

Scottish Older People's Assembly Newsletter

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



July 2019

Welcome to the SOPA newsletter, please feel free to pass on to others!

2019 Assembly – Date Confirmed

We are delighted that the Scottish Parliament has agreed the date for our 2019 Assembly on

Saturday 5th October 2019

This date will be very timely as it coincides with the Scottish Parliament's 20th anniversary, SOPA's 10th anniversary and International Older People's Day on 1st October.

Holding the event on a Saturday will allow access to the Debating Chamber and Committee Rooms for workshop activities.

Please put the date in your diaries and further information about how to book your place will follow shortly.

The Voice of Veterans

The Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) was delighted to be invited by Unforgotten Forces, to hold a joint engagement event for older veterans in Bathgate on 13th June. The aim of the event was to provide an opportunity for older veterans to be able to share their views on what is important to them. These views would then be collated and would feed into the SOPA annual Assembly which is being held on 5th October 2019 at the Scottish Parliament.

There was a great turnout on the day, with 44 attendees, including around 34 older veterans along with spouses, SOPA members and others working in the veterans' field. Following a welcome by Diana Findlay, Chair of SOPA, the programme moved on to an informative presentation from Glen MacDonald, Co-ordinator of Unforgotten Forces.



Unforgotten Forces is a collaboration of 15 organisations, led by Poppy Scotland, who have joined forces to enhance the support available for veterans over the age of 65 and their families in Scotland. Further information about Unforgotten Forces, the partner organisations and the range of support available is available on the UF website at www.poppyScotland.org.uk/get-help/unforgotten-forces/. The event featured a musical interlude from Jason Sweeney, from Music in Hospitals and Care, one of the Unforgotten Forces partners.

Discussions on the day were based around the themes of Identity, Community, Access to Services and Financial Security. Participants were asked to discuss

- How does this issue affect older veterans?
- Do you face the same issues as other older people, or are there specific benefits or challenges for older veterans?

Positive aspects reported by veterans included:

- Belonging, comradery, feeling part of a community, pride, strong identity, opportunities to travel the world.
- Support available eg priority healthcare and range of third sector support for veterans – but not everyone knows about these advantages

Challenges raised included:

- Adapting to civilian life –more should be done to prepare people leaving military service, where to get support in the future.
- Common health challenges caused by service eg back, leg pain, hearing loss, flash backs, PTSD. Incidence of alcohol use, relationship breakdowns higher amongst ex service personnel.

[The full report is available on the SOPA website.](#)

The event was also covered by Third Force News see <https://thirdforcenews.org.uk/tfn-news/making-sure-older-veterans-have-a-voice>

SOPA Welcomes New Members

At its meeting on 22 May in Glasgow, SOPA approved membership requests from 12 organisations, including 3 Local Authority Older People's Champions, and a further 6 Associate Members.



We now have Older People Champions from North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire, Scottish Borders and Dundee City and are following up with other interested areas.

New member organisations include: Living Streets Scotland, The Broomhouse Centre, Voice of Experience Forum, Independent Age, Aberdeen Multicultural Centre, Quiet Scotland, Disabled Living Foundation, Ability Net and Shared Lives Plus. All of these organisations work with older people and will help to extend SOPA's reach and representation.

Congratulations to Glenda Watt

SOPA members were delighted to hear that our former Co-ordinator, Glenda Watt, was recently recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her services to older people. This award marks Glenda's dedication to SOPA and ensuring that older people's issues are heard at every level of decision making. Well done Glenda!



News from SOPA Member Organisations

Generations Working Together

Generations Working Together, Scotland's national charity that works to bring younger and older people together. The charity gives support and delivers training, including:



- One day training for practitioners facilitating intergenerational project,
- Online 6 week International Certificate in Intergenerational Learning, accredited by the University of Granada,
- Dedicated training in schools for staff and teachers,
- Workplace training for public and private sector on intergenerational relationships and the workplace.

For training dates please see our website event page

<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/events-training/>

Recently the charity became a partner of the Soil Association's new Get Togethers, project funded by The National Lottery. The aim of the project is to highlight intergenerational connections and to inspire people to attend events in their communities, linked by food. Our new intergenerational development officer Bella Kerr will work on this project so please contact her on Bella@generationsworkingtogether.org if you have any questions.

The charity has also hosted a series of events in June with professor Peter Whitehouse in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth and Scottish Borders. Peter is known for starting an intergenerational school in Cleveland, Ohio, as well as being a specialist in neurology with a

particular interest in dementia. If you would like to learn more about his work, please see his Ted talk online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7_qvSlxs8k

Generations Working Together is also bringing the innovative intergenerational school project to Glasgow. The original pilot has ran over the last two years in Perth and Kinross in two schools, Community School of Auchterarder and Perth Grammar school and brought over 30 older volunteers from the community into the schools. The project has grown from the initial aim of improving numeracy and literacy to reading, poetry, gardening and more. The project has also received news coverage and has been visited by Jeane Freeman MSP and Christina McKelvie MSP. The first school in Glasgow to sign up is St Clare's Primary School located in Drumchapel and we are currently looking for more schools in Glasgow to get involved and will be recruiting older volunteers shortly. Please contact Alison Clyde, CEO on Alison@generationsworkingtogether.org if you are interesting in learning about the project.

Action on Elder Abuse

Action on Elder Abuse Scotland's national conference will take place on 4th September 2019 in Glasgow.



This year's theme focuses on justice and making Scotland a safer place for older people.

They have an engaging range of speakers, including Humza Yousaf (Cabinet Secretary for Justice) and Steven Fitzpatrick who will outline his struggle to see his elderly father who has dementia.

For further information sign up to their newsletter :-

<https://www.elderabuse.org.uk/forms/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>

or see their website <https://www.elderabuse.org.uk/in-scotland>

Shared Lives Plus

"The whole point of caring is to help people take some risks and get as much out of their day as possible. The day always flies by and I enjoy it too".



Shared Lives carer, Moray.



Shared Lives is a form of social care in which an adult who needs care and support moves in with, or regularly visits, an approved and self-employed Shared Lives carer. Together they share family and community life.

Traditionally, Shared Lives has been used to support adults with Learning Disabilities, but it can support people with a wide range of needs. Moray Council has established a distinctive Shared Lives service, which focuses on providing day support to older people, the majority of them living with dementia. An [independent report](#) recently found that Shared Lives Moray offers a more personalised service than traditional forms of social care, improving the self-esteem of people with dementia and increasing their social interaction. Unpaid family carers reported that the Shared Lives service sustains their energy and well-being, and reduces their stress. The report found that Shared Lives supports a preventative approach to social care, supporting people to stay at home for longer and delaying access to residential care. As one family carer put it, "Shared Lives is helping me stay well enough long enough to prevent my wife going into care".

Although still a small proportion of social care provision in Scotland, Shared Lives is growing. The number of older people supported through Shared Lives in Scotland has almost doubled in the past two years. There are now 15 Shared Lives schemes supporting 435 people in Scotland, and 321 people working as Shared Lives carers.

Shared Lives Plus supports and promotes Shared Lives across the UK. Our members are Homeshare schemes, Shared Lives schemes and Shared Lives carers. We support growth, diversification and the development of new schemes, and we aim to double the number of people receiving care and support within Shared Lives in the next five years.

For more information visit the [Shared Lives Plus website](#) or contact Lesley Stevenson, Scotland Development Officer, lesley@sharedlivesplus.org.uk

Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework - Delivery Plan for 2019-2020

The first annual delivery plan to support the implementation of the Accessible Travel Framework was published on 25th June 2019. The plan is available at <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scotland-s-accessible-travel-framework-delivery-plan-for-2019-2020/>

The Making Connections project has brought disabled people together with designers, transport operator staff and other professionals to experience and assess journey connections between rail and ferry services. In July an event to showcase the project, share what we've learned and think about what could happen in the future is being held at the Grassmarket Project in Edinburgh. For further details and to register see <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/making-connections-tickets-64303544633>

Thistle Assistance Card

The Thistle Assistance Card and App was developed to make using public transport easier for older people and those with disabilities or illness.

It is supported by all 7 Regional Transport Partnerships, Transport Scotland, Transport Operators and disability groups (including RNIB, SATA, Disability Equality Scotland).



The card and App, is supported by a wide variety of voluntary organisations across Scotland and by most bus, train, tram, ferry and airport operators. It is credit-card sized and comes with a supply of peel-off stickers, which advise the driver or conductor of your disability and the help you need in an easy-to-read format.

The card is available to all people who require it with no eligibility criteria required, through bus companies, libraries, health centres and on request, with no eligibility criteria required. For more information please e-mail thistlecard@sestran.gov.uk, call 0131 524 5153 or visit <https://www.sestran.gov.uk/projects/the-sestran-thistle-assistance-card/>

Forthcoming SOPA Dates

- Wednesday 7th August 2019 – SOPA AGM (11.00 – 12.30) followed by Planning Group meeting (13.00 – 15.00), Eric Liddell Centre, 15 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 4DP
- Saturday 5th October 2019 – SOPA Assembly
- Wednesday 13th November – SOPA Planning Group meeting, Glasgow

SOPA Contact Details

Caroline Clark, SOPA Co-ordinator

Address: Eric Liddell Centre, 15 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 4DP

Tel: 0131 357 1277

Email: caroline@scotopa.org.uk

Website: www.scotopa.org.uk

SOPA receives funding from the Scottish Government 'Promoting Equality and Cohesion Fund'.

The Scottish Older People's Assembly is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, number SC046520.

