



Overview

In the heart of Newport, an initiative has emerged to nurture the island's creative spirit and foster a sense of belonging in a central space in Newport town centre. Thanks to the support of Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council and the Isle of Wight Council, the doors of The Port opened at the beginning of 2025. Their investment transformed a small, long-redundant office space—previously a tourist information centre left vacant for many years—into a vibrant drop in hub. Its unique, accessible and central location made it the ideal setting for this creative endeavour. Seed funding was supported by the Hampshire and IW police services as the area directly surrounding The Port was identified as an area which suffers with anti-social behaviour.

Responding to a growing need for accessible social spaces, local organisers envisioned a place where creativity and connection could flourish. This vision materialised as The Port—a place where shared ideas, laughter, and artistic expression converge, transforming ordinary afternoons into memorable experiences. The initiative reflects research showing that creative engagement plays a vital role in promoting young people's wellbeing, reducing stress, building social connections, and enhancing self-esteem. Creative interventions are increasingly recognised not only for their power to spark imagination and skill development, but also for their profound impact on emotional health and resilience.

The Port is a creative youth hub in Newport, based centrally at Church Litten, for young people aged 12–18. Since September 2025, **Isorropia Foundation CIC** has taken oversight of The Port to ensure continuity of provision, safeguarding, and stability following the conclusion of earlier funding arrangements. This relationship has also ensured a strong theme of positive mental health and wellbeing as a core foundation of the Port's interventions.

Since its launch in Jan 2025, The Port has become a vital youth hub in Newport, **engaging 10–18 young people daily** through creative programming, safeguarding support, and strong community partnerships. It directly addresses anti-social behaviour (ASB) concerns by offering a safe, supervised, and enriching environment for young people in a known ASB hotspot.

Isorropia Foundation is hosting and supporting The Port while Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council undertakes consultation work with Network Ryde Youth Service to inform sustainable provision of youth provision in Newport from the new financial year.

Purpose and Ethos

The Port exists to provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment where young people can:

- Spend time safely after school in a known ASB hotspot
- Engage in creative expression and skill development
- Access trusted adults and safeguarding support
- Feel a sense of belonging, acceptance, and stability

The service is intentionally informal and flexible, recognising that for many young people wellbeing begins with safety, consistency, and being listened to.

Current Opening Times (as at January 2025)

The Port currently operates as a staffed drop-in youth provision during the following times:

- Tuesday – Friday: 3.00pm – 7.00pm

These hours reflect peak after-school and early evening risk periods in Newport town centre and align with safeguarding priorities.

Activities and Engagement (Current Delivery)

The Port offers a blend of structured creative activity and open-access drop-in support, including:

- Music sessions – DJing, jam sessions, acoustic and instrumental learning
- Visual arts – painting, clay modelling, collaborative artwork, henna
- Digital creativity – animation software and media exploration
- Informal wellbeing support – safe space, conversation, regulation and decompression
- Youth-led initiatives – including the Munsoon Creative Collective

Young people are free to come and go, using the space in ways that meet their individual needs. Food and drinks are provided

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Impact

Under Isorropia’s oversight, safeguarding governance, training, supervision, and escalation pathways are in place. The Port continues to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns that would otherwise remain hidden, including neglect, hunger, emotional distress, bullying, and vulnerability to exploitation. Without provision like The Port, these needs would escalate into statutory thresholds, policing involvement, or crisis services.”

The Isorropia team is on call to the Port Staff during opening times to provide advice and guidance when required.

Young people consistently describe The Port as:

- “The only place I feel safe”
- “Somewhere I feel I can just be myself”

- “Somewhere I can calm down before going home”
- “Better than being outside drinking or vaping”

They have also said:

- “I no longer spend my time shoplifting after school”
- “Following advice from the amazing team at the Port I am managing my emotions better and no longer getting into fights and avoiding altercations”

Community Value

Since opening, over 300 young people have engaged with The Port. Its presence contributes directly to:

- Reduction in anti-social behaviour
- Improved youth safety around the bus station and town centre
- Early intervention and cost avoidance for statutory services
- Stronger relationships between young people and community services

The Port represents low-cost, high-impact early intervention with significant potential cost avoidance for police, health, and social care

Partnerships and Collaboration

The project has built strong inter-organisational ties which the Munsoon Collective who run the facility and are keen to keep developing this important social tapestry:

- **Isorropia Foundation:** Delivers wellbeing sessions and co-hosts workshops from time to time from the centre and this has developed into a positive relationship where involvement with the collective and the provision of long-term support.
- **Christ the King School:** Promotes The Port and explores activity week collaboration
- **Southern Vectis:** Provided emergency transport support and due to the proximity with the bus station recognises the potential to mutual benefits
- **Josie & Rob da Bank:** Expressed interest in creative pop-ups at Bestival , which led to Ports x Isorropia’s successful attendance and are keen to be more involved with workshops moving forward
- **TFMZ IOW, P1 Sustainable Fashion:** Engaged in ongoing or planned collaborations
- **Creative Island** CEO and exec team have visited the Port and are keen to support future programme building

Conclusion

The Port is not simply a youth club. It is a protective, preventative, and stabilising presence for some of Newport’s most vulnerable young people. Continuity of provision is critical to avoid loss of trust, escalation of risk, and disengagement from support.