

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **A new chapter for Great War Chapel as place of worship to mark the care of veterans**

A re-hallowing service will take place today (May 17) following the restoration of The Memorial Chapel at The Star and Garter Building on Richmond Hill, which will allow worship to continue to commemorate the lives and the care of veterans of conflicts for years to come.

The Memorial Chapel of St Mary was founded at the Home of The Royal Star & Garter Homes charity on Richmond Hill in 1926, two years after the home was opened by King George V and Queen Mary, to care for soldiers and sailors injured in the First World War. It was established as the gift of Viscount and Viscountess Cowdray, in memory of their son, the Hon Francis Geoffrey Pearson, who was killed in France just five weeks after the start of the Great War.

Over the years, services took place in the chapel for residents who lived at the home but also to mark major conflicts, attended by members of the Royal family, including HM Queen Elizabeth, the Patron of The Royal Star & Garter Homes, and Princess Alexandra, its President.



The Memorial Chapel was closed while restoration took place as part of a grand refurbishment of the Grade II listed building following its sale by the Charity to the award-winning developer London Square, as it was no longer appropriate for the specialised nursing needs of its residents. Three new purpose-built care homes were established by the Charity in Surbiton, High Wycombe and Solihull.

The conversion and restoration of The Star and Garter has been a project of national significance. An elite professional team was appointed to convert the building into private residences, while respecting its architectural lineage and historical importance, preserving many significant features, including a stained glass window and ceiling mouldings, the bronze opening ceremony plaque and engraved stone commemoration of The Queen's visit.

The Memorial Chapel is the final part of the restoration. It has been rewired and its polished marble, moulded plasterwork and ornate carved furniture refurbished.



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**The Royal Star  
& Garter Homes**  
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The service on Friday was conducted by The Revd Canon Tim Marwood, Vicar of St Peter's, Petersham, and attended by The Royal Star & Garter Homes Chairman, Major General Tim Tyler, The Royal Star & Garter Homes Chief Executive Andy Cole, plus the charity's supporters and officers and councillors from Richmond Council, including Mayor Nancy Baldwin. The Memorial Chapel will be used by the Charity for public services on special occasions such as Armed Forces Day.

Major General Tim Tyler said: *"For many decades, the Memorial Chapel of St Mary brought strength, hope and comfort to our residents, their relatives and staff. It gives me joy to know that this wonderful place will once again be open for worship, and commemoration of the life and continuing work of The Royal Star & Garter Homes caring for the Veterans for many years to come."*

Adam Lawrence, Chief Executive, London Square, said: *"A glorious legacy has been created for this building and we are proud that its history will continue to be linked to The Royal Star & Garter Homes through the Memorial Chapel. The building also has a special place in the hearts and minds of the Richmond community and that is inextricably linked with the care and service dedicated to veterans over past generations. It is important that this connection is maintained."*

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### **About London Square**

Founded in 2010, London Square takes its name from the ethos of London's famous squares, the legacy and sense of community they have created over the centuries. Respectful of the past and inspired by the future, London Square is committed to delivering exceptional homes in London and its surrounding areas that reflect and respect the aspirations of its customers, stimulate thriving communities and set a new benchmark for modern living in the capital.

Today, the company has an experienced team of over 140 staff working from its headquarters in West London, a £2billion development pipeline and a range of first-class development sites in the capital, from the restoration and conversion of The Star and Garter, the highly prized Grade II listed building overlooking the Thames in Richmond to a joint venture with Peabody on redeveloping the Holloway Prison site. London Square has built a reputation for tackling complex, dormant sites where others had failed, such as Streatham Hill and Chigwell Village – building homes and community facilities to transform derelict and neglected areas.

**London Square Partners** is a new division of the company, set up to work with central and local government and housing providers to provide much-needed new homes for social rent and other affordable tenures.



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**London Square Works** is the new commercial arm, focusing on developing high quality bespoke space for offices, retail and leisure businesses to maximise the potential of every aspect of its mixed use developments.

London Square's achievements have been recognised with numerous awards, including an impressive collection of accolades from the Evening Standard New Homes Awards, Property Week's RESI Awards and the WhatHouse? Awards, with a record-breaking three gold awards for The Star and Garter and two gold awards and a bronze award for London Square Streatham Hill at the WhatHouse Awards? 2018.

**The Royal Star & Garter Homes** provides award-winning care for military veterans and their partners who live with disability or dementia.

The 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.

