

Scottish Veterans' Residences welcomes its first full-time Occupational Therapist

[Scottish Veterans Residences \(SVR\)](#) has welcomed its first ever full-time Occupational Therapist – experienced practitioner Janet Harkess – thanks to funding from the Scottish Veterans Fund.

Janet will work across all three of the charity's sites at Whitefoord House in Edinburgh, Rosendael in Dundee, and Bellrock Close in Glasgow.

Janet initially worked in health and community settings in Dundee and Perthshire, but most of her career has been spent in Rheumatology for NHS Fife, latterly as Principal Occupational Therapist.

She has been a committee member for the Scottish Society of Rheumatology and until recently was chair of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists Specialist Section in Trauma & Musculoskeletal Health.

Her clinical interests are in vocational rehabilitation, pain and fatigue management and quality improvement. She and her previous team recently won the NHS Fife Innovation Award 2023 for their work in self-management and rheumatology app development.

Janet said: "I am delighted to be appointed as SVR's first

occupational therapist. I have had many years of experience working with people with long term physical and mental health challenges and believe this has been good preparation for my new role at SVR. My husband and I have also in the past had the privilege of providing hospitality and a home from home for some of the Edinburgh barracks Commonwealth soldiers who were attending my church in between tours of Afghanistan.

“I want to thank the Occupational Therapy Lecturers and Students from QMU and GCU as well as the SVR residents for highlighting the value of Occupational Therapy, and also SVR CEOC Martin Nadin for giving me both the opportunity and honour of serving SVR.”

SVR Chief Executive Martin Nadin said: “I’m delighted to welcome Janet to SVR. Through our support of student placements, our eyes have been opened to the benefits that occupational therapy can bring to our residents. I look forward to working with Janet to build on the start we have made, and further develop the role of occupational therapy within our supported housing services.”

The post is funded thanks to a grant from the 2023-24 Scottish Veterans Fund. SVR were awarded £41,350 improve Veterans’ health and wellbeing by employing a full-time OT to support Veterans’ physical and mental health recovery and rehabilitation through the use of a holistic biopsychosocial approach.

It is one of 17 projects across Scotland which were awarded funds totalling £500,000 to help ex-service personnel access support for physical and mental health, financial, employment and cost of living challenges.



Janet Harkness, first full time occupational therapist at The Scottish Veteran's Residences