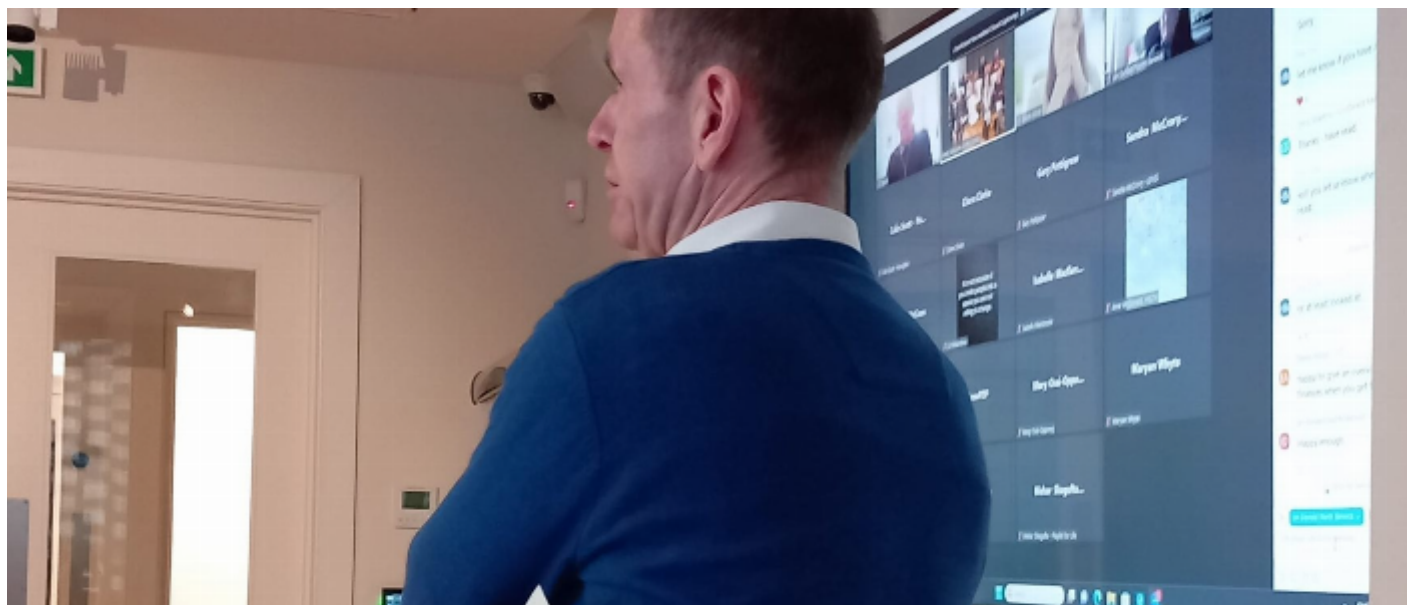




SOPA Annual General Meeting on 29th January 2024 in Glasgow



By David Paterson and Hetty Malcolm-Smith

Date: February 25, 2024

SOPA's Chair, David Paterson, warmly welcomed 37 of our members and associate members to the 2022/23 annual general meeting. Due to a clash of dates with another partner organisation, SOPA moved its usual December AGM to last month.

Nonetheless, we were delighted to see so many representatives from our member organisations attending in person, especially as the weather that week had been bad enough to cause public transport difficulties.

Several others attended online, including members from the Highlands to the Scottish Borders.

Venue

Despite the cold and wet winter weather that day, we were comfortable and warm in the relatively new refurbished meeting facilities at Mackintosh At The Willow.

Formerly known as the Willow Tearooms, it is considered by many to be an art nouveau masterpiece designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

Chair's Report

The Chair thanked our Lead Officer, Hetty Malcolm-Smith, for all her work in organising the AGM and for all her work during the past year.

He reported that last year SOPA had continued to earnestly promote the voice of older people through a range of initiatives.

These included a parliamentary reception at Holyrood, meetings with cross-party groups, regular members meetings, and participating and working with a range of organisations and working groups on older people's issues, such as the Older Peoples Strategic Action Forum.

Achievements

In addition to SOPA organising and delivering a very successful and well-attended Assembly on 9th October last year, other notable achievements include the continuing appointment of Older People's Champions and the Age-Friendly Communities Project funded by the Tudor Trust.

Election Results

The members noted and approved the results of the election of trustees. These were David Paterson, Catriona Mason, Mary Osei-Oppong, and Chris Grant. Office-bearers were re-elected unopposed.

Financial Report

Elaine Alsop, SOPA's independent financial examiner, spoke about the annual accounts she audited which were duly approved. She noted risks are recorded on a risk register and policies continue to be under review to ensure governance arrangements are robust to support the delivery of SOPA's three-year strategic plan.

Presentations

Three presentations followed the formal AGM business:

- **Teresa Lavery:** SOPA's Vice Chair, informed members about the board's development day held on 25th January 2024 and the ongoing work of the trustees on our strategic plan for the next three years and also the new working groups being set up.
- **Tony Donohoe:** SOPA's Project Coordinator for Age-Friendly Communities, updated our audience on his work to date.
- **Dr. Louise Brown Nicholls:** Senior Lecturer in Psychology Health and Wellbeing, at University of Strathclyde, is the founding Director of the Strathclyde Ageing Network. Her research is focused on understanding human memory and attention, and how these cognitive abilities are affected by adult ageing, especially healthy ageing. She delivered an interesting and illuminating presentation on her research into health and wellbeing through the adult

lifespan.

Closing Remarks

The presentations were followed by a lively question and answer session. The meeting closed with the Chair thanking members, trustees, and staff for their commitment and engagement throughout the past year.