

# Seeking the Peace & Prosperity of a Restorative Portsmouth



Portsmouth Mediation Service (PMS) and Portsmouth Children's Trust Restorative Practice Steering Group (PCT) have over recent years been at the forefront of a city-wide vision to see Portsmouth become established as a Restorative City.

In April 2019 PMS and PCT collaborated in promoting and hosting the first restorative conference in Portsmouth. The event was a huge success revealing how many people in the various spheres of city life had caught hold of a vision with the potential to transform Portsmouth. This movement of restorative champions and ambassadors continues to grow within the various communities of the city – ordinary people seeking an extraordinary peace and prosperity for Portsmouth.

There is now huge momentum towards the big idea of a restorative city and a real sense that we are entering a chapter where the vision will go wider and deeper. This document seeks to put more flesh on the bones of the vision – it's by no means a finished piece. We hope it will help to envision and inspire many more Portsmouth citizens and help trigger fresh thinking and new ideas along the way.



## Restorative Portsmouth

**Vision** A 'Restorative Portsmouth' is a city where citizens have been equipped with restorative skills that help build and strengthen positive relationships and who share a vision of building a restorative city – where restorative approaches are adopted and practised across every sphere of city life, helping to reduce crime and conflict and preventing people from being excluded from family and community.

**Why?** The cost of everyday conflict and division is huge in Portsmouth, and it is unnecessary. Not just in terms of the economy, but also because of the impact on the emotional and physical wellbeing of its citizens. The benefits of a Restorative City are peace and prosperity on a hitherto unknown scale.

**Who?** Participants and beneficiaries of a Restorative City include Portsmouth residents/citizens, employers/employees and visitors to the city.

Some of the organisations involved:

- ❖ **Portsmouth Mediation Service** – Restorative vision and provision of highly skilled in restorative justice, practice and approaches
- ❖ **Portsmouth City Council** – Restorative vision and corporate support
- ❖ **Portsmouth Foodcycle** – Helping to feed hungry people is a pre-requisite of any Restorative City
- ❖ **Solent NHS**
- ❖ **University of Portsmouth**
- ❖ **Portsmouth Education Partnership**

### **What? Building Restorative Communities**

The principles of restorative approaches will be embedded in everyday life and all citizens will be given the opportunity to develop the skills they need to be restorative in everything they do. Every aspect of life in the city will be included – families, schools, housing, community safety, businesses, health, local government and faith communities.

The following values and principles will be adopted by all.

- Unconditional positive regard
- Identifying both needs and responsibilities
- Safety
- Voluntarism
- Neutrality
- Doing with not doing to
- Accessibility
- Restoration of relationships

We will work with families, adults, parents and guardians to embed these principles and values into everyday life.



We will also work with:

- ❖ **children** as part of their education creating a restorative school community;
- ❖ **young people** as they progress through further education;
- ❖ **local charities** supporting the vulnerable in the community;
- ❖ **organisations** reviewing their staff conduct, grievance and disciplinary processes, focusing on ensuring such processes are restorative.

We will introduce a 'tool kit' of skills into every sphere of life in the city, creating opportunities to enhance everyday living. This will give everyone the opportunity to use restorative approaches every day. We will create a new generation of restorative practitioners who will positively communicate this ethos where they live, where they work and when they visit other cities.

For those who have perhaps not made the right choices in the past, this approach will reduce the need for a punitive response and increase the chances of repairing the harm that has been caused. Restorative approaches also reduce the demand on statutory agencies, whether the local authority or police, by providing long term solutions to neighbourhood difficulties, embedded in and led by the community.

**When? Now!** Portsmouth is already several years into its journey.



### **How? Create a grass roots movement**

- ❖ Provide opportunities in every sphere of city life for people to be equipped with a restorative tool kit for good everyday living.
- ❖ Equip adults and children to build positive restorative families.
- ❖ Promote opportunities for every organisation in Portsmouth to create a new restorative environment and culture.
- ❖ Establish through our children and young people a new generation of restorative practitioners.
- ❖ Reduce punitive action and punishment as the default answer to things going wrong.
- ❖ Assist organisations to rewrite their staff policies and processes to include early opportunities for repairing harm and broken relationships.
- ❖ Increase restorative opportunities for people who have made seriously wrong choices.
- ❖ Prevent exclusion – bring people back into family and community.



### This will be achieved by:

- ❖ Developing 'Teach Peace' in every school in Portsmouth
- ❖ Extending 'Sort it Out' in Portsmouth University
- ❖ Establishing restorative practices in nursery education
- ❖ Children sharing restorative skills with their parents
- ❖ Parents learning and using restorative conversation in the home
- ❖ Equipping communities with the skills to restore relationships
- ❖ Communities owning responses to harm
- ❖ Creating inclusiveness by bringing the excluded back into communities
- ❖ Encouraging workplaces to develop new ideas by engaging with their staff, from the lowest paid to the highest
- ❖ Facilitating a restorative conversation as a response when things have gone wrong in the workplace
- ❖ Being environmentally responsible, seeking to repair harm to the environment and contributing to creating physical environments that will be safe for future generations
- ❖ Working with schools to improve educational inclusion
- ❖ Bringing families into restorative circles to repair harm and strengthen the family
- ❖ Enabling public sector professionals to build and maintain strong relationships

### How will we know if we have succeeded?

- ❖ Reduced tension and stress for individuals, the family and community/build and strengthen Restorative families and communities.
- ❖ Reduced low level ASB and crime, the effects of crime and the fear of crime
- ❖ Reduced serious crime – gangs, drugs, knife crime, etc.
- ❖ Reduced amount of time and money that Statutory agencies occur in dealing with local conflict, ASB and serious crime (Neighbourhood police teams, environmental health, social services, NHS, law courts, etc.)
- ❖ Reduced number of people with mental health problems
- ❖ Reduced school exclusions and raised attendance
- ❖ Reduced need for statutory safeguarding children services
- ❖ Increased local community cohesion, social responsibility and emotional wellbeing of Portsmouth
- ❖ Satisfied citizens who feel they have been heard, can contribute, and belong
- ❖ Improved education/academic results in schools, colleges and university.
- ❖ Improved productivity and profitability of local business/boost the economy

The benefits of a truly restorative city are enormous and too many to list and whilst the vision is a big drum to bang, the success of a restorative Portsmouth will not be found in headlines. The peace and prosperity it delivers is found in thousands of small moments each day. These tiny restorative events that are cumulative, produce stronger families and communities. Great communities are never built top down likewise a Restorative City is always developed from the grass roots upwards.