



Irvine was part of a series of meetings for older people's groups around Scotland between January and April 2015. The format included a Welcome by the Provost Joan Sturgeon, Introduction by Ian Wallace, Chair of the Joint North Ayrshire Elderly Forum and a presentation by Tom Berney, SOPA Chair on the growing role of SOPA in supporting and challenging policy. 94 participants discussed Action Plan 2015 statements and identified their priorities. Then these questions were addressed:

How can SOPA work with you? and How can you work with SOPA?

SOPA's Communication Adviser, raised awareness of events in the local press and media, and publicised them afterwards on SOPA's Facebook site - <https://www.facebook.com/scotopa>

Results from 94 returned standard forms.

Some people gave priority to more than one action from each topic and all of these priorities are included in the totals shown below in Figure 1. The top five priorities are shown in Figure 2¹.

Fig.1

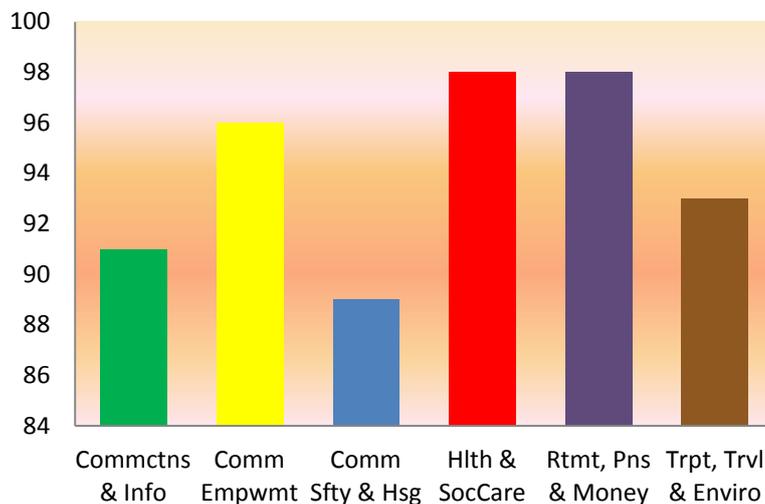
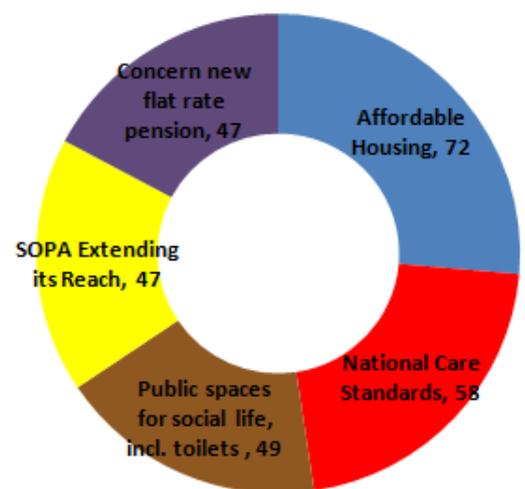


Fig.2



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

Communications & Information: accessible Internet access (14), solidarity between generations (34), and SOPA reaching out to groups of older people (43)

Community Empowerment: clear communication on how the Community Empowerment (CE) (Scotland) Bill will operate (28), reach out to the LGBT community and ethnic groups (21) and SOPA extending its reach to as many older people as possible (47)

Community Safety and Housing: all communities have access to affordable housing (72), street safety - traffic control and a police presence (9), clear comparisons between energy companies (8)

Health and Social Care: respect and dignity towards cared-for people (40), National Care Standards (58)

Retirement, Pensions and Money: pensions concerns over flat rate (47), expense of funerals (19), acknowledgement of unpaid carers and savings to the national purse (32)

Transport, Travel and Environment: integrated travel policy (44), public spaces for social life - including rest areas and toilets (49)

¹ A full ranking of priorities is available on request.



Comments on the meeting

85 participants completed an evaluation form and of this number:

- 60% valued the meeting as very or extremely useful;
- many appreciated being with others and getting useful and interesting information:

"Hearing what is going on and meeting like minded people. Particularly encouraging to see so many young people."

"They covered a lot of questions and answers which was very informative."

- some people suggested more ways to receive information about SOPA while others had difficulty hearing the speakers.

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.

Visit the SOPA website for up-to-date information about events and activities.

www.scotopa.org.uk

How SOPA can work with local groups

Suggestions focused on communications, lobbying, contributing to local activity and involving young people:

- ✓ Enable information sharing between SOPA and local forums
- ✓ Have more local meetings and listen to the local point of view
- ✓ Better publicity for meetings
- ✓ SOPA representative can visit and report current progress to our forums
- ✓ Have elected representatives on the main committee
- ✓ Involvement with young people
- ✓ Provide an update on policies going through Parliament
- ✓ Keep Councillors up to date
- ✓ Lobby Ministers.

How the local group can work with SOPA

Suggestions focused on intergenerational work, assisting local participation, gathering local evidence and sharing information:

- ✓ Intergenerational work to exchange skills and talents
- ✓ Get involved with local forum, then communicate to SOPA
- ✓ Representatives to give advice and take concerns back to their organisations
- ✓ Gather information from SOPA website and pass it on at local meetings.



A large turnout at Irvine on 5th February.