



*For immediate release*

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### **Barbara Windsor opens £336k Wing for ex-Servicemen at the 'Queen Vic'**

The queen of the East End Barbara Windsor MBE returned to the 'Queen Vic' to open The Royal British Legion Wing, a 14-room residential wing for ex-Servicemen at the Queen Victoria's Seamen's Rest (QVSR) in East London today.

Barbara Windsor unveiled a plaque with the Legion's Chairman John Farmer to officially open the new Wing in front of friends and supporters.

The 'Queen Vic', as the QVSR is locally known, is a charity providing accommodation and support to men in the East End of London. It received funding of £336,000 from the Royal British Legion's External Grants scheme to open the Wing, which is 'Phase 3' of the QVSR's major re-development programme.

New residents of The Royal British Legion Wing also attended the opening event in the Queen Vic's garden which was full of '90<sup>th</sup>' bunting and balloons in recognition of the Legion's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Among those enjoying the outdoor party with Barbara Windsor was QVSR resident David Waymark, 56, a former Private in the Scottish Guards.

David arrived at the Queen Vic in 2007, following difficult periods of homelessness and other related related issues. He currently suffers from mobility problems following an accident at work in 2010.

"QVSR has helped me access physiotherapy after I lost feeling in my arms and legs, but now I can move around with a walking stick and take part in activities such as making hanging pots for the garden," David said.

"I'm looking forward to moving into my new room in The Royal British Legion Wing, because the lift and en suite bathroom will give me easier and more convenient access."

"I would like to thank QVSR and The Royal British Legion for its support to ex-Service people like me, their support has made all the difference to my life."

QVSR Chief Executive Alexander Campbell said: "

"We are delighted to work with The Royal British Legion, both organisations are about people and helping them reach their full potential. The provision of these new 14 rooms will make a real difference to the lives of the men who call the newly created British Legion Wing home."

The Legion's National Chairman John Farmer said: "Our External Grants give the Legion an opportunity to support other charities which share our aims in providing welfare for those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their dependants.

"We're delighted Barbara Windsor could open The Royal British Legion Wing at QVSR today, she brought so much warmth and charm to our occasion because she's so connected to east London and its residents."

The new Wing of 14-rooms was project managed by HBW Partnership and designed by architect Ayshford Sansome, all come with en-suite facilities to provide contemporary and comfortable surroundings for residents some of who would have experienced homelessness.

Established over 168 years ago, the 'Queen Vic' provides accommodation and support for up to 170 seafarers, both active and retired, ex servicemen and other adults in need of accommodation.

The Legion's External Grants programme for eligible charities or serving units that deliver welfare to members of the Armed Forces community.

-Ends -

**Notes to Editors:**

The Royal British Legion is the nation's leading Armed Forces charity providing care and support to all members of the British Armed Forces past and present and their families. It is also the national Custodian of Remembrance and safeguards the Military Covenant between the nation and its Armed Forces. It is best known for the annual Poppy Appeal and its emblem, the red poppy. [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

The Royal British Legion is celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2011. In its 90th year, the Legion's mission is to put welfare at the heart of the organisation to stand shoulder to shoulder with all who Serve. The Legion aims to raise £90 million during this momentous year to support the Armed Forces family, in particular, the 'Afghan generation'. The Legion will provide £50 million, its biggest single funding commitment in 90 years, to The Royal British Legion Battle Back Centre and the wider Personal Recovery Capability.

For further information please contact Afsheen Latif, Public Relations Officer, The Royal British Legion on 0203 207 2243 / 07901 110 819 or [alatif@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:alatif@britishlegion.org.uk)