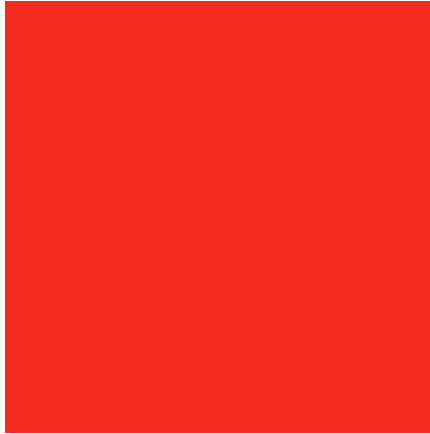




# st george's

## Impact Report 2023-24

# St George's works with:



Empowering Local Communities Grant



Affordable. Flexible. Fair.



Investing in a fairer Wakefield district



TURNING POINT



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## Foreword

It's great to be able to introduce our latest Impact Report. As you read it you will begin to understand the ways in which we have worked with and for so many people in our communities in 2023/24.

There's something good about what we do at St George's. It involves commitment, passion and care; it's about making a difference in our community, and I feel that we have done that again during this past year. So much is down to the dedication of our trustees, staff and volunteers and as you read through this report you will begin to recognise just what has been achieved.

At the end of the 2023/24 year, we applied to be considered at the Wakefield Business Awards as Charity of the Year. In the event we were successful, and it was very encouraging to have our hard work recognized in this way.

I'm grateful to everyone who has supported and been part of our work, and that includes the important contributions of our many partners. So, if you're tempted by what you read, why don't you drop into our Centre, experience what goes on for yourself, meet people, chat with them and see if you too might like to become part of our project? You won't regret it. I'll look out for you.

*Mike*

Mike Holt  
Chair of the Board of Trustees

## Key takeaways

This year, like many in our community, we rose to the challenge of trying to do more with less.

With the ongoing cost of living crisis, changes in government affecting funding and challenges with staffing St George's has been working extra hard to provide services, activities, courses and more for local people.

It's not been smooth sailing all the way, but we're proud to work with our partners, staff, volunteers and community members to make a difference in Lupset, West Wakefield and beyond.

Whatever the challenges, we know St George's has a positive role to play in our neighbourhood.

The impact we make helps fuel our determination to be here for people in good times and bad. Our community's involvement, donations, encouragement, and thanks are truly appreciated.



St George's offers a place for people of all ages to meet people and get involved. Our aim is that wherever you are at in life, whatever circumstance puts you in touch with us, there will be a way we can help you feel happy, welcome and part of something.

# Starting out strong

Our early years play a key part in our development, and St George's knows that little ones need a variety of support and experiences to make the most of these formative years.

## Under-fives sessions

We run a number of term-time groups for the under-fives, including weekly Baby Weigh and Play sessions and short course groups like Baby Massage and Maternal Journal.

These sessions offer local parents and carers free and low-cost opportunities to support their little one, meet other people and learn about local opportunities.

## Oral Health

St George's also lead on the Wakefield District Oral Health Champion Programme and Supervised Tooth Brushing Scheme in nurseries. We distribute funding, training and support.

Our aim is to reduce risk factors for tooth decay in under-fives. In Wakefield 1 in 4 local children have tooth decay, and 1 in 4 of those children will need general anaesthetic to remove teeth as a result.

We currently have 50 nurseries signed up to the scheme. To find out more about the scheme and how to get involved please contact Diane Pert [dpert@stgeorgeslupset.org.uk](mailto:dpert@stgeorgeslupset.org.uk).





Want to find out more about our nurseries? Scan the QR code (right) or follow us at



St George's Childcare

## Childcare

Our four nurseries offer high-quality childcare for local families, with St Swithun's receiving an Outstanding Ofsted report in April 2024. The report praised the "warm, welcoming and safe environment" and the "rich and varied range of activities and experiences" provided.

Parents tell us they value being able to stay in employment thanks to our service. They also appreciate the opportunity it brings to meet new people and develop new skills.

Our child has made lovely bonds with you and he is happier to be alongside other children. You gave me more confidence in his move to school and moving onto his next step in life.



212 staff training courses completed 2023-24



Over 20,000 lunches cooked at Broadway + Sandal



50 local nurseries are signed up to our oral health scheme



3125 local children have been supported with toothbrushing

# Childhood experiences

Our Young Futures team aims to offer a friendly and supportive space distinct from school or home. Whatever a young person's school or home life looks like we provide opportunities for fun, new experiences and self-development.



## Activities in term-time and the school holidays

Our Young Futures team offer activities for children and young people aged 5-25.

Their term-time sessions include Tech Zones for getting online, Youth Cafes, live music events plus outreach.

They also run sessions in school holidays as part of the District-wide Happy Healthy Holidays scheme.

Coming here has helped my granddaughter to realise there is life outside school and the fact that others can be kind instead of being cruel.



1 in 5  
local children  
live in poverty



We ran 196 term-  
time sessions for  
children this year



We supported 350  
children over the  
school year



139 families  
attended activities in  
the school holidays

Great activities and days out for families. Staff are friendly + welcoming and make you feel valued.

Want to find out what activities our Young Futures team are running at the moment?



Scan the QR code (right) or get in touch on



01924 330266 (Monday - Friday)



## Finding our own rhythm

A stand out event this year was our popular monthly youth café discos, which ran January-March 2024. We had an amazing 87 different people get to show us their talent.

This actually led to one young man creating his own YouTube channel and performing at the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction event in September. We proudly watched his performance alongside a diverse audience, including the Mayor of West Yorkshire!

Our younger children were not left out either - 69 of them attended their own disco event. They loved the party challenges and putting their dancing shoes on!



100% of children said Young Futures helps them stay active



74% said they learnt new things with us



78% of children said joining in lets them help others



77% said they felt listened to by others

# Transitioning into adulthood

As we move into adulthood, it can be challenging to adapt to new responsibilities, expectations or routines.

The Future SELPH project offers mental health and wellbeing support for 16-25 year olds in Wakefield as they navigate this new stage of life.

## How we can help:



Future SELPH welcomed 135 new young people



On average there are 114 young people using the service



Our team provided 3511 one-to-one sessions this year



In 2023-24 there were 588 total group attendances

I've recommended Future SELPH to lots of my friends because of how content I am with the service I have received.

### Want to find out more?

Scan the QR code or visit [linktr.ee/future-selph](https://linktr.ee/future-selph) for our timetable, referrals + more.



### Support to meet your goals

Our team in West Wakefield offer 1-2-1 support and optional groups.

1-2-1s are the backbone of our service, offering a non-judgemental space to talk, be heard and get support. Our team work with each individual to set goals and encourage them each step of the way.

People of all ages can find it difficult to navigate where they need to go when they are struggling, especially when they need a diverse range of support. Our team can guide young people to the right services and assist with referrals as needed.

The groups are build around young people's needs and interests. We've done all sorts, from Dungeons and Dragons to Budgeting, walking groups to Neuro Link (a social for neurodivergent people), Adulting 101 to boxing.

It's amazing to see where this takes people. For example, the art and crafts group have exhibited their work a number of times locally.



22 young people have been supported into employment



12 of our young people entered further education



We helped 19 young people positively change their housing status



14 of our young people started volunteering

# Responsive services

As the UK officially entered recession at the beginning of 2024, economic reporting matched the reality many in our communities have known for some time – our money is having to stretch further than it ever has.



## Food provision

St George's provides emergency food parcels and runs a food pantry service. Food parcels can be provided in an emergency situation.

Our Food Pantry membership scheme provides longer term support. Members pay £5 per week and can choose items from our store.

The money members save compared to a normal shop can then be spent on whatever they wish, such as paying off a debt or getting ahead with bills.

100% of those surveyed this year agreed that our food provision has not only saved them money, but also provided them with emotional and practical support.

## Information and support

St George's is 1 of 8 community hubs across the District, offering support with the cost of living locally.

Help at the Hub centres offer help with money, debt, energy bills, housing, jobs and skills and more. We do this through drop-in sessions with local organisations.

This year we have recorded a total of 1013 attendances across these sessions.



Providing  
emergency food  
parcels by referral



Food pantry  
memberships for  
longer term support



100% agree our food  
provision has saved  
them money



100% said our food  
provision offers  
quality products

## St George's continues to be responsive to local need, listening to our community and local partners as well as national conversations.

Many of the people who find us come looking for help with managing changes in life circumstances. This could be anything from the breakdown of a relationship to the loss of a job. Our support services can help people navigate the practical issues arising from such changes.



### Household support

The Prosper Together Fund offers people in need the opportunity to receive goods and support through a simple form they can complete with a referrer. The fund supports households that are not currently in crisis but could be soon due to lack of financial resilience + unexpected changes to their circumstances.

Our panel saw 45 applications from people experiencing a variety of challenging circumstances, particularly those fleeing domestic violence, experiencing mental health issues, living with disabilities and/ or those with caring responsibilities.

Many of the people applying were in receipt of Universal Credit, PIP or on low incomes, who struggled with unexpected costs such as broken white goods.

Numerous applicants referenced the cost of living crisis and it's impact on their ability to manage an emergency or unplanned expense.

While we are glad the respondents felt the fund can make a “massive difference”, it is a sad reality for our community that such funds are needed to ensure they have liveable homes and other essentials.



This year we had  
1013 attendances at  
Help at the Hub



659 Household Support  
Fund vouchers  
accessed with our help



90 Step-Up  
Employability  
drop-ins this year



45 applications  
received for the  
Prosper Together fund

# Reconnecting to the community

In recent years St George's has been involved in a number of projects across West Wakefield aimed at connecting people to their local community.

## HomeTime+

The HomeTime+ project supported adults aged 18+ living within the Wakefield District who had recently been discharged from hospital to access support within the community.

St George's worked with Age UK Wakefield, MHA Pontefract and Rycroft Leisure, Ryhill to deliver this service.

The aim of this support was to help people regain and maintain independence through community connection.

Our team took a person-centred approach with each client, moving at their pace and meeting them however was convenient (phone calls, home visits, meeting in the community).



I wasn't sure if it was for me [but] with the help I've had from here I've got my confidence back and I love it!

Maureen, HomeTime+  
(pictured top left)



HomeTime+ worked with a total of 68 clients



11% of HomeTime+ clients had no support from family or friends



CHAT supported a total of 42 clients



1/5 of CHAT clients had a disability or long-term condition

Want to find out more?  
Scan the QR code or get in touch!



It was really helpful to have someone to offload concerns to and to talk through problems and possible solutions.



## CHAT

The CHAT (Change, Hope and Transition) project ran April 2023 – March 2024. It supported people who were experiencing low-level mental health difficulties such as low mood, anxiety or depression.

Many of these individuals were struggling while on waiting lists for other support. Often, they had been through or were going through significant life changes, such as relationship breakdown, bereavement or health issues.



I've met a group of new people in a craft group and have started to knit again. I also met a volunteer, who has now become my friend.

## Community Connector

The learning from these projects has helped us improve and refine our offer. This vital work to connect people with their communities continues through our pilot project Connect West Wakefield.



This is a developing service open to locals in the West Wakefield area aged 18+. Our Community Connector Kathryn (pictured left) offers practical and emotional support focused on an individual's goals.



Aims to reduce isolation and loneliness



Helps people to increase their confidence + resilience



Person-centred, focused on your goals



Flexible, accessible options for support

# Enriching adult life

St George's doesn't just support adults facing difficult changes in life, we are also here to help people improve and maintain a good quality of life. We do this through offering a community space for people to gather, running our volunteer programme and organising courses and activities.



## The community centre

Our community centre offers a friendly and welcoming space with free wi-fi, a book exchange, toy and games library, litter pick equipment hire and more on site.

Our community café is a popular spot for locals and professionals alike to meet and enjoy good quality food and drink at reasonable prices. Our community centre also offers room and minibus hire to local organisations.



Sometimes it's good to know the place is there -  
an open door and somewhere to feel welcome.



Access free wi-fi at  
our community  
centre



5 rooms of various  
sizes are available  
to hire



Our community café  
is open weekdays  
9am-2pm



A toy and games  
library is here for  
children to enjoy



## Want to find out what courses we're running at the moment?

Scan the QR code (right), visit [stgeorgeslupset.org.uk/courses](https://stgeorgeslupset.org.uk/courses) or get in touch on:



01924 369631 (Monday - Friday)



## Adult education courses

We offered a variety of professional and accredited courses across the year. This included CSCS, Essential Digital Skills, FLT (Forklift Truck), Paediatric First Aid, SIA Security and Support Work in Schools.

Utilising professional links and volunteer skills allowed us to host a variety of hobby courses as well, such as Aromatherapy, Cooking and Company, Crafts, Hairdressing, Everyday English, Yoga and Zumba.



Across those completing courses with us in 2023-24, it was clear that people gained more from them than they initially thought. For example, prior to attending, 29% of people hoped it would increase their confidence. 65% said they felt more confident after taking their course. Of the same group, 30% felt the course would teach them new skills before attending. After attending the course at St George's 74% of people said they had learnt new skills.



We offered over 25 courses this year



165 people completed accredited courses



Over 50 individuals came to hobby courses



100% agreed we offer high quality courses

## Social groups

The cornerstones of our adult social groups offer are long-running sessions like our weekly Coffee Mornings, Singing for Fun, Chair Exercise, Thursday Leisure Club (TLC), and Friday Lunch Club. This year we trialled other socials including Monday meet-ups, weekday litter picks, plus Games Group and Book Club which were led by a volunteer who then went on to take over facilitating the TLC sessions.

Short-term wellbeing groups and workshops were also offered over the year, including Card Making, Fakeaway Masterclasses, Line Dancing, Recipe in a Bag, and Reiki. We consulted with the community about what activities they would like to see us run, and used this information to develop this range of activities, groups and workshops. Many were funded through the Know Your Neighbourhood grant from the National Lottery Community Fund.

We were also able to fund our minibus to take people who attend groups at St George's on day trips, including to museums, the theatre and garden centres. Our community fundays which ran throughout the year were also funded by Know Your Neighbourhood and Our Year 2024. These activities were attended by individuals who already use our services and people who were new to St George's.



I come to Chair Exercise which I enjoy, it does me good. I meet other people and Chris (the session lead) makes it very pleasant.

Want to find out what groups and events are coming up?



Scan the QR code above.



This year we had 817 attendances at adult socials



We served 632 meals this year at our Lunch Club



4 new groups were supported by volunteers



Around 600 people attended our community fundays

## Volunteering

Whether people need work experience, a productive way to spend time in their retirement or a reason to get out of the house, volunteers get back more than what they put in!

Many have used our services or come to sessions as attendees before they decide to volunteer with us. They know that just as there are times when they need support or a friendly face, there are times when they are needed to be that for someone else.

Our volunteers are key to our success, sharing their invaluable skills, passion and lived experience with the community. This summer saw the end of our three-year Lupset Inspiring Volunteer Engagement (LIVE) project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Our volunteer coordinator now developing the next stage of our volunteer programme, building on LIVE's success.

Want to find out more about volunteering with us?

Scan the QR code (right) or get in touch using the details on the back page.



St Georges has given me a purpose and has empowered me to share my passion as a volunteer.



We supported 75 volunteers across 2023-24



Volunteers gave 110 hours to support our events



Over 15 volunteer training sessions were completed



100% of volunteers felt supported + able to get help if needed

# Here for you

This could be the story of any number of people who visit St George's, and many be familiar to many of you reading it.

Julia has used St George's on and off since moving to Lupset 10 years ago.

When finances were tight, she signed up to the Food Pantry; volunteers directed her to the DWP drop-in service, who supported her to ensure she was claiming everything she was entitled to.

She has also attended a variety of our wellbeing activities for adults over the years, which have given her the opportunity to get out of the house and meet new people.

She has signed up to some of our courses in the past too, which allowed her to learn some new skills and gave her confidence a boost. She also comes to St George's for support with accessing her Household Support Vouchers.

Sometimes, Julia doesn't attend St George's for months.

However, Julia knows we are here for her, whether this be to find some additional support from one of our services, have a cuppa and a chat in our café, or to try something new.



## Looking forward

St George's work is needed more than ever so we're engaging with our community and partners to keep up-to-date with local issues.

We know there are likely to be further changes to the funding landscape, and further cuts to services as the national financial outlook remains poor. We have worked with Good Fundraising to ensure we are keeping our offer sustainable and remaining active in response to our communities' needs.

Given the increased pressures to local households we are also reviewing our offer as employers, including embedding wellbeing practices and support, improving ourselves as Disability Confident Employers and look towards being certified Real Living Wage Employers. This recruitment and retainment plan aims to ensure St George's remains an employer of choice.

A unique, supportive and caring environment  
which empowers individuals in the  
local community.





## Closing remarks

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with pride and appreciation. This impact report is more than a summary of achievements—it is evidence to the power of community action, kindness, and commitment to our purpose.

Every number, every story, and every milestone shared in this report represents lives touched, confidence restored, and futures transformed.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible work of our staff and volunteers, not forgetting our funders and partners.

While we celebrate these successes, we are aware of the ongoing challenges faced by communities. But with the continued support of local people, partners, and funders we are confident in our ability to meet these challenges head on.

Together, we are not just making an impact - St George's is providing happy, welcoming spaces where local people can feel part of something.

Berni

Berni O'Brien  
Chief Executive Officer

st george's

# We want YOU!



We are looking for enthusiastic and reliable people to join us as volunteers and Trustees!

If you're feeling inspired after reading our Impact Report, why not talk to us about sharing your skills, experience or interests with the local community?

We offer:

- Training and support to develop in your volunteer role,
- Regular coffee mornings and catch-ups,
- Cover for reasonable expenses e.g. refreshments, travel costs.

To find out more please contact Keri on 01924 369631, email [kmoore@stgeorgeslupset.org.uk](mailto:kmoore@stgeorgeslupset.org.uk), or scan the QR code for current vacancies.



**FEEL HAPPY,  
WELCOME + PART  
OF SOMETHING**



**st george's**

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