

Social opportunities for older veterans in Scotland



Welcome to your guide to Social Opportunities

Unforgotten Forces is a partnership of leading charities working together to boost the health and wellbeing of all veterans in Scotland age 60 and older who served one day or more with the British Armed Forces. If you were a regular, a reservist, did National Service or supported a military operation when you were in the merchant navy, then this list is for you and your family.

The purpose of the guide is to put you in touch with other veterans through local community groups and organisations. Whether you want to share a hobby or simply have a chat and a quick cuppa there are lots of options available.

Please contact the group or organisation directly for further information on where activities take place and how to get involved.

Unforgotten Forces partners work together to ensure you can get what you need without hassle, and without having to tell your story repeatedly. If you are unsure who to approach, Age Scotland can identify who is best placed to help and tell you about available opportunities in your area.

Call 0800 12 44 222 or email helpline@agescotland.org.uk. Further information can be found online at www.unforgottenforces.scot

The list is split into services covering the following geographical areas

-  [Scotland wide](#)
-  [East of Scotland & Scottish Borders](#)
-  [North & North East](#)
-  [Tayside and Central](#)
-  [West of Scotland](#)

SCOTLAND WIDE ACTIVITIES

Age Scotland

Companionship

For veterans age 50 and over and their spouses, partners, widows or widowers. Comradeship Circle is a weekly chat over the phone, for a group of roughly six people, lasting up to an hour. Veterans' groups can also set up their own Comradeship Circle. It's on the same day, at the same time every week. All you need to take part is a landline or a mobile phone and there are no call charges.

Website: www.AgeScotland.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/UnforgottenForces/

Email: veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk

Phone: Age Scotland Helpline 0800 12 44 222

Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Clubs

Companionship/Peer Support

Regular camaraderie and company for ex-service men, women, their family and friends. Join others from the armed forces community for a brew, buttie and banter in an informal setting. Visit our website to find a club near you.

Website: www.afvbc.NET

Facebook: www.facebook.com/afvbcnet

Combat Stress

Peer Support

The Peer Support Service offers veterans the chance to share their experiences, receive support and socialise with others who've had similar experiences. Led by veterans for veterans, it's the first UK-wide service of its kind for those struggling with their mental health.

Website: combatstress.org.uk/

Email: helpline@combatstress.org.uk

Phone: 0800 1381619

Legion Scotland

Breakfast/lunch clubs/Companionship/Outings

Legion Scotland's friendly volunteers can visit regularly and support you to re-connect with your community if you have lost touch

Website: www.legionscotland.org.uk

Email: t.douglas@legionscotland.org.uk

Phone: 07535 642950

Luminate

Creative Arts (art/music/drama/film)

A collection of songs created for people living with dementia to enjoy singing on their own or with family, friends or carers. Online recordings of a wide range of creative activities, led by professional artists. The films are around 30 minutes long with activities which can be done at home or in a care home.

Website: singing.luminatescotland.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LuminateScotland

Email: info@luminatescotland.org

Phone: 0131 668 8066

Military Wives Choirs

Creative Arts (art/music/drama/film)

The Military Wives Choirs network reaches across Scotland and provides weekly, inclusive music-making to promote wellbeing and support for all women in the military community, including veterans and their families.

Website: www.militarywiveschoirs.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/militarywiveschoirs

Email: joinus@militarywiveschoirs.org

Phone: 02074639407

Music in Hospitals and Care

Creative Arts (art/music/drama/film)

a weekly programme of live stream music sessions for everyone to access on our Facebook page and YouTube channel or personalised sessions for specific groups on Zoom.

Website: www.mihc.org.uk

Facebook: facebook.com/MiHCUK

Email: kirstyn@mihc.org.uk

The Royal Air Forces Association

Companionship

We match caring, friendly volunteers with those experiencing isolation, and actively contact vulnerable members of the RAF community to check on their welfare. Sometimes a chat and a laugh over a cup of tea can make the world of difference.

Website: www.rafa.org.uk

Email: welfare@rafa.org.uk

Scottish Men's Sheds Association

Companionship/Peer Support

Men's Sheds offer a friendly, welcoming and healthy environment for men (aged 18 and over) to socialise and take part in activities together with a purpose. You can work on projects with other shed members or develop your own personal project while enjoying the company of like-minded shedders. We welcome veterans of all ages. Find your local Shed today.

Website: www.scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed

Email: admin@scottishmsa.org.uk

Phone: 07465 202834

Sight Scotland Veterans

Lunch clubs/Outings/Social events

Whether it's sharing experiences of sight loss or time in the Armed Forces, or a friendly chat about something else entirely, engaging with others can make a big difference. Our social opportunities are the perfect way to get out and about and make new connections.

We know that by bringing veterans together with other veterans, we can break down fear and apprehension about life with sight loss. We provide opportunities to connect. Often, speaking to someone who has been through similar challenges can be reassuring.

Website: www.sightscotlandveterans.org.uk

Email: hello@sightscotlandveterans.org.uk

Phone: 0131 229 1456

Veterans Tribe Scotland

Creative Arts/Social Events/Peer Support

Supporting Veterans and their families by delivering a variety of creative events and activities throughout Scotland. Suitable for all ages and abilities, these are a great way to meet others and make friends with shared interests and experiences.

Events provide a relaxing environment, introduce new skills to challenge and develop, thereby improving mental health and wellbeing. Currently provided online.

Website: Coming soon

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/veterantribescotland

Email: gerry.mcgregor@veterantribescotland.co.uk

Phone: 07817 979486

EAST OF SCOTLAND & SCOTTISH BORDERS

A Veteran's Best Friend

Companionship

Our purpose is to support veterans any way we can, with or without dogs. Come along to our games night at the Linton Centre in Kirkcaldy every Monday evening 19.00 hours to 21.00 hours. Have a chat over a cup of tea or coffee and meet our wonderful furry friends. All veterans welcome.

Website: www.aveteransbestfriend.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AVBF2020/

Email: info@aveteransbestfriend.co.uk

Phone: 07721002757

Edinburgh Veterans Walking/Support Group

Physical Activity/Sport

A walking and social group for veterans living in and around Edinburgh aimed at improving mental wellbeing through exercise and friendly conversation.

Email: marchutton@btinternet.com

Phone: 07954 702906

FirstLight Trust

Physical Activity/Sport/Creative Arts/ Outings

Civvy street can feel isolating. At our Hawick Hub, we help you get out there and build new friendships. Here's what we get up to - gardening, walks, football, model making, jigsaws & cookery to name but a few.

Website: www.firstlighttrust.co.uk/how-we-help-uk-veterans/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FirstLightTrustHawick

Email: jane.burr@firstlighttrust.co.uk

Phone: 01450 218647

Veterans First Point Scottish Borders

Breakfast/lunch club

We provide support for veterans and their partners and families. Our breakfast clubs and drop-in sessions are a great way to meet others from the veterans' community. Additionally we facilitate regular social groups and events across the region.

Website: www.veteransfirstpoint.org.uk/drop-center/borders

Email: V1P@Borders.scot.nhs.uk

Phone: 01896 668551

Lothians Veterans Centre

Physical Activity/Sport/Creative Arts/Outings

Our drop-in centre is a safe place for “a brew and a blether” with fellow Veterans or to receive specialised support. Monthly social events, outings, sports and outdoor activities are also popular parts of our programme.

Currently we are offering the following activities: Wednesdays - social club for veterans and family members aged 50+ in the British Legion in Dalkeith, Thursdays - group walks in Dalkeith, Every second Friday – a bacon roll morning at the British Legion in Dalkeith. We also offer other events from time to time – please contact LVC for more information.

Facebook: Lothians Veterans Centre

Email: contact@lothiansveteranscentre.org.uk

Phone: 0131 660 5537 / 07443 878993 / 07501 237404

NORTH & NORTHEAST

Poppyscotland

Companionship

We hold regular drop-in groups in Moray and Inverness for a social cuppa and chat. Outings and activities are arranged when not in lockdown.

Website: www.poppyscotland.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Poppyscotland/

Email: Inverness@poppyscotland.org.uk

Phone: 01463 710300

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL

Scottish Veterans Residences

Creative Arts/ Physical Activity

Take part in activities, meet other veterans, enjoy a meal or a coffee at Rosendael in Broughty Ferry. The SVR team can also chat with you about your support needs. Activities on offer include art, cycling, walking and gardening. Activities are free and help can be provided for transport costs.

Website: www.svronline.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ScotVetRes/

Email: info@svronline.org

Phone: 01382 477078

Stand Easy

Creative Arts (art/music/drama/film)

We work with veterans and their families and use drama as a tool to help people build confidence and self esteem whilst being in the company of like minded people.

Website: standeasyproductions.org/

Email: markstandeasyproductions@gmail.com

Phone: 07909 695916

Veterans First Point Tayside

Breakfast Club/Physical Activity/Sport

We host regular social drop-in sessions for veterans and family members, a monthly breakfast club and a walking group.

Website: www.veteransfirstpoint.org

Email: tay.vfp@nhs.scot

Phone: 01382 424029

WEST OF SCOTLAND

ArtspaceG41

Creative Arts (art/music/drama/film)

A safe and inclusive space to promote, encourage and support health & wellbeing in our community through pottery, crafts and visual arts. Activities include pottery, sewing, painting, drawing, yoga, jewellery making, kids crafts, macrame, knitting, crochet and more.

Website: www.artspaceg41.org

Facebook: @artspaceg41

Email: Artspaceg41gaynor@gmail.com

Phone: 07581 707936

Erskine

Physical Activity/Sport/Creative Arts/Outings

The Erskine Reid Macewen Activities Centre aims to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of veterans in the community, providing the opportunity to engage with people who have shared experiences and history, learn new skills, explore a number of interests and access support services

Website: www.erskine.org.uk

Facebook: Erskine Proud To Care

Email: adelemckillop@erskine.org.uk

Phone: 0141 354 4534

Poppyscotland

Companionship

We run drop-in groups at our Kilmarnock centre for a social cuppa and chat. Some planned activities, information events and occasional outings also take place. Currently we are holding virtual groups via Zoom and phone.

Website: www.poppyscotland.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Poppyscotland/

Email: Kilmarnock@poppyscotland.org.uk

Phone: 01563 598000

Saltcoats Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club Activity/Sport

Breakfast club/Physical

Our breakfast club is a friendly place to catch up with old friends and make some new ones. You can also take part in other activities such as our walking club, fishing or bowling.

Website: www.afvbc.net

Facebook: [Saltcoats AFVBC](https://www.facebook.com/SaltcoatsAFVBC)

Email: saltcoatsafvbc@gmail.com

Phone: 07821 928358

Contact the Veterans' Project

T: 0333 323 2400

E: veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk

Age Scotland Veterans' Project
Causewayside House
160 Causewayside
Edinburgh, EH9 1PR

 **@UFForces**

www.agescotland.org.uk/veterans

Project publications and individual contacts for the Veterans' Project team are available on the website.

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To refer an older veteran for information, advice or support from Age Scotland and its Unforgotten Forces partners:

T: 0800 12 44 222 (Age Scotland Helpline)

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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