

THE RECOVERY COLLEGE GAZETTE

December 2025

Connectedness Hope and Optimism Identity Meaning and Purpose Empowerment

Principal's Message



Kerry

Principal

As winter arrives, it gives us a chance to pause and reflect—not just on the season, but on the progress each of you have made.

Winter reminds us that growth often happens quietly, beneath the surface. Even when things feel still, change is taking place. Every step you've taken this term—whether attending a course, sharing your story, or simply showing up—has been a step towards recovery and hope.

Recovery is not a straight path; it's a journey with ups and downs, so remember every effort matters and celebrate the courage you have shown by choosing to learn, connect, and invest in yourselves. That takes strength, and it deserves recognition.

2025 has seen amazing growth in the Recovery College with increasing student numbers and more students accessing our face to face courses delivered in our bases. Seeing the Recovery community grow and our students thrive and strive towards their goals, shows how every course delivered, every conversation and every act of kindness or compassion really matters and contributes to someone's recovery story, I am so proud to be part of that journey with you all.



Reflecting on my highlights of the term there are always so many, however celebrating The Recovery College 10 year anniversary, seeing our curriculum develop and grow with new courses like Nature prescribing and seeing our Moodle pilot progress with the aim of launching our new digital learning system early 2026, have got to be spotlighted.

As we look ahead to the New Year, remember: recovery is possible, and learning is a powerful tool. Keep setting small goals, keep reaching out, and keep believing in your ability to grow. Thank you to all, our Students, volunteers, staff, partners and stakeholders for being part of the Recovery College community. May this winter bring you peace, reflection, and renewed hope for the year ahead.

The New Year is full of opportunities, and we are here to help you explore them.

Best Wishes

Kerry



Celebrating 10 Years of the Recovery College

In September, the Recovery College reached it's tenth year! To celebrate we reached out to key figures from the Trust to ask them:

What value does The Recovery College bring to Black Country Healthcare and the wider community?

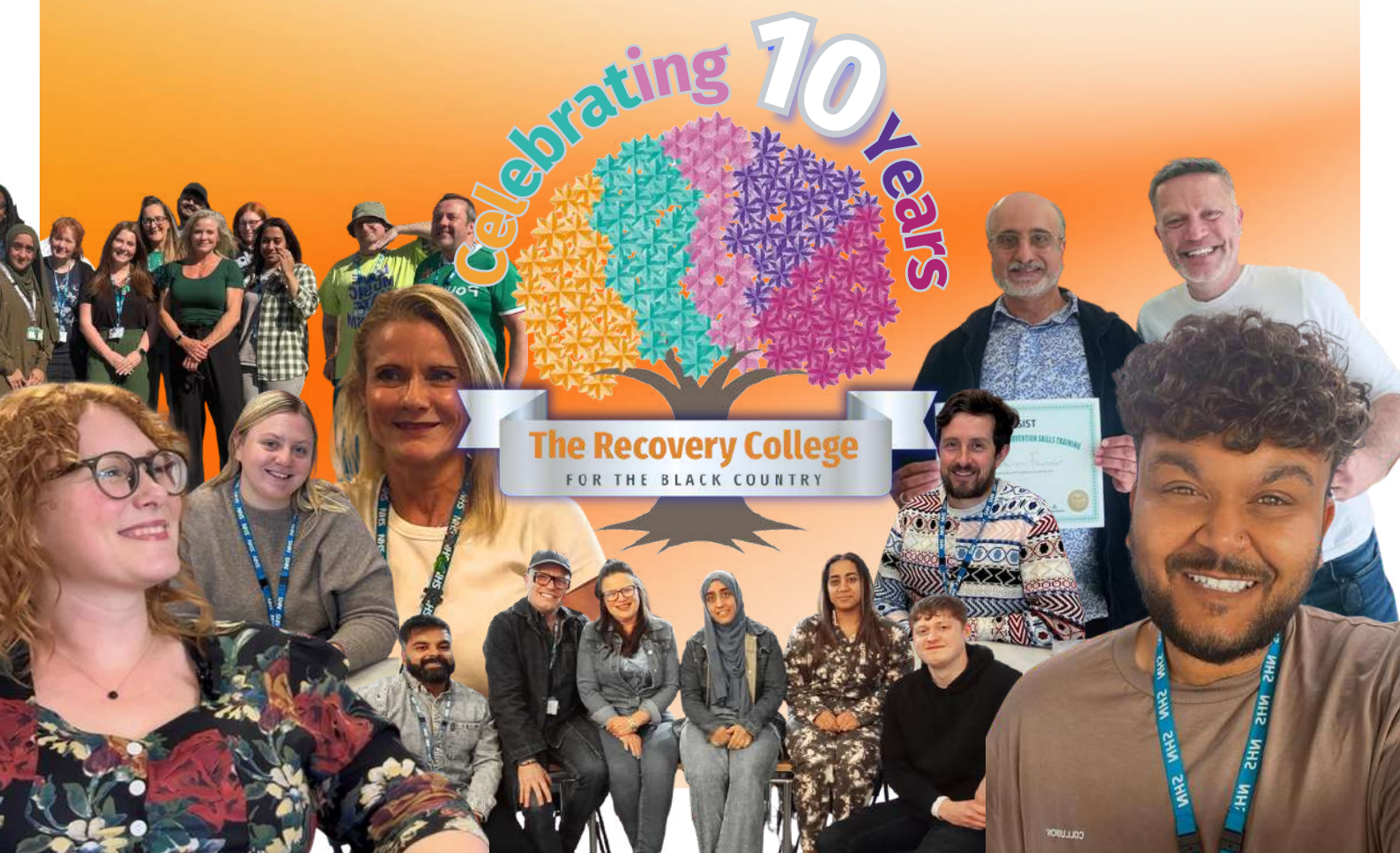
Interviewees included:

Melvena Anderson, Deputy Director at Black Country Healthcare NHS Trust, Kuli Kaur Wilson, Chief Strategy and Partnerships Officer, Kerry Wilkes, Principal at the RC, Stevie Chand and Liane Howe, Deputy Principals, Carolyn Green, Chief Nursing Officer and Emma Louis, Spiritual Care Lead. These interviews have now been published via our YouTube page. **Search for RecoverycollegeBC** on YouTube!

<https://www.youtube.com/@RecoveryCollegeBC>

In addition we have worked with our students who attend our ever-popular Recover Together Sessions to co-produce bespoke pieces of art for each of our bases and online, to celebrate CHIME. We will be unveiling these at the end of term celebration on 19th December, which we hope you can attend.

Thank you to everyone who has made the college the fantastic place it is today!



Winter Connections

Spending time in nature is really important for our wellbeing and connecting to nature improves mood, reduces feeling of stress, helps people to feel more relaxed, improves physical health, improves sleep quality, reduces loneliness and improves confidence and self-esteem.

Enjoy the shape of trees without their leaves, look out for leaf skeletons, the remnants of last year's beauty. Look at the lines in your hands - can you see these shapes repeated in the branches?

Look up some nature writing or poetry online. Nature writers include: Mary Oliver, Wendell Berry, John Muir, John Clare, Ogden Nash, Robin Wall Kimmerer

For more information, please contact the college on 0121 543 4061 or email: info@therecoverycollege.co.uk



The Recovery College
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Information Sessions with our Marketing Team

These sessions are run face to face from Quayside House in Oldbury, or you can join us online via Zoom!

Our friendly marketing team will discuss our incredible range of courses, where we are based across the Black Country, our socials plus so much more...

11am - 12pm, Quayside House, Oldbury

29th January 2026

26th February

26th March

30th April



For more information and booking:
Telephone: 0121 543 4061
Email: info@therecoverycollege.co.uk

moodle

is coming!

After our successful Pilot with Recovery College students, in January we will be launching our Moodle platform! This will give our students access to:

- 24 hour learning**
- Additional learning resources**
- Video based courses**
- Online notice board**
- Access course resources**
- Space for reflection**
- Calendar function**

Contact the college on 0121 543 4061 or email: info@therecoverycollege.co.uk to express your interest in joining



Log in

[Lost password?](#)

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Coping with Christmas

If you struggle with mental health over the festive period, here are a couple of hints and tips to help you improve your Christmas experience.

- **Embrace and accept it.**
- There will be reminders on the TV, radio, shops, your friends and family, everywhere. Try the following:



- Do Christmas your way!
- Put a couple of decorations up – cheap and cheerful is the way to go!



- Be proactive in making the event special for you... special food, a new top, treat yourself. You are worth it!
- It's ok to review who you buy for when you're on a tight budget.
- Buy gifts from charity shops or make your own gifts.

- Starting early will reduce your anxiety and feeling 'rushed'.
- If you don't want to meet in person or don't fancy the Christmas crowds you can still reach family and friends via WhatsApp, Skype, Zoom, telephone call chats or meet ups
- If you're alone on Christmas day, plan your day around yourself and do things that make you happy. Make your own Christmas.



- *Lastly...Be kind to yourself*

We want to hear from you!

To make either an informal or formal complaint, please contact the Recovery College using the contact methods as detailed below:

☎ 0121 543 4061 or 07979 199 991

✉ The Recovery College
Quayside House
Rounds Green Road
Oldbury
B69 2DG

✉ info@therecoverycollege.co.uk.

If after following the above process, you are not happy with how your complaint has been actioned or dealt with, please contact the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Service Experience Desk (SED) which is the central point of contact for all complaints, compliments and feedback.

The Service Experience Desk
Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm.

Freephone: 0800 587 7720

E-mail: sed.bchft@nhs.net

Post: Freepost RRRG-BBTC-UKSE

Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Service Experience Desk

Trafalgar House

47-49 King Street

Dudley DY2 8PS

Your
feedback
matters!

You can feedback to us
through a telephone
conversation, by sending a
text, a pre-planned Zoom
meeting or by sending an
email.

YouTube **FIND US...**

We have a fantastic YouTube channel where you will find student testimonials, Recovery College activities and so much more. Please subscribe below to keep up to date with everything we're doing.

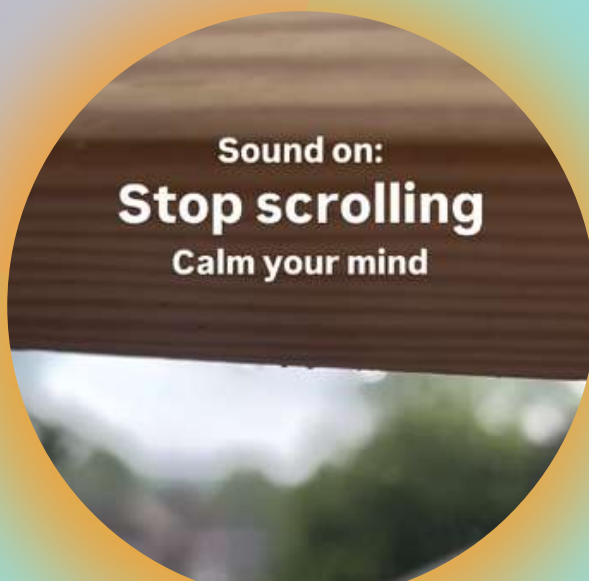


SUBSCRIBE

@RecoveryCollegeBC



Be on the lookout for our new base tour videos, mindfulness and nature prescribing shorts and of course our 10 Year Anniversary interviews!



Join our Facebook and Instagram pages for updates, opportunities, community news and national awareness days.

facebook.com/therecoverycollegeBCHFT

www.instagram.com/recoverycollegebc



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Recovery College Hall of Fame



Help in a Crisis

Quick Reference Guide

If you feel like you need to access face to face support out of usual mental health service hours then you can visit the **Sanctuary Hubs**, available within each of the boroughs of the Black Country.

Opening Times:

Monday – Friday 6 – 11pm; and Saturday and Sunday 12noon – 11pm

Locations:

Dudley Sanctuary Hub: DY1 Community Centre, Stafford Street, Dudley, DY1 1SA

Sandwell Sanctuary Hub: Hope Place, 321 High Street, West Bromwich, B70 8LU

Walsall Sanctuary Hub: 1 Queen's Parade, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 2EX

Wolverhampton Sanctuary Hub: 84 Salop Street, Wolverhampton, WV3 0SR

No referral is required. **You must be aged 18+ and have lived in or be registered with a GP in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall or Wolverhampton.**

The Sanctuary Hubs can provide emotional support to those in distress, in need of reassurance or at times when people need to be listened to most.

You can also access telephone support via calling NHS 111 and selecting Option 2.

Other helpful numbers:

Samaritans: 116 123

Papyrus: 0800 068 4141

Mind: 0300 102 1234

ReThink: 0808 801 0525



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