

SCOTTISH PENSIONERS' FORUM

Annual Report 2022-2023

Established 1992



CAMPAIGNING FOR A BETTER DEAL FOR OLDER PEOPLE SINCE 1992



Chairperson's Foreword

Since our last annual report there has been a large change in the rules surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic and we are slowly beginning to see some semblance of normality returning to our daily lives. However, the downside seems to be that a lot of older people are still uncertain of venturing out and engaging in social pursuits while the threat of Covid is still present.

We are happy that many of the Cross-Party Groups within the Scottish Parliament have resumed, albeit on a hybrid basis, which allows us to feed in the views of our members directly to government and policy makers.

We are thankful that as an organisation we are still managing to get out and about and over the past 12 months have held three outreach meetings, had our information stall at over 15 events, carried out two deep dive exercises, responded to 5 consultations relating to older people's issues, met with politicians at both local and national level and attended various events organised by our affiliates -it's certainly been a busy year but it's had to be!

One of the big successes for older people over the past few months was the reinstatement of the triple lock element of the state pension after the UK Government reneged on their manifesto promise by suspending it for a year. But, as we all know, inflation has eroded any benefit this meagre rise has offered with fuel bills and food prices, as well as many other things, escalating to record levels. We also know that the attack on the state pension is far from over and we must work together to safeguard this right for future generations.

As we celebrate 31 years of campaigning for older people's rights across Scotland, we continue to campaign on such issues as the National Care Service as well as embarking on new campaigns to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis particularly on fuel and energy costs and soaring food prices. In addition to this, we have recently joined with Unite the Union and other older people's organisations across the UK on the 'No to 68' campaign which is challenging any further rises to the state pension age - so watch this space on that one!

At this point, I wish to offer my sincere thanks to Eileen our administrator for her dedication and hard work over the last year as well as our Executive Committee members who continue to work tirelessly on behalf of older people. And finally you, our members, for your continued support.

Rose

Rose Jackson
Chairperson

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SPF ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022, GLASGOW



In June 2022, we were delighted to be able to hold our first in-person conference in 3 years at the City Chambers in Glasgow and what a day it turned out to be! Over 100 older people from across Scotland attended to help us celebrate our 30th year which made it all the more special as it was the first national older people's event since lockdown restrictions were lifted.

Our guest speakers included Roz Foyer, General Secretary of the STUC, Colin Scott, Hourglass Scotland, Thompson's Solicitors and Jim McGinn, Unite Scotland National Care Service Campaign.

An emergency motion tabled from Unite Glasgow Retired Members Branch condemned the UK Government's Spring Statement for its failure to deal with the ever-increasing price rises facing older people due to the cost-of-living crisis and delegates agreed that this would be the SPF's main priority moving forward - we believe that the work we have carried out during this year reflects our commitment to that pledge.

Executive Committee 2022-2023

Helen Biggins	Individual Member	
John Boyle	Individual Member	
Jim Bradley	Individual Member	
Surjit Chowdhary	Mel Milaap/Central Gurdwhara	Treasurer
Linda Clarke	STUC-Unite	
David Edwards	Individual Member	
Sam Gibson	Individual Member	
Alastair Hunter	STUC-UCU	
Rose Jackson	STUC-UNISO/N	Chairperson
Bill Lynch	Individual Member	
Bill Martin	The Thursday Club	
Dorothy McHugh	Dundee Pensioners' Forum	
Elinor McKenzie	Individual Member	
Alex Morrison	East Kilbride Seniors Forum	
William Quigley	GMB	
Rosemary Smith	Individual Member	
Jim Symons	National Union of Journalists	
Ian Wallace	Irvine Seniors Forum	
Colin Wakeling	NASUWT	Vice Chairperson
William Welsh	RMT	
June Whitelaw	STUC – USDAW	Assistant Secretary

OUR WORK THROUGHOUT 2022-2023

The SPF Launches Campaign Against Ofgem and Energy Giants



In August 2022, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum launched its campaign against Ofgem to coincide with their latest price cap announcement. Taking to the streets outside Ofgem headquarters at Commonwealth House in Glasgow, demonstrators called for more work to be done to tackle fuel poverty and hand delivered a letter to Director of Retail, Neil Lawrence, setting out our demands.

Rose Jackson, SPF Chair commented in a strongly worded press statement:

It is a ridiculous situation that consumers should pay for the failure of suppliers who generate nothing but a culture of fear surrounding rising energy bills. At a time when consumers are generally facing massive hikes in their energy costs, many Scottish pensioners are facing the stark choice between eating and heating this winter. Britain is lauded as one of the world's largest and most stable economies, yet it cannot secure basic necessities for the most vulnerable people in society. According to Ofgem's own research in 2014, almost 80% of Scots were rationing their winter energy use and prices were nowhere near those predicted over the next few months – the consequences of this crisis are going to be catastrophic for so many. Money expert, Martin Lewis, was right when accusing Ofgem of having sold consumers down the river! The organisation has failed to protect the interests of customers, preferring to insulate the fat cats in their boardrooms instead. Ofgem has lost its focus.

In response to our letter, a meeting was arranged between representatives of the SPF and their Director of Retail, Neil Lawrence, where we set out our demands and as a consequence of this we are now members of Ofgem's Vulnerable Consumers Stakeholder Reference Group where we can make our views heard on your behalf. We recently responded to their call for evidence on Levelisation of Payment Methods Cost Differentials, with their report and findings to be published over the next few months.



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SOOPIR event, Renfrewshire



Thanks to Renfrewshire Council for once again inviting our information stall along to their yearly **Strengthening Opportunities for Older People (SOOPIR)** event at the Lagoon Leisure Centre in Paisley. With over 150 people in attendance, it was lovely to see so many older people getting out and about and enjoying themselves. As well as ourselves, there were stalls from community groups across Renfrewshire as well as the Community Safety Team of Police Scotland. A very worthwhile event and It's always great to catch up with some of our members too!

Falkirk People's Assembly Challenges Local Authority Cuts

At our outreach meeting in Falkirk in March 2023, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum were shocked to discover the severity of some of the local authority budget cuts in the area which included the removal of certain social care packages for older people and the removal of pest control services.

We were more than happy to take up their request for support and recently attended the Falkirk People's Assembly rally and demonstration alongside local authority councillors, campaigning groups and MSP's to send a clear message that the people of Falkirk will challenge these cuts at every turn.



UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS 2022



On 29th September, the SPF held their yearly demonstration outside the Scottish Parliament to mark UN International Day of Older Persons. This year's theme was "**The Resilience and Contributions of Older Women**" and, as always, we were joined by our colleagues from the WASPI campaign, who the SPF work closely with on their Cross-Party Group.

For the first time ever, we held an event afterwards to mark the day at the **Scottish Poetry Library**, which was warmly received. Thanks to Carol Mochan MSP, who tabled a motion on behalf of older people, and Katy Clark MSP, who put forward a question at First Minister's Questions on our behalf.

Motion tabled by Carol Mochan MSP

That the Parliament notes that October 1st is international Day for Older Persons; understands that the theme of this years theme is the resilience and contributions of older women; believes that the current cost of living crisis is having a significant and detrimental impact on our elderly population; further understands that a significant proportion of older households are affected by fuel poverty and therefore commends the efforts of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum who are campaigning relentlessly, including outside the Scottish Parliament on September 29th, for a fairer society that treats its elderly population with dignity and respect.

No to 68 Campaign



In a campaign spearheaded by the Unite for A Worker's Economy campaign, the Scottish Pensioners Forum joined forces with Unite the Union and the National Pensioners' Convention to hold coordinated demonstrations in both London and Edinburgh where demonstrators handed in a petition, signed by 38,000 people, to the UK Government demanding that there be an end to any further raising of the state pension age in the UK.



In a televised interview at the Edinburgh demonstration Rose Jackson, SPF Chair commented:

“The UK state pension is already on its knees, being one of the lowest in the developed world, and yet the UK Government are determined to rob us blind – forcing us to work until we drop. Workers should not be made to pay for decades of politicians’ bad choices. Older people deserve dignity, respect and financial security, now and for generations to come. The profits of the UK’s largest companies are now 89% higher than before the Pandemic, but workers aren’t seeing any of this. Workplace pensions have been raided, life expectancy is no longer rising, the NHS has been cut to the bone and wages are failing to keep pace with the rising cost of living – and yet politicians in power continue to chip away at what is rightfully ours – we can’t just sit back and take this!”

Eileen Cawley of the Scottish Pensioners’ Forum, who spoke at the demonstration at Westminster stated:

“Across the UK we all need to work on this together because there is strength in numbers. People may think that because they live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland that everything is different but its not. These are reserved matters and affect us all equally. We have to fight cuts to our welfare state and challenge Westminster at every turn. It is vital that more young people get involved in the campaign against state pension rises as the media’s typical angle is to continuously pit young against old as though their interest are somehow mutually exclusive.”

Further demonstrations will be organised over the coming months.



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OUT AND ABOUT (and Online too)

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 2022-2023 and listed below are just some of those we have attended:

- Health and Social Care Consultation event
- Festival of Politics 2022
- STUC 125 Voices Launch
- Scots CONNECT: Making Work Fairer for Women over 50
- Challenge Poverty Week events
- Supporting Healthy Ageing at Work (SHAW) Advisory Board
- UN Older People's Day event, Edinburgh
- Glasgow Golden Generation/Scottish Ahlul Bayt partnership event
- SG Human Rights Governance and Engagement Advisory Board
- Cross Party Group on Older People, Age and Ageing
- Cross Party Group on Funerals and Bereavement
- Cross Party Group on Poverty
- Cross Party Group: WASPI
- Cross Party Group on Women's Health
- Know Your Rights Workshop
- Older People's Strategic Action Forum meetings
- Strengthening Opportunities for Older People in Renfrewshire event
- SWC International Women's Day event
- SG Pension Age Disability Payment Reference Group
- Scottish Older People's Assembly
- National Care Service Key Stakeholder Reference Group
- Poverty Alliance Annual Conference
- STUC Disabled Workers' Conference
- STUC Women's Conference
- UNISON Scotland Retired Members Conference
- STUC Congress
- Westminster Forums event: Next Steps for Social Care in Scotland
- First Minister's Anti-Poverty Summit
- Equality and Human Rights Commission roundtable event
- Ofgem Vulnerability Summit
- Generations Working Together Annual Conference
- Kings College London: Human rights of Older People Networking Conference
- Scottish Government Volunteering Action Plan Launch
- Falkirk People's Assembly Demo: Local Authority Cuts

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OUT AND ABOUT (In Pictures)



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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 31 years. Through our membership we represent over 280,000 older people across Scotland

We presently have 3 categories of membership of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum and new members are always welcome. These categories of membership are as follows:

- Individual Pensioner Members
- Other Individual Members
- Organisations and Local Forums

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



Join the Scottish Pensioners Forum
Application forms can be requested from:

Margaret Irwin Centre

8 Landressy Street

Glasgow G40 1BP

Telephone 0141 337 8113

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SCOTTISH PENSIONERS' FORUM
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

As at 31st March 2023

Balance As at 31/03/22	23,559.76
Add: Income	49,557.00
Less: Expenditure	49,483.76
Balance	<u>23,673.00</u>

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT As at 31st March 2023

<u>Balance as at 1st April 2022</u>		<u>23,599.76</u>
 <u>INCOME</u>		
<u>MEMBERSHIP FEES</u>		
Organisations	665.00	
Local Groups	25.00	
Individual Pensioners	265.00	955.00
 <u>DONATIONS</u>		 861.50
<u>GENERATED INCOME</u>		
Inspiring Scotland	47,740.50	47,740.50
 <u>Total Income</u>		 <u>49,557.00</u>
 <u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
<u>EXECUTIVE EXPENSES</u>		807.79
<u>POSTAGE/PRINTING/OFFICE</u>		
Report/Publications	774.63	
Postage Costs	686.74	
ICO GDPR Registration	40.00	
Stationery and Sundries	526.54	
Office Hardware	993.11	
Sundries	50.00	3,071.02
 <u>CONFERENCES/OUTREACH</u>		 <u>4,014.87</u>
<u>PETTY CASH</u>		200.00
<u>SALARY AND OVERHEAD COSTS</u>		41,390.08
 <u>Total Expenditure</u>		 <u>49,483.76</u>
 Year End Balance 31/3/23		 <u>23,673.00</u>



Scottish Pensioners' Forum

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PEOPLE SINCE 1992**



Funded through the Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights Fund

