

CAMBRIDGESHIRE RECOVERY SERVICE

LED BY THOSE IN RECOVERY

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CAMBRIDGESHIRE RECOVERY SERVICE STAFF NOMINATED FOR WISBECH UNSUNG HEROES AWARD.

We are thrilled to announce that two of our dedicated team members, Emma and Bex, have been nominated for the 'Community Hero' Award at the Wisbech Unsung Heroes Awards 2025, hosted by Wisbech Town Council and supported by Fenland Citizen.

This recognition highlights their exceptional contributions to the community of Wisbech and their unwavering commitment to helping others through their recovery journey.

A Commitment to the Community

Emma and Bex have been integral to the success of Cambridgeshire Recovery Service (CRS) and its mission to provide support and care for individuals affected by drug and alcohol dependency. Their passion for creating positive change in the lives of others extends beyond their professional roles, as they have continually gone above and beyond to serve the Wisbech community with compassion and dedication.

Emma and Bex are known for their hands-on approach, offering guidance, support, and a listening ear to those who need it most. Whether they're assisting members of our recovery community in their individual process or supporting community initiatives, their impact on the lives of others is immeasurable.

Recognition for Their Hard Work

The Wisbech Unsung Heroes Awards seek to recognize those who go the extra mile to make a difference in the community, often without seeking recognition for their efforts.

Emma and Bex's nomination is a testament to their tireless work, unwavering support for individuals recovering from substance dependency, and their ongoing efforts to foster a healthier, more connected Wisbech. Their dedication and hard work have not only changed lives within our recovery service but have positively impacted the wider community. We are incredibly proud of them, and this nomination is so well-deserved.

Celebrating their achievements

The awards ceremony took place on 25th January, where a panel of judges announced the winners. Regardless of the outcome, Cambridgeshire Recovery Service couldn't be prouder of Emma and Bex and their dedication to improving the lives of others in the Fenland community.

Their work is an inspiration to all of us, and we are grateful for the chance to celebrate their achievements alongside the Wisbech community.

Please join us in congratulating Emma and Bex on this well-deserved nomination!



A GRADUATE'S PERSPECTIVE OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

The Foundations of Life (FOL) programme has proven to be a life-changing experience for many individuals on their recovery journey.

Foundations of Life (FOL) is the final stage of the Foundations of Recovery programme. FOL offers individuals a comprehensive and transformative experience designed to cement their personal growth.

Jo, our FOL facilitator, explains: "FOL is offered to clients who have reached a stable place in their recovery. The subjects we explore range from beauty within and around us to the importance of community and self-compassion. FOL helps participants reinforce their hard work and achievements. We work through the grief we face around substance use and celebrate the acceptance and commitment clients have achieved in their recovery."

Participants have shared the profound impact FOL has had on their lives. By focusing on key areas such as self-compassion, community connection, and effective feedback, the programme empowers individuals to embrace their potential. One particularly inspiring story comes from a former participant who, after completing the programme, now works for Change Grow Live, using her experience to support others on their recovery journey.

Starting from Scratch

"Attending a group called 'Foundations for Life' may sound a bit strange to some, if like me, you have lived on this earth for quite some time," she shares. "However, as someone who had come into recovery from an alcohol dependency that had stripped me of anything positive in life, leaving me only the negatives, I was quite literally starting my



life from scratch, despite my biological age."

She emphasizes the importance of change, growth, and ultimately living a fulfilling life. She acknowledges how the programme helped her take small, meaningful steps toward recovery, which in turn led to tremendous personal growth and an "amazing life."

A Solid Foundation for a New Life

Reflecting on her experience, she describes the FOL programme as "interesting, informative, and fun" with a strong focus on sustainable, positive change. "The potential for positive and permanent change was clearly emphasized as we were gently guided through each session. I knew that this was something I had to work at in order to be healthy, but the difference in my attitude, now I no longer existed for my next drink, was that I wanted to work at it."

She credits the programme with igniting a hunger for knowledge and serving as a stepping stone in her recovery journey. "The course offered what I most needed, a solid foundation on which to build my new and precious life."

Addressing Deeper Issues

Beyond addiction, she faced trauma and childhood abuse—issues she had never fully addressed. "I didn't realize what was wrong, but alcohol made it

"THE COURSE TAUGHT ME TO BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR MYSELF AND MY ACTIONS: I HAD BECOME 'COMFORTABLE' IN MY VICTIM ROLE, BUT NO MORE, THAT PERSON NO LONGER EXISTS."

better... until it didn't! Having completed the Foundations of Change course, I engaged with a wonderful counsellor and I was able to work at becoming well, instead of waiting to be fixed." Completing the FOL course enabled her to seek counselling and adopt a proactive approach to becoming well. "The course taught me that I was a person of value, that I mattered, and that it was OK to be me."

She credits the programme with helping her break free from unhealthy co-dependency and people-pleasing tendencies, allowing her to take accountability for her life and actions. "The course taught me to be accountable for myself and my actions: I had become 'comfortable' in my victim role, but no more, that person no longer exists."

Restoring Self-Worth

"In addiction, we lose many things such as jobs, relationships, children, driving licenses, our freedom, respect from others... The list is endless. For me, the biggest losses were self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-belief," she explains. The FOL programme signposted her toward self-worth, which she describes as "truly liberating."

She found the courage to reclaim her identity, pursuing a career that brought her joy and surrounding herself with people who shared her values. "For years I had changed myself to fit in with jobs that were expected of me, but now I have a fulfilling and purposeful full-time job that I love. I may have lost or had to let go of relationships, but I have

forged firm friendships with those who share my interests and values."

A Life Transformed

Since embarking on her recovery journey, she has rebuilt her life in remarkable ways.

"I have enjoyed a beautiful relationship with my daughter, I have a home I can call my own, and I was approved for a modest mortgage." She also celebrates having a reliable car and, most importantly, a newfound sense of independence and contentment. "I happily live alone because I choose to do so. I enjoy being me and need no one else to 'complete' me."

Looking Back with Gratitude

She attributes much of her success and happiness to the Foundations of Life course. "The course was the catalyst for my transformational recovery, and I look back on it with much fondness and gratitude." Her journey stands as a testament to the profound impact the programme can have on individuals seeking to rebuild their lives.

For anyone considering the FOL programme, her story serves as an inspiring example of how a solid foundation, coupled with dedication and support, can lead to a fulfilling and purpose-driven life.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR
FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE PROGRAMME CONTACT
CAMBRIDGESHIRE RECOVERY SERVICE AT:
CRS@CGL.ORG.UK.**

HEARTWARMING CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS ACROSS OUR RECOVERY CAFES

Wisbech Christmas Celebration

A fantastic group of Cambridgeshire Recovery Service volunteers truly brought the Christmas spirit to life at our Wisbech Recovery Café, hosting a festive celebration like no other.

John and Kayleigh worked together to prepare and serve a delicious Christmas feast, ensuring that over 30 people enjoyed a warm and welcoming meal. Despite the challenge of the Wisbech kitchen being closed for refurbishment over Christmas, the team pulled off an incredible feast using air fryers, plate warmers, and plenty of creative thinking. Jenna and Caroline played a vital role in running the session, making sure everything ran smoothly and everyone felt included in the celebrations. What the team accomplished on December 17th was nothing short of extraordinary. Through their hard work and collaboration, they not only delivered a memorable Christmas meal but also demonstrated the power of community spirit.

To make this event possible, Kayleigh reached out to local businesses for support. We are incredibly grateful to Farmfoods, who generously donated a voucher to help cover the cost of the dinner. Thanks to Kayleigh's initiative, this generous contribution helped bring the volunteers' vision to life.

March Christmas Celebration

Over in March, Caroline hosted an engaging Christmas trivia game and a higher-or-lower challenge, bringing plenty of festive cheer to the café. In addition, she delighted attendees by gifting March Cafe with her special Christmas sensory bags, which included her famous Christmas critters—an adorable touch that added to the holiday magic.



Crafting and Creativity Across Cambridgeshire

Thea from Change Grow Live made a generous donation of craft supplies, allowing us to roll out additional wreath making activities across Wisbech, Huntingdon and Cambridge. This added a creative and hands-on element to our festive celebrations, giving participants a chance to make their own holiday decorations and enjoy the spirit of the season.

Christmas Quizzes

Throughout our cafés, Christmas quizzes were a big hit, bringing people together for laughter and friendly rivalry. Special thanks go to Kayleigh for leading the Wisbech quiz, and our Quiz Master Mark at Huntingdon, who runs his infamous weekly quiz at Free Flow Friday, keeping the spirit of fun alive all year round.

Free Flow Friday Festivities in Huntingdon

In Huntingdon, our Change Grow Live Aspire crew joined us for a lively Free Flow Friday event, filled with arts, creativity, and delicious Christmas sandwiches. The highlight? A fiercely contested quiz where Aspire managed to snatch the Quiz Cup from us! But fear not—we're already planning our comeback. We're calling all quiz enthusiasts to join the Huntingdon Free Flow Friday quiz team and help us bring that trophy back home!



COUNCILLOR JAMES EDWARDS SECURES TWO LAPTOPS FOR WISBECH CRS

We'd like to extend a huge thank you to Councillor James Edwards for his recent contribution of securing two laptops for Wisbech CRS Recovery Cafe that will make a significant difference to our community.



We would like to extend our gratitude to Councillor James Edwards. Understanding the challenges of digital exclusion—an issue we've worked to address through our partnership with Changing Futures—Cllr James Edwards sourced and arranged the donation of these laptops, which will be available for use by café members. His efforts in sourcing two laptops from Blyth Autos, with the kind delivery by Simon Goodchild, will be available for use by members of our recovery community at the Wisbech Recovery Café.

Once set up with the necessary software and internet access, these laptops will provide an invaluable resource for individuals who don't have access to computers. Whether it's learning basic online skills, staying connected with the digital world, filling out important forms, making applications, or simply keeping up with the latest updates on platforms like YouTube, these laptops will offer vital tools to support personal development and a crucial step toward empowerment and independence.

Councillor Edwards' generosity and commitment to supporting recovery and inclusion have not gone unnoticed, and we deeply appreciate his contribution to fostering positive change in our community.

Pictured: Emma and Bex receiving laptops donated by Blyth Autos delivered by Simon Goodchild.



CAMBRIDGE Garden Gate Recovery Cafe

WEDNESDAYS | 12PM-3PM

**COFFEE • BREAKFAST • SOCIAL • GAMES
• CREATIVE INSTINCT (ARTS) • SUPPORT • ACUPUNCTURE**

Located in the group room - access through the blue gate on Mill Road.

CAFE START DATE: 12th FEBRUARY 2025

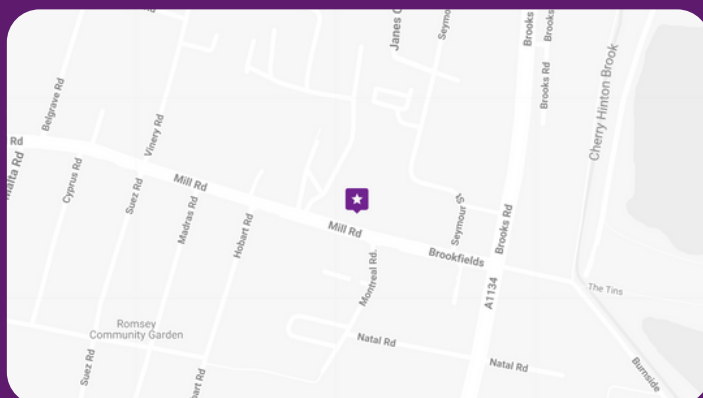
Led by those in *recovery*



Provided by



**Change
Grow
Live**



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