

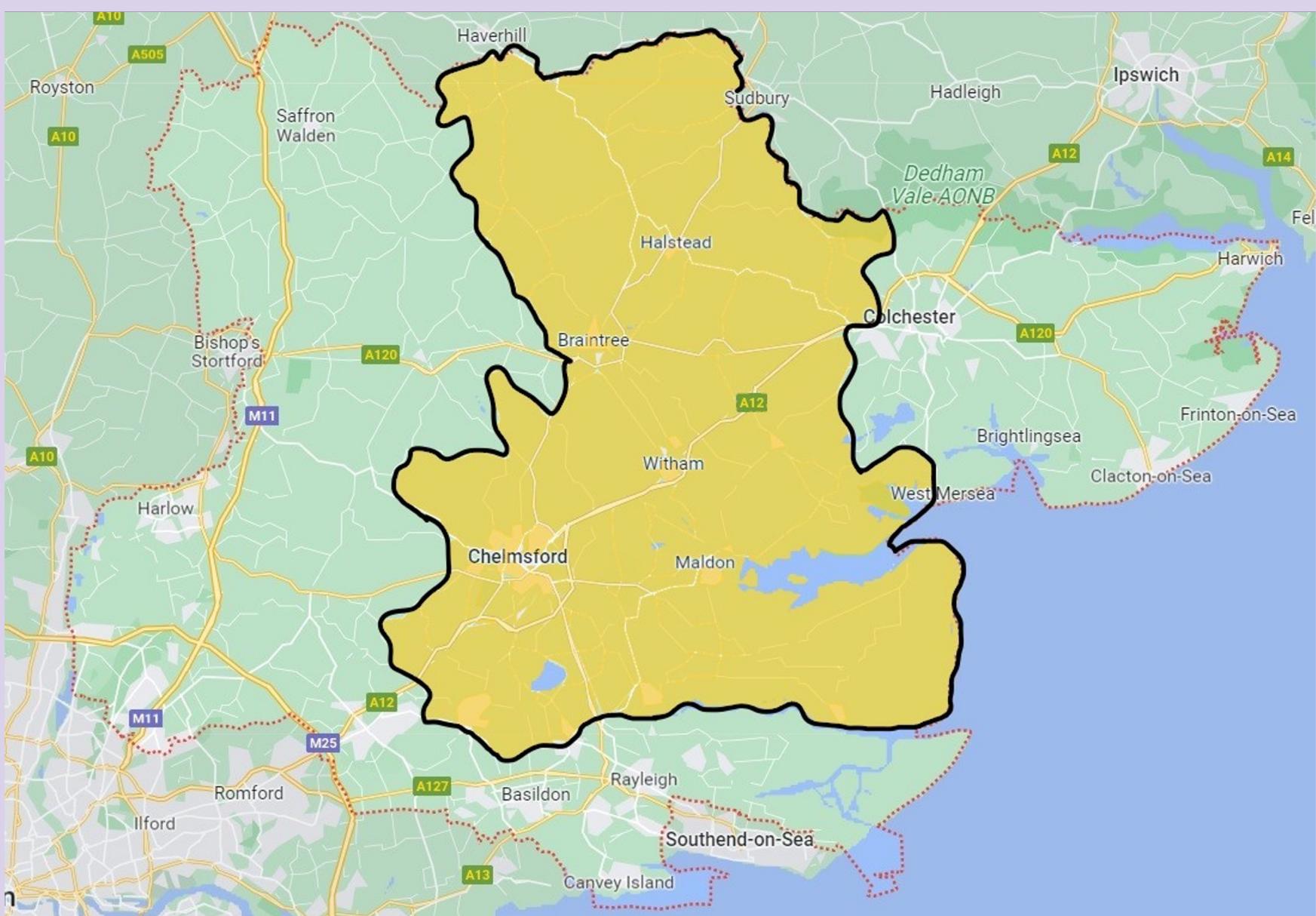
Lessons learned from establishing a Recovery College covering three towns and a rural area in Essex, England.

Vignesh Vyas, Provide CIC.

- **Recovery Movement** – 1970's - 1990's
- **Core idea** – shift from clinical “treatment” to an educational model – people become “students” rather than “patients”, and the focus is on building knowledge, skills and self-management rather than delivering therapy.
- **Co-Production & Co-Delivery** - courses are jointly designed and taught by people with lived experience and professionals, embodying mutuality and reciprocity rather than traditional hierarchies.
- **First** Recovery College in the UK - South West London Recovery College (2009)
- **Today:** roughly, 90 recovery colleges in the UK
- **Hub** spoke model

Recovery College:

- Free courses
- Anyone 18+
- Mental Health & Recovery
- Co-Production is at the center of everything.
- Co-delivery
- Expert by Experience
- Professionals
- Discovery



Mid Essex area (Essex County, UK)

Key Challenges:

- Large geographical area
- High travel times between towns/villages
- Lack of regular public transport.
- Deprivation
- Seldom-heard communities

“Not until we are lost, we begin to find ourselves.”

- Henry David Thoreau

- FRAMEWORKS:**
- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
 - CHIME (Leamy et al., 2011)
 - Connectedness
 - Hope
 - Identity
 - Meaning (in life)
 - Empowerment

- Co-production workshops:**
- Art Places
 - Job Centers
 - Hospitals
 - Community settings
 - Charities
 - Support Groups
 - Town Councils
 - Soup Kitchens
 - Supermarkets
 - Food Banks

Identifying Community Needs:



"The meaning of life is to give life meaning."
- Viktor Frankl

- Our Model:**
- Face to Face courses over **6 areas**
 - Delivering from **30+** venues - including Church halls, village halls, museums, art galleries, cafe's etc...
 - **Online delivery** + tackling digital literacy
 - Daytime and evening **bitesize** sessions

- 4 course themes:**
- Recovery & Wellbeing
 - Developing skills & knowledge
 - Physical wellbeing
 - Creativity & Self-expression

2024 - 2025

- 217 sessions delivered
- Total of 624 places booked, where students attended.
- 224 individual students attended our courses.
- Attendance rate is roughly 70% (higher than the National average: 50%).
- Over 25 collaborative ABCD partners.
- 55% of our staff force are made up of students who previously attended the Mid Essex Recovery College.
- 30 courses in total - including community focused courses, such as: introduction to Anger management, Understanding LGBTQIA+, New Beginnings etc...

“Thank you for saving my life... “

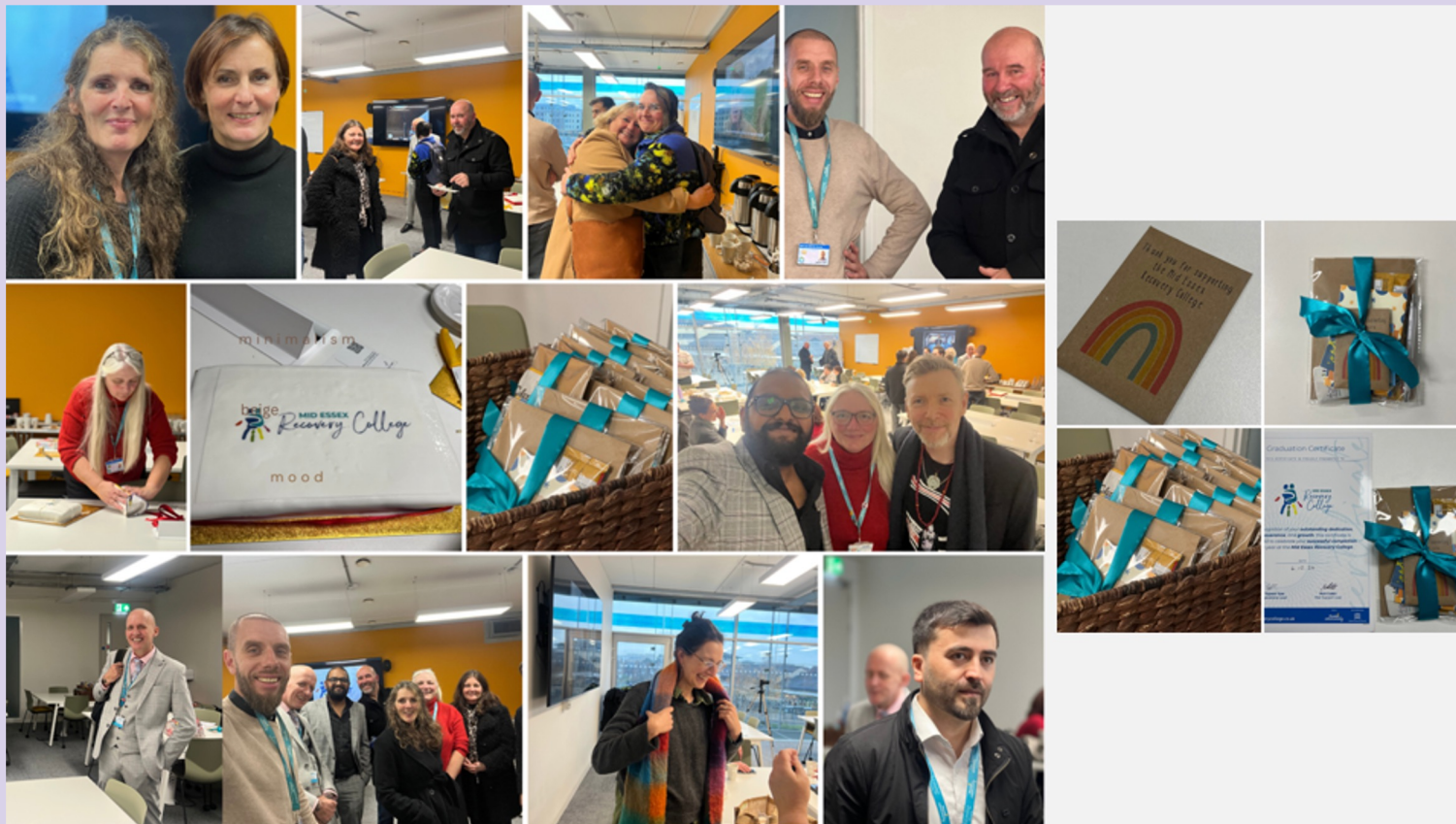
“With the recovery college, I have been able to develop my skills and get back into working - thank you for the peer support and volunteering opportunities”

Tutors sharing their lived experience - helped me... it helped me to look at my life from a different angle...

“The tutors have helped me become independent... you have helped me work towards my goals...”

“Thank you for accepting me for who I am... for everything“

Love the pass or participate options...



	Tony	Tamar	Rebecca	Emma	
Bryony					Chris R
Anne					Nisar
Indigo					Marisa
Sam					Bill
Hayley					Julie
Anna					Simon
Nicole					Chris D
Lucy					Matthew
	Lisa	Vignesh			

MID ESSEX RECOVERY COLLEGE

“Though nobody can go back and make a new beginning, anyone can start over and make a new ending.”

- Chico Xavier