Meet Teresa Lavery, SOPA Joint-Vice Chair

SOPA News

Date: February 25, 2024

I was fortunate enough to take early retirement in 2018 after 30+ years working mainly in the public sector. I learned very quickly to enjoy my freedom, but I did think that it would be interesting and constructive to offer my skills to a third-sector organisation that might be moving towards a period of change.

I didn't realise at the time when I was appointed as an associate trustee at SOPA that there was more than one change to tackle with my new fellow trustees, so I've been kept busy for a while.

I think that my past work experiences helped with some of the change management that we undertook. I am particularly pleased with being able to help shape SOPA's next three-year plan and to work with fellow trustees and members in developing ways of measuring our impact on issues that affect older people in Scotland.

I worked in local authorities in planning and evaluating public services and, in the last 10 years of my career, I worked specifically in health and social care services.

I did a lot of work in public consultations on services and in building relationships between service providers and service users.

Much of my work was organising and supporting the planning work of senior managers in Health and Social Care in developing, delivering and evaluating services.

I also did a lot of work with voluntary sector organisations to help them develop in ways that equipped them with the business skills to bid for and deliver, local services under contract with local authorities and the Health and Social Care Partnerships.

I am enjoying my retirement. I enjoy getting out and about with friends visiting galleries and exhibitions and places of interest. I am an active member of the 3Ls art club at Strathclyde University's Centre for Lifelong Learning.

The Centre and the art club have given me the confidence to put some of my paintings into public exhibitions – something I could not have imagined doing 10 years ago.

I have taken up Bridge which is a game that will keep me learning forever, and I have a young cockapoo dog who makes me go out walking at least three times a day, regardless of the weather.