

REAL RECOVERY – A ONE-PAGE BRIEF

A Christian-shaped, community-centred understanding of addiction, recovery, and why the Church still matters.

1. Why Real Recovery Matters

Recovery is never abstract. It has a face, a postcode, a family, and a past. In Scotland, addiction is often woven through trauma, poverty, loss, and fractured relationships. Real recovery must therefore be relational, holistic, and hope-driven. Services and medication can stabilise — but community restores, and Christ transforms.

2. What Real Recovery Looks Like

Relational: People grow when someone stands with them. Trust and belonging are the real infrastructure of change.

Holistic: Addiction harms body, mind, identity, families, and purpose.

Hope-centred: Hope isn't a slogan — it is a direction of travel.

Community-anchored: Recovery thrives in stable, relational communities.

Christ-shaped transformation: We honour every genuine attempt at recovery — clinical, therapeutic, peer-led, community-driven — but we are honest: for many, true and lasting recovery began when Jesus Christ rebuilt what addiction had broken.

3. The Reality on the Ground (Scotland 2025)

- Polysubstance use is now the norm.
- Powder cocaine is now the most common main drug in treatment starts.
- Nitazene-type synthetic opioids are appearing in more deaths than ever.
- Trauma, poverty, and mental-health challenges are often overlapping.
- Recovery outcomes improve significantly with stable community and trusted relationships.

4. What Helps People Recover

Regardless of background, people move forward through:

- A safe, consistent relationship
- A community where they belong
- Structure, purpose, and accountability

- Access to treatment when needed
- Non-judgemental spaces to grow

For many, encountering Christ brings the deep heart-change no programme alone can deliver.

5. The Church's Unique Role

Belonging before behaviour: Welcoming people before they are 'sorted.'

Stability: A calm, consistent presence in chaotic lives.

Compassion & dignity: Seeing the person, not the addiction.

Purpose & calling: Helping people rediscover who they are and what they can contribute.

The transforming hope of Jesus Christ: He restores identity, heals deep wounds, and rebuilds broken lives.

6. A Call to Action

Churches can begin today:

- Build trusted partnerships with local recovery groups
- Open buildings for community use
- Train volunteers to walk with those in recovery
- Support families affected by addiction
- Model grace, accountability, truth, and compassion

Real recovery happens where community meets compassion — and where Christ meets people in their brokenness and leads them into new life.