



January 2019 News

Welcome to our update for groups and services supporting older veterans and their families. In this edition:

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Please tell us whether and how you found this update helpful by completing a short online survey - [here](#).

Advice for older veterans with sight or hearing loss



A new guide has been published to inform older veterans about the early signs of sight and hearing loss, and to encourage them to make use of support that's available for them at the earliest stage. The guide is an initiative of Unforgotten Forces partners Age Scotland, Scottish War Blinded and Action on Hearing Loss, and funded through the consortium.

- Request one or more free postal copies: veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk
- [Download the advice guide](#)
- [News story](#)

Help us to send isolated older veterans your way



The Age Scotland [Community](#)

[Connecting service](#) can support socially isolated older veterans to benefit from suitable local groups and activities. Please help us to promote your activities and opportunities to older veterans through the service.

Here's how Community Connecting works. On receiving a referral (often a self-referral via the Age Scotland helpline) a trained volunteer will call the older person to suggest groups and activities matching their location and interests.

Everyone using the service is asked about prior military service, so our volunteers know to whom they should highlight opportunities offering older veterans a warm welcome. For 2019 we're developing a map (prototype pictured above) that volunteers will use to match older veterans, at a glance, with suitable opportunities from our database. Listings can quickly go out of date, so before calling back volunteers will check with groups or activities they intend to suggest to verify information about them. With the older veteran's

consent the volunteer can call again a few times over coming weeks; to give encouragement, and where desired broker contact with the group or activity organisers.

We've added a number of 'Veterans' Warm Welcome' groups and services to our Community Connecting database already – if you've sent us a Veteran's Project Community Connecting form already there's no need to send another. If you don't believe you are on our database, or are unsure, and would like to be included, please email us: veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk.

We're looking in particular for:

Unforgotten Forces Partner organisations

We can (and do) add established veterans' centres to our database where these are promoted online. However for outreach activities, e.g. informal local groups you run, or home-based support visits, we need further information from and discussion with you. Please email us: veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk if you run social or social support opportunities that you would like us to include.

Local veterans' cafes, groups and associations

We've added a number of veterans' community groups to our database, but know that many more are not yet listed. Unless you have already applied for inclusion in Community Connecting, assume you are not listed and please get in touch so we can add you - email veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk. For groups that don't have an official phone number or email address, and would prefer if organisers' contact details are not published online, we can broker contact with older veterans. We know that some groups and associations rely on tools such as Facebook to connect with veterans, which can make them less accessible to older veterans who are not internet users. Using us to broker contacts between such veterans and you in these circumstances could

potentially boost your membership.

Services and groups for older people

You don't have to be a group or service specifically for older veterans to be listed as offering a 'Veterans' Warm Welcome' in our Community Connecting database. You do, however, need to be committed to improving what you offer older veterans by:

- Ensuring your team is able to identify which older people are classed as veterans, and has basic knowledge of help and entitlements for them
- Circulating helpful information to older veterans you involve, e.g. Age Scotland Veterans' Project advice guides

If interested please get in touch to discuss:

veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk.

Free training days

Our older veteran awareness and dementia awareness training roadshow continues for 2019. Confirmed dates so far are:

- Perth - February 6th ([Details and booking here](#))
- Haddington - February 14th ([Details and booking here](#))
- Paisley - February 19th ([Details and booking here](#))
- Alloa - March 13th ([Details and booking here](#))

We can also run short veterans awareness workshops for groups and services individually where there are at least 6 participants and training facilities can be provided. To enquire email veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk.



Campaigning and influencing

UK Veterans Strategy Consultation

In November 2018, a draft UK Veterans Strategy was published and a consultation process launched. The UK and Scottish Governments are asking our Armed Forces community and all those who support them (including yourself) to share their views and thoughts.

Poppyscotland and The Royal British Legion have developed a survey. Please

circulate this and encourage veterans and those working with and for them to complete it.

- For more information and to complete the survey – [click here](#)
- **Response deadline** 21st January 2019

Scottish Government ‘Older People’s Framework’ consultation

The Scottish Older People’s Assembly (SOPA) exists to give a strong voice to older people about their concerns and experience of life in Scotland, and also raises issues about age inequality. It is also an Unforgotten Forces partner.

SOPA is collecting views from older people across Scotland on a range of issues in response to the Scottish Government’s request for views as it develops a new ‘Older People’s Framework’ in 2019. Their questionnaire is available for download here:

- For more information and to complete the questionnaire - [click here](#)
- Request paper copies – email Caroline@scotopa.org.uk
- **Response deadline:** 30th January 2019

Around the country



Happy birthday ERMAC

Happy 1st birthday to the [Erskine Reid Macewen Activity Centre](#). Since opening it has enabled veterans to enjoy comradeship and an amazing variety of activities; from model making, to computer classes, to Muay Thai Boxing.

Veterans and drama

The Macrobert Arts Centre in partnership with Stand Easy Productions (Dundee) offers weekly drama workshops for Armed Forces Veterans and their family members.

The group will perform a piece, 'I Remember' which they have devised themselves at 6pm on Friday 1st February at the Macrobert.

The piece started out as an exploration of what Remembrance Day means, who it is for and its value in the 21st Century. It became an exploration of things the veterans remembered, or thought about, around Remembrance Day; good times shared with fellow soldiers, friends lost, challenges moving back to civilian

life and the struggle to balance family with service.

Veterans groups are welcome to attend the performance. Tickets are free, but as space is limited groups are asked to contact the Macrobert in the first instance and not just turn up on the day. Contact Hannah Uttley, Creative Learning Officer. Email. hannah.uttley@macrobertartscentre.org

Veterans' gardens

A growing number of veterans are benefiting from gardening together in locations ranging from [Dumfries](#) to [Dundee](#). If your group is interested in setting up a therapeutic gardening project for veterans Trellis, Scotland's Network for therapeutic gardening, offers information and support:

<https://trellisscotland.org.uk/>

Funding

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has launched a £3m funding programme to fund renovations and improvements to veterans' community centres. Grants of up to £30,000 are available. A small number of grants of up to £150,000 will be made to more complex projects.

The Veterans' Community Centres Programme is a specialist pot of funding. Applicants must be Armed Forces charities with an existing building that requires refurbishment.

Find out more and apply – [Click here](#)

Application deadlines – variable throughout 2019



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About Age Scotland

Age Scotland, part of the Age Network, is an independent charity dedicated to improving the later lives of everyone on the ageing journey, within a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland. Registration Number: 153343 Charity Number: SC010100 Registered Office: Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PR.

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