



Isle of Wight charity championing mental health for children and young people wins UK health award

An Isle of Wight youth charity working with children and young people to support their mental health has scooped one of this year's GSK IMPACT Awards, a sought-after accolade for health care charities in the UK.

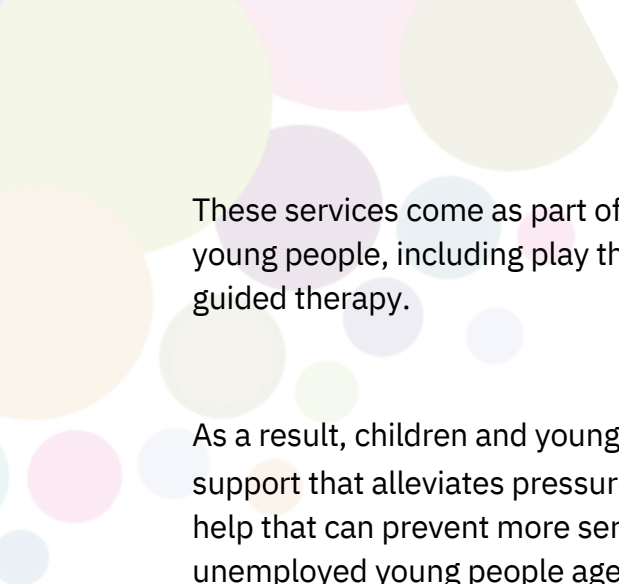
Isle of Wight Youth Trust (IOWYT) has picked up the award for its fantastic work supporting Islander's emotional and mental wellbeing.

There are over 25,000 children and young people aged under 19 living on the Isle of Wight. Parts of the island face high levels of deprivation, and there are significant mental health challenges for resident young people. The award judges praised IOWYT's work to understand the challenges facing young people and its youth-led wellbeing and therapeutic support.

Following a rigorous selection and assessment process, IOWYT was chosen from a record number of award entries as one of the 10 winners of the **2025 GSK IMPACT Awards**. Now in its 28th year, the awards are delivered in partnership with leading health and care charity **The King's Fund**. The awards are widely seen as a mark of excellence in the charity health sector and are designed to recognise outstanding small and medium-sized charities working to improve people's health and wellbeing in the UK.

As an award winner, IOWYT will now receive £40,000 in unrestricted funding as well as a place on a highly sought-after leadership development programme provided by The King's Fund.

The panel of experts from the awards were impressed with the charity's 'outstanding' dynamism. They highlighted a new service launched in 2024, The Hub, which acts as a 'one-stop shop' providing holistic and integrated support for young Islanders. The Hub offers drop-in services such as weekly 'Snack and Chats', where young people can meet others, and get practical help on housing and employment issues, all from a high street shop in Newport.



These services come as part of a wider package of therapeutic care for children and young people, including play therapy, art therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy and self-guided therapy.

As a result, children and young people now have access to alternative, non-clinical support that alleviates pressure on already strained NHS services and provides early help that can prevent more serious illness. The Hub has a target to engage 250 unemployed young people aged 18–25 in its first year and enable 100 of these young people to go into employment or training. In its first nine months, it has engaged with 298 young people, with 156 now in employment or training.

IOWYT was established in 1984 and initially offered counselling services to young people aged 13 and over. Today, the charity supports children from age five upwards and has expanded beyond its premises in Newport to provide outreach in partner venues, including several youth centres, the Island's homeless hostel, and secondary schools across the Island. The charity also offers counselling online for young people who struggle to access transport.

In 2023/2024, IOWYT supported 1,315 children and young people through 5,315 one-to-one, group or therapy sessions. They also delivered services in 40 of the Island's 51 schools as part of a partnership between IOWYT, the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Barnardo's. The charity has also supported 134 parents and carers by delivering 40 workshops.

The award judges were struck by the charity's strong and positive partnerships with statutory services across the Island. IOWYT works closely with the council's social care teams to support children in care and care leavers, and with the Island's Youth Justice Service to support those involved, or at risk of being involved, in crime.

Judges from the GSK IMPACT Awards said IOWYT stood out because it involves children and young people in its service design. The charity works with The Youth Mental Health Taskforce (YMHT), a group of young people who meet monthly to discuss issues facing young Islanders. YMHT identified a lack of belonging among young people, prompting the charity to work together with young people to create The Travelling Safe Space. The initiative offers monthly social activities such as tree-climbing, kayaking, cultural evenings and beach clean ups on the Island.

Katie Pinnock, Director, UK Charitable Partnerships at GSK, said: ‘Isle of Wight Youth Trust’s unwavering commitment to supporting young Islanders is truly remarkable. The broad range of services they offer, from art therapy to practical help on housing, means they are providing holistic support for young people that is not only responsive but preventive. The charity’s involvement of young people in designing services such as The Travelling Safe Space shows how deeply they understand and respond to the needs of local young people.’

Commenting on the award, **Jo Dare, CEO of Isle of Wight Youth Trust,** said: ‘We are thrilled and excited to have been chosen as a winner for a GSK/King’s Fund Impact Award, not only because it recognises our contribution to our local community, but because we can benefit from the leadership development programme to challenge our thinking and make what we do even better. In accepting the award, we want to pay tribute to our Youth Taskforce, who play a key role in shaping our services and holding us to account to ensure we best meet the needs of Island children and young people.’

Developing leaders in the charity sector is a key aim of the GSK IMPACT Awards programme and all winners are invited to build on their success and take part in a tailored leadership development programme run by The King’s Fund.

GSK IMPACT Awards

- The GSK IMPACT Awards, run in partnership with The King’s Fund, are designed to recognise the outstanding work of community-based health care charities. For more information, visit <https://www.gsk.com/en-gb/responsibility/charitable-investments/#UKInvestments>
- The awards are open to small and medium-sized charities working in health and wellbeing with an annual income between £150,000 and £3 million that are at least three years old. The 2026 GSK IMPACT Awards will open for applications on 1 July 2025. For more information and to apply visit www.kingsfund.org.uk/gskimpactawards.
- This year £430,000 in unrestricted prize money will be awarded to UK charities through the GSK IMPACT Awards. Five runners-up will receive £4,000 each. Ten winners will each receive £40,000 in unrestricted funding, film assets, a set of promotional photographs of their services, as well as access to training and development activities estimated to be worth £13,500. At the award ceremony at The King’s Fund in London on 15 May 2025, an overall winner will be announced and they will receive an extra £10,000, making a total of £50,000. The ten winning charities are also invited to join the GSK IMPACT Awards Network, a UK-wide network of 130 previous award winners who work together to develop leaders, find new ways of working and provide mutual support.
- The 2025 winners went through a rigorous assessment, including a half-day in-depth discussion with an independent assessor, and were selected by a judging panel of health and charity experts.
- Since its inception in 1997, over 560 health and wellbeing charities have received a GSK IMPACT Award and funding totalling more than £8.9 million.

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