

forward

PART 1

ANNUAL
REVIEW

What we do



The Forward Trust is a social justice charity that supports people to recover from addiction and/or leave behind crime, helping them to lead fulfilling lives with family, friends, jobs, homes, and a sense of belonging.

We deliver services to address substance misuse, mental health and employment issues in more than 70 prisons and community settings across England and Wales. These services are commissioned through contracts with government departments – Department of Health and Social Care, Ministry of Justice, and Department for Work and Pensions. Clients making progress through these services can make use of our unique range of ‘Recovery and Belonging’ services that help them maintain lasting recovery and transformational change - recovery programmes, safe and supportive housing, family support, recovery support, and the Forward Connect peer community.

We also campaign to change public attitudes and policy, so that more people feel able to ask for help in a society that believes in the power of second chances and long-term recovery.

Whatever their history or circumstance, we believe that anyone, with the right support, can overcome their problems and fulfil their potential.

All too often, individuals who experience addiction or perpetrate crime are written off as beyond hope, or a lost cause.

Our work and nearly 35 years of experience prove otherwise, having supported thousands of individuals from all walks of life to achieve transformational change - and lasting recovery. We exist to give this life-changing opportunity to as many people as possible.



Where we work

In 2024/25, Forward delivered **74** contracted services in addition to a range of charitably-funded projects and support:

Substance Misuse and Mental Health

Prison services

- ▶ Substance misuse services in 17 prisons.
- ▶ Talking Therapies in 5 prisons (see table).
- ▶ Reconnect (linking vulnerable prison leavers with healthcare) services in 3 counties (Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex).

Community services

- ▶ 4 integrated substance misuse services in East Kent, Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock and Medway.
- ▶ Structured day programmes and groups in East Kent and 4 other services (Medway, Hull, Essex and Liverpool).

Criminal Justice

HMP Millsike

- ▶ Desistance, Wellbeing, Families and Relationships Services ('Connections').

Probation services

- ▶ Personal Wellbeing services in 9 counties (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Essex, Kent, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Sussex, Surrey).
- ▶ Accommodation support in 3 Welsh probation regions (Dyfed-Powys, South Wales and Gwent).
- ▶ Dependency & Recovery services (connecting people with community treatment) through 2 contracts in London and Humberside.



Employment

- ▶ Careers Information, Advice and Guidance services in 9 prisons (see table)
- ▶ Employment Support in 4 community contracts
- ▶ Enterprise support and employment opportunities through Blue Sky Services (grounds maintenance) delivering 12 contracts

Recovery and Belonging

Recovery programmes:

- ▶ Residential rehabilitation in 2 centres in Hull (The Bridges) and Wiltshire (Clouds House).
- ▶ National Recovery Online Programme.
- ▶ 2 abstinence-based group programmes ("Y Bont") run as part of recovery units at HMP Cardiff and HMP Swansea.

Housing Support

- ▶ Access to private rented sector accommodation and mentoring support in 9 London Boroughs and 3 other areas (Kent, Hull and Surrey).
- ▶ 6 Recovery Houses in Kent and Essex.

Family Support

- ▶ M-PACT (whole family support for addiction) delivered through licence in 21 local authority areas.
- ▶ Family Workers supporting Forward clients in 9 prisons.
- ▶ Recovering Families UK Online - a UK wide online, 20 session programme for adult family members affected by someone else's addiction

Recovery Support

- ▶ Nationwide, helps people who have accessed Forward's services and want ongoing recovery support to maintain and strengthen their progress.

Forward Connect

- ▶ Nationwide, a peer-led mutual aid community of like-minded people who arrange local social events, arts and sports activities, and voluntary work.

Through these services we reached **35,325** people in 2024/25.

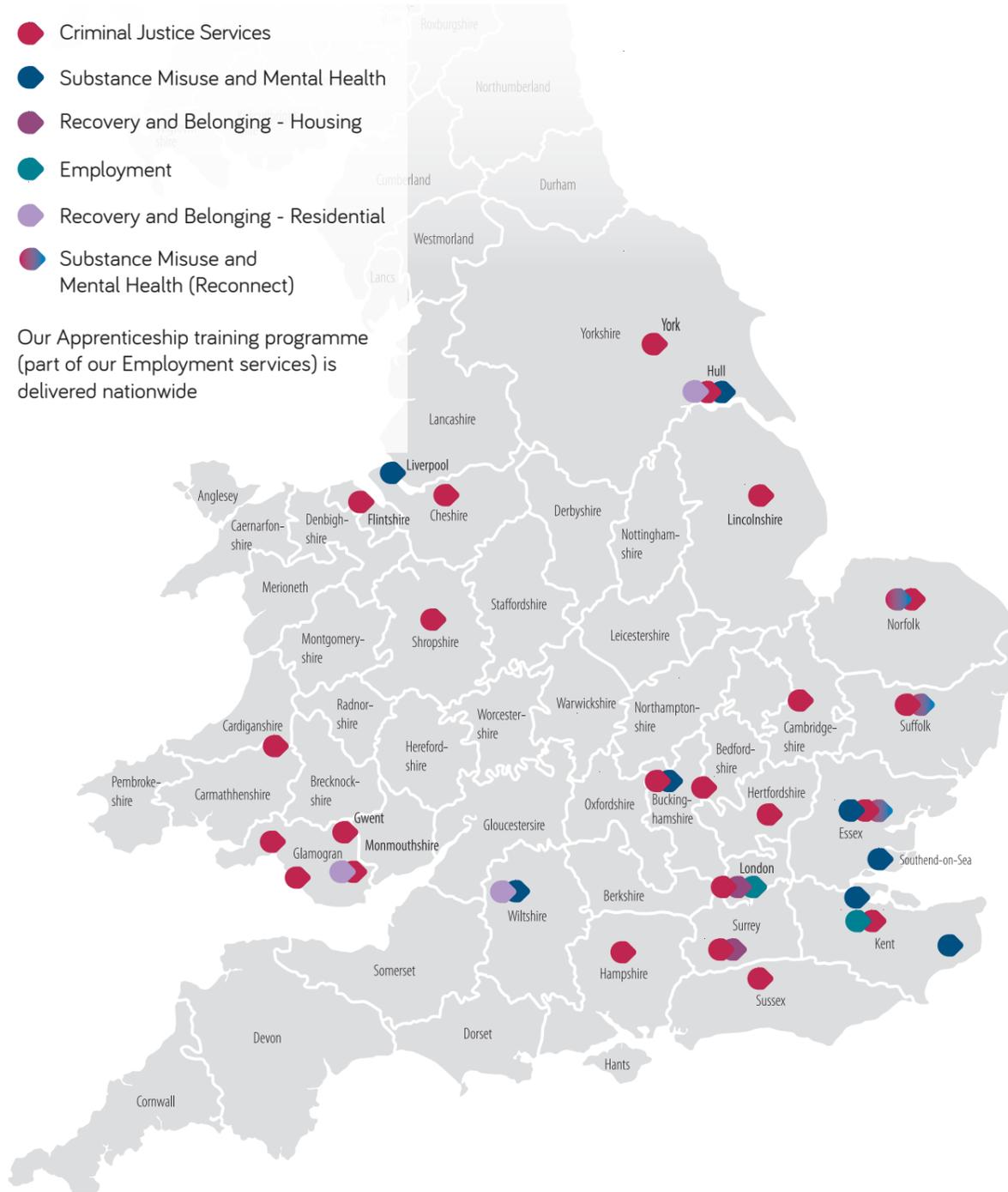


These services spanned the breadth of England and Wales as set out in the map below, including delivery in **28** prisons (22% of the prison estate, detailed in the table).

SERVICE KEY

- Criminal Justice Services
- Substance Misuse and Mental Health
- Recovery and Belonging - Housing
- Employment
- Recovery and Belonging - Residential
- Substance Misuse and Mental Health (Reconnect)

Our Apprenticeship training programme (part of our Employment services) is delivered nationwide



Forward's prison-based services

Area	Prison
London	HMP Belmarsh
	HMP Brixton
	HMP/YOI Feltham
	Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre
	HMP/YOI Isis
	HMP Pentonville
	HMP Thameside
	HMP Wandsworth
Thames Valley	HMP Wormwood Scrubs
	HMP/YOI Aylesbury
Surrey	HMP Bullingdon
	HMP Bronzefield
	HMP Coldingley
	HMP Downview
	HMP High Down
South West	HMP Send
	HMP Winchester
Yorkshire	HMP Millsike
East of England	HMP Chelmsford
	HMP Highpoint
	HMP Hollesley Bay
	HMP The Mount
	HMP Warren Hill
Midlands	HMP Onley
	HMP Rye Hill
	HMP Stoke Heath
Wales	HMP Swansea
	HMP Cardiff
	HMP Berwyn

Who we work with

Through our services, we reach some of society's most marginalised and disadvantaged groups – the individuals we support are often homeless, out of work, and in poor mental or physical health; most will have been let down by schools or the care system, and many will have been traumatised by adverse childhood experiences.

We know this from the data we collect on clients in our different service areas, and from national statistics.

For example, in our **substance misuse and mental health services**, only 1 in 5 of our clients in the community in 24/25 were employed at the time, and nearly 1 in 10 have never been employed. In prison, the situation is even worse, with 1 in 4 clients never having had an official job.

In terms of housing, 1 in 4 of our community clients in 24/25 were homeless or insecurely housed at point of assessment, and nearly 1 in 2 of our prison clients were in a similar situation.

HOUSING NEED



1 in 4 of clients in the community are homeless or insecurely housed.



1 in 2 prison clients didn't have a home before they started their sentence.



EMPLOYMENT NEED



Only **1 in 5** of our substance misuse clients in the community have a job;



1 in 10 have never been employed.



1 in 4 prison clients have never worked legally.



More broadly in the prison system, as indicators of severe disadvantage:

- ▶ Over **90%** of prisoners have a mental disorder with incidents of self-harm at an all-time high (876 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in 23/24).
- ▶ **One in four** adult prisoners have been in local authority care, compared to 2% of the general population.
- ▶ Previous educational attainment is low – **73%** of prisoners are assessed as below GCSE level for mathematics, and **71%** below GCSE for English.

For people on probation who receive our **Criminal Justice** Commissioned Rehabilitative Services, while we don't collect extensive data on their needs and backgrounds as they are referred to us by probation services, national data sets tell us that

- ▶ **60%** report problematic drug use:
- ▶ Probation clients are **8.8 times more likely** to report a mental health condition than the general population.
- ▶ On release from prison, only **1 in 5 (19.3%)** are employed with 6 weeks.

Our **Employment Services** are commissioned to specifically target ex-offenders and people in recovery from addiction, who share many of the challenges and disadvantages described above, as well as people from other disadvantaged backgrounds who are claiming Universal Credit. We also support young people not currently in education, employment, or training (NEET) where:

- ▶ **1 in 5** have no qualifications, compared with 10% of all young people.
- ▶ **1 in 4 (27%)** report a health condition or disability that limit work opportunities.

Even through the growth and expansion of our services, Forward remains committed to reach people who most need our help and who have most been let down by society.



Service Delivery

Substance misuse and mental health

Service Overview

In 2024/25, we delivered advice, support and treatment in 6 community services and 17 prisons to help people achieve personal goals related to their use of drugs and alcohol, whether that is to use more safely, cut down, or become abstinent and achieve recovery. We offered 'psychosocial' support (therapeutic interventions on a one-to-one and group basis) alongside 'clinical' support (opiate substitution treatment and other health interventions).

In prisons, we also delivered mental health support (talking therapies) in 5 prisons and Reconnect (linking prison leavers with healthcare in the community) across the East of England.



Personal reflections on the year

By Jason Moore, Executive Director for Substance Misuse Services

2024-25 threw a lot at our substance misuse and mental health services. I'm incredibly proud of how our teams have responded. Rising drug-related deaths and emerging dangerous drug trends have demanded agility and innovation. We distributed more Naloxone kits and training than ever before, and thanks to an innovative pilot project have tracked many of those who have left prison with one of these life-saving kits in their pocket.

Our **Mortality and Serious Incident Review Group** continues to monitor incidents and implement learning to reduce fatalities, while the rollout of **Rapid Access Prescribing Clinics** (more on this below) in our community-based services is testament to our focused response. In prisons we continue to see an increase in dangerous, evolving drug use, as reported by HM Inspector of Prisons and the media. As detailed below, we have adapted services to improve our response and reduce the risks to this vulnerable group. At **HMP High Down** and **HMP Aylesbury**, our trailblazing work to engage high-risk, chaotic drug users via assertive outreach and increased peer support is already showing encouraging results, with plans to expand this model.

A key focus has been **continuity of care from custody to community** (more below). This effort improved engagement rates post-release, though the government's **SDS40 early release scheme** created disruption by releasing many prisoners at short notice. Our Eastern prisons-based Talking Therapies service has grown stronger, expanding its intervention suite, overcoming recruitment hurdles, and launching an innovative **virtual reality mindfulness programme** at HMP Warren Hill.

This year, the directorate successfully mobilised numerous contracts, including renewals in **East Kent, Essex, Hull, and Liverpool**, and a significant expansion of **Reconnect across the East**. Two new custodial contracts—**Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre** and **Oakhill Secure Training Centre**—will launch in 2025-26, expanding our portfolio and partnerships. Recruitment and retention challenges persist due to a tight labour market. However, we welcome the government's plans to professionalise the sector and are well-positioned to implement this agenda. Forward Trust is committed to attracting passionate, mission-driven professionals. Despite this year's pressures, our recovery communities remain vibrant and resilient. Our intensive programmes continue to create lasting change for individuals facing addiction and feed directly into our **Forward Connect** networks, which are part of our 'Recovery and Belonging' service, reinforcing our mission.





Strengthening Support: How One-to-One Counselling in Surrey's Female Prisons Is Transforming Mental Health and Recovery

In 2022, we launched a new service offering one-to-one counselling for graduates of our programmes at two women's prisons in Surrey: HMP Send and HMP Downview, kindly supported by charitable donations. The following year, the initiative was expanded to HMP Bronzefield.

Since it launched, the project has gone from strength to strength, and we are now able to offer support to clients both before and after they engage in our treatment services. In the last year, the service has received **over 200 referrals** and provided over **800** hours of counselling across 3 prisons.

This service has made a real difference to the women we support. We've seen measurable improvements in those completing counselling, with **77%** of clients who completed the course showing a noticeable decrease in depression and **83%** a noticeable decrease in anxiety.

The service was recognised with a Forward Trust **Impact and Innovation Award**, celebrating new ideas that have strengthened Forward Trust's mission. Partnership has been central to our progress. We've deepened multi-agency working, increased participation in the **Footsteps to Recovery** programme, and extended our counselling offer into male establishments—already supporting nine men with tailored interventions. Our work has been praised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons at both HMP Send and HMP Bronzefield for its person-centred and collaborative approach.

We've also advanced our Dual Diagnosis work, tackling addiction and mental health together through a new integrated framework. And, in response to unmet need, we launched **Step by Step Therapy** at HMP Bronzefield—offering meaningful, one-session-at-a-time support for those on remand or short sentences.



Transforming Young Lives Through Recovery at Oakhill Secure Training Centre

This year, we were thrilled to be given the opportunity to expand our work with young people in secure facilities. Forward were invited by one of our partners, Dr PA Secure, to bring our expertise in psychosocial (non-clinical) substance misuse support to Oakhill Secure Training Centre in Milton Keynes. Oakhill is home to up to 80 young people aged 12–18.

This new chapter is more than just a contract—it's a chance to walk alongside young people at a pivotal point in their lives, offering hope, guidance, and the tools to build lasting change. It marks an exciting step forward for our directorate and our organisation as a whole, strengthening our reach and deepening our impact with those who need it most.

We have spent the last part of the year preparing for the service to go live, and the contract went live on 1st May 2025.

New working group improves continuity of care by 50%

One of the year's key milestones was the launch of our Continuity of Care (CoC) Working Group, working to ensure that clients leaving prison can access structured community treatment within 21 days of release. The initiative not only reflects our core values but also drives progress toward the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) target of 75% of prison leavers with substance misuse issues entering community treatment within that crucial 21-day window.

The group has injected fresh energy and attention into this vital agenda, bringing about creative solutions to what has been a challenging issue for many years. A range of practical tools and processes have been developed, including a best practice framework, joint working protocols, and process maps to support smooth transitions, alongside directories of key contacts and a four-part release form with guidance. Regular working groups and monthly performance reports ensure accountability and drive improvement. To support staff, reflective practice materials have also been developed for use in team meetings.

The results are already impressive. By early 2025, 69% of our prisons had improved their CoC data, with six performing above the national average. Forward's internal overall continuity of care rate has increased by 50% since the group was initiated.

There is still more to achieve, but our directorate is not standing still. By challenging the way we work and strengthening partnerships nationwide, we are building momentum toward lasting, system-wide change.



HIGHLIGHTS: COMMUNITY SERVICES

Transforming support for people with opioid dependence in Surrey prisons

This year we introduced a new opioid substitute medication, Bupival, to our Surrey prisons service. Bupival is a prolonged-release buprenorphine injection that is administered weekly or monthly. Traditionally, most people receiving Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST) rely on daily medication, often under supervision—a routine that can feel restrictive and disruptive.

The benefits of this new service are numerous: no longer having to take a daily tablet has led to a reduced risk of misuse and a greater ability to balance other responsibilities, particularly for those who are work outside the prison on day release or are due to be released imminently. Clients and their families have reported significant improvements, including better sleep, less anxiety about missing doses, enhanced work-life balance, and a stronger overall sense of health and wellbeing. Allowing clients to have access to this medication, along with the support of our trained clinical team, is transforming the treatment experience, giving individuals more control and confidence as they focus on recovery.



Scaling Up Naloxone in Surrey Prisons: Progress and Impact

Over the past year, The Forward Trust, in partnership with HMPPS and Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL), has driven the Surrey-wide Naloxone Pathfinder Project to make sure every prison leaver is offered not only Naloxone but also the skills to use it confidently. The results speak for themselves: more than 550 take-home kits have already been distributed across HMP Send, Coldingley, High Down, Downview, and Bronzefield—with Bronzefield in particular showing a sharp rise in uptake.

Crucially, the project has widened access beyond those already engaged with Forward Trust, reaching more than 140 additional individuals with training and lifesaving kits before release. A follow-up element has strengthened the impact of the initial scheme, offering feedback opportunities, linking people with community services, and supporting ongoing recovery journeys.

The difference is already being felt on the ground. One participant, equipped with a nasal naloxone kit, reported using it after release to save a life—a powerful reminder of why this work matters.



Navigating new realities in substance use: how our Emerging Drug Trends Working Group is turning information into action

In response to rising reports of new and emerging drug trends both nationally and within our services, we launched the Emerging Drug Trends Working Group this year. Its mission is clear: to provide a swift, coordinated, and proactive response to staff, service users, and the public whenever new substances are identified.

Bringing together functional leads from across the organisation, the group serves as a hub for collaboration, discussion, and action on how emerging drug trends affect service users, services, and operational plans.

Already, the group has delivered significant outcomes. These include introducing testing kits for synthetic opioids like Nitazenes and Xylazine in both prison and community services, providing tailored harm minimisation guidance, running targeted social media campaigns, updating and reviewing resources, sharing substance alerts with staff, stakeholders, and service users, and enhancing staff training to address local needs more effectively.

Building on this strong foundation, the directorate is committed to expanding and strengthening this vital work in the year ahead, ensuring our services remain responsive and informed.



Rapid Access Prescribing Clinics – giving community clients same-day support

This year, teams across multiple community sites rolled out new ‘rapid access prescribing’ pathways—designed to get people the help they need faster than ever. Now, clients can often receive their first dose of substitute medication the very same day they reach out for support.

These clinics are a lifeline, particularly for those in crisis—such as after leaving prison or being discharged from hospital—reducing overdose risk and helping people engage with treatment immediately. By breaking down barriers and speeding up access, rapid access prescribing is transforming outcomes, saving lives, and giving clients a stronger, safer start on their recovery journey.

More than meals: how our East Kent Breakfast and Dinner clubs are engaging the most at-risk into services

This year, the Rough Sleepers Initiative Team in East Kent started out of hours breakfast and dinner clubs for homeless individuals in Canterbury and Margate.

These clubs are a brilliant way of engaging some of the hardest-to-reach groups who are traditionally reluctant to engage with drug and alcohol services, even when they need the support. The clubs are a low-pressure way for potential service users to meet our teams and establish a rapport with them, allowing us the opportunity to build trust. The team spend time with every attendee, getting to know them, their situation and needs, as well as putting together care packages when possible to give to people when the event is over.

The initiative has evolved into indispensable components of the region's health and social care infrastructure. These clubs offer more than just meals; they serve as consistent, trauma-informed engagement points for individuals facing complex challenges, including substance misuse, homelessness, mental health issues, and domestic violence.



Progress and innovation in Medway

The Medway Community Drug and Alcohol service has delivered a number of exciting innovations in the past year. This includes the introduction of a **'Breakfast Club'**, where the team provide a hot breakfast for people in Medway every Friday. This has proved a popular initiative that is helping the most at-risk people in the community get into treatment.

The team have also started delivering our family programme **Moving Parents and Children Together (M-PACT)** and the second cohort of clients has just completed the programme. M-PACT is a 'whole family', structured support programme which aims to improve the wellbeing of children and families affected by substance misuse.

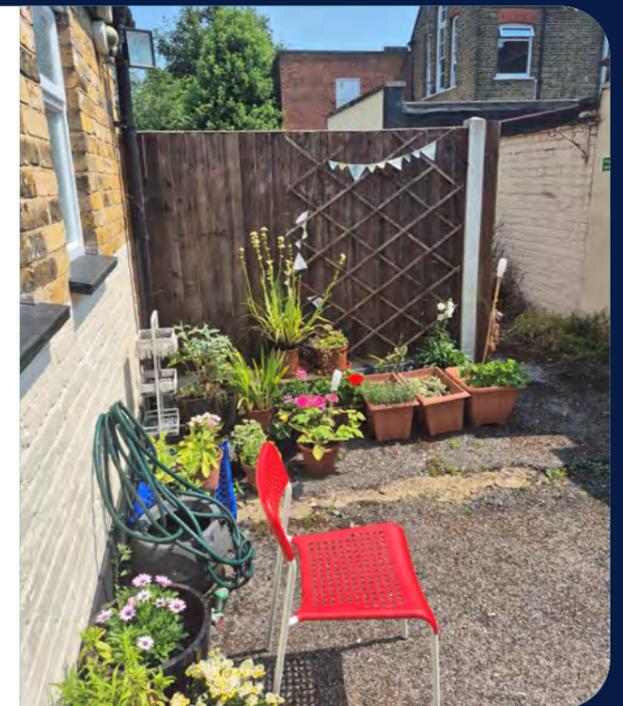
We were also delighted to celebrate the first anniversary of the **Medway Day Rehab programme**, which provides an intensive, abstinence-based treatment programme for people for whom residential rehab is not possible or appropriate.



M-PACT[®]
Moving Parents and Children Together
Licenced by The Forward Trust

Growing Change: The Southend Garden Transformation

A team of dedicated volunteers, comprised largely of former or current service users, have worked tirelessly to transform the Southend STARS garden into a calm, welcoming sanctuary for service users. What was once a small, uninspiring space is now bursting with colour and life — complete with comfortable seating, vibrant potted plants, and even a small greenhouse for nurturing herbs and flowers. The result is a bright, therapeutic environment where service users can relax, reflect, and reconnect with nature.

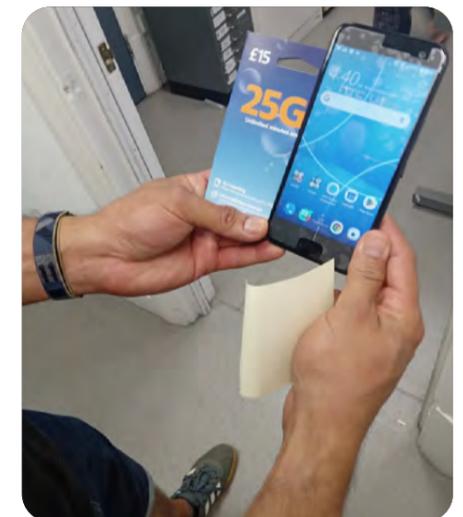


Building Connections Through Digital Inclusion

In 2024/25, The Forward Trust joined forces with digital inclusion charity The Good Things Foundation to help bridge the digital divide. Through this partnership, clients in need were offered free SIM cards providing up to 12 months of internet data — opening access to the Forward Trust App, online Forward Connect meetings, and essential digital tools such as the NHS app, mobile banking, and email. Over the year, 61 clients were supported with connectivity that helped them stay informed, connected, and engaged in their recovery. Following its success, the scheme has now expanded to reach more areas and offer additional services.

“ Being given a phone by Forward has been life-changing for me. It gives me the opportunity to get in contact with services such as the GP and Forward.” Medway client

“ The phone and SIM I have been given by STARS have been vital to me. It has enabled me to contact and access various services I would not have been able to, and to contact my Dad.” Medway client





WHAT OUR SERVICE USERS SAY

Joint initiatives with our Recovery and Belonging colleagues

The following initiatives are joint projects between our Substance Misuse and Mental Health teams and our Recovery and Belonging services.

East Kent Unity Day

East Kent Unity Day took place on 25th April 2025. It was a powerful gathering of people in recovery, their families, and supporters. Held in a welcoming environment, the event celebrated recovery, built connections, and offered hope to all affected by alcohol addiction. From the outset, the sense of community was clear. Attendees openly shared their stories, creating a safe space for honesty, vulnerability, and mutual support.

Workshops provided practical tools for recovery, with sessions on coping strategies, family relationships, and building support networks. Participants valued both the expert guidance and the chance to learn from others who truly understand their journeys.

A key theme of the day was family involvement. By engaging loved ones in the recovery process, Forward Trust highlighted that healing is a collective effort. Families left feeling encouraged, supported, and reassured they are not alone. The day was uplifting and memorable, strengthening bonds across the recovery community. It showcased the importance of unity, compassion, and shared experience—leaving everyone inspired and hopeful for the future.

Volunteers Litter Pick for Social Value

We are proud to share the fantastic efforts of our Southend volunteers who recently took part in a community litter picking initiative — a small act with a big impact! Armed with gloves, bags, and a shared sense of purpose, our volunteers set out to clean up local green spaces and public areas. Their dedication not only helped create a cleaner, safer environment but also contributed to the wider goal of building social value in our community. Litter picking is more than just tidying up — it's about taking pride in where we live, supporting local wildlife, and showing that we care. For our volunteers, it was also a chance to connect with others, build confidence, and enjoy the outdoors while doing something meaningful. A huge thank you to everyone who took part — your time and energy are truly appreciated. Together, we're making our community a better place, one bag of litter at a time!



“I tried to go sober so many times and always failed...being part of this group gives me strength to be free.” Alcohol Pathway client

Julie came to the Essex Day Programme (SHARP) after a 20-year struggle with alcohol addiction. She had tried private rehab, detoxes, counselling, and fellowships, but nothing worked. Feeling trapped in a “living nightmare,” she self-referred through a partner agency and, with the support of a key worker, secured a place at SHARP.

Starting the eight-week programme was daunting, but despite anxiety, Julie embraced group workshops, therapy, and the challenges of facing her addiction.

“My life was turned upside down, but I didn't give up. I learnt to manage anxiety, face problems without drinking, and found hope through the support of staff and peers.”

Julie graduated with 100% attendance, reconnected with family, and later returned as a volunteer. Now training as a counsellor, she says: *“Wherever you are in addiction, SHARP showed me recovery is possible—and opened the door to a wonderful new chapter.”*

Julie, SHARP client, Essex

Jack's casual drug use quickly escalated from smoking cannabis with friends to cocaine, party drugs, and eventually daily use. Over ten years, his habit left him isolated, angry, and emotionless. Hitting rock bottom with a morphine addiction, Jack realised the damage he was causing himself and others.

For the first time, he reached out for help and began attending sessions with The Forward Trust and Open Road in Southend. In early 2024, he was introduced to a key worker who helped him take the first real steps toward recovery.

“My life changed from that first session. I was finally ready to stop.”

With ongoing support, Jack has achieved his ultimate goal: stopping drug use. He's rebuilt relationships, made new friends, and found contentment. Grateful for the service, he urges others: *“If it worked for me, it can work for anyone.”*

Jack, Southend client

Maria had struggled with her mental health for as long as she could remember. In prison, she began smoking spice and lying to her family for money to fund her use.

“I didn't care about myself or anyone else. I just wanted to block out my feelings and memories, but the drugs only made things worse.”

When The Forward Trust team invited her to join the Bridge Programme, Maria agreed and moved wings to begin her recovery.

Although the change was difficult, she stopped taking drugs and, through hard work, successfully completed the programme.

“Since then, I've learnt a lot about myself. My family wants to know me again, I'm sober, and I feel so much better. Now I have the tools to move forward, and as a Peer Supporter, I can help others—because I've been there myself.”

Maria, Bridge programme graduate



Criminal Justice

Service Overview

Forward Trust's Criminal Justice division works with individuals, prisons, probation units, and communities to strengthen relationships and build personal, social, and community capital—creating safer, healthier, crime-free futures.

In 2024/25 we delivered Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) for people on probation in 14 contract areas and 69 probation delivery units, comprising:

- ▶ **Personal Wellbeing** helping men on probation to access mental health support, improve family relationships and make new positive social networks, working in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, Surrey and Sussex as well as Kent and Cheshire (in partnership with Seetec) and Lincolnshire (in partnership with Lincolnshire Action Trust).
- ▶ **Dependency and Recovery** supporting men with complex substance misuse needs, bridging probation and recovery services to improve outcomes, working in London (in partnership with Catch 22) and Yorkshire & Humber.
- ▶ **Accommodation** in Wales (the 'Camau' service) preventing homelessness and improving housing options across Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, and South Wales.



Personal reflections on the year

By Emma Stuart, Executive Director for Criminal Justice Services

The last year has been one of progress and expansion for the criminal justice division at Forward. We've welcomed more volunteers, mentors, and a wider diversity of staff than ever before and have seen a notable reduction in staff turnover — a reflection of the strength and stability within our teams.

A standout achievement this year was the mobilisation of our new services at **HMP Millsike** — a comprehensive blend of family, wellbeing, recovery, and desistance interventions delivered by a team of over 30, which went live in April 2025. Working in partnership with Mitie and People Plus, this service marks a step change in how rehabilitation is approached within prisons, and we are already seeing early signs of impact.

Our decision to welcome men on remand into our **Accommodation** probation programmes has prevented homelessness and housing crises during custody — a major step forward in creating stability and hope. Our **Dependency and Recovery** services continue to grow, increasing the number of men linked to community treatment through persistent, evidence-based outreach. Forward's **Personal Wellbeing** services also expanded their reach, building more community partnerships and boosting referral rates. None of this would be possible without our dedicated probation practitioners, who operate across wide regions, delivering expertise, consistency, and care day in and day out.

Adapting our services to accommodate **sentencing changes** introduced by the Government, as well as to new early release schemes, was another key focus. We responded quickly to ensure continuity of care and support for everyone affected. We also significantly grew the number of probation clients engaging with our **Forward Connect** community. We know that connection is the antidote to crime — the same principle that underpins recovery from addiction. This community offers our clients vital social links that can reduce isolation and strengthen recovery.

Despite a challenging justice landscape, my teams have shown that determination, compassion, and collaboration drive real progress, and I am hugely impressed by their commitment to our service users and transformational change.



HIGHLIGHTS



Building Social Skills and Connections with Forward Connect

This year, our **Personal Wellbeing** practitioners have helped even more probation clients get involved with the Forward Connect community (to learn more about Forward Connect, see. Over 300 men have participated in a wide range of events and activities—from museum visits, creative arts, and origami to mindfulness sessions, 'Ted Talks', fishing, pool games, documentaries, and group walks.

These experiences do more than fill time—they build positive social connections, confidence, and essential life skills. Engaging in Forward Connect activities gives people on probation the support and opportunities they need to create new, positive futures.

By fostering community, creativity, and wellbeing, Forward Connect transforms everyday moments into meaningful steps toward lasting change.

"I really enjoyed the relaxed environment."

"My English isn't very good but everyone has taken the time to slow down their talking for me to pick it up. I can't stop smiling. Thank you for spending time and taking the time with me. I feel accepted."

"I hadn't been to a movie in 18 years and was relishing the moment."

"Just going with others around London to look at the Christmas lights has been nice, something I would not usually do."



Expanding Support for Non-English Speakers

This year, our **Dependency and Recovery** service has strengthened its commitment to supporting clients from diverse backgrounds. By increasing the number of multilingual staff, we've expanded our ability to deliver interventions to those whose first language is not English.

We now provide direct support in six languages—English, Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian, Punjabi, and Hindi—and offer translation services in 14 additional languages, including French, Hungarian, Persian, Farsi, Urdu, Bengali, Yoruba, and Twi.

This enhanced language capability allows us to reach a wider range of clients, ensuring that everyone receives tailored support that respects their cultural and linguistic needs. Across our services, we are proud to work with clients from 69 different nationalities, reflecting the rich diversity of the communities we serve.

By breaking down language barriers, we're not just delivering interventions—we're building trust, understanding, and more effective support, helping clients engage fully in their recovery journey.



Innovation in Action: The Digital Application for Assistance Tool

Our **Accommodation Service in Wales** has teamed up with **HMPPS** to create a groundbreaking digital Application for Assistance tool, designed for use on tablets by men in custody.

This innovative tool streamlines the housing application process—cutting down on paperwork, reducing admin time, and empowering applicants to input their own information directly. By replacing a daunting 14-page paper form, it makes the experience simpler, faster, and far less stressful for those applying for housing support.

Beyond saving time and paper, the digital system securely stores applications, allowing them to be easily reviewed and submitted when needed.

Although still in its early stages, the tool is already showing promising results, helping clients feel more in control of their housing journey and improving overall outcomes.

Forward Trust continues to embrace technology that removes barriers, enhances efficiency, and delivers real benefits for the people we support.



Our new service at HMP Millsike

As well as pioneering specialised programmes designed for its prisoners, HMP Millsike – which is the size of 39 football pitches – has been built to run solely on electricity. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) believes the use of solar panels and heat pumps could save £1m a year.

Built next to HMP Full Sutton, near York, the prison houses almost 1,500 category C prisoners who will be resettled in the surrounding area and are in the final two years or less of their sentence.

Our Connection Services

Our connections services operate across the whole prison and are supported by staff, volunteers, and peer mentors – many of whom have lived experience of the issues we address.

At HMP Millsike, Forward's Criminal Justice Services team run the Connections Desistance and Wellbeing Services and the Connections Families and Relationships Services including all services for visitors. This includes:

- ▶ **The More Than My Past Unit** (Houseblock E, Level 1): A new desistance programme based on narrative therapy, co-designed with prisoners, helping individuals reshape their identities and futures.
- ▶ **The Incentivised Substance Free Living (ISFL) Unit** (Houseblock E, Level 2): A community-led space supporting recovery from substance use.
- ▶ **The Connections Family and Relationships Unit** (Houseblock C, Level 4): Offering interventions like M-PACT, Parenting Support, and Relationships Matter, tailored for families affected by addiction and offending.
- ▶ **The Visitors' Centre**, and all aspects of visits including Purple Visits and visits booking.



Supporting visitors, strengthening families

We manage the full visits experience, including visitors' reception, family days, and all visitor services – creating a welcoming space where adults and children feel supported. In partnership with Combat2Coffee, the visits hall café offers refreshments with purpose, run by veterans in recovery and rehabilitation.

WealsotrainPrisonerCustody Officerstosupport our family-friendly ethos, ensuring visits reinforce vital relationships and are a positive experience for all involved.



Connections in action: desistance and wellbeing

Our Desistance and Wellbeing Practitioners provide one-to-one and group interventions across the prison, helping people build healthier lives and aspirational personal goals. Connections and Wellbeing Champions (CWCs) are lived experience peer mentors, living the change.

The 'More Than My Past' programme is the heart of our identity-change work, the building of personal capital. It's our innovative evidence led six-week course that uses a narrative approach to guide participants to reflect on their journey, define their future selves, and take action towards a life free from crime.



Building trusted connections to support recovery

A core element of our approach is the recognition and cultivation of 'social and community capital' – the networks of relationships, opportunities, and values that help individuals and communities thrive.

At the individual level, social capital includes:

- ▶ Personal relationships.
- ▶ Peer support.
- ▶ Trusted community engagement.

These connections not only provide emotional and practical support but are also a foundation for resilience, motivation, and positive identity change.

At the wider community level, social capital reflects a sense of shared purpose, cooperation, and collective wellbeing. It builds trust between individuals and institutions and fosters environments where people feel they belong.

Investing in personal, social, and community capital can dramatically increase the potential for successful rehabilitation, reintegration, and reduced reoffending. Simply put, stronger relationships and connected communities are a powerful driver of individual change and collective progress. And we can all play our part in being a trusted connection.

Whether through a facilitated group session about how to change ('re-author') their personal life story, a visit from a family member or friend, every connection counts.

WHAT OUR SERVICE USERS SAY



Dependency and Recovery

CASE STUDY: Paul Dalglish – Peer Mentor, Dependency & Recovery London

“I first came to Forward Trust as a client while on probation, in the early stages of recovery. Unlike probation appointments—where I often felt unable to be completely honest—Forward gave me a safe, non-judgemental space to speak openly with others in similar situations. That support was vital. Getting clean is one thing, but staying clean is the bigger challenge, and Forward's aftercare helped me stay on track. When asked to become a peer mentor, I didn't hesitate. Having experienced the benefits myself, I wanted to support others. Being part of sessions and building relationships with clients has been incredibly rewarding, and I can see the same positive impact on them that I once felt.

The meet-and-greet service has also opened my eyes. I've supported men leaving prison to attend probation, preventing them from falling back into the recall cycle. This work shows just how valuable Forward's services are in recovery and rehabilitation.”



Personal Wellbeing

CASE STUDY: Stephen

Finding Stability: Stephen's Journey from Homelessness to Hope

Just before Christmas, Stephen became street homeless. Despite the challenges, he continued attending sessions with his Personal Wellbeing practitioner, Lana, though he struggled to focus on his wellbeing while his basic needs went unmet.

Seeing that housing was the biggest barrier to progress, Lana added extra sessions and acted. She advocated on Stephen's behalf through Brighton Housing Trust, arranged face-to-face appointments, and helped him complete complex housing forms. She also supported him to contact his GP for medical documentation and wrote a personal cover letter to strengthen his council application.

Just one week later, Stephen was offered a one-bedroom flat—close to his preferred location. It was an unexpected and life-changing outcome, especially since earlier options had only been available in London.

Lana's dedication, flexibility, and compassion kept Stephen engaged through an incredibly unstable time, helping him rebuild confidence and stability.

“The service is wonderful. Having someone willing to sit down and listen has made a huge difference to my self-worth and mental health.” – Stephen

Accommodation

CASE STUDY: Service user attending housing surgery

“I am so grateful for Holly's support with my housing. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for her” Service user attending housing surgery

Jack* had been sofa surfing for a year when he was referred to Forward. He'd lost his temporary council accommodation after accidentally causing damage to it during a mental health crisis. He was unsure where to turn to for housing support, as the council had refused to support him, and he did not feel confident accessing private rented accommodation.

His Camau worker helped Jack to access supported accommodation, along with help for his mental health and substance misuse issues. A support worker was also assigned to help him find longer-term affordable housing. He is now stable on his medication, living in supported accommodation, working with his support worker to find somewhere more permanent to live, and feeling much more positive about the future.



* a pseudonym has been used to protect clients confidentiality

WORKER CASE STUDY: Service user attending housing surgery

“Working for Forward aligns deeply with my values. I am proud to be part of a team that delivers compassionate, person-centered support to those facing complex challenges. I have the privilege of directly contributing to life-changing outcomes. Housing is a fundamental human need, and I am passionate about helping individuals secure safe, stable accommodation.

It's also fantastic to work for an organisation that genuinely supports career progression. I started working for Forward as a Housing Intervention Worker and was then offered career development opportunities. I have been promoted to Senior Housing Intervention Officer.

My role requires strategic thinking, persistence, and adaptability. I contribute to team development and support positive outcomes across the service. This development has not only deepened my confidence but has also positioned me as a trusted and reliable team member and positively influence others to the best of my ability.”

Robyn Llewellyn, Senior Housing Intervention Officer at The Forward Trust

What Probation Practitioners say

“Excellent service - couldn't have asked for more support for my client. He is in a better place as a result”

“Brilliant service provider, understanding, resilient, professional. Excellent communication skills for probation practitioner”

“The work conducted by Forward Trust is truly appreciated. The commitment to supporting clients and delivering impactful services don't go unnoticed”

Employment

Service Overview

In 2024/25 we delivered a range of services that develop the employability skills of marginalised groups - including job coaching and placement, vocational training and qualifications, and support for people who run their own business or want to start one.

As well as ex-offenders and people in recovery from addiction, we also supported young people not currently in education, employment, or training (NEET), individuals claiming Universal Credit, and those from other disadvantaged backgrounds. We worked with a broad range of employers and partners to support people looking for work to secure a sustainable job placement.

We also offered employment opportunities through our own social enterprises: Blue Sky Services (grounds maintenance), Amenity Landscaping (garden maintenance), and The Brink recovery café, part of our Liverpool service.



Personal reflections on the year

By Asi Panditharatna MBE, Executive Director for Employment

It is with great pride that I present the 2024/25 Annual Report for Employment Services at The Forward Trust. This year has been one of remarkable growth, innovation, and impact across our Adult Skills, Careers Advice, Employability, and Enterprise programmes.

From launching a new **Individual Placement Service (IPS)** in Medway for individuals with substance misuse issues, to expanding our Multiply numeracy programme across East Kent, our teams have consistently demonstrated resilience, creativity, and a deep commitment to supporting those furthest from the labour market. We have supported over 3,700 individuals in custody with careers guidance, over 1,000 in the community with employability and education services and helped 730 people into sustainable employment or self-employment.

Our work has been recognised nationally, with our teams shortlisted for two **ERSA Employability Awards**, including 'Frontline Advisor of the Year' and 'Skills for Work'. These accolades reflect the dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the strength of our partnerships across the private, public and charitable sectors.

We have responded to the external challenges in the UK economy and labour market, including skills shortage and gaps, rising levels of economic inactivity and cost of living challenges. We have remained committed to adapting our delivery to meet these emerging needs and celebrated the entrepreneurial spirit of our participants through events like our **Dragons' Den** showcase.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to delivering high-quality, person-centred services that transform lives. I want to thank every member of our Employment Services Directorate for their tireless efforts and unwavering belief in the potential of the people we serve.





Celebrating Entrepreneurship: The Forward Trust's Dragon's Den 2025

On 3 April 2025, The Forward Trust, in partnership with the Financial Times, hosted its second annual Dragon's Den Event at the Financial Times' London offices. Three of Forward's enterprise clients pitched their business ideas to a panel of 'dragons', including Forward's Chair of Trustees, Tony Adams.

The event opened with welcomes from Asi Panditharatna (Executive Director of Employment Services) and Tefvick Souleiman (Head of Enterprise), alongside Jacqui Dobson from the Financial Times. Tony Adams shared his personal journey of recovery and entrepreneurship, inspiring both the audience and panel before the pitches began.

Jody presented Chef4Life, offering cooking workshops focused on health and wellbeing. Adetola pitched Back2Life Project UK, empowering neurodivergent minority women to reintegrate into the community through mentorship, workshops, and holistic therapy. Benjamin introduced WALKIE, an app connecting people for group exercise to increase motivation, access, and community.

While the judges deliberated, attendees enjoyed a tour of the Financial Times offices, including rooftop views. After careful consideration, Adetola was crowned this year's Dragon's Den winner.

Congratulations to the Enterprise Support team and our entrepreneurs for an inspiring and impactful event — we look forward to seeing how these innovative businesses grow and thrive.



Forward

FT FINANCIAL
TIMES

Changing Lives Through Work: The Forward Trust's IPS Service

The Forward Trust's Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service, which went live in July 2024, transforms lives by helping adults in substance misuse treatment secure education, skills, and employment. Tailored support creates personalised vocational profiles and action plans, guided by the Wheel of Change, focusing on aspiration, hope, and meaningful relationships.

Employers play a key role, with guidance, support, and education ensuring challenges are addressed and employment is sustained. Innovative initiatives like job fairs and reverse job fairs connect service users with real opportunities, resulting in over 90% of job starts leading to ongoing employment.

Collaboration with recovery professionals embeds employability from day one, while role models continue the journey through Forward Connect, engaging with employed peers and entrepreneurs. To date, we have supported 40 clients and are aiming to double that figure for the next financial year.

By combining personalised support, employer partnership, and ongoing engagement, IPS not only helps people find work—it builds confidence, independence, and lasting pathways to recovery.

Expanding the Successes: Reflecting on the Multiply Programme in Thanet

Over the past two years, The Forward Trust has delivered Multiply courses across Thanet and East Kent, funded by Kent County Council via the Department for Education. As the programme concludes, it's clear the impact has been significant.

Multiply targeted adults with low numeracy skills, particularly those unemployed or facing learning barriers. 90% of participants struggled with numeracy, and 55% reported learning difficulties, highlighting the need for tailored support. Many learners were referred from other Forward services and came from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In total, 400 learners benefited from one- and three-day courses. Beyond improving mathematical skills, participants gained confidence, with many progressing into further education or employment, feeling better prepared for work, and becoming equipped with skills that make them more attractive to employers. The programme's impact extends beyond individuals. Strengthening numeracy in the community supports a more skilled workforce, benefiting local employers and the wider economy.

Multiply leaves a lasting legacy: learners continue to use their skills in daily life, education, and work, while the programme underscores the importance of accessible adult education and ongoing numeracy support. Its ripple effects will be felt across Thanet for years to come.





WHAT OUR SERVICE USERS SAY

Excellence in action: Celebrating our ERSA Finalists

The **ERSA Employability Awards** recognise excellence in helping people secure sustainable employment across the UK. Celebrating innovative programmes, impactful practices, and meaningful collaborations, the awards highlight organisations and individuals making a real difference.

This year, we were delighted to learn that Forward had been named a finalist in two categories.

Paige Tilbrook, a Restart Scheme advisor in Kent, was shortlisted for 'Frontline Advisor of the Year'. Since joining the sector two years ago, Paige has supported over 100 participants into sustainable work. "Changing people's lives is priceless," she says of her role.

Our Adult Skills teams in Kent and London were also named finalists in the 'Skills for Work' category, recognised for equipping adults with the essential skills to access employment. One of just five finalists, the teams link learners to employability support and other Forward Trust services, helping them gain the knowledge and confidence to build rewarding careers.

Being shortlisted as finalists reflects the passion, expertise, and impact of our staff in driving real change for the communities we serve.



Igniting Entrepreneurial Talent: Forward Trust Enterprise Programmes

In 2024, Forward Trust launched its Enterprise Support programme, funded by the City Bridge Foundation, to empower people with lived experience in the criminal justice system to develop and implement their own business ideas. We also expanded our enterprise services for young people and young adults in Brent, supported by the Brent Council Grant programme.

These programmes are more than workshops — they're launchpads for innovation, confidence, and opportunity. Participants get access to a wide range of business support and mentoring, and those with promising business ideas can take part in our regular 'Dragons Den' events, held in partnership with the Financial Times.



Keira claimed Universal Credit and was referred to the Forward Restart programme in January 2025. Through Restart, she was enrolled on the Forward Multiply course, initially completing the one-day workshop, which focused on budgeting and money management. Keira enjoyed the session, stating:

"It was engaging, particularly the interactive games and Sudoku exercises. Having lived independently since I was 18, I have strong budgeting awareness, but I found value in reinforcing my financial management skills."

With a solid level of numeracy, Keira then progressed to the three-day Multiply course, which covered more traditional maths concepts and processes. Multiply allowed her to strengthen her mathematical confidence and gain a fresh perspective on practical numeracy skills that could support her future aspirations.



Jacob's journey to self-reliance and opportunity

After a difficult childhood, **Jacob** spent much of his early adult life struggling with substance use, offending, probation, and mental health. Despite this, he graduated from university and worked as a probation officer until losing his job after ending up on probation himself.

In 2023, Jacob was referred to The Forward Trust. He also began attending AA groups and church meetings, while studying counselling and mental health courses. Around the same time, he developed LS Lifestyle, a sobriety-focused headwear brand supporting people in addiction and recovery.

Jacob first started working with a Forward Trust enterprise coach in March 2024. He later joined our Ex-Offenders Business Bootcamp, gaining confidence, tools, and guidance to shape his business. Jacob was invited to pitch LS Lifestyle at Forward's Dragons' Den-style event (the 2024 round) at the Financial Times, receiving valuable feedback and networking opportunities. Jacob now aims to expand his brand, build a website, and seek partnerships and funding to grow LS Lifestyle into a sustainable business.





Recovery and Belonging

What we do

Our Recovery and Belonging services provide clients with the extra support they need to sustain progress and achieve lasting transformation. In 2024/25 these services comprised:

- ▶ **Recovery Programmes:** at two residential centres (Clouds House in Wiltshire and The Bridges in Hull), offering intensive, abstinence-based rehabilitation for substance and behavioural addictions; Recovery Online, a 12-week structured day programme providing therapy and support remotely; and, in Welsh prisons, Y Bont (“The Bridge”), a 12-step recovery programme helping participants build drug- and crime-free futures.
- ▶ **Recovery Support** — additional one-to-one support and groups for those exiting drug and alcohol treatment and who are pursuing abstinence, delivered by staff and peers who are themselves in recovery.
- ▶ **Housing Support** — from recovery housing and tenancy guidance to private rental matching and accommodation for people leaving prison—ensuring stability and independence.
- ▶ **Family Support and Specialist Programmes**, working with clients and their families in nine prisons, supporting them to develop, maintain and strengthen relationships. The delivery of a UK wide online programme for adults affected by family addiction, as well as the provision of specialist training and the development of existing and new programmes, including M-PACT, which supports children aged 8 and over and their adult family members impacted by addiction.
- ▶ **Forward Connect**, our peer-led network of over 6,000 people making good progress in their recovery and rehabilitation, who meet nationally and locally to support each other, celebrate personal achievements and progress, while also giving back to local communities through volunteering.

Together, these services create a powerful pathway to recovery—helping individuals rebuild lives, relationships, and hope for the future.

Personal reflections on the year Julie Muir, Executive Director of Recovery

The last 12 months have seen the creation of our Recovery and Belonging Directorate, combining our residential, online, housing, family and young people and recovery support services with our Forward Connect community into one division.

Our **recovery programmes** have gone from strength to strength, with innovations in our **Recovery Online** service as well as our **residential rehabilitation** centres. Our **housing teams** expanded their footprint, and we **opened five new recovery houses across East Kent and Southend**. These abstinence-based homes offer more than shelter—they provide structure, community, and a pathway to independence. The introduction of a new leadership role—Head of Housing and Recovery—has helped to drive this expansion.

Forward's **family support and specialist programmes services** have also thrived, launching a new online programme, **Recovering Families UK Online (RFUK)** as well as going from strength to strength with the delivery of their **Moving Parents and Children Together (M-PACT)** programme. **Recovery support** services have flourished, bolstered by the merging of the Recovery Support and Forward Connect staff teams. Our **Forward Connect** community grew to over 6,000 members and our face-to-face celebrations of recovery in London, Hull and East Kent, have been a highlight of the calendar.

Forward has had ambitions to grow our network of **lived experience ambassadors** for some time. These ambassadors are individuals with powerful stories of personal transformative change who can carry the message of hope and recovery to a wide range of audiences, including current service users, staff, partners and external audiences. The past year we have significantly invested in this initiative and we now have a strong group of over 80 Ambassadors, reaching an audience of over 1,500 people. We look forward to expanding this group even more in future years.

Our Recovery and Belonging teams exemplify dedication and purpose, championing transformational change for the people we serve. They should be rightly proud of the great work they have accomplished, and I look forward to working with them to bring about even more positive change in the year to come.



HIGHLIGHTS



This year has been one of growth and innovation across our residential services, with new systems, programmes, and approaches enriching both client care and staff development.

CLOUDS HOUSE

Equine-Facilitated Learning (EFL)

Clouds House **Equine-Facilitated Learning** programme has expanded from one to three weekly sessions, helping clients build trust, emotional awareness, and deeper self-understanding through spending time with and caring for horses.

ADHD Coaching

With growing recognition of neurodiversity in recovery, Clouds House welcomed a qualified ADHD coach to provide one-to-one support—equipping clients with tools to improve focus, executive function, and long-term recovery outcomes.

'Conversations at Clouds'

A new initiative, 'Conversations at Clouds', brings together clinicians, therapists, and specialists from across the UK for thought-provoking discussions on addiction treatment. Topics have included ADHD and addiction, sex addiction, and building unity across the recovery sector.

Clinical Care Enhancements

Clouds House has strengthened their clinical framework through new on-site Blood Testing, ECG Monitoring, and Discharge Planning clinics—improving proactive and personalising care. Staff have completed Immediate Life Support (ILS) and RCGP1 training, further enhancing our clinical excellence.

Christmas celebrations at Clouds House

In December, our annual Christmas Carol Concert brought warmth and joy to the Clouds community. The service was held in the village of East Knoyle, close to Clouds House, and was a celebration of recovery attended by villagers, supporters, alumni, current clients and former staff. The concert, held in the historic village church, featured traditional carols, heartfelt readings and moments of shared reflection—beautifully aligning with the spiritual foundation of Clouds House. We also created a Christmas Tree for the St Thomas' Christmas Tree Festival. Members of the local community attended to view a collection of beautiful trees created by local charities — ours was filled with messages of hope, gratitude and recovery.



Celebrating 20 years of The Bridges - Hull

On Friday 20th September 2024, past and present service users, staff, trustees, and friends gathered to celebrate 20 years of The Bridges - Hull.

The Bridges - Hull has come a long way since it first opened in 2004. The centre recently moved to new premises in a more central part of Hull and has begun welcoming a wider range of clients. It has helped hundreds of people since it first opened its doors, some of whom were able to join us at the celebration event. This included the very first client of The Bridges - Hull, Craig Dexter, who is now celebrating 20 years of recovery himself.

Craig shared his inspiring story, and there were also speeches from Dame Diana Johnson MP and Colonel Christopher Henson, High Sheriff of East Riding, praising The Bridges for its vital role in helping people build lives free from addiction. Charlie Forbes-Adam, a key supporter of The Bridges and a former member of The Bridges Fundraising Advisory Group, who have raised millions of pounds to support The Bridges work over the years, also commended the centre's staff for supporting so many to find recovery. An honorary plaque was revealed at the end of the day to celebrate 20 years of the service.

A huge thank you to past and present staff, fundraisers, and former and current clients for making The Bridges the brilliant service that it is today. Here's to the next 20 years!

"The Bridges has always been about what the organisation fundamentally tries to achieve: to help people who are struggling, show care and compassion, provide practical help, and believe in people so they can make transformational changes in their lives. That has happened hundreds of times at The Bridges over the last 20 years."

Mike Trace, Forward CEO

You can also watch a video of the event: <https://youtu.be/hvW4K226gAY>





HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

The Bridges - Hull

Using digital systems to improve efficiency at The Bridges

We introduced the eMAR (Electronic Medication Administration Record) system at The Bridges. Combined with comprehensive staff training, eMAR has reduced dispensing errors, improved record-keeping, flagged missed doses, and ensured timely medication reordering—enhancing both safety and efficiency.

Holistic Wellbeing at The Bridges

We've introduced diverse holistic activities—from therapy dog visits and wellbeing walks to yoga, meditation, and seaside trips—promoting mindfulness, connection, and joy. Clients also enjoy Sunday church services, sports, and swimming, nurturing spiritual and physical wellbeing. These experiences reduce stress, build confidence, and strengthen recovery bonds.



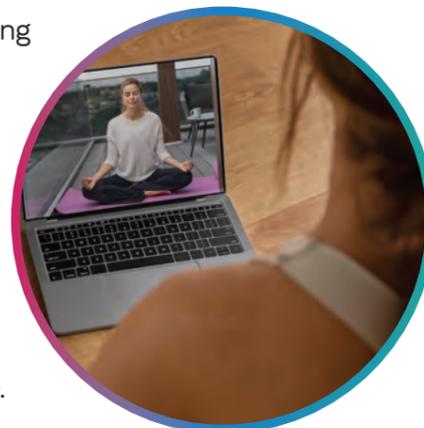
Transforming Recovery: Innovation in Action at Recovery Online

We're continually evolving our online programme to deliver deeper, more holistic support for clients' emotional, physical, and practical wellbeing. Weekly yoga sessions, led by a Clouds counsellor, help participants manage stress, regulate emotions, and reduce cravings—building calm, focus, and resilience in recovery.

To make our programme more inclusive, we've introduced specialised ADHD coaching, offering tools for time management, emotional regulation, and coursework success. Peer study groups foster collaboration and motivation, creating a powerful sense of community and shared growth.

Recognising the ripple effects of addiction, family counselling helps rebuild relationships and strengthen support networks, while nutrition workshops, led by a trained specialist, highlight the essential link between self-care and sustained recovery.

Together, these initiatives reflect our whole-person approach—addressing the mind, body, and relationships that sustain lasting change. By constantly refining our services, we're empowering every individual not just to recover, but to thrive and rebuild their lives with confidence.



Expanding Safe Spaces for Recovery

This year, we've grown our Recovery Housing network, providing more people with the stability and support they need to rebuild their lives. We now manage six properties offering 26 bed spaces across Medway, Ashford, and Folkestone in Kent, and Southend-on-Sea in Essex.

Each home offers a safe, recovery-focused environment where residents can maintain progress, connect with others, and prepare for independent living. We're also partnering with like-minded landlords and community partners to continue expanding our reach—ensuring even more people have access to secure, supportive accommodation as they move forward in recovery.

Building Second Chances: Accommodation for Ex-Offenders scheme

For over three years, Forward has proudly partnered with Croydon Council on the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AFEO) scheme, supporting people at risk of rough sleeping to find safe, stable homes in the private rental sector.

The project has helped more than 150 people secure accommodation since its launch—offering not just housing, but hope and a fresh start.

This past year has been our most successful yet, with 47 Croydon residents housed in 2024/25, surpassing annual targets and demonstrating the power of strong partnerships to transform lives.

We were also delighted to acquire five new AFEO partnerships, in Wandsworth & Richmond, Camden Lewisham, Newham and Greenwich, expanding our reach and enabling us to house and support even more clients.

Leading Change Through Sector Collaboration

At Forward Trust, we're not just delivering services—we're helping shape the future of the housing and recovery sector through active collaboration and thought leadership.

This year, we've strengthened our partnership with Homeless Link, co-hosting bi-monthly London Private Rented Sector (PRS) Forum events that bring together frontline charities to share insight, innovation, and best practice.

Our Service Manager, Tara Moore, has been a key voice in this work—appearing on a national podcast to discuss PRS affordability, and speaking at Homeless Link's Summer Conference, where she shared Forward's pioneering approach to partnership with private landlords.

Her outstanding leadership was recognised with an industry award and her acceptance onto a Charity Housing Senior Leadership Development Programme — a testament to her expertise and impact.

Through sector engagement and collaboration, Forward continues to influence policy, inspire best practice, and amplify the voices of those driving real change.



FAMILY SUPPORT HIGHLIGHTS



Recovering Families UK Online: Supporting Families Affected by Addiction

Launched in January 2025 with funding from the Julia Rausing Trust, **Recovering Families UK (RFUK) Online** provides vital support for family members affected by someone else's addiction. In just six months, the programme has received over 100 referrals, helping participants gain a deeper understanding of addiction, develop healthy coping strategies, and connect with a supportive online community.

This 20-session programme is structured to address the wide-ranging impact addiction can have on family members. It combines 14 group sessions with three mandatory and three optional one-to-one sessions with a trained facilitator, providing both education and personalised support. Participants also have access to the RFUK Hub and Reflective Toolkit, with the option to continue their journey through the RFUK Forward Connect service, accessible via the Forward App.

Designed for adults aged 18 and over, the programme is ideal for those impacted by someone else's addiction and able to engage in an online format. By blending education, practical tools, and community support, RFUK Online empowers participants to build resilience, improve wellbeing, and navigate their own recovery alongside their loved one's journey.

"It's given me strength to trust myself and I think being with other people who understand it and don't judge it is so vital - it has been life-changing for me. The continuity of care around the programme has been exceptional."

(RFUK Participant)



Development of Shaping Us network with Royal Foundation

Katherine Jenkins, our Head of Family Support and Specialist Programmes, has played a pivotal role in the development of the **'Shaping Us Framework'**.

Katherine was part of the study advisory group, working alongside US and other UK subject matter experts to support the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood (CfEC) in the development of this vital framework.

Launched nationally in February 2025, the Shaping Us Framework puts a spotlight on the importance of early childhood and describes social and emotional skills in a clear and accessible way, which can inform and inspire action across society.

We will be using the framework to inform all of our family support interventions and programmes moving forward.

RECOVERY SUPPORT AND FORWARD CONNECT HIGHLIGHTS



Merging of Recovery Support and Forward Connect teams

In the past year, our Recovery Support and Forward Connect teams have merged and the team has expanded. We introduced recovery navigator positions into all of Forward's main community hubs and prisons and as a result have integrated recovery support and Forward Connect into the day-to-day running of these projects. As a result, we have started to see an increase in referrals to both Forward Connect and Recovery Support.

New Islington Online and Weekend Service

In October 2024, we proudly launched **Way Forward**—a new peer-led substance misuse support service in Islington, running until March 2026. Way Forward offers support six days a week online, plus face-to-face weekend walk-ins. The service combines peer-to-peer meetings with social activities such as breakfast and lunch clubs, creative workshops, sports, and opportunities to give back. We work closely with Better Lives, the local substance misuse provider, and other organisations to create referral pathways and expand opportunities for our clients within the Islington community.

Feedback from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive. Clients value the safe, welcoming space—especially at weekends—where they can connect, socialise, and support one another. New activities such as a gardening club and group days out have been especially well received. Way Forward is already building a strong recovery community in Islington, empowering people with lived experience to support each other while developing skills, friendships, and confidence.



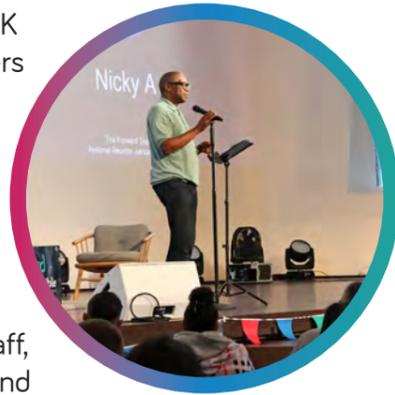
Forward National Reunion: Celebrating Connection and Recovery

On **Saturday 25 January**, Forward Connect clients from across the UK came together in Hackney for the **annual National Reunion**, with others joining online via Zoom. Around **400 people from 12 hubs** attended, making it a powerful day of connection, celebration, and shared recovery.

Hosted at **St John's Church** by Forward stalwarts and Recovery Support team members **Joshua Thetford and Mark Ash**, the event welcomed guests with a variety of stalls, including **recovery-inspired artwork, bracelet-making, and information stands** run by Forward staff, volunteers, and partners. Food, snacks, and a traditional ice cream stand added to the warm, community atmosphere.

The day's highlight was **four moving personal stories** from people who had overcome addiction, crime, prison, and family estrangement with Forward's support. One story came from a family member, highlighting the wider impact of recovery on loved ones.

Entertainment, live music, and an open mic session rounded off the day, with attendees sharing heartfelt reflections on their journeys. The reunion was a **true celebration of unity, resilience, and the transformative power of recovery**.



Hull Reunion: Celebrating the Heart of Recovery

Held in May 2025, the Hull Reunion was a heartwarming and inspiring celebration of community, connection, and resilience. Over 100 attendees gathered, creating an atmosphere filled with warmth, camaraderie, and shared purpose. Guests enjoyed tea, coffee, cakes, and doughnuts in a welcoming space that encouraged meaningful conversations and reconnections.

Stalls offering T-shirts, key rings, and badges provided lasting mementos, while a themed photo backdrop added a playful, memorable touch. The event's theme, "The Heart of Recovery," resonated throughout the day, reflecting the personal journeys of healing, growth, and transformation shared by participants.

The most powerful moments came from moving personal stories, showcasing resilience, hope, and progress, which inspired everyone present. The day ended with a lively raffle, but the true highlight was the emotional strength, unity, and shared sense of achievement felt by all. The Hull Reunion was a vivid reminder that recovery changes lives and offers connection and community support.



Connecting through technology – the launch of the Forward Connect app

The Forward Trust Community App was launched in September 2024, providing a peer support platform and useful resources to members of our Forward Connect community. Nearly 250 people signed up to the app in the first six months, with 79% actively logging in. Over 200 posts were shared and nearly 3,000 chat messages sent in 2024/25. These numbers have continued to increase this year, and we look forward to developing this valuable resource even further in the years to come.

"Great app, easy to use and plenty of useful resources." – Forward Connect Member

"It is very good to have so we can still have a connection with people. For me, this is what I need for my recovery and journey." – Forward Connect Member

Forward Connect Member

"I've just signed up to this new app and am really impressed with it. This is going to be so useful to so many." – Forward staff member



WHAT OUR SERVICE USERS SAY



Recovery programmes

“It was wonderful for me, Clouds – it taught me how to live, and how to stop at the same time. So I’m very very grateful.”

Clouds House alumni Clive, speaking at the 2025 Clouds House reunion.



“It’s an amazing place. The staff are amazing. Just the whole thing (Clouds House reunion event) made me feel so welcome and so loved. And it’s been a long time since I’ve been able to love myself.”

Clouds House alumni, speaking at Clouds House reunion.



THE BRIDGES CASE STUDY

In June 2024, Charlie* arrived at **The Bridges – Hull**, two days sober and on crutches after shattering their leg in a fall. It was Charlie’s third hospitalisation in a year, following two years of homelessness and struggling to stay away from substances. *“You never win by comparing your rock bottom to someone else’s,”* Charlie recalls, reflecting on the honesty and struggle of living alongside others in recovery. With the support of staff and secondary treatment funding, Charlie began to rebuild their life.

After three months, Charlie was referred to **Cat Zero Humber**, a charity that supports people of all ages, including young people and families, helping them into employment or training. Its uses confidence-building activities, tailored plans and the organisation’s 72-foot Challenge yacht as a tool for change. They invited him on a 10-day sailing voyage. Over 500 miles, Charlie learned to navigate, helm, tack sails, and even compete in a yacht race. *“The voyage was the reset I needed,”* they said. *“It reminded me that even small ripples can become waves.”*

*Charlie is a pseudonym



THE
BRIDGES
HULL



From Prisoner to Peer Mentor: Richard’s Recovery Journey

Richard’s recovery began on the Intensive Substance-Free Living (ISFL) unit at HMP Cardiff, where he embraced the ethos of Forward’s Y Bont and became a source of encouragement and belief for others. As one of the programme’s first graduates, he helped set the tone for what peer support and lived experience can achieve.

In a powerful full-circle moment, Richard recently returned to HMP Swansea—not as a prisoner, but as a guest speaker for Y Bont course. His heartfelt talk carried real weight, showing men in recovery that lasting change is possible. *“To give back to the prison that gave me true freedom is a privilege beyond words,”* he said.

Richard’s story has become a symbol of hope, recognised by peers, Forward Trust leaders, and even government representatives.

Richard will resettle at Men’s House in South East Kent—a Forward Trust recovery residence offering safety, structure, and community support. This carefully planned move, agreed with his family and support team, will give him the best chance of long-term success.

From prisoner to peer mentor, Richard’s journey is proof of what’s possible with commitment, support, and belief.

“Just saying I was an addict was hard. Being on “Y Bont” has shown me life, that there is light at the end of the tunnel and help is out there. I’ve taken back power over something that I have been powerless against. I’ve taken so much in over the past few weeks, I’ve never been so determined and driven to succeed.”

Graduate of the “Y Bont” programme

Recovery Support and Forward Connect

The following quotes are all from service users who attended our annual Reunion.

“This service has meant a lot to me. I have found out a lot about myself and other people.”

“Forward Trust has open doors for me, If I can do this, anyone can.”

“I am a changed man. I do not use substances, I live a healthy life, and I am trying to help people.”

“Forward encouraged me to attend 12-step meetings. If anyone is questioning recovery, please do not. It’s the best thing I have done.”

“It is very good to have so we can still have a connection with people. For me, this is what I need for my recovery and journey.”

Housing

Lindsay's Story

Lindsay's life was stable until her 40s, though alcohol had quietly become a daily habit throughout her twenties and thirties. As a single mother of two, she didn't initially see drinking as a problem. Recreational drug use on nights out seemed manageable—until the pandemic. Isolated and drinking heavily, Lindsay was introduced to crack cocaine. Within four months, her life unravelled. She lost her dignity, self-esteem, and relationships, turning to crime to feed her addiction. Two prison sentences followed.

Prison, however, became a turning point. Transferred to HMP Send, she connected with Forward Trust. "I remember the day I told my key worker, 'I need help. I can't do this alone.' The relief was overwhelming—I knew I had to take the opportunity." Two months before release, Lindsay was terrified about her future. Then came the news: she had a place in Forward Trust's Recovery Housing. "When I heard, I fell to my knees crying. It felt like the start of my future." From the moment she was met at the prison gates, Lindsay felt safe, supported, and part of a family in recovery.

Through Recovery Housing and Forward's Day Programme, Lindsay found acceptance, community, and the tools to rebuild her life. "I've regained my dignity, my self-respect, and my family have seen the change in me. Forward Trust propped me up and gave me my life back."

Now 18 months clean and sober, Lindsay has moved into her own flat and embraced new roles as a Lived Experience Ambassador, Peer Mentor, and housing volunteer. She has spoken at national events, worked with ITV News, and even taken her story to Parliament.



"I refuse to let addiction, prison, or homelessness define me. The only thing that defines me now is my determination to show others that what they've been through is just a chapter, not their whole story."

Family Support

"I'd like to bring it to your attention that the family support practitioner who is more than an asset to the team. I respect and appreciate the personality and attitude that she brings to her job role. I've had many one-to-ones in rebuilding relationships with family and children and she has never been late, missed an appointment or looked at her watch during our sessions. I have a brain injury and can find it difficult to communicate with people at times, but this has never happened with my family support practitioner. I feel understood, respected and listened to. I am eternally grateful for the help I have received."

Family Support Client

"It's given me strength to trust myself and I think being with other people who understand it and don't judge it is so vital - it has been life-changing for me. The continuity of care around the programme has been exceptional."

RFUK Participant

"When I was little, I thought no-one had been through the same stuff I had been through. I went to M-PACT and now I don't feel alone."

Young M-PACT participant

Strengthening Family Bonds Through the M-PACT Programme

Kirsty * had a long-standing history of substance misuse, and her 15-year-old son was subject to a Child Protection Plan. Before offering them both a place on the M-PACT programme, extensive discussions were held with key professionals involved in the family's care, including social services, the school's pastoral team, and the safeguarding lead. Kirsty had had a pattern of missing appointments, raising concerns about her ability to engage with the programme. Given the absence of any other suitable adult in the child's life, the decision was made to allow her son to attend sessions independently, based on his strong desire to participate and the belief that excluding him due to adult non-engagement would be detrimental. Transport support was arranged to facilitate his attendance.

Despite a history of disengagement from support services, Kirsty completed the programme. Over the course of the sessions, she overcame previous resistance and began discussing her addiction with her son—something she had previously avoided, despite pressure from social care professionals. As the programme progressed, Kirsty became increasingly reflective and receptive to feedback. Communication between her and her son improved significantly, leading to a noticeable improvement in his confidence and self-esteem.

After completing M-PACT, mother and son reported spending more quality time together and communicating more effectively. His school noted a marked improvement in attendance, and he began forming friendships within his peer group, indicating positive social development.

"I feel that every parent who seeks help with addictions and has children should be required to do the M-PACT course as part of their recovery. It has helped me talk to my child and see things from his point of view."

* a pseudonym has been used to protect identities

M-PACT[®]
Moving Parents and Children Together
Licenced by The Forward Trust



Campaigns

Challenging stigma: how Forward's campaigns are changing the conversation

We campaign to **change public attitudes and influence policy**, ensuring those often written off by society receive understanding, compassion, and opportunities to transform their lives. By raising awareness of the root causes of addiction and offending, we reduce the shame and prejudice that stop people seeking help.



Taking Action on Addiction

Launched in 2021 by our Patron, **HRH The Princess of Wales**, the **Taking Action on Addiction (TAOA)** campaign aims to reframe public perceptions of addiction. Since its inception, TAOA has campaigned nationally to promote compassion, challenge stigma, and demonstrate that recovery is possible. Led by Forward with support from other organisations in the sector the campaign gives a voice to people affected by addiction and those in recovery.

Through polling, media engagement, and events across the UK, TAOA raises awareness of how widespread addiction is, highlights the impact of drug, alcohol, gambling, and behavioural addictions, promotes the support available, and underscores that recovery is achievable. The campaign also works to build a wider understanding of addiction as a health condition, celebrate the recovery community, and influence policy and practice.

A key feature of the campaign is the **annual Addiction Awareness Week (AAW)**, which provides an intense focus on addiction's impact on individuals, families, and society. Through compelling storytelling, research, and events, AAW challenges stigma and encourages open conversations about addiction and recovery.



More Than My Past

More Than My Past challenges the stigma that exists towards ex-offenders and people in recovery from addiction.

This campaign aims to increase understanding that people living marginalised lives – homeless, long term unemployed, addicted, or criminally involved – have often been victims themselves of childhood neglect, abuse or trauma, or of violence, grooming or mental health crises in adulthood. We celebrate stories of resilience and achievement, where individuals find a way out of negative cycles to live positive and productive lives.

Specifically, we aim to demonstrate to policy makers, employers, landlords and the general public that people can and do turn their lives around – and are capable of amazing achievements.



HIGHLIGHTS



Addiction Awareness Week 2024

Addiction Awareness Week 2024 ran from 30th November – 7 December and began with a special message of support from Forward's Royal Patron, HRH The Princess of Wales.

The week centred on our new campaign film *Recovery Is Possible*. More than 75 people shared inspiring stories of their own or a loved one's recovery, with special support from Ant and Dec, who filmed a message for the video. A key highlight was *The Addiction Conversation Live* in London, sponsored by the Financial Times. This event featured a live podcast, music, and spoken word performances, alongside powerful discussions on addiction. Guests included Lily Allen, Bryony Gordon, Matt Willis, and Tony Adams, with performances by Hannah Stanislaus and Gorillaz bassist Seye Adelekan. The audience included an impressive collection of policymakers, public figures, media and people from The Forward Trust's recovery community in support of the week's theme – *Addiction Affects Everyone BUT Recovery Is Possible*.

We also released new Ipsos research showing the scale of dependency in the UK. Almost half of adults (47%) have either experienced or know someone affected by alcohol, drug, medication, or gambling addiction—equating to 23 million people nationwide. Over one in 10 (11%) have faced it personally. The study highlighted concerning post-pandemic patterns, with 31% of those affected saying their alcohol use has risen since March 2020, and 10% of drinkers reporting it is now part of their daily routine. Stigma remains a major barrier, with up to 43% saying shame would stop them seeking help from sources such as GPs or employers.

Social media engagement with the campaign was impressive, with **2.28 million post engagements**, **a reach of 2.13 million** and over 425,000 video views in the run up to and during the week. Our content was liked and shared far and wide, from celebrities to Members of Parliament, professional bodies and organisations working in the sector.



The week amplified the voices of those affected by addiction and shone a light on the hope that recovery brings. As Mike Trace, Forward's CEO, said on the night of *The Addiction Conversation*:

“There continues to be a deep lack of understanding about addiction in Britain today. Addiction affects everybody and yet still this continues to be a hidden condition, a secret illness. This event brought people together in order to bring stories into the light because it's only by hearing other people's stories that we are more likely to recognise the symptoms in others.”

“As Patron of The Forward Trust, I am delighted to once again support Addiction Awareness Week.

It has been heartening to see that progress is still being made to end the stigma surrounding those battling addiction. For too long, many have suffered in silence, harbouring feelings of shame and guilt about their condition, despite their vulnerability.

Everyone suffering from addiction is another human being, with a story of their own, which many of us don't understand or see.

It is not our place to judge or criticise, we must take the time to sit by someone's side, learning the values of love and empathy. Being a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen, these simple acts of kindness are crucial in breaking down the misunderstandings that so many face.

Addiction is not a choice. It is a serious mental health condition that could affect any one of us. By acting with humility and compassion we can all make a difference and support those who are suffering.

Many charities up and down the country are guiding individuals and families through the toughest of times. But they cannot do it alone. It is up to each and every one of us to change the way we think about and consider the many people coping with addiction.

Because recovery is possible.”

HRH The Princess of Wales, on Addiction Awareness Week 2024



“The blast radius of addiction is far and wide. It's your uncle or your cousin; it's the person fighting in the bar; it's the constant shouting through the walls from your neighbour; it's the quiet bottle and a half every night you don't tell anyone about.

We see its effects in A&E departments across the nation and with those unfortunate enough to sleep on our streets. We see it in boardrooms, classrooms, playgrounds, pulpits, and sporting arenas. Addiction takes many forms, and it affects us all in many ways.”

Seye Adelekan, multi-instrumentalist musician, composer and producer

Special episode of the **More Than My Past** podcast

We were delighted to broadcast a new, special episode of the *More Than My Past* podcast in October 2024. The episode focussed on the incredible story of Tony Attwood, who experienced addiction and served multiple prison sentences for a number of crimes before Judge Peter Ross sent him to rehab instead. Now many years into recovery, Tony has set up a vital housing charity for ex-offenders. Peter was his chair of trustees. Tony and Peter join actor Jason Flemyng and Forward Trust director Julie Muir to retell their extraordinary story for this remarkable episode.

forward

PART 2

IMPACT

REPORT

Overview (Stages of Change)

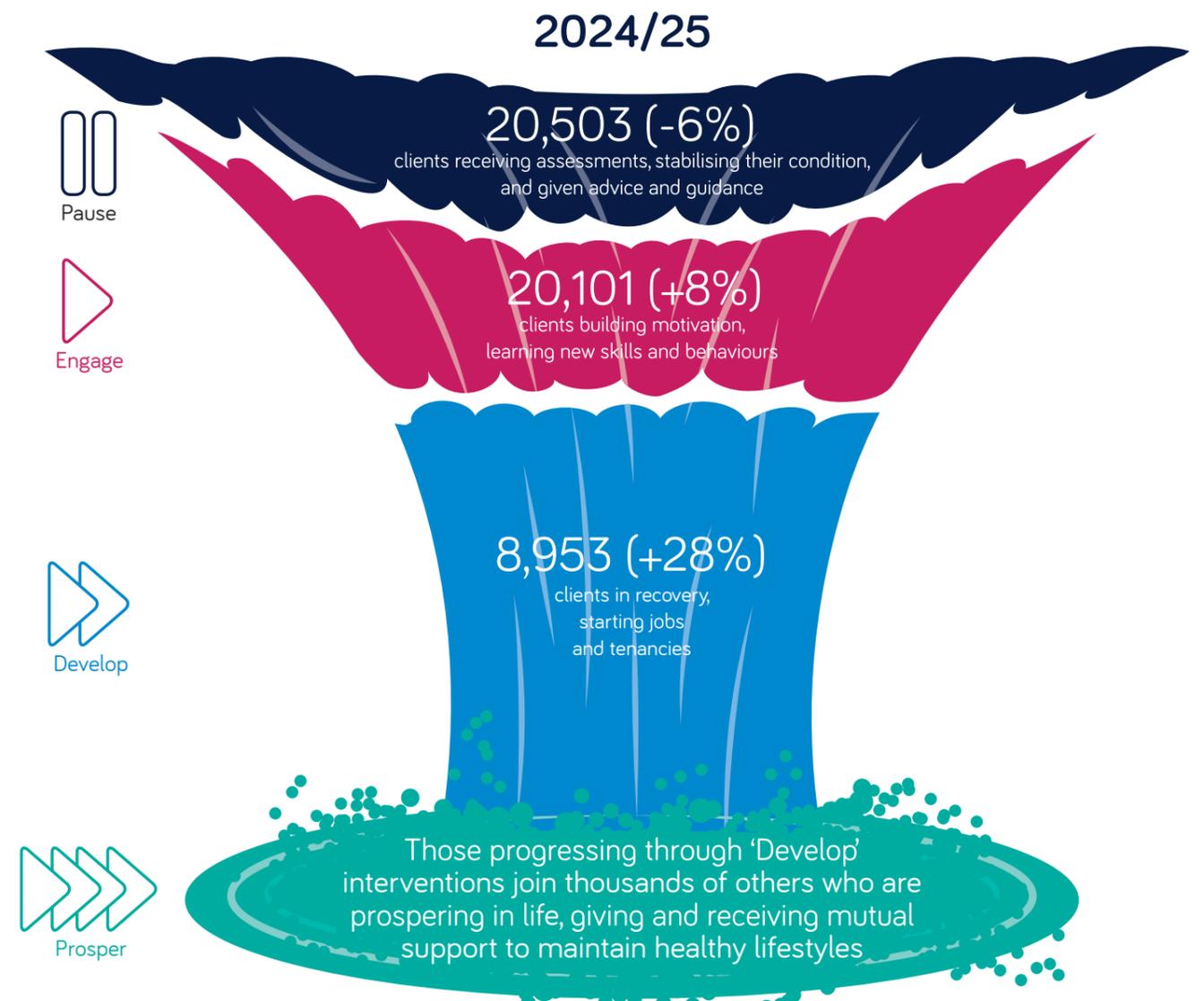
In this section of the report, we present - for each of our service areas described above - headline data on the numbers of clients reached and the levels of activity they engaged in, while also highlighting outcomes and impact achieved based on our research and evaluation activity.

We also present below an overview of the progress made by all our clients across our 'stages of change', with client activities categorised as 'pause', 'engage', 'develop' and 'prosper', designed to provide a structure that supports people towards recovery and rehabilitation.



For the last 6 years, we have collected data on the number of clients who were accessing support at each of these stages, from 'Pause' through 'Engage' to 'Develop', data that can be visualised as a 'funnel' that flows into our ever-growing reservoir of people who are 'Prospering' in life (becoming part of our 'Forward Connect' recovery community).

The diagram below present a comparison of the size and shape of our 'funnel' in 2023/24 and 2024/25. It highlights the change in the number of interventions delivered during this period. Of particular note is the growth in both Engage and Develop interventions, which represent our most targeted and transformative methods of client support.



	23/24	24/25	% Change
Total number of clients supported	32,493	35,325	+9%
Pause	21,645	20,503	-6%
Engage	18,486	20,101	+8%
Develop	6,056	8,953	+28%

SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH

PRISON SERVICES

Reach and activity



Substance Misuse

- ▶ 8,792 male clients and 1,711 female clients (43% more than 23/24).
- ▶ 5,321 prescribed for opioid use, 2,254 for alcohol use.
- ▶ 578 life-saving Naloxone kits issued
- ▶ 936 clients commenced OST-reduction (▶Engage).
- ▶ 475 clients commenced alcohol detox (▶Engage).
- ▶ 172 clients starting our Stepping Stones programme (▶Engage).
- ▶ 318 clients starting structured abstinence-based group programmes (▶▶Develop).



Talking Therapies

- ▶ 827 clients
- ▶ 327 clients starting Step 2 or Step 3 (▶Engage)



Reconnect

- ▶ 724 clients supported

Client outcomes and feedback



71% average completion rate across all Develop prison programmes.

Substance Misuse

- ▶ 1,696 clients completing treatment drug/alcohol free (25% more than 23/24).
- ▶ 19.5% increase in continuity of care rates across Forward's services for those leaving prison accessing support in the community.
- ▶ 53% of those that exited (non-transfers) had successfully completed their treatment, free from dependence.
- ▶ 92% of clients rated the service as excellent or good.
- ▶ 90 clients clients engaging with Forward Connect, our 'Prosper' peer community.

"The help that was offered has given me tools to take away with me and make a fresh start...Forward Trust have helped me gain an understanding about my life choices and behaviour around drink and drugs. I have gained skills to help me on my release. They tried to help all of us and have done a great job"

"I started this journey in denial, but Forward have persevered and helped me throughout and I feel confident and optimistic for my future. They have helped me to see the benefits of substance-free living"

"Forward Trust have supported me fully... They've supported me when I've relapsed, helped me get back on track."

"Forward Trust has been a life saver for me, every staff member is supportive and understanding. It's been a privilege to work with them all."



Talking Therapies

- ▶ 40.2% of Talking Therapy clients moving into 'reliable improvement'.



clients completing treatment drug/alcohol free (25% more than 23/24)

Client outcomes and feedback continued

Reconnect

- ▶ **100%** of Reconnect clients rated the service as excellent or good.
- ▶ **81%** said the service helped them to better understand and address their difficulties.
- ▶ **88%** said they felt involved at all times in making choices about their treatment and care.
- ▶ **100%** of clients said they felt staff listened to their concerns and treated them seriously.
- ▶ **87%** of Reconnect clients had a mental health need, 80% of these were referred into a mental health service.
- ▶ **76%** of Reconnect clients needed support to register with a GP, 80% of these were helped to do so.



said the service helped them to better understand and address their difficulties

"I really valued everything you did for me, thank you so much."

Reconnect service user



"You were the only people who actually helped me on my release. I really appreciated the calls and check-ins and how you supported me to attend my GP appointment also. It really did mean a lot."

Reconnect service user

"Thank you so much for all the help. You guys have really supported me both in prison and on my release too. It's been nice to have a familiar face to talk to whilst I've been back in prison (due to recall). You've helped to link me in with IAPT [now Talking Therapies] and drug and alcohol support which I really appreciate. I would never have registered with a GP or attended my appointments on release without your support."

Reconnect service user

Surrey female prisons counselling service

Reach and activity

- ▶ **225** referrals received.
- ▶ **810** hours of counselling received.

Client outcomes and feedback

- ▶ **77%** of successfully completing clients showed a noticeable decrease in depression.
- ▶ **83%** of successfully completing clients showed a noticeable decrease in anxiety.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Reach and activity



- ▶ **4,617** male clients and **2,282** female clients supported (**21.4% more than in 23/24**).
- ▶ **1,054** clients starting Engage group programmes (e.g. alcohol detox groups).
- ▶ **605** clients accessing brief interventions.
- ▶ **406** clients starting structured day programmes (▶▶Develop).
- ▶ **354** clients accessing residential rehabilitation. (▶▶Develop).



Community Day Programmes – Long-term Impact Study

During 24/25 we also started work on 'Programme to Prosper', looking at the long-term impact of our community day programmes in Hull, Kent and Medway. We are interviewing participants at 6-, 12- and 24-month intervals after they complete these programmes to assess their progress in recovery and how well they are practising the key behaviours developed on the programme on an ongoing basis. We are using the COM-B model (assessing people's Capability, Opportunity and Motivation to change Behaviour) to do this, widely used in public health evaluation. We will be reporting on findings from 2026.

Client outcomes and feedback

- ▶ **1,722** clients completing treatment drug/alcohol free, a 21% increase on 23/24.
- ▶ **99%** of clients rated their service experience as excellent or good.
- ▶ **60%** average completion rate across all structured day programmes.
- ▶ **418** clients engaging with Forward Connect, our 'Prosper' peer community.



"Always felt listened to and felt it was a great service, appreciated the work my keyworker was doing with me and helping myself and my partner to get out of treatment successfully as we have both detoxed from OST. Thank you."

"Amazing service, the groups are fantastic, very informative, educational and makes me think, and now has helped me on my sobriety journey and into a more prosperous life."

"Forward have saved my life. I now have a future and many good things to look forward to."

"Grateful that Forward were there when I needed them."



ReNew (structured day programme in Hull)

- ▶ **82%** of ReNew participants felt more confident in their ability to abstain from alcohol.
- ▶ **70%** gained confidence in staying drug-free.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Reach and activity



Forward supported **11,091** clients of our commissioned rehabilitative services in 2024-25, 27% more than 2023-24. These comprised:

Personal Wellbeing

(Commissioned Rehabilitative Service)

- ▶ **4,369** clients supported.
- ▶ **6,810** interventions delivered.

Accommodation

(Commissioned Rehabilitative Service)

- ▶ **3,473** clients supported (62% increase in community referrals received from 23/24).



Dependency & Recovery

(Commissioned Rehabilitative Service)

- ▶ **3,249** clients supported (from 69 different nationalities).
- ▶ **5,099** interventions delivered.



Client outcomes and feedback

Personal Wellbeing

- ▶ **1,838** clients achieved their action plan goals.
- ▶ **80%** of clients progressed in their personal goals.
- ▶ **95%** of clients rated their experience of the service as excellent or good.



"I think the service is 'wonderful' I feel that it has helped immensely to have someone who is willing to sit down and listen. The nature of the practitioner has positively impacted on my feelings and views of my own self-worth and own mental health" PWB Service User



Accommodation

- ▶ **1,838** clients achieved their action plan goals.
- ▶ **80%** of clients progressed in their personal goals.
- ▶ **95%** of clients rated their experience of the service as excellent or good.

"I am so grateful for Holly's support with my housing. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for her"

Accommodation Service User



Dependency & Recovery

- ▶ **95%** of clients rated their experience of the service as excellent or good.
- ▶ **83%** of clients are progressing in their personal goals.

In addition, **580** of our Commissioned Rehabilitative Services clients engaged with the Forward Connect community.

"I have been abstinent from alcohol for 3 months now thanks to Forward Trust. Initially, I was worried as English is not my first language, but my caseworker delivered all sessions in Punjabi, which meant I could clearly understand what was being shared. I was struggling with depression, so my caseworker even came out to my home and met me, which I am very grateful for. My health and relationships with family have improved, and I have more energy than ever. Thank you Forward Trust."

D&R service user



Additional Outcome Measurement: Intermediate Outcome Measurement Inventory (IOMI)

As part of an organisation-wide roll out, in 2024/25 we started to use 'IOMI' across our Commissioned Rehabilitative Services. This is a tool that measures resilience, wellbeing, self-efficacy, impulsivity, motivation, hope and interpersonal trust (measures widely regarded as predictors of desistance and recovery) where service users self-report on a scale of 1-5 before and after engagement with our service.

Findings from the first two quarters of 25/26 are summarised below:

IOMI measure	Percentage change in scores (pre and post)
Agency/self-efficacy	+15%
Hope	+22%
Impulsivity / problem-solving	-4%
Motivation to change	+9%
Resilience	+14%
Interpersonal trust	+15%
Wellbeing	+18%



EMPLOYMENT

During 2024/25, Forward delivered employment-related information, advice and guidance (IAG) to clients in 17 prisons, and employment support for ex-offenders and other disadvantaged groups through X contracts. We also provided enterprise support and employment opportunities through Blue Sky Services.

Reach and activity

- ▶ **3,701** clients in prison receiving Information Advice and Guidance.
- ▶ **1,085** clients receiving community-based job support or training.
- ▶ **60** clients supported with their ideas for enterprise.
- ▶ **12** staff employed through Blue Sky Services.
- ▶ **222** job and apprenticeship vacancies offered through our Employer network.



clients supported with their ideas for enterprise

Client outcomes & feedback

- ▶ **98%** of prisoners are satisfied/very satisfied with our IAG services.
- ▶ **278** prison clients moving into jobs, training, education, or apprenticeships upon release.
- ▶ **412** community clients moving into jobs, training, or apprenticeships.
- ▶ **48%** of enterprise clients trading, applying for growth funding or employing staff after 3 months.

PROGRAMME SPOTLIGHT

'Multiply' (numeracy programme across Thanet and East Kent)

- ▶ **90%** of participants reported struggling with numeracy; over half disclosed learning difficulties.
- ▶ **400** learners supported.
- ▶ **98%** (of programme completers) reported overall gains in numeracy confidence.
- ▶ **73%** showed improved confidence in core maths operations.
- ▶ **60%** showed improvement in logical problem-solving.
- ▶ **67%** showed improvement in budgeting.
- ▶ **45%** progressed into further education or employment.

Adult skills programmes (London and East Kent)

- ▶ **410** learners supported.
- ▶ **92%** overall achievement.



410 learners supported

RECOVERY AND BELONGING

RECOVERY PROGRAMMES

Reach and activity

Residential

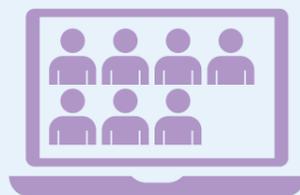
- ▶ **286** clients accessing structured programmes at Clouds House (Wiltshire) or The Bridges (Hull).
- ▶ **74** detox completions.
- ▶ **62** clients moved on to Clouds aftercare service.

Prison

- ▶ **82** clients graduated Y Bont programme.

Online

- ▶ **7** people completed our first pilot programme.



Client outcomes & feedback

Residential

- ▶ **74%** completion rate for Clouds House and **54%** for The Bridges.
- ▶ **83%** of all people leaving Clouds House or The Bridges are drug and alcohol free.

Online

Recovery Online participants:

- ▶ **100%** said their wellbeing improved.
- ▶ **71%** said resilience improved.
- ▶ **86%** said their self-efficacy improved.
- ▶ **71%** said their hope improved.

REACH OUT

Reach and activity

3,640 calls received:

- ▶ **Nearly half (48.8%)** of callers had not previously contacted Forward or other support providers, meaning Reach Out was the first step for them in getting help.
- ▶ **One in 6 (16.6%)** of callers were the friends and family of those needing support.



Client outcomes & feedback

- ▶ **90%** of callers would recommend Reach Out to a friend.

Quotes from Reach Out service users



"Your staff are very helpful, welcoming and professional."

"My enquiry was answered promptly and succinctly. It was helpful in terms of advice and was kind."



HOUSING SUPPORT

Reach and activity

Vision Housing (independent living)

- ▶ **335** referrals made.
- ▶ **270** assessments completed.
- ▶ **397** viewings arranged.
- ▶ Housed clients in properties across **20** London boroughs and Surrey and Kent.
- ▶ Working with **10** borough and district councils in Surrey, Probation, and **10** London Borough councils.

Recovery Housing (shared living)

- ▶ **6** houses situated across Kent and Essex (male, female and mixed schemes).
- ▶ **35** new referrals.



Client outcomes & feedback

Vision Housing

- ▶ **162** people housed.
- ▶ **115** tenancies (90%) have been sustained for over 6 months.
- ▶ **93** tenancies (79%) sustained over 12 months.

Recovery Housing

- ▶ **26** people housed.

"My mentor has helped me develop independence and provided me with key skills to manage my own tenancy, they have guided me and provided me with solutions and options that I never knew existed before, I can't wait to become a mentor myself in the future."

"Without your help when I came out of prison, I would have been completely lost. You've all been unbelievable. If people come out of prison like I did, with nowhere to live, they have no chance. ... If Forward hadn't been there, I know my mental health would have suffered. They worked with my probation officer to explain what was happening, and they took away the stress of landlords asking too many questions. I'm not trying to be funny — I genuinely don't know what would have happened to me. It also feels like someone actually cares. If my Forward worker isn't around, someone else calls me to make sure I'm OK. You don't feel forgotten."



FAMILY SUPPORT

Reach and activity

- ▶ **301** clients attending Relationships Matter structured programme.
- ▶ **106** families supported through M-PACT structured programme.
 - **136** adults.
 - **177** young people aged 8-17.

Recovering Families UK Online

- ▶ **44** people referred.
- ▶ **33** people started.
- ▶ **29** people completed.

(Figures are for Jan – Mar '25 only, following programme launch at the start of the year).

RFUK Online quotes from service users

"I feel like it's helped to not be as angry"

"It's given me strength to trust myself"

"I've loved every minute of it"

"It's given me a great sense of relief"



Client outcomes & feedback

Relationships Matter participants

- ▶ **69%** feel more confident in their relationships.
- ▶ **60%** report that communication with someone in their life has improved.
- ▶ **58%** report their ability to deal with relationship challenges has improved.
- ▶ **39%** have developed new supportive relationships.

(2 year evaluation).



RECOVERY SUPPORT

Reach and activity

- ▶ **520** programme graduates supported.
- ▶ **332** new clients referred across community and prison projects.
- ▶ **103** 'Meet and Greets' undertaken by staff or volunteers, ensuring safe travel to and from custody or rehabilitation settings and into accommodation schemes.

Client outcomes & feedback

- ▶ **98%** of Recovery Support clients rated their experience as excellent or good.



FORWARD CONNECT

Reach and activity

5,286 members, representing national recovery communities:

- ▶ **728** meetings.
- ▶ **1,456** hours of volunteering activity.
- ▶ **2,946** messages of online peer support via our Forward Trust Community app.
- ▶ **244** peer mentors and volunteers.
- ▶ **62** Lived Experience Ambassadors.
- ▶ **1,503** people attended a Lived Experience work shop, of which **92** took place over the course of the year.

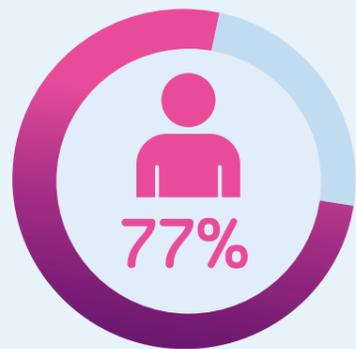


hours of
volunteering
activity

Client outcomes & feedback

Of Forward Connect members surveyed:

- ▶ **77%** felt less isolated.
- ▶ **76%** felt more hopeful for the future.
- ▶ **72%** noticed an improvement in their relationships.
- ▶ **68%** were helping support their peers in recovery.



felt less isolated