

Veterans are set to walk 100 miles from the site of bloody battles in Ypres to the Cenotaph in central London to mark a century since the end of World War I

- The march over four days is intended to reach London on Remembrance Sunday
- Veterans from the charity Haig Housing will walk from Belgium to Whitehall
- Ypres was the site of three major battles and an early use of poison gas in battle

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One hundred war veterans will walk 100 miles from Ypres to the Cenotaph in central London to mark a century since the end of the First World War later this year.

The march, named the Long Walk Home, will see veterans from Haig Housing, a charity which provides homes to former members of the armed services, walk from Belgium to Whitehall over four days.

The trip will take them from Ypres, the site of three major battles, to the Belgian coast before they head to Dover, continuing towards London via Canterbury, Rochester and Dartford.

They are planning to stay in a hotel on the eve of Remembrance Sunday before they march to the Cenotaph the following morning.



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Brigadier James Richardson, the charity's chief executive, said: 'Haig Housing Trust started its life to meet the needs of veterans returning from the Great War.

'Prime Minister Lloyd George campaigned to build homes fit for heroes and ever since Haig has striven to do just that.

'The Long Walk Home recognises the great sacrifice given by so many in that war and its pilgrimage to walk the route from Flanders to the Cenotaph to take part in the National Act of Remembrance by today's Veterans will be a poignant commemoration.

'We hope that the public and in particular the people of Kent give support and encouragement to this event.'



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Ypres was notable for being the first use of poison gas on the Western Front, in the form of chlorine expelled from 41kg canisters using prevailing winds to carry it over enemy trenches.

The new weapon was so effective that thousands of Allied troops were injured or died painful deaths from inhaling the gas.

The Germans made four attempts to take the strategic town with a combination of artillery bombardment and direct attacks on Allied trench lines.

But during the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915 they were repulsed each time with heavy casualties on both sides.