

June 2016

Message from Chair Tom Berney



All at SOPA are pleased to announce that the Office of Scottish Charities Register (OSCR) has registered SOPA as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). The new constitution is available on the website Committee page. Also an office has been rented from the Scottish Council Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Hayweight House, Edinburgh to accommodate Co-ordinator Glenda Watt and Administrator Rosa Ardia. The Committee has completed documentation to create a register of full and associate members. Signatories to the charity application - Alan Sidaway, Diana Findlay and myself - have become SOPA's initial trustees. Additional trustees, roles and responsibilities and

further discussion of the constitution will be decided at the next Committee meeting. Actions on our campaigning issues have been progressing and are listed below. These are in parallel with the re-organisation and summer meetings now in the pipeline to promote and exchange information with local groups, such as in East Lothian, Scottish Borders, North Lanarkshire, Clackmannanshire, West Dunbartonshire, Dundee, Kintyre and Edinburgh. See the SOPA website soon for dates and locations.

Scottish Older People's Assembly Campaigning Issues 2016

The workshops at the Scottish Older People's Assembly on 5th October 2015 raised the following campaigning issues for SOPA to pursue.

- Reduce funeral poverty through funded developments and promotion of social enterprise funeral arrangements
- Raise awareness of the negative impact of major changes to the State Pension
- Promote the need for funded programmes to encourage active citizenship in later life
- Improve participation of older adults through funded use of communication technology
- Seek to have older representatives on all Joint Integrated Boards
- Emphasise the need for care workers to be respected, well paid and trained to the highest standard
- Highlight the importance of improved quality of life for older people cared for in a home and 'at home' through links to the community.
- Psychological and therapeutic services for people over 65 should be funded on a par with 'adult' services.

ACTIONS to progress campaign issues

1 April: Q&A Session with Tom Berney published in the Scotsman newspaper - <http://bit.ly/25MWZUy>

11 April: Meeting with Welsh Commissioner and English and N.Ireland representatives to create a more

coordinated approach on issues concerning older people in the UK under Westminster control.



21 April: **Holyrood Magazine conference on Funeral Poverty** – Tom Berney stated that this was of great concern to older people he had met around Scotland. John Birrell, Chair of the Scottish Working Group on Funeral Poverty paid tribute to SOPA for adding its voice to the pressing need for action.

Ongoing meetings with Scottish Government regarding funeral poverty review and exploration of welfare payment.

Joint work arranged with SOPA committee members and the **Care Inspectorate** to develop a standard on SOPA's campaign action connecting to the community. Meetings arranged with Donald McLeod (HSCN) and Tim Puntis (LGBTI). Also Eileen Wallace (OPRGS) and Alison Clyde (GWT) wish to be involved.

Age in Mind, Stirling has established a Scottish network to highlight discrimination and stigma towards older people, raised through discussions, questionnaires and focus groups. Betty Milton and Rosa Ardia attended a meeting on 31 May in Edinburgh to ensure connection to SOPA campaign actions.

SOPA's current collaborations and opportunities

13 June: **Action on Elder Abuse Conference**, Edinburgh

Tom Berney and Glenda Watt attended this event which ran workshops on the responsibility of the financial sector, how the Adult Support & Protection Act can help support people, legal perspectives on financial harm, working together to tackle scams and doorstep crime, and supporting and protecting dementia sufferers.

Tom Berney was the guest speaker at AGMs of the Learning in Later Life Students' Association, University of Strathclyde and the North Ayrshire Sheltered Housing Group.

A letter of thanks has been sent to **Alex Neil MSP** who has left the Cabinet and an introductory letter sent to **Angela Constance MSP**, the new Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities.

Tom Berney, Bill McDonald and Glenda Watt met with Mhairi Black MP who has agreed to organise a **Westminster Reception** at the end of the summer.

Tom Berney, Glenda Watt, Jimmy Miller and John Richardson attended a meeting with **PoppyScotland**. It is leading a portfolio bid for £5m and is inviting organisations to make submissions. SOPA will be submitting an idea for a project and other SOPA-linked organisations are also interested.

UK /WHO Age Friendly Cities - SOPA is involved in Age Friendly developments in Fife and the UK Network. A growing number of cities and communities worldwide are striving to better meet the needs of all their citizens. The WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (the Network) was established to foster the exchange of experience and mutual learning between cities and communities worldwide. Members share a commitment to promote healthy and active ageing and a good quality of life for the older population.

Scottish Government Older People's Development Group, set up by the Scottish Government's Adult Social Care Team, meets every 2 months. It brings together representatives from the health, care and wider policy agendas to discuss related issues on health, social care and prevention.

SOPA has attended meetings of the **Scottish Government's Age, Home And Community: A Strategy For Housing For Scotland's Older People: 2012 – 2021**. Link - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/12/16091323/0>

The Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing - discussions are underway for its start-up in September 2016 and for SOPA to continue as secretariat.

Profile of new SOPA committee members and their organisations

Go to <http://www.scotopa.org.uk/sopacommittee.asp> for full listing and web links to organisations.

John Parkhill, President of the [Learning in Later Life Students' Association of Strathclyde University \(3Ls\)](http://www.strath.ac.uk/ccli/) -



<http://www.strath.ac.uk/ccli/> is a doer and believes in leading by example. He is a champion of keeping the mind active by trying new things, and remaining socially active and engaged. Rarely does he miss an opportunity to volunteer. He has held a variety of roles in the 3Ls in recent years which came into being in 1987 when the student body of older adults decided that they should band together to play an active role in supporting the University in making the Learning in Later Life classes a success. There are now around 1000 members who volunteer in the university, support clubs which organise events around interests. Students also help fund underprivileged students and community projects. Click <http://3ls.website> for newsletter.

Alan Spinks, regional organiser for Scotland, [National Federation of Occupational Pensioners](http://www.nfop.org.uk) (NFOP) -



<http://www.nfop.org.uk>. The NFOP dates back to the 1930s and is an independent not-for-profit membership organisation representing 70,000 people across the UK, including 5000 in Scotland. Members have access to a number of benefits including legal and tax advice, help with computer and IT problems, an Accident Aftercare service, an informative magazine, and a travel club. There are also local branches, where people can socialise. Its Welfare Fund can provide some financial support to members in need. Anyone in receipt of a pension, or who is a deferred member of a pension scheme (including the State Pension) can join. Alan has been the regional organiser for 10 years and believes the work of the NFOP is very important to ensure that the both Westminster and Holyrood governments are constantly reminded of

pensioners' concerns across the UK. Click <http://www.nfop.org.uk/join-us/> to see joining rates.



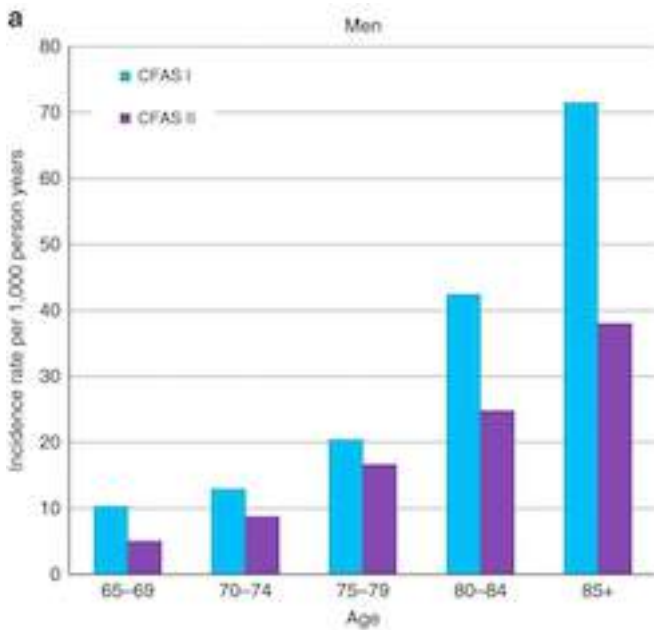
DIGITAL FAMILIES ACROSS THE LIFECOURSE: Seminar 3 - 13th April, 2016. 'Digital technology, older age and caring' run by CRFR

The digital families programme has added to a growing body of knowledge about the impact of technologies across the life course. This includes domestic technologies and the debate about both the benefits and pressures these bring.

The University of Edinburgh's Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR) has uploaded all the presentations to its website - www.crfr.ac.uk/digital-families-across-the-lifecycle/ These are listed in the righthand column and under Seminar 3 is SOPA's presentation by Val Bissland and the SOPA film on TeleHealth Care which was shown to illustrate the

benefits. Report also available at www.scotopa.org.uk/2016events.asp

RESEARCH



Dementia rates for men drop: The most viewed research on SOPA's Facebook page was this piece on the unexpected fall in the number of men diagnosed with dementia. This fall in dementia rates suggests the disease can be prevented, researchers say, looking at the **Cognitive Function and Ageing Study - CFAS 1** (1989–1994) and **CFAS 2** (2008–2011). Read article on SharpBrains - <http://bit.ly/1Tegv3T>. This is more hard evidence supporting the argument that how we lead our lives can make a difference to brain health in later life.

The idea of building 'cognitive reserve' through lifestyle choices has of course been around for some time. However, it's great to see this playing out in the real world though this UK research. It offers a lifeline to people rather than the depressing scenario of

inescapable decline. Not just a healthy diet and giving up smoking make a difference. Staying socially engaged, physically active and learning new things can keep the brain in much better shape for longer. We need more studies to confirm this reality.

Campaign to End Loneliness



Have a look at the Executive Summary of the recently published '[Missing Millions](http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/the-missing-million/)' report - <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/the-missing-million/> - by the 'Campaign to End Loneliness'. It contains 10 key recommendations to tackle this scourge in our society. There is no quick fix. It involves engaging with a mix of your local Age UK office, health and wellbeing board, fire and rescue service, local third sector organisations, housing associations, relevant public services, and key local businesses (for example, local supermarkets and leisure providers). Get local public and voluntary services on board to build sustainability and momentum.

Strathclyde Ageing Network



On 3 May Strathclyde University presented a review of interdisciplinary work going on in the University linking with organisations further afield. One example was work with European partners on employability in the IT sector for older adults. This sector is not synonymous with jobs for older people as employees over 50 are often perceived as less able to learn and less committed. This is a fallacy, of course, and skilled older adults can find good jobs. An organisation called CaMEO (Career Mobility of Europe's Older Workforce) operates an eAcademy - a way of benchmarking skills - and having a matching database of skilled older workers for businesses to recruit.

Age No Bar to Friendship



In an award-winning project in Dundee, secondary school pupils from Harris Academy pay weekly visits to Balhousie Care Home and interact with the residents, who love their lively company. The project improves understanding between generations and helps dispel myths about care home nursing.

The initiative which started in 2014 involves a group of 5/6 students per week visiting the home on Mondays and interacting with residents. Last year the project was honoured in the Scottish Care Awards winning in the personalisation and partnership category. Read more of the background at <http://bit.ly/1Phy028>



Photo - Volunteers with their certificates in recognition of their contribution to society at a multi-cultural event held during June's Volunteers' Week

Ethnic Minority Volunteering Celebration: SOPA is committed to promoting the achievements of under-represented groups of older people in Scotland. Project Manager and SOPA Committee member, Rohini Sharma Joshi said: "The volunteering contributions of ethnic minority communities often go unacknowledged. We would like to see more mainstream voluntary organisations actively encouraging ethnic minority older people to participate in their programmes. It is important to raise awareness that ethnic minority older people have insights into different communities and can make a meaningful wider contribution to society." The event was co-hosted by the Hanover Trust (Scotland) and Bield Housing Association which jointly run the Older People Services Development Project - Read more at <http://bit.ly/1Yf7LRg>

Market Place

- Guido Cuyvers is a research student looking at barriers to 55-70 year olds joining traditional organisations for older people. He would like to hear of good examples and methods that overcome the reluctance of this age group to participate. Email: gcuyvers@skynet.be
- Age Scotland is setting up a study into quality of life for older people in Scotland, in association with the Life Changes Trust and the University of Stirling. It is now beginning to recruit community researchers to set up diverse groups. If you are interested in being part of this project, or would like to discuss this opportunity further contact: Jane Robertson - j.m.robertson@stir.ac.uk

SOPA's Facebook page has a regular stream of short items on interesting events in Scotland plus links to articles in the areas of health, wellbeing and political issues in later life from a global perspective. SOPA's website contains information on local meetings and reports and links to many other organisations.

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