Exciting Development as Perth & Kinross Council Join UK Network and More

SOPA News

By Tony Donohoe - SOPA AfC Project Coordinator

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Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) is the lead organisation in Scotland promoting Age-friendly Communities (AfCs). SOPA's Project Co-ordinator, Tony Donohoe, is working with representatives from different areas around Scotland to adopt the AfC approach and become part of a global movement, supported by the World Health Organisation.

Perth & Kinross Council Achieves AfC Status

Further to our update in the November Newsletter, there has been an exciting development for the Age-Friendly Communities project in Scotland with the Perth & Kinross Council area now registered as an AfC with the UK network of AfCs.

This means that older people in Perth & Kinross can look forward to the progression of various activities and initiatives that are age-friendly over the coming months and years. Perth & Kinross now joins South Lanarkshire and South Ayrshire as part of the growing Age-friendly movement in Scotland.

For information on the Perth & Kinross AfC, you can contact their Lead Officer, Andrea Paius (Perth & Kinross Health & Social Care Partnership) at apaius@pkc.gov.uk.

Expanding Connections Across the UK

Other developments in our Age-friendly work include making connections with Age-friendly representatives in Northern Ireland and Wales to learn about other approaches across the UK. In Wales, for example, they have an Older People's Commissioner who supports the development of AfCs across the country.

The development of AfCs is one of the main priorities within the Commissioner's current Work Programme.

In Northern Ireland, there is a strong network of AfCs covering all areas – Belfast, for example, has an Age-Friendly Belfast Plan covering the period 2023-2027. Through making connections and learning from across the UK, we are aiming to develop the best approach to AfCs in Scotland.

Growth of SOPA's AfC Network

SOPA's AfC Network Group has grown to have representatives from eleven Local Authority areas in Scotland. As well as the three AfC areas, there are eight other areas at various stages of considering adopting the AfC approach to make their communities more age-friendly and promote ageing well among older people.

Through establishing and supporting the group, SOPA hopes to assist in increasing the number of AfCs across Scotland over the next year.

Our national Advisory Group is also playing a role in helping to develop the SOPA AfC project going forward, and we are undertaking an evaluation of the project to measure our impact and help improve its sustainability.

Upcoming AfC Events

SOPA is also hosting two specific events on AfCs in March 2024 – one focusing on AfCs in rural areas and specific challenges and another on how to resource an AfC in your area.

We hope that these events will bring together interested parties to share practice and learning on two key aspects of developing and delivering AfCs in Scotland.

Looking ahead

Over the next year or so we want to help as many communities as possible in Scotland to become more age-friendly. We are looking forward to an exciting 2024 and developing the AfC approach in Scotland!

If you or your organisation wish to find out more, please contact Tony Donohoe, AfC Project Co-ordinator at:

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