

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Plucky veterans get up to creepy crawlies during visit from zoo

Some weird and wonderful creatures from around the world found their way into The Royal Star & Garter Home in Surbiton following a visit a special zoo.

Exotic animals including a Brazilian black spider, a fully-grown Madagascan ground boa constrictor, and a meerkat were some of the star attractions when the Spirit of the Wild zoo visited the Home, which cares for ex-Servicemen and women living with disability or dementia, on 29 August.



Residents were able to be up close and personal with the animals and insects, stroking and holding them, and in some cases, allowing them to rest on their heads.

They were also shown giant stick insects, a parrot, lizards and chameleons, a barn owl, an African bull frog, tortoises and a hedgehog-like mammal called a tenrec.

Ben Pugh spoke to residents and relatives about each animal, telling them about their habitat, diet and traits.

The event was organised by Activities Manager Raquel Pena-Aristizabal. She said: *"I made sure I kept well away from the spider, but the residents showed no fear and loved meeting all the wonderful animals and creepy-crawlies. They had a great time!"*



Speaking afterwards, Ben said: *"I loved it. It's always such a pleasure to come here."*



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**The Royal Star
& Garter Homes**
Caring for the nation's military family since 1916



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About The Royal Star & Garter Homes:

The Charity provides award-winning care for military veterans and their partners who live with disability or dementia.

The Royal Star & Garter Homes is a charity founded in 1916 to care for the severely injured men returning from the battlegrounds of the First World War.

Today our friendly, state-of-the-art Homes offer a pioneering approach to nursing, dementia and therapeutic care. We have award-winning Homes in Solihull, West Midlands and Surbiton, Surrey. Our third Home in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, opened in April 2019.

We continue to expand our services to reach even more veterans. In 2018, we were able to support 186 residents in our Homes and 36 guests at our Day Care service. We also offer interim care for young disabled Service personnel. We provided 11,700 individual sessions of



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physiotherapy and speech & language therapy last year to support our residents' health, and over 5,600 places to residents for activities, outings and events, to promote well-being.

We are proud to have enjoyed Royal patronage since our foundation, including that of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II from 1953 to the present day.

Twitter: @starandgarter

Facebook: facebook.com/starandgarter

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The Royal Star & Garter Homes is a member of the National Care Forum – the leading voice for not-for-profit care providers. A national perspective may be available from info@nationalcareforum.org.uk or by contacting 02476243619. More details on NCF available at www.nationalcareforum.org.uk.

