

TOP MILITARY CHARITY LAUNCHES LONG WALK HOME TO COMMEMORATE 100 YEARS SINCE THE GREAT WAR

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TOP MILITARY CHARITY ANNOUNCES 'THE LONG WALK HOME' TO COMMEMORATE 100 YEARS SINCE THE GREAT WAR

UK's top military housing charity Haig Housing Trust has announced that 100 Veterans will walk 100 miles from Ypres to the Cenotaph to mark 100 years since the end of the First World War.

The march by Veterans from across the Haig Housing community has been called 'THE LONG WALK HOME' and the journey will finish on Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph.

Haig Housing was one of the organisers of the hugely successful Poppies at The Tower installation which raised millions for Veterans charities and is the country's leading charity for military housing. The Long Walk Home has been planned as a mark of respect to those who died in the Great War and will raise funds for the charity. It is also an important milestone for Haig Housing as it was launched in memory of Earl Haig soon after the Great War.

Each of the walkers will be taken to Ypres in Belgium – scene of three major battles and Headquarters of the British salient in the First World War – and there they will begin their journey home. Over the next four days they will walk over a hundred miles from Ypres to the Belgian coast and thence from Dover to London.

The Long Walk Home journey will go from Dover to Canterbury and Faversham; on the second day from Rochester and Rainham and on the third day the walkers will stay in Dartford and Sidcup. On the Saturday night before Remembrance Sunday the walkers will stay in a hotel before marching to the Cenotaph the following morning.

Along the route from Dover to central London the people of Kent are going to be asked to host the brave Veteran walkers overnight in a show of the 'Dunkirk spirit'. It is hoped that the walkers will be joined along the route in November by the public, politicians and celebrities to raise awareness and raise funds for the charity.

THE LONG WALK HOME is a fundraising campaign of Haig Housing

Chief Executive of Haig Housing, Brigadier James Richardson MBE said:

"Haig Housing Trust started its life to meet the needs of Veterans returning from the Great War. Prime Minister Lloyd George campaigned to build homes fit for heroes and ever since Haig has striven to do just that. The Long Walk Home recognises the great sacrifice given by so many in that war and its pilgrimage to walk the route from Flanders to the Cenotaph to take part in the National Act of Remembrance by today's Veterans will be a poignant commemoration. We hope that the public and in particular the people of Kent give support and encouragement to this event."

Chairman of Cobseo, The Confederation of Service Charities, General Sir John McColl KCB CBE DSO said:

"2018 marks the centenary of the end of the Great War, the aftermath of which saw the creation of so

many of the well-known organisations still supporting the Veterans community and their families today.

This centenary of the first Armistice will therefore attract much attention as the Nation stops to remember, not just the sacrifices of the Great War, but those who have given so much in all subsequent conflicts.

Haig Housing Trust's The Long Walk Home is a perfect way to commemorate this anniversary and raise awareness of Veterans' housing issues. This poignant pilgrimage joins the memory of events in the British Salient around Ypres during WW1 with Whitehall and the Cenotaph where our National Remembrance is centred. The walking Veterans will meet the challenge and hopefully be supported and encouraged along their route, raising awareness of Veterans' housing issues. I wish them and the Trust every success."

For more information please visit:

<http://www.haighousing.org.uk/donation-fundraising /the-long-walk-home>

For all images please download here:

<https://we.tl/s1YJ91YvfH>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Haig Housing (Haig), is a charitable housing Trust and the leading provider of rental housing for ex-Service people in the United Kingdom.

Across the UK, Haig has over 1,500 properties - mostly built in the 1930's, 50's and 90's. Homes are situated on small, well managed estates of usually around 30 properties but that range in size from about 6 houses up to the largest estate in Morden of over 270 homes. Properties are a mix of family-sized houses, maisonettes and smaller flats, which are spread throughout the UK in over 50 different local authorities. Properties are available to qualifying beneficiaries at a charitable rent, roughly comparable to that charged by the local authority.

Haig also offers special housing solutions for severely wounded and disabled Service and ex-Service personnel. Homes are found and acquired in areas conducive to the needs and personal preferences of the individual, adapted to meet these needs and a shared ownership/ rental scheme then agreed. This has the advantage in ensuring that the individual's compensation package is not wholly and immediately spent on housing, while allowing a greater ownership share to be taken as circumstances change in the future.

Of the 54 homes obtained in this way since the scheme was first established by Haig under the 'Coming Home' fundraising brand some 7 years ago, 18 have now been fully bought out. In this way we have been able to – and continue to - provide appropriate housing for those personnel and other Veterans in need of rebuilding their lives following traumatic life changing injuries.

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