



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Veterans' Voice: Royal Star & Garter shines light on veterans and older people

Veterans living at a charity's care homes and using its services have been sharing their views as part of a new project highlighting the value of veterans and older people.

Veterans' Voice aims to give a platform to residents in Royal Star & Garter's Homes, and the people who use its services, ensuring they are not hidden because of their disability or dementia. It also aims to recognise and celebrate the process of ageing by sharing their knowledge and supporting their beliefs and wishes for the country's future.

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 and through services reaching into the community.



Royal Star & Garter residents Yvonne, Michael and John

The charity has helped veterans find their voice, tackle loneliness, and support them to foster friendships and companionship through its Day Care and Lunch Clubs. Their free nationwide Telephone Friendship Service also addresses issues of isolation, with trained volunteers calling veterans and their partners who live in their own homes anywhere in the country.

As part of Veterans' Voice, Royal Star & Garter residents have expressed their concerns and hopes for the future. RAF veteran Michael wants more understanding and equality: "I'd like to see a world where everyone is treated fairly. It's wrong to pre-judge anyone." And he added: "We must respect other people's views. I think that is a problem, especially right now. I think politics today is too divisive." Yvonne, whose husband served in the RAF, added: "I think there's lots that needs to be changed because the world is in a mess."



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

RAF veteran and resident John wants to see a future without armed conflict. He said: "People just seem to go into things without realising what they're doing, and the consequences of what they're doing. If I had the power to, I'd end all wars."

Residents also feel more should be done to help and support Armed Forces personnel when they leave the military. Michael called for better welfare, and for them to be treated with more respect. "I think that's the least we can do, when you consider the sacrifices they have made for us," he said.

Royal Star & Garter has also supported veterans to be heard and appreciated through its other services. Navy veteran John uses their Telephone Friendship Service fortnightly. He said the conversations allow him to speak to his volunteer about personal issues, which he doesn't want to worry his family with. He said: "It's nice to talk to someone who isn't family, someone from the outside, to explain things to, and who relieves my concerns. I feel the burden and pressure that I carry relieved." He added: "We all get lonely. There might be a time when I haven't spoken to my children for a while, but I know that someone will call me and ask how I'm doing, which makes it a lot better."

Royal Star & Garter is one of the charities supporting the Veteran Friendly Framework (VFF), which aims to improve the care and support given to veterans in all care homes in England. The Willows care home has been supported in achieving the Veteran Friendly Framework and sees huge benefits from this. Home Manager Julie Gregory said: "The recognition and celebrations shouldn't stop just because veterans live in a care home. We can act as their voice and share with the community what they have achieved, ensuring they are not forgotten."

Caley Eldred, the Director of Supporter Engagement at Royal Star & Garter, said: "We want to communicate the value of our older people, their views and their experiences. People living in adult social care are often overlooked and sidelined. Their views are relevant – they care about people having a safe place to live, they are passionate about the world being a peaceful one and they uphold the values of respect and equality. They are also positive about life in a care home and want to help us show that it can still be fun! We share the



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

common desire to increase respect for each other in the local communities where we operate, and we hope Veterans' Voice will contribute to this."

For more information about Royal Star & Garter, including long-term and short-term stays at its Homes and new services go to www.starandgarter.org

[Ends]

For further information please contact:

Press Mailbox

press@starandgarter.org

Goolistan Cooper

Communications Officer

goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org

0208 481 7669 / 07391 868796

Cally Madden

Marketing & Communications Manager

cally.madden@starandgarter.org

020 8481 7692 / 07881 017299

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.

About the Veteran Friendly Framework

Royal Star & Garter is collaborating with Royal British Legion and the NHS Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA – an NHS flagship Armed Forces programme) on the Veteran Friendly Framework (VFF). It is designed for use in residential settings for older people, and helps providers to offer appropriate support for veterans living in care homes across England.



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

Twitter: @starandgarter

Facebook: @starandgarter

Instagram: @Starandgarter

LinkedIn: @Royal Star & Garter

Tik Tok: @starandgarter

Website: www.starandgarter.org



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