


## Our Manifesto for Independent Advocacy



Independent advocacy  
must be:

- Accessible
- Diverse
- Sustainable
- Engaged

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## Editorial

Welcome to our Election Special edition. This issue aims to help the advocacy movement campaign to improve the profile of independent advocacy and influence our political representatives in light of the upcoming elections.

Erin starts a series of articles giving us information about influencing policy making and Parliament in Scotland. This edition looks at Scottish legislation.

With a fine of up to £1000 for non-completion, we look at the Census and why it is important to be counted this year.

Elsewhere Adelle updates us about the Quality Assurance Working Group and the draft model in planning.

*Rhian*  
Editor

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### Next issue:

Please submit information and articles for the next magazine by 18th March 2011.

### Thank you:

The SIAA would like to thank all the individuals who have contributed to this magazine.

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### Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual authors and should not be taken to represent those of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

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An electronic copy of this magazine can be downloaded from our website: [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk).





## SIAA news

### Shaben Begum receives MBE

The first big news of 2011 was that our Director Shaben Begum was included on the Queen's New Year Honours List with an MBE for services to healthcare.

Shaben has been receiving congratulatory letters from many including **Alex Salmond, First Minister of Scotland** who congratulated Shaben on her well-deserved recognition: *"I am very much aware of the key role... advocacy plays in delivering quality healthcare, and the vast experience and expertise you continue to bring to the table, most recently as a member of the Mental Health Act Review Group.*

*"In your eight years leading the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, you have created a highly respected organisation which lights the beacon for others to follow."*

**Dr Donald Lyons, Director of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland** said *"Shaben has made a great contribution to improving the quality and accessibility of advocacy across Scotland and has been a valuable partner in the Commission's work to promote best practice in the principles of mental health law. We offer her our sincerest congratulations."*

**Shona Robison MSP, Minister for Public Health and Sport** wrote *"This honour reflects your longstanding commitment to the principles of independent advocacy and I am sure that you will welcome it also as a recognition of the importance*



*of the SIAA in providing a strong national voice for organisations in this sector."*

During her time at the organisation, Shaben has helped the SIAA develop a strong national voice for independent advocacy organisations, helping to contribute to and influence services and legislation. This work will be continued in the coming year with the *Manifesto for Independent Advocacy* and campaigning work in parliament and an increase in the SIAA's involvement in parliamentary and policy work and influence.

As well as this being a great recognition for Shaben's hard work and dedication, this honour is also a recognition that independent advocacy is seen as important by decision makers both in the UK and Scottish Governments which Shaben has played a large role in developing.

**Muriel Mowat and Rhian Thompson**

# A manifesto for independent advocacy in Scotland

By Muriel Mowat, Advocacy Safeguarding Officer, SIAA

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*With the forthcoming Scottish election in mind, and next year's local elections, the SIAA have been working on a manifesto for independent advocacy in Scotland.*

The SIAA surveyed its member organisations towards the end of 2010 to find out what issues were affecting the advocacy movement. The following four themes emerged from the responses received and have been consolidated into one document

Many of us at some times in our lives may find it difficult to have our voice heard about decisions or actions that affect our lives; this may be particularly true for individuals who are vulnerable or discriminated against. Independent advocacy is about standing alongside a person and making sure their views are heard and listened to, that they have control over their lives, and that they can make informed decisions.

**Advocacy Partner Robert explains** *"I can't talk like these people and can't put over what I want to say very well. I need someone to help me."*

**Fiona, also an Advocacy Partner shares the difference that independent advocacy made to her:** *"You have people around you that make you feel confident whatever the decisions you have to make. You are in control."*

Independent advocacy has been available in Scotland for many years and the right of access to independent advocacy, for some, is now enshrined in legislation. We believe that there must be appropriate commissioning and resourcing of independent advocacy organisations to ensure that Scotland has robust and widespread provision with the highest quality of independent advocacy available to all who need it.

We want politicians and prospective politicians to consider the importance of the provision of independent advocacy both in formulating their own party manifestos and when making or updating legislation or funding decisions in the future.

## **Our manifesto calls for independent advocacy in Scotland to be:**

### **Accessible**

There are many people who have a right of access to independent advocacy under existing legislation or who need to access independent advocacy because they are disenfranchised and disempowered. Unfortunately far too many find accessing advocacy services difficult and sometimes impossible.

**The Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee states:** *"The Scottish Government must develop approaches to tackle the difficulties that groups are facing in accessing their entitlement to advocacy services. Quite simply, advocacy provision should be available to all groups, not just to those who present as crisis cases."*

### **Diverse**

Independent advocacy supports many different people including children and young people, carers, asylum seekers, people with physical disabilities, and those with mental illness and learning disabilities. As a result there are different models of advocacy that suit different people and situations.

**Lynda Thompson, Commissioner NHS, Highland** *"...would like to see independent advocacy offered in a variety of ways that provides the best choices for individuals, such as individual professional*

*advocacy, collective advocacy, citizen advocacy and support for self-advocacy.”*

### **Sustainable**

Risk of becoming homeless, dementia, mental health tribunal hearings, or the challenge of caring for someone, are a few of the reasons a person may access independent advocacy. Depending on the issue a person may need support for a few days, weeks, months or years. Provision of independent advocacy must reflect this.

When considering the retender or commission of independent advocacy, commissioners must take into account the needs of people already accessing the service.

**Limited Review of the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 Report recommends:** *“The Government should, by whatever means it sees fit, ensure that there is appropriate provision, with associated funding, across Scotland, of independent advocacy services.”*

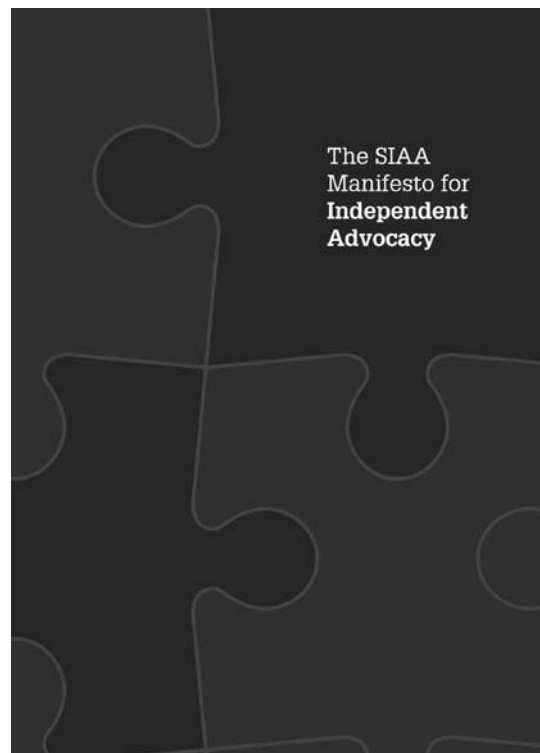
### **Engaged**

The Scottish Government has consistently shown a commitment to independent advocacy and this has led to many disadvantaged people feeling valued and becoming more included in Scottish society. There is, however, scope for improvement, as availability of independent advocacy for the people who need it in Scotland still varies widely.

**Dr Donald Lyons, Director of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland believes** *“Independent advocacy plays a very important role in making sure that people with mental health problems or a learning disability have their rights respected and are able to influence decisions about their care and*

*treatment.”*

With this manifesto the SIAA is calling for all elected representatives to consider the role and inclusion of independent advocacy when developing new policies, legislation and strategies. We are also calling for local and national decision makers to work with the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance to take forward the recommendations in our manifesto and thereby better support and develop independent advocacy in Scotland.



To download a copy of the SIAA Manifesto go to [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk), or contact [enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk) for more information or to order copies.

# Guide to promoting advocacy and influencing using the SIAA manifesto

By Erin Elvin, Policy and Parliamentary Officer and Rhian Thompson, Information Officer, SIAA

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*Please keep the SIAA up-to-date about what actions you are taking and who you are talking to!*

*A full campaigning toolkit with further materials and more information about the above will be included on our website at [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk) from the 8 March, after the SIAA Manifesto launch.*

In the lead up to the Scottish Parliamentary Elections the SIAA wants to show our future Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) how important advocacy is and we hope that our members and supporters will use the manifesto as a helpful lobbying tool. Members can use the Manifesto to hone in on the specifics in their own areas and build up relations with their own candidates.

Always remember: MSPs are elected to represent their constituents, including you and your advocacy partner. This makes your views important to them. You don't need any special skills or knowledge to influence your local politician, just your experience as an independent advocate in your area.

## Preparation

- Find out who your local prospective MSPs are and how to contact them.
- Take some time to familiarise yourself with the four key demands. For each of the demands think about why they are important to your organisation and the people you work with.
- There is a box on the back of the manifesto where you can stick an address label, so that when you hand copies to prospective MSPs they will know where it came from and have contact details of their local organisation as well as those of the SIAA.

## Actions

- Write a letter or email to your MSPs (compose your own letter or use the template provided on the SIAA website).
- MSPs are often concerned about local media coverage; get a letter published in your local paper.
- Visit their surgery or make an appointment to see your local prospective MSPs to give them the manifesto in person and talk about your own work or interest in the field.
- Ask your advocacy partner if they would like to accompany you to the meeting.
- Take along the manifesto, SIAA documents and leaflets about your organisation to leave with your MSP to read.
- If you already have a good relationship with your local MSPs why not organise a local event and invite your MSPs and the local press.

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If you would like to talk to someone about lobbying your local MSPs, you would like copies of the manifesto or any further information, please contact **Erin Elvin** at [eelvin@siaa.org.uk](mailto:eelvin@siaa.org.uk) or telephone **0131 260 5382**

# An introduction to independent advocacy in Scottish legislation

By Erin Elvin, Policy and Parliamentary Officer, SIAA

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*Scottish legislation can have a variety of purposes, including to regulate, authorise, prescribe, provide (funds), sanction, grant, declare or to restrict. It can have a significant impact on services in Scotland and is therefore one of the reasons why the upcoming Scottish Elections are important to independent advocacy.*

There are a number of pieces of legislation which already govern our work:

## **The Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003**

This important Act was the first to set out a statutory right to independent advocacy for people with a mental disorder.

## **The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000**

This Act aims to help people (age 16 and over) who lack capacity to act or make some or all decisions for themselves, including by ensuring they have access to advocacy.

## **Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007**

This Act is designed to protect adults at risk of abuse. The Act places a duty on Council Officers to: "*consider the importance of providing advocacy and other services*".

## **The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004**

The 2004 Act introduces a new framework for providing for children and young people who require additional help with their learning, including giving them the right to access advocacy.

As well as campaigning for the right of access to independent advocacy for everyone who needs it,

the SIAA manifesto also addresses existing legislation, the right to independent advocacy and how it should be implemented, funded and improved. The SIAA monitor the Scottish Parliament to identify what draft legislation is being proposed and ensure that it takes into account the needs of independent advocacy organisations and the people we support.

The SIAA contributes to the development of legislation by:

- responding to consultations on upcoming legislation
- giving oral and written evidence to Scottish Parliamentary committees; and,
- working closely with MSPs and Scottish Ministers to highlight issues affecting independent advocacy.

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**The SIAA is always looking for input and case studies from our members to ensure that we are responding on behalf of, and representing the advocacy movement in Scotland.**

To find out how to contribute, keep up with our work, and what is happening in the Scottish Parliament in relation to independent advocacy, follow us on twitter: @siaa\_voice, visit our [website](#) or sign up to our [e-bulletin](#).

**For more information contact the SIAA's Policy and Parliamentary Officer, Erin Elvin, at [eelvin@siaa.org.uk](mailto:eelvin@siaa.org.uk).**



## Ensuring voices are heard in Scotland's 2011

**polls** *By Sarah Mackie, Senior Officer (Scotland), The Electoral Commission*

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*On Thursday 5 May 2011, there will be an election to the Scottish Parliament, and a referendum on the voting system you use to elect MPs to the House of Commons.*

### Who can vote?

You can vote in the Scottish Parliamentary election and the referendum if you are registered to vote in Scotland, are 18 or over on 5 May 2011 and are:

- a British citizen, or
- a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or
- a citizen of the Irish Republic.

Citizens of other European Union countries registered to vote in Scotland can vote in the

Scottish Parliamentary election. However they can't vote in the referendum.

### Registering to vote

If you're not registered, you won't be able to vote. Most people register to vote using the form that local councils send to each household each year.

If you are not on the electoral register, you will need to complete a voter registration form and send it to your local electoral registration office to arrive by Friday 15 April. A voter registration form as well as other information can be found on the Electoral Commission website [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk).



If you aren't sure whether you are registered or not, your local electoral registration office can tell you. You can find their contact details on the website.

### **What if I have a learning difficulty or mental health condition?**

There is no bar on people with learning difficulties or mental health conditions registering to vote. However, the decision as to whether and how to vote at an election must always be made by the voter themselves and not by any other person on their behalf. Carers may not make decisions on voting and no type of power of attorney has any power in connection with voting rights.

### **What about if I am detained under the Mental Health Act?**

Patients staying in mental health units, both as voluntary and detained patients, are entitled to register to vote unless they are also detained offenders. Depending on their circumstances, they will have a number of options when it comes to registering to vote.

Patients may give the address of the unit as their permanent address if they are likely to spend enough time there for them to be regarded as resident. Alternatively, they can register at another address (likely to be the address where they would be living if they weren't in hospital), or register in an area by means of a 'declaration of local connection'. Your local electoral registration office can give you more advice about your options for registering. Their details can be found on the website.

Detained patients may vote by post, by proxy, or in person if they have permission to leave the hospital.

### **Ways of Voting**

*There are three ways of voting:*

**In person** on 5 May: most people vote in person at their polling place which are open from 7am to 10pm. You will receive a poll card telling you where your polling place is. It is often a nearby

school or community centre. If you do not receive your poll card, you can contact your local council to find out where your polling station is.

Tactile voting templates and large print versions of ballot papers are available at all polling stations. If you need help to vote then you can take a companion with you to assist you, or ask the presiding officer at the polling station for help.

**By post:** You can apply to vote by post. You will need to fill in an application form and send it to arrive at your local electoral registration office by 5pm on Thursday 14 April. You can get an application form online.

**By proxy:** If you can't go to the polling station and don't want to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf. You will need to fill in an application form and send it to your local electoral registration office to arrive by 5pm on Thursday 21 April. You can get more information and an application form online.

### **How will I know how to fill in my ballot papers?**

There will be posters and notices in the polling station telling you what to do and you can also ask the staff to help you.

The Electoral Commission will also be sending a booklet to every house in Scotland before the election with information about the election, the referendum and the ballot papers.

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Find all this information and more, download or fill in forms at The Electoral Commission website: [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)

If you need further information on voting in the forthcoming election and referendum then please **contact Sarah Mackie at the Electoral Commission on 0131 225 0204 or [Smackie@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:Smackie@electoralcommission.org.uk)**

## What your political parties have to say...

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The next few years will bring significant challenges to the delivery of services in Scotland. The SIAA asked the Scottish Government and main opposition parties what they believe should be done in Scotland to improve access to independent advocacy...

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### **Nicola Sturgeon MSP**

*Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Scottish Government*

There can be few things worse than feeling vulnerable or confused about your health or welfare and having no-one to support you or explain things.

For a huge range of people, advocacy can make a major difference. For example, Scottish councils and health boards are legally obliged to ensure independent advocacy is available for everyone with a mental disorder, not just people subject to compulsory

measures. The law on vulnerable adults encourages advocacy and people with autistic spectrum disorder or learning disabilities can also benefit.

But the Scottish Government is going further — making advocacy part of the Patient Rights Bill going through parliament, asking the SIAA to help health boards address gaps in provision, improving advocacy for children and young people and developing advocacy for prisoners with mental disorders. Most importantly, we will continue to listen to people who use advocacy and put them at the heart of services.



### **Dr Richard Simpson MSP**

*Deputy Party Spokesperson on Health, Scottish Labour Party*

The availability of independent advocacy is of great importance in ensuring fairness and equity. Today we face the challenge of restricted resources and there is a danger that

some may see advocacy as a luxury — it is not.

Advocacy is required today even more than before in deprived areas, for those with learning disability and for children. A group of GPs serving the most deprived communities in Scotland

identified advocacy as an issue of importance because many patients have numerous and complex needs. As many as 400 patients below the age of 65 are being placed in care homes for the elderly, many following a crisis such as the loss of their carer. The average age in care homes is nearly 90 and the placement of younger, learning disabled adults there is unacceptable.

Any future Labour government will need to look at our progress in advocacy and we are committed to ensuring that any contract retendering should only take place where a service is not meeting the needs of its users.



**Mary Scanlon MSP**

*Party Spokesperson on Health, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party*

Scottish Conservatives believe that independent advocacy performs a vital role in supporting and empowering some of the most vulnerable groups in society.

face in accessing advocacy services, and believe that advocacy provision should be available to all groups, not just to those who present as crisis cases.

To help achieve this, we want to see more public and voluntary sector organisations working with local independent advocacy groups to ensure that those people, particularly with a legislated right to independent advocacy, are aware of the services available and how to access them.

We hold the view that new approaches are needed to tackle the difficulties that some groups



**Ross Finnie MSP**

*Party Spokesperson on Health, Scottish Liberal Democrats*

Independent advocacy safeguards some of the most vulnerable people in Scottish society.

far too many people are unable to access services. With regard to mental illness for example, gaps in advocacy provision exist for a number of groups including children and young people.

Access to such services is vital in order to support individuals and empower them to make decisions

We must ensure that everyone with a right to independent advocacy can access it when they need it. Services must remain independent and diverse in order to meet the needs of different people. Improving access will also require the provision of training and more joined-up working between decision makers, at both national and local levels, and local advocacy groups.

about, and take control of, their own lives.

Liberal Democrats are therefore extremely concerned that, while existing legislation gives many people a right to access independent advocacy,



**Patrick Harvie MSP**

*Party Leader, Scottish Green Party*

One of the core values of the Scottish Green Party is equality. We believe our society must be founded on co-operation and respect, and we have campaigned hard against discrimination,

is vital in helping vulnerable people to have a strong voice in the decisions that affect them, their life and their care and treatment.

We believe that advocacy organisations must be properly funded, and thus access to advocacy services properly resourced, so that every vulnerable person in Scotland can have their right for an independent advocate met. The gaps in current provision are too great and resources too stretched. The next Parliamentary session must create a clearer and more stable path for independent advocacy to thrive right across Scotland.

including on grounds of age, disability and gender.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the principle of independent advocacy resonates strongly with Green Policy. The work of advocacy organisations

# Quality assurance in advocacy: the time is now

By Adelle Gardiner, SIAA, Research and Quality Officer

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*Many About Advocacy readers will be aware of discussions in recent years about the need for a quality assurance process in advocacy. Within the advocacy movement these discussions have been fruitful: thanks to the hard work of SIAA's Quality Assurance Working Group we will shortly be distributing a draft process model for consultation, and are on track to present the results to the SIAA AGM in October.*

Some of the key features of this model are outlined below. At the same time we have noticed increasing interest in the evaluation of advocacy from outside the advocacy movement, suggesting the time really is now.

## Taking the lead

Earlier consultations revealed that SIAA members were in the majority positive about introducing an evaluative process that would measure an organisation's performance against the Principles and Standards for Independent Advocacy. However, it was also important to many that advocacy was not subject to an externally imposed quality assurance process.

There is indeed increased interest from outside the movement in the evaluation and scrutiny of advocacy, particularly from the statutory sector. Most notably, the Limited Review of the *Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003\** recommended that "the appropriate scrutiny processes and bodies should promote and monitor the application of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance Principles and Standards and Code of Practice".

However, such external interest does not necessarily translate to a threat of external

scrutiny. Instead, it suggests an audience willing and ready to consider the advocacy movement's own model for quality assurance.

## The draft model

After much interesting discussion and debate, the SIAA's Quality Assurance Working Group has agreed on a draft model under the working title of the Practice Development and Safeguarding Team. This title aims to reflect the Team's dual function: formal evaluation of advocacy practice; and on-going support for continuous improvement and learning within advocacy organisations.

The Working Group has identified four key beliefs that will form the basis of all work conducted by the Team:

**1 All organisations providing advocacy should strive to meet good practice** as identified in the *Principles and Standards* and the *Code of Practice*.

People accessing advocacy in Scotland should rightly expect at least a defined basic level of good practice regardless of the form of advocacy they are accessing or their geographic location. The *Principles and Standards* provide a clear marker for this basic level of good practice. The Team will work cooperatively with advocacy organisations across the country to support the delivery of quality advocacy as set out in the *Principles and Standards*.

**2 Good quality advocacy should be available to all who require it.**

The Team will lead a quality evaluation process conducting an external evaluation of each

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advocacy organisation every three years.

Simultaneously the Team will work with relevant Commissioners to encourage and influence the provision of an adequate level of support and resourcing.

### **3 Good quality advocacy can be achieved in a variety of advocacy models.**

The Team will respect the diversity inherent within the advocacy movement and will support the delivery of advocacy in all its forms. The Team will also support organisations of varying size and capacity, recognising that there will often be more than one appropriate and successful way to meet the outcomes within the *Principles and Standards*.

### **4 Building a culture of sharing good practice will benefit the provision of good quality advocacy.**

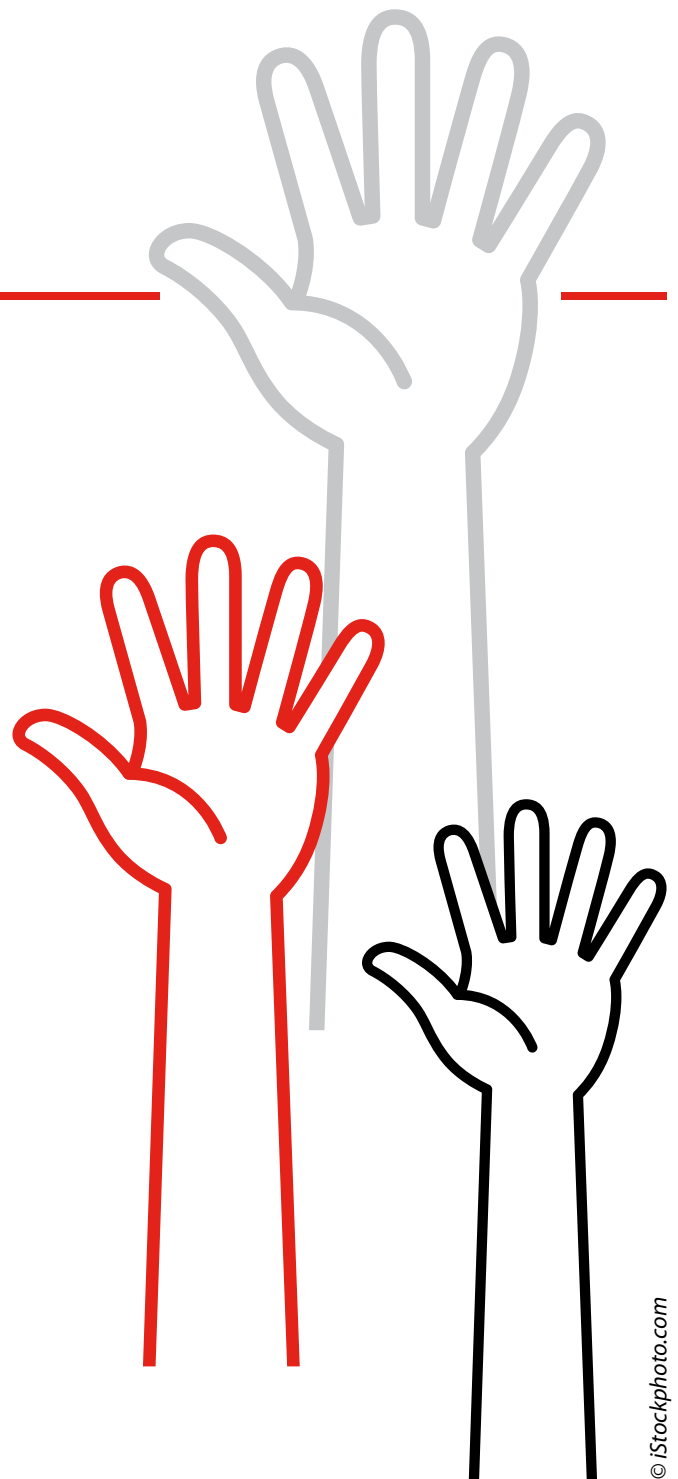
The advocacy movement can learn so much from itself. Innovations and creative practice are happening across the country but not always publicised. The Team will publish a report of findings from external evaluations to encourage the sharing of good practice within the advocacy movement.

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#### **Your views**

The full draft model for the Practice Development and Safeguarding Team will be available shortly for consultation.

Keep an eye out over the next few weeks!



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*\*The Scottish Government (2009) Limited Review of the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003: Report, p12*

# Shaping Scotland's future

## Scotland's Census 2011

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*This March will see a once-a-decade event take place which will help plan for the future of Scotland. Advocacy partners may be looking to their advocates for information help and guidance about the 2011 Census as it starts to be publicised and awareness grows.*

Scotland's official population survey, the 2011 Census, is being held on Sunday 27 March. Questionnaires will be delivered to all of the country's 2.5 million households and it is important that everyone is included.

The 2011 Census marks the 150th year for which the Registrar General has been responsible for the count of Scotland's population. Censuses have been held in Scotland every 10 years since 1801 with the exception of 1941 during the Second World War.

While personal details from a census are safeguarded by law and kept confidential for 100 years, the anonymous statistical results will play a vital role in helping shape Scotland's future.

The Census paints a picture of Scotland as a nation. It lets people inform government, local authorities, public sector organisations and businesses about the services they and their community need. Census questions ask about our circumstances such as age, health, accommodation and occupation.

The Census provides national and neighbourhood statistics that are used to plan how billions of pounds worth of public services, like health, education, transport and housing, are delivered as well as business investment and retail opportunities throughout Scotland. It asks the same questions of us all, including our long-term health and whether we look after, or give any help

or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either long-term physical or mental ill-health, disability or problems related to old age.

That is why the content of the 2011 Census questionnaire has been so carefully considered.

There are five new questions in this year's Census. These are: long-term health conditions, national identity, month and year of arrival in the UK and two new questions on language.

There are 13 questions about the household and 35 questions about each person who usually lives at that address. Given its vital importance, participation in the Census is compulsory and all questions must be answered—apart from the question about religion which is voluntary.

Duncan Macniven has been the Registrar General since 2003. He heads up the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) and is responsible for organising the country's national census.

For him, the statistics produced by the Census will prove fascinating reading for the decision makers of today and the historians of tomorrow:

*“Scotland's Census is unique in its capacity to chart our history and inform key decisions about the level of services required and how our country grows and develops.*

*“It is fascinating being able to track the developments in our country and view the trends of the last 200 years such as the move from a population with a*



**Scotland's  
Census 2011**  
Shaping our future



*Duncan Macniven, Registrar General with the Census Regional Managers from across Scotland*

*high number of young children to one consisting of a high number of older people.*

*"While it is a unique historical record it is important to remember that the Census is a living statistical mechanism that changes with society. The 2011 Census will reflect a wider change in society by offering most householders the option to complete their Census questionnaire online for the first time.*

*"One common aspect of every modern census has been the emphasis placed on the security of personal details. All such information collected through the Census is safeguarded by law and kept confidential for 100 years. Only then will the individual census records be available to future generations as a rich source of information about 21<sup>st</sup> century Scotland."*

The Census can be filled in as soon as it arrives if you know who will be staying at your address on the night of 27 March. It is very important to include everyone in your household.

For the first time, householders will have the ability to fill in their Census questionnaire in English or Gaelic online.

Help is available to anyone who needs it from **the helpline on: 0300 123 1702** or online at **[www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk)**

For further information on the census visit **[www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk)**

# Census awareness raising Top Tips

By Rhian Thompson, Information Officer, SIAA

*The Census team contacted the SIAA as they are keen to use the advocacy movement to reach the hard to reach members of society.*

They aim to get everyone in Scotland to fill in the Census and emphasise that governments, local authorities and many other organisations can use the results to plan ahead and meet our needs.

The results mean public services can be properly planned and funded. We have laid out some pointers below to help raise awareness about the Census.

- Plan in plenty of time, the 2011 Census takes place on Sunday 27 March
- Order accessible versions of the information in advance from the Census website
- Make sure all staff and volunteers know about the forthcoming Census and why everyone should contribute
- Where possible, mention the Census in meetings with advocacy partners and find out if they have any questions or need any further information to help them participate
- Spread the word for advocacy partners to share with their social or work networks, their friends and family
- Produce easy to use guides in accessible formats for advocacy partners and visitors
- Display leaflets and posters around your premises
- Include information about the Census in any newsletters or e-newsletters

## Information sources, help and guidance



Help is available to those who need it from the helpline on: **0300 123 1702** or online at **[www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk)**

- You can watch the census questions in British Sign Language (BSL).
  - You can listen to the questions through audio clips.
  - Translations of the questionnaire and help leaflet are provided in 11 further languages.
  - Other support such as large print and Braille supported questionnaires is available on request.
- Spread the word on any online networks you are a part of
  - Encourage any partners or other organisations you work with to share information about the Census

Some people may be reluctant to complete the form because of worries about the security and confidentiality of their personal information, so it is important to emphasise that the findings are kept confidential for 100 years.

It is also important that people know that they could be facing a large fine if they do not complete the form by post or online.