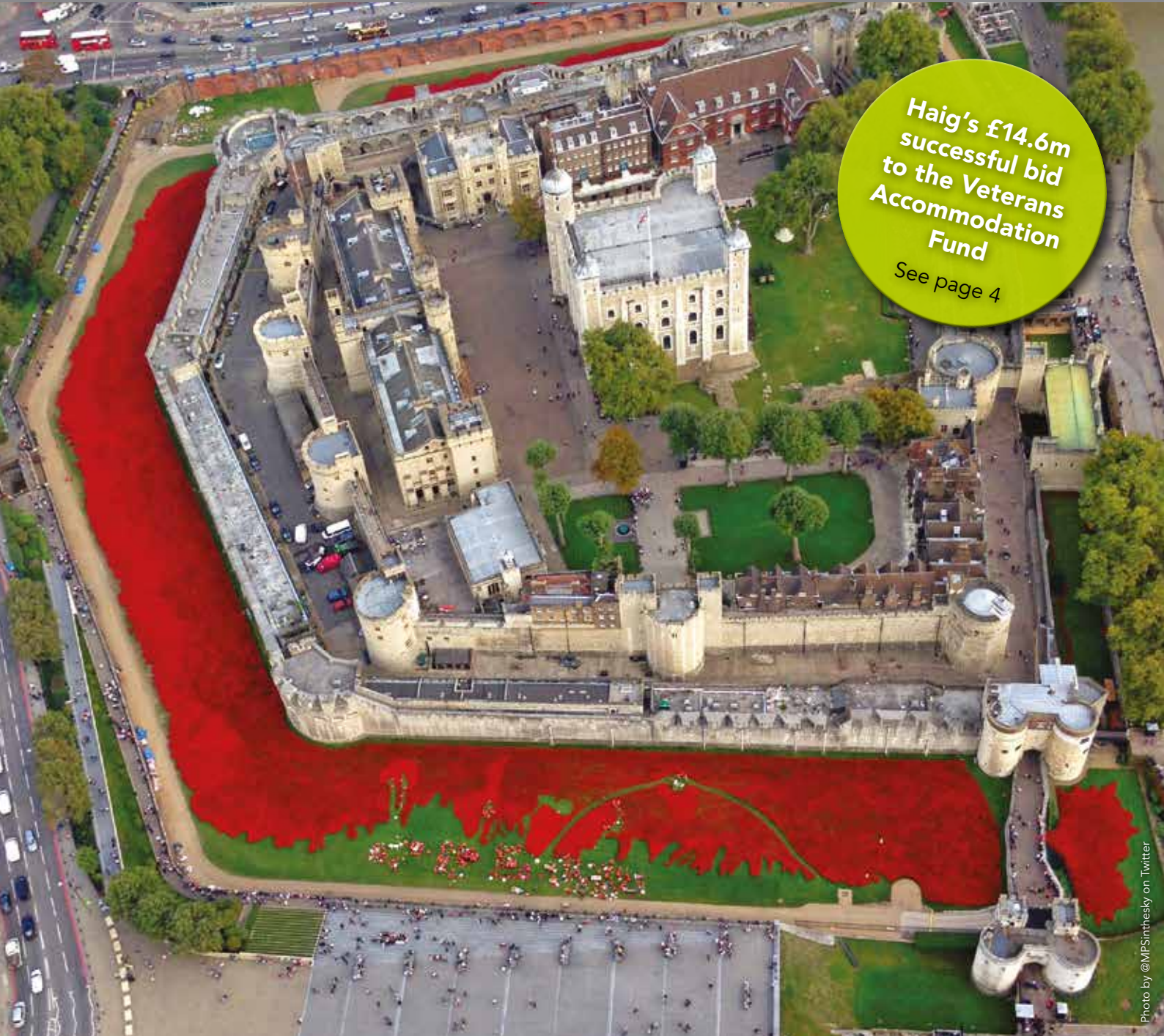


Haig News

WINTER 2014

THE NEWSLETTER OF HAIG HOUSING

CENTENARY OF WWI COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE



Haig's £14.6m
successful bid
to the Veterans
Accommodation
Fund

See page 4

An iconic tribute to those British and Commonwealth
Service people who lost their lives in WWI See page 8



Major General John
Drewienkiewicz CB CMG



Colonel Noori Ismaili FRCS



Mr Leslie Brantingham



Commodore John
Wightman CVO CBE WS

Trustees

When Haig Homes and Haig Housing Trust merged, the two boards of Trustees combined to make a Board of fourteen. The aim is to have a permanent Haig Housing Trustees Board of ten members. The following four Trustees retired from the Board at the September 2014 AGM (pictured left to right):

Major General John Drewienkiewicz CB CMG

Colonel Noori Ismaili FRCS

Mr Leslie Brantingham

Commodore John Wightman CVO CBE WS



Lisa Waterman



Lorna Tait



Amy Rodwell



Diana Thurgood

Staff Changes

There have been a few changes in staff over the past few months:

Janet Turrell is now Income Team Leader

Lorna Tait has joined the Trust as Income Officer replacing Natalie Dunn who left for a job nearer her home

Lisa Waterman, formerly the Repairs Service Manager, is now Housing Manager for the Morden estate and some estates in the South East taking over from Andy Nelson who has left the trust to travel the world.

Diana Thurgood joins the Trust as a Repairs Administrator replacing Charlotte-Jade Edwards who is pursuing a career in the Probation Service

Amy Rodwell joined the Coming Home fundraising campaign team as Social Media Assistant.

Follow the campaign on Twitter @ComingHomeOrg or on Facebook Coming Home and Coming Home Gals

Haig Staff Pay their respects at Menin Gate, Ypres

In June 2014, just ahead of the start of the WWI centenary commemorations, a contingent of Haig Staff was able to make a trip to Belgium to visit battlefield sites such as Petit Bois and Commonwealth War Graves Cemeteries including Langemarck and Tyne Cot.

The staff and Trustees found the visit very moving; some were even able to locate the exact spot where their relatives lost their lives. One member of the trip said, *"It was certainly something that has touched me and has left a permanent place in my memory as you cannot really comprehend the enormity and scale involved until you are there. I have always felt that I am privileged to work as part of a team at Haig Housing, providing a service to ex-Servicemen and their dependents and it was a real privilege to be part of this trip to Belgium."*

Former Trustee

We are sad to report that Helen Sword died at the end of September. She was Secretary of the Officers' Families Fund for 15 years and represented the fund on the Council of the Housing Association for Officers' Families' from 1976 through to when the association was amalgamated into Haig Homes in 1995.



Haig Trustees Peter Cleminson (left) and Group Captain Bob Kemp (right) laid wreaths at Menin Gate during the Last Post ceremony are pictured here with Haig Housing's Chief Executive James Richardson.





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Haig's £14.6m successful bid to the Veterans Accommodation Fund

Earlier this year the Treasury made £40m of LIBOR money – funding from fines imposed on banks – available for charities to bid for to support projects providing accommodation for Armed Forces Veterans. The Trust is facing an exciting time having been successful with its application for the provision of further Haig housing in key areas of the country; Morden, Edinburgh, Aldershot and Colchester.

At the annual Armed Forces reception at 10 Downing Street, in July, Prime Minister David Cameron announced the first eight successful bids. He said, *"Our Armed Forces make huge sacrifices for the nation and it is right that all of us recognise that sacrifice – that is why this government enshrined the Armed Forces Covenant in law. One of the greatest worries for our troops when they are wounded or injured is how they and their families will continue with daily life. We should do all we can to take away those worries by providing them with the specialist help and support they need to continue to live their lives and these projects will help to deliver that."*

Haig has been awarded £14.6m for the following projects:

- £8.6m to develop further accommodation in Morden and Edinburgh
- A £2m share in the Colchester Veterans' Pathway project in partnership with Riverside ECHG and Stoll. The £6m project is to provide 65 units of temporary, supported and independent accommodation in Colchester to form a pathway for Veterans in housing need to pass through on their way to independent living;
- £4m for further housing in Aldershot also being acquired to ease Service leavers' transition into civilian life.

These projects will result in about 140 new accommodation units - a 10% growth over the next three years. Our Chief Executive, James Richardson, said, *"we are delighted to have been awarded this funding. As the leading provider of veterans housing in the UK, we are ideally placed to build new homes, with the support of the local authorities, which will provide a secure foundation for veterans who, for several reasons may find themselves in need of our help. The funding will enable us to deliver sustainable, good quality homes in areas of most need."*

News and Notes

Helping Scottish Veterans help each other



With a funding boost from the Scottish Government, The Thistle Foundation, a health and well-being charity, is expanding its work with ex-Servicemen

and women struggling with issues through unique lifestyle management course and support sessions.

Diana Noel-Paton, Chief Executive of the Thistle Foundation says, *"The Veterans Self Management Service works because veterans are there for each other. They can relate to each other and once they have completed the course successfully they can go on to support others who are experiencing similar struggles. We know that a 'peer support' approach is hugely successful as individuals can say 'me too' and share how they coped with what was going on in their lives."*

More Info: 0131 656 99 33
www.thistle.org.uk

Oyster Card Travel for War Pensioners

In certain circumstances TFL issue Oyster Travel Cards to veterans who are in receipt of a War Pension or a GIP (Guaranteed Income Payment). This card allows free transport on bus, tube, tram, DLR, London Overground, and most National Rail services in London. For further information www.tfl.gov.uk and search for 'veterans oyster photocard'.



SPVA VETERANS HELPLINE

NUMBER: 0808 1914 2 18

DEDICATED BEREAVEMENT LINE:

0800 169 3458

www.veterans-uk.info

Armed Forces Family Breaks



The Calvert Trust provides Armed Forces family (including serving, reserve, veteran and bereaved families) with a family member who has a disability, to enjoy a fully-inclusive outdoor activity break in the Lake District for only £50 per person per holiday. This is inclusive of all food, accommodation and activities.

The dates for 2015 are:-

- Fri 13 to Mon 16 Feb
- Mon 16 to Fri 20 Feb
- Fri 3 to Mon 6 April
- Fri 10 to Mon 13 April
- Fri 9 to Mon 12 October
- Fri 23 to Mon 26 October

To participate in these breaks, families must be willing to complete a feedback form and a 6 monthly review questionnaire.

For further details please contact:

The Lake District Calvert Trust
Little Crosthwaite

Keswick T: 01768 772255

Cumbria CA12 4QD E: bookings@lakedistrict.calvert-trust.org.uk

News and Notes

Tracing WWI and WWII Ancestors



Private Israel 'Izzy' Brooking, who lived on the Haig estate in Penzance, was the last surviving Haig veteran of WWI. He joined the Worcestershire Regiment aged just 16. Izzy died aged 95 in 1992 and put his long life down to a 'Cornish Pasty for breakfast washed down with lemonade.'

With the commemorations around the commencement of the 1914-1918 War and the influence of television programmes such as *Who Do You Think You Are?* and *Long Lost Family*, there has been an increase in interest in tracing family history. The following information may be helpful for tracing WWI and WWII ancestors.

Tracing a WW1 British Soldier

If you know that one of your ancestors was a soldier, sailor or airman who served with the British and Commonwealth

Armies in the Great War of 1914-1918, even if you only have a small amount of information based on family stories, there are places you can look to help you discover more. Some records are now available online to download free, for a fee or by subscription. Military museums and libraries, national archive collections, newspaper and photograph libraries, census records, town archives, village memorials, memorials in churches are sources which possibly will help point you in the right direction. Frustratingly though, in WWII, two thirds of the service records of 1914-18 servicemen were burnt beyond rescue in enemy bombing which makes finding some information impossible.

If they died in the War

Sadly, sometimes it can be easier to trace a relative if they died in the 1914-18 war. The recorded deaths include details of their military unit, date of death and location of burial or commemoration.

The record will be held by one of the War Grave Agencies responsible for the care of military graves according to the nationality or military force served with for the serviceman or woman. You should be able to find at least the date of death, the location of the burial or commemoration in a military cemetery, a civilian cemetery or an official memorial, together with the grave or memorial reference.

www.cwgc.org

Medals

Every individual who entered a theatre of war on active service in the First World War was issued with one, two or three campaign medals. The Medal Index Cards collection,

held at the National Archives in Kew, confirms details including name, regimental number, military unit and medals issued. Cards usually include the date when the individual entered a theatre of war on active service if that date was before 1916. Occasionally the cards have additional personal information on the reverse.

You can also see some information in *The London Gazette* which can be searched on line at www.gazettes-online.co.uk or in person at the Imperial War Museum www.iwm.org



Useful Links

A very useful website is www.greatwar.co.uk Commonwealth War Graves Commission:

www.cwgc.org

The National Archives: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Ancestry: www.ancestry.co.uk

Findmypast: www.findmypast.co.uk

Forces War Records: www.forces-war-records.co.uk

Housing Services

Haig Housing's Conference for Tenants



Look out for information in the next few months on our next Conference.

Past conferences have provided an ideal opportunity to learn more about the Trust and to meet fellow residents from other Haig estates. This year there have been several changes to the Trust: our Chief Executive will have seen his first full year in place and the merger of Haig Homes and Haig Housing Trust is now fully embedded. There has been a great deal going on and there are future exciting development plans and we will have a great deal to talk about. You will be sent information on the date, location and form this will take.

Condolence Grant

The Trust pays a Condolence Grant on the death of a tenant or their spouse/partner. This payment is to help with the associated costs of a funeral and other expenses over a distressing time.

It is the responsibility of the tenant or the spouse/partner to inform the Trust of the bereavement within three months. The condolence payment has just been increased to £450.

Subletting and Housing Fraud

If you suspect that one of our properties has been illegally sub-let, please speak to your Housing Manager.

In recent months a tenant of Newham Council, who illegally sub-let her property for more than a year, was ordered by a court to pay back the £7,000 profit she had made. *The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013*, means tenancy fraud is now a criminal offence and punishable by a custodial sentence of up to two years and a £5,000 fine. It also gives councils power to recover profits made from fraud.

D-Day 70 – Award of The Legion D'Honneur

To mark the 70th Anniversary of the Normandy landings, the Government of France wishes to award the Legion d'Honneur to all surviving veterans; not only of the landings, but also the wider Battle for Normandy; the Invasion of Provence (Operation Dragoon); the Liberation of Paris and the Liberation of France.

This applies to any veterans, not only troops that landed, but also Royal Navy and Royal Air Force personnel who operated in support of the landings, who have not already received this award from the French Government, or have not been identified to take part in award ceremonies during the events in Normandy.

If this is relevant to you and you would like an application form, please contact Anna MacLeod, on 020 8685 5781.



Coming Home

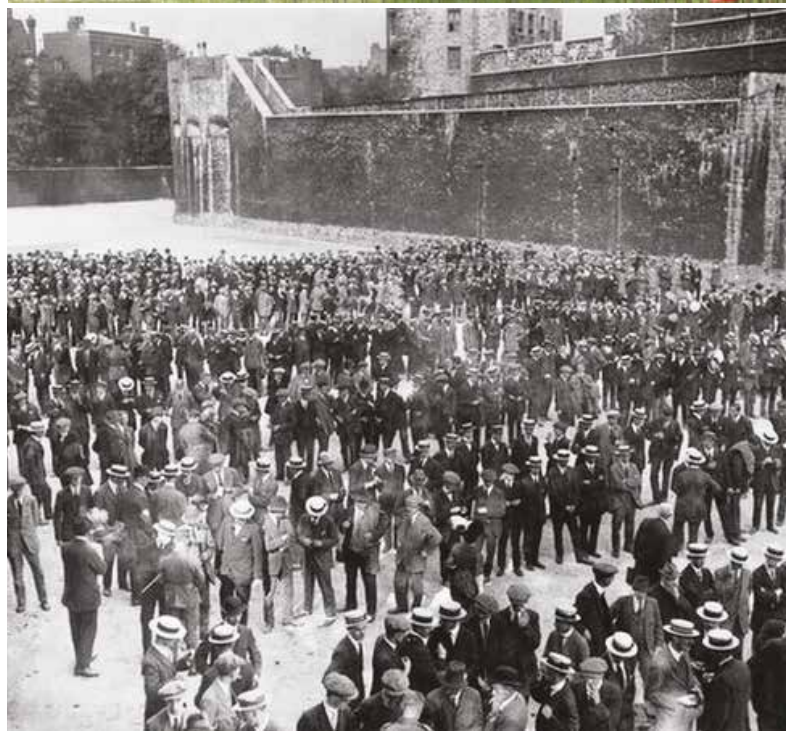
888,246 ceramic poppies filled the moat of the Tower of London. The iconic tribute to those British and Commonwealth Service people who lost their lives in WWI

Haig Housing's fundraising campaign Coming Home is one of six beneficiaries from the sale of the ceramic poppies which made up the "Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red" installation at the Tower of London.

Since July, the 16 acre dry moat at the Tower of London slowly filled up with 888,246 ceramic poppies, each one representing the death of a British or Colonial Serviceman in WWI. Over 21,000 of volunteers from all over the UK, and as far away as Canada, Hong Kong and Australia have been planting the handmade poppies to create a beautiful and poignant reminder of the sacrifice made by brave men and women. The proceeds from the sale of the poppies is to be split equally six ways to benefit Service Charities. These include Coming Home, SAFFA, Help for Heroes, The Royal British Legion, Combat Stress and The Confederation of Service Charities.

The Tower of course has a long military history, and was used as a recruitment centre during the war. In 1914 the moat was used to swear in more than 1,600 soldiers. The men were City workers enlisted into the so-called Stockbrokers Battalion. They called themselves Ditchers after the moat, known as Tower Ditch. The Tower also acted as a military depot and a ceremonial setting-off point for regiments who had been stationed there.

The installation was officially unveiled by their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry on the 5th August. They were shown around the installation by our Patron and Constable of the Tower, General the Lord Dannatt and his wife, Pippa. They were each given one poppy to plant, presented to them by a



cadet from each of the three Armed Services.

A beneficiary or representative from each charity was also given the opportunity to meet the Royals; in our case double amputee Rifleman Michael Swain MBE, who Coming Home helped to find a suitable property.

The work has been designed by Derbyshire ceramic artist Paul Cummins and created in conjunction with Olivier Award-winning theatre designer Tom Piper. It was inspired by a line from the will of a Derbyshire serviceman who died in Flanders. He described "the blood swept lands and seas of red, where angels fear to tread". A Derbyshire team worked round the clock to

produce the poppies, which were then driven down to the Tower in huge crates, ready to be planted by scores of volunteers, including many from Haig.

The Coming Home team was busy all summer helping to organise groups of volunteers, including serving soldiers and some from the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Headley Court, who are still undergoing treatment for their injuries. Haig Homes Chief Executive, James Richardson, helped injured Servicemen to plant the poppies.

Every evening at dusk, a Roll of Honour was read out of 180 Service men and women who lost their lives. Members of the public nominated

relatives to be included in this list, which was read by people such as Dame Helen Mirren, Stephen Tompkinson and Tim Piggott-Smith.

The final commemoration took place in a dignified ceremony on 11th November with the poignant vision of the final poppy being planted. The day after, the installation began to be dismantled and the poppies will be cleaned and then sent to purchasers all over the world.

Further pictures of the beautiful poppy installation can be seen on page 19



Beaumont Ball, Old Windsor



A spectacular fundraising evening organised by Ascot Lawyers Foundation was held at the beautiful Beaumont Estate in Windsor on 4th October. Guests were greeted outside the palatial entrance by drummers from the NW London ACF Corps of Drums before a drinks reception. Diners were called into the Hanover Suite by a fanfare and entertained by MC Chris Hollins, TV presenter and winner of Strictly Come Dancing. A magnificent Grace was sung by the Lay Clerks of St George's Chapel, Windsor, before a sumptuous three course dinner. Entertainment by Fuse, the electric violin duo provided an exciting interlude with their covers of classic rock tracks (photo Fuse). The audience was told their Swarovski crystal studded violins are valued at £1m each! An auction of money can't buy prizes

such as a special effects workshop experience with an Oscar and BAFTA award winning technician and a silent auction, plus singing and dancing from Colin Roy and the Extravaganza band topped off a wonderful evening. Proceeds raised on the evening will go to Coming Home and other local charities.



Coming Home



Normandy or bust!

Alan Spencer, a resident on our Haig estate in Morden undertook a huge personal challenge in the Summer, along with support from brother-in-law Dave Heath, and good friend Dave Minchin.

Following on from last year's challenge where he hand-cycled his way around the 8 mile Ride London route, he decided that 8 miles simply wasn't enough. Setting his sights on the 80 mile route of the first day of the Normandy landings, he and his friends wanted to show respect and gratitude to our British, American & Canadian Service men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice. June 2014 was the 70th anniversary of the Allied Landings, so the group set off on 2nd June from Sainte-Mere-Eglise, which was secured by the American Airborne on the first day of the Allied landings. They then cycled along the beaches Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword, and finishing at Pegasus Bridge on 6th June, the actual 70th anniversary of D-Day.

Alan is a staunch supporter of Coming Home fundraising campaign and has raised a great deal of money for us in the past. Alan is ex-REME and disabled himself, so knows all too well what the men and women who Coming Home assists are going through. Alan has very limited mobility and therefore hand-cycling is a huge challenge, having the use of only one arm. In order to complete the challenge, the group had to average 16 miles a day; twice the amount Alan had ever hand-cycled in a day. Their target was £5000 but they actually raised a staggering £5415 between them! Alan said *"I would personally like to thank all the Haig residents and staff who sent cards and letters of support – it was absolutely overwhelming. Thanks also to all those who sponsored us – it made all the hard work and exhaustion worthwhile!"*

Alan is now planning his next cycle challenge for 2016 and would like others to join him. Watch this space!

Station Collections

Many thanks to all those who have volunteered at our London Station collections. The total for this year so far is £8209.44! Our wartime singer Elkie is always a huge hit with everyone – this couple even decided to stop and have a little dance!



Haig's Housing Options Manager takes to the skies for Coming Home!



Lynne Horton bravely took part in a tandem skydive in October to raise funds for Coming Home. Not one to shy away from a hair-raising challenge, Lynne has previously taken part in a bungee jump for charity. Lynne's god-daughter Phoebe decided she wanted to do a sky-dive for her 18th birthday and wanted to share the experience and Lynne was the only person mad enough to do it!

Lynne said *"I love a challenge and I admit to being excitedly terrified of doing the jump! 2014 has been a year of trying new things for me and this opportunity was too good to miss. When I decided to do it I also thought it would be a good idea to get some sponsorship and make money while I was doing it and of course Coming Home was the only charity I wanted to support. Doing the job I do, I see what a difference the help we provide can make to someone's life"*. Lynne smashed her fundraising target of £500 and raised £660.

Coming Home Aromatherapy Candles



We have re-launched our hugely popular Aromatherapy candles and they are selling like hot cakes!

Available in three delicious fragrances, these candles make beautiful gifts, but we think you'll like them so much you'll want to keep them for yourself!

Made from 100% natural wax and handmade in England, these lovely candles are a

great way to support our injured heroes. Get your order in before Christmas!

Inspiration: Orange, Cedarwood and Clove

Peace: Jasmine, Patchouli, Bergamot and Lemon

Freedom: Frangipani, Rose, Freesia and Lily

If you can't decide which one you'd like, why not have a miniature one of all three? Our

Coming Home Collection is a beautifully boxed set of one each of the above.

You can order online by visiting <http://www.coming-home.org.uk/content/coming-home-aromatherapy-candles> or by calling the office on 020 8685 5787. If you want to take advantage of a Haig discount, please use the form enclosed with this newsletter.

Poppy Planting: World War One commemorations on Haig estates

Groups of tenants on several Haig estates planted poppies to commemorate the centenary of the start of WWI. Various 'poppy planting' events were organised so that the poppies would be blooming in time for August 4th.

BIRMINGHAM

Sharon McKnight, Haig Close's Housing Manager, who organised the event, said, *"Although the weather did not smile on us, there were plenty of smiles from the residents of Haig Close, who braved the rain to support the poppy planting day. Tenants of all ages enjoyed light refreshments, prepared by Haig Social Club, before embarking on a trek around the estate to plant poppy seeds. Our thanks go to Haig Social Club for their continued support of such community projects and to all the tenants who turned up to support the event. Also, thank you to our younger volunteers, Kat and Amelia, who presented drawings of their very own poppies."*



BRISTOL

People also gathered at Haig Close, Bristol to sow poppy seeds. This event was also organised by Sharon and everyone is grateful to her for her enthusiasm and dedication.



Diamond Wedding Anniversary Celebrations

Arthur and Audrey Sanders celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary earlier this year. Arthur was born at Legion Court, Morden in 1932. His father served in the First World War and lost a leg whilst serving with the Lancashire Regiment. Arthur and Audrey no longer live on the Morden estate but have moved all of a few hundred yards away! Arthur said, *"I have had 60 wonderful years with my wife Audrey she is the love of my life."*



HASLEMERE

An area in the grounds of the Castle of Mey House in Haslemere was prepared for the poppies which were duly planted. Very sadly, just as they were growing and shortly before small commemorative service arranged by Heather Stewart-Cameron was to take place, the poppies were destroyed. There were no fully grown poppies available for love nor money by then so, alternative red flowers were planted along with poppy crosses.



ISLE OF WIGHT

Tenants on the Isle of Wight gathered together to plant poppy seeds on 22nd June, the 80th birthday of fellow tenant Marie Rawlinson. The event was well attended and Marie's 8 year old granddaughter Charlotte Williams entertained everyone with a song and dance routine.



Brickbats and bouquets

Whilst complaints are always welcome as it helps us learn how to improve on our services, it is also appreciated when we receive lovely letters like this one from Carole Briffitt in Purcells Close, Ashted.

Bouquet

I would like to take the opportunity to express my thanks to those who make living in a Haig home a privilege.

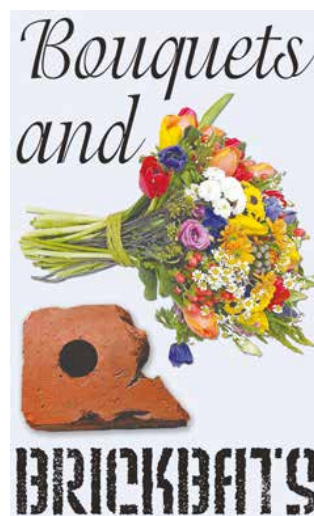
My husband and I have been tenants for twenty years. Many changes, in staff, administration and tenants has taken place but the core of what Haig Housing does has never changed.

Most people appreciate the uncertainty and distress that can be caused by redundancy, unemployment, life changing injuries and personal loss, and people at Haig Housing, (I still want to write Haig Homes!), do their utmost to assist in these complex issues. We tenants should consider sometimes, that assisting Haig Housing by helping ourselves where possible, goes a long way to saving money for worthwhile projects that grants alone cannot finance.

Once more thank you to all the staff, for their patience and fortitude. We must be a real pain sometimes.

BRICKBAT

This letter was especially well received as it came on a day when we faced criticism on Facebook when the cleaners accidentally left a light on in the office over night on the night of 4th August; the night when everyone was being encouraged to switch off and light a Remembrance candle in recognition of the centenary of the commencement of World War One.



Tenants News



Charlotte and Keith Winter



Chris and Muriel Young

Buckingham Palace Garden Party

Several lucky tenants attended the Not Forgotten Association's summer garden party this year. Chris and Muriel Young from Warrington and Charlotte and Keith Winter from Lake on the Isle of Wight managed to meet up.

Chris said, *'We both enjoyed a brilliant day at the Palace. Even on the way there we had a nice thing happen to us; at Euston Station we were weighing up the options for onward travel to the Palace. We got chatting to two Merchant Navy Veterans who were going to the same place and we decided to share a taxi. We enjoyed the banter with the driver but imagine our total surprise when the driver refused payment, "this one's on me, have a great day!"*

At the palace, what came home strongly was the whole range

of emotions such an event can take you through. From total respect for veterans in their 90s with enough brass on their chests to sink a flotilla, through humour, sadness, respect and also a sense of feeling honoured to be in the company of such people and great pride being part of the nation's Service and ex-Service Community.

All chatting stopped and heads turned as Her Majesty and Prince Andrew appeared on the steps behind the palace. Every man, whether young or old, grew at least 2 inches in stature on hearing the Band of the Scots Guards strike up with the National Anthem. As Their Majesties made their way through the guests we all enjoyed the wonderful buffet tea accompanied by the music of the band.

It was a time for reflection but also for "chewing the fat" with friends old and new. All too soon the event drew to a close and their Majesties waved their goodbyes after a beautiful rendition of The Evening Hymn by the band.

We will both treasure the memories of the day. Arriving back home in Warrington late the same evening we were still buzzing and their probably isn't a friend or acquaintance who has not heard about our trip."

Charlotte Winter added, *"we had an awesome day and will remember it forever. I had a job to get a picture of The Queen as she was flanked by very tall Royal Protection Officers, or maybe it is that she is that small!."*

60 minute make-over

Lee and Amanda Amos were given the surprise of their lives when they returned home one day to find that Peter Andre and his 60 Minute Make-over Team had blitzed their house in Alexander Godley Close and given their sitting room and bedroom a complete facelift

Keeping it a secret from them, Amanda's mother had plotted behind their backs to have this done as she felt they deserved a bit of a lift after a few difficult years. Amanda's mother, who speaks very highly of her son-in-law, just asked him *'to trust her and keep out of the way for the day at work'*. Getting Amanda and their 10 year old son Corey out of the way was a little more difficult and involved a great deal of deviousness on the part of her friends and family. They were thrilled with the result.

Amanda said, *'We are still overwhelmed with it all, I couldn't believe this could happen especially to us as we do attract a lot of bad luck in our lives,*

We are so happy with what the makeover team has done it is stunning, the colours I would not have picked myself but it is amazing, it has opened my eyes to be more colourful and proud.

The designer Martyn Lawrence-Bullard was fantastic and such a lovely gentleman and has really inspired me to carry on with the rest of the house. When I returned home, I could not speak very much and the day after I was still in a complete and utter daze, I just couldn't get anything done, except for sitting in each room they had done and just sit there and cry how beautiful it all was.

I feel so undeserving of it all, we have had a very tough time since my husband Lee left the Army, but with thanks to Haig Housing who helped us we can finally build our family back up.

My son is only 10 but he has moved a total of 8 times with us in the Army. When he was being taken to school on the day by our lovely next door neighbour,



A Son to be Proud Of

Cadet Sergeant Andrew Johns, is the son of proud parents Alan and Sheila Johns from Princes Court, Carlisle.

16 year old Andrew has been a dynamic member of Cumbria Army Cadet Force for 4 years. During this period he has shown exceptional qualities, resulting in being designated as Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Cumbria.

At a recent presentation evening held in the Cloisters of Sedbergh School, Andrew was personally awarded with a framed certificate by the Lord Lieutenant. He took over officially from September 2014 and his role will include accompanying the Lord Lieutenant on Royal and Military duties.



Kevin, Corey saw the boxes and pleaded with him to tell him that we were not moving again as he likes the house and his school. That says it all really – we are in a house we can call our home.

I want to thank everyone who helped:- the whole team, camera crew, the designer and especially Peter Andre who was the cherry on top. Also thanks to all our neighbours who put up with the disruption with such good grace.'

An amazing experience for this popular couple from Ashted. Whether they'll ever be able to trust anything Amanda's mother says in the future, remains to be seen!



Race for Freedom

Veronica Radakin, also from Alexander Godley Court in Ashted, took part in the Race for Freedom Car Rally in September. She said, *"I had the privilege of participating in the inaugural Race for Freedom - a 12 car charity rally racing almost 3,000 miles across France into Spain and Andorra raising money for the Royal Marine Charitable Trust Fund and the RNRM Children's Fund."*

We were a mixed group of former and serving Forces personnel and supporters and took in some breathtaking scenery and challenging driving conditions. I was navigating for Car 7, a VW Lupo GTI driven by Ray Crabb former RM whom I had last seen 30 years ago when I was in the the WRNS and we worked together in the Communications Centre at RM Condor. Fortunately old bonds run deep and we were a good team. Our route saw us taking in some driving highlights such as the Cols d'Aubisque, du Solour, du Tourmalet, d'Aspin and the infamous Gorges de Galamus.

The racing came to an end with a formal wreath laying ceremony at the Frankton Memorial Plaque on the Garonne riverfront in Bordeaux, in honour of the Cockleshell Heroes after which we began the long journey home.

We raised almost £16,000 which is divided equally between our two chosen charities. Having covered all our own expenses you can be sure that every penny raised goes to the charities and if you are minded to donate you can still do so at the fundraising page for Car 7 - <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/RaceForFreedom2014-Car7>

Calling All Poets

John Montgomery who lives on the Haig estate in Penzance, is compiling a book on poetry about various wars to be called **'Poems from Heroes'**. If any body would like to contribute to this book, please send your poems to him at **johnmontgomery57@yahoo.co.uk**.

All work remains the copyright of the author and will be credited with the writer's name.

I'm usually camera shy and publicity avoidant but I so wanted to say thank you to everyone who donated and contributed to making this a truly memorable and worthwhile event as well as supporting what will become an annual fundraising event - check out the plan for next year's rally at raceforfreedom.co.uk"

Armed Forces Day

Vishal Rai (2 GR) had the honour to hoist the Armed Forces Day flag at Crosfield Court, Warrington before heading off to help fellow Crosfield Court residents Chris and Muriel Young and Brian Felton to set up the Coming Home stand at the Tom Sephton Memorial Trophy event in support of Service Charities at Crosfields Rugby Club in Warrington.



Hobbies

Flower baskets

Next door neighbours in Highland Road, Southsea, Phil Whicker and Les Carstairs will take some beating with their magnificent display of flowers this summer. What a lovely sight!

Model Railway Enthusiast

Michael Wisden who lives in Minden Close, Bury St Edmunds is a model train enthusiast (never let it be confused with a 'toy train enthusiast'!) and he has created a wonderful display of trains in his flat which covers most of his living room

What interesting hobbies do other tenants have? Please let us know.



Mo and Jo – Patriotic Pensioners

Maurice Benton has the claim to fame of being the first baby to be born in the newly developed area of Morden in 1931. He, with his partner Joanne Goody-Orris, is now an indefatigable supporter of our Troops.

The patriotic pensioners from Curry Rivel in Somerset, known affectionately known as Mo and Jo, have sent over 13,000 parcels of essential items and goodies out to troops serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. Each parcel also contains a handwritten letter from Jo telling the soldiers about what's going on at home.

Joanne, whose grandson served in Afghanistan, said: *"We first started in 2007 when a young medic serving in Iraq asked her father-in-law to send some wet wipes because they didn't have anything to clean the wounds of the injured. The parcels now contain essentials such as skin creams, magazines, shampoo and conditioner, as well as hats and socks for the winter. We also include non-perishable food for a tasty change from basic rations such as custard creams and spices."*

Mo and Jo have a special place in their hearts for the Gurkhas, and include a Nepalese curry powder prepared in Somerset for them. The troops were so grateful they made the couple honorary Gurkhas

and presented Maurice with one of their famed kukri daggers.

They also send parcels to wounded soldiers in hospital in the UK. Jo adds: *"We've got to remember the wounded. They deserve it. They go out there for Queen and country."*

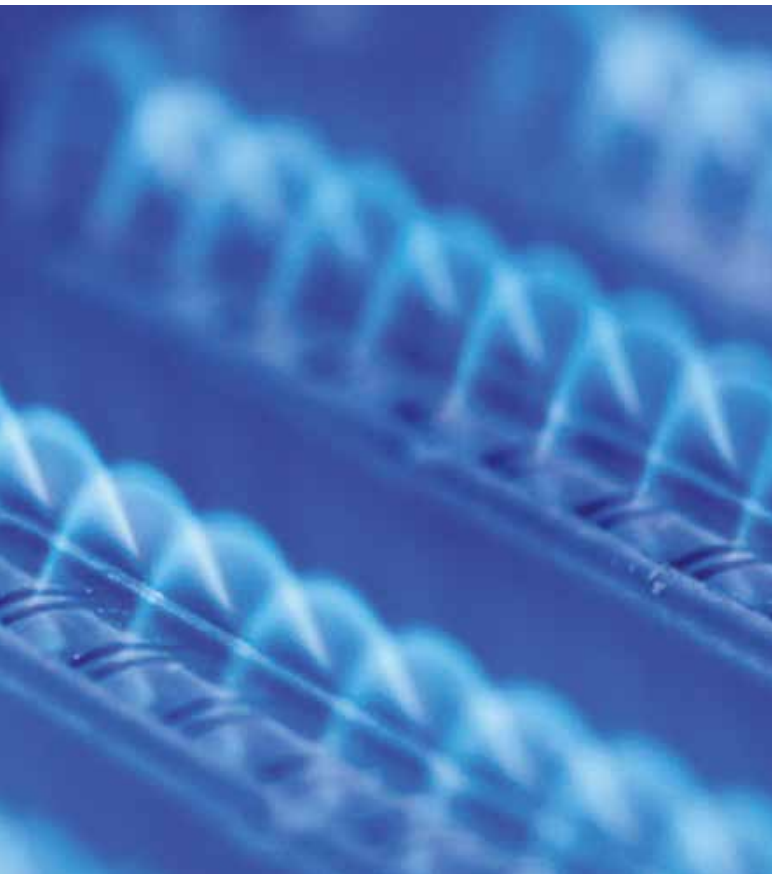


Maurice says, *"We will continue to send parcels until Jo and I are gone or until the last soldier comes home from Afghanistan. It is worth the effort and extremely rewarding to receive letters back from the grateful soldiers. One letter said 'It is my honour to serve you and people like you'."*

Maurice has fond memories of the Haig estate and the area of St Helier in Morden where he lived with his family. His father served with The Buffs in WWI – he was wounded twice. His two older brothers served in WWII in the Royal Artillery and as a submariner. Maurice served later with the Royal Signals.

He remembers the open fields to the back of the local estates and the time, during the war, when a Messerschmidt flew so low that it almost brushed the top of the trees in Central Road. He particularly remembers sitting on The Tavern pub wall underage drinking! Maurice left the area after he married aged 27 following his wedding reception in the Lawrence Weaver Institute at 27/- a head.

Property Services



Safety Checks, Gas Servicing and Emergency Call Out Service

Following a review of the service, Haig has made a change to its suppliers and is now using British Gas and All England Gas as our two national contractors for Safety Checking, Gas servicing and Emergency Call Outs.



It is important to give Gas Engineers access to your home to carry out safety checks. You will be sent a letter a few weeks in advance of a proposed visit, please make an effort to keep the appointment or rearrange in good time. It is important for these checks to be carried out and will avoid a future emergency.

Works Orders

Please keep returning your satisfaction questionnaire on any work you have had done. Your name will go into a draw for a £25 thank you. We take them seriously and respond where requested.

Difficult Times

The Property Services Department has had a challenging few months recently. Yassin Ali, Property Services Director says, *"with several contractors going into receivership or delivering unsatisfactory work we have had to put a great deal of time and effort into sourcing appropriate replacement contractors who are now dealing with any backlogs created, as a matter of priority. We have, however, been able to carry out some*

access road resurfacing in Oxford and have done some bathroom replacements as part of our rolling repairs programme at Legion Court and, weather permitting, we will be carrying out some external redecoration work on our estates in Cardiff at Ely and Rumney."





Photographic competition

In the last newsletter there was a photographic competition to take a photo of an estate. Tom Godwin is our winner with this lovely picture of his estate at Macdonnell Gardens in Watford.

This time, the competition is to take a wintery scene on your estate. We may even use it as a future Christmas card! Send your entries in by email to anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk for your chance to win £25. Entries to be received by the end of February 2015.

Haig Office Christmas Hours

The office will be shut on 24, 25 and 26 December 2014 and on 1 and 2 January 2015. If you have an emergency please call the emergency number **020 8685 5797**

This is your newsletter. Is there something in it for you?



If you feel that this newsletter doesn't include anything from your estate... don't complain... send something in. Let us know of your celebrations, anniversaries or commemorations in your area. Do you have a 'social group' or is there anything you want to say about your estate? Or do you want to know more about the history of your estate for example?

If you need translations of any Haig information, or need a translator for any verbal communication with Haig Homes, please make contact

with our Head Office to arrange this. You can contact the office by telephoning 020 8685 5777 or by writing to: Haig Housing, Alban Dobson House, Green Lane, Morden, Surrey SM4 5NS.

If you need copies of any Haig information in **LARGE PRINT** or **BRILLE**, please contact **Haig Housing, Alban Dobson House, Green Lane, Morden, Surrey SM4 5NS or telephone 020 8685 5777**

This newsletter is printed using recycled paper.

Do you want to comment on or contribute to the newsletter? If so, contact Anna MacLeod, Haig Housing Newsletter Editor, Alban Dobson House, Green Lane, Morden, Surrey SM4 5NS. Tel 020 8685 5777 Fax 020 8685 5778 Email anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk **Deadline for contributions 13/03/15**

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