

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fulham players surprise ex-soldier cared for at veterans' home

A disabled soldier who was injured in Iraq was surprised by a visit from two Fulham footballers.

Midfielder Kevin McDonald and defender Cyrus Christie dropped in to meet die-hard Fulham fan Stephen Vause, 32, at The Royal Star & Garter Home in Surbiton.

The visit on Tuesday, 17 September was organised by staff at the Home, who form close friendships with the residents and love to arrange treats and surprises for them.



Stephen was presented with a Fulham shirt signed by the squad, and a signed book featuring press cuttings from Fulham matches over the years. He was also promised two tickets to a match of his choice this season. The players were also taken to the Physiotherapy room where Stephen regularly works out.

Stephen was just 19 and on his first tour in Iraq, serving with the 4th Battalion The Rifles, when he suffered brain injuries in a mortar explosion near Basra. The attack left him severely disabled.

The Royal Star & Garter Homes cares for ex-Servicemen and women and their partners living with disability or dementia. The Charity has been caring for Stephen since 2015.

Following the visit, Stephen said: *"I had no idea they were going to turn up. I'm feeling very grateful. It was amazing."*

Scotland international McDonald spoke of his admiration of the Home and Stephen. He said: *"Every day we get a lot of kicks that cause a bit of pain, but then we meet guys who put their lives on the line for their country. It puts everything into perspective to meet people like this. When you consider what Stephen's been through it's an honour to meet him."*



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Cyrus Christie's brother was in the Army for 10 years and served in Afghanistan. The Irish international said it was "humbling" to meet Stephen and added: "He's a true inspiration."

To support Stephen and other veterans like him, please go to <https://starandgarter.org/donation-page/donate/> or

<https://www.justgiving.com/starandgarter>

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Further information please contact:

Goolistan Cooper
Communications Officer
e: goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org
t: 0208 481 7669 / 07391 868796

Cally Madden
Marketing & Communications Manager
e: cally.madden@starandgarter.org
t: 020 8481 7692 / 07881 017299

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 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.

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



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.

