

SUMMARY REPORT
Red Rose Recovery: Images of community coproduction.



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This report summarises the coproduction approach taken by [Red Rose Recovery \(Red Rose\)](#), a non-profit organisation which coproduces recovery with people affected by substance misuse and criminalisation. Coproduction involves a partnership between people who rely on services and those providing them. It can build trust and use knowledge gained by lived experience to solve problems. The people who work for *Red Rose* use their own experiences to provide inspiration, hope and practical support.

In this study, people working with and for *Red Rose* used an approach called ‘Photovoice’ to tell the story of the work. Below we draw out some themes across the images people made to explain how people experience working with and for *Red Rose*.

Theme 1: Disregard.

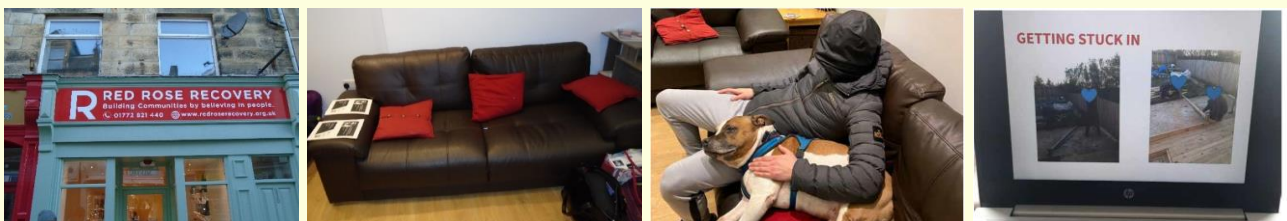
Often people felt disregarded, neglected, and abandoned by society.



People described feeling like garbage during times of crisis, in cold, dark, depressing places without love, compassion and help. These are places that are unseen, where no light shines, where people feel shame, embarrassment, and unwelcome.

Theme 2: Visible recovery

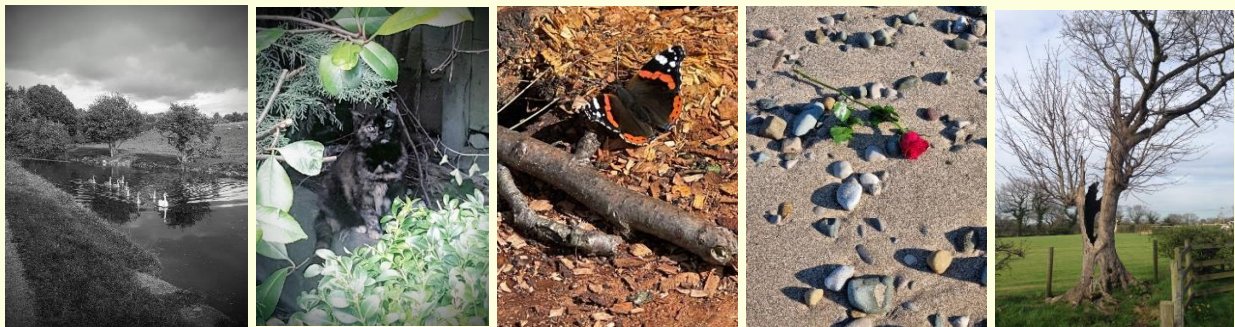
In contrast *Red Rose* offers a highly visible welcome. The bright, open centre is on a main street in the middle of town. Its sign proudly announces the work. People are welcomed to rest, to play and bond with pets, and to get involved with projects that harness their skills for the benefit of the broader community.



These welcomes and opportunities humanise people and communicate their value. There is recognition that everybody has assets, strengths, and skills, even if these are not always seen in other systems of support. At *Red Rose*, people in recovery are seen, not hidden.

Theme 3: Nature

There was also a strong theme of nature. People depicted animals, plants, waterways, and mountains. These elements represented beauty, safety, calm, belonging and healing.



Nature connected people to a sense of something bigger than themselves, it also offered peace, refuge, meditation and meaning.



There is evidence that contact with the natural world—with animals, plants, landscapes, and wilderness—can offer health benefits. *Red Rose* uses these environments, for example, organising community walks, camps, outdoor events and encouraging reflection on our relationship with the environment.

Theme 4: A journey together to autonomy (self-direction)

Finally, people talked of a *journey* taken alongside others that have taken a similar path. *Red Rose* draws on the knowledge and survival strategies of people who have experienced social exclusion to create bridges and pathways for others.



People are encouraged to support their peers in 1-1 and group relationships. Across *Red Rose* there are opportunities for people to volunteer as peer supporters and prospects for people to gain paid support and leadership roles. Role models provide a sense that change is possible and support people along the way. This shared journey helps people to move from feeling *powerless* over addiction to *powerful together* over addiction.

Conclusion

This small, visual study found that **in contexts of pain, shame, exclusion and disconnection, coproduced services can offer a visible example and welcome, valued relationships and opportunities, a sense of community and affirmation of people as vital beings in need of belonging within the built and natural environments.** Coproduction is therefore filled with potential – providing symbolic resistance to social exclusion by co-designing and co-delivering more strengths based, community based, humanising interventions.

*We would like to thank all the co-researchers and participants for taking part and the [CMSWTP](#) for supporting this project. For follow up questions or to see a full report with descriptions of **all images** in the study, contact g.buck@chester.ac.uk*



