Older People Shaping the Future
Edinburgh 19 March 2015

Older People Shaping the Future was an event to promote the voice and experience of older people at a national, city and neighbourhood level. It was organised through a partnership between A City for All Ages, Age Scotland, Pilmeny Development Project, LOOPS and the Scottish Older People's Assembly. The chairperson was Joan Turner of A City for All Ages. The programme began with a welcome by Rt. Hon. Donald Wilson, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, followed by presentations from Christine Farquhar, Citizen Representative, Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board; Tom Berney, SOPA; Hannah Lister, Age Scotland; Stef Milenkovic, EVOC; local stories from Pilton Equalities Project, NEECAG, Guid Blethers and Caring in Craigmillar. Heather Smith, Age Scotland spoke of the Silverline. During the afternoon World Café table discussions identified what works well, what could be better and whose voice could be represented in a local area. During the morning session 60 participants discussed the SOPA Action Plan 2015 statements and identified priorities.

Results from 44 returned standard forms.

Some people gave priority to more than one action from each topic. All priorities are included in the totals. The priorities for each topic are shown in Figure 1. The top four priorities are shown in Figure 2 [1].
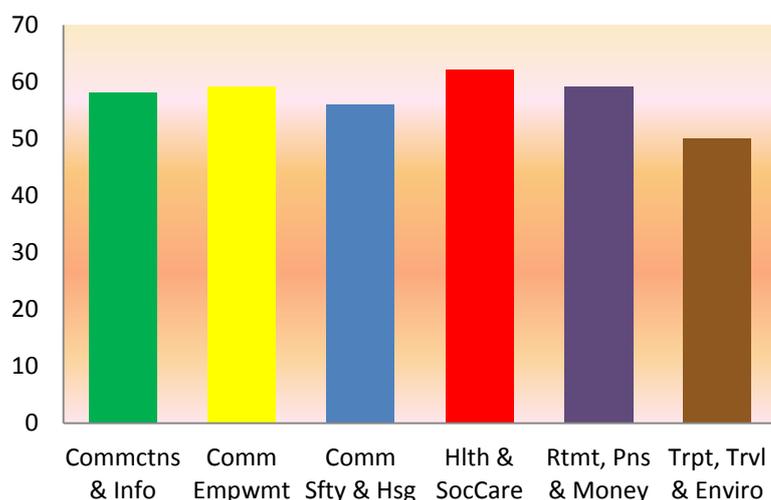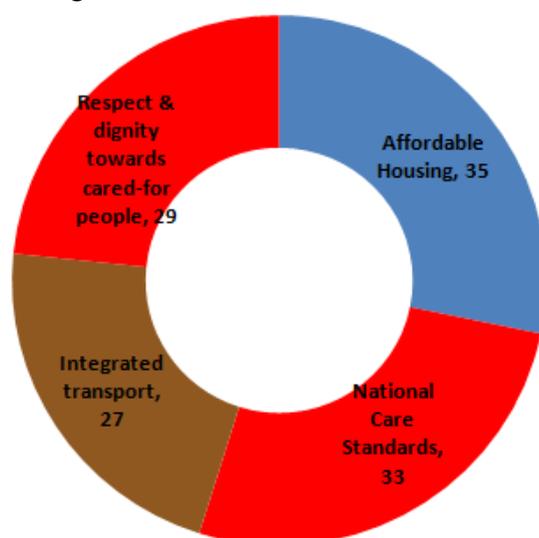

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

The action points break down as follows, with the number of votes in brackets:

Communications & Information: accessible Internet access (10), solidarity between generations (23), and SOPA reaching out to groups of older people (25) - on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, for example

Community Empowerment: clear communication on how the Community Empowerment (CE) (Scotland) Bill will operate (19), reach out to the LGBT community and ethnic groups (18), and SOPA extending its reach (22)

Community Safety and Housing: all communities have access to affordable housing (35), street safety - traffic control and a police presence (11), clear comparisons between energy companies (10)

Health and Social Care: respect and dignity towards cared-for people (29), National Care Standards (33)

Retirement, Pensions and Money: pensions concerns over flat rate (24), expense of funerals (9), acknowledgement of unpaid carers and savings to the national purse (26)

Transport, Travel and Environment: integrated travel policy (27), public spaces for social life - including rest areas and toilets (23)

---

[1] A full ranking of priorities is available on request.

Have Your Say

During the lunch and networking break people were invited to take part in Age Scotland's Have Your Say activity to assist in setting policy priorities for Age Scotland. Participants were invited to place three poker chips on the topics they felt required most attention. The information given at this event was added to information gathered from all across Scotland and will be collated in to a national report which will inform the next campaigns the charity will work on.

Local opportunities

Part of this event provided an opportunity to look at LOOPs and the voice of older people within localities in Edinburgh. An Introduction to **LOOPs** (Local Opportunities for Older People) was given by Stef Milenkovic (EVOC) in the afternoon session. In early 2014 EVOC and Pilmeny Development Project launched LOOP (Local Opportunities for Older People) Networks in each of the 4 Health and Social Care quadrants. These local networks, which correspond to the Healthy Living Partnership, originally developed by Pilmeny Development Project in Leith, are now being developed in partnership with Pilmeny Development Project and City of Edinburgh Council across the city, to improve uptake of social activities and preventative services by Edinburgh's older people.

LOOPs primary aim is to improve communication and signposting between the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors and strengthen three underutilised referral routes into community based preventative services and activities.

1. **Strengthen the local infrastructure:**
   a. Provide a supported forum
   b. Increase uptake of local community services
   c. Build upon and maximise the contribution of the 3rd Sector

2. **Strengthen Community Capacity and Resilience:**
   a. So that communities are more able to provide informal support for local vulnerable people

3. **Strengthen the voice of local older people** so that they have a direct impact on the services that are available locally and how these are designed to meet their needs.

The voice of older people

LOOPs have an outcome of working within the communities of both older people's service providers and with Edinburgh's older people to 'strengthen the voice of the older person'. The table discussions that took place at this event (using a World café format), began this dialogue by looking at:

- **What are the issues for older people in your area?**
- **What one big idea would you like to take forward in your area?**

Issues identified included:

North West – Communication, Home Care, Transport & Activities
North East – Communication, Information, Intergenerational work, Transport, Activities
South West – Communication, Isolation, Transport, Wellbeing, Activities
South East – Transport, minority ethnic and LGBT needs, Transport, Activities.

Older People Shaping the Future
Edinburgh 19 March 2015

We now hope to use the information gathered to help inform and plan with older people a series of Roadshows in each locality to look at how their voice, needs and concerns can be heard and made known to service providers.

The Roadshows will aim to:
- Provide a different method to engage with those older people who may not find the current avenues of engagement accessible or approachable, and
- Through this engagement – co-productively develop locally focussed activities and communication channels which can directly reach in to the community to find out

about key issues on a regular basis without the requirement of an ongoing commitment for those older people to attend meetings or forums.

Comments on the meeting

Most of the participants who completed the evaluation forms enjoyed the meeting, rating the presentations and activities as good and very good. Some people would have liked more time for discussion and questions.

"A super meeting. The best yet I thought. We seemed to hear many more new things than usual! Anyway the speakers were all very good and none of them too long".

"Local stories presentations were outstanding, shows what good community involvement can provide/do. An excellent 'template' to follow in regard to community, support and involvement".

"It was all excellent".

SOPA Co-ordinator Glenda Watt
glenda.watt@edinburgh.gov.uk

The City of Edinburgh Council,
Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street,
Edinburgh EH8 8BG
t: 0131 469 3806

The Scottish Older People's Assembly is a 'voice' for older people. www.scotopa.org.uk

A group of Edinburgh participants at the meeting.