Introducing The Forward Trust
The new name for RAPt and Blue Sky
I never thought it would be possible to change my ways of crime and addiction. But I now live free from drugs, alcohol and crime in a beautiful flat, with a full time job and a girlfriend. I feel so positive about my future and know that I will continue to move forward with my life.

Lee, former Forward client

We are The Forward Trust (formerly RAPt and Blue Sky), the social business with charitable status that empowers people to break the often interlinked cycles of crime and addiction to move forward with their lives. For more than 25 years we have been working with people to build positive and productive lives, whatever their past.

We believe that anyone is capable of lasting change. Our services have supported thousands of people to make positive changes and build productive lives with a job, family, friends and a sense of community.
A word from our Chair

25 years ago a group of people got together to set up a project that would offer 12 step programmes to those with drug or alcohol problems in prison. Today, that small project has grown into a much larger organisation working in 18 prisons and also in the community, offering substance misuse and employment services to ex-offenders and people struggling with drug/alcohol dependence. We support some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in society to turn their lives around by helping them to break the cycles of addiction, crime, unemployment and destructive behaviours.

At our core is the belief that anyone is capable of transformational change, no matter how entrenched their addiction or prolific their crimes. We have thousands of examples of people making real change in their lives and moving forward with family, a job and a community.

We now enter an exciting new phase of our development as RAPt and Blue Sky merge to become The Forward Trust. By combining the skills and expertise of these two organisations - with over 35 years’ experience between them - we hope to help more people break the cycle and move forward with their lives.

We know there are many people who are affected by addiction and crime. As The Forward Trust we intend to show that change is possible, building on our track record to offer support to many more people. Anyone, given access to the right support, is capable of moving forward.

David Bernstein
Chair, The Forward Trust
A word from our Chief Executive

It is a privilege to work in an organisation that delivers on such an important mission – to help offenders and people struggling with addiction to make transformational changes to their lives. We have learnt over the years that, with the right motivation and support, even the most marginalised or distressed people can pause, review their situation, consider choices and resolve to change their future. The RAPt 12 step addiction programmes, and Blue Sky ‘Employment Agency’ approach, have both shown that offenders respond positively to clear and achievable offers of recovery – the experience of both organisations is that instilling belief, offering consistent personal support, and providing alternative networks and connections, are the key factors in any change programme.

That’s why we place inspirational role models and peer supporters at the heart of our service delivery, and why over one third of Forward’s own employees are ex-offenders or in recovery from addiction themselves. They offer living proof that change is possible, and are a vital source of support and motivation to others. This ‘peer support culture’ has always been at the core of both RAPt and Blue Sky’s work, and will remain as a core feature of Forward’s services.

We are looking to diversify the programmes and pathways we offer to our clients – different models, settings and intensities, but all guided by our core principles. We are also seeking to strengthen the relationships we have with other agencies to ensure the most efficient and best quality support for our clients.

With the merger complete, this is an exciting time at The Forward Trust and we want you to be part of our development. To see how we can work together please visit our website (forwardtrust.org.uk) or contact me directly at mike.trace@forwardtrust.org.uk.

Mike Trace
Chief Executive, The Forward Trust
Our theory of change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pause</th>
<th>Engage</th>
<th>Develop</th>
<th>Prosper</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEALTH AND WELLBEING</strong></td>
<td><strong>DRUG AND ALCOHOL RECOVERY</strong></td>
<td><strong>CONNECTIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment, triage, and harm reduction advice and information</td>
<td>Assessment and stabilisation of drug use, Immediate medical care and prescribing</td>
<td>Mapping and reviewing key relationships</td>
<td>Assessment of employment status, and realistic job opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2-1 support and group workshops to promote wellbeing and healthy behaviours</td>
<td>Working on motivation to change, and skills for recovery</td>
<td>Reaching out to family, friends and peers to develop positive connections</td>
<td>Articulating dreams and ambitions; vocational skills and work-ready behaviours</td>
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<td>Pursuit of safe and healthy behaviours, and activities that generate mental health and wellbeing</td>
<td>Working through our structured recovery programmes, engagement with support networks</td>
<td>Working through difficult issues, building positive networks</td>
<td>Placement into real jobs or work experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>A long, contented and healthy life</td>
<td>Independent and positive lifestyle, free of crime and addiction</td>
<td>Lasting, supportive and positive relationships with family and social networks</td>
<td>Economic independence, self-worth, career progression</td>
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Drivers of change

- **Belief in change** - For anyone, whatever their past
- **Peer role models** - Living proof that change is possible
- **Clear progression pathways** - Incremental steps towards lasting change
- **Networks of support** - Providing positive encouragement and affirmation

Our impact

- **Reduced re-offending and long-term recovery**
- **Improved physical and mental health**
- **Positive social and economic contribution**
Drug and alcohol services

We opened the first intensive abstinence-based treatment programme in a UK prison at HMP Downview in 1992, and our drug and alcohol programmes were the first to be independently accredited for reducing re-offending by the Ministry of Justice.

Peer reviewed research into the original ‘RAPt’ 12 step treatment programme, showed a 65% reduction in the volume of crime committed by RAPt programme graduates, compared to a comparison group completing less intensive drug treatment programmes. To retain the strong association with this success, and the connections with 12 step fellowships and our own graduate community, we continue to use the name RAPt to describe any of our intensive abstinence-based prison programmes.

Since 1999, we have expanded the range of drug and alcohol services we provide in prison – to include advice, health and wellbeing, motivational work, clinical services, and a wider range of group work programmes – and have become national leaders in the management of these complex services in the unique environment of a prison.

Having broken the cycle of addiction and crime I feel like I’ve got a new lease of life. I feel like I can move forward with my life and start contributing to society instead of taking away.

Karl, former Forward client

About our services

Around 2 million people (1 in 30 adults) in the UK are struggling with addiction to drugs or alcohol. Amongst marginalised groups, such as homeless people, the proportion can be as high as 1 in 3 and amongst prisoners, it is higher than 1 in 2 – more than 50% of all prisoners have some history of drug or alcohol problems. The waste of potential, as well as the social and emotional damage involved is massive – but it is also redeemable.

Forward manages a diverse range of drug and alcohol recovery services that aim to provide individuals with the care and support to stabilise their lives and think about the future, the strength and motivation to believe in change, and the support and connection to stay the course. Our accredited 12 step programmes have independently proven success rates in achieving these transformations, and we are applying the 25 years of experience of these programmes to a wider range of client needs and circumstances.

In prison

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An estimated 2,000,000 people in the UK are struggling with an addiction.
In the community

Forward has 14 years’ experience in supporting people in communities across the country. Our services are tailored to the individual needs, strengths and motivations of our clients – whether they are looking for support to build a life free from drugs and alcohol or need help to stay safe and reduce risks.

We offer a wide range of services to a diverse client group – from initial advice, assessment and harm reduction services, to substitute prescribing and clinical care, to recovery pathways and programmes.

Recovery support

The key to successful recovery is a network of support that replaces previous drug using associates. Forward tries to make such positive influences available to all our clients. For example, people who complete our intensive abstinence-based treatment programmes can access our recovery support service, that provides practical help and onward referrals, as well as a point of contact with a mutual support network through reunions, events, and support groups. To date, this service has helped thousands of clients to help build the resilience and strength to maintain their recovery and live a positive and independent life.

Family and relationship support

Our services for family and friends offer additional support to help our clients rebuild meaningful relationships. Forward also offers support to those affected by someone else’s drug and alcohol problems through a range of interventions and referrals.

There’s so much shame and stigma that people who have loved ones with addiction can feel – I can’t believe how much the family service has helped and taught me. It’s given me the tools I need to stay strong, as well as to support my husband in his recovery.

Jackie, Forward family support client

Where we work

Forward currently provides drug and alcohol services in 18 prisons and 10 community programmes across Kent, the Home Counties, the West Midlands, Hull and London.

Work with us

For information on partnership opportunities please contact partners@forwardtrust.org.uk or visit us at: www.forwardtrust.org.uk

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1 Based on an estimated £63,000 saving in crime and resentencing costs to the public purse for every client completing the RAPt Intensive substance misuse programme compared to the average cost of delivering the programme to each client.
Employment services

On leaving prison after eight years, my prospects weren’t good. I thought, ‘Who’s going to employ an ex-offender?’ But then I found Blue Sky and I’ve never looked back. Best thing I’ve ever done.

Irvin, Blue Sky Agency employee

About the service

Having a job can help break the cycle of re-offending and addiction. A job can bring purpose, a connection to the community and independence. Forward Employment Services create chances for people to develop new skills, find work and start a new story. Operating across Justice, Welfare to Work and Local Authority commissioning frameworks, our services include:

- **Work**: Direct employment of ex-offenders through our award-winning Blue Sky Agency in a range of sectors and wider brokerage services, plus in-work support;
- **Skills**: Accredited vocational training based on employer needs;
- **Motivation and Resilience**: Activities and interventions to engage, inspire, and prepare people in the criminal justice system for work;
- **Apprenticeships and Volunteering**: Our award winning schemes for people starting out on a new career;
- **Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship**: We invest in our own enterprises – including start-up enterprises – led by and employing ex-offenders and people in recovery from addiction.

Our services are informed by years of working with some of the hardest-to-reach people in the community, in custody and through the gate. Our expert team includes people with comparable experience, who can provide inspirational peer support to our target client groups.

Our current employment and skills contract portfolio includes HMPPS CFO3, HMPPS Learning and Skills Development, Work Programme, Prison Reform contracts, and Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS).

**Employer engagement**

We have built long-standing relationships with employers in a range of sectors including local and national companies as well as local authorities:

- We invest heavily in understanding the operational needs of our commercial partners;
- We provide key social and economic reporting to support the strategic priorities of our partners;
- Skills gaps identified by our commercial partners help inform our vocational training in prisons and in the community;
- Our employability and motivational work is underpinned by insight into the attitudes and behaviours required to sustain jobs.

Blue Sky Agency sectors include:

- Transport and logistics
- Grounds maintenance
- Warehouse and distribution
- Waste management
- Catering
- Construction

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Informed by the client’s voice

We build trust with thousands of people in recovery from crime and addiction every year. Our work is informed by the barriers we know exist for the people we support, and by ongoing analysis of the impact of our employment work.

Here’s what our clients tell us:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to employment</th>
<th>Our solutions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discrimination</strong></td>
<td><strong>Creating opportunity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Employers just put the phone down when they hear about my past.”</td>
<td>“Really happy with Blue Sky; they gave me an opportunity when so many others let me down.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Loss of confidence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Growing confidence</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’ve forgotten how to work.”</td>
<td>“I am really enjoying my job, it has boosted my confidence.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of trust in mainstream services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Building trust</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What system?”</td>
<td>“Blue Sky treats us like human beings with normal interactions and no judgements.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social isolation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Developing social networks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel so terribly lonely that I wouldn’t be happy even if I win the lottery”</td>
<td>“I’ve met new people through work who are on the same journey.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Working with Blue Sky has proved to be a really productive partnership on the ground thus enabling Idverde to meet our high standards.”

Martyn Bradley, Operations Director, Idverde

Where we work

We operate across London, the Home Counties and Southern areas, and are also developing new initiatives in the West Midlands.

Work with us

For more information on how to partner with us please contact employment@forwardtrust.org.uk

or visit us at:

www.blueskydevelopment.co.uk or www.forwardtrust.org.uk

23% reduction in re-offending

17:1 return on investment

Based on the Deloitte cost benefit analysis tool and Pro Bono Economics finding that the model of employment saves £18,600 for every ex-offender who completes employment with Blue Sky Agency in terms of reduced re-offending, lower unemployment and reduced substance abuse.

1,500 ex-offenders employed to date by Blue Sky

43% move directly into permanent jobs

38 employer partnerships across 8 sectors

23% reduction in re-offending

17:1 return on investment
I completed the RAPt prison programme in 2008 at HMP Send and was released in 2014. Since then, I’ve opened my own business and become a mother. Forward has given me more opportunities than I ever could have imagined and they are still here for me, still supporting me.

Lacie, former Forward client