



Since 2004 we have distributed over £4.4 billion across the UK to projects covering health, education, the environment and charitable purposes. Our mission is to bring real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need. BIG is an outcomes funder, we are interested in what works and what makes a positive difference to the communities in which we deliver funding. We are also able to deliver non lottery funding.

This briefing outlines our funding that is related to the portfolio interest of the MOD and in particular our work supporting Veterans.

### Forces in MIND

BIG's £35 million Forces in Mind programme which was launched in Summer 2010. The funding is aimed at helping those veterans who struggle with the transition to civilian life, including those whose psychological well-being affects their quality of life and that of others around them. It will focus on addressing a range of problems that veterans can experience when returning to civilian life, such as mental health problems, social exclusion, family breakdown, alcohol problems, suicide and crime.

We want to provide long-term help that supports and joins up with the valuable work already being carried out by a range of organisations. We think the best way to do this is to set up an independent UK-wide Trust. Our ambitions for the Trust which is being delivered by a partnership led by the Confederation of Service Charities (COBSEO) are to improve fundamentally the way in which services are developed and delivered in support of veterans and their families. The Trust will deliver improved partnership working between service, ex-service and other relevant organisations to provide more integrated, flexible support. This is an approach which the veterans sector wholly supports.

#### Further information:

[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog\\_forces\\_in\\_mind](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_forces_in_mind)

### Heroes Return 2

Building on the success of the Veterans Reunited programme (see below), BIG announced in April 2009 its Heroes Return 2 programme to commemorate

the 65th anniversary of D-Day to mark the end of World War II. So far over over £8,584,450 has been awarded to 12,566 veterans, spouses, widows and carers.

### Case Study – Heroes, Liverpool – 2009 Heroes Return 2 – £1,750

Larry Taylor and Bob Draper travelled to Holland with two carers in September 09.

91-year-old Larry Taylor from Liverpool was a wireless operator and air gunner in World War 2, flying on over 51 operations. Larry was part of one of the largest airborne operations of all time – Operation Market Garden – where the plucky pilots flew behind enemy lines to secure a network of bridges on the Dutch German border.

Bob and Larry travelled with the veterans group to Holland to pay tribute to their fallen comrades. As part of the trip, the group attended the unveiling of a monument in memory of the four crew members of Halifax Mark III, 78 squadron, who lost their lives when their plane crashed in the town of Weert on 22 September 1944. The crash occurred on the same day that Weert was liberated as the plane was returning from a raid on Germany.

“I get really emotional when I talk about it,” says Bob, as tears well up in his eyes. “The Dutch haven't forgotten us, they are teaching their children about what we did. They told me they used to wait for the roar of our planes – 200 aircraft which had come to help them by dropping food parcels. We are heroes over there – we were the only hope they had. It's only now that I realise what we actually did and how much we helped them.”

### Veterans Reunited

The Veterans Reunited programme was launched in 2004 by BIG to bring generations of people in the UK together to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The programme aimed to bring together different generations of people in the UK to explore, learn about, remember and commemorate the Second World War. It also enabled people to organise and take part in local, regional and national projects and events to raise

awareness of the significance of the Second World War for the UK today.

Veterans Reunited was made up of three strands:

### 1. Their Past Your Future

- £9.6 million was awarded for educational projects
- nine touring exhibitions visited 70 venues UK-wide and around 2 million visitors UK wide
- young people participated in 158 educational visits to important historic sites around the world and in the UK
- historical sources have been preserved for the future and published on many websites.

### 2. Home Front Recall.

- £19.2 million was awarded for community projects
- a joint Lottery funding scheme which included a contribution of £1.14 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund
- over 3,300 commemorative events and projects took place in the UK for those who served in the UK during the war, such as RAF ground crew, shore-based Navy staff, evacuees, fire fighters, the Land Army, Women's Royal Voluntary Service and the Bevin Boys.

### 3. Heroes Return

- over 39,000 Second World War veterans, their spouses, carers, widows or widowers, visited sites around the world where they served during the War
- hundreds of veterans volunteered to work with young people to share their memories of the War
- £16.6 million was awarded for travel grants.

### Evaluation

In 2006 an external evaluation<sup>1</sup> was carried out on the Veterans Reunited programme. Some of the key points highlighted were:

- over 11 million people took part in Veterans Reunited
- 83 per cent of those who participated now know more about the Second World War
- participants have gained a sense of perspective about their lives and taken a wider view of the world
- older and younger people have changed their perceptions of each other.

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1. Evaluation on the Veterans Reunited programme can be found at: [www2.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er\\_eval\\_veterans\\_reunited2.pdf](http://www2.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er_eval_veterans_reunited2.pdf)



Further information on all programmes, awards and evaluation reports are available from [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)  
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