



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From grateful son to dedicated colleague: Staff member to run half marathon for dad's care home

An indebted son will run a half marathon to raise money for the veterans' charity which looked after his father, and where he now works.

Mark Iliffe will take part in the Windsor Half Marathon for Royal Star & Garter on 27 September.

He has worked at the charity's Home in High Wycombe since November 2025 as a Driver and is part of the Wellbeing Team which provides tailored, meaningful activities, including physical exercise, social events, and activities including outings, arts and crafts, music, gardening and cookery.



Mark with (l-r) Natalie and Taylor at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe. The three members of the Wellbeing Team will be running the Windsor Half Marathon

Mark's father, RAF veteran Frank, lived with dementia and was at the Home for over three years until his death in February 2025, aged 94.

The 57-year-old will be running with his son Joe and Royal Star & Garter colleagues Natalie Diamond and Taylor Thomson, who are also part of the Wellbeing Team.

Royal Star & Garter has Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe and Worthing. The charity provides loving compassionate care to veterans and their families living with disability or dementia, and also runs services reaching out into the community, including Lunch Club, Day Care and the national Telephone Friendship Service.

Recalling visits to the Home, Mark said: "Dad was a bit of a character, and everybody knew him. When I came to see Dad, I was struck at how appropriate the care was for him. They knew what he enjoyed, what he loved and what made him happy. That



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person-centred care was the magic ingredient – it's the heartbeat of what we do here."

Mark had worked for 30 years in recruitment before deciding on a career change and says working at Royal Star & Garter makes him feel close to his dad. "I owe the job to him, I feel he opened this door for me and I feel very grateful to him," he said. "I'd never worked in a care home before but when I saw the job advert, I thought how good it would be to be part of the team that provided such great care for Dad, and provides such great care for so many people."



Mark (right) with his son Joe (left) and dad Frank. Mark and Joe will be running the Windsor Half Marathon for Royal Star & Garter

Mark drives residents on trips and outings and helps with activities in the Home. He said: "It's a brilliant job and incredibly rewarding. I see my role as trying to make people smile. It gives me a great buzz to make people laugh and I go home feeling incredibly content and lucky every night."

Taylor and Natalie, who are running with Mark, are also part of the Wellbeing Team. They said: "Our residents have been incredible throughout our training journey. They always ask how we're getting on and never fail to encourage us. Whenever we're having a tough training day or don't feel like heading out for a run, we think about them and the sacrifices they've made as members of the Armed Forces. Knowing



Mark with dad Frank

we're taking on this challenge to support the veterans and their families at Royal Star & Garter gives us all the motivation we need to keep pushing forward."

The High Wycombe Home is a [rated outstanding by the Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#).

To sponsor Mark, Natalie and Taylor, go to <https://www.justgiving.com/page/wellbeingteamhighwycombe>



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Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, its other service or to work at the Home, go to www.starandgarter.org/hw

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About Royal Star & Garter

Founded in 1916, Royal Star & Garter provides care, support and friendship for veterans and their families so that they can live well. The charity delivers nursing and dementia care through Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe, and now in Worthing, having recently merged with the military charity Care for Veterans. It also offers a range of services reaching into the community, including Lunch Clubs, Day Care and a national Telephone Friendship Service.

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