

Scotland Branch Newsletter

Issue 15



TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH OUR MEMBERS



Statement from the Branch Chair

Hello everyone. Branch Officers continue to be concerned about the serious drop in members and the fact that the group structure has failed through lack of willing members to form committees.

So we thought it was a good idea to ask members some questions, in the hope of finding a solution. We hope you will take the time to send us your answers or ideas.

You can reply by letter, email or phone to Wilson MacDonald, 95 Eastwoodmains Road, Clarkston, Glasgow G76 7HG Tel: 07596 028119 Email: Wilson.Macdonald@cspa.co.uk

1. What would make you get involved in CSPA activities?
2. What information would you like

to see in the Scotland newsletter and *The Pensioner* magazine?

3. Would you be interested in attending a meeting if you were able to travel to it or alternatively attend virtually?
4. Do you find the Scotland Branch newsletter interesting and informative?
5. Do you think the CSPA is still relevant to you today?

The deadline for replies is Monday 11 December 2023.

And as we are now on the countdown to the festive season, may I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I hope 2024 is kind to us all.
Wilson Macdonald

Important announcement: deceased members

As Branch Membership Secretary, I would like to take this opportunity to explain to members why, on occasion, branch newsletters are sent out to recently deceased members.

To meet printing deadlines, the mailing list of 'active' branch members is sent to the printers by head office staff in Croydon at least a month prior to the newsletters being posted to members.

Scotland Branch does not have the capability or facility to do this, so it is carried out on behalf of the branch by head office. At the end of every calendar month, MyCSP, the pension provider, gives head office a list of deceased members names. This is usually where the difficulty arises, so there is nothing anyone can do to stop the occasional newsletter being sent out to a recently deceased member.

I appreciate that receiving mail addressed to a deceased loved one can cause distress, but although my contact details are at the bottom of this newsletter, I have no control over the distribution of the newsletter.

I hope this explanation helps you, as Branch members, to understand the logistics involved in sending out the newsletter.

Michael Kirby

Report from CSPA Annual General Meeting

At the national AGM, held in Kenilworth on 11-12 October, Scotland Branch was represented by Wilson Macdonald and Christine McGiveron (Executive Council members), Cherry Dolan (delegate) and Michael Kirby (sponsored representative).

The AGM was opened at 2pm by Kenilworth Deputy Mayor Alan Chalmers.

CSPA General Secretary Sally Tsoukaris gave her first AGM speech, presenting the annual report. The statement of accounts was moved by National Treasurer Mike Sparham and adopted by the AGM, and a Certificate of Merit was given to outgoing General Secretary Lisa Ray recognising her work for the CSPA.

As these newsletters are designed to report on Scottish matters, there is insufficient space here to list full details of the many motions brought to the AGM by groups and branches, and the results. These will be listed in the supplement included with

Scotland Branch was represented at the AGM by four representatives



the Winter edition of *The Pensioner* magazine, due out in December.

Guest speaker Angela Saunders from the Lifeboat Fund – the civil service charity that raises funds for the RNLI – told us about the organisation’s campaign to raise £18,000 each for lifeboat stations at Whitby, Tower (London), Blackpool and Stonehaven, and also help for crews on Lake Tanzania in Kenya.

On the second day of the AGM, Stella Humphreys from the Cabinet Office gave a presentation on what is happening regarding the McCloud remedy for pensions after 2015

and before 2022. The legislation to deal with this was put in place on 1 October and those affected will receive remedial statements in the year commencing April 2024.

There was a very interesting presentation on Independent Age’s campaign to support having a Commissioner for Older People in England and Scotland (Wales and Northern Ireland already have one).

The AGM closed with a vote of thanks given by Les Priestly, EC member.

ABOVE: Branch Chair Wilson Macdonald INSET: Cherry Dolan and Michael Kirby

Free Legal Advice Service

It has been some time since this important service was advertised. Free initial legal advice is one of the benefits available to Scotland Branch members. For further information and assistance, please email Thompsons Solicitors at advicecentre@thompsons-scotland.co.uk or telephone 0800 801 299. Consultation is

for a maximum of 30 minutes and members will be required to provide their membership number prior to advice.

As there is now a new national membership database, please contact Michael Kirby, who can verify your up-to-date membership number – contact details as listed on this newsletter.



Scottish Older People's Assembly

Branch Officers attended the SOPA 2023 Assembly in Glasgow on 9 October, where there was a CSPA Scotland Branch stall.

Professor Jason Leitch (pictured), National Clinical Director of the Scottish Government and Senior Clinical Adviser to the Scottish Government, gave an extremely informative speech regarding the decisions made during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic.

He has been highly praised for his ability to translate complex

SOPA events could prove to be a valuable opportunity to recruit

scientific information to the public, providing calm, clear advice during the unprecedented circumstances the world was facing. He delivered his speech to the attendees in an unusually entertaining manner, without losing the understanding of the severity of this new disease.

SOPA Chair David Paterson gave the annual update and the event proceeded with members' statements – including from African Caribbean Elders, Lanarkshire Unite Retired Members Association and LGBT Health, to name but a few. It was chaired by Teresa Lavery, SOPA Trustee.

An update was given by Tony Donohoe on age-friendly communities. Various workshops

were then organised and after lunch a cross-party panel of MSPs answered questions online.

This was followed by a debate on SOPA priorities for the coming year, chaired by Teresa Lavery and Catriona Mason, both SOPA Trustees.

It is hoped that SOPA events such as this will prove to be a valuable recruitment opportunity for the Branch, as it is not widely known that becoming a member of the CSPA is not reserved only for retired civil servants but is available to those in public service such as the NHS and the teaching profession.

Two such attendees approached our stand and Michael Kirby gave his business cards to them in the hope they would consider membership and spread the word.

As word-of-mouth is the best recruitment tool, please reach out to your friends and/or colleagues who may be interested.



THOMAS LAMONT, CC BY-SA 4.0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Venue for members meetings

The Griffin public house, which has recently been refurbished, has been chosen as the most suitable venue for members meetings.

The room for the meetings can be accessed through the bar at 266 Bath Street or via a door in Elmbank Street. The Branch Officers have negotiated a favourable room hire rate for the meetings, and those wishing to use the facilities of the Griffin are free to do so either before or after the meeting.

Meetings will be held on the first Thursday of February, May, September and November. The start time will remain at 1.30pm. and **any branch member** is welcome to come along.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 1 February 2024. Members who wish to attend a meeting 'virtually' please contact Michael Kirby.

We have negotiated a favourable room rate at The Griffin





Christmas Lunch

We will end the year with our Christmas lunch. It will once again be held in the Pipers' Tryst Restaurant (National Piping Centre), 30-34 McPhater Street, Glasgow G4 OHW, on **Thursday 14 December with a start time of 12 noon.**

The deadline for booking your place is 30 November – contact Michael Kirby.

For anyone who is unable to access the Pipers' Tryst menu for the festive season, please do not panic – turkey is available!

Keeping your details up to date

Membership Secretary Michael Kirby (contact details at the bottom of this page) is the man to contact if you need to make any changes to your personal data held

on the Scotland Branch section of the CSPA database – change of address, email, phone number or any other membership matter with which you require assistance.



SP Energy Networks Priority Services Register

In the event of a power cut, our teams work around the clock to restore your electricity as quickly as possible.

To enquire about being placed on this register – phone 0330 1010 167

Any feedback regarding this newsletter would be very much appreciated.



Remember: do not leave *The Pensioner* magazine in doctors' or dentists' surgeries or any public places as it contains names and addresses of Alliance officers.

The CSPA is committed to ensuring that your information and privacy are protected.