

RECOVERY CYMRU STRATEGY

BUILDING A VISION FOR THE
NEXT 10 YEARS

"It is an organisation that treasures recovery and treats it like a valuable asset that enriches our lives and society. Its philosophy is that we can have a joyful life without alcohol."

"Being in Recovery Cymru has been the backbone of my recovery."

A LIVED EXPERIENCE RECOVERY ORGANISATION

BEING AT THE
FOREFRONT
OF THE
PEER-LED
RECOVERY
MOVEMENT

HELPING PEOPLE
REALISE THEIR
POTENTIAL
THROUGH SKILL
DEVELOPMENT

CHANGING THE
WAY SOCIETY
VIEWS AND
RESPONDS TO
SUBSTANCE USE
PROBLEMS

REFLECTING, CELEBRATING & BUILDING ON 10 YEARS
OF RECOVERY CYMRU

WRITTEN FROM THE VOICES OF OUR MEMBERS,
VOLUNTEERS, STAFF, TRUSTEES AND SUPPORTERS

INFORMED BY OUR INDEPENDENT TEN-YEAR
IMPACT ASSESSMENT (2020)

2021-2026

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STRATEGIC AIMS

Recovery Cymru is a peer-led Recovery Community Organisation with three main aims:

To build the recovery community, originating in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan

To raise awareness of overcoming problems with substance misuse, challenging stigmas and discrimination

To partner with others to create environments for recovery

We will do this by focusing on our key areas:

- People
- Voices
- Partnerships



PEOPLE

(Recovery Cymru Aim 1: Build the recovery community, originating in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan)

- Grow the Recovery Cymru Community
- Inclusion, equity and diversity
- Develop the Peer Workforce
- Go to the people
- Reach people earlier
- Connecting with the community
- Learning and education
- Celebrate success, sharing hope
- Those affected by another's substance misuse



VOICES

(Recovery Cymru Aim 2: Raise awareness and challenge stigma and discrimination)

- Empower our people to find their voice, recognise their strengths and fight the stigmas within
- Use our platform to share our members' voices
- Share our lessons through Recovery Cymru's expert voice
- Strengthen our public presence and public understanding
- Advocate for change via our policy positions
- Contribute to research and the evidence base



PARTNERSHIPS

(Recovery Cymru Aim 3: To partner with others to create environments for recovery)

- Train and educate
- Build Recovery Oriented Systems of Care
- Influence policy and practice; be involved in research
- Partner with others to deliver peer support at people's point of need
- Connect with the private sector and other employers
- Develop best practice and create standards for peer support
- Provide opportunities for people with lived experience to help communities thrive

Our Purpose

Everyone's journey is unique and individual. Recovery Cymru believes passionately in the reality of recovery and the power of shared experience and support. Based on the principles of community, participation and independence, we believe that everyone has the potential to recover.

"Thank you for believing in me, accepting me, having faith in me and just being there."

Our Background

Recovery Cymru is a peer-led, mutual aid recovery community. Established in 2010, we evolved out of a single weekly support group set up in 2008. Gaining charitable status in 2011, we opened our first recovery centre and since then have helped thousands of members.

The RC Family runs from our recovery hubs, outreach and distance delivery programmes. As a founding member of the National Welsh Recovery Group, we co-wrote the recovery framework for Wales. We run training and work with providers to develop recovery focused systems.

"In those ten years, Recovery Cymru have always been the go to organisation for me."

Our Values

We believe in the reality of recovery and in the power of shared experience, and support. Our approach is based on community, participation and independence. We believe that everyone has the potential to recover from substance use problems and our activities are based upon the following principles: hope, choice, empowerment, inclusion, understanding, support, enjoyment and acceptance.

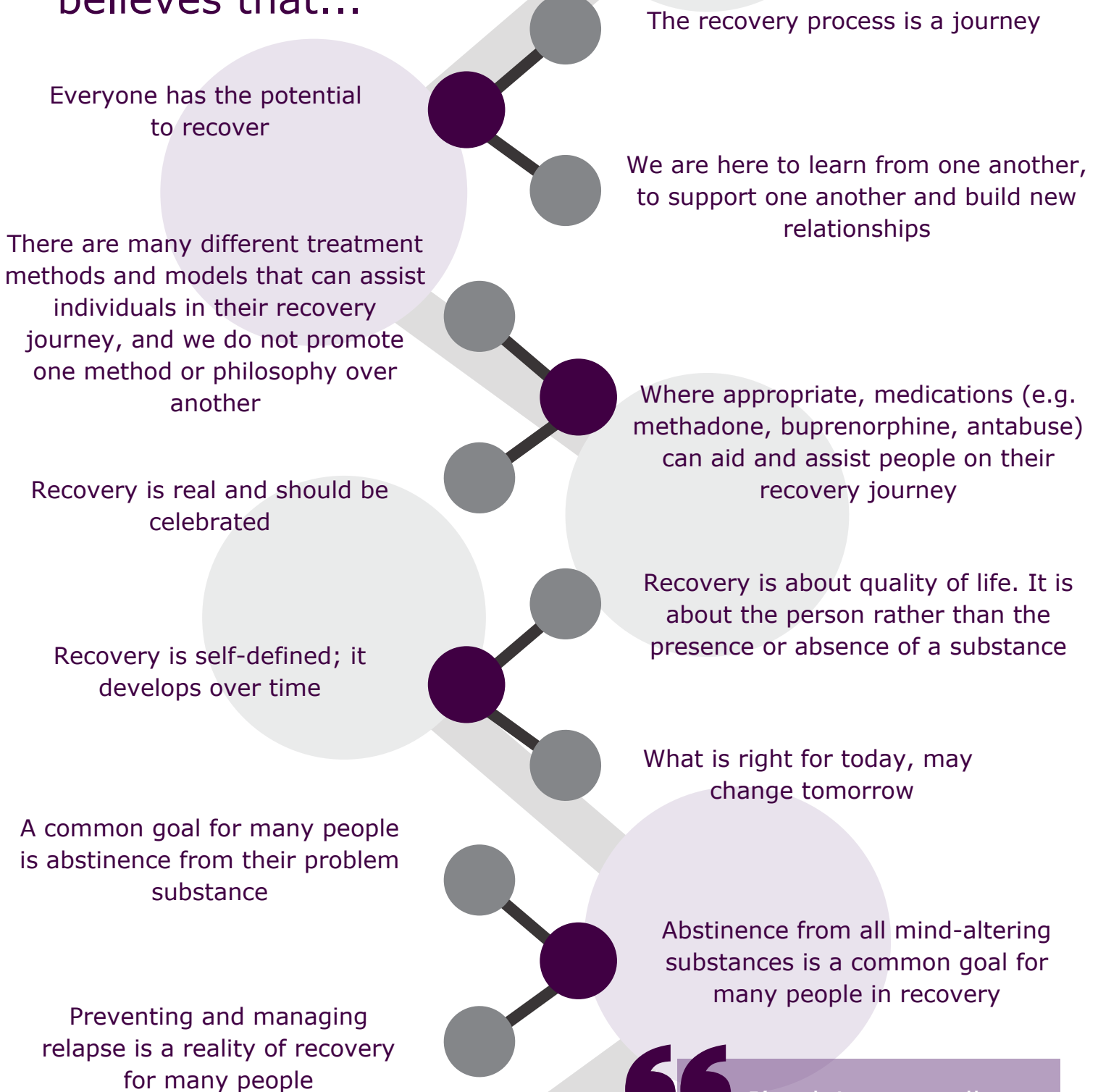
"I find the ideas I get from everyone in the groups helps my own ideas grow clearer."

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

As a peer-led, mutual aid organisation, we want to create an environment where diversity is respected, and differences valued. Underpinned by a focus on inclusion and empowerment, we commit to reflect the diversity and intersectionality of the communities we work with, and to seek to understand and connect with those we don't. We are committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity and inclusion in the way we deliver our support ensuring that our members, volunteers, staff and trustees feel a sense of belonging and can be their authentic selves.

The Recovery Cymru Philosophy

Recovery Cymru believes that...



“ I’m doing so well, and thanks to Recovery Cymru, I’ve got a tool bag that helps me manage my thoughts, feelings & emotions. ”

Founding and Enduring Principles of Recovery Cymru

We are a community, not a service

Life (and recovery) happens 365 days per year, so we are available 365 days per year

The Recovery Cymru organisation enables 'the magic to happen', the community is where it is at

Our people are members, not service users

We all have strengths. Sometimes we can't always see them. Recovery Cymru helps you to see them

Community, connection and social networks are key

We are Member led

Our activities are informed by our members, we respond to needs and opportunities

We are independent whilst working closely with services

We offer a social learning environment

We have a flat hierarchy

Recovery's got to be worth it – quality of life matters!

Why is a Flat Hierarchy Important?

The Individual

Volunteers

Staff

Members

We are committed to our 'flat hierarchy' which builds our community spirit and culture. For us, this means we value each individual equally, whether they have been with us one day or ten years; whether they are stable in their recovery or in the early stages; staff, volunteer, member.

Our ethos promotes shared understanding, respect and care. We encourage our people to find their voice and we listen to what they have to say. This means our people are invested in, cared for and passionate about our work.

They truly believe in what we are doing and help us do it. We also recognise that to lead and run an effective organisation, we need people in leadership and management roles that hold key responsibilities and authority.

“There is nobody you can't talk to. Everybody is available. Everyone is valued. We have involvement and inclusion throughout the organisation. Recovery Cymru is special because of the staff and culture - not the model.”

The Recovery Cymru members are the essential elements that build up the recovery community.

Members feedback that the ability to be open and honest about their past has help their recovery the most. Having connections with other members, noticing their fellow members' improvements and the similarities in their journeys is therapeutic for the members. They were humbled hearing others stories and their challenges. Having people around, who have similar problems and issues is important for members' recovery.

The diversity of members' backgrounds and experiences and hearing the many different routes to recovery is an interesting feature of the community for many members.

Offering a welcoming, comfortable atmosphere in a nice, well decorated space with good friendly people and an open-door policy, provides the environment for this approach to flourish.

Members feel part of something. They feel trusted, not judged, being challenged to grow, being hopeful, and being human. Listening is a valued and crucial part of our approach which members love. They feel they have not been listened to properly before.

Our Approach

The Recovery Cymru approach has a number of component parts which are essential for the approach to work: the members themselves, the peer support and the environment.

Members

"It's so easy to be honest here! - I'm not afraid of you knowing things that went badly or things I want to happen - I know you want good stuff for me too."

Environment

Peer Support

"You show people how to do it, you don't just tell them, you're living examples."

The peer element, 'experts by experience' with everyone around being able to personally relate to experiences of recovery, is in many members' experience the central feature of the Recovery Cymru approach.

If people need support they do not need to wait. There is someone there from the moment they call or the moment they walk through the door who listen. Receiving peer support from the moment they get in touch even though the individual may not be aware of this at the time.

Peer-led and Peer Informed

Recovery Cymru peers:

- Act as group facilitators
- Take the role of recovery buddies
- Offer 1:1 support and recovery coaching
- 'Meet and greet' people in the community, offering hope through their lived experience
- Give talks and raise awareness
- Help run our programmes

Working with our peers for Recovery Cymru members is special and can be transformational. It compliments other support available. Based on social connection, peer support is 'real life'.

Recovery Cymru believes we can all relate to the process of recovery. We have more in common than that which separates us. We welcome all people, as staff, volunteers, trustees and students. Peer-informed allies of the recovery community play an important part. People who share our values and are able to relate their experiences to the recovery process, be that mental health, life's hardships, difficult events or the challenges life can throw at us. Together, we make up the Recovery Cymru family.

"I always appreciate your kindness and honesty in reflecting things back to me."

"Peer support works! I was running on empty but feel refreshed for being in group today."



Lived Experience
Raise Awareness
Recovery Coaching
Group Facilitators
Mutual Aid
1:1 Support
Community & Connection

Everything we do, whether run by people with lived experience or other members of the Recovery Cymru family, is peer-informed.

For us, this means our programmes are created using the expertise of people with lived experience of recovery, be that formal or informal; experiential; needs-based or sharing opinions and ideas.

The voices of our members, past and present, as well as responding to the needs and opportunities we see around us drive all our programmes, including peer support, staff wellbeing, volunteering, partnerships, training and resources.

"Lived experience is our capital to be used to enhance the experience of the [recovery] community."

"The peer support model is good – our lived experience is very important, as it helps members' barriers to come down."

Our Peers: The Power of Lived Experience

Our peers, staff and volunteers are the beating heart of our community. We are proud of our peer development, training and support model. We want our programmes to be recognised. Accreditation and endorsement is part of this.

Nurturing, skills development, opportunity, experience, reciprocal respect, and being at the forefront of standards and best practice are key to our approach. Each strand has been developed and is delivered by people who can remember what it's like to be on day one of change, as well as the needs of those in long term recovery.

Whether our peers stay a month, year or decade their contribution is invaluable and each one has played a part in the bigger RC story. We are a place peers can return to, to tell stories of recovery adventures. Working with others to support peer leaders, peer supporters, and Live Experience. We are also excited to work with other Lived Experience Recovery Organisations (LERO) to create and share quality standards.

Purpose and opportunity

Building the peer workforce through participation: volunteers, staff, trustees

Helping others while helping ourselves



What Our Peer Family Do

- A community, a family
- Meeting people at their point of need
- Hope, belief, understanding, inspiration, no judgement
- You can't kid a kidder!
- Coaching
- Groups
- Check ins
- Buddying
- Running our centres
- Outreach
- Walking alongside someone through treatment
- Engaging with the community
- Talks and awareness raising



What We Do: Recovery Community Activities

The Magic
Of RC
=
The RC
Family

▶ Recovery centres

▶ Mutual aid
& peer groups

▶ Aftercare

▶ 1:1 Support

▶ Social networking

▶ Meaningful activities in
the community

▶ Discovering passion

▶ Rehab in the
community

▶ Relapse support

▶ Social learning

▶ Medication assisted
recovery

▶ Volunteering

365 days
a year

Change is
possible for
everyone

No
judgement

Staff

Volunteers

Members

The
Wider RC
Family

Referrers

Graduates

Friends of RC

Partners



“

A person in recovery isn't alone – there's so much shared identity

”



Positive Impact on Society for the Individual...

£26,124

Relief from drug/alcohol problems

£20,141

Improvements in physical health

£36,776

Relief from anxiety and depression

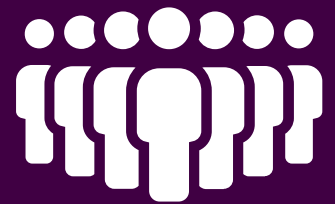
(IA, 2020)

How do we quantify the value of recovery? Recovery has huge value, social and financial, for individuals in recovery, those closest to them and society. We know what we do makes a difference. We see it and our members tell us so.

We want to join other Lived Experience Recovery Organisations, academics and policy makers to contribute to research, creating an evidence base of what we do, and how it works.

“ I realised I had a choice in what my recovery/life was going to be about. ”

We take estimates from social value banks and are delighted to contribute to these positive changes.



1 in 7 adults in Wales drink 14 units of alcohol every single day

1 in 11 adults have used drugs in the past year



Alcohol is attributed to more than 200 types of chronic disease, accidents and injuries (SROI)

People

Voices

Community

Partnerships

Learning
and
development

Connection

Innovation

Growth

Since 2010 we have achieved a great deal and are proud of the work and efforts undertaken by all. But there's more to be done. We aim to be an environmentally minded organisation, that has a bright and sustainable future, so we can continue to help those across South Wales and beyond.

"I know now that finding the joy in my recovery is critical to my future stability."

"When we are stuck in a rut we are being invited to grow and expand."

The current climate presents a number of challenges – from securing finance and funding, responding to Covid and its after effects, through to destigmatising the effects of alcohol and drug misuse. Our strategy seeks to address these issues, so by March 2026 we will have made significant strides to becoming a self-supporting, engaged organisation.