

Hot Walls & Camber Dock Restorative Support Group

Terms of Reference

Project Background

From May Bank Holiday all through the summer, Southsea Seafront attracts thousands of visitors. Over the years there have been a range of problems with groups of young people congregating around the Hotwalls, Victoria Pier, and the Camber Dock and jumping into the sea. Despite the risk of serious injury, the risk and excitement of this activity continues to draw young people from across the city, and from further afield. It is reportedly seen as a generational 'rite of passage' and is likely to continue despite attempts to stop it.

The presence of large groups of young people, often drinking and smoking, also generates considerable anxiety and sometimes fear in older residents and some business owners in Old Portsmouth. They expect someone to do something to reassure and protect them. This is a complex perennial problem that affects not only the residents of the surrounding area but also the local traders, fishermen, holiday makers, visitors and indeed the young people themselves.

Conflict between generations and sweeping statements that paint all young people in a negative light is not a new phenomenon. Anecdotally, police colleagues report young people are generally polite when approached and just want to know what they can do and where. Risk taking behaviour is part of growing up, but resident's concerns for the safety of young people can generate high emotions.

Balancing the needs of young people against the concerns of residents and businesses is tricky. Diverting, containing, or moderating the behaviour of a small group of young people has been the subject of many multi-agency meetings and discussions. Operation Nautical, currently led by police, has evolved from previous multi-agency groups in response to these perennial problems, and alongside this, other recent work has been undertaken; for example, local charity Motiv8 have worked with the staff from PCC's Cultural Services for several years to mitigate the impact of anti-social behaviour and have delivered 'de-escalation' sessions to local businesses to help positive communication with those involved. Hampshire Police have also funded an organisation called Mutual Gain to run a participatory budgeting event in the area.

In April 2022, Portsmouth City Council commissioned the Portsmouth Mediation Service to develop a long-term restorative plan for the Old Portsmouth area. The work will run over at least 12 months and will involve relationship building, restorative training and meetings between community members, police, and hopefully young people. This work will be supported by Motiv8, the police, Portsmouth Youth and Play Service, Street Pastors, and others. It is hoped that it will be possible to identify individual young people who would be willing to meet and talk with some of the residents who are/have been most affected.

This work supports the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy 'Positive Relationships' theme and the City Vison's priorities as well as three of the Police and Crime

Commissioner's priorities: tackling anti-social behaviour, preventing young people from committing crime and improved outcomes for victims.

There are many different voices and opinions in this complicated situation, however increasingly there is a growing consensus that we cannot police or patrol our way out of these annual difficulties.

Project Objectives

The following from the Portsmouth City Council Health & Well Being Strategy captures the central vision of the Hotwalls & Camber Dock Restorative Support Group:

Positive Relationships in Safer Communities

Connectedness with each other, family and community underpin many positive outcomes. We call this social capital. Evidence shows that communities with high levels of social connectedness have longer and happier lives and are less dependent on public services. Relational capital – the positive relationships we have with those around us – underpins social capital.

Our approach is to enable people to develop their own relational capital to help address many of the biggest challenges we face, and this will underpin many areas covered by this strategy. For example, we know that people who experience trauma – in childhood and adulthood – struggle to develop and maintain positive relationships and connectedness due to what is known as 'blocked trust'. Restorative approaches, including listening to people's stories about how the way services are run affects them, are a key part of addressing this.

Restorative skills need to be embedded across the board, in our services and our communities. The work of Portsmouth Mediation Service, including with tenants and landlords, in education settings and with the community, show the value of applying relational approaches upstream – supporting the strategy's overall aim to enable people to thrive.

Portsmouth Health and Wellbeing Strategy, January 2022, p.26
<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/transparency/health-and-wellbeing-strategy/>

The key objectives of the Restorative Support Group are

To help coordinate, communicate, implement, and embed a long-term Restorative Plan for The Hotwalls & Camber Dock.

This plan includes

1. Ongoing engagement and positive relationship building with the local community, businesses, and other stakeholders
2. Helping facilitate ongoing opportunities for forums and meetings where local people can be heard and are motivated to help become part of new ideas and solutions.

3. Help foster new partnerships that facilitate communication and understanding between the various different opinions and agendas
4. Provision of training that envisions and equips the local community and young people with a personal restorative tool kit which can help strengthen relationships and prevent conflict from breaking out and escalating.
5. Facilitating community circles and restorative meetings
6. Identifying the institutions that some of the young people attend and working directly with schools, colleges and youth services to help build understanding and trust.
7. Working with local police and law enforcement to help keep people from being expelled from family and community by referring individual cases for restorative interventions

In addition to the above, The Restorative Support Group will source and apply for funding to ensure the sustainability of cultural change towards a restorative neighbourhood.

It will also seek to grow its membership with new skills and knowledge by recruiting key people who act as centres of influence connected to the community of Old Portsmouth.

Role/Purpose

The role of the Restorative Support Group is to support the collaborative leadership necessary to ensure the key objectives of the restorative plan outlined above are achieved

Term

This Terms of Reference is effective from 01/04/22 and will be reviewed annually as necessary or when it is terminated by agreement of its members.

Membership

The Hotwalls & Camber Dock Restorative Support Group will initially comprise representatives from each of the following organisations and agencies:

- Portsmouth City Council (elected members and officers inc. Hotwalls & Seafront Management)
- Portsmouth Mediation Service
- Motiv8
- PCC Play & Youth Service
- Friends of Old Portsmouth
- Representative from Spice Island Association
- Neighbourhood Police Team

Other organisations and partners will be encouraged to join as the project unfolds and develops. It is also envisaged that the Support Group will co-opt associate members who bring special skills and knowledge where this is needed.

Meetings

Chaired by a representative from Portsmouth City Council or The Portsmouth Mediation Service and held in a location within Old Portsmouth

February to end of September - Two meetings every month

October to February - One meeting every month