

SCOTTISH PENSIONERS' FORUM

Annual Report 2017-2018

Established 1992



CAMPAIGNING FOR A BETTER DEAL FOR OLDER PEOPLE SINCE 1992



Chairperson's Foreword

In my third term as Chairperson, it has proved yet another busy year for the Forum with our volunteers going out and about across the country hosting outreach meetings and attending a variety of conferences and events to ensure older people's voices are heard.

Throughout the year we have engaged in a series of talks with the Scottish Government on the concessionary travel scheme consultation and in turn launched a campaign 'Hands Off Our Bus Pass' to challenge the proposed changes to the age of entitlement as set out in the consultation. We feel that any changes would have a drastic impact on a person's wellbeing in terms of both their physical and mental health.

As set out in last year's annual report, the issue of health and social care continues to be a concern for older people with loneliness and isolation being a major worry. During the past year, the SPF has been going out and about across Scotland to hear your views on how loneliness and isolation impacts on you, both within your communities and on a more personal level and we aim to deliver a similar programme throughout 2018.

What we have found from our work is that young or old, loneliness and isolation does not discriminate on the basis of age. It's only in recent years we have come to realise how big the issue is and how chronic loneliness can be to our health. Millions of people are affected by it yet there is still such a stigma surrounding it that it only serves to exacerbate the issue.

During mental health awareness week, the SPF took part in a panel discussion on the subject and helped highlight the similarities between young and old when considering the common causes that lead to loneliness and isolation and during this Scottish Government Year of Young People the SPF will be working with STUC equalities groups to expand on this.

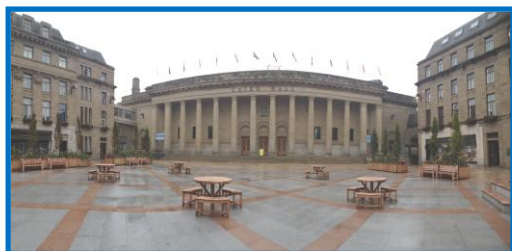
I hope that you will see from the report that we have been working hard to ensure that the voices of our members are heard and over the coming year will continue to do so. We are pleased that the newly formed Older People's Strategic Action Forum will give us, and our members, a direct link to government and we look forward to working with the Minister for Social Security and Older People and other older people's organisations and groups to help implement change.

It is at this point that I would like to thank all of you for being part of an organisation that continues to fight for the rights of older people across Scotland. We are only as good as our members and your continued support allows us to carry out the work on what we are all trying to achieve, a better deal for older people.

Rose

Rose Jackson, Chairperson

SPF ANNUAL CONFERENCE, DUNDEE 2017



The SPF Annual Conference took place on Tuesday 13th June 2017 at the Marryat Hall, Caird Hall, Dundee with over 130 delegates in attendance. Guest speakers on the day were Lesley Irving, Head of Equalities at the Scottish Government, Derek Young, Senior Policy Officer at Age Scotland, Helen McFarlane, Programme Director of Our Voice, a project of the Scottish Health Council and Erik Cramb of Dundee Pensioners Forum

Formal business on the day included the adoption of the SPF Dignity and Rights for Older People in Scotland policy, the election of the Executive and Standing Orders Committee for 2017/2018 and a discussion on funeral poverty in Scotland.

Motions to conference seen an endorsement that the SPF would call on trade unions who presently had no retired members' branches to introduce them in order to help combat loneliness and isolation in retirement.

Our thanks go to Dundee City Council for their hospitality for the event and to our delegates, who travelled across Scotland to join with us on the day.

Executive Committee 2017-2018

Helen Biggins	Individual Member	
Jim Bradley	Individual Member	Vice Chair
Surjit Chowdhary	Mel Milaap/Central Gurdwhara	
Pauline Frazer	Individual Member	
Maureen Gardner	STUC-Unite	Treasurer
David Gavin	CWU	
Sam Gibson	Individual Member	
Sharon Greig	UNISON	
Rose Jackson	STUC-UNISON	Chairperson
Tom Lithgow	UNISON –East Lothian	
Bill Martin	Johnstone Seniors Forum	
John McAllion	Dundee Pens. Forum	
Christine McGiveron	Individual Member	
John McGiveron	Civil Service Pens Alliance	
Elinor McKenzie	Individual Member	
Alex Morrison	East Kilbride Seniors Forum	
Jeanette Pieper	Age Scotland	
William Quigley	GMB	
Rosemary Smith	Individual Member	
Alan Spinks	National Fed of Occup. Pensioners	
John Taylor	STUC - Prospect	
Colin Wakeling	NASUWT	Vice Chair
William Welsh	RMT	
June Whitelaw	STUC – USDAW	Assistant Secretary

OUR WORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



MEETING WITH JEANNE FREEMAN, MSP Minister for Social Security and Older People

Members of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum, along with members of Scottish Seniors Alliance, met with Jeanne Freeman MSP at Holyrood on 13th September 2017 to discuss issues of concern for older people. In a joint letter previously sent from SPF/SSA, both organisations listed items for discussion however due to time constraints, the following issues were prioritised:

- **A Minister for Age, Ageing and Older Peoples issues.** The SPF was informed that it was the First Minister's remit to decide which Ministers she would like in place and who would be best suited to the post. Ms Freeman advised that her Ministerial portfolio included working with older people.
- **The reinstatement of The Older People's Consultative Forum.** The Minister indicated her support for a consultative forum which could deal with such issues as the Winter Fuel Allowance and fuel poverty as well as any other matters presently being devolved from Westminster. Ms. Freeman indicated that it was her intention to hold the first meeting of the new group in November 2017 and that it's remit would in no way replicate the work already being done by the Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing, chaired by Sandra White MSP.
- **Fuel Poverty and the Winter Fuel Allowance.** Evidence was produced in support of increasing this allowance. The Minister replied that eleven benefits had been devolved to the Scottish Government, including the Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel Allowance. She advised that the transfer of funds from Westminster in 2019 would be based on the spend undertaken in 2018, so there would be no new monies linked to the transfer. Ms Freeman also raised her concerns surrounding child poverty. It was stated that the only benefits to increase would be those already mentioned in the SNP Election Manifesto, i.e. Carers' Allowance, and extending winter fuel support to families with disabled children.
- **Funeral Poverty.** The Minister acknowledged the disparity of charges throughout the country and the problems of poor practice in many areas. Any harmonisation of costs should be downwards and therefore an increase in prices should not be seen. The Scottish Government is encouraging a social enterprise approach regarding funeral directors and the SPF was advised of such a partnership in East Ayrshire. At the moment many people have pre-paid funeral plans, and many more think they have put enough money aside to cover costs however as the small print shows, this is not always the case. Currently an additional payment of £700 is subject to intrusive questions. Angela Constance MSP is working on social security payments to be effected by 2019 whereby if someone is eligible based on the qualifying criteria then the money will be released immediately. If someone is on a low income then they will know when making arrangements what they are entitled to. The Minister emphasised that social enterprise was the favoured way forward rather than any form of 'nationalisation'.
- **Concessionary Travel Scheme.** The Minister referred to the SNP Election Manifesto commitment to extend eligibility to other groups. The SPF restated its policy of retaining eligibility for those aged 60+ and argued that it should be extended to cover rail and ferry travel, and in addition to this there should be improvements made to rural services in order to help combat loneliness and isolation. The Minister said she would pass the SPF's comments to Transport Minister Humza Yousaf MSP although she herself believed that the age for concessionary travel should be pegged to state pension age. 65 and rising.



Delegates at the SPF Annual Conference in Dundee adopted the following document on the Dignity and Rights of Older People in Scotland into SPF standard policy and practice on Tuesday 13th June 2017

Under Article 1 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) it states

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”

The SPF believes that this right should not diminish throughout an individual's natural life cycle as, all too often, when people age, there is a common misconception within society that their contribution becomes less valuable than that of their younger counterparts.

This policy sets out that any movement towards denying older people their basic human rights on issues affecting their everyday lives on the basis of age is unacceptable and to this end calls for:

- Respect for older people to take charge of their own affairs, or if necessary, by their chosen representative if they are no longer able to do so for themselves
- That older people have the opportunity to actively participate, and to speak, for themselves on decisions affecting their overall wellbeing
- That older people have access to information through language and methods of communication that they fully understand
- That older people have the right to access proper health care benefits and treatments which could enhance their quality of life
- That advanced statements expressing the personal choices of older people on their health care in later life be taken into consideration when they can no longer express themselves clearly
- That care packages in later life be adapted to cater for individual needs and not on a standardised 'one size fits all basis'
- The right for older people not to be abused or disrespected in any way or being made to feel invisible or incompetent when carrying out everyday tasks
- The right of an individual to be free from the threat of violence due to their age or vulnerability
- Support for older people to allow them to maintain a good standard of personal hygiene and appearance
- In line with the NPC Dignity Code, comfort, consideration, inclusion, participation, stimulation and a sense of purpose on all issues affecting an older person which could help enhance their quality of life
- That there be no barriers to participation for older people, if desired
- That there is respect for an individual's preferences, routines, customs, faith, cultural differences, disability, sexual orientation and all other needs appertaining to their sense of self
- A proper mechanism for older people to address concerns and make complaint without fear of recrimination
- Older people have the right to privacy
- Older people have access to educational opportunities which could help improve their quality of life.
- Older people have the right to employment opportunities, both paid and voluntary
- The right of older people not to be discriminated against in the workplace as a consequence of age
- The right of older people to be afforded dignity and respect in all verbal and written communications
- That the rights of older people, as set out under the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights are respected and adhered to as standard practice

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON OLDER PEOPLE, AGE AND AGEING

The Scottish Pensioners' Forum continue to be represented on the Scottish Government Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing, convened by Sandra White MSP.

Recent discussions have looked at the integration of health and social care and its developments, concessionary travel, community safety and nuisance and bogus callers.



OLDER PEOPLE'S STRATEGIC ACTION FORUM

After numerous meetings between ourselves, SSA and Minister for Social Security and Older People, Jeane Freeman MSP, on the reinstatement of the former Older People's Consultative Forum the first meeting of the newly formed **Older People's Strategic Action Forum** took place in November 2017. This newly formed group will once again give older people and their representatives a direct link to government on issues affecting them in their everyday lives. More information will be made available after future meetings (the next being held in June 2018) to adopt a potential framework for joint action in order to maximise older people's contribution to policy making in Scotland.

CONSULTATION ON THE CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL SCHEME



The Scottish Government Consultation on Free Bus Travel for Older and Disabled People and Modern Apprentices closed on 17th November 2017. The SPF launched a campaign which we took around the country and for which we received support from our affiliates and MSP's, in particular Unite Glasgow Retired Members' Branch,

who had also launched a similar campaign.



Up until the closure of the consultation, the SPF continued to meet with Transport Scotland to put forward the views of our members on how to preserve the scheme at the present age of 60 and above.

As well as this, the SPF were scheduled to meet with Transport Minister, Humza Yousaf, on a number of occasions to discuss the scheme however these had to be cancelled by his office due to other commitments. The response to the consultation has not yet been published and we hope to have the opportunity to meet with the minister prior to this.

The SPF's full consultation response can be found here at <http://www.scottishpensioners.org.uk/files/SPF%20Conultation%20Response.pdf>

UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS



To mark UN International Day of Older Persons, the SPF held a demonstration outside the Scottish Parliament on 28th September 2017 calling for recognition for older people's contributions within society in line with this year's theme ***Stepping into the Future: Tapping the Talents, Contributions and Participation of Older Persons in Society.***



Over 50 members and affiliates from across Scotland joined us on the day and guest speakers included Richard Leonard MSP, Claire Baker MSP, Derek Young, Age Scotland and SPF Chair Rose Jackson, Treasurer Maureen Gardner and Executive Committee member, Elinor McKenzie also made a contribution.

As well as the valued contribution made by our speakers more than a dozen MSP's came out to meet with our representatives and to listen to our concerns.

SPF/SSA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION



On 22nd May 2018, the Scottish Pensioners' forum, along with our colleagues in the Scottish Seniors Alliance, held a joint parliamentary reception in the Garden Lobby of the Scottish Parliament. Hosted by Ms. Sandra White MSP, Convenor of the Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing and with contributions from Ms Jeane Freeman, Minister for Social Security and Older People, Rose Jackson, SPF chairperson and Bill Johnston, SSA Chairperson, the reception was a celebration of both organizations over the years and their input into the

development of the Older People's Strategic Action Forum giving older people a direct link to government on issues affecting them.

Over 80 people came along to the event and stallholders included Age Scotland, Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance, Action on Elder Abuse and Irvine Seniors Forum.



A Connected Scotland: Consultation on Loneliness and Isolation

The Scottish Government recently launched a consultation on a draft strategy to help tackle loneliness and isolation in Scotland which closed on 30th April 2018. The paper also looks to take into account the views of communities across Scotland and how by building on the framework set out in the Scottish Governments draft plan, those most at risk have access to the proper mechanisms and support networks.

The Scottish Pensioners' Forum's full consultation response can be found here at <http://www.scottishpensioners.org.uk/files/Loneliness%20Isolation%20Consultation.pdf>

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SPF OUTREACH WORK TO HELP TACKLE LONELINESS AND ISOLATION

Over the past year, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum have been travelling across Scotland to hear your views on loneliness and isolation and what can be done to help combat this within society.

With the help of our affiliates and trade union retired members' branches we have held meetings in Dumfries, Inverness, Edinburgh and Dundee.

As well as continuing with our campaigning work and everyday business, over the course of three years the SPF will also be working on a Scottish Government funded project, in collaboration with the STUC, where we will be working with their equalities committees older people's organisations, trade unions and retired trade union branches and trades councils to implement change.



It is very important that new social networks are quickly established after retirement, or even put in place beforehand, to help combat loneliness and isolation.

“As the UK's population rapidly ages, the issue of acute loneliness and social isolation is one of the biggest challenges facing our society”
Social Care Institute for Excellence 2012

At the SPF Annual Conference in Dundee, a motion tabled by Individual Member, Maureen Gardner, was unanimously passed by delegates. It read as follows:-

“This conference is aware of the loneliness and isolation experienced by many pensioners. It therefore urges the STUC to encourage its affiliates to set up retired members' branches and regional committees where these do not already exist.

We believe that union members will benefit from this type of contact which can have a social as well as an educational and business function.”

OUT AND ABOUT

In addition to the work highlighted in this publication and our recent newsletters, the volunteers, and staff, of the SPF Executive Committee have attended various conferences and events throughout 2017/2018 and listed below is just some of the work carried out by them:-

- NPC Pensioners' Parliament
- STUC Youth Conference, Glasgow
- Age Scotland Parliamentary Reception
- GOPWA AGM
- Poverty Alliance Tackling Poverty Conference
- Holyrood Conference on Community Transport (Speaker)
- UN Older People's Day Dundee
- STUC Black Workers' Conference
- Age Scotland Regional Assembly
- Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing
- Cross Party Group on funerals and Bereavement
- STUC Women's Conference, Glenrothes
- Scotland Policy Conference: Priorities for the NHS
- Poverty Alliance 7th Annual Conference
- Scotland Policy Conference: Priorities for Primary Care in Scotland
- Action on Elder Abuse Annual Conference, Glasgow
- STUC Disabled Workers' Conference
- Westminster Employment Forum: Next steps for policy for older workers and state pension reform
- Campaign to End Loneliness workshops and briefings
- Scottish Funeral Poverty Working Group
- CSPA Annual Conference
- STUC Congress Aviemore.
- SPF Outreach meetings
- Meeting with Jeanne Freeman MSP
- Age Scotland Conference, Glasgow
- STUC Equalities Conference: Mental Health Awareness (Speaker)



We also continue to issue press releases and give comment to press articles and local and national radio on issues of interest and concern for older people in Scotland.

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SPF MEMBERSHIP

Our members are very important to us and their commitment allows us to carry out the work that we have been doing over the past 27 years. Through our membership we represent over 150,000 older people across Scotland

We presently have 3 categories of membership of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum and our membership numbers are as follows:

Individual Pensioner Members	382
Other Individual Members	21
Organisations and Local Forums	172

We thank you for your continued support to the work we carry out on your behalf



thank you!

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT As at 31st March 2018

INCOME AS AT 31st March 2018

<u>MEMBERSHIP FEES</u>		<u>3168.50</u>
<u>DONATIONS</u>		<u>5042.00</u>
<u>GENERATED INCOME</u>		
Conference Fees	470.00	
Scottish Government	33093.50	<u>33,563.50</u>
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>		<u>41,774.00</u>

EXPENDITURE AS AT 31st March 2018

<u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u>		
Volunteer Expenses/Catering	1559.03	<u>1559.03</u>
<u>POSTAGE/PRINTING/OFFICE</u>		
Publications	805.00	
Postage	1228.78	<u>2033.78</u>
<u>CAMPAIGNS AND OUTREACH</u>		<u>4488.83</u>
<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>		
Remuneration	20.00	
Watson & Co Audit Fees	576.00	
Rent/Rates	1414.99	
Petty Cash Float	190.00	<u>2200.99</u>
<u>SALARY</u>		
Salary	27297.80	<u>27297.80</u>
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>37,580.43</u>

Balance		
As at 31/03/17	16,904.95	
Add:		
Income	41,774.00	
Less:		
Expenditure	37,580.43	
Year End Balance		<u>21,098.52</u>

Audited and verified by Watson & Co. Chartered Accountants on 17th May 2018



Join the Scottish Pensioners' Forum

Application forms can be requested from:

**Scottish Pensioners' Forum,
333 Woodlands Road, Glasgow
G3 6NG**

Telephone 0141 337 8113



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Government**

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