



Legion  
Scotland



## NEWS RELEASE

Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (*For immediate release*)

### REMEMBRANCE EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY CANCELLED DUE TO COVID

The annual national remembrance events that were scheduled to take place in Edinburgh on Remembrance Sunday (8<sup>th</sup> November 2020) and Armistice Day (11<sup>th</sup> November 2020) will not be open to the public following confirmation of Coronavirus guidelines by the Scottish Government yesterday.

Under the Scottish Government Strategic Framework outdoor standing events are not permitted in areas placed in Levels 1 to 4, which means that traditional remembrance services and parades at outdoor war memorials must be cancelled. Services held in places of worship can proceed if undertaken in line with Government guidelines but will be limited in size.

However, Legion Scotland and Poppyscotland are encouraging alternative arrangements to be made for marking remembrance this year. The public are being encouraged to take to their doorsteps at 11am on Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day to mark the two-minute silence. The BBC will televise proceedings from the Cenotaph in London on the 8<sup>th</sup> November and both charities will be broadcasting a virtual service of remembrance on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Chief Executive of Legion Scotland, Dr Claire Armstrong, said: “Coronavirus must not cancel remembrance, but public safety is paramount. The Scottish Government guidance means that it is simply not safe to proceed with our planned national events. It also means that for most of the country, local remembrance events cannot take place either. However, we can and must take time as a nation to observe the two-minute silence safely, and ensure we come together in spirit to pay our respects to those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

“While we cannot stage our traditional Remembrance Sunday event at Edinburgh’s Stone of Remembrance, we will be holding a small private service and wreath laying within the Scottish National War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle, highlights of which will be broadcast via the news media and our social media channels afterwards. This service will be conducted in strict adherence with Scottish Government guidelines on places of worship, with only a very small, invited number of wreath layers in attendance. Legion Scotland will also lay wreaths at the Stone of Remembrance on behalf of those organisation who would normally attend in person.”

Commenting on the Scottish Government’s restrictions and the implications for the remembrance period, Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans, Graeme Dey MSP, said: “Remembrance Sunday is an opportunity for people in Scotland to join with others across the world to commemorate those who laid down their lives for their country, but the pandemic has made that much more difficult this year.

“We understand it will be disappointing to many people that national services will not be open to the public, however, due to the risk of public gatherings spreading the virus and endangering lives, we would encourage those who want to pay their respects to do so safely in other ways.

“It is vitally important that all of us abide by the restrictions to help save lives and protect the NHS as we are remembering the incredible sacrifice that so many have made.”



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The 2020 Scottish Poppy Appeal continues, albeit with thousands of volunteers forced to stay at home. This has seen Scotland's biggest annual street collection badly affected with much of the vital fundraising now taking place online.

Mark Collins, Chief Executive of Poppyscotland added: "So many of our traditional and planned remembrance activities cannot proceed and that comes with great disappointment to many, myself included. Remembrance remains a period of personal reflection and while we cannot share in that moment in the usual way, we can and must continue to remember those who have sacrificed so much for us in new and different ways.

"Our Armed Forces community rely on the vital, life-changing support provided by Poppyscotland and this is largely made possible by the donations we receive to the Scottish Poppy Appeal. That is why I am urging the public to donate differently this year.

"We have launched a number of new digital innovations including our Virtual Field of Remembrance, QR codes and contactless chips on poppy boxes and our Donate, Download and Display campaign. Many supermarket collections are also continuing, and poppies are still widely available from the usual outlets. As we approach the final few days of the Appeal, we're urging the public to show their support online like never before. Our Armed Forces community are counting on us all.

The Scottish Government guidelines on remembrance events can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-remembrance-2020/>

To donate to the Scottish Poppy Appeal visit: [www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk).

ENDS...

#### Notes to Editors

- For **further information** or to speak to arrange an interview, please contact Fraser Bedwell, Head of Marketing at Poppyscotland, on **07989 419026**, or email at [f.bedwell@poppyscotland.org.uk](mailto:f.bedwell@poppyscotland.org.uk).
- For further information from the **Scottish Government**, please contact Andrew Denholm, on **0131 244 7363** or **07584 883329**, or at [Andrew.Denholm@gov.scot](mailto:Andrew.Denholm@gov.scot).
- The Royal British Legion Scotland (**Legion Scotland**), is the largest ex-Service membership charity in Scotland working at the heart of the community, supporting veterans of all ages and from all conflicts. With more than 140 branches, 61 clubs and 23,000 members, Legion Scotland, working in partnership with other organisations, provides veterans in the community with three key services covering remembrance, comradeship and befriending whilst supporting the welfare services and fundraising initiatives of Poppyscotland. Contact Legion Scotland at New Haig House, Logie Green Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4HQ, or telephone **0131 322 1076**. For more information on Legion Scotland's work, please visit: [www.legionscotland.org.uk](http://www.legionscotland.org.uk).
- **Poppyscotland** provides life-changing support to the Armed Forces community. Money raised from the Scottish Poppy Appeal and Poppyscotland's year-round fundraising enables them to deliver support to members of the Armed Forces community in Scotland by providing tailored funding and assistance. The charity also funds services in advice, employment, housing, mental health, mobility and respite. Please note that we are known as "Poppyscotland", and not "PoppyScotland" or "Poppy Scotland". For more information, please visit us at: [www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk).