

issue 13 • january 2013

# aspire

age  
sector  
platform

speaking from experience

## Fear of cold is top concern for pensioners



Also inside this edition...

Platform members meet  
Justice Minister

Lobby at  
Westminster

2013 NI Pensioners  
Parliament Dates

Member Spotlight:  
COAST

## Message from the Chair

Happy New Year!

Our front page has highlighted the main concern for us all – keeping warm in winter. Read more about the launch of the NI Pensioners Parliament Report and issues of concern to older people on the following pages.

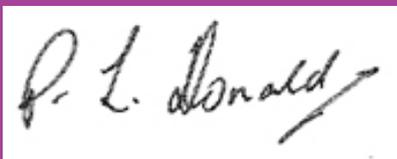


This year marks the 3rd year of the NI Pensioners Parliament, which you can find out about on page 7. We're eager to hear what issues are important to you, and if they have changed from previous years.

Inside this edition you can find news about a meeting with the Justice Minister, some useful ageing statistics from the 2011 Census, a report from our trip to Westminster and info on our exciting new online tool for the 'Silver Saver' campaign.

I'd like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to a valued member, Bryan Alexander, who unfortunately passed away last month. More words of tribute can be found on page 19.

I hope you enjoy this edition!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. L. Donald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Patricia Donald

## Report launched at Stormont

The 2012 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament Report was launched on Friday 16 November 2012, and found that the biggest worry facing the older population here is keeping warm in winter, with four out of five pensioners in Northern Ireland concerned about the cost of heating their home.

The report also highlighted fear of crime, food prices and access to health and social care as major concerns for the older population.

Coinciding with the launch of the report, around 70 pensioners from across Northern Ireland gathered in the Senate Chamber at Parliament Buildings for a debate centred on three motions which emerged from the Pensioners Parliament earlier in the year. The debate which was hosted by Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, William Hay MLA, saw three Ministers from the Executive officially respond to the motions – OFMdFM Junior Minister Jennifer McCann MLA, Justice Minister David Ford MLA and Health Minister Edwin Poots MLA.

Michael Monaghan from Age Sector Platform said: "With the high cost of electricity, gas and oil, it is no surprise that the number one worry for older people is the basic ability to keep warm during the winter months. Despite the fact that last winter was relatively mild, the level of concern has risen. As we approach the coldest months of the year, we are calling on the Northern Ireland Executive to provide help for the most vulnerable."

"Last year the winter fuel payment was cut by between £50 and £100 for pensioners; and whilst the rest of the UK is assisted by a scheme entitling some pensioners to £130 off their electricity bill, the 'Warm Home Discount Scheme' has not been introduced here. Why does the region with the highest levels of pensioner poverty and fuel poverty provide less help to older people for heating their homes?"

Mr Monaghan continued: "The launch of this report is the culmination of a long process of engagement with older people throughout the year, and we are pleased that our Assembly has

allowed us to present three important motions on behalf of the 300,000 pensioners living in Northern Ireland.”

William Hay MLA, Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, said: “On what was the building’s 80th anniversary, I was particularly delighted to host the debate of the Pensioners Parliament. I chaired the Pensioners Parliament in Parliament Buildings in 2011 and with an agenda focusing on health, social care and crime, it again highlighted issues of real concern to older people. The event is a great example of democracy in action and was a fantastic opportunity for Members and Ministers to hear from older people themselves on the issues that matter to them.”

To view an electronic copy of the 2012 NI Pensioners Parliament Report or to see more photos from the Stormont debate, please visit [www.agesectorplatform.org](http://www.agesectorplatform.org).



Michael Monaghan and Patricia Donald present the Speaker of NI Assembly William Hay MLA with a copy of the 2012 NI Pensioners Parliament Report

## Platform members meet Justice Minister

During November 2012, members of Age Sector Platform's Community Safety Campaign Committee met with Justice Minister David Ford to discuss the motions passed in relation to fear of crime at the 2012 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament.

The delegation presented issues in relation to community safety that were of concern to the older population, namely:



- Visibility of police
- Speediness of police in responding to crimes against older people
- Low level of conviction rates for crimes against older people
- Lack of engagement with older people in some areas
- Support for older victims; and finally
- A perception of 'soft' sentencing when dealing with crimes against older people.

The Justice Minister accepted that crimes against older people and particularly the fear that these crimes generate was a major cause for concern.

He acknowledged that fear of crime has an impact on the health and well-being of older people and that it can lead to a greater sense of isolation and withdrawal from the community. The Minister said he was committed to doing more to tackle the fear of crime and that this was a priority in the new Community Safety Strategy.

The Minister welcomed the engagement with the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament and Age Sector Platform on these matters and that he hoped that there may be opportunities to work together to tackle these issues in the months ahead.

## 2011 Census confirms population ageing

During the last few months, statistics from the 2011 Census continue to be published, and have reinforced the fact that the population here in Northern Ireland is ageing. There has been an 18% increase in the number of people aged over 65 living here - exactly 263,720 in total - since the previous Census of 2001. Those over 65 now represent approximately 15% of the entire population.

**aspire** is pleased to publish for your information some more detailed statistics detailing the demography of your own local area below.

	All ages	65-84 years	85+ years	% aged 65+
Northern Ireland	1,810,863	232,324	31,396	14.56
Antrim	53,428	6,340	731	13.24
Ards	78,078	11,761	1,505	16.99
Armagh	59,340	7,467	955	14.19
Ballymena	64,044	9,410	1,244	16.63
Ballymoney	31,224	4,152	500	14.9
Banbridge	48,339	5,894	802	13.85
Belfast	280,962	35,268	5,623	14.55
Carrickfergus	39,114	5,541	712	15.99
Castlereagh	67,242	10,270	1,544	17.57
Coleraine	59,067	8,743	1,146	16.74
Cookstown	37,013	4,194	564	12.85
Craigavon	93,023	11,238	1,379	13.56
Derry	107,877	11,647	1,205	11.92
Down	69,731	9,119	1,297	14.94
Dungannon	57,852	6,336	836	12.4
Fermanagh	61,805	8,053	1,171	14.92
Larne	32,180	4,841	643	17.04
Limavady	33,536	3,779	456	12.63
Lisburn	120,165	14,804	1,855	13.86
Magherafelt	45,038	4,974	655	12.49
Moyle	17,050	2,580	341	17.13
Newry and Mourne	99,480	10,912	1,344	12.32
Newtownabbey	85,139	11,603	1,512	15.41
North Down	78,937	12,475	1,997	18.33
Omagh	51,356	5,919	796	13.08
Strabane	39,843	5,004	583	14.02

Visit [www.nisra.gov.uk/ninis](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/ninis) for more statistics from the 2011 Census, or phone 028 9034 8111 for any detailed requests for data.

## NPC Dignity Code accepted by Health Minister

The National Pensioners' Convention (NPC) has developed a 'Dignity Code' which sets out minimum standards for the dignified treatment of older people, whether in hospital or the community. The Code has been widely supported by both those in the care sector and across the political spectrum, and was recently accepted by Northern Ireland Health Minister, Edwin Poots MLA.

### NPC Dignity Code

The purpose of this Dignity Code is to uphold the rights and maintain the personal dignity of older people, within the context of ensuring the health, safety and well being of those who are increasingly less able to care for themselves or to properly conduct their affairs.

This Code recognises that certain practices and actions are unacceptable to older people, such as:

- Being abusive or disrespectful in any way, ignoring people or assuming they cannot do things for themselves
- Treating older people as objects or speaking about them in their presence as if they were not there
- Not respecting the need for privacy
- Not informing older people of what is happening in a way that they can understand
- Changing the older person's environment without their permission
- Intervening or performing care without consent
- Using unnecessary medication or restraints
- Failing to take care of an older person's personal appearance
- Not allowing older people to speak for themselves, either directly or through the use of a friend, relative or advocate
- Refusing treatment on the grounds of age

This Code therefore calls for:

- Respect for individuals to make up their own minds, and for their personal wishes as expressed in 'living wills', for implementation when they can no longer express themselves clearly
- Respect for an individual's habits, values, particular cultural background and any needs, linguistic or otherwise
- The use of formal spoken terms of address, unless invited to do otherwise
- Comfort, consideration, inclusion, participation, stimulation and a sense of purpose in all aspects of care
- Care to be adapted to the needs of the individual
- Support for the individual to maintain their hygiene and personal appearance
- Respect for people's homes, living space and privacy
- Concerns to be dealt with thoroughly and the right to complain without fear of retribution
- The provision of advocacy services where appropriate

## The 2013 NI Pensioners Parliament

The Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament was launched in 2011 and allows older people from across Northern Ireland to have their say on the issues that matter to them. Organised by Age Sector Platform, 2013 will mark the third year of the Parliament.

Local parliaments will take place between February and April 2013 and will ensure that older people's views from every county in Northern Ireland are represented.



<b>Belfast</b>	Thursday 21 February 2013
<b>Enniskillen</b>	Friday 1 March 2013
<b>Ballymoney</b>	Friday 8 March 2013
<b>Armagh</b>	Thursday 14 March 2013
<b>Derry/Londonderry</b>	Thursday 21 March 2013
<b>Strabane</b>	Friday 12 April 2013
<b>Downpatrick</b>	Friday 19 April 2013



All venues are centrally located in each town/city and each event will take place between 10am and 3.30pm (lunch will be provided). Delegates from each local parliament will be selected to attend the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in Belfast on Thursday 30 and Friday 31 May 2013. This two-day regional parliament will decide on the priority issues for older people across the province.

If you would like to attend your local parliament, please contact Age Sector Platform by phoning 028 9031 2089 or emailing [info@agesectorplatform.org](mailto:info@agesectorplatform.org). As spaces are limited, booking in advance is essential. The deadline for RSVP is two weeks prior to the date of your local parliament.

**Don't forget...** Please fill in the NI Pensioners Parliament questionnaire. The results will form the basis of the discussion at each local parliament and will determine what issues are taken to the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in May 2013. The questionnaire is short and simple to complete and will take no more than 5 minutes. Hard copies of the questionnaire are available from Age Sector Platform by telephoning 028 9031 2089 or emailing [info@agesectorplatform.org](mailto:info@agesectorplatform.org). The questionnaire can also be accessed online by visiting [www.pensionersparliament.org](http://www.pensionersparliament.org).

## ‘Silver Saver’ campaign

Since the last edition of *aspire*, the Silver Saver campaign has grown in strength with almost 6,000 signatures in support of the motion calling on food retailers to introduce a pensioner ‘Discount Day’ to help older shoppers to cope with the rising cost of living and enable them to maintain a balanced and healthy diet.

The signatures have been growing online (via [www.silversaver.org.uk](http://www.silversaver.org.uk)) and through petition postcards. If you haven’t signed the petition yet, please show your support by visiting the website or phoning 028 9031 2089 to request a batch of petition postcards.

Over the last few weeks and months, all the main political parties and numerous individual MPs, MLAs and Councillors have announced their support; with several councils from across Northern Ireland also passing a motion officially supporting the campaign.

A brand new aspect to the campaign was launched during December 2012. Along with our good friends at Stratagem, Age Sector Platform has developed an iCampaigner tool which allows you to easily and quickly inform your local MP and MLAs about the campaign, and seek their support.

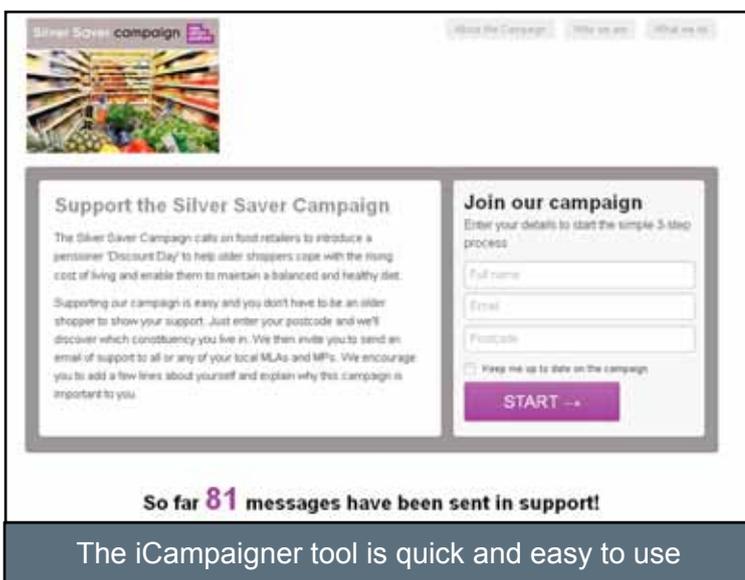
Although this campaign is directed at food retailers and supermarkets, any political support will be of great value in raising awareness of the campaign in local areas, and will add pressure on the retailers from a political perspective. Many politicians have excellent links with local retailers, which should be utilized.

Age Sector Platform Secretary, Ivan Baxter (72), said of the Silver Saver campaign tool, “I found the online campaign site really easy to navigate - it was just a couple of clicks and off my letter went to my MP and MLAs.”

To use the iCampaigner tool, simply visit [www.silversaver.org.uk](http://www.silversaver.org.uk) and scroll down to click on the iCampaigner link. The tool will ask for your postcode in order to identify your local elected representatives, and within a few steps your local politicians will be aware of your support for the campaign.

Eddie Lynch, Chief Executive of Age Sector Platform, said, “We are delighted with the progress of the campaign with almost 6,000 signatures so far to our online petition.





With the introduction of the iCampaigner in recent weeks we have seen large numbers of emails being sent by Silver Saver campaign supporters to their MPs and MLAs across every constituency in Northern Ireland.

Supporters have already been telling us that they have had positive engagement with their elected representatives as a

result, with many MPs and MLAs not only signing the petition but sharing comments on the issue.”

If you have any problems in using the iCampaigner tool, please phone the Age Sector Platform office on 028 9031 2089 and or email [info@agesectorplatform.org](mailto:info@agesectorplatform.org), and please keep us informed of any responses you receive from your local representatives!



Party leaders Peter Robinson MLA (DUP), Alasdair McDonnell MP MLA (SDLP) and Mike Nesbitt MLA (UUP) show their support for the campaign at their party conferences

## Lobby at Westminster

At the tail end of October 2012, a group of older people from Age Sector Platform's Westminster Campaign Committee travelled to London for their annual lobby of Parliament. The trip, which has become a permanent feature in the campaign calendar, saw members squeeze in two full days of meetings to ensure issues controlled at Westminster were raised with the people that can make a difference.

During the two days at Westminster, the group met with a cross party group of Northern Ireland MPs, the Chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee, the Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and a group of Peers from Northern Ireland.

Eleven MPs from Northern Ireland attended the meeting with Platform members on Tuesday 30 October where the group discussed a number of motions from the 2012 NI Pensioners Parliament. The group passionately argued to dispel the myth that pensioners are



getting off lightly during these times of austerity, whilst raising issues in relation to pension reform and fuel poverty. Every Northern Ireland political party at Westminster was represented, and the MPs used the opportunity to reinforce their commitment to working on a cross-party basis to address the issues in relation to pensions and benefits.



The group met with a cross party delegation of Northern Ireland MPs



Following the meeting with Northern Ireland MPs, the group also met with the Shadow Secretary of State for NI, Vernon Coaker MP, and the Labour MP who is currently Chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee, Dame Anne Begg MP.

Dame Begg MP provided the group with a unique insight into the work of the DWP committee and discussed the Coalition Government's plans for pension reform.

The group discussed the special case for help in Northern Ireland in relation to fuel poverty with Vernon Coaker MP. The group talked of the 'Warm Homes Discount Scheme' available in all other parts of the UK, but not in Northern Ireland, and Mr Coaker MP promised to examine this and bring it to the attention of the NI Executive.

During day two of the trip, the group met with a number of Northern Ireland Peers (Members of the House of Lords). Since this was the first time a Westminster delegation had met with any NI Peers during their time in London, the group began with an introduction to Age Sector Platform and the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament.

The group of Peers listened intently to the concerns that were raised through the Pensioners Parliament, and suggested that regular updates and briefings being sent to MPs should also be sent to them; promising to help in whatever way they could.

Anne Watson from the Westminster Campaign Committee, who travelled to Westminster for the first time in 2012, commented: "The trip to London was very worthwhile because I can honestly say those we met listened, and we will be sure to follow up with them. The two days we spent in London were extremely busy, and with no time to shop or even sightsee, I can tell you I worked harder than when I was getting paid in employment! I was very impressed with the whole experience."

More photographs from the 2012 Lobby of Parliament at Westminster can be viewed by clicking on 'photo gallery' at [www.agesectorplatform.org](http://www.agesectorplatform.org).



The group met with Vernon Coaker MP and Dame Anne Begg MP

# Member Spotlight

## COAST

COAST (Causeway Older Active Strategic Team) sub regional network has been working in partnership to plan the way forward to best serve the interests of older people in the Causeway Coast and Glens for over three years now.

Supported by Age NI, COAST aims to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations across a wide range of service areas including health, housing, education, transport, local government and the voluntary sector. It has been working with existing age sector groups and the community sector across the 4 council districts that cover COAST to support, inform and provide vital networking opportunities that will increase long term sustainability now and into the future. The Strategic Partnership of COAST is made up of local representatives with a joint vision to work together.



Thelma Dillon,  
Chairperson of COAST

COAST's mission is to improve the quality of life, health and well-being of older people across the Causeway Coast and Glen's area promoting equal access to services. Its vision is of older people living in a vibrant and caring society where their voices are heard and respected.



COAST members joined 150 delegates at the 'Celebrate Age' event in Titanic Building, Belfast

### What has COAST done in 2012?

- Get the voice of older people heard
- Empower older people
- Co-ordinate interagency working
- Support local older people's groups and individuals

In April 2012, COAST members were in attendance at Age NI's 'Celebrate Age' event in the Titanic Building, Belfast where 150 representatives from 11 sub-regional Networks, community, voluntary and statutory organisations came together to celebrate successful partnership working and collaboration.

# Member Spotlight

## Services for Older People Survey

COAST in conjunction with Age NI carried out research in 2011 which identified gaps in services for older people within Limavady, Coleraine, Ballymoney and Moyle. COAST listens to older people, involves older people and plans services with and for older people.

### Some comments from the COAST survey:

*“It’s scary getting older; there should be more preparation for old age.”*

*“I don’t like to ask what I’m entitled to; someone to call would be nice”*

*“A wee bit of company would be nice. I miss laughing.”*

## Empowering Older people

COAST is represented on the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament, and it also inputs directly to policies of the Northern Health & Social Care Trust’s through the Older People’s Panel. Many of the representatives of COAST attend regional campaigns to ensure the voice of older people in the Causeway area is heard.

Older people on the COAST sub regional network ensure local issues are raised and older people are engaged with the right decision makers and represent older people on different decision making panels and partnerships.

Chairperson of COAST, Thelma Dillon, who is one of the two COAST representatives on the Age Sector Platform, along with a few other members of COAST assisted in a survey with over 1,200 older people across the province earlier this year as part of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament. COAST members have also supported the ‘Silver Saver’ campaign, which was developed by Age Sector Platform on the back of one of the most popular motions at the Parliament.



Thelma Dillon (left) helps raise awareness for ‘Silver Saver’ campaign

COAST

Causeway Older Active Strategic Team

## Bill recognised as 'Diamond Champion'

Age Sector Platform's former Chairperson, Bill Carson from Randalstown, was one of sixty older people in Northern Ireland shortlisted as a Diamond Champion during October 2012.

The Diamond Champion awards, developed by WRVS to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, involved searching for Diamond Champions across the UK - older people who give their time to improve the lives of those around them. Supported by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, Diamond Champions recognises the contribution that people over the age of 60 make through volunteering. In total, 4,573 people were nominated as Diamond Champions across the UK, representing 249 charities.



Bill was one of sixty people shortlisted as champions and was invited to an event in the stunning Titanic building, where those shortlisted were presented with a specially designed Diamond Champions pin. They also received a certificate signed by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall.

Ten Diamond Champions from Northern Ireland were also chosen to attend a celebration at St James's Palace in London on 29 November, where they met Their Royal Highnesses.

Congratulations to Bill Carson and the other 59 Diamond Champions from Northern Ireland who were selected for their outstanding volunteer work.

### The sixty Northern Ireland champions

<b>Robert James Alexander</b> County Antrim	<b>Ronnie Hamilton</b> County Down	<b>Mary Morrison</b> Belfast
<b>Margaret Andrews</b> Belfast	<b>Josephine Higgins</b> County Antrim	<b>Bill Morrow</b> Belfast
<b>Tom Armour</b> County Antrim	<b>Midworth Jamieson</b> County Armagh	<b>Brian Mullan</b> County Antrim
<b>Robert Atkinson</b> Belfast	<b>Freda Johnston</b> County Down	<b>Anna O'Malley</b> Antrim
<b>Jane Bannister</b> County Antrim	<b>John Jordan</b> County Down	<b>Hugh Orr</b> County Antrim
<b>Rita Beattie</b> Belfast	<b>Alice Kidd</b> Antrim	<b>Henry Phillips</b> County Antrim
<b>David Bell</b> Belfast	<b>Robin Kilpatrick</b> Belfast	<b>Jim Pierce</b> Belfast
<b>Laurence Bellinger</b> County Down	<b>Winsome Kilpatrick</b> Belfast	<b>Annabel Poots</b> County Antrim
<b>Bill Carson</b> County Antrim	<b>Anne King</b> Antrim	<b>Thos Gerald Potts</b> Belfast
<b>Pauline Carson</b> County Down	<b>Raye Kingston</b> Armagh	<b>Herbie Rennie</b> Belfast
<b>Lynn Davidson</b> Belfast	<b>Vida Lake</b> County Tyrone	<b>Yvonne Rooney</b> County Antrim
<b>Rosemary Davis</b> County Armagh	<b>Brian Maguire</b> County Tyrone	<b>Irene Scott</b> Belfast
<b>Perry Donaldson</b> Belfast	<b>John Marshall</b> County Down	<b>Norman Scott</b> County Antrim
<b>Vivienne Dunlop</b> County Antrim	<b>Kathleen Mayers</b> County Armagh	<b>Norma Shannon</b> County Antrim
<b>Margaret Elder</b> Belfast	<b>Sean McCaffrey</b> Belfast	<b>Jean Shields</b> County Tyrone
<b>Liz Fleming</b> Belfast	<b>Rosina McKee</b> Belfast	<b>Mabel Stevenson</b> Belfast
<b>Margaret Flynn</b> County Antrim	<b>Margaret McKeown</b> County Antrim	<b>May Tuttle</b> County Antrim
<b>Ann Greenan</b> Belfast	<b>Susan McMullan</b> Belfast	<b>Cecil Walker</b> County Antrim
<b>Margaret Gurney</b> County Antrim	<b>Jimmy Millar</b> County Antrim	<b>Ruby Wray</b> County Londonderry
<b>May Hamilton</b> County Down	<b>Eileen Moore</b> County Antrim	<b>Elsie Vance</b> County Antrim



CELEBRATING THE ROLE OF  
OLDER VOLUNTEERS

## Who Cares? The Future of Adult Care and Support in Northern Ireland

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has launched for consultation the discussion document “Who Cares? The Future of Adult Care and Support in Northern Ireland”, as a first step in a three stage process to reform the provision and funding of adult care and support services.

The purpose of the “Who Cares?” discussion document is to raise awareness about the pressures among the population of Northern Ireland, and to engage as many people as possible in the debate about the future provision and funding of these services.

The discussion document can be accessed by visiting [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/consultations/current\\_consultations/](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/consultations/current_consultations/) or you can request hard copies by phoning 028 9076 5630. Friday 15 March 2013.



The closing date for responses is

## Active Ageing Strategy

In developing the Active Ageing Strategy, OFMdfM officials have been working closely with many of the organisations that work with older people here including Age Sector Platform and Age NI.

As a result of this, OFMdfM officials have drastically reworked the draft strategy in recent months, and are currently working on the Early Actions Plan to implement the Strategy. Once finalised, the result will be a strategy and Early Actions Plan, with content that has been strongly influenced by both older people and people who work closely with older people.

OFMdfM intends to publicly consult on the finalised strategy in February or March 2013.

Keep an eye out for the consultation details on the OFMdfM website in the coming months at [www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/about-ofmdfm/ofmdfm-consultation-zone/](http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/about-ofmdfm/ofmdfm-consultation-zone/) or phone 028 9052 8400.

## Up for a laugh?

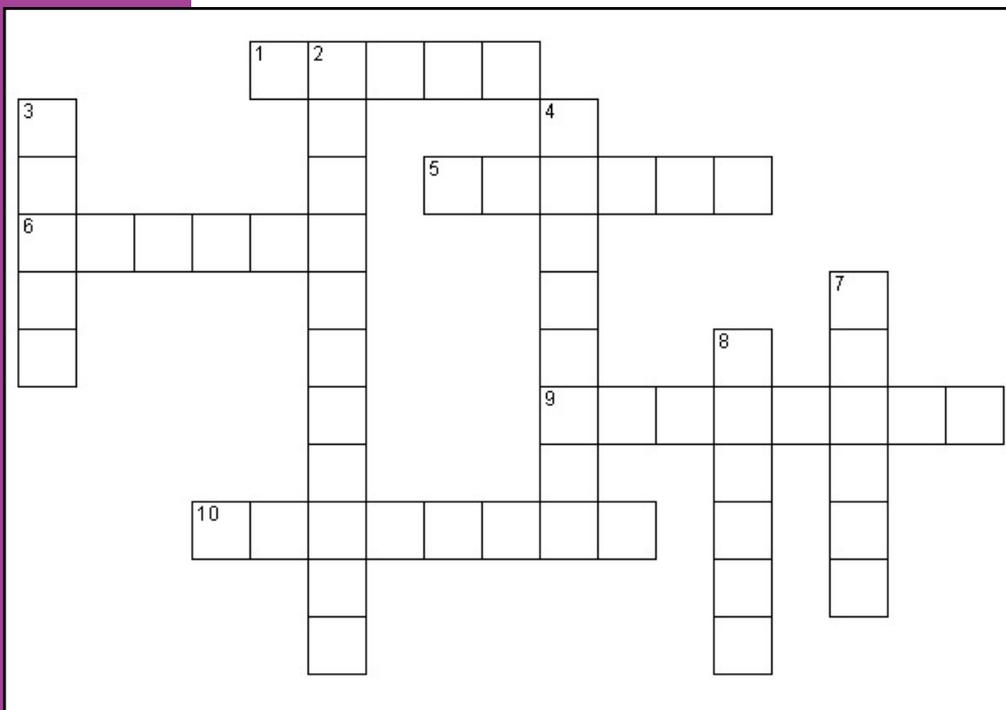
An elderly gentleman had hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor and the doctor was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids that allowed the gentleman to hear 100%.

The elderly gentleman went back in a month and the doctor said: "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again." To which the gentleman said: "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've already changed my will three times!"

A reporter was interviewing a 104 year-old woman: "And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?" the reporter asked.

She simply replied, "No peer pressure".

## Crossword



### ACROSS

- No. of older people in NI shortlisted as Diamond Champions
- Fill in the blank - Causeway Older \_\_\_\_\_ Strategic Team
- Government Dept responsible for Active Ageing Strategy
- Name of MP who chairs DWP Committee at Westminster
- First name of new Junior Minister McCann

### DOWN

- Name of online tool launched for 'Silver Saver' campaign
- Surname of NI Health Minister
- Town where 2013 Co. Tyrone Parliament will be held
- No. of NI MPs who met ASP members at Westminster
- Name of population survey conducted every ten years

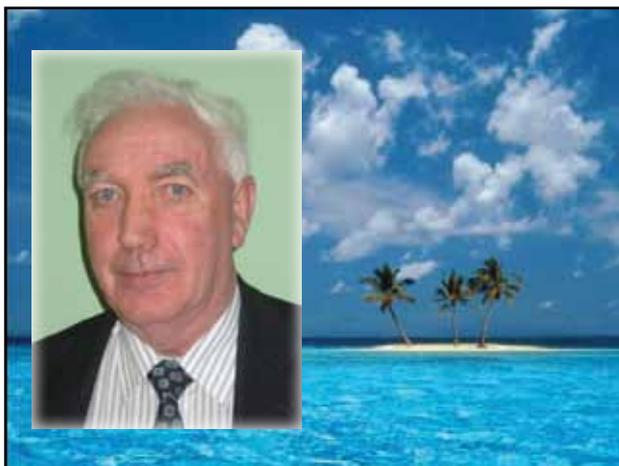
ANSWERS AT  
BOTTOM OF  
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# Desert Island Discs

with Francis Hughes, Vice-Chair of Age Sector Platform

Welcome to *aspire*'s running feature based loosely on the BBC Radio 4 *Desert Island Discs* programme!

Our third castaway is Vice-Chair of Age Sector Platform, Francis Hughes. We asked Francis to select six pieces of music, a luxury item and a book that he could not live without if stranded on a Desert Island.



## Music

- 1) **Gentle Mother by Big Tom and the Mainliners**  
A great reminder of the mother who gave us life and one of the best recordings by Big Tom McBride.
- 2) **Christmas 1914 by Mickey MacConnell**  
An illustration of life in the trenches on the Western front and the futility and horror of war.
- 3) **The Hens march o'er The Midden by The Scottish Fiddle Orchestra**  
To remind me of my country roots and the many visits to Scotland.
- 4) **Farewell to Carlingford, written by Tommy Makem, performed by The Dubliners**  
This will bring me back to where we once had a holiday home for ten years.
- 5) **Nine to Five by Dolly Parton**  
A great reminder that I am no longer constrained by these office hours and the daily grind that this involves.
- 6) **The Boys from the County Armagh by Bridie Gallagher**  
You can take the man out of Armagh but you can never take Armagh out of the man.

## Luxury Item

Hand Saw - To be able to use the skills of woodwork learned over seven years at school and hope the Island has trees from which to create a shelter and a raft to be used as a means of escape.

## Book

Walking with Angels by Carmel Reilly - reading this you will never feel alone.

Crossword Answers  
ACROSS: 1. Sixty 5. Active 6. OFMDFM 9. AnneBegg 10. Jennifer  
DOWN: 2. Campaigner 3. Poots 4. Strabane 7. Eleven 8. Census

# Support a strong voice for older people

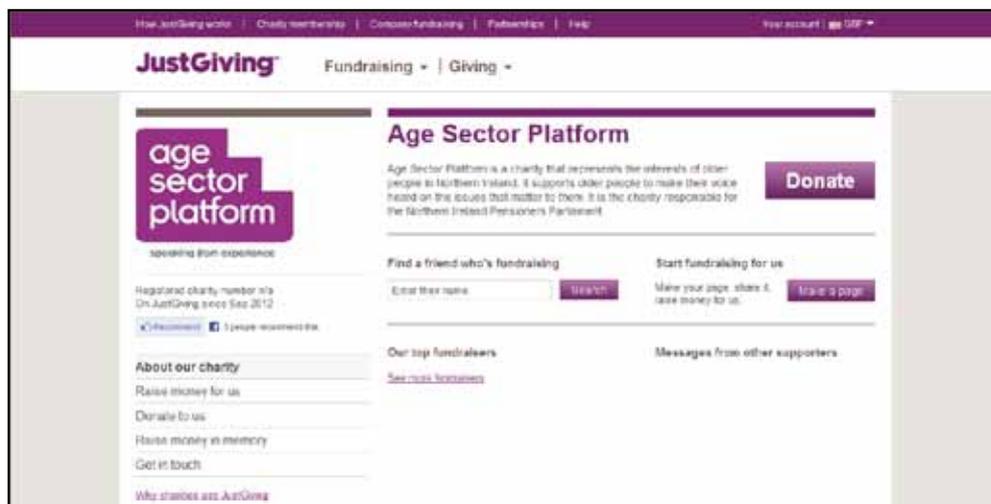
Age Sector Platform is a registered charity, and is grateful for all donations - big or small, one-off donations or monthly donations. If you believe the work of Age Sector Platform and the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament is worthwhile, please consider donating whatever you can afford to help us ensure this valuable work continues in the future.

## Donate by cheque

Make it payable to 'Age Sector Platform', and post it to Age Sector Platform, Merrion Business Centre, 58 Howard Street, Belfast, BT1 6PJ

## Donate online

Visit our website at [www.agesectorplatform.org](http://www.agesectorplatform.org) and click on the 'Donate' button, or visit our Just Giving web page at [www.justgiving.com/agesector](http://www.justgiving.com/agesector).



## Donate by text

Simply text the words '**PLAT28**' then a space, then '**£5**' to 70070 to donate £5.

Or text '**PLAT28 £10**' to 70070 to donate £10.

The donation will show on your next phone bill, or will be taken from your current balance.

**Don't forget...if you're a taxpayer,  
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## A tribute to a valued member of the Platform

It is with sadness that I report the death of our CWU Retired Members' delegate Bryan Alexander to Age Sector Platform. Bryan passed away on the 8 December 2012 after a long illness. After a funeral service in the Methodist Church; Ballynahinch he was cremated at Roselawn on the 14 December 2012.

I first met Bryan at our own Union's Annual Conference in Bournemouth some thirty two years ago and ever since a lasting friendship prevailed. He was a typical Yorkshire man; could be a bit brusque, and

didn't suffer fools gladly, but underneath was a kind hearted human being who regarded family life with his partner Irene and later in life his grandchild Rebecca as the centre of his universe.

Bryan was born on 13 September 1936 and when he left school, he became a coal miner for twenty years, not realising like the vast majority of miners of that era the ill health problems that would arise later on in life (Miner's lung). He then became a postman and thirty odd years later transferred over to the Ballynahinch Post office and became an excellent CWU union rep until the day he retired from the post office but still kept up his role in the Northern Ireland Retired Members' Section as Chairperson until his passing.

When Age Sector Platform was set up, Bryan, who had all his life stood up for social justice, became an active member and representative and took part in the decisions that affected older people in Northern Ireland.

Bryan was a good, loyal friend and comrade and will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him. I am sure you will join me in offering our condolences and support to Bryan's family and his partner Irene.

Sleep well, my friend, sleep well.

**John Martin**

**Communications Workers Union (NI Regional Retired Members)**



Pictured at the launch of Age Sector Platform in 2008, Bryan Alexander (far left) with Seamus Lynch, Francis Hughes and John Martin (far right)

# Age Sector Platform Members

ABC Seniors Network  
Age NI  
Age North Down and Ards Over 50s Forum  
ALLY Foyle  
Amicus Retired Members  
AT&GWU Retired Members Association  
Belfast East Seniors Forum  
Carers NI  
Castlereagh Lifestyle Forum  
Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance (CSPA)  
COAST (Causeway Older Active Strategic Team)  
Communications Workers Union (NI Regional Retired Members)  
Engage with Age  
Friendship Federation  
GMB Retired Members  
Greater Shankill Senior Citizens' Forum  
Hoi Sum Chinese Elderly Group  
ICTU Retired Workers Committee (NI)  
Indian Community Centre 50+ Club  
Mid and East Antrim AgeWell Partnership  
Mid Ulster Seniors Network  
NASUWT Retired Members Association  
National Federation of Occupational Pensioners  
National Pensioners Convention (NI)  
Newry and Mourne Senior Citizens' Consortium  
Newtownabbey Senior Citizens' Forum  
NIPSA Retired Members Association  
North Belfast Senior Citizens' Forum  
North West Ageing Well Together (NNAWT)  
Older Women's Network NI  
Public Commercial Services Union (Associate and Retired Members)  
South Belfast Lifestyle Forum  
South West Age Partnership  
UNISON Retired Members  
West Belfast 50+ Forum

If you have any feedback or would like to request additional copies of this newsletter, please get in touch.



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