

THE CRESSET, PETERBOROUGH - Opened in March 1978

The name 'Cresset' refers to a basket of fire kept continuously alight and placed at the focal point of a medieval community. Around it, people gathered for their meetings and discussions; from it, they took fire to their own homes to provide heat and light. Like its namesake, The Cresset was designed to sit at the heart of the community, offering a wide range of services for local residents and visitors to Peterborough. Over 40 years after opening its doors, it remains true to the original ethos of inclusion and community.



The unique concept for The Cresset – a community hub at the heart of Bretton, the first new township of Greater Peterborough – was devised in the 1970s by Sir Harold Haywood. The Cresset was developed and built by multiple organisations, including Peterborough City Council, Peterborough Development Corporation, Cambridgeshire County Council and several voluntary organisations. 1978 saw the official opening of this unique community complex by HM The Queen on 22nd March. The Queen attended with Prince Philip and toured the building, meeting staff, volunteers and clients before unveiling a commemorative plaque in The Cresset reception.

The ambitious plans for the building included a library, youth club, theatre, **sports facilities**, day care centre, events venues and a church, as well as over 70 flats managed by YMCA. 40 years on, many of these services are still in operation. The Cresset Theatre is Peterborough's foremost multi-purpose venue, playing host to an exciting and diverse mix of live entertainment community activities, corporate and private events. It showcases the best live music, comedy, theatre, children's and family shows, special events and exhibitions and has a thriving community programme offers activities for all ages. This includes dance and drama classes and community workshops, and function suites. The Cresset has plenty of parking on-site, shops and a pub/restaurant – all under one roof

The Cresset is completely self-funding but in 2014 it merged with what is now YMCA Trinity Group which has secured the future of the building and organisation. On 12th August 2018, to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of The Queen opening the doors, it invited the people of Peterborough to a big Cresset birthday party bash, with free tea and cake for all! There were performances from The X-Factor star Nicole Lawrence, Goldhay Arts and The U3A Ukulele Band as well as speeches from VIP guests.