



SOPA
Scottish
Older People's
Assembly

Three Year Plan

2024-2027

SOPA is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated
Organisation: Number - SC046520



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Welcome

We are very pleased to set out the SOPA plan for the next three years. SOPA's diverse membership is a strength, something of which we are rightly proud; and it gives us a wide appreciation of the challenges met by different communities.

Our new Work Streams will increase membership participation opportunities and address the main topics of concern to Older People. Developing projects such as Age-friendly Communities and consolidating and sharing SOPA's experience are areas we are looking forward to developing further.

We will continue to move forward, working together with partner organisations, academia and all levels of government to make Scotland an even better country in which to grow older and enjoy life in our later years.

David L. Paterson, Chair of Board of Trustees





About SOPA

SOPA is a membership organisation, Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation: Number - SC046520.

There are two categories of membership:

- Full membership – open to organisations involved in any aspect of promoting the voice and experience of older people
- Associate membership – open to other bodies (whether public sector or private sector) and to individuals.

Members are invited to meetings of the Planning Group which take place around four times a year, and our Parliamentary Reception and Assembly.

SOPA holds local outreach events and we are involved in many consultations and other engagement activities.

SOPA is managed by a Board of Trustees elected by members.

SOPA is funded through the Equalities and Human Rights Fund

Vision

A Scotland where Older People are recognised as a vital part of our society with opinions, thoughts, ideas and solutions to help create an equal and socially just society.

Mission

The Scottish Older People's Assembly exists to give a strong voice to Older People about their experience of life in Scotland, the challenges they face and Mission concerns they have, and to celebrate the positive contribution that Older People make to society.

Strategic Aims

- To facilitate and empower older people to have their voices heard.
- To influence policy and practice on issues relating to older people, age and ageing.

Guiding Principles

United Nations Principles for Older Persons*

- Independence
- Participation
- Care
- Self-fulfilment
- Dignity

Equalities Act (2010)

Protection from discrimination on the basis of ‘protected characteristics’ which include age.

Framework

A Fairer Scotland for Older People* provides a framework for SOPA’s work.

World Health Organization (WHO) Decade of Healthy Ageing - a decade of “concerted, catalytic and collaborative action to improve the lives of older people, their families, and the communities in which they live”.

* Adopted by the General Assembly of the UN, 16th December 1991, <https://www.ohchr.org>

* 2019, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-older-people-framework-action/>

Profile of Older People in Scotland

Total population of Scotland: 5.454 million

Age profile

- 50 – 59 707,000
- 60 – 69 599,000
- 70 – 79 399,000
- 80 – 89 194,000
- 90+ 37,000

Those aged 65+ are 19% of population – projected to be 25% by 2038.

Predicted 25% increase in the over 75 age group by 2038.

There are 906,000 single person households, Older People are more likely to live alone or in smaller households. This is rising annually.

Source: National Records of Scotland.

The population is ageing at a faster rate in Scotland than the rest of the UK. There is considerable geographical variation in the ageing of the population within Scotland. In general, it is lowest in the cities and higher in more rural areas.

Source: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-older-people-framework-action/pages/3/>

Four ways SOPA works to achieve its aims

Bringing older people together

SOPA delivers an annual Assembly, parliamentary receptions, events, outreach and consultations

Campaigning

SOPA campaigns against stereotyping of older people, takes up issues of concern to members and supports the campaigns of partner organisations

Supporting research

SOPA partners with universities, academics and research bodies

Being at the table

SOPA is a member of the Older People's Strategic Action Forum (OPSAF), Cross Party groups, the Age-friendly Communities UK Network and Unforgotten Forces Consortium

Overview of 3 Year Objectives

Create a powerful network of engagement by:

- Campaign on relevant issues identified by our Members and guided by Member working groups (working groups to be chaired by a Trustee) create accompanying campaigns. We will also encourage advocacy within our membership at a local level.
- Celebrate the positive contribution Older People make to communities and society in Scotland
- Raise SOPA's profile with a balanced focus on retention and engagement with the membership facilitated by the introduction of a hub for members
- Build the organisation and strengthen our processes to ensure effective coherent governance to protect the future of the charity (including funding).



Objective 1

To give a strong voice to Older People in Scotland so that policymakers at every level of government in Scotland hear the voices of Older People and act on what they hear.

How will we do it?

- involving, engaging and listening to the membership.
- prioritising relevant issues (through our Annual Assembly and Survey) which SOPA will campaign on.
- holding an Annual Assembly to debate our priorities and current issues as well as celebrate the contribution of older people in Scotland
- sharing our Annual Assembly report plus survey results with our membership and political parties across Scotland.
- forming working groups which will help shape SOPA's actions.
- engaging with all political parties to secure commitment to the priorities identified
- playing an active role in Older People's Strategic Action Forum (OPSAF) and the Cross-Party Group for Older People, Age and Ageing.
- attending and participating in other key government groups
- arranging outreach sessions with members and older people to involve them in the work of SOPA and the key priorities.
- holding an annual parliamentary reception concentrating on our current priorities and celebrating the contribution of older people in Scotland.
- publicising our campaigns to the wider community.
- creating and monitoring an impact assessment aligned to our purpose and measuring outcomes against our actions.

Objective 2

To promote Your Issue, Your Voice project to highlight local issues that impact Older People in Scotland

How will we do it?

- providing resources on our website and through non digital arrangements including in person communications on how to campaign on local issues and training resources where appropriate
- showcasing case studies of successful local campaigns and collate as best practice
- highlighting this campaign work through our outreach work.
- work with Age Scotland to campaign for an Older People's Champion in every local authority in Scotland.
- implementing a membership strategy that embraces opportunities through new partnerships and technologies.

Objective 3

To celebrate the positive contribution Older People make to communities and society in Scotland

How will we do it?

- developing our work on Age-friendly Communities in Scotland with the target of supporting Scotland to become an Age-friendly Nation
- promoting the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing and International Day of Older Person (1st October)
- building on our campaign of celebrating the contribution of Older People to Scotland through case studies, blogs and news provided by members.
- helping to bring about a positive change in the language, images and signage used to describe Older People by collating resources

Objective 4

To promote the appointment of an Older People's Champion in every local authority in Scotland

How will we do it?

- partnering with Age Scotland we will work to explain the benefits of appointing an Older People's Champion in each local Authority
- Continuing to highlight the role of the Older People's Champions at our events
- providing support to SOPA members who wish to contact their local authority about appointment of an Older People's Champion.
- continuing to work with Age Scotland to maintain an Older People's Champion network.



Objective 5

Increase SOPA's membership and participation

How will we do it?

- setting up a working group on membership to increase membership and encourage diversity and inclusion
- holding 4 x member meetings each year- this will include event and Assembly planning and other issues.
- holding 4 x outreach meetings each year to promote SOPA's work and gather feedback.
- acting as a hub for our members' news and events – this will be done through our website, newsletter, social media.
- committing not to digitally exclude our members

Objective 6

To contribute to and support research which increases knowledge about the lives of Older People in Scotland

How will we do it?

- developing our research partnership with Strathclyde University on Ageing and Communication.
- helping to share key findings from University of Strathclyde, School of Psychology's as a partner to their Catalyst project (positive changes during and beyond COVID).
- engaging as a research partner with others on a case-by-case basis.

Objective 7

To increase SOPA's capacity and ensure a sustainable organisational structure.

How will we do it?

- maintaining a clear focus on good governance, realistic and achievable goals, partnerships and investing in our team.
- supporting the active and inclusive participation of our members.
- seeking funding to increase our scope and develop our project-based work to diversify our reach and increase our presence.
- continuing to develop our membership.
- continuing to build our close ties with partner organisations.
- ensuring we do makes a difference through monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board monitors our performance and reports regularly on progress to our funders. We will also seek to evaluate the medium and longer term impact of our work in delivering objectives.



How to contact SOPA

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SOPA is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation: Number – SC046520



Guy Hinks Photographer



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