

MEDIA RELEASE



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers: Why spending time at The Royal Star & Garter Homes is so special

Volunteers at The Royal Star & Garter Home in Surbiton have explained why they give up their free time for the Charity's residents.

The Home in Upper Brighton Road, which cares for ex-Servicemen and women and their partners living with disability or dementia, has over 50 volunteers who help deliver a wide range of activities and events each week.

As part of Volunteers' Week, which runs from 1 June – 7 June, they spoke about the rewards they get from giving up their free time, and the new friendships they strike up with residents.

Jeremy Wadia, 43, began volunteering in 2017 because he wanted to give something back to ex-Service personnel after leaving the Army. The passionate conservationist spends a lot of time with residents living with dementia, often helping out in the garden. He said: *"I love my time with The Royal Star & Garter Homes. The experience of being a volunteer has not only been shaped by what I do and the difference I make to residents' lives, it's also down to the exceptional way the Home is managed, run and staffed. I genuinely feel this is a fantastic option of longer-term care for anyone with a military connection should they find they need it."*

Irene Rowe and her PAT (Pets As Therapy) dog Harvey recently received medals to mark their five years as volunteers. She said: *"Harvey loves coming here, he pulls me into the Home and knows which residents have treats for him. I like coming here because I enjoy talking to people and hearing their stories, it's very humbling."*

Vicky Peirson's mother is currently a resident at the Home. Her father was also cared for at Surbiton. She said during her volunteers' interview that she could bring fun and was accepted immediately. Vicky enjoys dressing up to amuse residents and staff: *"I've been the Queen, I've been Queen Victoria, I've been Mrs Dickens... Every year I come and do Florence Nightingale. I write my own script and I absolutely love it. It's wonderful volunteering here."*

Volunteers' Week thanks and recognises the invaluable and diverse contribution made by volunteers in the UK.

The Surbiton Home has a number of long-term volunteers, some of whom have spent 25 years helping veterans. The Charity believes this reflects how well they are valued. Every April, it holds its annual awards ceremonies to thank its volunteers.

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Captions:

Irene & Harvey: Lovable lurcher Harvey, with owner Irene, and resident Joan
Jeremy: Jeremy Wadia tending to raised flower beds at the Surbiton Home

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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 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

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Website: www.starandgarter.org



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.