

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES****11 November 2014****Report of the Director of Public Health****DERBYSHIRE'S FIRST RECOVERY WALK 2014****1. Purpose of the report:**

To note Derbyshire's first Recovery Walk to reduce stigma and make recovery from substance misuse visible in the local community.

**2. Information and analysis:**

In 2010, the government published its drug strategy 'Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery: Supporting People to live a Drug Free Life'. Whilst previous drug strategies had focused primarily on reducing the harm caused by substances, this publication aimed to support people into recovery. Instead of substitute prescribing being the end goal, treatment was to help people build their "recovery capital" to achieve a substance-free, productive life. Recovery capital includes the things that most people take for granted such as family, employment, housing, hobbies, friendships and a sense of purpose and meaning: they are the resilience-building motivators that help people stop using substances and in turn, enable people to remain substance-free long-term.

September is designated worldwide as Recovery Month and is now in its twenty fifth year. It gives a voice to those in recovery, those who aim to be in recovery and those who work hard to try to help people achieve recovery. It encourages visible recovery in communities, reducing stigma and raising awareness that a substance-free life is a possibility for everyone. For those still in the midst of a problem, it is invaluable for them to see visible role models demonstrating recovery is achievable.

The UK began hosting a National Recovery Walk in 2009. It provides an annual opportunity for individuals and families to walk alongside others who have had, or who are still experiencing, problems with addiction, showing living proof of long-term recovery. It was felt that some of our local residents may not be able to travel to the main event in Manchester, so it was decided to hold a Derbyshire Walk.

Many of the services commissioned by the Local Authority's Substance Misuse Commissioning Team came together to help organise the event: DAAS (Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service), Hope Springs Recovery Centre, Rhubarb Farm, Addaction, SPODA, Phoenix Futures Prison team, RIOT (Recovery Is Out There) and Action Housing, along with the commissioning team.

The walk took place in Erewash (to coincide with the Thriving Families work recently undertaken in Cotmanhay), starting from Ilkeston library, walking along the Nutbrook Trail and ending in Shipley Country Park in Heanor. Staff from the Library Service supported the event, including displays promoting recovery in four libraries across the county in Gamesley, Chesterfield, Shirebrook and Ilkeston to raise the profile of recovery services. It also encouraged individuals who may not have used library services before to spend time in a library setting. For example, Rhubarb Farm staff and volunteers are now exploring a group library ticket allowing them to borrow items for a longer period.

On Friday 19 September, twenty six service users and staff members took part. The walk took around an hour and a half to complete and at the end the walkers had tea together in the café and played football in Shipley Park. The walk encouraged people to interact with those from other services allowing them to find out what other agencies provide, both on a service user and staff level. Many positive comments about the day were made including:

- *New people, new environment, new challenge*
- *I enjoyed interacting with other services*
- *Thoroughly enjoyed every bit*
- *Must do it again next year*
- *Loved being outside on a great walking route*

Service users in recovery from Hope Springs Recovery Centre and Rhubarb Farm were interviewed by Richard Spurr from Radio Derby with these interviews being aired on his Radio Derby drive-time show. Weleda, an Ilkeston-based manufacturer of holistic cosmetic products, donated one of their products to each walker, expressing that the ethos of the walk matched the philosophy of their company.

The joint efforts and resources of the County Council, the local voluntary sector and support from a local business resulted in a highly positive event to reduce stigma and promote recovery for all. The intention is to build on these plans for Derbyshire's second Recovery Walk next year where it is hoped to encourage more people to join.

**3. Other considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

**4. Background papers:**

None

**5. Key Decision:**

No

**6. Call-in:**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

No

**7. Officer's recommendation:**

That the success of Derbyshire's first Recovery Walk be noted, along with plans to expand Recovery Month activities and events across Derbyshire in September 2015.

**Elaine Michel**  
**Director of Public Health**