

SHAPING

**PORTS
MOUTH**

TRANSFORMING PORTSMOUTH TOGETHER

**2025
IMPACT
REPORT**

WELCOME

As I reflect on 2025, what stands out most is not the scale of activity we have delivered, but the way in which our partners, volunteers and team have yet again come together to turn our shared ambition into tangible impact for our city. Shaping Portsmouth exists to enable collaboration. We are a small organisation, but one that acts as a catalyst – connecting people, organisations and ideas in ways that unlock opportunity and strengthen our city. In 2025, our partners didn't just fund our work, they actively delivered it, enabling the delivery of £750,000 worth of social value by volunteering and supporting our programmes as well as funding them.

Volunteering is not an add-on at Shaping Portsmouth but our delivery mechanism. Volunteering from our ambassadors, partner organisations and board members actively contributes to our impact and through 2025 we registered a total contribution of 4,804 hours of volunteering against Shaping Portsmouth activity.

We have continued to deliver across our three pillars of Business, Education and Community and focus on areas that drive our vision of making Portsmouth the number one UK city in which to invest, live, learn, work and visit. We have grown our activity across each of these pillars and through 2025 we held 35 different events in support of our programme delivery with a total attendance of 1464 people. But it's not just our delivery that's grown, our staff team and our partner numbers have increased too. We have added a dedicated Community Pillar lead role into the team and have recruited a Chief Operations Officer post to help us manage increased delivery. We have welcomed 23 new partners through 2025 and now have 82 partner businesses making up Shaping Portsmouth.

Our social impact framework provides a clear, transparent, and conservative way of understanding the difference that partnership working makes. The framework has been deliberately designed to be auditable and credible. It distinguishes between the inputs that enable delivery, such as skilled volunteering



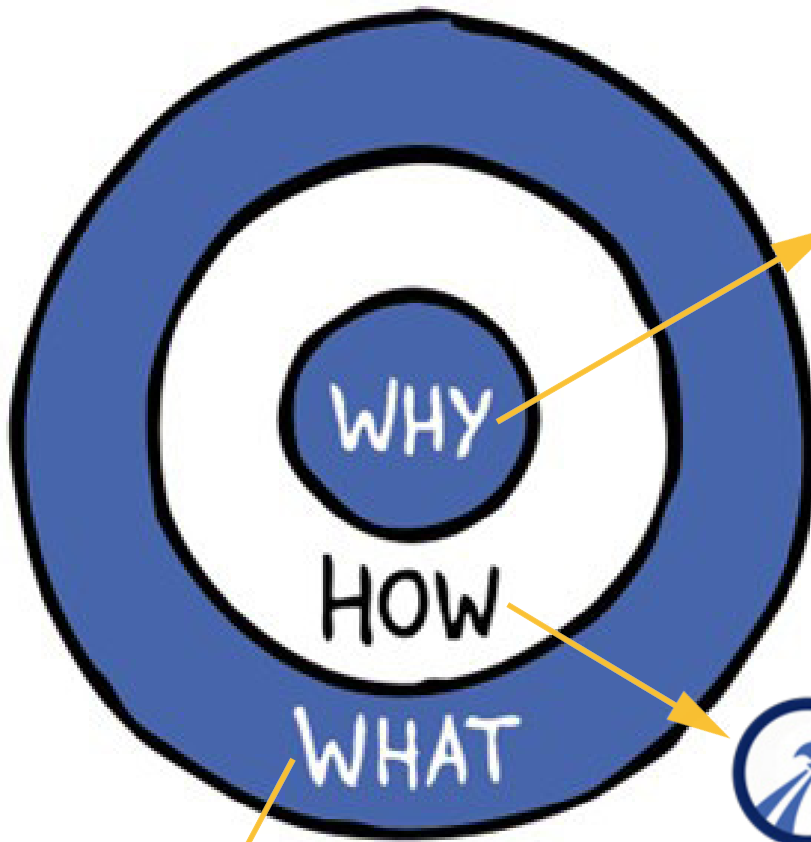
and leadership, and the outputs and outcomes experienced by people, organisations and communities. It tells us that Shaping Portsmouth enabled at least £750,000 of social value in 2025. This headline figure is intentionally cautious. Behind it sits a much wider picture of collaboration, commitment and civic pride that cannot always be fully captured in numbers alone.

However, none of this would have been possible without the continued commitment of our partners, patrons, volunteers and stakeholders across the city. This report is therefore not simply a record of Shaping Portsmouth's activity, but a reflection of what Portsmouth can achieve when organisations work together with a shared sense of purpose. I would like to say a huge thank-you to our staff team, our volunteers - including our non-executive directors, programme leads, ambassadors, armed forces community team and all those partners who have supported our programmes in 2025. As we look ahead, we do so with confidence – not because the challenges facing our city are small, but because the strength of collaboration is significant. I am proud of what we have delivered together in 2025, and excited about what we can continue to achieve for Portsmouth in the years to come.

Dave Humphries

Chief Executive Officer
Shaping Portsmouth

STRATEGY



VISION:
To make Portsmouth
the number one UK
city in which to **invest,**
live, learn, work, and
visit.



MISSION:
Transforming Portsmouth
Together.



AIM:
Through partnerships and
collaboration, **deliver a range of**
innovative programmes that provide
high levels of **social impact.**

BUSINESS PROGRAMMES



Supporting a
thriving business
ecosystem

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES



Equipping people with
the skills they need to
be employable

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES



Making our city
a better place
to live

TRANSFORMING PORTSMOUTH TOGETHER



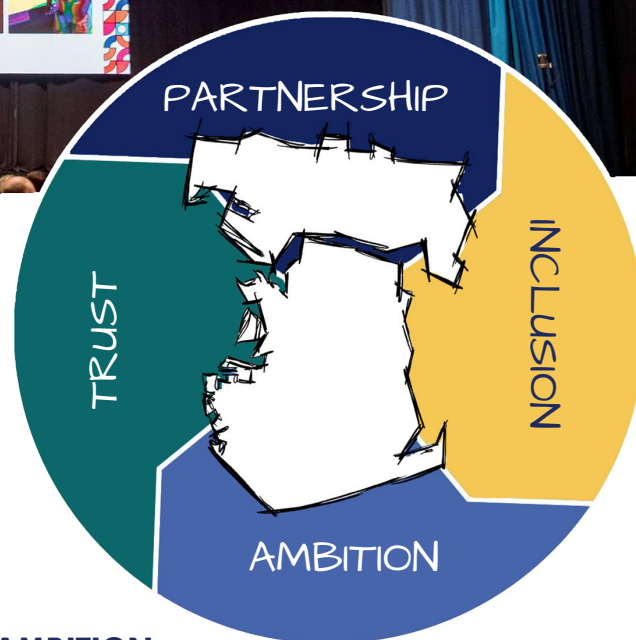
OUR VALUES

PARTNERSHIP

We believe in the power of collaboration. By fostering strong partnerships, we create a supportive city ecosystem where everyone can thrive. Our commitment to working together with local businesses, educational institutions, community organisations, and residents ensures that our collective efforts drive positive change and sustainable growth for Portsmouth. Partnership and collaboration are essential to achieving social change in our city because issues such as deprivation, educational outcomes, health inequalities, and environmental sustainability are multifaceted, and no single organisation can solve these problems alone.

INCLUSION

We champion inclusivity in all our endeavours. We are dedicated to creating a city where everyone that makes up the rich tapestry of Portsmouth, is heard, valued, and respected. By embracing diversity and ensuring equal opportunities for all, we strive to build a community where everyone has a seat at the table and the opportunity to contribute to our shared success. Inclusivity fosters social cohesion, economic growth, and overall well-being, contributing to a vibrant, sustainable, and equitable environment. It allows different cultures, traditions, and communities to coexist and enriches the social fabric of our city which in turn attracts a diverse workforce and fosters innovation. Diverse communities bring varied skills, ideas, and perspectives that fuel entrepreneurship and creativity, helping our business community to remain competitive and vibrant, and our economy grow.



AMBITION

Our ambition drives us to aim high and think big. We are passionate about setting bold goals and pursuing innovative solutions to make Portsmouth a better place to invest, live, learn, work, and visit. Through a relentless pursuit of excellence, we aim to inspire and empower our community to reach their full potential and achieve remarkable outcomes. Ambition drives our impact, helps us address large-scale challenges, and ensures that we maximize our potential to fulfil our vision.

TRUST

Trust is the cornerstone of our organisation. We are committed to transparency, integrity, and accountability in all of our actions. By building and maintaining trust with our partners, stakeholders, and the wider community, we create a solid foundation for lasting relationships and meaningful impact. We are dedicated to keeping our promises and delivering on our commitments, ensuring that Shaping Portsmouth is a trusted leader in our community. We want Shaping Portsmouth to be seen as an ethical, transparent, and accountable organisation. This will enhance our standing in the community, attract new partners and enable us to promote collaboration that will continue to maximize our impact.

HOW OUR SOCIAL VALUE FRAMEWORK WORKS AND WHY IT CAN BE TRUSTED

Shaping Portsmouth exists to enable collaboration across the city. Measuring the impact of that collaboration matters, but it must be done in a way that is credible, transparent and proportionate. Our Social Value Framework v1.4 has therefore been designed to provide a clear and conservative picture of the difference partnership working makes.

The framework focuses on what actually happened during the year. Every figure links back to real, evidenced activity – such as volunteer hours given, people engaged, organisations supported, qualifications achieved or roles filled. Where activity cannot be clearly evidenced or itemised, it may be described in this report but is not assigned a points value.

The framework distinguishes between inputs and outputs. Inputs, such as skilled volunteering, leadership and coordination, enable delivery. Outputs and outcomes reflect the benefit experienced by people, organisations and communities. Both matter, and both are measured separately to avoid confusion or double counting.

Importantly, impact is counted regardless of whether delivery is paid or volunteer-led, reflecting how partnership-based organisations actually work.

A small set of simple, consistent scoring units is used across all activity, with one point shown as equivalent to £10 of indicative social value. This is a reporting proxy rather than a financial claim, designed to aid understanding and comparison. The framework is conservative by design. It avoids economic multipliers, speculative valuations and unproven assumptions. Where activity involves large audiences or public reach, sensible caps are applied so that volume does not outweigh delivery quality. Additional safeguards, including limits on volunteering, influence and platforming, ensure balance and credibility.

The result is a framework that is transparent, auditable and trustworthy. It provides partners, funders and the wider city with confidence that the social value described in this report is real, proportionate and delivered collectively.



TRANSFORMING PORTSMOUTH TOGETHER



BUSINESS



Portsmouth Business Support Service

Portsmouth is a great place to do business, it nurtures entrepreneurial ambition, supports resilience and champions sustainability. Our business pillar seeks to make Portsmouth an inclusive, resilient and sustainable business ecosystem where more enterprises start, survive, grow, and contribute to long-term prosperity.

We aim to increase business survival and success through accessible support services, enhanced resilience, workforce wellbeing, leadership on climate, and creating a high-value visitor economy, positioning Portsmouth as one of the UK's most business-friendly cities.

Business impact links to employment, productivity, community wellbeing and longer-term economic resilience making it an important area, not just for us but the whole city. Portsmouth sees high business start up rates but also high business failure rates. Our partnership with Portsmouth City Council on the Portsmouth Business Support Service has now seen over 500 small and micro businesses engage making the service the front door for business support in the city.

The Portsmouth Business Support Service (PBSS), delivered in partnership with Portsmouth City Council, was established with the clear priority to strengthen and grow Portsmouth's local economy by supporting the success and sustainability of its business community.

Each year around 1,000 new businesses are created in Portsmouth, demonstrating the city's strong entrepreneurial spirit and ambition. However, as in many local economies, a significant proportion of these start-ups struggle to survive, with more than 700 businesses failing within their early years. Many of these failures are not due to a lack of ideas or ambition, but because small and micro-business owners often face challenges accessing the right advice, networks and practical support at the right time. While a wide range of support programmes exist locally, they can often be fragmented and difficult for business owners to navigate, particularly for start-ups and very small businesses that lack time and resources. The Portsmouth Business Support Service therefore provides a coordinated gateway to advice, mentoring, training and specialist support, helping

Supporting a thriving business ecosystem

entrepreneurs and small businesses develop the skills, resilience and confidence needed to grow sustainably and contribute to the long-term prosperity of Portsmouth's economy.

Since its launch two years ago over **500 businesses have registered** with the Portsmouth Business Support Service.

Mentoring and Advice

A core element of PBSS is our Volunteer Mentoring Network, which connects small business owners and entrepreneurs seeking guidance with experienced professionals from the local business community as mentors who provide structured support with growth strategy, finance, marketing, operations and leadership. Research consistently demonstrates the value of mentoring, with mentored businesses significantly more likely to grow and survive during their early years. So far, 41 volunteer mentors have supported 97 mentees and our volunteer mentors have collectively delivered approximately 388 hours of volunteer mentoring. This mentoring network provides businesses with practical, real-world advice that many would otherwise struggle to access due to cost barriers.

Workshops, Training and Skills Development

PBSS also delivers a programme of free workshops and courses designed to build practical business capability. Delivered by industry professionals and partner organisations, the sessions focus on core business skills such as financial planning, lead generation, marketing strategy and digital resilience.

During 2025 we delivered:

- **13 business support workshops** were delivered free of charge
- **242 participants** attended these workshops
- **593 hours of training and courses** were delivered overall

The commercial value of training delivered exceeded £66,000 and these workshops enable entrepreneurs to build critical capabilities and access expertise that would normally be unaffordable for early-stage businesses.

This also incorporated the delivery of Six free Emergency First Aid at Work courses for businesses and community organisations through which 68 participants received this nationally recognised certification with the training delivered valued at £5,950. Providing these free removes financial barriers for small businesses and improves workforce wellbeing and regulatory compliance.

The Marketing Agency – University Partnership

One of the most innovative elements of the PBSS programme is The Marketing Agency, a collaborative initiative with the University of Portsmouth marketing courses.

Through this programme:

- **Eight businesses or charities** received free digital marketing audits
- **Eight organisations** received marketing services including website rebuilds, digital marketing strategies and social media campaigns
- **Three marketing students** gained paid internships, gaining real-world experience and enhancing their CVs

This initiative delivers mutual value: businesses receive professional marketing support while students gain hands-on experience working with real organisations. It also strengthens the link between the local economy and the city's higher education institutions.

Overall, the Portsmouth Business Support Service represents a significant investment in the resilience and growth of the city's small business community, helping businesses develop skills, access advice and build networks that support long-term economic success.

Workplace Health & Wellbeing Programme

The Workplace Health & Wellbeing Programme recognises that healthy and resilient employees are fundamental to sustainable business success, and that many sole traders and small business owners don't prioritise their own health. The programme provides businesses with practical opportunities to improve workforce wellbeing through preventative health screening, mental health initiatives and

workplace training. In 2025 we have relaunched this programme using the Five Ways to Wellbeing model as the basis for our strategy.

Prostate Cancer Screening

In partnership with local Prostate Cancer charity PCaSO, we have delivered PSA prostate cancer screening tests to the local business community and carried out campaigns to raise awareness of this. During 2025 we carried out 202 PSA screening tests within the Portsmouth business community. 10 individuals recorded raised PSA levels requiring monitoring, 8 individuals received high-risk results and were referred for further NHS testing and at least two of those have since received a confirmed prostate cancer diagnosis. One of those has had his prostate removed and attributes the early detection to saving his life. This demonstrates the tangible impact of preventative health initiatives within the workplace.

Mental Health

Workplace wellbeing extends beyond physical health but are mental health “Walk and Talk” events, combine both and encourage business leaders and employees to connect, share

experiences and support mental wellbeing in a relaxed environment. 56 people participated in mental health walk-and-talk events during 2025. This initiative reduces isolation, encourages open conversations around mental health and builds stronger relationships within the business community.

Skills and Safety Training

As noted earlier, the programme delivered Emergency First Aid at Work training, benefiting 68 individuals from small businesses, voluntary organisations and care leavers. In partnership with Solent Mind we also delivered Suicide First Aid Lite courses to 44 individuals. The Emergency First Aid and Suicide First Aid courses not only improve workplace safety but increase individual confidence in responding to emergencies.

Overall, the Workplace Health & Wellbeing Programme demonstrates that business productivity and employee wellbeing are closely interconnected. By investing in preventative health and workforce skills, the programme strengthens both individuals and organisations.





Cruise Passenger Programme

The Cruise Passenger Programme showcases Portsmouth to international visitors and supports the city's visitor economy. The programme mobilises trained volunteers known as Cruise Ambassadors, who welcome passengers arriving at Portsmouth International Port when cruise ships visit the city.

Our ambassadors not only provide a friendly welcome to our city but play a crucial role in providing visitors with local knowledge, directions and recommendations, helping passengers make the most of their time in Portsmouth and encouraging spending within the local economy.

During 2025 62 Cruise Ambassadors delivered 2,490 volunteer hours at Portsmouth International Port, greeting passengers on 35 cruise ships visiting Portsmouth. Our volunteers welcomed a total 31,150 cruise passengers to Portsmouth. Visiting cruise ships generated approximately £52.5 million for the local economy in 2025. Portsmouth International Port generated £10.3 million profit for Portsmouth City Council as well as over £400million for the UK economy.

The success of the programme has also been recognised nationally. Portsmouth International Port was awarded "Port of the Year" at the Wave Cruise Awards for the third consecutive year, with the contribution of Cruise Ambassadors recognised as a key factor in the visitor experience. The Cruise Passenger Programme therefore represents an excellent example of how volunteer engagement

can support economic development and tourism growth while strengthening the city's reputation internationally.

Climate Ready Portsmouth

The Climate Ready Portsmouth programme reflects the growing importance of sustainability and climate resilience within the local economy. The initiative supports businesses and organisations in reducing carbon emissions, improving environmental performance and accessing funding opportunities for sustainability projects. The programme was relaunched during the year as part of a wider partnership initiative focused on helping Portsmouth businesses respond to climate challenges and transition to a greener economy.

Green Partnership and Engagement

The programme hosted a Green Partnership event attended by 79 participants, bringing together businesses, sustainability specialists and public sector partners to share knowledge and explore collaborative solutions. At this event, Shaping Portsmouth relaunched its Business Climate Action programme as "Climate Ready Portsmouth," signalling a renewed focus on practical climate action for the business community.

The Climate Ready Portsmouth initiative demonstrates how Shaping Portsmouth can convene partners to deliver environmental, economic and social benefits simultaneously, helping businesses transition to a more sustainable future.





EDUCATION



Portsmouth's future prosperity depends not only on the strength of its businesses, but on the skills, confidence and employability of its people.

Education and skills shape individual life chances, support a resilient local economy and help ensure opportunity across the city. However, for many young people, pathways from education into employment can feel unclear or out of reach. Shaping Portsmouth's education pillar works in partnership with schools, colleges and employers to help young people better understand the opportunities available to them locally. Our focus is not on attainment, but on aspiration, awareness and access, particularly for those who may not otherwise see a clear route into work, training or further education.

We place particular emphasis on supporting young people who face additional barriers, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, care leavers and those at risk of disengagement.

Despite Portsmouth having a diverse labour market, strong education base, and employers

who want to recruit locally many young people and adults:

- Lack meaningful exposure to employers and careers;
- Are unclear how education connects to real jobs
- Face barriers to accessing work experience, advice or networks

We want Portsmouth to be a city where people of all ages, but particularly young people, are equipped with the skills, confidence and connections they need to access meaningful employment.

As a business-led, place-based organisation, Shaping Portsmouth is ideally placed to play a bridging role between education, employers and opportunity in ways that individual institutions cannot do alone. We want to improve employability outcomes by:

- Connecting education with the real world of work
- Aligning education pathways with local labour-market demand
- Supporting lifelong learning and skills development

Equipping people with the skills they need to be employable

Shaped By Solent

Shaped by Solent is an enterprise and skills programme designed specifically for students with special educational needs (SEN). It provides students with an opportunity to develop entrepreneurial skills by challenging them to work in teams to develop a product that responds to a real design brief, supported by a volunteer business mentor. Students experience the full process of entrepreneurship, from idea generation through to product creation, marketing and sales.

2024–2025 Programme

During the 2024–25 academic year, 7 teams of 8 students took part in the programme, meaning 56 students participated overall. Each team was supported by a volunteer business mentor who delivered four one-hour classroom sessions

supporting the students through the process to design, make and sell an item that could be sold in the Mary Rose Gift Shop. Participating students were given a guided tour of the Mary Rose Museum with their mentors which provided a real-world context for the project and helped connect them with Portsmouth's heritage.

At the end of the programme, each team produced 30 units of their product, which were sold at the Shaping Portsmouth Conference, raising £791.43 in profit. In a programme first the Mary Rose Museum agreed to permanently sell the winning item in their shop with profits returning to the school. This represents a significant achievement for the students involved and provides a lasting example of their entrepreneurial success.



Apprenticeship Bus

2025–2026 Programme

For 2025–26 the Shaped by Solent programme was expanded significantly. The programme doubled to 14 teams and involved 112 SEN students, each team still supported by a volunteer business mentor. Mentors again delivered four classroom sessions with each team. This year's brief was to create an item that celebrated the city's centenary, with the winning item to be sold in the Spinnaker Tower gift shop.

Approximately 60 students visited the Spinnaker Tower, which provided an opportunity for them to explore one of the city's most recognisable landmarks while strengthening their relationship with their business mentors.

An additional element introduced during the 2025–26 programme was a marketing presentation. Teams presented their product and marketing strategies to a panel of judges, replicating real-world business pitching scenarios. This allowed students to develop communication skills and practise explaining ideas clearly and confidently.

The Apprenticeship Bus is one of Shaping Portsmouth's most visible and impactful education initiatives, designed to raise awareness of apprenticeships and connect students directly with current apprentices. The programme uses a fully branded double-decker bus to visit schools across Portsmouth, bringing apprentices from a range of different sectors directly into classrooms. This enables students to hear first-hand about career pathways that combine employment with training. During the 2025 programme the Apprenticeship Bus visited 9 secondary schools across Portsmouth with 40 apprentices engaging 500 students.

Prior to the roadshow itself all students received a pre-briefing classroom session explaining apprenticeships. Then on the road show our apprentices shared their personal experiences, explaining how they developed skills, gained qualifications and progressed in their careers. These conversations provided students with relatable role models, helping them understand that apprenticeships offer a viable and successful alternative to traditional academic routes.





Consequently 79% of students reported that they were now inspired to consider an apprenticeship, which demonstrates the strong impact that direct peer-to-peer engagement can have on young people's career aspirations.

The Apprenticeship Bus also helps local employers showcase the opportunities available within their organisations. The bus itself displayed the logos of 20 local businesses that employ apprentices and this visibility ensures the programme delivers year-round impact beyond the school visits. When not actively delivering the programme, the bus continues to drive routes around the city, raising awareness of apprenticeship opportunities and highlighting the businesses that support them.

Explore Your Future

Our Explore Your Future programme supports students to better understand the world of work and the local labour market, providing employer engagement to encourage career conversations and support improved student aspirations.

Business leaders share their personal and professional journeys with students giving them an authentic understanding of career paths and/or the opportunities available in particular sectors.

We have supported Unloc with a number of leadership sessions that have seen three local business leaders engaging students about their own career journeys. Keir Construction delivered a work experience project trial at Milton Cross School which saw students engaged in industry related projects as an alternative to workplace placements. The Harbour Future Project saw five of our partner businesses deliver EYF sessions to students in small groups. Partner businesses also supported interview experience days at Cowplain school and the CRED days at Portsmouth University saw 43 business leaders volunteer to assist in short mock interviews over a week-long event. Overall, a total of 258 hours of EYF support was delivered for students.





COMMUNITY



Armed Forces Community

Shaping Portsmouth's Community Pillar focuses on making our city a better place to live. This is done by bringing together volunteers, businesses and community organisations to strengthen connections across the city and by supporting individuals and organisations that play a vital role across Portsmouth. Through partnerships with businesses, charities, volunteers and public sector organisations, this pillar works to ensure that economic success in Portsmouth is matched by strong, resilient and inclusive communities.

The programmes delivered under this pillar aim to support community organisations, connect residents with opportunities and ensure that individuals who may face barriers to employment or participation are able to access support. We also aim to give every Portsmouth resident the chance to give back to the city that they call home.

Portsmouth has one of the strongest historic connections with the Armed Forces anywhere in the UK. As the home of the Royal Navy and a city with a significant veteran population, supporting the Armed Forces community remains a key priority for Shaping Portsmouth.

Through our Armed Forces Community programme, Shaping Portsmouth works with local businesses and partners to promote the Armed Forces Covenant, encouraging employers to recognise the value that service personnel, veterans and military families bring to the workforce. During 2025 an additional 23 local businesses signed the Armed Forces Covenant bringing the total number of Portsmouth businesses signed up to the Covenant to 246.

We hosted the inaugural Shaping Forces event, bringing together businesses, veterans and Armed Forces Community partners to strengthen connections and highlight opportunities for collaboration. 83 people attended the inaugural

Making our city a better place to live

event which also raised £600 for Armed Forces charities. This programme continues to strengthen Portsmouth's reputation as a city that values and supports its Armed Forces community while encouraging businesses to play an active role in supporting veterans and military families.

Portsmouth Ambassadors

The Portsmouth Ambassadors programme promotes civic pride and encourages residents to act as advocates for the city. Ambassadors support major events, welcome visitors and help showcase Portsmouth as a great place to live, work, study and visit.

During the year the programme underwent a refresh and relaunches at our 2026 conference.

Ambassadors contributed 186 hours of volunteer support to several major events across the city, including:

- Isle of Wight Festival
- Victorious Festival
- The Clipper Round the World Yacht Race

By supporting high-profile events and welcoming visitors, Portsmouth Ambassadors play a valuable role in enhancing the city's reputation while demonstrating the strong civic pride within the community.

Charity Support Network

Shaping Portsmouth's Charity Support Network connects businesses with charities and community organisations that require practical support. Many charities face challenges accessing specialist expertise such as governance support, marketing



advice, digital resources and equipment. The network helps address these challenges by mobilising professional expertise from local businesses and partners to support the voluntary sector.

During 2025 this programme filled 20 charity trustee vacancies and established a new mechanism for collating and advertising vacancies across the city, in partnership with The Hive.

We responded to 10 urgent requests for charity support which ranged from emergency repairs to moving 800 bean bag chairs. We also provided 4 laptops and 1 bicycle were provided to community initiatives. These contributions help charities strengthen their governance, improve operational capacity and deliver services more effectively to local residents. The network also provided specialist support to a charity that was facing closure, assisting with the responsible wind-down of the organisation and the appropriate distribution of remaining grant funding. This will

ensure that charities' funds will continue to benefit local causes.

In addition, the programme supported by the University's MCP project, helped to promote the Portsmouth Community Lottery and strengthen vital fundraising opportunities for local charities. Through this work the Charity Support Network demonstrates how businesses can play a meaningful role in supporting the voluntary sector and strengthening the city's social infrastructure.

Choose Employability

The Choose Employability programme supports individuals who face barriers to employment by connecting them with employers, training opportunities and practical support. The programme focuses on groups that may require additional support entering the workforce, including care leavers, young people not currently in employment or education, individuals experiencing homelessness and people with special educational needs.





Care Leavers Academy

A key component of the programme is the Care Leavers Academy, which provides practical employability training delivered by local businesses. In 2025 we delivered two sets of six workshops were delivered by partner businesses.

Six young people participated in the first programme cohort from which:

- 2 participants secured employment
- 2 entered work placements
- 1 returned to education
- 1 moved into a volunteering role

These outcomes highlight the importance of targeted employability support for young people who are care experienced.

NEET Young People

The programme also actively supports young people who are Not in Education, Employment or

Training (NEET). Shaping Portsmouth partners with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on the Aspiration NEET Zero programme.

Supporting Vulnerable Individuals

Choose Employability also supports individuals facing other complex challenges. During the year one homeless referral was supported into employment. Although small in scale, outcomes such as these demonstrate the life-changing potential of targeted support for individuals facing significant barriers.

The programme also hosted a Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Employers Event, bringing together employers to explore how organisations can better support and employ individuals with special educational needs and disabilities. The programme continues to support employers offering opportunities to SEND individuals across the city.



Shaping Portsmouth's Events

Transforming Portsmouth Together Through Connection, Collaboration and Influence

Throughout 2025, Shaping Portsmouth delivered a wide range of events designed to increase collaborate, share insight and drive collective impact. From large-scale flagship events to targeted stakeholder groups, these convening opportunities have enabled meaningful dialogue, supported partnership development and generated tangible outcomes across all three of our pillars. In total Shaping Portsmouth hosted 35 separate events with a total attendance of 1464 people.

Shaping Portsmouth Conference

The annual Shaping Portsmouth Conference continues to act as the organisation's flagship event, bringing together our partners, stakeholders and the wider community. The 2025 conference saw 509 people attend the Guildhall, 50 businesses exhibit and 7 teams sell products in the Shaped By Solent Shop. Structuring the conference more rigidly around our three pillars, linking the speakers / presentations and the awards to a clearly defined section, and involving the wider team more in front

facing roles all received positive feedback. We also introduced the live podcast concept, interviewing our main speaker, Sir Ben Ainslie in this way, which again was positively received. The event is uniquely positioned as both a celebration of impact and a catalyst for future collaboration, reinforcing Shaping Portsmouth's brand as a trusted city-wide convenor.

Portsmouth Business Leaders Forum

The Portsmouth Business Leaders Forum (PBLF) happens twice each year and remains one of the organisation's most influential convening platforms, bringing together senior leaders from across the city. As well as receiving updates on key Shaping Portsmouth programmes, part of the agenda is given to Portsmouth City Council to update on the Economic and Regeneration Strategy.

The Spring PBLF took place in April at The Queens Hotel and attracted 92 attendees. The event provided an opportunity to introduce: the current





plans around Mayoral Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation; The Fostering Friendly Employer Initiative from Fairways; and encourage support for the Portsmouth Community Lottery. The Parenting Network were also able to highlight the work they are doing in the city and encourage businesses to become partners.

The Autumn PBLF took place at Fratton Park in October and attracted 112 attendees. The event provided a platform for: Local government reorganisation updates, including devolution; Discussions on social cohesion and the role of business; Engagement opportunities for partners and community organisations. The event also created direct impact by enabling Connors Toy Library to highlight their current challenges and access funding and support from within the room.

Immediately following the Autumn PBLF, and at the same venue we held a SEND Employer Event which saw 22 attendees attend to discuss employment opportunities for SEND individuals, and resulted in the provision of further employment opportunities.

Shaping Forces

Shaping Forces was a new event linked to our Armed Forces Community Programme and taking place in Armed Forces week, designed to bring businesses and the Armed Forces community

together in a practical, outcomes-focused way. At its core, Shaping Forces is a business engagement and awareness event focused on how organisations can better support serving personnel, veterans, and military families.

The event included discussions on how companies can support the Armed Forces community in practice and understanding the value that veterans and military families bring to the workforce. There was clear explanation of the Armed Forces Covenant, with pathways through the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (Bronze → Silver → Gold). Plus, importantly we had real-world insight and storytelling via a panel featuring veterans and forces family members sharing lived experiences. We had 83 attendees across 41 organisations, with 7 organisations signing the Armed Forces Covenant on the day.

Climate Ready Portsmouth – Green Partnership Event

The Green Partnership event, relaunched under the Climate Ready Portsmouth banner, brought together businesses and organisations to address climate challenges. The event had 79 attendees and 8 business exhibitors participated. It featured speakers from local government, the NHS, Southern Water, other business and community

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organisations and academic expertise from Professor Vera Trappman. The event created a platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration and practical climate action, helping businesses better understand and respond to environmental challenges. Overwhelmingly positive feedback has sown a case for making this a regular annual event.

Workplace Wellbeing Events

Shaping Portsmouth delivered targeted events focused on workforce wellbeing, recognising its importance to business performance and employee outcomes. A Workplace Wellbeing stakeholder event at Fratton Park saw 30 attendees linked to HR in our partner businesses attend to discuss the programme and a further 58 people attended our three Mental Health Walk and Talk events, at Southsea Seafront, Lakeside and Old Portsmouth. These events are helping to build a city-wide network of organisations committed to improving employee wellbeing, with direct links to programme delivery.

Portsmouth Pride Stakeholder Network

Shaping Portsmouth played a key role in convening the Portsmouth Pride Stakeholder Network, supporting collaboration between businesses and

community organisations. There were 25 attendees at the initial stakeholder meeting which focussed on inclusion and diversity, community cohesion and strengthening business engagement with Pride initiatives. Some of these then attended the Portsmouth and Southampton Pride joint World Aids Day in Southampton. Having supported the growth of the Pride Stakeholder Network in the previous year we want to continue to provide strong LGBTQ+ allyship by taking on the co-ordination of this network.

Partnerships

Across 2025, Shaping Portsmouth events have not only delivered engagement but have also acted as a platform for partnership growth and influence. Throughout 2025 Shaping Portsmouth welcomed 26 new businesses taking our overall partner number to 83 organisations.

Shaping Portsmouth's events programme in 2025 demonstrated the power of bringing people together with purpose. By creating spaces for collaboration, insight and action, the organisation has enabled businesses, educators and community leaders to work more effectively together.





2026 EVENTS

- **16th January** - Shaping Portsmouth Conference
- **31st January** - Shaping Portsmouth VOS bucket collection Pompey vs West Brom
- **9th to 13th February** - Apprenticeship Bus Tour
- **16th February** - Cruise Ambassadors Thank You event – End of Jan 2026
- **17th February** - Portsmouth Pancake Day Races in Guildhall Square.
- **23rd to 27th February** - Portsmouth & South Coast Business Week
- **27th February** - Portsmouth Business Excellence Awards
- **19th March** - Enterprise Fest (University of Portsmouth collaboration)
- **22nd March** - Pompey Women vs Sunderland
- **30th March** - Cruise Ambassadors season kick off event at Brasserie Blanc
- **20th April** - Portsmouth Pride Stakeholder Group
- **16th April** - Spring Portsmouth Business Leaders Forum at Royal Maritime Hotel
- **26th April** - Pompey Women vs Nottingham Forest
- **21st May** - Mental Health Walk and Talk
- **7th June** - Portsmouth Pride
- **10th June** - Shaping Forces at Fratton Park Victory Suite
- **1st July** - Partner Only Networking 2026 at Portsmouth Historic Quarter
- **16th July** - Mental Health Walk and Talk
- **28th to 30th August** - Victorious Festival 2026
- **1st September** - Shaped By Solent 2026 commences
- **17th September** - Mental Health Walk and Talk
- **Early October** - Portsmouth Pride Stakeholder Group
- **21st October** - Autumn PBLF 2026 at Portsmouth Grammar School Auditorium
- **18th November** - Green Partnership – Climate Ready Portsmouth – at Lakeside, North Harbour
- **1st December** - Portsmouth Pride Stakeholder Network World Aids Day Event

2027 EVENTS

- **22nd January** - Shaping Portsmouth Conference
- **8th to 13th February** - Apprenticeship Bus Tour
- **9th February** - Portsmouth Pancake Day Races in Guildhall Square
- **22nd to 26th February** - Portsmouth & South Coast Business Week
- **27th February** - Portsmouth Business Excellence Awards
- **14th April** - Spring Portsmouth Business Leaders Forum

SHAPING
PORTSMOUTH

£750,000
worth of social value
enabled in 2025