

SPECIAL REMEMBRANCE ISSUE

Haig News

WINTER 2018

HAIG HOUSING'S NEWSLETTER



ESSEX FARM CEMETERY
Ypres, Belgium

**THE
LONG
WALK
HOME**

Read all about Haig's
Centenary pilgrimage
The Long Walk Home.

See Pages 4 – 7

Remembrance Sunday
across the Haig estates.

See Pages 14 & 15

Update on our exciting new
development at Morden.

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Introduction

The clocks are back, nights are drawing in and the recollections of a splendid summer are now faded memories. 2018 has been an extremely busy year for Haig and you can read about it in this newsletter. It has also been an important year in terms of remembrance, as this charity was formed directly because of the need to provide housing for returning service personnel from the First World War. To mark this centenary, Haig ran a commemorative and pilgrimage event called The Long Walk Home, calling on veterans and Service Personnel to join with us to commemorate. There is an article by one of our residents who joined the walk later in this newsletter and I hope you enjoy and are inspired by the determination of these 100 people who walked from Ypres in Belgium to the Cenotaph. Another resident completed a charity hand cycle to the Flanders battlefields raising funds for Haig and we have some wonderful photographs of how Remembrance was marked in Haig estates around the country. We are always grateful for your contributions to these newsletters.

While I would not wish to concentrate on Morden, Haig's largest estate development in decades continues apace and, if

anything, slightly ahead of schedule with work now moving to interior finishing. We are also indebted to a sister military charity, Forces Support, who have agreed to fund both internal and external accessibility adaptations for 7 of the new homes and provide mobility scooter shelters for residents who are in communal entrance type homes. We look forward to building a sustained and supportive relationship with Forces Support and thank them for their involvement. The formal opening of the 68 new homes will take place later in 2019 and will be covered in detail in the next newsletter. The blocks of homes will be named after our patron, Queen Elizabeth and after gallantry award winners who have connections with the Borough of Merton.

Haig continues to expand its stock and is acquiring new homes in Colchester to provide for this large garrison town where we previously had no presence. We are indebted to Colchester Council for their support and assisted funding to provide these new homes. In return, Colchester will be able to nominate qualifying veterans who are on their housing waiting list.

I have continued to enjoy meeting our residents on roadshows and visits to our estates. We intend to



conduct more roadshows where I and other Directors can brief you on events and activities and answer specific questions. I do hope we can meet your aspirations to host a visit and please get in touch if you think you are overdue.

May I close, on behalf of the Chairman, Trustees and all at Haig Housing Trust, by wishing you and your families a most peaceful and enjoyable festive period.

James Richardson
Chief Executive

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Please Note **Haig contact details** and **Christmas closing times** on back page.

Front page picture: TLWH walkers Tristram Mayhew and Steven Kelliher at Essex Farm Cemetery, Nov 2018
Photo credit: @AcutePix

Haig Housing has been pleased to welcome the following new members of staff during the course of 2018.



Rachael Ward-Bradshaw is our Housing Options Officer, helping and advising new applicants to the Trust.



Bill Lindsay is our new Regional Manager (Scotland) looking after the tenants in Edinburgh and Glasgow.



Mercy Makuyana joined the Finance team in January as Assistant Accountant, with responsibility for Income.



Scott Bashford joined earlier this year as Development Officer with particular responsibility for the development at Morden.



Chandani Rekers has joined the Trust as Management Accountant. Chandani has useful previous experience working for Housing Associations.



Yvonne Marshall is our most recent recruit having joined the Finance team this month as Financial Accountant.



In July we sadly said goodbye to our Operations Accountant Swapna Chakraborty (centre) who had been with the Trust for nearly 25 years. He is much missed and we wish him well in his retirement.

We are sorry to report the recent death of **Mr Reginald Davis**, who retired in 1987 after serving as Haig Homes' General Secretary for 40 years. Mr Davis enlisted in the RAF in 1941 and became a Flight Lieutenant in 47th Squadron, based in Burma. Throughout his time with the Trust his constant concern was the welfare of both the tenants and his colleagues, and he will be long remembered.

THE LONG WALK HOME

A Haig Resident's Experience



Photo: @AcutePix

THE LONG WALK HOME

When I read the summer edition of Haig News I knew immediately I wanted to be a part of The Long Walk Home, a pilgrimage of 100 Veterans walking 100 Miles from Ypres in Belgium to The Cenotaph in London to commemorate 100 Years since the end of the World War One 1914-1918.

It was no small commitment, time off work, training and fundraising, but after talking it over with my fiancée Melinda we both agreed it was a unique opportunity to take part in something very special. I applied as a walker and Melinda applied to be part of the support team.

We were both over the moon when informed our applications were accepted and in what seemed like no time at all we were on the London Underground on our way to the start point, Hyde Park Barracks. A warm welcome from the organisers greeted us and soon the walkers and support

staff were loaded onto the two coaches and we were on our way to our overnight stop at The Peace Village near Ypres via the EuroStar. There was plenty of time on the journey to start to get to know my fellow walkers, a mixed bunch of serving personnel (men and a couple of women) and veterans from the Navy, Air Force and the Army.

Once checked in and fully briefed about the next few days we were taken by coach to the Menin Gate at Ypres. Between October 1914 and September 1918 hundreds of thousands of Servicemen of the British Empire marched through Menin Gate on their way to the battlefields. The memorial now stands as a reminder of those who died who have no known grave and is perhaps one of the most well-known war memorials in the world. A highlight of our visit was to witness the very moving Last Post Ceremony conducted every evening at the memorial and followed by wreath laying, including our own.

DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY 7 NOVEMBER

After breakfast at The Peace Village, all the participants were back on the coaches to Ypres and the Menin Gate where our pilgrimage began. The next eight hours of walking, some of it in the rain through Belgium, was remarkably quiet and flat; a large part of our route to the port of De Panne followed canals. Along the way opportunities were taken to lay a wreath at WWI memorials including the Essex Farm Cemetery, the site of an Advanced Dressing Station during the Great War and believed to be the location where Major John McCrae wrote his famous poem In Flanders Fields. At our destination we were back on the coaches for the return tunnel crossing to Folkestone. Some of the walkers would be spending the night with hosts in Kent while the rest of us were taken to a hotel.



Photo: C Parfitt

DAY 2 – THURSDAY 8 NOVEMBER

By 8am all the walkers were mustered at The Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover and we were given a wonderful send off by the cadet marching band, cheering teachers and pupils. Feeling 10 feet tall we were soon on North Downs Way heading for Canterbury. It was a lovely sunny autumnal day walking in the picturesque Kent countryside, fears about mud from the previous day's rain were unfounded, and looking back this was my favourite leg of the 100 mile pilgrimage.

At our first rest stop we were given the most amazing welcome in the village of Shepherdswell, where local people and school children lined our route, cheering and clapping our arrival before we headed into the church for hot drinks, homemade cakes and savouries. After a brief stop we left feeling like heroes. On our arrival in Canterbury, some of the walkers were whisked away by kind hosts while the rest were once again taken a hotel.



DAY 3 – FRIDAY 9 NOVEMBER

Canterbury to Gillingham was a stark contrast to Thursday's countryside ramble. The route took us along the busy A2 mainly on pavement; traffic thundering past was occasionally punctuated with toots and shouts of support from passing motorists. As we passed through Kent's towns and villages the welcome from local people was still warm and supportive, with rest stops in village halls and churches providing more hot drinks and homemade goodies. Taking advantage of the fact we were walking through public areas, some of walkers began carrying collection buckets which soon began to rattle with the sound of coins and notes being dropped in from well-wishers. On our arrival in Gravesend it was mine and Melinda's turn to be hosted by kind Kent residents in their own home. Keen to support The Long Walk Home, our hosts Mike & Rona couldn't have made us feel more comfortable by providing a hot bath and a hot meal whilst hearing about our travels so far. A great night's sleep in a warm comfy bed and a hearty breakfast later it was time to get back to the final leg of our endeavour.



DAY 4 – SATURDAY 10 NOVEMBER

My body, legs and feet were feeling the 75 miles of the walk so far, time to dig deep and push on. To ensure the 100 mile total we were leapfrogged to Gravesend to restart the final day's walk to Whitehall in London. Continuing along the A2, we had pavement and busy roads once again but the welcome and support was no less warm than yesterday, with more tooting and waving from drivers, and more good wishes and donations from passers-by. A nourishing lunch provided by Army Reserve City of London Yeomanry Signal Regiment in their HQ set us up for a long ascent up Shooters Hill that seemed to go on forever and took its toll on my sore leg muscles, which nearly seized up altogether. I made use of the team Physio at the next pit stop, and after a miraculous 15 minute rub down I caught up with the tail enders for the last 3 hours until the finish.





Three miles before the end, torrential rain. It didn't seem to matter though. Word had got back to us that the fast walkers were already at the final rendezvous waiting in a bar, and spurred on with the thought of something cool and refreshing awaiting us we pushed on with renewed purpose. The atmosphere in the bar where all the walkers and support team had assembled near the London Eye was incredible, we hadn't actually finished yet, there was still Westminster Bridge to cross before we reached The Cenotaph, but that didn't seem to matter, there was plenty of congratulations, hugging and shaking of hands. A celebratory pint later and we all mustered outside, a 20 minute walk in the pouring rain to The Cenotaph, group photo and then off to our hotel for a much needed hot bath.

That evening we all sat down to eat together in a hotel dining room to ourselves; speeches were given, people were thanked and acknowledged. Looking back the walkers had the easy job - all we had to do was walk from A to B, most of it in a straight line; the real hard work was done by the organisers and support teams. They made sure we were transported to and collected from the right place at the right time, accommodated comfortably so that we could rest, ensured we were all fed, watered and a facility available to "relieve" ourselves when required. The medical team from the Red Cross worked wonders with the walkers' blisters as did the team physio (Jan Lieskovsky) in getting aching sore muscles to move freely again. We had volunteers serving hot drinks and snacks from the back of a pick-up at regular intervals and guides at tricky road junctions. I'm not going to pretend there weren't problems, but it was never long before things got back on track thanks to the hard work and effort put in by the support team. The thought and planning that went into this event from start to finish is now clearly evident from how much everyone enjoyed this endeavour.



Photo: J Richardson

DAY 5 – SUNDAY 11TH NOVEMBER

The Eleventh Hour of The Eleventh Day Of The Eleventh Month 2018. To march past The Cenotaph as part of the official parade was very special indeed; as one of the 40 walkers given a place by the Royal British Legion it was a privilege to pay my respects in this way to those that served and those that made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Taking part in The Long Walk Home has been an amazing experience I'll never forget, I have made new friends and have wonderful memories to remember for the rest of my life.

Chris Parfitt
November 2018

THE GROUP PHOTO AT THE CENOTAPH AND HAIG'S WREATH LAID BY THE WALKERS



Simon Johnson, from Sutton Coldfield, walked from the Menin Gate to the Cenotaph carrying photographs of two soldiers who themselves made the Long Walk Home from Belgium back in 1918. Benjamin Potts was just 16 when he went to war, returning at 18. Henry Price on his Long Walk Home bought silk and lace for his wife to make a christening gown that was used for his two children and every child born since in the family. Simon carried the photographs for friends, who kindly sponsored his walk.



Thanks to tenant and walker Chris Parfitt, shown above with fiancée Melinda (whose own comments are opposite), for sharing with us his experience on TLWH (pages 4-6)

It was an honour to help as a volunteer on the long walk home. I mainly drove one of the 2 mini buses around but also helped wherever I was needed. I did my best to help keep the walkers spirits up with a smile and cheer as they walked by. It was wonderful to see how everyone pulled together to keep spirits high, no matter what part of the armed forces they had served or where currently serving, it was like seeing one big family come together.

One of the highlights for me was staying overnight with a host family in Kent; they were a lovely couple who made us feel at home and who had thought of all the home comforts we may need or want to make our stay comfortable. They even washed some t-shirts for Chris, who was walking and had run out of clean ones!

I have volunteered to help with walking events before and I can honestly say that the long walk home was the best organised and the friendliest walk I've ever had the pleasure to be involved in.

Melinda Green
November 2018

Haig Housing would like to thank all the walkers, volunteers, hosts and staff who participated in The Long Walk Home and made it such a success. We are accepting donations until the end of the year at www.justgiving.com/campaign/tlwh. All funds raised will support our work in housing Veterans in need.

A symbol of Remembrance and Hope

The wearing of poppies to commemorate those who died in war was inspired by a poem by a Canadian doctor, Lt Col John McCrae, who wrote *In Flanders Fields* in the spring of 1915 after the death of a friend in Ypres. He was inspired by the sight of poppies growing in battle-scarred fields.

When Moina Michael, a professor at the University of Georgia in the US, read the poem in 1918 she started selling artificial red poppies to raise funds and in 1920 the National American Legion adopted her Memorial Poppy as its symbol to wear annually on Armistice Day.

A member of the French YWCA, Anna Guerin, attended the 1920 American Legion convention and saw how the sale of the poppies could fund support for those suffering the after effects of war. She began production of fabric poppies and, with Moina Michael, arranged nationwide distribution in America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. In 1921 she met with Field Marshal Earl Douglas Haig and persuaded him to adopt the poppy as an emblem for the British Legion, which ordered nine million to sell on the 11th November that year.

According to the Royal British Legion, the poppy is a symbol of remembrance and hope which was chosen because it flourished on the battlefields 'even in the middle of chaos and destruction'. The poppy is neither a symbol of death nor a sign of support for war.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

by John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be hours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Competition

All you have to do to have a chance of winning either the biro or the Tommy is to write down your name and the first line of your address, state which prize you would like (TOMMY or PEN) and send to

**Newsletter Competition,
Communications & Fundraising,
Haig Housing,
Alban Dobson House,
Green Lane,
Morden SM4 5NS**

Congratulations to Mrs M of Harrow who won the 100th Anniversary of the RAF Centenary £2 coin, and to Mrs W of Belfast who won the Uckers board game, both of which were offered in our Summer 2018 Newsletter.

Commiserations to those of you who missed out, however we are still looking for a home for the very special hand-made biro, with a chrome and copper bullet 'knib', chrome bolt



action mechanism and polished driftwood body, so please apply.

Also we are very lucky to have a 'There But Not There' Tommy to be claimed, shown here in its presentation box; these very special figures (standing 11" high) commemorate the fallen and have been created by veterans working for Royal British Legion Industries.



Summer Get-together at Hampstead

Each summer at Southwood Court we meet together once or twice to enjoy some time chatting, eating and drinking a little to celebrate the community in which we live. The children have some 'outdoor' toys including a paddling pool which was a great success on the 24th June as the day was very hot. They were all soaked through at the end of our time together, so we knew they had had a good day!

One of our aims this year was to dedicate a small tree to the memory

of those Southwood Court residents who had lived here and now passed on. Hem Thapa had suggested it to me in the winter, when three of our community died in December and January.

We all thought it a good idea and had obtained and planted a prunus cerrula before the weather got too hot. On 24th June some of us gathered round the tree and dedicated it with the sign shown in the photograph 'in memory of our past friends'. Afterwards we had our usual



chats and refreshments under the gazebos which we had put up in the morning and which gave us welcome shade.

Jean Hudson (VEM)

Armed Forces Day in Morden – 30th June 2018



Morden Council organises an annual parade to celebrate the Armed Forces and recognise all those serving our country. This year the Deputy Lieutenant, Clare Whelan and the Major of Merton took the salute as the parade marched up London Road to the Bandstand in Morden Park for a welcome and speeches from official guests.

Staff and volunteers from Haig turned out to serve tea, coffee and treats in the park after the parade.

Please help us by sending information and pictures about events and celebrations taking place on your estate or in your area. We want more of the newsletter to be about you, but can only do this with your help.

Email ann.clark@haighousing.org.uk.



A REMEMBRANCE POEM

*by Jayme Gonzalez-Thomas, aged 10
(Nephew of TLWH walker David Thomas)*

Showers of blood, human skin,
Battlefields full of sin.
Peaceful place for kids to play
Remembered as no man's land today.

Tanks rolling out, Sopwith Camels soaring
Howitzers open fire, the big guns roaring.
Out at sea, naval vessels shoot,
Following a certain route.

The guns go quiet, peace has come
Looks like the war is done.
They gave their today for our tomorrow
So we celebrate in silence and sorrow.

The red of the poppy
The green of the stem.
Lest we forget,
We will remember them.

Image by pascovka / stock.adobe.com

Haig Housing Shop

We are currently running down stock of items branded with our Coming Home logo (which will soon be replaced by Haig Housing ones) and have some amazing bargains. All items can be ordered through our website (www.haighousing.org.uk/donation-fundraising/shop) with instant payment by PayPal.

Postage and packing costs are as indicated for each individual item/box. For multiple orders please email us at communications@haighousing.org.uk or telephone **020 8685 5786** and we can advise the appropriate postage and packing cost.

LIMITED STOCK OF CANDLES



INSPIRATION

Orange, Sandalwood
and Clove



PEACE

Jasmine, Patchouli,
Bergamot and Lemon



FREEDOM

Frangipani, Rose, Freesia
and Lily

Candles in glass made in England using pure soy sustainable wax, to burn cleanly, slowly and evenly with a natural fragrance. Made by one of the UK's leading bespoke candle makers, you will not find anything nearly as good at these prices.

Individually boxed and with an approximate 40 hour burn time – all at £7 each, plus p&p £3.50

Triple box (one of each fragrance, approx. burn time 10 hours) – £12 per box, plus p&p £3.50



Wristband (adult or child)
£1 including p&p



Mug blue ceramic
£3 plus £3.50 p&p



5" Teddy Bear with Coming Home t-shirt **£3 plus £3.50 p&p**



Umbrella – Small **£5**, Large
£12 plus £3.50 p&p



T-shirt in white (S, M, L or XL)
£5 plus £1 p&p



Running Vest in blue (S, M, L
or XL) **£3 plus £1 p&p**



Travel Mug stainless steel
thermos **£3 plus £3.50 p&p**



Queen & Country Limited Edition

£25.00 plus

We are honoured to have Rankin photograph our beneficiaries and supporters for a beautiful limited edition book of those who served their Queen and Country



100 Years of Housing Heroes

£5

From the early days of the Great War through to the present day, this fabulous book spotlights the people, anecdotes and history of Haig Housing Trust



Becoming a Chelsea Pensioner

Today some 320 army veterans call the Royal Hospital Chelsea home, including those who have served in Korea, the Falkland Islands, Cyprus, Northern Ireland and World War II. Others may not have served in campaigns, but all understand what it means to be a soldier and the potential sacrifice that it entails.

The Royal Hospital welcomes retired soldiers who would otherwise spend their advanced years alone to consider applying to become a Chelsea Pensioner and part of a vibrant community, with excellent standards of accommodation and the very best care.

Also eligible for admission are any former officers of the British Army who meet these same criteria, provided they served for at least 12 years in the ranks before obtaining a commission or if they were awarded a disablement pension while serving in the ranks.

Unfortunately the Hospital generally receives many more applications than they have available places. As they wish to ensure that they select the most suitable candidates for the opportunity to live at the Royal Hospital and fulfil the role of a Chelsea Pensioner, there will therefore be occasions when applications are not successful. The selection process also takes into consideration an individual's Army service record, together with an

assessment as to how an individual will benefit from a place at the Royal Hospital and how an individual would be able to represent both the Royal Hospital and the wider Veteran community.

To apply, visit their website here:
www.chelsea-pensioners.co.uk/eligibility-how-apply and request a brochure on the link provided at the bottom of the page.

To be considered for admission you need to be:

- A former non-commissioned officer or soldier of the British Army.
- Of State Pension age.
- Either in receipt of an Army Service Pension or War Disability Pension which you would be required to surrender upon entry to the Royal Hospital or, if you do not receive an Army Pension, you would be required to pay a £175 per week contribution towards your living costs. Please note, if your Army Service Pension and/or War Disability Pension is less than the £175 per week minimum you would be required to top-up to that amount, provided it does not place you in financial difficulty.
- Free of any financial obligation to support a spouse or family.
- Self-caring and able to live independently on the Long Wards – the Royal Hospital Chelsea is unable to accept direct entries to its Infirmary.

Royal Parks Half Marathon

Three members of Haig staff took part in the London Royal Parks Half Marathon on the 14th October. Here's what Andrew Duffy (one of our Housing Managers) had to say:

Joanna Long, Simon Griffin and myself Andrew Duffy took part in the Half Marathon on a very wet and quite cold Sunday morning. Arriving at the starting point at 9am we were met with a deluge and had to take shelter in black bin bags – very photogenic.

Anyway we eventually set off along with over 16,000 other runners. In our case it was to raise much needed funds for our Coming Home charity which as we all know assists our disabled ex-Servicemen.

I have to say it was an honour to represent Haig in this event particularly as this year marked the centenary of the First World War and

all the suffering that it entailed for our past generations. It certainly kept us motivated and the run kept us warm. Looking forward to the next one.



Simon, Andy and Jo sheltering from the rain before the race started.



Jo and Simon with their well earned medals.

Prudential RideLondon



On the 29th of July Haig Housing's Phillip Johnson took part in the Prudential Bike Ride London-Surrey 100. Phill joined 25,000 amateur cyclists to take on a cycling challenge like no other through London and Surrey. The challenge started in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, to then go out through London to Surrey's stunning country roads and hills before returning to the capital to finish in spectacular style on The Mall in front of Buckingham Palace.

Despite the gruelling weather, Phill managed to finish the race and earn over £2000 in donations for Haig and the Royal Marsden Hospital. He sends his thanks to everyone who donated. When we asked Phill for his comments on the race he said:

"It was wet – after two miles the rain was coming out of my shoes. It was windy. It was cool. It was long. It was great (once I'd finished)!".

RUN OR CYCLE FOR HAIG



Haig receives a number of opportunities each year to bid for places on some pretty prestigious fundraising challenges such as the London Half Marathon or Royal Parks Half Marathon. It doesn't always rain! There are many others up and down the country too. If you feel that you can raise money for us by taking part in one of these then please let us know. We'll give you every support including paying for any entry fees, helping you set up a fundraising page, and providing a specially designed printed t-shirt or polo shirt.

Image by: sudevwood / stock.adobe.com

The Day The Guns Fell Silent

For the last few years Alan Spencer, one of our Morden residents, has been assembling a team of cyclists, most of whom are also Veterans and who live locally, to raise money for the Trust by cycling round the battlefields of the Western Front in the Great War. Known as 'Battlefield Challenges', the name is all the more apt when you consider that Alan cycles using a specially adapted tricycle and with just one hand. Moreover, not just a few miles either – over a hundred on each and every one of these challenges.

With this year marking the Centenary of the ending of the Great War, Alan and his team of five consisting of son Harry, brothers Mark and Simon Auckland, Graham Porter and Dave Stonnell, decided to undertake one last event – as much to raise funds as to honour and pay respect to all those of our forebears who fought in that terrible conflict and who, in so many instances, never returned home. With typical British military humour, they all assumed 'Blackadder' nicknames for their trip with Alan, inevitably, becoming Baldrick.



The team left Morden in the early hours of the 5th November, cycling on the first day to Maidstone and the following to Folkestone, before crossing over into France via the Eurotunnel. There then followed a further four arduous days, sometimes in freezing cold and wet conditions, others in brighter and crisper weather. Their route took them to many of the Commonwealth War Cemeteries via Wimereux, Etapes, Montreuil, Amiens and along the route of the Somme. They also took in Glisy, the Australian National War memorial at Villers Bretonneux, Corbie, Bray sur Somme, Peronne, Bellicourt, St Quentin (and the French National Cemetery), the US Cemetery at Bony, the joint UK-German Cemetery at

Le Cateau-Cambresis, St Symphorien and Nimy Railway Bridge, where Private Simon Godley VC of The Royal Fusiliers won the war's first Victoria Cross.

Finally they arrived at Mons, headquarters of Field Marshall Haig at the end of the war. There, on Armistice Day, 11th November 2018, Alan and his team represented the Trust and laid their final wreath at a major ceremony at the Municipal Cemetery, before loading their cycles into their safety vehicle and driving back home.





Sandown Cenotaph, Isle of Wight
Haig wreath laid by Steve Radcliffe



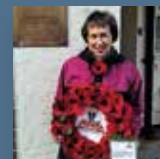
Jim Diviney



Keith Winter



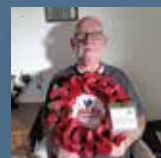
Steve Radcliffe



Linda Hodges

ISLE OF WIGHT

Some of our tenants from Haig Close on the Isle of Wight, with the wreaths they laid on Remembrance Sunday. Our thanks to Charlotte Winter and Steve Radcliffe for the excellent photographs.



Mark Simpson



Peter Hudson



Kitty Priest

Kitty Priest (93) shown on the right has lived at Haig Close for 35 years, longer than any other tenant on the estate.

ARMISTICE DAY, PORTSMOUTH

The Trust was represented on Remembrance Sunday at the City of Portsmouth Cenotaph and Memorial by Management Committee Representative and former Royal Marine Band Sergeant Patrick Hill and his wife. Guildhall Square was packed to capacity and a big screen was provided so all could see the actual ceremony at the Memorial itself. Needless to say, having held off during the Service, heavy rain returned just as the various Veterans and serving contingents marched off – without dampening spirits, at least.

The image of the Trust's wreath includes one for 40 Commando Royal Marines which Patrick also laid on their behalf, assisting a fellow Marine Veteran and wheelchair user, who found himself somewhat challenged by the two sets of steps leading down into the memorial area. A Suez Veteran, he subsequently commented while being helped back to his wheelchair, "Never thought I'd see the day when I was caught holding hands with a Bandy by the Guildhall Steps!"

And, while they never exchanged names, their encounter summed up the day fittingly: Remembrance and Fellowship.



Photos: Patrick Hill

BELFAST



Photo: Nigel Berry

Wreath laid at the East Belfast cenotaph, N. Ireland

ASHTEAD



Tommy silhouette on display at Purcells Place Ashted, courtesy of Haig tenant Damian Thompson

NEWCASTLE



Photo: Gary Bell

Wreath laid at St Bartholomew Church, Benton by residents of Goathland Avenue, Newcastle

MORDEN



In the centenary year marking the end of The Great War, an extra special Service of Remembrance was held at Haig's Morden estate, organised by Housing Manager Lisa Waterman, together with colleagues. Guests were invited to join staff in the Lawrence Weaver Institute hall to watch the service from the Cenotaph before attending the main service in the Garden of Remembrance, which had been beautifully prepared by Haig's Grounds Maintenance Team.

Wreaths were laid by Councillor Dennis Pearce, SLNGA, RBL, Blesma, The Rotary Club and on behalf of Haig

staff and trustees. The service was taken by Reverend Martin Davy from St Lawrence Church and reading were given by staff, tenants and Councillor Kelly Braund.

The event was made extra memorable by the presence of 98 year old Betty Hyde, a long time Haig resident until November 2017, who was presented with a belated birthday cake by Lisa.

Everyone enjoyed the much needed hot drinks and refreshments provided following the service, especially the delicious food kindly prepared Nepalese ladies from the estate.



Tenant Howard Varney put on a fitting display of militaria.

A guest's comment book was opened for anyone wishing to share their thoughts and feeling on those who had served and fallen, and many moving comments were left, it will remain a precious memento of this most important centenary.

A service is held every year at the Morden estate on Remembrance Sunday and all residents, their families and friends are always welcome.

Development Update

In 2015, Haig Housing was fortunate to secure funding from the Ministry of Defence Veterans Accommodation Fund for the construction of 76 new homes on our Morden estate in Surrey, where demand for housing is always high. Haines Phillips Architects were appointed to design a master plan for the development of two previously unused areas of land. Parry Court, which sits on the former Café site, was completed in March 2018 providing eight transitional homes for Service leavers.

Construction began in October 2017 of a much larger development on the playing fields adjacent to Rhodes Moorhouse Court, with an anticipated completion date of June 2019. The scheme will include 68 new homes and a landscaped central communal garden, with a mix of 1-4 bedroom homes, seven of which will be specially adapted wheelchair homes, kindly funded by Forces Support. A huge effort has been made to complement the best aspects of the existing properties by matching the construction materials and preserving the tranquil character of the estate.

The main contractor, United Living, has done an amazing job. As well as progressing the build programme to schedule, they have liaised with existing tenants and neighbours

by producing monthly newsletters, held open days for visitors and local schoolchildren, constructed a new patio for our Hart Square residents as part of their community improvement programme, employed where possible ex-Service men and women, and are currently operating a work placement scheme with the local Merton College for students to be on site for three days a week, gaining valuable experience of working on a live site.

The Trust is delighted to have received permission to name one of the blocks 'Queen Elizabeth Terrace' after our Patron the Queen, and other blocks will be named after war heroes including Odette Sansom, Jack Cornwell and Kulbir Thapa, who a Gurkha recipient of the Victoria Cross,



as well as local Ward Counsellor Maxi Martin who was a staunch supporter of Haig and our Veteran community.

We will include more news, and photographs of the opening ceremony, in future newsletters.



The League of Remembrance



The League of Remembrance

Unlocking opportunities for veterans and retired nurses

The League provides direct, practical and enduring support to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force Veterans, their widows and dependants, and retired nurses. There are no barriers to receiving this support – as long as you meet the eligibility criteria and are willing to get stuck in and help your community through voluntary work, the League will support you.

The League achieves this through their volunteer programme where they match people to suitable volunteer opportunities in hospitals, hospices and other social institutions in Greater London, Bucks and Essex. Called Remembrance Workers, these volunteers deliver a range of services including bereavement assistance; staffing information points; acting as a guide, working in the shop or gardens; driving; administration or in simply just showing a friendly face to patients or their loved ones.

By becoming a volunteer this helps individuals bring value not just to others but to themselves too. They become part of a hospital team, build a new

network of friends and social activity thus helping to tackle any isolation or loneliness that they themselves may experience. It's also a marvellous way of learning new skills while also passing on their own knowledge and skills to others, at the same time relieving the burden on often hard-pressed hospital support services.

The League now wants to reach out to a new generation. With many of

their current Remembrance Workers ranging in age from 60 to 90 plus and being Veterans, widows or dependants of WW2, the Korean War and Northern Ireland campaigns, they want to extend their help and support to a younger generation, particularly those who served in the First Gulf War, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan.

If you would like to learn more about becoming a Remembrance Worker in Greater London, Bucks or Essex then please visit the League's website at www.leagueofremembrance.org.uk or telephone: 020 7881 0987.



Do you have a Veterans Badge?



You can get an Armed Forces Veterans Badge if you've served in the UK Armed Forces - there's no fee.

Eligibility

You can apply if you were in the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Air Force (RAF), Volunteer or regular reserves.

You can't apply if you served in the armed forces of another country, or alongside the UK armed forces, for example in the Canadian Navy or Royal Australian Air Force.

If you're applying on behalf of someone who's died

You can only apply on behalf of a veteran who's died if you get either a War Widow's or Widower's Pension or compensation under the Survivors Guaranteed Income Payment (SGIP).

How to apply

Download and fill in the application for

an Armed Forces Veterans Badge. You can find this online at this address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-veterans-badge-application-form>. You can't apply by email.

Alternatively, email us at communications@haighousing.org.uk or telephone us at 020 8685 5786 and we'll send you a copy of the form. Send the form by post or fax to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Medal Office – the address is on the form. You can also apply using the UK **Freephone** helpline: 0808 1914 218

You will usually get your veterans badge within 6 to 8 weeks of applying.

If you need to contact MOD about your Veterans badge application, you can phone, fax or send an email to db-s-modmo-vets-badge@mod.uk. If you lose your badge, you can apply for a replacement.

ADVICE ON PAYING YOUR RENT

- Haig Housing will happily accept Debit Card Payments in respect of your rent and associated accounts. However please be aware we can only accept a payment from the card holder or with consent at the time the payment is being made. This is in line with banking regulations.
- As from January 2019 we will no longer be sending receipts unless specifically requested for debit card payments.
- Please be aware that rent is still charged over the Christmas period, and you should ensure normal payments are made. The office will be open should you wish to call, please see Christmas opening times on the back page.
- If you are struggling with debts or rental payments, then please contact the Income Team. We can advise you of other organisations that may be able to assist you. Alternatively please see the list of people you can contact for help and advice below.
- Did you know there are various ways to pay your rent. If you have a payment card you can pay at the Post Office or any PayPoint Outlet, you can pay by Standing Order, Bank Transfer (you will need our bank details), online, or via Debit Card over the telephone. If you require a standing order form, our bank details or payment card please contact the Income Team.
- In March 2019 we will be changing our online banking provider, which means you will no longer be able to pay your rent through Santander. Please watch out for further details in the near future.
- We currently receive a number of payments that do not have the correct reference attached. This can result in delayed payments being credited to your account, or in some circumstances they remain in a suspense account as we are unable to confirm who they belong to. If you think there is a payment missing please contact us. Please use the number on the top right of your statement, labelled Tenancy No, as a reference.
- Universal Credit continues to be rolled out across the country. If you are applying or have a claim, please ensure we are listed as a private landlord. If you wish for us to contact them regarding any problems you may have, you will need to add permission in your online Journal as otherwise they will not discuss anything with us.



Citizens Advice Bureau. www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Telephone: 03444 111 444 (England); 03444 772 020 (Wales)

Shelter. www.shelter.org.uk
Telephone: 0808 800 44 44. Free housing advice line
Mon – Fri 8am – 8pm and 9 – 5pm at weekends

National Debt Line
Telephone: 0808 808 4000. Mon – Fri 9.00am – 8.00pm
and 9.30am – 1.00pm Saturdays.

Step Change (advice on financial difficulties)
Telephone: 0800 138 1111. Mon – Fri 8.00am – 8.00pm
and 8.00am – 4pm Saturdays.

Veterans Gateway. www.veteransgateway.org.uk
Telephone: 0808 802 1212. Available 7 days a
week 24 hours a day. Text: 81212

SSAFA: The Armed Forces Charity. www.ssafa.org.uk
By Post: SSAFA, 4 St Dunstan's Hill, London, EC3R 8AD
Telephone: 0800 731 4880. Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.30pm

Royal British Legion. www.britishlegion.org.uk
By Post: Royal British Legion,
199 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1AA
Telephone: 0808 802 8080. Available 7 days a week
between 8.00am – 8.00pm

Veterans UK. www.gov.uk/veterans-uk
Post: Veterans UK, MOD, Norcross,
Thorton Cleveleys, FY5 3WP
Email: Veterans-uk@mod.uk
Telephone: 0808 1914 218. Mon – Fri 8.00am – 5.00pm

Christmas Cards



If during this winter you are able to take a suitable photograph of a wintry or festive scene featuring your estate, please send it to us at **communications@haighousing.org.uk**, and if it is chosen to be the next Haig Christmas card you will receive a **£25 shopping voucher** of your choice.

Humour In Uniform



DADDY IS GOING TO WAR - TRUE STORY

During the Persian Gulf War, I was assigned to go to Saudi Arabia. As I was saying good-bye to my family, my three-year-old son, Christopher, was holding onto my leg and pleading with me not to leave. "No, Daddy, please don't go!" he kept repeating.

We were beginning to make a scene when my wife, desperate to calm him, said, "Let Daddy go and I'll take you to get a pizza."

Immediately, Christopher loosened his death grip, stepped back and in a calm voice said, "Bye, Daddy."

The Mrs Willie James Charity

Mrs William (Willie) James, born Evelyn Forbes (1868-1929) founded The Housing Association for Officers' Families (HAOF) in 1916. On the merger of the Association with Haig Homes in 1995, the Mrs Willie James Charity was created as a memorial to her.

The Charity helps tenants of Haig Housing by providing items, services or facilities they need but cannot otherwise afford. All tenants who qualify as beneficiaries of Haig Housing are eligible for assistance. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they do not have the resources to provide the item or service themselves.

A wide range of assistance may be given with such necessary small items as furniture and white goods; payment for dental work or new glasses; items to improve quality of life or medical condition such as a rising chair or television; courses or equipment to help with a return to work; respite care; occasional expenses, etc.

If you would like to apply please contact Shirley Skinner for an application form on 020 8685 5777 or by email shirley.skinner@haighousing.org.uk.

