



# BUCKS RECOVERY COLLEGE NEWSLETTER - February 2021

**Welcome to the first publication of Buckinghamshire Recovery Newsletter in which students will be provided with information and updates within the college.**

## The Bucks Recovery College Steering Group

The Bucks recovery college steering group was set up in February 2020. The purpose of the steering group is to bring together key stakeholders to ensure we are providing a locally responsive, transparent, co-produced educational setting for service users, carers and staff to learn together, and from each other, how to support their own and others recovery.

The group has some decision-making powers regarding local delivery. We have great representation from our students, carers, peer tutors, professional tutors and our recovery college lead Paul Wells and coordinator Andrew Mutandwa. We also have Gurav Salhotra; team manager and the group is chaired by Emma Croft, who is the AHP lead for specialised services.

Since we began meeting all of our meetings have been via Microsoft Teams video calls, so some of us are yet to meet in person! The group is really committed and we continue to meet monthly. We have been using the RECOLLECT fidelity measure for recovery colleges to help in reviewing our services and this has led to a number of key pieces of work to ensure that our college is staying true to recovery college principles. Some of the developments from the steering group have included the introduction of a quality assurance board to review any new courses and some work redefining roles of the team members.

We are also working on ways to increase involvement in the college from professional tutors. We are happy to share our work and am hoping that via our newsletter we can share all our developments at the college

## Monthly Team Spotlight



*1 - Paul Wells – Acting Head of Recovery College*

My name is Paul Wells, and I am the Acting Head of Buckinghamshire Recovery College. I am, a Registered Mental Health Nurse by training and have extensive experience of working in Acute and Forensic Ward settings, Community Alcohol and Substance Misuse services and community adult mental health services.

I'm proud to have the opportunity to work with Lived Experience Tutors and professionals to co-produce and facilitate courses to students. Sharing my knowledge and experience with students, staff and carers in order to provide a College-setting which inspires, educates and builds resilience, courage and fortitude is a highly rewarding.

Buckinghamshire Recovery College provides meaningful courses which enable, empower and provide hope through education. In a safe setting which is not only empathic but where unconditional positive regard and congruence are key.

Due to COVID 19 Buckinghamshire Recovery College is providing on-line courses to students to help them connect with others, provide hope, control and opportunity.

The college is open to Service Users, carers, and professionals. I hope that the courses available will empower and enable students to develop and forge a connection within the community setting where they live and re-establish their identity by their strengths, qualities, skills and assets and not be defined by their illness.

Recovery is a journey not a destination and with this in mind I hope that the college will be the guiding compass where students can learn to plan, navigate, and consolidate new and existing tools to help successfully navigate their journey

## Artscape Recovery College Course



### **ARTSCAPE RECOVERY COURSE - ART FOR WELLBEING**

Artscape have recently co-produced two courses for Buckinghamshire Recovery College. Working with Maya and Heide from the college, Tom Cox the Artscape project manager developed a five-week course of workshops run remotely on Teams exploring the benefits of art for mental wellbeing based around the five ways to wellbeing.

The course was practical based, and students were set a task to complete each week. Students would share their work and discuss it as a group at the next session. The course was designed to stimulate



participants' creativity, provide enjoyment, distraction, and fun. The groups are always warm and welcoming and offers an opportunity to connect with other people and take part in interactive artmaking.

The group explored the five ways to wellbeing and learned how art can be used to achieve them. Each week focused on a different theme, distraction or experimentation for example.

The students were given examples to look at and new ideas were introduced or demonstrated followed by discussion and a chance to share and ask questions.

The tutors provided worksheets and mindfulness activities during the workshops, for example mindful looking or the benefits of repetition. The tutors also drew on examples and experiences from their own life and practice to illustrate these ideas.





## **MANDAL AND HAIKU**

The theme of the course was *Mandala and Haiku*.

The word mandala literally means circle and the students explored the origins and history of the mandala before starting to create their own. Students explored different ways of making mandala using a variety of materials.

Haiku is a short form of Japanese poetry that has become popular around the world in many languages. Haikus are created using a set of rules stipulating the number of syllables the poem should contain. Haiku should also contain a word relating to the seasons.



