



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minister praises High Wycombe care home and new national veterans project during visit

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs has praised the Veteran Friendly Framework (VFF), after seeing the impact of the new nationwide project during a visit to Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe.

Rt Hon. Johnny Mercer MP said the VFF, which can benefit tens of thousands of vulnerable Armed Forces veterans in England, should be "turbo-charged and put into every care home in the country", during the visit on Wednesday, 24 January.

The VFF aims to tackle loneliness and isolation, and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for over 25,000 veterans, plus their partners, living in care homes across the country.



Johnny Mercer introduces himself to Army veteran Michael

It is a two-year collaboration between Armed Forces charities Royal Star & Garter, the Royal British Legion and the NHS Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA – an NHS flagship Armed Forces programme), with funding support from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia from Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe, all of which have attained VFF status.

Mr Mercer was greeted in High Wycombe by Royal Star & Garter's Chief Executive Andy Cole, Home Manager Reggie Ballos and VFF Project Lead Kathryn Glass. He was taken on a tour of the Home, meeting residents and viewing the in-house Physiotherapy and Activities rooms. He later had lunch with residents including Ken, who served in the Army during WWII, and RAF veteran John.



Johnny Mercer speaking to veterans and veterans' partners during his visit to Royal Star & Garter



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Mr Mercer, himself an Army veteran, said: "It's when you see the Veteran Friendly Framework in practice, and what it actually means to older veterans, that you realise you're on the right track, and that you really need to get behind this, and turbo-charge it and make it go into every home in the country." And discussing the Royal Star & Garter Home, he continued: "It's a first-class care home. It's amazing to see what they're doing, and the care they give to our older veterans. I met a Second World War veteran, and it was amazing to sit down and chat to him. It's a huge privilege."



Ken, who served in the Army during WWII, shared military tales with Afghanistan veteran Mr Mercer

Royal Star & Garter Chief Executive, Andy Cole said: "We were delighted to welcome Veterans' Minister Johnny Mercer to our Home, so he could see the outstanding care we provide to the Armed Forces community, and learn how the new Veteran Friendly Framework will support the care of veterans living in all care homes across the country."

Ken, who served in the Royal Engineers during WWII, said: "I told Mr Mercer that I feel very fortunate to be at Royal Star & Garter. The care they provide is outstanding, and by getting VFF status, they have demonstrated their determination to provide the best care for veterans like myself. Thanks to the VFF, veterans in other care homes will also benefit, like I have here."

VFF launched in October last year. To date, 17 care homes have attained VFF status, with more than 50 currently going through the process.

Care providers must meet eight standards to achieve VFF status. These include provisions to identify the wellbeing needs of veterans and their partners by ensuring that Armed Forces status is included in care planning; addressing social isolation; and providing signposting to local statutory and charitable support services.

Any care homes interested in receiving more information about the VFF can visit <http://veteranfriendlyframework.org.uk>, email VFF@starandgarter.org or call 07425 326070.

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



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About Royal Star & Garter

Our Charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

Twitter: @starandgarter

Facebook: facebook.com/starandgarter

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Royal Star & Garter
is a member of the
National Care Forum