



Working in Partnership



MD 105 Special Appeal Support for Sight Impaired Service Personnel

At its Meeting in January of this year your Council of Governors (Council) endorsed support for all organisations facilitating the care and rehabilitation of troops wounded in conflicts – St Dunstan's is the only organisation specifically committed to the rehabilitation of Servicemen, both *current and past*, who have been blinded in combat or whose sight has deteriorated over time.

Support for such an organisation is a natural fit for LCI given our commitment to sight related projects and service to the blind and visually impaired. Consequently at its subsequent meetings in April and September Council further endorsed the development of an ongoing Partnership between MD 105 and St Dunstan's and that an Appeal be made to the Clubs of MD 105 to raise at least **£50,000** towards the cost and dedication of a Day Room within a new Rehabilitation and Training Centre being built by St Dunstan's in Llandudno, North Wales.

A Memorandum of Understanding confirming the Partnership parameters is being developed with the intention that it be approved at the next Council Meeting in January 2011 and that it be signed by both organisations at the MD Convention in Belfast in May 2011.

Currently St Dunstan's provides lifelong commitment and services to nearly 3000 St Dunstaners. Their two Centres at Ovingdean (near Brighton) and a smaller site in Sheffield have come under increasing pressure as the organisation has had to respond to increased activity arising both from *current conflicts around the world and increasing number of ex-Servicemen* developing sight related issues as a result of the aging process.

The response to this increased demand has been the purchase of the former North Wales Medical Centre in Craig-y-Don, Llandudno. It is intended to make this a world class Centre, offering state of the art rehabilitation, training and respite facilities plus the provision of high dependency nursing beds, which will enable those who are unable to travel down to Brighton to benefit from the services for the first time.

A Centre which is vital to allow St Dunstan's to continue support for its beneficiaries, the ex-Service men and women who have lost their eyesight as a result of war, age, accident or illness. They are the men and women who are proud to call themselves St Dunstaners. The Centre will play a key role to meet the needs of new St Dunstaners

A Case Study

St Dunstaner's story Corporal Craig "Freddie" Lundberg

On 22 March 2007, Corporal Craig Lundberg, on his second tour of Iraq, whilst trying to draw enemy fire from a neighbouring unit, took a direct hit in the chest from a rocket propelled-grenade. The blast shattered his left arm and sent razor-sharp burning shrapnel flying into his face. Craig lost his left eye instantly and his right was damaged beyond repair.

Incredibly, Craig tried to continue fighting: "I got up and demanded my rifle, but it had been bent by the force of the blast. My mate gave me another and I tried to carry on firing. But I only managed a few steps before I collapsed." Doctors managed to save Craig's life was saved, but they couldn't save his sight. He underwent major reconstructive surgery and was flown back to the UK knowing that he would never see again.

Craig has undertaken intensive rehabilitation and training with St Dunstan's, and we have also been able to provide him with a specially adapted flat near his family in Liverpool. Craig now says: "When I was lying in hospital I didn't know how I was going to cope. But thanks to St Dunstan's I found out my life wasn't over and I could enjoy a happy and independent future."

The Llandudno Project

With 3,000 St Dunstaners, *and the number set to increase by a further 650 in 2010/11*, Craig Lundberg's story is one of many. St Dunstan's supports all beneficiaries for life, be they young or old and are very conscious of their life-long commitment to its younger St Dunstaners. They will be there to support them for the remainder of their lives and the facilities at Llandudno will be an on-going part of their lives.

As the demand for rehabilitation and training at the existing Centres in Sheffield and Brighton is stretched to the limit a new Centre is absolutely essential to meet the continually increasing need. The former North Wales Medical Centre at Llandudno in North Wales is being refurbished to provide a 30 bedroom unit offering world class, recovery, rehabilitation, training and respite facilities. There will also be a gym, a workshop and a range of other facilities in the main building.

Work has started to build an extension to the Centre to provide 10 high dependency nursing beds, which are not available in the main building. The addition of high dependency nursing facilities is essential to ensure St Dunstan's can support all ex-

Service men and women with damaged sight, regardless of their other injuries. *This is especially important for those returning from today's conflicts, given the extensive injuries associated with counter-insurgency operations.*

The extension will ensure St Dunstaners with the greatest need are able to benefit from St Dunstan's care and training programmes and enable those who are unable to travel as far as the existing Centres to benefit from the full range of services for the first time.

It is within this extension that Council approved that an appeal be made to Clubs of MD 105 to raise funds of **£50k** for a Day Room (one of two within the unit) to be built and dedicated to LCI MD 105 and if more than the required **£50k** is donated such extra monies to be allocated to other aspects of the overall project at the discretion of the MD Lions Appeal Team subject to the total raised – how good would it be if both Day Rooms could be dedicated to LCI MD 105 ? !!

Financing the new Centre

The Centre will open in the autumn of 2011.

The total cost of the project is £11.9 million. The St Dunstan's Trustees have already committed £8 million towards the purchase, conversion and fitting out of the main building.

Building the extension at the same time makes sense from a cost and disruption perspective. To do this St Dunstan's have launched a Capital Campaign and need to be confident of raising £4million inclusive of the Day Room(s) costs.

Lions Clubs International – MD 105

Council on behalf of LCI MD 105 has committed to supporting this Project and there will be a further update in the next issue of the Lion magazine and prior to a presentation at MD Convention there will also be presentations at many of the District Conventions, whilst the MD Website will also carry information.

Council encourages all Clubs to consider organising an event in aid of this major MD Appeal or to donate such an amount as is considered appropriate to the cause and especially given the current circumstances in Afghanistan - all monies donated will be totally ring fenced for this Project and will be supporting our blinded and sight impaired *current war wounded and ex-Servicemen and women.*

Details of how to pledge or make donations will be circulated in January 2011

Further information available from:-

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