22 (AGM)
- Parliamentary Reception Event: 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022
- Assembly: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 22, Perth Concert Hall

SOPA is grateful for the funding received from the Scottish Government 'Equalities and Human Rights Fund' and the Tudor Trust.

