

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra joins military veterans to celebrate Charity's Founders' Day

Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra spoke to residents at The Royal Star & Garter Home in Surbiton and viewed some of the state-of-the-art equipment available there during a visit on Wednesday, 23 January.

Her Royal Highness was at the Home as part of the Founders' Day celebrations, marking the Charity's 103rd anniversary.

Princess Alexandra has been President of the Charity, which cares for ex-Servicemen and women and their partners living with disability or dementia, since 1964. Her cousin, Her Majesty The Queen, became The Royal Star & Garter Homes' Patron in 1953.



The visit was one of two events held at the Surbiton Home to mark Founders' Day, and followed a Tea Party earlier in January to celebrate the special day.

Her Royal Highness was received by Fr Martin Hislop, Deputy Lieutenant for Kingston upon Thames and Vicar of St Luke's Church of England Parish, before meeting The Royal Star & Garter Homes' Deputy Chairman Malcolm Chapple, and the Mayors of Kingston and Richmond. She also met long-serving Charity volunteer John Parvin, who was awarded the British Empire Medal in this year's Queen's New Year's Honours list, and Raquel Pena Aristizabal, Activities & Volunteers Manager who won the Best Activities Co-ordinator in the National Care Awards in 2018.

Princess Alexandra was escorted around the Home by the Charity's Chief Executive Andy Cole and Director of Care Pauline Shaw. Raquel demonstrated with residents the new OmiVista Mobii magic table, an interactive projector which keeps residents physically and mentally active by stimulating movement, memory, reasoning and recall. It was purchased by the Charity following a successful fundraising drive.



Her Royal Highness then chatted to residents in the café-bar area who were flower arranging, before going upstairs to see a weekly exercise programme held

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at the Home's Physiotherapy Room. Her Royal Highness also visited the Home's kitchen and spoke with the catering team from Signature Dining.



Before leaving, Princess Alexandra also spoke to long-serving staff – some of who have worked more than 30 years for the Charity – and was presented with a posy by a resident.

One resident who met Princess Alexandra said: *"It was very nice talking to her. She was very friendly and easy to talk to. I thought it was lovely that she came to the Home, it was an honour."*

The Royal Star & Garter Homes was set up to care for severely injured young men returning from the battlefields of the First World War, opening its doors to residents on January 14, 1916.



ENDS

Captions:

975: The Princess speaks to The Mayor and Mayoress of Kingston upon Thames, as The Mayor of Richmond watches on

998: Princess Alexandra talks to volunteer John Parvin while Activities & Volunteers Manager Raquel Pena Aristizabal watches on

1030: Health Care Assistant David Offield helps demonstrate the OmiVista Mobii magic table

1045 / 1049: Speaking to volunteer Rosemarie Swinfield



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1103: Her Royal Highness joins in the flower arranging
1149: Princess Alexandra
1178: Viewing a weekly exercise session in the physiotherapy room
1262: Chatting to a resident from The Royal Star & Garter Homes
1364 / 1373: Signing the Charity's Visitors' Book
1399: Princess Alexandra with (l-r) Fr Martin Hislop, Deputy Lieutenant for Kingston upon Thames and Vicar of St Luke's Church of England Parish; Kingston Mayoress Lata Thayalan; Kingston Mayor Thay Thayalan; Richmond Mayor Ben Khosa; Richmond Mayoress Jaz Khosa; and Malcolm Chapple, Deputy Chairman of The Royal Star & Garter Homes

For 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 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 young men returning from the battlegrounds of the First World War. Today we provide specialist care to the whole military family in our friendly, state-of-the-art Homes. Disabled ex-Servicemen and women, and their spouses, can all benefit from our pioneering approach to nursing, dementia and therapeutic care.

We are in the process of building new Homes around the country to provide specialist nursing care for disabled ex-Service people in the best modern surroundings, including dementia care facilities to address this growing need. The Charity has award-winning Homes in Solihull, West Midlands, and Surbiton, Surrey, which also enables the Charity to offer interim care for young disabled Service personnel. Following the successes of the first two Homes, a third Home in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, is being built, with a planned opening in 2019.

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 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.

