

# Haig News

AUTUMN 2015 HAIG HOUSING'S NEWSLETTER

## For Queen & Country

On 10th September the Coming Home Campaign illuminated the historic walls of the Tower of London to raise awareness of Haig Housing. Group Captain Carol Vorderman MBE RAFVR(T), switched on the iconic projections revealing the stories of two of our beneficiaries, Lance Corporal Scott Yarrington and Serjeant James Davies MC, with images taken by world renowned photographer Rankin (see page 8).

The images were shown every night until 16th September when the Trust's major fundraising event 'For Queen & Country' took place.

The event was a spectacular reception in a see-through marquee on the main Broadwalk within the Tower with entertainment by the Band of the Welsh Guards, the Choir of St Peter ad Vincula, the Tenors and the J-Tones were followed by a charity

auction in the New Armouries after private visits to the Crown Jewels and a walk through the beautiful White Tower.

Lord Dannatt, who kindly gave us the opportunity to hold this event at the Tower where he is Constable, made a welcome speech and, later, the guests heard from Michael Swain MBE, a Rifleman severely injured in Afghanistan. The evening raised a magnificent sum for the Coming Home campaign and our thanks go to the generous guests and the For Queen & Country Committee for their enormous efforts in advance of the big day.

The only thing that threatened the success of the evening was the 'challenging' English weather which was experiencing the tail end of a hurricane. The weather was awful but fortunately did not dent the spirit of the evening.

Photo ©Holly Clark



## The Princes visit the Manchester Project

HRHs Prince William and Prince Harry made a surprise visit to our project in Manchester in September. You can see more information on the project on page 17. The two Princes saw round the streets in the Newton Heath area of Manchester where we have been given 25 houses to turn into housing specifically for the ex-Service community. The area has been the subject of a BBC DIY SOS Big Build project, within the next year, Haig Housing will be offering this housing on a rent-to-buy, shared ownership and full purchase basis to Service and ex-Service personnel.

## TRUSTEES

There have been some changes in Trustees from the AGM in September.

### Retiring Trustees

**David Stewart OBE**, Trustee for 15 years of which nine were spent as Chairman of Trustees, has retired from the Trust. In the New Year's Honours list David was awarded an OBE for his services to housing and as Chairman he has steered the Trust through some very interesting times, including de-registering as a Social Landlord, the successful amalgamation of Haig Homes with Haig Housing Trust and the set up of the Coming Home fundraising campaign. His guidance and dedication to the Trust will be missed. He said, *'Throughout my time here I have seen an extraordinary amount of change and have been honoured to be associated with a dedicated team of staff and fellow Trustees all working towards not only providing suitable housing for*

*our ex-Service community but ensuring it is of good quality and well managed.*

*I have seen the Trust move from being bogged down by the demands of the Government's regulatory bodies; The Housing Corporation, The Tenants Services Authority to name but two. The insistence of trying to place a specialist Military charitable housing association within a political framework was like trying to place a square peg in a round hole. To move the Trust away from the restrictions inherent in being a Registered Social Landlord in 2013 to being able to go back to our roots providing charitable help, is one of my proudest achievements as Chairman.*

*I will watch with interest, how the Trust progresses in the future and I have no doubt that Haig will be here to deliver another hundred years of housing.'*



**Gillian Arthur** is retiring after 11 years as Trustee and and Chair of the Nominations and Remunerations Committee for seven years. Gillian has been a steady influence on the Trust and we are grateful for her time and commitment over the years.

**Peter Girling**, After two three year terms as a Trustee we are losing Peter, a specialist in housing matters, who assures us that he will remain interested in the working of the Trust and aims to continue to support us.

### New Chair

**Cathy Lester-Walker MBE** will be taking over as Chair of Trustees from September 2015. Cathy has been a Trustee for 6 years and is Deputy Controller, Volunteer Support at SSAFA, an organisation with close ties with Haig Housing. Cathy says of her new appointment, *'it is with some trepidation that I take over from David Stewart, his are very big boots to follow!'*





## New Trustees

Five new Trustees have joined the Board bringing with them a diverse wealth of experience:



Ben Bengougam



Captain RN Carol  
Betteridge OBE



Stephen Elliott



David Williams



Neil White

**Ben Bengougam**, an HR specialist with family links to the Services and Service charities.

**Captain RN Carol Betteridge OBE**, ex senior Military Nurse with appointments commanding the major military hospital in Afghanistan.

**Stephen Elliott**, a Property lawyer with

experience in development, disposals, landlord and tenant law.

**David Williams**, ex Royal Artillery and HAC with vast experience in accountancy and risk.

**Neil White**, A retired experienced Property and Development lawyer.

## STAFF

### New Staff



**Michael Whately** has joined us as a Case Worker after a 44 years serving with the Life Guards of the Household Cavalry. He is working on the provision of housing solutions for injured and disabled Service and ex-Service personnel.

## Congratulations



To **Marcus Forster**, Haig's Grounds Maintenance Manager and his lovely wife Claire, on the arrival of Fern, named after Marcus's favourite plant.

# News and Notes

## Low Cost Home Ownership

Haig Housing has embarked on a new way of helping the ex-Service community with their housing by offering means to get onto the housing ladder. If you are interested in housing in Manchester under this scheme, please phone 020 8685 5777.

Other Low Cost Home Ownership schemes are Government funded usually requiring smaller deposits than on the open market.

There are two basic types of LCHO schemes

**Shared ownership:** also known as part buy/part rent, this allows you to buy a share of your home and pay a subsidised capped rent on the remainder.

**Equity loans:** you own 100% of your home but only have to cover a percentage of the cost

initially with a mortgage and deposit – the rest of the purchase price can be deferred as it is covered by the loan. The loan is usually interest free for the first 5 years and then needs to be repaid in full in 25 years.

Both schemes offer the opportunity for 'staircasing' – increasing your stake in your home.

For serving personnel (and up to 12 months after serving) there is also, the Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) scheme which enables still serving Service personnel to borrow up to half of their annual salary (capped at £25,000) for a first-time buy (not for buy-to-let). This can also be used in conjunction with the two LCHO schemes.

For more information please go to [www.helptobuy.org.uk](http://www.helptobuy.org.uk)



## Seafarers UK – centenary project Memorabilia Wanted

In 2017, Seafarers UK (formerly King George's Fund for Sailors) will celebrate its 100th Anniversary. Amongst other celebrations they are intending to produce a Centenary booklet as well as an online timeline of the Charity's history and achievements. If you have any special, fun or interesting photo or memorabilia from a seafaring yesteryear you would like to share, please send them to Cheryl Gallop, Office Manager, Seafarers UK, 8 Hatherley Street, London SW1P 2QT.

## Employment Skills

Haig is occasionally offered places on workshops and masterclasses on CV writing and interviewing skills. Mainly held in London over one or two days, if you are interested in attending one, please contact Anna MacLeod on 020 8685 5781 or email at [anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk](mailto:anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk) to go on a waiting list. One tenant who has attended a course said, 'Thanks for putting me forward for the course; it was very constructive and helpful'.





# Help for Heroes: Hidden Wounds



Help for Heroes have launched a Psychological Wellbeing Service to provide support for Veterans and families of the Armed Forces community living with the everyday challenges of anxiety, depression and stress.

You can contact the team on your behalf or someone else's 9-5, Monday to Friday, on 01980 844300 or email on [hidden.wounds@helpforheroes.org.uk](mailto:hidden.wounds@helpforheroes.org.uk)

## Armed Forces Day Parade

Organised by the Housing Manager for the Morden estate, Lisa Waterman, a group of Haig Housing Trust residents took part in the Merton Armed Forces Day Parade this year. With a great turnout headed by Morden resident, Bugle Major James Davies and his fellow Rifle Brigade Buglers, we marched through Morden to St Lawrence Church where there was a multi-faith tribute to the brave men and women of our Services.

The Parade was championed by local Councillor Maxi Martin who is a great friend to Haig Housing Trust and a massive supporter of the people who make up HM Services.



## Haig on COBSEO Executive Committee



James Richardson, Haig's Chief Executive, is a newly elected member of COBSEO (the Confederation of British Service Organisations)'s Executive Committee. Haig Housing now joins the other permanent members ABF The Soldiers' Charity, Help for Heroes, SSAFA, Royal Air Force Benevolent Association, Seafarers UK, The Royal British Legion, Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Veterans Scotland.

The Cobseo Executive meets four times a year to identify issues and concerns affecting the Armed Forces Community and to agree on a collaborative and coherent direction to deliver solutions. Cobseo features in a large number of policy making bodies. A few examples are as follows:

- The Cabinet Office Covenant Reference Group that drives the cross Government approach to the Armed Forces Community
- MOD and Service Charities Partnership Board
- Veterans UK Customer Advisory Group
- MOD War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Central Advisory Group
- Veterans Advice and Pensions Committees
- Defence Recovery Steering Board
- SSAFA Stakeholder Group
- War Memorials Action Group

# Haig Roadshows

## The First Haig Roadshow

Rather than hold an annual tenants' conference, members of the Trust's staff are now going to travel round the country to hold roadshows on estates, or a group of estates if closely located, in order to reach more people than were attending the conferences. The first roadshow was held in Watford in September at Macdonnell Gardens. On a sample of one roadshow so far, we are confident that this is a good way to increase our communication with residents as previously we had one household attending the conference but had five households represented at the roadshow with one further household having submitted a letter to be considered. It also means that the information can be tailored to be relevant to the people living on the estate



Residents at Macdonnell Gardens listening to Chief Executive James Richardson.

and can address some very specific questions if wanted which wasn't so easy in the conference.

Information about roadshows will be sent by post, please look out for this and join us if you can.

## Gurkha Community Welfare Leaders Seminar

A Gurkha Community Leaders' Forum, hosted by the Gurkha Welfare Trust, was held in Salisbury in September. James Richardson made a presentation about Haig's commitment to Gurkhas along with others to discuss the ways forward to help Gurkhas settle in the UK.



# Housing Services



## Right to Buy



From April 2015, the Government's Right to Buy scheme helps eligible council and housing association tenants in England to buy their home. We have received some enquiries about whether this will be an available option for Haig tenants. As Haig Housing is not a Registered Provider (RP) and is regulated solely by the Charity Commission, we do not fall under this legislation and therefore our tenants do not have a right to buy. One of the reasons the Trustees have decided against offering this housing option is that, with housing stock spread throughout the country and with housing sometimes on very small estates, the 'tyranny of geography' (a phrase heard often at the Tenant Conferences) would mean that the administration and maintenance of properties would become increasingly difficult and less cost effective if the properties owned by the Trust are dotted around the country rather than grouped on estates. In addition, as a Military charity, Haig intends to maintain the integrity of its estates to ensure that properties continue to be occupied by ex-Service personnel and their families.

## London Landlord Accreditation Scheme



We are now accredited by the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS) a part of the UK Landlord Accreditation Partnership (UKLAP) and the London Rental Standard (LRS). This recognises that we work to certain high standards and are a trustworthy private landlord.

We are also members of The National Housing Federation (NHF), Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH), The Housing Ombudsman and The Fundraising Standards Board (FRSB).



The Trust is, however, currently looking at ideas to help tenants to move on into home ownership and there are strategic discussions on options such as shared equity. Any options will be reported on in future newsletters.

## Paying Off Arrears

There has been a steady increase in rent arrears in recent months. This is partly attributable to LHA being paid direct to tenants rather than to the Trust and these funds being paid a month in arrears when the Trust works on a two weeks in advance calculation.

Being in arrears can be upsetting and, whilst the Haig Income Officers are sympathetic to the reasons why this debt is accumulating, if you would like to put your rent account in the clear please discuss how to do this with your Income Officer. You may like to pay just a little more per month over a manageable period of time. For help with all rent enquiries, please phone 020 8685 5777 and choose Option 2.





# Coming Home

## For Queen & Country (continued from front cover)



Serjeant James Davies MC

Lance Corporal Scott Yarrington



These strong images, taken by Rankin, were displayed on the walls of the Tower of London. It was a very proud and emotional moment for all of us when the projections were switched on to highlight the work of the Trust and to acknowledge our Patron, HM The Queen, becoming Britain's longest reigning Monarch.

## Station Collections



Chelsea In-pensioner Joe Hutt, songstress Elkie and Haig Volunteer John Barrett at Victoria Station



Joe Hutt and young admirer

A huge thank you to helpers at our Station Collections this year! It is hard work but can be fun. We raised the following sums: **Waterloo Station: £1,518.36** and **Victoria Station: £2,018.22**

Particular thanks to John Barrett and Simon Griffin who joined us for the first time at a collection, Lawrance McDowall an old hand at bucket shaking and Chelsea in-Pensioner Joe Hutt who stayed with us at Victoria Station for eight hours,

dancing with the passers-by and keeping us all entertained.

Thanks also to the wonderful Elkie who sang a selection of old favourites on both days, our totals would certainly not be what they are without you.

If you'd be prepared to lend a hand and rattle a bucket for an hour or two on other occasions, please let us know. [Anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk](mailto:Anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk)



## Dedicated Coming Home Fundraisers



Chris and Muriel Young from Warrington are dedicated fundraisers for Coming Home. They raised £120 at the Penketh Carnival car boot sale and an impressive £1,131 at the Phoenix Social Club's Charity Dance in August at the Eagles Social Club in Great Sankey. The Phoenix Social Club chose Haig's fundraising campaign Coming Home as its charity of the year. The event was a tremendous success thanks to Chairman Brain Felton, the Committee and Chris's efforts to gather together an impressive array of raffle prizes for the event and for the weekly dances. The photograph shows the presentation of the cheque to Chris Young (centre) by Ged Hall, Treasurer (front left) and Chair, Brian Felton (back left). (Photo: CL Young)



## Old and Bold Battlefield challenge

Alan Spencer, a tireless fundraiser for Coming Home campaign is off on his hand cycle again. He says, 'We are a group of eight 'fifty-something' ex-Servicemen aiming to raise £20,000 in memory of the 20,000 British casualties on the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916. The money we raise will provide specially adapted homes for today's severely wounded and traumatically disabled Service and ex-Service heroes. We are cycling the route of the World War One battlefields starting at Tyne Cot Cemetery near Passchendaele travelling south through the Menin Gate at Ypres on 25th June 2016 and finishing five days later on 1st July at the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing at the Somme. We are aiming to have all costs covered through generous donations before we start, so our target of £20,000 will be spent on providing homes,

*adapted to suit the individual Service person.'*

This is a particularly tough physical and mental challenge for Alan, whose serious disability affects the use of both legs and one arm. He'll be using a hand-cycle and he says he'll be OK as long as there are only left hand turns on the route! It works out at only £1 per soldier they are aiming to raise so, if you would like to sponsor him please go to <https://www.justgiving.com/OldandBold-BattlefieldChallenge>



# Coming Home

## Twitter Campaign names the Coming Home Bear

The Coming Home team ran a Twitter competition to name the Coming Home bear.

Suggestions such as Douglas (after Earl Haig) and other triumphant names such as Hero and Pride came flooding in. All great suggestions but the favourite was Nostoi – Greek for homecoming after a long journey back from War. We felt that our bear deserved to be named in honour of our returning Service personnel.



You can buy your own Nostoi, who measures a cute 5" high, for £6.00 including postage by returning this form or by going to the on-line shop at <http://www.coming-home.org.uk/content/coming-home-bears>

Nostoi has been on his travels recently and has sent some photos back. Let us know where your Nostoi travels to and what he gets up to and follow us on @ComingHomeOrg for more competitions.

PLEASE SEND ME:

**Colour of Bear    Number of Bears required**

White Bear .....

Cream Bear .....

Ginger Bear .....

@£6 each (Total including P&P)

Total £ .....

I enclose a cheque made payable to Haig Housing Trust for £ .....

Please send my bear(s) to:

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Postcode: .....

Email address: .....

I would like to become friend of Coming Home: Yes/No

Return this order form to the address on the back page



## Lynton & Barnstaple Railway: Inaugural Journey on Armed Forces day raised Funds for Coming Home

A steam engine, named Axe, built to carry troops to the trenches during the First World War, made a special centenary 'Coming Home' journey to celebrate Armed Forces Day at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway (L&BR) in North Devon.

The beautifully restored engine, built in 1915 in Stoke-on-Trent, pulled carriages of visitors to the narrow-gauge railway line raising over £600. All ticket receipts went to Coming Home.

Peter Miles of The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway said: *"We are proud to support Coming Home and raise much needed funds for wounded personnel on this special day, Armed Forces Day. The engine was discovered in a quarry in Boulogne and repatriated. It seemed appropriate that given the incredible military history of our engine Axe, we should recognise Armed Forces Day by linking up with Coming Home."*

Chief Executive of Haig Housing Trust, Brigadier James Richardson MBE, said: *"We are very grateful to Lynton and Barnstaple Railway for supporting our charity during Armed Forces Day. The history of this railway and in particular the engine Axe has a lot in common with the roots of our Trust which helped wounded soldiers returning from the Great War."*

Tenants and Staff also took part in a big parade in Morden for Armed Forces Day - See page 5





## Michael Marven

Michael Marven, Haig's Housing Manager for the North, is a keen supporter of the Coming Home campaign and pushes himself more and more to complete challenges that the rest of us can only imagine. His aim, this time was to complete 50km in 7.5 hours in an ultra marathon over a multi terrain course in the Peak District!

Michael said before the event, 'By multi terrain, this doesn't mean following a footpath down Kensington High Street, part of the course includes a disused railway tunnel a mile long – that is a test for those with claustrophobia! It

will be quite a challenge for me at that pace, especially as the route is not marked so all NAV work will have to be spot on otherwise I may do more than the 50k!!'

After completing the course, Michael said, 'I ended up doing 55.3k due to a slight navigational error!! I Therefore missed my 7.5 hrs. target time and ended up being on the road for 8hrs 58m. Thanks for those that have sponsored me.'

We think this is an incredible achievement. What will be his next challenge? What this space!

## Just giving

If you are about to do a challenge, perhaps you may like to raise funds for Coming Home? If you have an event coming up, talk to the Coming Home team and they will help with creating giving pages, etc

Sometimes we are fortunate that people just like what we aim to do; provide general needs housing and specially adapted housing for severely wounded and traumatically disabled Service and ex-Service personnel. Some unprompted donations have come with these messages of support;

"this donation was a pledge I promised some time back. My luck has come good and I am now in a position to fulfil my promise. I know this will be gratefully received and used effectively. With thanks." **Genevieve Hyde**

*"saw an advert in The Lady magazine for the Coming Home aromatherapy candle which I ordered through the website. I didn't know this charity existed but what a worthwhile cause."* **Margaret Brent**

*"I am running and will keep on running for Haig Housing Trust because our heroes deserve our help!"* **Victoria Riddle.**

## Marathon Runner

Trevor Holden from Artillery Place, Harrow, ran the Virgin Money London Marathon under the Coming Home banner and raised £667.60 for Coming Home. Well done Trevor!!



# Property Services



## Vandalism costs you money

This picture here shows Marcus Forster, the Grounds Maintenance Manager at Morden, holding the top of two young trees. Marcus and his team spend a great deal of effort ensuring the Morden estate looks good and Marcus, who has just completed his Royal Horticulture Society Master of Horticulture – the highest qualification in the RHS level - also advises on the trees on other Haig estates. After a planting programme ensuring that there are young trees coming up on the state to replace and compliment older trees, it is disheartening to have them snapped off like this. Trees cost money, planting them costs money and whilst there is a budget for ground maintenance, it shouldn't have to include replacing trees vandalised by people on the estate.

## Gheluvelt Homes in Worcester now Grade II listed

The group of 12 houses at Gheluvelt Park which were built in the 1920s and designed by Alfred Hill Parker for disabled Servicemen and their families, were given Grade II listing on 28th April 2015. They are considered to be of special architectural and historical interest for the following three reasons:

**Architectural Quality:** they combine careful planning and the use of adapted vernacular architecture to create a varied and successful composition.

**Intact survival:** although windows have been replaced with uPVC, the level of original features is high across the range of buildings.

**Group value:** the composition of a designed landscape, housing and war memorial arch, all designed by Alfred Hill Parker, is considered to have strong group value.

**History of the houses and the Park:**

The battle of Gheluvelt was an early engagement in the First World War. The British Expeditionary Force had established a line to prevent the German forces reaching the Channel ports. On 31 October 1914 the Germans broke through this line and the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire regiment was sent to plug the gap and did so with a bayonet charge in the grounds of the Chateau at Gheluvelt in Flanders. They pushed back the German force of more than a thousand men, but with the loss to the battalion of 34 men and 158 injured. The victory was seen by many as highly significant, and a turning point in the early history of the war.

The park was opened in June 1922 by Field Marshal John French, the Rt Hon 1st Earl of Ypres, PC, GCB, OM, GCVO, KCMG as a memorial to those who lost their lives in the heroic counter attack. He said that 'on that day, the 2nd Worcesters saved the British Empire'.

Further information on this listing and any other listings can be found at [www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk)





## Fire damage: Lessons to be Learnt

Fireman fighting the fire at Trenchard Court

At the end of April, two houses in Trenchard Court in Morden were damaged in a fire. This resulted in the Trust moving the two families involved to alternative accommodation, which fortuitously was available, on the estate.

The damage has taken some time to put right but now the families have been able to move back in to the restored properties.

What was heartening was the response of the local neighbours. One family lost almost all of their possessions in the fire but the community rallied round rapidly to provide immediate essentials; food, furniture, clothes and support.

In addition, members of the community also provided food and refreshments for the firemen on duty.

**Whilst the Trust insures its properties, it is important to remember that tenants are responsible for their own home insurance. There are many providers of insurance and it is a good idea to shop around. We have included a leaflet from the National Housing Federation about their home insurance.**



## Gas Certificates

Please note that it is not only important but also a legal requirement for the Trust's properties to have a valid gas certificate and we achieve this by carrying out an annual gas service. As part of your tenancy agreement, you are obliged to cooperate with the Trust representatives to allow access. However, we have examples where tenants fail to be at home for pre-arranged appointments, in some cases up to FIVE times.

Failed appointments incur charges which, ultimately are passed on to all tenants. Trustees are considering putting the responsibility of meeting the cost of this failed appointment on to the relevant tenant.

If you fail to keep an appointment, you now may run the likelihood of being charged for the 'no-show' (any mitigating circumstances may be taken into account) and habitually failing to keep an appointment may also be considered a breach of tenancy and the Trust might take further action which ultimately could result in you losing your home.

## Diamond Anniversary

Beryl and John Clayton of Haig Place in Birmingham celebrate their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 29th October. Beryl says, *"We have had some hard times and some great times. We have reared four children including twins who are now all in their 50s. They, in turn, have given us seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Although we have some disabilities we still like to keep active and love to go on cruises."*

John also celebrated his 80th birthday in March.

Beryl and John pictured on a cruise on RMS Queen Mary



## Armed Forces Champion for North Tyneside

Cllr Gary Bell, one of two Haig Resident Management Committee Members, is also the Armed Forces Champion for North Tyneside Council which has been awarded two prestigious awards. Firstly, the 15th Brigade Commanders Commendation for Highly Meritorious Service to the Army and, secondly, the Council has become one of only two North Eastern Councils to get a silver award under the Ministry of Defence new National Employer Recognition Scheme.

In support of Veterans, the Council offers priority housing, free leisure, library facilities and an outreach worker. Gary says, *"It's a great honour to accept these commendations. In North Tyneside we're exceptionally proud and supportive of our Service personnel – whether they are serving, veterans or reservists. We understand that after leaving the Forces, the transition back to civilian life often presents real challenges to many ex-Service personnel and*



Congratulations to Gary (pictured on the left) and the Council for setting a fine example.

*their families and offer practical support and advice that hopefully goes some way to providing a better quality of life for those who defend our way of life."*

The council has also signed up to the Armed Forces Community Covenant scheme and is committed to working with local charities and voluntary groups, businesses and private individuals to further support current and former Service people throughout the Borough.

## In Memory of Eric Alderson Smith

We were touched that the family of the late Eric Alderson Smith who lived at Haig's Hampstead Garden Suburb estate since 2000, set up a Just Giving Page to encourage donations to the Trust instead of funeral flowers raising over £450.

Craig Smith, Eric's son, said they wanted to *'remember the life of an incredible man: the son, the brother, the uncle, the husband, the father, the friend, the soldier, the hotelier...the gentle and the generous.'*

He added that *'their home afforded him and Grace the best years of their lives together, in retirement and in each other's company in their quaint cottage in Hampstead Garden Suburbs.*

*We are all nonetheless devastated by his loss and shall miss him every day. Rest in Peace Dad x'*

Our condolences to the family and thanks for such a thoughtful gesture.





## Not Forgotten Association's Events

Haig tenants are lucky enough to be invited to some of the Not Forgotten Association's Events.

This year they have invited people to their Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, Christmas Party at St James's Palace, a holiday abroad, a weekend away in England and trips, teas and lunches around the UK. They also put on two concerts a year at the Lawrence Weaver Institute on the Morden estate with the wonderful Mickie Driver and his talented fellow artists.



Kiran Gurung met Ken Dodd at Buckingham Palace



## Southwood Court Get Together

The residents of Southwood Court in Hampstead decided it would be a good idea to renew a previous habit they'd had for a get together and have a chat together on the lawns of the estate. Jean Hudson, the Trust's Volunteer Estate Monitor wrote to tell us about the day she and Alia Arnall and Peter Ward arranged. She said, *"about 25 hardy folks turned out to meet for a drink, something to eat and a chat on a day which, after so many days of being rather too hot, turned out to be a bit overcast and chilly. We didn't let that put us off though and we were fortunate that Alice and Mark Fisher and Grace and Eric Smith lent us some gazebos which Mark and some other kind gentlemen put up for us."*

*Everyone who came brought a plate of party food and something to drink and, because everyone was so generous, we had a royal feast.*

*For some of the newer residents it was the first time they'd met people and all who came seemed to enjoy it. One factor which we hadn't taken into account was the different pattern of employment*

*nowadays. In the past, we could rely on practically everyone being 'off work' on a Sunday but quite a number couldn't come because of their shift work.*

*We are fortunate to have an easy space for us to congregate and we have made plans to get together again in a couple of months. I hope that we shall make a habit of relaxing together from time to time like this."*





## Local Children talk to tenants about their Wartime experiences

Inspired by the various First and Second World War commemorations, a group of children have been putting together a book on what the war was like for people who lived through it. In June, three Year 5 children from Morden Primary School; Ryan, Roseselda and Django, talked to some of the Morden residents. Johnnie Baker, Lionel Cohen, Amoy Collier, Betty Hyde, Jean Treherne and Iris Winson chatted over tea and biscuits about their memories; rationing, gas masks, Doodlebugs, ice creams, no bananas, transport, the Blitz, ambulance driving and what it was like being an evacuee were all lively topics of conversation.

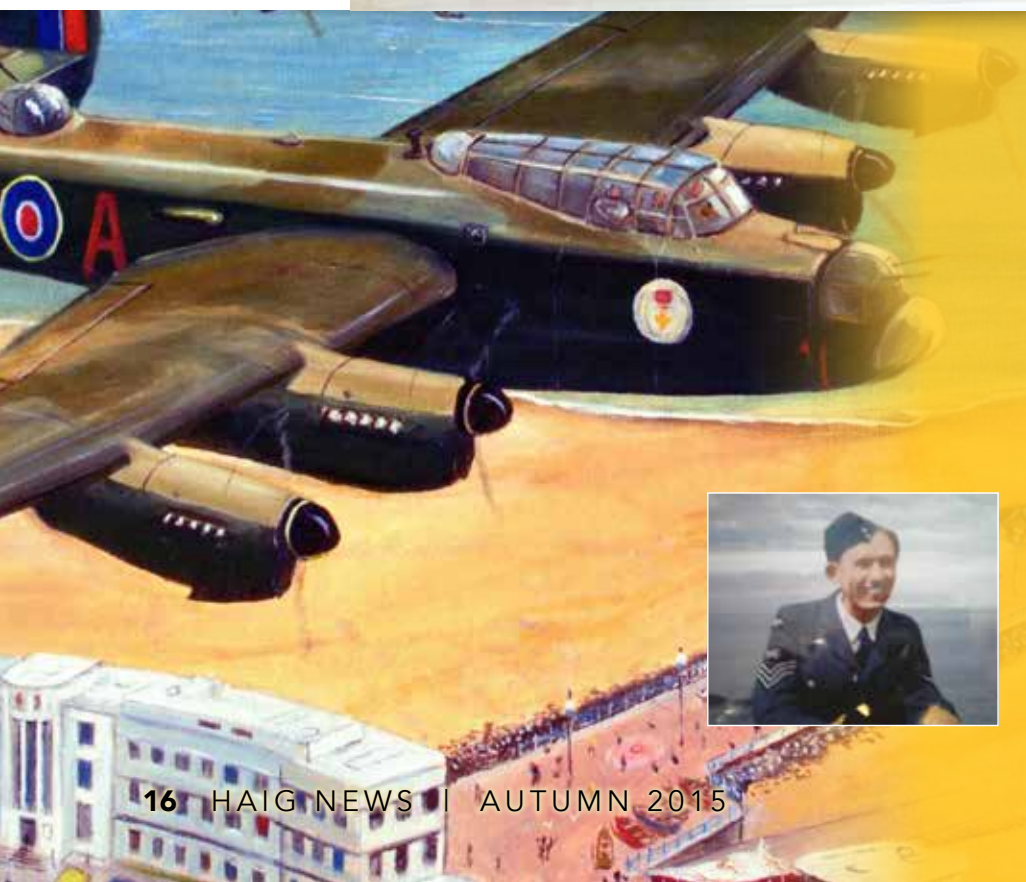
Jean Treherne, as a young girl, drove around with a pony and trap. This picture delighted the children – they could hardly believe that this was the way people used to travel!



Amoy Collier's husband Claude who served along with other brave men in the Merchant Navy having joined up from his home in the Caribbean aged only 17. Amoy did her bit from far away in the Caribbean; she sang a song to the children about knitting for the war effort much to everyone's delight.



Schoolchildren with the Veterans



## Tribute to a Lost Brother

Jack Holmes, our very own talented resident artist in Haig Place, Birmingham, was asked by his friends and neighbours Jack and Jean Bateman whether he would paint a picture depicting a Bristol Beaufort Bomber as a tribute to Jack's brother Charles who was shot down over the English Channel in WWII. Charles was only 20 years old; his body washed up two days later at Clovelly. The painting will be a wonderful memory of a brave young man.

See pages 18 & 19 for more Military Aviation history



# Development News

## Manchester – Did you see the BBC programme?



We are grateful to Military Mutual who have donated Buildings Cover insurance for the houses within the Veterans Village whilst they were being refurbished and they are going to continue their support for this project by providing free Buildings Cover to the military families living there. Their Chairman, Sir Sebastian Roberts said, *"This project highlights not only the need to provide decent homes for our veterans and their families, but to support the people that we respect into the future, not just when the cameras are rolling. Our support will not stop after the development phase. We've ensured that when they receive their keys, they will continue to benefit from our support."*



On 14th and 21st October, the BBC DIY SOS programme featured their latest Big Build project which involved Haig Housing Trust, Walking with the Wounded and Manchester City Council. Haig has been given 25 properties in the Newton Heath area of Manchester, 8 of which have been converted into 5 properties by the BBC for the programme. The new properties provide two, 3-bed houses, one 2-bed house, an office space to be used by Walking with the Wounded and the RBL as a drop in facility and a shared unit for ex-Service people on training programmes in the city.

The project has made the national newspapers regularly and has attracted large numbers of tradespeople and volunteers. In September both Prince William and Prince Harry lent a hand; Prince William showed off his artistic flair as he painted a kitchen, whilst Prince Harry was tasked with laying garden paving stones. This is the most ambitious and largest project that DIY SOS has taken on and refurbishment is to a very high standard with attractive streetscaping.

Now the razzamatazz of the TV coverage is over and the first

three occupants are happily moved in, Haig faces with the task of completing the refurbishment of the remaining 17 properties and will be turning them into three, 3-bed homes and 11, 2-bed homes enabling us to house a mix of families.

The properties will be offered to the veteran community to get on the housing ladder though several routes such as shared ownership, full purchase and rent-to buy.

For further information, please phone 020 8685 5777.

## Morden Development Plans



Residents on the Morden estate looking at and discussing the estate development plans.

Haig Housing Trust has secured funding for the construction of 76 new homes on our Morden estate from the Veterans Accommodation Fund. The new accommodation will enable us to:

- House single service leavers who need transitional support and a secure residence
- Transfer some current Haig tenants whose housing needs have changed
- Help additional Veteran families seeking housing assistance

A master plan has identified areas on the estate which would

be suitable for further housing and the plan has been discussed with London Borough of Merton Planning Team. A consultation day has been held for residents on the estate to discuss plans and, largely, people are in favour of the Trust being able to provide further housing for the ex-service community.

Full details about the project can be seen here: <http://mordenredevelopment.org>

# 75th Anniversary: The Battle of Britain

'Never has so much been owed by so many to so few'

Average age of a  
Battle of Britain pilot: 20

544 Fighter Command Pilots lost  
2,600 Luftwaffe pilots lost

1 in 6 Fighter  
Command Pilots  
killed

1023 RAF aircraft lost  
1887 Luftwaffe aircraft lost



# 10th July – 31st October

In the summer and autumn of 1940, the Battle of Britain between the RAF and the German Air Force (the Luftwaffe) was waged in the skies over Britain. This struggle, the first to be fought primarily in the air, led to the freedom of Europe and the outcome of the Second World War.

By the end of June, 1940, the United Kingdom stood alone. The Forces of Nazi Germany had conquered or dominated the rest of Europe and the British Expeditionary Force and its allies had undergone a humiliating retreat back across the Channel. The British Isles were the last bastion of European democracy and Hitler was determined to force our surrender; with control of the skies, he believed a heavy bombing campaign could lead to a successful invasion.

The Luftwaffe had 2,800 aircraft, two-thirds of them bombers. Having already defeated the air forces of Poland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the RAF contingent in France, its commander, Goering, predicted that victory would take a few days.

With only 650 aircraft, and 1,300 pilots in Fighter Command, the struggle to keep sufficient pilots in the front line was cause for concern but the RAF had the advantage of a highly efficient and advanced command and control system giving a near 'real-time' picture of the situation in the skies above. This allowed sparse resources to go where most needed, rather than wasting effort guarding empty skies.

The Battle of Britain began in early July, 1940. Hitler intended to cut Britain's coastal supply lines and to draw the RAF's fighters into battle over the Channel where they could be destroyed.

Sustained German attacks hit the British mainland, airfields, coastal radar stations and, by 13 August, Goering's "Eagle Day", the principal target was radar sites in order to blind the RAF. Airfields, particularly those in the South East, suffered particularly badly.

Casualties mounted on both sides; Fighter Command was increasingly short of pilots and the Luftwaffe also suffered heavy losses. Senior RAF commanders were fearful that they were beginning to lose the war of attrition and by 6 September, Fighter Command was on the back foot; pilots were worn out, many aircraft and pilots had been lost, airfields damaged; the situation was increasingly grim.

Early German optimism was now severely strained and in the belief that Fighter Command had only 150 or so aircraft left, Hitler turned his attention to hitting London to draw planes out to be destroyed. He was wrong: Although II Group was on the edge of exhaustion, the RAF as a whole had more than a thousand fighters available across the country.

On 7 September, 1940, the Luftwaffe began the nine-month long campaign against London causing widespread damage. This strategy, however, took pressure off Fighter Command, and allowed vital time to rebuild strength and heavy Luftwaffe raids were met with renewed ferocity, shattering German morale.

From 1 October, the Germans resorted to fighter bomber attacks by day and a ferocious Blitz on British cities by night, continuing unabated and eventually resulting in nearly 40,000 civilian deaths. Both sides took heavy casualties during the Battle of Britain but ultimately the battle for control of the air over Britain was won decisively by the RAF and on 17th September, Hitler dropped plans for the ground invasion of Britain.

Victory in the Battle of Britain not only saved the United Kingdom from invasion, but also in the long-term saved Europe too. Nazi Germany plans to impose its will on Europe were thwarted for the first time and its vaunted Luftwaffe had tasted defeat in battle. Britain would remain as a bastion of freedom and hope off the coast of occupied Europe.

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN VCs:

Three RAF personnel were awarded the Victoria Cross during the Battle of Britain:

**FLT LT JAMES NICOLSON VC DFC AFC**

**FLT LT RODERICK LEAROYD VC**

**SGT JOHN HANNAH VC**

# Haig Christmas Opening Times

The office will be shut on:

**24, 25 and 28 December 2015**

**1 January 2016**

**When the office is closed, the emergency repair lines will still operate with our Out-of-Hours Service: 020 8685 5797.**

## Brain Teaser

While away the dark winter evenings with this Sudoku with a difference. Using the names of some of Haig Housing's smaller estates, can you complete the grid? The following Haig estates names must appear once in each 3x3 box:

**Belfast Dartford Penzance  
Carlisle Grimsby Romford  
Chalfont Leeds**

£10 prize for the correct entry drawn on 18/03/2016. Send to the address below.

Chalfont	Hull	Penzance			Leeds			
Grimsby				Chalfont				
Romford				Grimsby		Dartford		
					Grimsby			Leeds
	Leeds	Grimsby				Belfast	Penzance	
Penzance			Carlisle					
		Hull		Romford				Grimsby
				Belfast				Dartford
			Leeds			Romford	Belfast	Carlisle

## 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 Housing, 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

Email [anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk](mailto:anna.macleod@haighousing.org.uk) **Deadline for contributions 18/03/16**

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