



CYMRU OLDER PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2020–2021

December 2021

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Foreword

I am very pleased to present this fifth Annual Report for Cymru Older People's Alliance since we have become a registered charity to give a national voice for 50 plus Forums and Groups across Wales.

The last 12 months have again been challenging for older people as substantial impacts on their lives have continued for a second year through the pandemic. We are pleased that our charity has been able to make an influential contribution to the response by ensuring the voice of the 50+ Forums has been heard at the national level in discussions about Covid-19 and information and advice about it has been disseminated on a very regular basis. The pandemic is still not over over of course and we will need to ensure the concerns of older people continue to be heard and that their needs are prioritised as society recovers from the pandemic.

The Board have met monthly over the last year and we have also organised monthly meetings with Forum Representatives. Since our last Annual Report was presented to a successful "virtual" AGM in January 2021, there has been good progress made. We continue to make a substantial contribution to the shaping of national policy through the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing and related groups. Our strategic review has continued and action agreed to bring about fundamental change in the impact we are able to make. A Forum Development Plan was published as a basis for reform and revitalisation of Forums across Wales. We have continued to ensure that our Charity is well managed and continues to meet the Charity Commission requirements for registered charities.

Looking ahead over the next 12 months, there are a number of challenges and opportunities. The Welsh Government's Strategy for an Ageing Society has been published and we will want to ensure that COPA and the Forums influence the effective implementation of its Delivery Plan. Above all else, we must prioritise our efforts to grow our charity and its capability, capacity and resources. This will empower our work with Welsh Government and others to make sure that Age Friendly Communities are developed across Wales and that reformed and revitalised 50+ Forums are fully engaged in the co-production of that vision.

In closing, I want to firstly acknowledge the significant contribution that Gaynor Davies has made to COPA over many years. Gaynor was a past Chair and most recently Treasurer of COPA before she retired in October. I must also thank Age Cymru who have given us excellent support over the last year and we are very grateful to Vicki, Kathy and Rachel. We are also most grateful for the support and engagement that we receive from Helena Herklots, our Commissioner for Older People and her team. We are also very grateful to Wyn Llewellyn for his continued support as our independent advisor. Finally, thanks are due to all our Trustees and Forum Representatives for their hard work.

S G Milsom
Chair, Cymru Older People's Alliance

Introduction

1. The year 2020–2021 has been another challenging period for Cymru Older People's Alliance (COPA) and for Wales, particularly given the substantial impact of the Covid pandemic on the lives of older people. This report is the fifth Annual Report since we became a Registered Charity and covers the period from November 2020 to December 2021 although our accounts cover the 2020-21 financial year only.

Context

2. COPA has been recognised by Welsh Government as the national charity to lead and support 50+ forums in Wales and they have provided small-scale development funding since 2014. Resources for further changes are available to ensure COPA becomes a stronger and more democratic organisation.
3. COPA brings together the views, opinions and concerns of local older people's forums to the all-Wales level. This provides a strong, credible and coherent voice to government at all levels and represents what older people want and need. COPA is a group that has existed in different forms and titles since 2001, initially working under the umbrella of the Welsh Government's Strategy for Older People. As such it has a strong tradition of influencing policy and practice for older people in Wales. It is now a genuinely independent organisation – a voice for older people led by older people. COPA will challenge ageism and lobby government nationally and locally so older people are properly consulted and involved in decisions that affect them and their communities, built on the evidence of what is the most effective in giving everybody the opportunity to age well.
4. The future direction of COPA has been continued to be discussed and agreed with members across all parts of Wales through extensive engagement with Forums.

The Board

5. The Board of Trustees (see Appendix 1) has met regularly over the last 12 months with structured agendas and an agreed Business Plan. COPA has worked hard to devise, debate and review position papers and policies and to ensure that we fulfil Charity Commission requirements. We have clarified our position on some priority issues impacting on older people that we have raised in our discussions with Welsh Government Ministers and officials and with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales.

Reporting on Key Objectives

6. In the last 12 months, COPA has been fully operational as a Registered Charity. A Board of 9 Trustees, including 3 co-opted Trustees, meet monthly. The COPA Board has addressed a range of issues over the last year and a short summary of the action taken is provided for the main objectives in the agreed Business Plan for 2020–21.

Governance of the Charity

7. Our Annual Report and Financial Statement agreed at our 2020 AGM were published to the Charity Commission website with our Annual Accounts.
8. We secured continuing Welsh Government funding for 2020–21 and expenditure has been monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. A decision was taken to revert to an approach of only claiming funding on a needs-basis rather than automatically each quarter.
9. Continuing through the pandemic restrictions, Board meetings have been held virtually on a monthly basis to ensure COPA's continued contribution on behalf of older people.
10. Revisions to the COPA constitution that were presented to the last AGM and notification were sent to the Charity Commission.
11. A strategic review of COPA, its purpose and structure were completed and discussions have been held around the future of the charity and its branding and funding.
12. Recruitment for new co-opted and elected Trustees was undertaken and two new Trustees appointed – and one Trustee has retired.
13. A Business Plan was agreed for 2021–22 and has been submitted to Welsh Government. Subsequent revisions to reflect the impact of the pandemic were also submitted to them.
14. A review of COPA's charity policies was completed and minor changes agreed.

Policy Work on Behalf of Older People

15. The Joint Working Concordant with the other national organisations for older people in Wales has continued and regular discussions have been held by the five organisations with the Commissioner for Older People.
16. Campaigning Priorities for 2021 were agreed at our 2020 AGM and published. We also produced a COPA "Manifesto" to influence political parties in the 2021 Senedd Elections. We have responded to a variety of Welsh Government and other consultations.

17. Communication has continued with the deputy minister for Health and Social Care and the Older People's Commissioner regarding the Future of 50+ Forums and Age Friendly Communities.
18. COPA has Board Members on the Ministerial Advisory Group on Ageing who have made substantial contributions to the coproduction of the Strategy for an Ageing Society in Wales. COPA provides members for the Older People's Commission's Abuse Action Group, and the Pensions Service's Planning for Later Life Group. The Chair also attends regular Covid-19 meetings with the Older People's Commissioner and other national older people's organisations. The Chair attends the Welsh Senedd Cross Party Groups on Older People and on Intergenerational Solidarity. Reports are made regularly to Forum Representatives (Voting Members) to keep them updated on these discussions as well as action regarding the pandemic and the implications for older people.
19. Communication priorities have progressed in 2020–21. The COPA Facebook page continues to grow following its inception last year.
20. A follow-up to the survey to research the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on older people in Wales was implemented by Age Cymru with COPA and the other four national older people's organisations. Over 1,000 responses were received and a report has been published.
21. Policy Position Papers were published on Climate Change, Social Services and (updated) Paying for Care. A Position Paper on Housing has also been agreed for adoption by the AGM in January 2022.
22. There are a range of key national policy issues where we monitor developments and secure COPA involvement and intervention where needed.
 - Promoting Age Friendly Communities
 - Working with Ageing Well
 - Isolation and Loneliness
 - Digital Inclusion
 - Transport including Bus Passes
 - Paying for Care
 - NHS and Older People
 - Care Home Quality of Care and Life
 - Implementation of Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014
 - Public Toilets Strategy Implementation
 - UK Benefits for Older People including TV Licence for over 75s

Engagement of forums

23. The 'buddying' scheme with Forum Chairs continues to ensure sustained engagement with the membership. Under the scheme, Trustees establish and maintain contact with Chairs to offer support for their local work and campaigning and create a two-way dialogue to inform COPA's work.

24. Monthly Voting Members meetings continued to be held virtually to improve communications with forums and to engage them with COPAs plans – 17 of the 22 Forums are COPA members. These meetings have also brought contributions from other organisations as a basis for debate and engagement.
25. A Forum Development Plan was agreed by the Board as a basis for reform and revitalisation of Forums across Wales. It sets out proposals for action and is being utilised as a basis for dialogue with Welsh Government and other key partners to move forward this agenda.
26. A Forum Grants Programme was initiated to support member forums to hold events to re-start activities post-Covid and to attract potential new members. This scheme will be extended into 2022-23 given the uncertainties about the pandemic and recovery from it.
27. Guidance has been published on a Framework for Older People's Forums and Groups – the first in a series of documents to bring together and share local ideas and projects for a national level audience. It aims to provide a basis for stronger and more effective forums to develop that ensure the voice of older people is heard and acted upon.
28. Guidance was also published for Forums on the General Data Protection Regulations so that Forums respect and take care of people's personal data and do not keep any information that they do not need.

Looking forward

29. The Board of Trustees has agreed its priorities and a new Business Plan for 2020–21. The main priorities that will be targeted cover:
 - make a difference to the lives of older people through activity that creates age friendly communities, addresses isolation and loneliness, increases intergenerational solidarity and promotes well-being
 - contributing to the implementation and delivery of the new Strategy for an Ageing Society including through membership of the Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing
 - promote a dialogue with Welsh Government and Commissioner for Older People to commence a programme of reform and revitalisation of forums in Wales
 - effective relationships with other national older people's organisations
 - effective relationships with the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Care and Older People's Commissioner, especially in relation to developing Age Friendly Communities

- working with 50+ forums across all parts of Wales, including a programme of increased dialogue and visits (post Covid-19) to promote COPA
 - increasing Voting Members and Trustees
 - improved communications, including continued development of the website and Facebook page
 - holding an Annual General Meeting and publishing an Annual Report
30. As a result of our Strategic Review, we will implement a programme of development. This will aim to change and grow our charity and increase its impact, capacity and resources to enable us to maximise the potential of COPA to support the revitalisation of Forums and ensure older people in communities across Wales are effectively engaged.
31. Over the next year, we will continue to make improvements to communication in order to raise awareness of who we are and what we do. It is vital that we continue to ensure that older people's voices are heard at the planning stages of national policies, legislation and policies. Our focus will be on improving communication with all the local 50+ forums across Wales.
32. We believe that working in partnership is the only way forward and will always aim to co-operate and engage with other older people's organisations to ensure a coherent voice is heard from older people in Wales. We will of course build on our strong partnership working with Welsh Government, the Older People's Commissioner and Age Cymru, as well as with the other national older people's organisations through the Joint Working Concordant.
33. The Welsh Government Review of Engagement of Older People will be central to our work over the next 12 months. Our policy is that age-friendly communities should be developed across Wales and we see local forums playing an essential role in that agenda as well as in reconstruction post-Covid and in promoting intergenerational solidarity.
34. The new Welsh Government Strategy for an Ageing Society will provide a refreshed framework for COPA's policy work on behalf of older people and we want to ensure the voice of older people is heard and taken into account in the implementations of its objectives.

Finances

35. Total funding for 2020–21 agreed by the Welsh Government is £12,800. Due to the pandemic, it has not been possible to hold face to face meetings or progress projects. A decision was therefore taken by the Board in March 2021 not to drawdown further Welsh Government funding unless there was a clear need and demand demonstrated. This is reflected in our verified accounts for the 2020-21 financial year at Appendix 2. This shows that as at the 4 April 2021 COPA hold a bank balance of £18,567.79 including reserves of £8,000. Plans have been agreed for the effective utilisation of this expenditure once the pandemic is over. There are robust and effective arrangements for the monitoring and accountability for this expenditure through policies and processes agreed by the Board. One of the Trustees oversees these arrangements and reports to the Board on a regular basis. Any risks to the achievement of objectives and related expenditure are identified and addressed on an ongoing basis through our Risk Management policy.

Conclusions

36. COPA's strongest public benefit is enabling older people to have the confidence and access to change the conversation about ageing in Wales to one that is lead from the experience of older people about their needs and what works best for them in an age-friendly country. The next 12 months will be critical as we continue to work with others to support recovery from the pandemic and ensure that 50+ forums in Wales have a viable and sustainable future and that their contribution to shaping and creating Age Friendly Communities is recognised and supported at all levels of government.

COPA Board
December 2021

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Appendix 1

The Board

Steve Milsom – Chair and Policy Officer – Caerphilly Over 50s

Dr Ralph Stevens -Vice Chair and Communications Officer – Caerphilly Over 50s

Gaynor Davies – Treasurer (retired September 2021) – Pembrokeshire 50+

Angela Tritschler – Treasurer (from September 2021) – RCT OPAG/50+

Lyn Finn - Events Officer – Cardiff 50+

Huw Bendall (from May 2021) – Cardiff 50+

Cllr Andrew Hinchliff – Conwy Older Peoples Champion

Susanne Jones- Gwynedd Older Peoples Council

Hazel Maguire – Swansea 50+

Mollie Reach (from November 2021) – Pembrokeshire 50+

Independent Advisor - Wyn Llewellyn - Carmarthenshire

Appendix 2

The Accounts

CYMRU OLDER PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2020-2021

INCOME

AGE UK £2,296.00 PMT030420 7/4/20
AGE UK £6,000.00 PMT041120 6/11/20
AGE UK £2,000.00 PMT240321 26/3/21

EXPENDITURE

7733 M&S £35.00 Phyllis's flowers 18/5/20
7733 Mission SE £100.00 Donation 19/5/20
300148 Refund AH £68.00 9/6/20
300149 Rock Level £144.00 20/7/20
7733 L.H. Phillips £960.00 29/9/20
300150 Carms 50+ £200.00 12/10/20
7733 Edwards Ins £320.00 26/3/21

TOTAL INCOME £10,296.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £1,827.00

OPENING BANK BALANCE	£10,098.79
ADD: INCOME	£10,296.00
LESS: EXPENDITURE	£1,827.00
*CLOSING BANK BALANCE	£18,567.79

*Note – a Reserve of £8,000 is held in accordance with the agreed COPA reserves policy