



Paisley 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 Provost Anne Hall, an Introduction from Jeanette Nunnery, Chair of Renfrewshire Seniors Forum and a presentation by Tom Berney, SOPA Chair on the growing role of SOPA in supporting and challenging policy. 45 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 45 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 four priorities are shown in Figure 2¹.

Fig.1

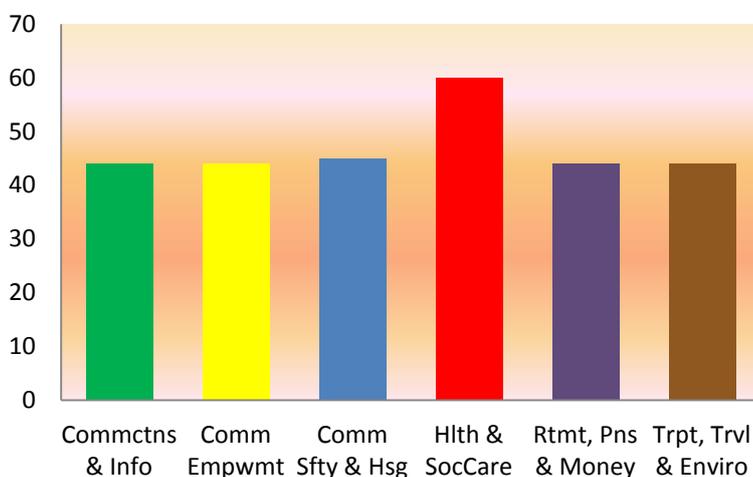
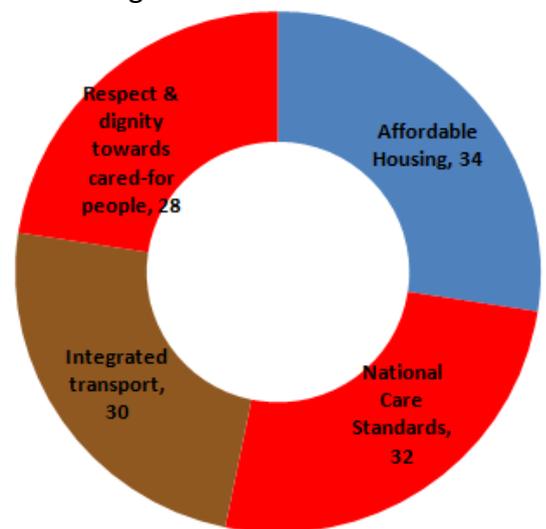


Fig.2



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

Communications & Information: accessible Internet access (11), solidarity between generations (14), and SOPA reaching out to groups of older people (19)

Community Empowerment: clear communication on how the Community Empowerment (CE) (Scotland) Bill will operate (9), reach out to the LGBT community and ethnic groups (11) and SOPA extending its reach to as many older people as possible (24)

Community Safety and Housing: all communities have access to affordable housing (34), street safety - traffic control and a police presence (5), clear comparisons between energy companies (6)

Health and Social Care: respect and dignity towards cared-for people (32), National Care Standards (28)

Retirement, Pensions and Money: pensions concerns over flat rate (21), expense of funerals (4), acknowledgement of unpaid carers and savings to the national purse (19)

¹ A full ranking of priorities is available on request.



Comments on the meeting

41 participants completed an evaluation form and of this number:

- over 50% valued the meeting as very or extremely useful;
- many appreciated meeting other people and discussing the various topics but
- many people could not hear the proceedings;

"It was good that SOPA wanted to hear our concerns."

"This was my first time at the Assembly. I found it to be informative."

"Quality of sound system and background noise from ventilation system made it difficult to hear."

- one person suggested alternative ways to reach out to disabled people and those often confined to their home.

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

Transport, Travel and Environment: integrated travel policy (30), public spaces for social life - including rest areas and toilets (14)

How SOPA can work with local groups

Suggestions focused on communications and contributing to local activity:

- ✓ Arranging meetings with forums and communicate more with them
- ✓ Spread information
- ✓ Send newsletter to every senior forum.

How the local group can work better with SOPA

Suggestions focused on assisting local participation, gathering local evidence and identifying local champions:

- ✓ Support SOPA
- ✓ SOPA should provide regular communication to enable us to work with them to reach a common goal
- ✓ Have a representative from Renfrewshire on the Committee
- ✓ Attend local forums and share information
- ✓ Local meetings should continue but be affiliated to SOPA .



A group debate the issues at Paisley on 13 March.