

# Poppyscotland Leading veterans programme

✘ A joint venture by three organisations has been awarded £4 million from the Aged Veterans Fund for a programme of support for older veterans and their families in the next three years.

Unforgotten Forces is a collaboration of 14 organisations formed to deliver a range of new services such as access to healthcare, advice, social isolation, respite and activities for those living in care settings. The ambitious programme will be rolled out over the next three years to support aged veterans.

Some of the funding came from Standard Life's Accelerated Development Support Programme and the rest came from HM Treasury funded by banking fines.





Mark Bibbey, Chief Executive at Poppyscotland, the organisation leading the consortium, said: “We want people to understand that key organisations in the area of support provision have joined forces to provide a more holistic provision for aged veterans.

“If a veteran is engaged with one organisation, for example, they can immediately be referred to another – or multiple consortium members if required. The essence is strength in numbers and we want the identity of our consortium to reflect this.

“The 2014 Poppyscotland Household Survey numbered Scotland’s Aged Veterans community at approximately 280,000, with almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of those aged 65 or over. It highlighted the need to improve the wellbeing of this group in areas such as care, loneliness, social isolation and recreational activity, and to ensure access to advice on a wide range of subjects in order to ensure an improved quality of life.

“Poppyscotland’s strategy has been to build a wide portfolio of complementary activity and to work in partnership with like-minded organisations to provide enhanced and well-defined services.

“The components of the portfolio partnership are deliberately diverse to cover the range of potential needs identified and to maximise reach and this funding boost will allow us to do just that. Each partner will also have a sound understanding of what others offer and each will effectively be a door to the whole partnership.”

And Defence Minister Mark Lancaster added: “Our veterans have given so much for their country, and the Aged Veterans Fund is a way of us thanking our older veterans and ensuring they are cared for in later life.”

The charity Poppyscotland offers support to members of the armed forces in Scotland with funding and assistance along with services in advice, employment, housing, mental health, mobility and respite.