



Mitch Winehouse to open first Recovery Street Film Festival Monday 15 September

On 10 September the Recovery Street Film Festival will host its official launch in Borough Market in London. The festival will be opened by Mitch Winehouse, founder of the drugs and alcohol charity The Amy Winehouse Foundation. Mitch Winehouse will also announce the overall festival winner, who will be awarded with £1000 worth of film related training and prizes.

Organised by a consortium of addiction treatment providers including Phoenix Futures, Turning Point, CRI, Blenheim and Action on Addiction, supported by Public Health England, Alcohol Concern and Drugscope, the festival aims to celebrate and promote recovery from substance misuse.

The launch will see the premier of the official festival films on the subject of recovery, chosen by a panel of film professionals including award winning documentary film maker Emma Wakefield, film producer Lisa Bryer, whose credits include The Last King of Scotland, and psychologist, writer and documentary film maker David Cohen.

Following the Borough Market launch, the festival will move to a number of 'pop up' locations on the streets of Birmingham, Cardiff, Liverpool and Glasgow; returning to London to close. All qualifying films, including those not selected by the judges will be made available to watch and share online (www.recoverystreetfilmfestival.co.uk) promoting a greater insight into addiction and recovery.

Hundreds of thousands of people are directly affected by drug and alcohol problems and many thousand will, at this moment, be facing the challenge of achieving and sustaining long term recovery. The Recovery Street Film Festival aims to challenge existing preconceptions about addiction and show that recovery is possible and everyone deserves a future.

Mitch Winehouse says, "Since the creation of the Amy Winehouse Foundation our lives have been touched by the wonderful examples of human endeavor exhibited by those who have battled with and overcome addiction. We have built an incredible programme at the Foundation employing people in recovery to carry out vital prevention work in schools, our staff and volunteers share their experiences of addiction and emotional wellbeing issues to empower young people to make healthier choices and reach out for help if they need to.

This film festival is another great example of Britain's recovery community giving something back to society and reaching out to share their stories, and hopefully in turn save lives. In doing so they humbly shine a light on themselves and expose the incredible people they are today."

Rosanna O'Connor, Director of Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco at Public Health England said:

"The passion, energy and determination of the recovery community never fails to amaze us, and they are our greatest asset in spreading the word that recovery is possible for everyone. This film festival will help to show that we should all have high ambitions for what people can achieve as they overcome their addiction.

The journey to recovery from addiction is challenging and daunting, and different people need different things to get there – including jobs, a decent place to live, families and friends – as well as whatever treatment people might need to help them work towards getting their lives back. At the same time, it's vitally important that the voices of those who have achieved this are heard, so that others can be inspired to face their futures, with their own high ambitions for recovery, whether for themselves or for a loved one."

Lisa Bryer, Film Producer, who is a Trustee of Action on Addiction and a Recovery Street Film Festival judge said;

"I am honoured to be part of jury for the Recovery Street Film competition! Film has played a very important part in my recovery life. Right from an early age I was able to lose myself in a good film, give myself a break from all my self-loathing and terrible insecurities. Even during the worse days of my active addiction I would hold on to the fact that after working on a film, that if I ever did recover from this terrible disease, I would at least have found an interest in something that I could be good at. For the last 33 years of being clean and sober, being a film producer has been one of the best things that ever happened to me. I love film, I love making a good story come alive. I love the whole process of putting a film together. Good luck to all our budding film makers!"

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You can find out more about the Recovery Street Film Festival at www.recoverystreetfilmfestival.co.uk or you can follow the action on Twitter at #RecoveryStreet

The Recovery Street Film Festival will launch in Borough Market on Wednesday 10th September at 12.30pm. The festival will be open from 9.00 am.

Notes to Editors

- Phoenix Futures are a leading provider of services for people with drug and alcohol problems.
- We offer services within community, prison and residential settings in England and Scotland.
- Established in 1969, Phoenix has 46 years' experience in helping people through recovery.
- Over 20,000 people every year begin their treatment with Phoenix Futures.