

ST GEORGE'S COMMUNITY HYDROTHERAPY POOL

# A Celebration...

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# Introduction

**“Nothing has captured the hearts of city people as much as the brand new hydrotherapy pool.”**

This was the headline in the Peterborough Evening Telegraph on the opening of St George’s Hydrotherapy Pool in 1976 and the sentiment has held true ever since.

Originally a school hydrotherapy pool for children with special educational needs and disabilities, St George’s opened to the wider community in 2011 so it could benefit more people. Since then, the fully accessible, warm water pool has delivered improved health and wellbeing to over 4,500 local residents with disabilities and health conditions. It has also brought fun, friendship and joy. This very special facility has enjoyed continued support from the community.

This can be seen by the array of kind messages received when St George’s celebrated its 10th birthday as community pool on 23rd March. This was despite the pool being closed owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

However, these are just a small sample of all the people and groups who supported the pool in so many ways over the years. People like the Art and Graphics students at Peterborough Regional College who have so generously given their time and expertise to design this celebration of the St George's years.

To each one of you who have used, donated or spread the word in support of St George's in some way, thank you so much and here is to St George's continued success.

**Karen Oldale**  
**St George's Friends and Service Users' Lead**

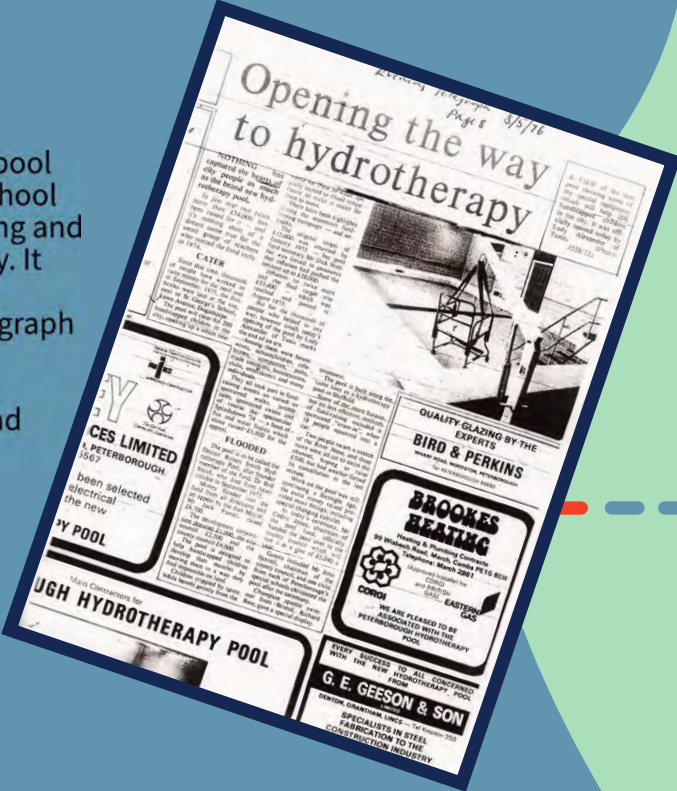




# The Beginnings

1976

The original hydrotherapy pool opens at the St George's School after two years of fundraising and campaigning across the city. It even featured in The Peterborough Evening Telegraph who wrote "Nothing has captured the hearts of city people as much as the brand new hydrotherapy pool."



2004

The pool remained in constant use until 2004 when the school closed. The pool was then used for respite care.



2009

When the pool closed in 2009, a new campaign began. The community was determined to get a hydrotherapy pool for the city to help all those who need it.

Officially Open!

2011

On 23rd March 2011 St George's pool was re-opened by the council for the community, a positive result of all the hard work for the city and the community.



2012



After having making a huge difference for many self-referred patients, in 2012, the pool accepted its first patient funded by the NHS.





2014 brought some tough challenges for the pool. The community campaign to keep the pool open gained 3,600 signatures in just two weeks.



However, the pool pulled through allowing us to host a successful Fundraising Open Day and welcome our 2000th user.



# 2013

# 2014

# 2015

St George's Service Users Rehabilitation Forum (SURF) was changed to St George's Friends and Service Users in 2013. This was so they could better represent the interests of the hydrotherapy pool's customers and raise money to buy vital equipment for the pool making it better for future users.



The team also took part in a sponsored skydive to raise money to buy a defibrillator for the pool.



## Community Power!



In 2015 the pool held a second fundraiser which was once again met with overwhelming generosity from the community. This allowed us to continue to provide a vital service to the community and help improve the lives of many people.





Thanks to the work of the fabulous Network team, St George's Community Hydrotherapy Pool had new showers fitted, improving the experience for all users.

2017 was a challenge for the pool and community when the pool developed a leak and had to close temporarily.



However, between Peterborough City Council and The Friends and Service Users, funds were raised to have the pool relined.



Vivacity took over the management of the pool in 2018. Some exciting new classes and sessions were introduced at the pool. When a new poolside hoist was needed, the Vivacity St George's team took part in the Deepings Raft Race to help raise funds. With the generous support of the local community and especially Goldhay Arts we very quickly reached our target and bought a new hoist.

# 2016

# 2017

# 2018

*Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday!*

This gave us the chance to hold a successful 'Ground Force' volunteer weekend to improve the pool's car park, making it more accessible to everyone.



Furthermore, the Friends and Service Users produced their Health, and evaluative Social Return on Investment (SROI) report. This showed the pool delivered £1,525,000 per year of social-economic value - a return of £16 for every £1.







In 2018, as part of a school project, a group of the pupils of Heltwate St George's School designed and constructed a fabulous new garden area for customers to enjoy.



# Bright Future!

St George's Community Hydrotherapy Pool continues to provide vital hydrotherapy services for the community with the support of the city. We plan to help many more people in future.

## 2019

## 2020

## 2021

# Beautiful Gardens!

2020 brought a different type of challenge for everyone. COVID-19 led the country into a national lockdown and the pool had to close to help keep the community safe. It was hard not being able to provide much needed services for the our users but the community still remained strong.





# Celebrating Ten Splashing Years

With St George's celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2021, the community wanted to wish it a happy birthday. Here you can read all the lovely messages.

Wishing all members of the St George's Hydrotherapy Pool a very happy 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.

With best wishes from Sandie and all at Disability Peterborough



Dear St George's Hydrotherapy Pool,  
No one like myself knows more about the joy that you, as volunteers have brought to hundreds of my patients who I have referred to you over the years. The happiness and relief and healing you bring to others is wonderful and it's for this reason that I wish you and everyone at the pool a very Happy Birthday! Let's take this opportunity to commemorate the wonderful pool and all it does to help so many people in Peterborough and most of all, thank you.

Cllr Shabina Qayyum, Shadow Cabinet Member, Investment and Commercial Interest.

I am really proud to have played my part in the reopening of the hydro-therapy pool 10 years ago. I saw first-hand what a positive difference it made to local people's lives, and what can be achieved when everyone works together. Such was the impact, it led me to working at Cross Keys Homes who support thousands of residents across Peterborough and beyond. I wish everyone involved continued success in delivering such a vital service, and look forward to celebrating the next 10 years of the hydro-therapy pool.

Angela Burrows Former COO for Healthwatch Peterborough and Service Manager, Governance, Legal Services and Compliance for Cross Keys Home



Happy 10th Birthday St George's. I am missing you lots. Hope to see you re-open soon.

Best wishes Andy xx

(Volunteer receptionist for over 8 years!)



I would love to wish the Hydrotherapy Pool a very, very Happy 10th Anniversary. Having been aware of the pool for many years and of the amazing great work and huge health benefits it has provided for local people, my anniversary wish would be for the pool's continued success and longevity for many years to come. Best wishes

Emma Valerio Former Community Liaison Coordinator for John Lewis



Happy Birthday St George's! It is vital this service is not lost for those who need it.

Stewart Francis (back left), Chair of Vivacity



Happy birthday to St George's – such a fantastic local resource for Peterborough. Thanks for the great work you locally.

Matthew Mahabadi Former East Ward Councillor

**When I think of St George's...**

**Sublime, soothing**

**Temperature of the water.**

**Gradually, gently**

**Easing symptoms.**

**Out of the pool**

**Reliable,**

**Generous, often humbling,**

**Enthusiastic**

**Support**

I am thrilled to send birthday wishes to the wonderful St George's Hydrotherapy Pool staff, volunteers and visitors. I remember meeting with the Friends group all those years ago - sharing the importance of hydrotherapy to those in need and determined to bring its wonders and magic to Peterborough's communities. We did good gang. Happy Birthday. X

Leonie McCarthy, CEO Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services



The Peterborough Telegraph has been delighted to feature the marvelous work achieved by the staff and volunteers at St George's Hydrotherapy Pool.

We have championed its great efforts to continue to offer a vital service over the years in the face of many challenges. St George's continues to offer an incredible facility - one we know is treasured by those who use it - and we look forward to supporting the pool and all associated with it in the years to come."

The Peterborough Telegraph





This is a great achievement to celebrate 10 years the hydrotherapy service has been running. It has made a huge difference to patients and residents over many years. Well done to you and the team.

Chas Ryan NHS

I am delighted to have this opportunity to wish St George's Community Pool a very happy tenth birthday. I was a councilor in Park Ward for most of the past decade and had the opportunity to visit the pool on numerous occasions. From the outset I was impressed by the dedication and friendliness of the team working at the pool - both paid staff and volunteers and was always made to feel very welcome.

I know that during its first ten years St George's faced several challenges (often related to funding), I also know they dealt with them with tenacity and good humour and it is to everyone's credit that the pool is still flourishing in 2021. Well done to all concerned. I look forward to visiting again, post Covid, and enjoying your company and cakes, but most of all to witness the joy on the faces of the pool's users.

Happy birthday and here's to the next ten years.

John Shearman (left), former councilor for Park Ward



Congratulations to such a wonderful, invaluable facility and community. Our city is so fortunate to have St. George's. Here's to a bright future for hydrotherapy in Peterborough - keep up the amazing work that you do!

Richard Ferris (right) former Park Ward Councillor



Jade's joyful journal page celebrating the big day!

As both Katia and I live, literally, just around the corner from the pool, I vividly recall it opening 10 years ago. But it took another eight years and being elected as councilors for Dogsthorpe ward before we darkened its doors. Katia and I both agreed that our only regret was taking so long to discover the warmth, both of its welcome and the pool! We not only contributed from our Councilor Leadership Funds we also promoted it in our ward in our very next newsletter. Only Covid has stopped us going back to this little gem right on our doorstep. So, to Karen and all the staff and users; wishing St George's a happy anniversary or 10th birthday - you decide. Katia and I just feel proud and privileged to have such a wonderful facility so close at hand. Very many thanks for the service you provide and here's to another ten years!

CLlr Dennis Jones and CLlr Katia Yurgutene for Dogsthorpe Ward



Happy Birthday St George's think of eh difference you have made for so many people over the past 10 years. Wishing you well for the next ten!  
Former NHS CEO

Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday! 10 years of serving the community and changing so many lives. Thankful and proud to have been part of this journey. May this first 10 years be the first of many more.  
Jade Bell Lifeguard

St George's Pool, ten years passed, thousands helped. May it continue for many more. A big congratulations from CLlr Barkham, Paston & Walton Team.

St George's is a vital service for many. My wife was a regular user and so I know it well. My congratulations on your 'birthday' and sincere thanks to Karen and its supporters for all you do.

CLlr David Seaton, Cabinet Member for Finance

Happy 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. Me and the rest of the staff are looking forward to being back when it is safe to do so.  
Ben Beeby Lifeguard



Over the years both as a local elected councilor and local resident I've always tried to help with fundraising and activities at St George's pool. It is great to see that we are now celebrating our 10th anniversary and look forward to the pool reopening again and welcoming back its many users.

John Peach (right), former councilor for Park Ward



Happy 10<sup>th</sup> birthday to St George's Hydrotherapy Pool. All of us at Goldhay Arts are very excited be part of your birthday celebrations even though we cannot physically be there with you but hope to see you all soon. "A huge well done to all of you who have been instrumental in keeping the pool going for 10 years and we wish you all the best for the next 10 years to come. Keep up the great work! Lots of love and best wishes.

All at Goldhay Arts



Wow 10 years, well done to all concerned I know it has been a struggle. I thank your committee for keeping St George's in the public eye. Whilst I am retiring from the council I wish you every success for another 10 years.

CLlr John Holdich OBE (far left), Leader of Peterborough City Council





Happy Birthday to St George's. I have been visiting you for many years now as photographer with the Peterborough Telegraph. When I get poolside my camera always recognises the warmth in the building and mists up. I always recognise the warmth of the people who run the place, who are always happy and welcoming AND serve the best tea and CAKES in the city. Congratulations to all the friends and volunteers for keeping the pool open to your swimmers and thank you all for the time and effort you give to St George's. May it long continue. Regards

David Lowndes (far left), Freelance Photographer



Image credit: Peterborough Telegraph

My best wishes to St George's Users, Friends and well-wishers on this 10th 'birthday'. I have been delighted over the years in my official capacity on Peterborough City Council to be invited to various events at St George's and have the opportunity to meet some truly wonderful people. I sincerely hope, and will do everything I can, to support initiatives that mean hydrotherapy can be available well into the future.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ST GEORGE'S!!

Cllr Irene (left), Cabinet Member for Communities

Sending all best 10th birthday wishes to everyone who has benefited from St George's. I remember well my first visit all that time ago and how you've tirelessly worked since then to keep it running Karen. Well done you! Most sincere best wishes,

Cllr Peter Hiller (left), Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning



The hydrotherapy pool is essential for people with mobility problems and is a great asset to Peterborough. I am proud to have been associated with them over the years and am fully supportive of what they do and their aims and achievements and look forward to a good future for them.

We have to keep supporting it as best we can and look for ways to improve it - either a big, new location or a couple of locations. They're doing a tremendous job.

Cllr John Fox

As ward councillors we want to take this opportunity to wish St George's a very happy 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. We know first-hand the great work Karen and her team do. Not only are we proud to have St George's in our ward, but we also always support the centre, because we know the huge difference it makes to people's lives. Here's to the next ten years and beyond. We want to thank Karen and her team for their dedication and commitment and wish them all the best.

Cllrs Nawaz, Joseph and Yasin Park Ward



Congratulations to everyone at St George's for providing 10 years of community hydrotherapy. Everyone deserves the opportunity to be physically active in a way that feels good. St George's certainly delivers this and so much more, including vital health and well-being improvements. It is much-loved facility of which Peterborough should be proud. Here's to the next 10 years and beyond.

Karen Oldale, St George's Friends and Service Users' Lead

Happy Birthday to everyone at St George's!

You are a unique, much-needed facility and loved by many people in and around the city. Healthwatch Peterborough has been a big supporter from the early days. So here's to your next decade, and a proper celebration once lockdown lifts.

Sandie Smith, CEO Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



Happy "Birthday" to St Georges!! Our Kiddies loved coming to the Hydrotherapy pool every Saturday morning before the big lockdowns happened. You helped so many of our children who have serious additional needs and life-limiting conditions. They cannot wait to get back in the pool which helped them relax and unwind with their loved ones whilst helping with their underlying condition.

All our love and best wishes from the staff, volunteers and families at Little Miracles xx

Michelle King CEO



Happy 10th Year to St George's Hydrotherapy Pool. This is a wonderful facility, and its worth to the users group, and the valuable health, pain relief and rehabilitation benefits were proven by the happy faces of the users I witnessed on a recent visit.

My message to management & staff - keep up the good work.

Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing Culture and Recreation

"The benefits of hydrotherapy has been in its ability to help so many people with so many long term and short term medical problems. It has also provided a great sense of community spirit and belonging to so many clients. Happy birthday, let's hope the pool continues till it can receive a birthday message from the Queen."

Pat Baker, Aquatic Physiotherapist

Autism Peterborough would like to send our congratulations to St George's Hydrotherapy pool on your 10th Birthday. You do an amazing job. Hoping you will be able to open safely very soon.

St George's Community Hydrotherapy Pool would like to thank everyone who has supported them over the last ten years, from fundraisers to volunteers and beyond. The people are the heart of the pool. St George's plans to keep helping people improve their health and wellbeing in the local community for many years to come. We look forward to celebrating many more birthdays with everyone in the future.



We're now in double figures! –  
aged 10, and going strong,  
*we've* seen it all, and had great fun  
as the years have raced along.

What a decade we have had,  
it's been a bumpy ride  
but, with pluck and courage,  
*we've* swum against the tide.

We've soldiered on, determined,  
strong-willed, *we've* kept afloat,  
the secret of our buoyancy  
is surely worth a note –

for *we've* become a family,  
spurred on by mutual zeal.  
Encouragement, and a common goal  
keeps us on an *even* keel.

Ideas for this, and plans for that,  
and much creative stuff  
have kept our spirits lifted  
when the going has been tough.

We've done exercise, aerobics,  
swimming, chilling out,  
*we've* chatted, sung, relaxed, laughed,  
made friends – without a doubt.

The pool has been our sunshine,  
the highlight of our weeks,  
it's soothed our stress and worries,  
and eased our pain and creaks.

Thanks to ALL who make it work,  
and volunteers and staff  
for all your help and friendliness  
and our lovely big, hot bath!

The success is in the teamwork,  
and this haven makes us feel  
that we are loved and valued  
as we smile and laugh and heal.

Three Cheers for 'St George's Friends'  
without you, we'd sink for sure.  
Because of your commitment,  
there are more good times in store.

We look forward to the next 10 years,  
of that there is no doubt.  
We'll soon be reunited  
and free to float about.

And Thank You our supporters  
for your generous cheques and cash.  
You've helped us grow and blossom, and  
*we've* really made a SPLASH!

Happy  
Birthday St  
George's By  
Sue Moore





# Bubbling Reviews

A fantastic place that me and my son wouldn't want to be without. It has improved my son's muscle tone, co-ordination and confidence in the water. St George's is a lifeline for many people and is vital for the community.



Hydro gives me a temporary pain free time and I can move my lower joints in the pool but can't do the things that I do in the pool on land. It is a relaxing friendly atmosphere, the staff are so helpful. I go home supple, relaxed and stress free. I would really miss it if I was not able to go.

Has helped me build up muscle strength and improve mobility.

People are understanding and helpful and non-judgmental.



Allows me to do exercise that I would not be able to do otherwise. I travel 25 miles to use the pool, as there is not one nearer. It is worth the journey! I consider it to be a valuable place and it contributes to keeping me mobile and able to have a better quality of life.



Not only has the pool helped my well-being. But it is clear that all users benefit.







It gives me the gentle exercise I need to keep as fit as possible. Other exercise classes are too much for me. Hydrotherapy is the only exercise I can manage from which I benefit greatly. The warm water eases joint pain. The aqua fit exercises build muscle strength.



Hydrotherapy provides an opportunity to exercise and improve mobility which "dry land" exercise opportunities do not offer me.



Hydrotherapy gives my service user a chance to access a swimming pool in a controlled and an un-overwhelming environment and with a strong staff team with a lot of patience for him. It creates a relaxing environment without the need and stress of rushing about.



Love coming and meeting people, it is relaxing and I feel good afterwards



Since I started attending St George's I have noticed such a reduction in pain.



My son loves coming to St George's because the water is warm and he finds other pool large and intimidating. Having smaller groups has helped him to become more confident in the water. He has a better weekend and copes better at school /more attentive when he has been to St George's.



St George's helps me as it helps me relax. I can have a dance in the pool when the music is on too. I do have autism so being at St George's swimming pool calms my anxiety.

The social interaction improves mental health.

# **St George's Community Hydrotherapy Pool**

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**[www.hydrotherapypeterborough.com](http://www.hydrotherapypeterborough.com)**