



Recovery Devon Development Day

Meet-ups like our Development Day are part of our staying connected to local communities. These meet-ups are open to all and give us an opportunity both to let people know what we're doing and hear from people about what they or their communities need or currently offer.

Our most recent meeting on the 9th December 2019 was very well attended and brought out some exciting possibilities for future projects and collaborations.

These are a few brief notes. If you'd like to know more about any of these ideas and projects do get in touch.

Suggestions for what Recovery Devon should do:

Keep different perspectives in mind

Importance of remembering the history and origins of the recovery movement and of Recovery Devon

- To remain connected to the founding principles
- To remember what has worked well in the past

International dimensions

Value and compare the experience of receiving services and experience of delivering services

- The view from "both sides of the counter"

Story-telling, a way to enable different voices to be heard

Be led/guided by the voice of lived experience

Its authority

Its authenticity

Remain connected to mainstream services while remaining independent

Work more closely with DPT

Remain a "critical friend" to DPT despite the fact that RD is DPT-funded

Be aware of the risk of losing the original force and impetus of recovery as a civil rights movement

Foster connections within the Recovery Community

By extending a broad invitation to development meetings like this

Be clear what the Recovery Community is, who is part of it, how it is changing

Distinguish between "communities of interest" and "communities of place"

Be adaptable and responsive

Sharing stories in different ways, via different media

- Stories offer resonance and companionship
- Stories can create new connections from an experience which is inherently disconnecting

Social media

- For example, conversations sparked off by live-tweeting at conference
- See also: Development Fund

Make events as accessible as possible

- Information in advance about the format and participation expected
- acceptance of some people's difficulties with getting out and taking advantage of community opportunities
- buddy system to accompany people to events
- web and social media
 - o bringing news and connections into people's homes
 - o creating a community which is welcoming and easy to engage with because of comparative distance and anonymity
 - o sharing music/art/film

Create new opportunities for recovery

Development Fund

- Has created new connections, one project leads to another
- Has revealed the depth of resource within communities

Continue to reach out beyond Recovery Devon's existing connections

Be optimistic, hopeful and ambitious (but realistic, see below)

Be realistic in its aims

With new ventures, start small and develop based on what is working

Ensure that roles are not too demanding

- Shared responsibilities
- Flexible, adaptable commitments
- Acceptance that everyone will "do what they can do"
- Be aware of the need to balance activities with what people have to do to stay well

Careful and discerning use of IT

- As a useful tool, not an end in itself

Careful and discerning use of stories and storytelling

- How an individual's story can change
- How stories do not resonate with everyone

Possible new directions for RD

Training for volunteers

Continue and develop peer support work

- A lot of interest shown in peer support groups at the meeting

Signposting, bridging between services and people in need

- Eg, someone to sit and chat in cafes and in community venues with information about community opportunities
- Offer specific guidance

More support for family and carers

RD to take up opportunities in radio

- A slot on existing radio shows
- Mental-health-specific programming along the lines of "My Favourite Things" or "The Listening Project"

- Another way for people to share their stories
- Music playlists

Promote and extend the “community of storytellers”

- Use expertise gained in publishing *Beyond the Storms and Riding the Storms*

Support and create new courses within DRLC

Promote RD and make it more widely known

Support for people to stay in work

Themes of discussion in the meeting:

Examples of what works well in your community

Exeter Wellbeing group, Beacon Hill

- Welcoming, informal, relaxed, calm

Dementia café run by Bradninch Methodist Church

- Hospitable, local, people know each other
- Brings whole community together
- Creates spontaneous opportunities for volunteers

aDoddle.org – connected collaborative community mapping

- Creates map of local community opportunities

Happy to Share cards

- Showing benefits beyond elderly community, eg young mums and families

What are the barriers to engagement with community opportunities or mental health services?

“Learned helplessness” – experiences of services which are delayed or inappropriate

Reaching out to the “hard-to-reach” people who have difficulty leaving their homes

For volunteers: people may be afraid of taking on an open-ended or overwhelming commitment