“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”
Helen Keller

“If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself”
Henry Ford

“Experience is the teacher of all things”
Julius Caesar
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The Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament is supported by:

![Comic Relief](image1)

![The Atlantic Philanthropies](image2)
1. foreword

The Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament was established in 2011 to engage with older people from across Northern Ireland, enable them to have their say on the issues that matter to them and to provide a basis for bringing about positive change to older people’s lives.

Organised by Age Sector Platform (ASP), the parliament aims to provide a bottom-up and democratic approach to tackling the issues of concern for older people. We know from working with our forums and networks that older people for many years have hoped for a more formal vehicle to express their concerns so that those in power could be better informed to do something to tackle them.

Thanks to the support of Comic Relief and The Atlantic Philanthropies, Age Sector Platform has been able to design and implement this unique and ambitious project to provide older people with this opportunity.

One of the main aims of the Pensioners Parliament is to reach out to people who have never before had a chance to make their voice heard on issues that affect them. Our initial evaluation has shown that the majority of people who have taken part this year have not previously been engaged in any way to discuss their views and concerns. As well as creating a platform for people to have their say, the Pensioners Parliament has also provided older people with key information and practical advice on support services in their own areas, including information on health, transport and community safety issues.

The response from older people in this first year of the parliament has demonstrated the support for this approach with huge numbers engaging across every county in Northern Ireland. The parliament structure and process has been designed to ensure that any older person is able to have their say - through filling in a survey, attending one of the local parliaments or by putting their name forward to attend the two day Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament. Everyone has an equal vote when it comes to deciding the priorities and motions for change.

It is very difficult to capture the engagement, enthusiasm and passion of the debates held in every county over the year in writing alone, but this report provides an overview of what happened, what the big issues are and what areas older people have singled out for particular attention. We hope that those in positions of power and influence not only read this report but take on board the recommendations emerging from it.

I would like to acknowledge the support we have received from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) throughout the year. The First Miniater and deputy First Minister promoted the Parliament at the beginning of the year and we were delighted that Junior Ministers Martina Anderson MLA and Jonathan Bell MLA could officially open the first Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in June 2011. Delegates were encouraged by their words of support and commitment to carefully consider the outcomes of the event. We look forward to
working with them and other Ministers and members of the Northern Ireland Assembly in the year ahead on many of the issues contained in this report.

I’d also like to thank the expert speakers who gave their time so willingly to attend the seven local parliaments and the two day parliament. Their contributions greatly enhanced the debate and discussions on the day and helped delegates to better understand the various issues. We are also grateful for the support provided by some of the local councils, and hope this partnership approach will continue in the coming years.

Huge thanks must go to the staff of Age Sector Platform and the members of Pensioners Parliament Committee for all their hard work in planning and implementing such a large scale project in a short period of time. The outcomes and success are a direct result of the effort and commitment put into this project over the past year and the widespread support from the membership of Age Sector Platform has also been vital as our members played a key role in promoting the parliament and helping to organise venues for the local events across each county.

A final thank you must go to every single pensioner who took part in the Pensioners Parliament 2011. The strength of the parliament is confirmed by the numbers that have become involved and their willingness to work together to try to bring about a better quality of life, not just for older people, but society as a whole.

I hope that you will continue to support this project in the coming years so we can make it go from strength to strength. In 2012 we plan to reach out to more people and hold events in different locations so that more people get a chance to participate.

Age Sector Platform’s vision is a society where older people’s voices are heard, respected and acted upon. I hope that when we look back in years to come we will look at 2011 as a key year in making this happen. The Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament has provided a new and powerful platform for older citizens to engage and air their views based on their years of experience.

We now need to work together to ensure action is taken on the issues contained in this report. Age Sector Platform will be taking the lead on following up on the motions passed but will also work with many other organisations and bodies to make progress on these matters. If you are not a member of the ‘Platform’ I would urge you to get involved and add your voice to our campaigns all year round.

Change will not happen overnight but with the continued support and commitment from older people I am sure that we can work towards creating a better life for our older population.

Michael Monaghan
Chair, Pensioners Parliament Committee
“The first Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament is empowering, it’s letting older people know that their voices are being heard and we will look very clearly and spend a lot of time on the report that is produced from the Pensioners Parliament today and see where we can translate that into policy that will make real change in older people’s lives.”

Junior Minister Bell, MLA

“I have to say it was a real honour and a privilege to be here today to open the Pensioners Parliament, to be engaging with ordinary people who are making an extraordinary contribution to the lives of so many in our society. I know the kind of energy that’s in that room today, it fairly impressed us…and I know they will make a valuable contribution not just to our society as they are doing already but what will emerge from today will influence the form and shape of policy development in the time ahead.”

Junior Minister Anderson, MLA
2. aims of the pensioners parliament

The aims of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament are as follows:

- Increase the opportunity for older people to have their voice heard on the issues that matter to them
- Connect older people to key decision makers within government and service providers
- Increase the confidence of older people to make their voice heard and to uphold their rights
- Increase older people’s knowledge of their rights and entitlements
- Increase awareness and access to services that can improve the quality of life for older people
- Enable older people aged over 60, and especially those over 75, to become actively involved in influencing decisions that affect their lives
- Ensure that older people remain active and engaged citizens and are not excluded from decision making
- Enable older people to utilise the experience and skills they have amassed over their lifetime and use this to help develop solutions on important issues.
3. executive summary

About the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament

The first Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament (NIPP) took place in 2011 and it is planned that the parliament will be held each year. The Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament is organised by Age Sector Platform and is supported by Comic Relief and The Atlantic Philanthropies.

The NIPP has three stages. The first is a Northern Ireland wide survey of pensioners, the second stage is the holding of seven local parliaments across each county and Belfast, and the third stage is the two day Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament where delegates vote on motions and key priorities for the year.

Over 1,200 NI Pensioners Parliament surveys were completed during January and February 2011. The results of the survey in each county set the agenda for the discussion and expert panel at each local parliament.

Over 500 pensioners attended the seven local parliaments which were held across Northern Ireland during March and April 2011. There was a parliament held in each county and an additional one in Belfast.

The host towns and cities for 2011 were Belfast, Enniskillen, Ballymena, Armagh, Omagh, Derry/Londonderry and Newry.

180 Members of the Pensioners Parliament (MPPs) attended the first Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in Belfast on 8-9 June 2011.

There were six plenary sessions held over the two day parliament with a panel of experts present for each.

The plenary sessions focussed on energy, food, fear of crime, health and social care and pensions and benefits. The final session was around the theme of ‘Campaigning Together’ and involved a panel of older representatives from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Following each plenary session, members of the parliament voted on whether to pass relevant motions on that topic and were then asked to rank the motions in order of importance.

24 motions were passed at the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament 2011.
the findings

NIPP Survey Results

Three quarters (75%) of pensioners were concerned about keeping warm in winter and the rising cost of energy. This was the number one concern for pensioners in each county.

Almost two-thirds (65.5%) of pensioners said they did not have enough money.

Fear of crime was a major concern across each county with almost two thirds of pensioners (63.9%) listing this as a problem.

top recommendations from NIPP 2011

Energy

The biggest concern in relation to energy was the decision by the UK Government to cut the amount of the Winter Fuel Payment.

Introducing social tariffs and regulating the oil industry in Northern Ireland were ranked joint second as recommendations for the NI Assembly to help tackle the impact of high energy prices.

Food

The introduction of a ‘Pensioner Discount Day’ by food retailers was voted as the best way to help pensioners to have an affordable healthy diet.
Fear of Crime

More visible policing on our streets would have the biggest impact in tackling the fear of crime that exists for many pensioners. The NIPP also voted that allocating older people places on the new Community Safety and Policing Partnerships would help to address this serious problem.

Health and Social Care

Increased funding for preventative care programmes and better support for older carers were the top two recommendations in relation to health and social care from the NIPP.

Pensions and benefits

The NIPP voted that the UK Government should change its plans to change the way pensions are uprated from RPI to CPI as this will have a negative impact on pensioners’ incomes for years to come.

The automatic payment of pension credit was voted as one of the key changes that would make a huge difference for many low-income pensioners. The NI Assembly should make the case for a pilot programme to be rolled out in Northern Ireland as this would help tackle pensioner poverty as well as providing a welcome boost to the local economy.

Age Discrimination

NIPP called on the NI Assembly to bring forward legislation to end unfair discrimination where it adversely affects the opportunities, goods and services available to older people.
Age Sector Platform (ASP) conducted an extensive survey across Northern Ireland to determine the top concerns of older people. The survey asked each respondent to list their top five areas of concern in order and ASP used these survey results from each county to shape the agenda, discussions and panellists at each of the local parliaments. The overall Northern Ireland results of the survey are displayed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% of older people that selected this as a top concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food prices</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on benefits / entitlements</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suitable housing</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to education / training</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment issues</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. reports from local parliaments

During March and April 2011, seven local parliaments were held across Northern Ireland, one in each county and another in Belfast. They were held in Belfast, Enniskillen, Antrim, Armagh, Omagh, Derry/Londonderry and Newry.

Each parliament was split into three themes, determined by the results of the Pensioners Parliament survey.

They were:

- The Rising Cost of Living (energy prices, pensions, benefits)
- Health & Social Care
- Staying Active & Feeling Safe (community safety, transport, funding for groups)

Each local parliament was an opportunity for the people living in that area to discuss the big issues that affected them.

As expected, following the survey results, many of the issues facing pensioners are the same no matter where they live. However, some problems are more severe in some areas and this came to the fore during the local parliaments.

A panel was assembled at each local parliament to address the five biggest issues that emerged from the survey in that county. At each event, delegates discussed and debated the key issues within these areas and used interactive key pads to vote on their priorities at the end of each session.

In total, around 500 older people attended their local parliament with feedback from the events being very positive.
The first local Pensioners Parliament was held in Belfast City Hall on Friday 4 March 2011. It was officially opened by Lord Mayor Councillor Pat Convery with around 100 pensioners in attendance. Belfast City Council kindly supported their local parliament by providing the venue.

The expert panel on the day was:

John French                Consumer Council
Pat Austin                 National Energy Action (NI)
Gillian Ardiss             Department of Justice
Margy Washbrook            Engage with Age
Sandra McCarry             Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Overview of issues raised:

• High energy prices
• Supermarkets not doing enough for older people
• Should everyone receive the Winter Fuel Payment?
• Complicated benefit application forms and lack of awareness of benefits
• Cuts to funding for social care
• Inadequacy of home help provision
• Lack of recognition for older carers
• More visible policing needed
• Better promotion & support for Neighbourhood Watch

Top 3 issues from Belfast surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (72%)
2. Fear of crime (61%)
3. Not enough money (57%)
The County Fermanagh Pensioners Parliament was held in the Lakeland Forum, Enniskillen on Friday 11 March 2011. It was officially opened by the Chairman of Fermanagh District Council, Councillor Stephen Huggett and there were 75 pensioners in attendance. Fermanagh District Council kindly provided some financial assistance in support of their local parliament.

The expert panel on the day was:

Michael Hughes, Rural Community Network
Anita Flanagan, Rural Lift
Zoë Anderson, Access to Benefits (A2B)
Sergeant Scott Fallis, PSNI
Brendan Duffy, Western Health and Social Care Trust

Overview of issues raised:

- Lack of benefits for pensioners with small pots of savings
- High energy prices
- Cuts to funding for social care
- Inadequate transport options for attending health/hospital appointments in Western Trust area
- Inadequacy of home help provision
- More visible policing needed
- Better promotion & support for Neighbourhood Watch
- Extra home security measures for older people

Top 3 issues from County Fermanagh surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (84%)
2. Fear of crime (60%)
3. Not enough money (54%)
The County Antrim Pensioners Parliament was held in The Braid, Ballymena on Tuesday 15 March 2011. It was officially opened by the Mayor of Ballymena, Councillor Maurice Mills and there were 85 pensioners in attendance.

The expert panel on the day was:

Patrick Graham, Northern Health and Social Care Trust
Joleen Cunningham, Consumer Council
Zoë Anderson, Access to Benefits (A2B)
Inspector John Allen, PSNI

Overview of issues raised:

- High energy prices
- Regulation of the oil industry, energy brokering & pensioner tariffs
- Women’s disadvantage in pensions
- Supermarkets need to do more for older people
- Dementia care
- Too many managers in the health service
- Malnutrition in hospitals
- More visible policing needed
- Anti-social behaviour
- More community involvement in policing

Top 3 issues from County Antrim surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (73%)
2. Not enough money (70%)
3. Fear of crime (61%)
The County Armagh Pensioners Parliament was held in Armagh City Hotel on Thursday 24 March 2011. It was officially opened by the Mayor of Armagh, Councillor Jim Speers and there were 64 pensioners in attendance.

The expert panel on the day was:

Sergeant Wendy Walker, PSNI
Mary Curran, Citizens Advice Bureau (Armagh)
John Doyle, Armagh City and District Council
Roisin Toner, Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Gerard Rocks, Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Nuala Gorman, Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Overview of issues raised:

- Complicated benefit application forms
- Cut to Winter Fuel Payment
- Stigma attached to claiming benefits
- High energy prices
- Cleanliness in some hospitals in the Southern Trust area
- Age discrimination in health provision
- ‘Prevention is better than cure’
- Benefits of active ageing programmes
- More visible policing needed
- Disproportionate effect crime has on older victims
- Anti-social behaviour
- Extra home security measures for older people

Top 3 issues from County Armagh surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (75%)
1. Fear of crime (75%)
3. Not enough money (68%)
The County Tyrone Pensioners Parliament was held in Strule Arts Centre, Omagh on Friday 1 April 2011. It was officially opened by the Chairman of Omagh District Council, Councillor Declan McAleer and there were 67 pensioners in attendance.

The expert panel on the day was:

Janice Vance, Western Health and Social Care Trust
Zoë Anderson, Access to Benefits (A2B)
Inspector Dave Sherry, PSNI
Paddy McEldowney, EasiLift Community Transport

Overview of issues raised:

- Cost of petrol is very significant in rural areas
- Unfairness of means-testing
- Social tariffs available in Great Britain
- Supermarkets need to consider their older customers
- More funding needed for regional hospitals
- Poor communication with patients/families in health service
- Inadequate transport options for attending health/hospital appointments in Western Trust area
- More visible policing needed
- Older people are not aware of their community police officer
- Difficulties with rural/urban split of community transport

Top 3 issues from County Tyrone surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (80%)
2. Fear of crime (72%)
3. Not enough money (66%)
The County Derry/Londonderry Pensioners Parliament was held in the Tower Hotel on Friday 8 April 2011. It was officially opened by the Mayor of Derry, Councillor Colum Eastwood and there were 64 pensioners in attendance. Derry City Council kindly provided financial support to enable delegates to attend the two day parliament on 8-9 June 2011.

The expert panel on the day was:
Alan Corry Finn, Western Health and Social Care Trust
Inspector Michelle Boyd, PSNI
Maureen Collins, Neighbourhood Assist
Paula Martin, Bridge Accessible Transport
Helena Hasson, Derry City Council

Overview of issues raised:

- Regulation of the oil industry and pensioner tariffs for energy
- Cut to Winter Fuel Payment
- Older people losing their homes and savings to pay for care in nursing homes
- Too many managers in the health service
- Age discrimination in the health service
- Inadequacy of home help provision
- More severe sentencing for crimes against older people
- Inadequate opening hours of youth centres
- Difficulties with rural/urban split of community transport

Top 3 issues from County Derry/Londonderry surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (70%)
2. Not enough money (69%)
3. Fear of crime (57%)
The County Down Pensioners Parliament was held in Ballybot House, Newry on Wednesday 13 April 2011. It was officially opened by the Mayor of Newry and Mourne, Councillor Mick Murphy and there were 45 pensioners in attendance. Newry and Mourne District Council kindly provided some financial assistance in support of their local parliament.

The expert panel on the day was:

Kellie Murray, Citizens Advice Bureau (Newry)
Brian Groves, Newry and Mourne Community Transport
Brendan Whittle, Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Gerard Rocks, Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Sergeant Wendy Walker, PSNI
Inspector David Hutchinson, PSNI

Overview of issues raised:

• Change to pension inflation rating from Retail Price Index (RPI) to Consumer Price Index (CPI)
• Coalition government’s proposal for flat rate pension
• High energy prices (especially oil)
• Benefits system is too complicated
• Cuts to funding for social care
• Age discrimination in the health service
• Malnutrition in hospitals
• Speedier response times needed from police
• Stronger action on anti-social behaviour
• More visible policing needed
• Difficulties with rural/urban split of community transport

Top 3 issues from County Down surveys

1. Keeping warm in winter/energy prices (80%)
2. Fear of crime (72%)
3. Not enough money (72%)
Official Opening of Parliament

The first Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament (NIPP) took place in Belfast over two days on Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 June 2011. One hundred and eighty Members of the Pensioners Parliament (MPPs) attended the Parliament where they passed motions aimed at tackling various issues affecting them; including pensions and benefits, health and social care, fear of crime, and rising food and energy prices.

The Parliament was opened by the Junior Ministers from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) Jonathan Bell MLA and Martina Anderson MLA. Junior Minister Bell described the event as an “ideal opportunity for each of you to make your voice heard”. Minister Bell proceeded to encourage participants by saying that the Parliament provides a “strong formal vehicle” for engagement with Government and represents “a public statement that the views and ideas of older people are valued”.

Minister Bell also addressed the issue of the appointment of a Commissioner for Older People, saying that it is “critical” that older people are empowered with a “strong, independent voice”. Junior Minister Anderson acknowledged the “huge contribution” to society made by older people in Northern Ireland. She went on to encourage participants to “enter dialogue with politicians and policy makers and others on where our priorities should lie, now and in the coming years”.

ASP Chairman Bill Carson then proceeded to welcome the delegates to the first ever parliament, describing the day as “truly historic”. He said the parliament had been “a long time in planning but as we sit on the brink of going into our first session it has been worth all the effort”.

He said that the Pensioners Parliament was an attempt to “enable greater numbers of older people to have a say on the issues that are affecting them and to provide a channel to raise these with people in power to help bring about change to their lives”.

Junior Ministers and ASP Chairman Bill Carson
Mr Carson went on to say that “older people have much to contribute to society” and that delegates had a “wealth of knowledge and expertise from their lives that should not be placed on the shelf once retired”.

ASP Chief Executive Officer Eddie Lynch then provided delegates with an overview of the process for the parliament. He explained how the first stage was the Northern Ireland wide survey and how the results of that survey set the agenda for the local parliaments, while the outcome of the discussions and voting at the local events created the focus for the two day parliament. Mr Lynch explained that the motions presented to delegates over the two days were based on the results from the survey and local parliaments.

The format of the two day parliament was then outlined with delegates informed that there would be six plenary sessions over the two day event and votes on twenty four motions. Mr Lynch explained that a motion must receive the support of over two-thirds (67%) of MPPs for it to be passed.
Following the address by the Junior Ministers, the first plenary session was held on energy prices. The keynote speaker during this session was Sarah Brady, Head of the Social and Environmental Branch at the Utility Regulator.

Ms Brady acknowledged that Northern Ireland has the “highest rate of fuel poverty in the United Kingdom” and highlighted that this trend is “only increasing”. She highlighted the fact that the average annual household electricity bill is £496 in Northern Ireland, and that world energy prices will continue to have a “significant impact” on this country.

The keynote speaker was proceeded by a question and answer session, chaired by Seamus Lynch from Age NI. Delegates were invited to address questions to an expert panel consisting of Anne O’Reilly, Chief Executive of Age NI, Pat Austin, Director of National Energy Action (NI), John French, Head of Energy at the Consumer Council and Sarah Brady from the Utility Regulator.

The first question came from County Down delegate, Joyce Griffin, who addressed the question of how to effectively engage with political leaders on the issue of fuel poverty. Anne O’Reilly began by emphasising that “heating or eating is a reality” for many older people, adding that the new Assembly must make progress on fuel poverty.

Pat Austin commended the role of the Fuel Poverty Coalition in working to fight fuel poverty, promote the development of a fuel poverty action plan for Northern Ireland and provide support to fuel poor households. However, Ms Austin noted that whilst a Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland was released by the Department for Social Development in March 2011 and the funding for the Warm Homes Scheme has been maintained, it has “not made a difference” to scale of the problem. She also recognised that energy prices are a “global issue”, adding that the Assembly has to do more to address the impacts in Northern Ireland by working alongside the Department for Social Development and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment which have a “key role” to play in tackling fuel poverty.
Delegate Michael Fox, from County Derry/Londonderry, brought up the Warm Homes Scheme again, asking “why are there differences in the eligibility criteria for warm home benefits for pensioners?” Pat Austin told the audience that whilst it is useful for benefits to be targeted, the eligibility criteria is currently “too narrow” and the Warm Homes Scheme is “not as effective” as it could be.

Francis Hughes, a delegate from County Antrim, questioned the panel on the lack of social tariffs in Northern Ireland to help vulnerable customers deal with rising energy prices. Sarah Brady commented that prior to the introduction of social tariffs in the rest of the United Kingdom; many vulnerable customers were tied into pre payment arrangements which included premiums. However, she distinguished the situation in Northern Ireland where pre payment customers are not charged a premium and instead receive a 2.5% discount on their electricity bills. Ms Brady stressed that the viability of social tariffs in Northern Ireland would need to be “investigated fully”.

John French then interjected, outlining the need for a “defined mechanism to help households”. He went on to state that seventy per cent of households in Northern Ireland currently use heating oil, whereas social tariffs in the rest of the United Kingdom have generally been limited to the electricity and gas industry. To date, the oil industry has paid “very little” towards the problem of fuel poverty which would impact upon the feasibility of social tariffs in Northern Ireland. Anne O’Reilly emphasised the “lack of political support” for social tariffs, saying that there is a “sense of paralysis” on the issue. She urged politicians to be “mindful of the coming winter” for vulnerable energy customers.

Another delegate, Joan Cosgrove from County Antrim, asked the panel what could be done to increase the regulation of the oil industry in Northern Ireland. John French underlined that the Executive and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment currently believe there is adequate competition within the oil industry to ensure that regulation is not necessary at present. Mr French commented that it was in fact “debateable” whether there were adequate levels of competition within the oil marketplace. Anne O’Reilly addressed the “lack of transparency” within the oil industry, adding that the Office of Fair Trading is currently investigating oil companies with a report due in October 2011. Furthermore, Sarah Brady then went on to address the cost of installing oil heating systems, saying that the associated expenditure is “crippling” householders. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive had to spend millions of pounds repairing frost damage to oil heating systems during the 2010/2011 winter.
John Martin, a delegate from County Fermanagh, asked the panel to provide a justification for the Coalition Government’s decision to cut the Winter Fuel Payment by £50 for 60 to 80 year olds and by £100 for those aged over 80 years.

Pat Austin commented that a recent report by The Institute for Fiscal Studies showed that people are 14 times more likely to spend money from the Winter Fuel Payment on heating bills than if they are given the same amount of money through other means. However, there remain issues over whether this payment should be targeted or means tested. Ms Austin told delegates to be vigilant, saying that the payment is gradually being “eroded”.

In addition, Ms Austin referred to a savings scheme developed by St Vincent de Paul and the Armagh Credit Union which was very successful in helping older people to budget on heating costs. Austin called for this to be “widened and adopted by local councils”. John French also referred to the potential of energy brokering schemes, following a report by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Bryson Charitable Group and the Consumer Council. He added that bulk buying of fuel could be used to lower the price of energy for those in fuel poverty.

County Armagh delegate, Paddy Houlahan, brought up the issue of renewable energy with the panel, asking whether it would be a viable option to provide affordable energy for households with older people. Sarah Brady commented that the Utility Regulator is “very interested in indigenous renewable energy”. John French added that renewable energy has a “part to play” and that “energy efficiency” and “home insulation” provide the quickest payback for householders. Pat Austin added that young families might benefit the most from renewable energy but added that “strengthening the grid” had to be a priority for the Executive.

Edith Shaw, a delegate from Belfast, asked “what can be done to stop speculation in the commodity markets from impacting upon the cost of gas, oil and electricity?” John French told delegates that the Consumer Council must ensure that “consumers get the best price possible”, adding that regulators provide greater fairness and transparency within energy markets.

Anne O’Reilly stated that “markets and justice don’t mix” and that a “greater sense of what is fair and just” is necessary. Pat Austin proceeded to say that speculation on the energy markets
is “distorting normal supply and demand”. Furthermore, the commoditisation of oil has made “vast sums of money” for some individuals. A delegate from County Down asked whether funds from any future reduction in corporation tax could be used to subsidise energy costs for older people. Pat Austin highlighted that people are suffering with rising energy costs, adding that the Government needs to “grasp this and help people to heat their homes to an adequate level”.

**Energy Motions**

The following motions on energy were all passed (received over 67% of the votes) by the Parliament:

**Motion E1**
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the Northern Ireland Assembly to bring forward plans to introduce social tariffs into the local energy market so that older people here have the same help in coping with energy prices as the rest of the UK.

**Motion E2**
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for a Northern Ireland wide oil stamp scheme to be developed to assist pensioners to save for the purchase of home heating oil.

**Motion E3**
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the UK Government to reverse its decision to cut the Winter Fuel Payment this year and to look at ways of linking future payments to energy prices.

**Motion E4**
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for the oil industry to be regulated to help ensure that oil customers get value for money.

**Ranking of Motions (top priority ranked 1)**

1. Motion E3  Reverse decision to cut Winter Fuel Payment
2. Motion E1  Introduce social tariffs
3. Motion E4  Regulate the oil industry
4. Motion E2  Introduce an oil stamp scheme
plenary session 2: food

The second plenary session was on food issues, with delegates addressing questions to a panel of experts. The panel comprised of Michele Shirlow from Food NI, Aodhan O’Donnell from the Consumer Council, Phil Evans from the Newry and Mourne Senior Citizens’ Consortium and Glyn Roberts from the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association.

Chair Seamus Lynch, from Age NI, began by highlighting that food prices have increased by 25% since 2007. This prompted Margaret Ewing, Belfast MPP, to ask if anything can be done to address the increasing price of food.

Aodhan O’Donnell said that choices often have to be made by older people between buying food and heating their homes, adding that he did not envisage any short term fall in the price of food.

Phil Evans highlighted the problems facing many older consumers living alone, saying that many older people do not need to buy a lot of food but often have no option due to the way in which food is packaged by the large supermarkets. Lynd Roper, a delegate from County Armagh, observed that many shops “do not cater for older people”.

Mr O’Donnell highlighted that many shops also fail to meet the needs of younger people who live alone, adding that consumers have varying “needs and expectations” and that shops need to offer “specific and tailored” products for all customers to ensure that they retain a competitive edge in tough economic times.

Michele Shirlow then proceeded to emphasise that it is the supermarkets that drive the special offers in store - such as ‘buy one get one free’ and that the cost is borne by the manufacturer. Frequently manufacturers feel “powerless” to do anything about this. In addition, Ms Shirlow encouraged the audience to consider alternatives to the large supermarkets such as farm shops and independent retailers.
Phil Evans also drew attention to the fact that food prices are often driven by the “bigger players” in the market, saying that supermarkets “must reach out more” to customers.

Anne Watson from County Antrim called for supermarkets to have one day a week dedicated to accommodating the needs of older people. Mr O'Donnell observed that a cogent “economic argument” would have to be developed in relation to this, whilst Michele Shirlow underlined that this was “definitely an idea worth pursuing”.

Glyn Roberts highlighted that many independent retailers are already dedicating one day a week to pensioners. Mr Roberts described older people as “an essential part of the customer base”, adding that independent retailers have to adapt to suit the needs of these customers. He went on to draw attention to the role that independent retailers have to play, stressing that they provide “choice” and play an “integral part” in community life in Northern Ireland.

Following this discussion, delegate Violet Little from County Tyrone asked the panel if there were any guidelines for producers on the size of text on supermarket labels, as many older people struggle to read them.

Michelle Shirlow observed that product labelling is driven by the retailers and the only guidance provided is the statutory information that retailers are legally required to display.

Aodhan O'Donnell commented that the information provided on shop labels is “very confusing” for customers, stressing that “less, better quality information” would be beneficial for consumers.

Phil Evans proceeded to highlight accessibility difficulties that many older consumers face in supermarkets, stating that shops “need to make food and shelving accessible to older people”. Mr O'Donnell added to this by saying that the “internal environment of shops is very important”, emphasising that designated rest areas should also be provided for older people.
Food Motions

The following motions on food were all passed (received over 67% of the votes) by the Parliament:

Motion F1
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on food retailers to introduce more individual price offers on products to help people living on their own.

Motion F2
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on food retailers to introduce smaller sized portions on essential items at a fair price.

Motion F3
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on food retailers to introduce a pensioner discount day or schemes to help older shoppers cope with the rising cost of living and enable them to maintain a balanced and healthy diet.

Ranking of Motions (top priority ranked 1)

1. Motion F3  Introduce a pensioner discount day
2. Motion F1  More individual price offers on products
3. Motion F2  Smaller sized portions at a fair price
The third plenary session of the day was on fear of crime. The key note speaker during this session was Superintendent Alan Skelton from the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Superintendent Skelton began by commenting on the crime figures for 2010-2011 in Northern Ireland, highlighting that during this period there were 4,099 fewer victims of crime than in the previous year.

According to the superintendent, crime is at a “13 year low” in Northern Ireland. He also addressed the crimes which often impact upon older people, such as burglaries, rogue traders and robberies, underlining the PSNI’s operational response to these crimes.

Following the key note speech delivered by Superintendent Skelton, Seamus Lynch highlighted that fear of crime was identified as one of the “top three issues for older people” at the seven local parliament events held throughout Northern Ireland during March and April.

Mr Lynch then introduced the panel for the question and answer session. Superintendent Alan Skelton was joined by David Jackson from the NI Policing Board, Rosaleen Moore, a former Independent Policing Board Member, Gillian Ardiss from the Department of Justice and Wendy Austin from the BBC.

The first question was asked by Jean McMillen from Belfast, who wanted the panel to address whether a greater role could be given to the victims of crime within the criminal justice process. Gillian Ardiss admitted that the “voice of victims is not always properly taken into account”, adding that the Community Safety Strategy consultation document highlighted that this is vital. Ms Ardiss also remarked that a code of practice for victims is “currently being developed”.

Rosaleen Moore highlighted that there is a role for restorative justice in this area to help bring “victims and perpetrators together”. Seamus Lynch then interjected, saying that there is often “a lack of police contact with victims”. Superintendent Skelton said that Victim Update Bureaus were set up in some districts to help deal with this problem.
Ann Gamble, a delegate from County Antrim, questioned the panel on the failure of police and community safety personnel to communicate effectively with older people. Gillian Ardiss drew attention to the partnership work of the Department of Justice’s Community Safety Unit, saying that the Community Safety Strategy consultation document recommended the increased use of partnerships between police and community safety personnel to make areas safer. She also emphasised that focus groups are “excellent for working with older people”.

David Jackson proceeded to comment on the work of the Policing Board which is “active in outreach” with older people. Mr Jackson added that partnerships can be effective but that appropriate usage of the “information that is generated from this work” is vital.

Following this, Belfast delegate Ivan Baxter brought up the role of the media in fuelling fear of crime amongst older people. Wendy Austin remarked that a “sensible and responsible” approach to the reporting of crime is needed, adding that it is important that the media does not “leave people with a sense of fear”. Rosaleen Moore addressed the role of the Policing Board in this, describing the issue as a “two edged sword”, as the media need to report on crime to encourage older people to observe crime prevention advice. David Jackson also emphasised that a “serious and sensible” approach to media reporting of crime is necessary.

Superintendent Skelton commented on the support that the PSNI has had from the media, saying that they often put out messages on crime prevention, and help in encouraging the public to identify perpetrators.

Another question from the audience addressed the merging of District Policing Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships, with Emmett Lynch from County Armagh asking “how can the panel assure us that older people’s views are being represented locally on community safety?” David Jackson began by emphasising that the merging of District Policing Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships will not take place until May 2012. He provided an “absolute assurance” that one will not take precedence over the other, saying that the “best of both elements” will emerge.

Gillian Ardiss called for a move towards a more “integrated approach” where the involvement of older people is valued. She also added that a Code of Practice on appointments to the new partnerships is currently being examined, providing an opportunity for older people to seek representation on these bodies.
Fear of Crime Motions

The following motions on fear of crime were all passed (received over 67% of the votes) by the Parliament:

Motion C1
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for more visible policing on the ground to help address the fear of crime among older people.

Motion C2
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the new Community Safety and Policing Partnerships to have older people represented on them so that the views of pensioners are heard in the development of their actions plans.

Motion C3
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the new Community Safety and Policing Partnerships to make tackling fear of crime among older people a priority.

Motion C4
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for more support for intergenerational projects and for better recreational facilities for younger people, particularly in the evenings and weekends.

Motion C5
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on NI media organisations to report crimes against older people in a more balanced way taking into account the high levels of fear.

Ranking of Motions (top priority ranked 1)

1 Motion C1 More visible policing
2 Motion C2 Older people represented on new Community Safety and Policing Partnerships
3 Motion C3 New Community Safety and Policing Partnerships to make tackling fear of crime among older people a priority of their work
4 Motion C4 More support for intergenerational projects and better recreational facilities for younger people
5 Motion C5 More balanced media reporting of crimes against older people
Address by the Older People’s Advocate’s Office

The second day of the Parliament began with an address by Kate McCullough from the Older People’s Advocate’s Office, who stepped in on behalf of Dame Joan Harbison who was unable to attend at the last minute due to the birth of her first grandchild.

Kate delivered Dame Joan’s speech which highlighted the ageing population of Northern Ireland, where 10% of the population will be over 85 by 2080. She also called for a “new vision of population ageing using the experience and knowledge” of older people, adding that intergenerational work will also be vital in future. She outlined many of the key issues that she had encountered during her time as the Older People’s Advocate and wished the parliament well in its deliberations.
The first plenary session on day two of the Pensioners Parliament focussed on health and social care. The key note speech was delivered by Kevin Keenan, Assistant Director of Social Services, Older People and Adults, with the Health and Social Care Board. Mr Keenan began by noting the “immense contribution that older people make to society”. He then went on to address the key areas which will need attention in the future, including the increase in the population aged over 85, the rising number of people with dementia, the increasing demand on services and the “massive financial challenge facing health and social care”. Mr Keenan then drew attention to the Dementia Strategy, which is expected to be published in the autumn. Finally, he stressed that the needs of the ageing population in Northern Ireland are a “high priority” for the Health and Social Care Board.

Mr Keenan was then joined on the health and social care panel by Duane Farrell from Age NI, Theresa Nixon from the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), Professor Derek Birrell from the University of Ulster, John McCormick from Carers NI, Margy Washbrook from Engage with Age, Michael Hughes from the Rural Community Network and Stella Cunningham from the Patient Client Council.

County Down delegate, Maureen Ruddy, addressed the panel regarding the rising levels of malnutrition amongst older people staying in hospital. Theresa Nixon emphasised the importance of providing good nutrition for older people in line with the DHSSPS guidelines. These guidelines state the need for a well balanced diet for hospital patients and those receiving meals in the community and to ensure staff training in the importance of food and nutrition. RQIA may, as part of their three year review programme, look at the food and nutritional standards and the implementation of the ten a day guidelines by Health and Social Care Trusts.

Duane Farrell highlighted that nutrition represents a “fundamental building block” in ensuring that people recover from illness, adding that community care also has a vital role to play in this.

Victor Murphy from County Down brought up the issue of the McKinsey report which recommends that additional charges should be implemented for care packages.
Kevin Keenan described the report as a “strong statement” on the range of options available to deal with current financial pressures and acknowledged the reference to the introduction of charging for services but emphasised that it was “not formal government policy”. He added that the previous Health, Social Services and Public Safety Minister, Michael McGimpsey, did not support additional charges, but stressed that this issue would inevitably have to be visited within the new Assembly as Northern Ireland cannot “continue to ignore this issue”. Duane Farrell criticised the report for using economics as a “starting point”, adding that “older people have to be at the heart of radical changes”. Professor Derek Birrell described the McKinsey report as “poor quality”, highlighting that the proposals are “centralist, top down and target driven”. He proceeded to emphasise that a greater focus on “participation, integration, personalisation and localism” is needed within health and social care in Northern Ireland.

Robert Hasson from County Down asked whether an Equality Impact Assessment had been carried out under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Mr Keenan commented that the report is only a Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety consultation document, carried out by an independent consultancy firm. It “points the Department in certain directions” but would not have to be impact assessed unless it was actually adopted as policy. Duane Farrell confirmed Mr Keenan’s comments, adding that “clarity” was still needed on how the document is influencing current commissioning. Michael Hughes from the Rural Community Network remarked upon the particular need to consider the impact of the McKinsey proposals on older people living in rural communities.

Tony Damoglou, a delegate from County Armagh, asked: “In the absence of an equality bill that outlaws discrimination in the provision of services, how can we ensure that older people are protected?” Duane Farrell remarked that older people are now faring worse in Northern Ireland than they are in the Republic of Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom. He urged the Assembly to bring forward legislation during this term to ensure that “covert discrimination” against older people is prevented. However, he warned that a legislative agenda would “not be quick to deliver”.

Following this, County Antrim delegate Margaret McGreevy, told the panel that carers do not receive enough support, highlighting that they lose their entitlement to a carer’s allowance upon retirement. John McCormick said that many pensioners feel “outraged” that
they do not receive this allowance upon retirement. He recognised that the Carer’s Allowance Bill, proposed by David McNarry MLA in 2008, had been defeated. However, he insisted that Carers NI would “push for this to be brought to the next Assembly”.

Margy Washbrook also urged politicians to address the respite care system. Kevin Keenan acknowledged that if “carers are adversely affected then this impacts upon wider health and social care services”. Furthermore, Professor Derek Birrell directed delegates to examine a recent report by the Law Commission of England and Wales on Adult Social Care to view proposals for a statutory carer’s service which could be considered for Northern Ireland.

Anna Stewart from County Fermanagh then proceeded to ask the panel for their views on action that could be taken to make hospital appointments more suitable for older people living in rural areas. Stella Cunningham remarked that transport in rural areas “needs to be reviewed” to ensure that there is a “joined up approach”. Michael Hughes added that the Assembly needs to make public transport more available to everyone in a “cost effective manner”.

Irene Davis, another delegate from County Fermanagh, asked for the views of the panel in relation to waiting times for major operations which are usually 12 months or longer. Kevin Keenan commented that “considerable investment” has been put into addressing this problem in the last five to seven years, adding that it is unlikely that it will receive the same level of “financial investment” as it has in the past. Mr Keenan remarked that “better use” of existing services is necessary.

Delegates also brought up the issue of potential hospital closures in Northern Ireland. John McCormick commented that a “radical rethink” on hospital provision is needed. In addition, Professor Derek Birrell remarked that investment is needed in the “community and social care workforce”, emphasising that there is a hospital distribution issue with too many being located in the Belfast area. Michael Hughes observed that everyone needs to be able to “access quality hospitals within a reasonable distance”.

Finally, Mr Keenan stressed that care has to be about “quality, not quantity” and he referenced recent statements from the Health, Social Services and Public Safety Minister, Edwin Poots, who has indicated that he is prepared to make “difficult decisions” about the future configuration of services.
Health and Social Care Motions

The following motions on health and social care were all passed (received over 67% of the votes) by the Parliament:

Motion HS1
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for increased funding for preventative healthcare programmes to help maintain the quality of life and independence of older people living at home.

Motion HS2
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for better support for older carers and in particular more respite care and the payment of carer’s allowance to pensioners.

Motion HS3
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for better transport support for older people travelling to doctor and hospital appointments, particularly for those living in rural areas, and calls for the Senior Smartpass to be usable on all community transport services.

Motion HS4
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for an increase in home help services for those older people who are in need of extra support.

Motion HS5
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for action to reduce waiting times for older people waiting on operations.

Ranking of Motions (top priority ranked 1)

1  Motion HS1  Increased funding for preventative healthcare programmes
2  Motion HS2  Better support for older carers including more respite care and payment of carer’s allowance
3  Motion HS5  Action to reduce waiting times for older people waiting on operations
4  Motion HS3  Better transport to health appointments and free travel on all community transport
5  Motion HS4  Increase home help hours for those in need
The second plenary session on day two focussed on pensions and benefits, with delegates addressing questions to a panel of experts. The panel comprised of Mark Durkan, MP for Foyle, Duane Farrell from Age NI, Zoë Anderson from Access to Benefits (A2B), Michael Monaghan from the National Federation of Occupational Pensioners and Ivan Baxter from the Civil Service Pensioners’ Alliance.

The first issue addressed by the panel was the newly proposed flat rate pension of £140 a week, which Dolores Woodside from County Antrim claimed would “discriminate against current pensioners as it is only designed for new pensioners”. Mark Durkan MP said that the Government is discriminating against current pensioners because it suits them in order to “minimise costs”. He added that the “principle of universality” has to be argued for in this case and urged the delegates to lobby both the Westminster Government and the Labour Party, as the official opposition, in relation to this.

Zoë Anderson described the flat rate pension as “very much up in the air”, stressing that there needs to be a consultation on this. Ivan Baxter referred to the flat rate pension as being “politically motivated”, advising the delegates to fight against the development of a “two tier system for old and new pensioners”.

County Antrim delegate, Margaret Galloway, questioned the panel on the Government’s decision to alter the way pensions are uprated from the Retail Price Index (RPI) to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Ivan Baxter described this change as “an attack on pensioners” as the RPI has been consistently higher than the CPI over a number of years.

Michael Monaghan said that this was done simply to “reduce costs”, adding that there was the possibility of a judicial review of this decision. Duane Farrell furthered the calls for the Government to reinstate the pensions link with the Retail Price Index. Mr Durkan stated that if the Consumer Price Index is to remain then a “bespoke system” should be designed for pensioners to “deal with real life cost surges”.

Pensions & benefits panel at the Parliament
Moira Tapster from County Fermanagh raised the issue of the Lone Pensioner Allowance, saying that pensioners under the age of 70 still pay the full level of rates which is “unfair”. Zoë Anderson commented that the rationale for this was that pensioners aged over 70 were more likely to live in poverty than those aged under 70; she continued that there is a need to strike a “balance” and a limit has to be set at some point. Ms Anderson also highlighted to delegates that there were other benefits available that give help with rates and people should check out if they are eligible to claim them.

Pensions and Benefits Motions

The following motions on pensions and benefits were all passed (received over 67% of the votes) by the Parliament:

Motion PB1
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the UK Government to abandon its plans to change the way pensions are uprated from RPI to CPI and supports the judicial review being launched by pensioner organisations on this matter.

Motion PB2
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the Labour party, as the official opposition, to commit themselves to the immediate reintroduction of RPI as the measure for uprating pensions if they are returned at the next election.

Motion PB3
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the Northern Ireland Assembly to call for the automatic payment of pension credit in Northern Ireland so that all pensioners get what they are entitled to and so many of the most vulnerable in society are able to have a decent quality of life.
Motion PB4
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the Northern Ireland Assembly to make tackling pensioner poverty a key priority in their new Programme for Government.

Motion PB5
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls for any new pension proposals by the UK Government to be universal proposals that apply to all pensioners and not just future pensioners.

Motion PB6
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the Northern Ireland Assembly to take action to help those pensioners who find themselves just above benefit levels or whose modest savings leaves them missing out on any financial assistance.

Ranking of Motions (top priority ranked 1)

1. Motion PB1  UK Government should abandon its plans to change the way pensions are uprated from RPI to CPI
2. Motion PB3  Automatic payment of pension credit in NI
3. Motion PB5  New pension proposals should apply to all pensioners and not just future pensioners
4. Motion PB4  Make pensioner poverty a priority in Programme for Government
5. Motion PB2  Labour party should commit to restore RPI
6. Motion PB6  More help for pensioners who are just above the benefits level

Miscellaneous Motion

The following motion calling on legislation to be introduced to outlaw age discrimination in Northern Ireland was passed by delegates:

Motion M1
Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament calls on the Northern Ireland Assembly to bring forward legislation to end unfair discrimination where it adversely affects the opportunities, good and services available to older people.
The final session of the parliament was entitled ‘Campaigning Together – Sharing Experience on Westminster Issues’. The delegates were addressed by Dot Gibson from the National Pensioners’ Convention, Margaret Morgan from the Welsh Senate of Older People, Sandra Martin from the Scottish Seniors’ Alliance, Ivan Baxter from the Civil Service Pensioners’ Alliance and Bill Carson from Age Sector Platform.

Ivan Baxter began by stating that cooperation is an “absolute necessity of the highest priority”, prompting one delegate to question the panel on the best way forward following the Parliament.

Bill Carson emphasised the need for delegates to “spread the word among their own groups and get more people on board” and for groups to feed into the work being carried out by Age Sector Platform. He urged individuals or groups not currently members of ASP to join up as “together we will have a stronger voice”.

Sandra Martin outlined that in Scotland an Older People’s Consultative Forum has been set up which regularly meets with Ministers in the Scottish Government. Margaret Morgan highlighted that Wales was the first place in the world to have a Commissioner for Older People, and said that the creation of one should be a positive step for older people in Northern Ireland. Dot Gibson drew attention to the need to “educate people”, and stressed the advantages of promoting intergenerational cooperation on issues.

County Armagh delegate, Paddy Houlanhan, spoke to encourage the audience members to work with other organisations around the UK and Ireland to develop a joined up approach and he said that it was important that the momentum from the success of the Pensioners Parliament to date is followed up throughout the year ahead.
Michael Monaghan said that Age Sector Platform was perfectly placed to take on board the recommendations from the Pensioners Parliament and urged all delegates not already members of Age Sector Platform to “join up and get involved so we can increase our strength and impact”.

Eddie Lynch, Chief Executive Officer of Age Sector Platform, finished the day by highlighting that the Pensioners’ Parliament only represents the start of this effort to ensure that age is pushed up the political agenda. He said that the “huge response to the surveys, the attendance at the local parliaments and the enthusiasm and participation of delegates over the two days of the NI Pensioners Parliament clearly showed the need for it”.

He advised that the report would be published in the autumn and that ASP will be planning to follow up on all the motions to see how they can be moved forward over the coming year.
### 7. Table of Motions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion Ref</th>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Voting Results (67% needed to pass)</th>
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</table>
| E1         | NIPP calls on the NI Assembly to bring forward plans to introduce social tariffs into the local energy market so that older people here have the same help in coping with energy prices as the rest of the UK. | 91% Yes  4% No  5% Abstain          | NI Assembly  
NI Executive  
DETI  
DSD  
Utility Regulator  
Consumer Council |
| E2         | NIPP calls for a Northern Ireland wide oil stamp scheme to be developed to assist pensioners to save for the purchase of home heating oil. | 68% Yes  18% No  14% Abstain         | DSD  
NILGA  
Local Councils |
| E3         | NIPP calls on the UK Government to reverse its decision to cut the Winter Fuel Payment this year and to look at ways of linking future payments to energy prices. | 97% Yes  1% No  2% Abstain           | UK Government  
DWP |
| E4         | NIPP calls for the oil industry in Northern Ireland to be regulated to help ensure that oil customers get value for money. | 96% Yes  1% No  3% Abstain           | DETI  
Utility Regulator  
Consumer Council |
| F1         | NIPP calls on food retailers to introduce more individual price offers on products to help people living on their own. | 96% Yes  1% No  3% Abstain           | Major supermarkets  
Independent food retailers |
| F2         | NIPP calls on food retailers to introduce more smaller sized portions on essential items at a fair price. | 96% Yes  2% No  2% Abstain           | Major supermarkets  
Independent food retailers |
| F3         | NIPP calls on food retailers to introduce a pensioner discount day or schemes to help their older shoppers cope with the rising cost of living and enable them to maintain a balanced and healthy diet. | 96% Yes  1% No  3% Abstain           | Major supermarkets  
Independent food retailers |

DETI - Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment  
DSD - Department for Social Development  
NILGA - Northern Ireland Local Government Association  
DWP - Department for Work and Pensions
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<td>95% Yes 5% No 0% Abstain</td>
<td>PSNI NI Policing Board DOJ</td>
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<td>NIPP calls on the new Community Safety and Policing Partnerships to have older people represented on them so that the views of pensioners are heard in the development of their action plans.</td>
<td>98% Yes 0% No 2% Abstain</td>
<td>DOJ NI Policing Board Local Councils CSPPs</td>
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<td>NIPP calls on the new Community Safety and Policing Partnerships to make tackling fear of crime among older people a priority.</td>
<td>88% Yes 5% No 7% Abstain</td>
<td>PSNI NI Policing Board DOJ CSPPs</td>
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<td>C4</td>
<td>NIPP calls for more support for intergenerational projects and for better recreational facilities for younger people, particularly in the evenings and weekends.</td>
<td>81% Yes 11% No 8% Abstain</td>
<td>DOJ DE DCAL OFMdFM</td>
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<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>NIPP calls on NI media organisations to report crimes against older people in a more balanced way taking into account the high levels of fear.</td>
<td>71% Yes 19% No 10% Abstain</td>
<td>Media Organisations National Union of Journalists</td>
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<td>NIPP calls for increased funding for preventative healthcare programmes to help maintain the quality of life and independence for older people living at home.</td>
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<td>DHSSPS</td>
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<td>95% Yes 2% No 3% Abstain</td>
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PSNI - Police Service of Northern Ireland  
DOJ - Department of Justice  
CSPPs - Community Safety and Policing Partnerships  
DE - Department of Education  
DCAL - Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure  
OFMdFM - Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister  
DHSSPS - Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety  
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<td>87% Yes 10% No 3% Abstain</td>
<td>UK Government</td>
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<td>94% Yes 3% No 3% Abstain</td>
<td>NI Executive NI Assembly DSD</td>
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DHSSPS - Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
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<td>UK Government DWP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB6</td>
<td>NIPP calls on the NI Assembly to take action to help those pensioners who find themselves just above benefit levels or whose modest savings leaves them missing out on any financial assistance.</td>
<td>94% Yes  2% No  4% Abstain</td>
<td>NI Executive NI Assembly DWP DSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>NIPP calls on the NI Assembly to bring forward legislation to end unfair discrimination where it adversely affects the opportunities, goods and services available to older people.</td>
<td>98% Yes  0% No  2% Abstain</td>
<td>NI Executive NI Assembly OFMdFM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DWP - Department for Work and Pensions  
DSD - Department for Social Development  
OFMdFM - Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister
## Belfast Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% listed this as a top concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Food prices</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Information on benefits / entitlements</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Suitable housing</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Access to education / training</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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### County Fermanagh Survey Results

<table>
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<th>Issue</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
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<td>Food prices</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Suitable housing</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Access to education / training</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>% listed this as a top concern</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
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<td>Not enough money</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>60.9%</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Food prices</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Information on benefits / entitlements</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
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<td>Transport</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<td>Age discrimination</td>
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<tr>
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<td>New technology</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>Suitable housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Access to education / training</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Employment issues</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
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## County Armagh Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% listed this as a top concern</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
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<td>Food prices</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Information on benefits / entitlements</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Suitable housing</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Access to education / training</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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## County Tyrone Survey Results

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<th>Issue</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Information on benefits / entitlements</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Suitable housing</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Employment issues</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
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</table>
### County Derry / Londonderry Survey Results

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<th>Issue</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Food prices</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
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<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Suitable housing</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Access to education / training</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Employment issues</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
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</table>
## County Down Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% listed this as a top concern</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Keeping warm in winter / Energy prices</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Not enough money</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Food prices</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Information on benefits / entitlements</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Loneliness / Boredom</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lack of respect</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Access to health and social care</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Age discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>New technology</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Elder abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Access to education/training</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Suitable housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Employment issues</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
members of the pensioners parliament 2011

Evelyn Alexander
Maureen Andrew
Nixon Armstrong
Betty Baird
William Barrett
Briege Barrett
Ivan Baxter
June Bingham
Diarmuid Boyle
Toni Bunting
Olive Calvert
Beryl Carson
Bill Carson
Anne Casey
Leslie Clarke
Patrick Conlon
Catherine Corrigan
Joan Cosgrove
Marie Coyle
AP Damoglou
Irene Davis
Sheila Dodds
Gerald Doherty
Chrissie Dolan
Patricia Donald
Isobel Dunlop
Averil Dunlop
June Edens
Gladys Edmondson
Philomena Evans
Margaret Ewing
Allison Forbes
MW Forrester
Michael Fox
Tony Freedman
Anne Gallagher
Paddy Gallagher
Margaret Galloway
Ann Gamble
Betty Gillespie
Rose Gilmore
Irene Glass
George Glenholmes
Patricia Gordon
Joyce Greaves
Joyce Griffin
Robert Grimason
Denis Hamill
Dorothy Hanna
Joan Harkin
John Harkin
Andrew Harper
Irene Harper
Eric Harvey
Robert Hasson
Irene Haughey
Denise Hegarty
Breda Hickey
Jayne Higgins
Meg Holmes
Elizabeth Ann Hopley
Paddy Houillahan
Maureen Hoy
Francis Hughes
Dorothy Hutton
Brenda Irvine
Indu Jairath
Naresh Jairath
Albert Johnston
Ruth Johnston
Sabine Jones
Jacqueline Kelly
Jennifer Kelly
James Kennedy
Jim Kenny
Kathleen Keogh
Anne Keys
Violet Little
Emmett Lynch
Mary Lynch
Josephine Lynch
Bridget Maguire
Martha Mallon
Mary Marr
Anna Marshall
John Marshall
John Martin
Joe Mathews
Teresa McCafferty
Mona McCallister
Martin McCartney
Glynis McConnell
Colette McCrossan
Gladys McCullagh
Mary McEneaney
Paul McEvoy
Martha McGonigle
Margaret McGreevy
David McGreevy
Molly McIvor
Geraldine McKee
Alex McLaughlin
Pat McLaughlin
Jean McMillen
Mrs R McWatters
Nicholas Menhinick
Margaret Millen
Margaret Milliken
Dolly Misra
Michael Monaghan
Mary Moran
Patricia Mulhern
Victor Murphy
Rita Murray
Robert Murtland
Jean Nicholl
Henry Nichol
Karen O’Donnell
Imelda O’Dowd
Magdalene O’Reilly
Letitia Parkhill
Deanna Parsons
Li Ping
Gerry Potts
Mary Ann Quigley
Conn Quinn
Hugh Rafferty
Dorothy Ramsey
Gretta Reid
Paul Riordon
Mary Roberts
Lynd Roper Daphne
Ruddell
Frank Ruddy
Maureen Ruddy
Terry Ruddy
Rama Sharma
Rajni Sharma
Edith Shaw
Jean Shields
Renu Shori
Marie Short
May Sinclair
Dympna Sinton
Mary Small
Ruth Spence
Dorothy Stevenson
Anna Stewart
Deane Stewart
James Stewart Laird
James Stitt
Moira Tapster
Wilma Taylor
Margaret Thomas
Edward Vint
Anne Watson
Isabelle Weir
Patricia White
Shirley Wilson
Robert Windrum
Dolores Woodside
Li Ping Ye
Xixiang Zhang
8c. pensioners parliament committee 2011

Committee

Michael Monaghan (Chair)
Patricia Donald (Vice Chair)
Nixon Armstrong
Tom Cairns
Bill Carson
Sam Caul
Angelina Cooper
Alison Forbes
Philomena Evans
Margaret Galloway
Robert Grimason
Olaf Hvattum
Seamus Lynch
Denise McBride
Paddy Joe McClean
Pat McLaughlin

Staff and Advisers

Eddie Lynch Age Sector Platform
Alison McElhinney Age Sector Platform
Nichola Johnston Age Sector Platform
Eleanor Mallon Age Sector Platform
Sam McWilliams Age Sector Platform
Claire Flynn Stratagem
Chris McCreery Stratagem
Mission

To be a strong unified voice for older people in Northern Ireland.

Vision

A society where older people’s voices are heard, respected and acted upon.

Aims

• To engage with older people, allowing them to make their voice heard.

• To enable older people to advocate on their own behalf.

• To change the lives of older people for the better.

If you are interested in becoming a member of Age Sector Platform, please contact us using the below details:

Age Sector Platform
Merrion Business Centre
58 Howard Street
Belfast BT1 6PJ

Tel: 028 9031 2089
Fax: 028 9033 2273
Email: info@agesectorplatform.org
www.agesectorplatform.org
www.twitter.com/aspni