



# Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Valentine's Day 2025 – Keeping couples together at Royal Star & Garter**

The partners of residents at Royal Star & Garter's three Homes have spoken about the importance of being able to spend time with their loved ones, whenever they want to, ahead of Valentine's Day on 14 February.

The charity has a proud history of caring for couples who have spent a lifetime with each other and can remain together in older age. It helps couples stay in its three Homes, but this is only possible if both require nursing or dementia care.

Royal Star & Garter's Homes, in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe, also have residents whose partners do not require the same level of care and live elsewhere. In these instances, staff go out of their way to support the couples to spend time together as much as possible.



*Jeremy visits his wife Isobel daily at Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton*

Among these is Jeremy, who was a Royal Marine Reservist. His wife Isobel is living with dementia at the charity's Surbiton Home, and he said: "I normally visit Isobel daily. The staff know me by name and are very friendly and I feel part of the Royal Star & Garter family. I don't know how much my visits mean to Isobel. We have some days where the clouds part and the old Isobel appears for a little bit. But then the clouds come over again and she looks and says 'who are you?' But the visits mean the world to me. We've been married 55 years and it's very important to me that I can spend time with my wife. I don't take any day for granted."



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Margaret Beaumont lives at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe. Her husband, Army veteran Gordon, lives nearby and comes in to see his wife several times a day. Last year, staff at the Home put on a family lunch for the couple to celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Their daughter Anne said: "Going into the Home gives Dad purpose, I think he'd be lost if he didn't have the ability to see Mum every day. He pushes her to eat well and to keep walking. Without him, Mum might not bother, she might not try. I feel relief that at the age of 95, they still both have each other, which is enormous comfort for me. The staff at the Home are amazing. They treat my Dad like he's part of the family, and it means so much to me that they are encouraging and helping my parents to live their lives together."



*Margaret and Gordon celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe*



*Peter, a resident at Royal Star & Garter in Solihull, shares a glass of wine with Ellena during an anniversary lunch put on by staff at the Home*

Ellena Whatley has been regularly visiting her husband Peter at Solihull since he became a resident in October 2022. He served in the Army and is now living with dementia. Staff at the Home provided a special lunch for the couple last summer when they celebrated their anniversary. Ellena, 86, said: "Peter's face lights up when I come to visit, so I take it that he gets a lot of pleasure from my visits. And they mean a lot to me too. If the weather is nice we take a walk to the park and have a coffee or tea. I visit him at least twice a week, his children come regularly and so do his grandchildren. I think the visits are essential in keeping him connected and in touch with his family."

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia. It also runs services from its Homes which reach out into the community, including Lunch Clubs and Day Care.

Director of Care & Wellbeing, Shirley Hall, said: "We do everything we can to keep couples together and partners can visit as often as they wish, spending time with their loved one, joining them for meals and enjoying activities



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together. After a lifetime of love and happiness together, couples don't want to be separated, so we welcome partners and encourage them to visit as often as they want. Our Home is their home and they are part of the Royal Star & Garter family."

Royal Star & Garter is welcoming new residents into its Homes. For more information on this, its other services, or to work for the charity, go to [www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)

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## **About Royal Star & Garter**

Founded in 1916, Royal Star & Garter is a charity which provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their families living with disability or dementia, and has three Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe. It has also launched services reaching out into the community including Lunch Clubs, Day Care and a national Telephone Friendship Service.

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Royal Star & Garter  
is a member of the  
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