Latest News on SOPA's Age Friendly Communities (AfC) Work

SOPA News

By Tony Donohoe, 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.

SOPA recently held two exciting events promoting Age-friendly Communities (AfCs) across Scotland. Both events took place in March, with the first held at Perth Concert Hall and the second at the Cosla Conference Centre in Edinburgh. In Perth, the focus was on AfCs in a rural context, while the Edinburgh event concentrated on how to resource an AfC.

The events brought together speakers from across the UK, including Northern Ireland, Wales, and England. Representatives from two of Scotland's current AfCs, Perth & Kinross and South Ayrshire, also presented at the seminars.

The events successfully engaged various stakeholders interested in AfCs from different regions of Scotland. Approximately 80 people attended both events, sharing practices and learning about AfCs.

Attendees included representatives from Health & Social Care Partnerships, Local Authorities, Charities, Cultural Organisations, and older people keen to make a difference in their communities.

A brief report on the events will be available shortly on our website, and all presentations can be found at SOPA | Age-friendly Communities (scotopa.org.uk).

In addition to the events, Tony, our AfC Project Co-ordinator, has been actively spreading the AfC message across Scotland. He has visited events in Perth & Kinross, the Scottish Borders, and East Lothian.

SOPA's AfC Network Group is growing in strength and will meet again at the end of April, with our National Advisory Group scheduled to meet in early May. We have also made initial contacts with new areas, including Glasgow and Midlothian, and hope to engage with them further.

At the national partnership level, Tony has arranged meetings with Public Health Scotland, the Third Sector Interface Network, and Health & Social Care Scotland. Our aim is to continue building the AfC movement across Scotland at both national and local levels, and we are looking to encourage and support more areas to become AfC over the next year.

Tony will also be attending the International Conference on Integrated Care in Belfast this April, where he will present an Oral Paper on Age-friendly Communities (AfCs) on behalf of SOPA. The conference theme is 'Taking the Leap: Making Integrated Care a Reality for People and Communities,' and SOPA's presentation will fall under the sub-theme of "Improving Health & Well-Being."

We look forward to sharing more details about this presentation in the next newsletter!

As we move into 2024, we are excited to continue our work and further develop the AfC approach across Scotland.

If you or your organization are interested in learning more, please contact Tony Donohoe, our AfC Project Co-ordinator, at Email: tony@scotopa.org.uk or Mobile: 07745 355234.