



Haig Homes & Gurkhas

Haig Homes was a charity founded in 1928 to provide affordable housing for British veterans and their families returning to civilian life. The Haig Housing Trust was formed in 2008 and united with the charity in 2013. The main office is based in Morden and Haig Home now has over 1500 properties in different local authorities around England and Channel Islands.

Commonwealth veterans are amongst those served by the Trust - perhaps the most recognised contingent are the Gurkhas - native Nepalese soldiers renowned for their bravery, loyalty and teamwork. After the completion of 68 new homes on the Morden estate in May 2019, a special June ceremony united the Haig Housing Council, the South London Nepali Association (SLNA), Merton councillors and members of the public in celebrating the opening of Kulbir Thapa VC House for veterans.



Kulbir Thapa Magar VC

Kulbir Thapa Magar VC and Kulbir Thapa Magar House, Morden

Kulbir Thapa Magar was a Nepalese Gurkha soldier who fought with Allied forces during the First World War.

For valour in the face of the enemy, he received the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award in the British Military Honours system.

25th September 1915 was a significant date for Kulbir Thapa Magar, the Gurkhas and the Nepalese community.

Based on the front line in Fauquissart, France, wounded Rifleman Kulbir Thapa came across another injured soldier behind the front line of German trenches. This is believed to have been 20 year old Bill Keightley from Melton Mowbray, a soldier with the Leicestershire Regiment.

Kulbir stayed with the wounded man all day and night, Despite misty weather early the next day, he managed to transport him to a place of comparative safety, whilst passing near German lines.

Kulbir took two wounded Gurkha soldiers to the British trenches, then returned for Keightley, carrying him back to safety, whilst under enemy fire.

The Germans troops were so impressed by this incredible act of courage and compassion, that when Kulbir Thapa Magar arose from his trench, they clapped their encouragement. This support enabled him to stand up and walk right across No-Mans-Land, back to his own side.

To commemorate him, one of the blocks of a new Morden housing development for British Veterans has been named Kulbir Thapa VC House in his honour.