

'Unforgotten Forces' Project Launched Today

£4M programme launched to support older Armed Forces veterans in Scotland.



Launched by Scottish Veterans Commissioner Eric Fraser CBE at the Legion Scotland Club in Grangemouth today, the Unforgotten Forces project will fund a programme of support for older veterans and their families in Scotland.

Unforgotten Forces is a collaboration of 15 leading organisations, led by [Poppyscotland](#), and will deliver a range of new services and enhancements in areas including advice, access to healthcare, social isolation, respite and transport, along with creative activities and events for those in care settings. The consortium has been awarded the funding from the Aged Veterans Fund.

Speaking at the launch, which featured a performance by a singer and pianist from Music in Hospitals & Care, one of the Unforgotten Forces partners, the Scottish Veterans Commissioner Mr Fraser said: "The Unforgotten Forces project is a very welcome collaboration between several organisations that provides real support on many of the issues faced by our older veterans today, such as health, isolation and loneliness.

"I know from experience that in serving with the Armed Forces you become part of a large family; leaving that cocoon can be daunting in both the short and long term. I hope many of the projects that will be funded can help bridge that gap by providing both practical and emotional help to those that need it. It is a privilege to launch Unforgotten Forces and I wish the project, the organisations behind it and the veterans it

will serve every success for the future.”

Another high-profile supporter of Unforgotten Forces is the star of BBC comedy *Still Game*, James Martin, who visited the Erskine Glasgow Nursing Home last week to help boost the programme. James, who spent seven years in the Royal Navy having joined up in 1949, said: “It’s great to see that there is proper and lasting help in place for our older veterans. The funding that has led to the formation of Unforgotten Forces will prove vital as we do the utmost to look after those who served our country with such pride, bravery and distinction.”

Mark Bibbey, Chief Executive at Poppyscotland, said: “The Unforgotten Forces collaboration of 15 leading organisations is now fully established and delivering services to older veterans across Scotland. It aims to make a positive contribution towards improving the quality of life for older veterans by offering assistance with the practical issues that some of them face, as well as tackling social isolation and loneliness.”

Speaking when the funding award was made earlier this year, 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 application for funding, which was boosted by input from Standard Life’s Accelerated Development Support Programme, was made to the HM Treasury grant-giving body funded from Libor banking fines. The money will be used over the next three years to improve the coordination of existing provision and introduce new services aimed at supporting aged veterans.

Image courtesy of [Poppyscotland](#)