



# CANDIDATE PACK FOR CHAIR

forward



# WELCOME

---

I have had the privilege to serve as chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Forward Trust for more than nine years and am immensely proud of the organisation's achievements over that time. My fellow Trustees and I have had the good fortune to work with an excellent leadership team, and a committed and diverse workforce of volunteers, trainees, and salaried staff to deliver services that save lives.

We have brought together the incredible work of several charities over this period under the banner of the Forward Trust, and now manage a wide range of services that reach over 20,000 beneficiaries each year. All of these services work to a single mission – to help people who are struggling in life, to give them the belief that a better life is possible, and to provide them with emotional and practical help to achieve it.

Formerly known as RAPt (Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust) the organisation began life 32 years ago as a provider of drug and alcohol treatment in prisons. Now, with a turnover of approx. £45 million and a staff complement of nearly one thousand, we work both in prisons and in the community. We help those with addiction, but also those in or around the criminal justice system. Whether their presenting problem is addiction, imprisonment, unemployment, homelessness, or a more general mental health issue, we hope that Forward Trust can provide our clients with the support they need to turn their lives around.

As a charity and social enterprise that is primarily funded through public sector contracts (over 95% of our income), we can be subject to significant fluctuations in our annual income and expenditure, but I am happy to report that we are today a financially sound organisation with strong governance. We hope to continue to develop and expand the services we offer, while raising wider awareness of the needs of our beneficiaries and influencing public policy on the issues we deal with.

I am pleased to be able to hand on chairmanship of the charity in the knowledge that its board, senior management, and entire staff are all working together to create a first-class organisation.

I hope that having read more about us you will be sufficiently interested to put your name forward to take on the role of chairman. And I hope that, if you are invited into the forward Trust family, you find it as stimulating and rewarding as I have.

**Hon David Bernstein**  
**Chair of Trustees**



# ABOUT US

---

The Forward Trust empowers people to break the cycles of addiction or crime to move forward with their lives.

We're a national organisation delivering over 70 projects around the country, with over 900 staff and 200 volunteers, 30% of whom have lived experience of the issues we seek to address. Since 1991, we have enabled thousands of people to make changes to create better lives with jobs, family, friends and a sense of community.

We deliver a diverse range of care and rehabilitation services focused on recovery and rehabilitation in community and prison settings, and campaign for equality and compassion for people on the margins of society.

We also host a large, growing recovery community, [Forward Connect](#), for people who are making progress in their own recovery, and run a successful nationwide awareness campaign, [More Than My Past](#) that celebrates individual stories of lives turned around.

We are proud to have the Patronage of Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, and a wide network of supporters, donors, and ambassadors, who together support and promote our work.

Like all charities, we have a Board of Trustees who have ultimate legal responsibility for all aspects of the operation of the organisation. Our Board of Directors currently consists of fourteen members, drawn mainly from the previous Boards of RAPt, Blue Sky and Action on Addiction, with several members due to step down later this year.

As such, we are broadening the diversity of our Board, filling skills gaps, and bringing new perspectives, ideas, and connections to our work. We have appointed 5 new Trustees in the past year and are now looking to appoint a new Chair of Trustees.

For further information on us, please visit [Forward Trust](#)

## OUR CORE BELIEFS & VALUES

Our 9 Core Beliefs are:

- Addiction or offending behaviour are often rooted in adverse childhood experiences - neglect, abuse, and trauma - or mental health problems in adulthood.
- Poverty, and lack of positive opportunity or networks, are also significant factors in the development of drug or alcohol addiction, or criminal lifestyles.
- Anyone, irrespective of their past or current circumstances, is capable of confronting their problems and challenges in life and, with the right support, making lasting and positive changes.
- Change and recovery depends on people taking responsibility for their own actions, and for confronting negative behaviour patterns.
- Instilling self-confidence and self-belief in people who have become accustomed to alienation and disappointment, is core to enabling change.
- Change and recovery is grounded in human connection and community, with family, friends and loved ones involved wherever possible, and opportunities provided for people to build self-respect through making positive contributions to the communities in which they live.
- People who have succeeded in turning their lives around are important role models and sources of support and inspiration for others, as peers, educators, and members of staff.
- The benefits to communities and society of enabling change and recovery are long term and wide reaching.
- Wider understanding of the causes of addiction and offending will reduce the prejudice and shame that stops people asking for and getting help.

We deliver all our services with compassion and without condemnation. We are a safe place to start a changed life and we will be there for people for however long it takes, because change and recovery happens one day at a time. To do this we:

- Do not judge or condemn people, recognising that many who come to us have been accustomed to stigmatisation and marginalisation.
- Empower people to make their own positive choices.
- Stay with people throughout their journey, connecting for a lifetime, though we also respect people's wishes when they want to move on.
- Treat everybody equally with dignity, compassion, and empathy.
- Create an environment where people have a freedom to be themselves without fear or judgement.
- Recognise the importance of family relationships, positive or negative, in people's lives (and also the importance of directly supporting family members). We believe how a family is defined is up to the individuals involved, and that we all hold our own unique version of what family looks like.
- Believe that the principles of honesty, self-care and self-improvement are universally relevant – to us as volunteers, staff, and Trustees, the same as our clients.



# MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

---

The Chair will hold the Board and Executive Team to account for the Charity's mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring that each Trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Charity. The Chair will also support the Chief Executive and ensure that the Board functions as a unit and works closely with the entire Executive Team of the Charity to achieve agreed objectives. They will act as an ambassador and will be the public face of the Charity in partnership with the Chief Executive.

## Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership to the charity and its Board, ensuring that the Charity has maximum impact for its beneficiaries.
- Ensure that Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Charity.
- Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives and provides a clear strategic direction for the Charity.
- Ensure that the Board is able to regularly review major risks and associated opportunities and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities and manage and mitigate the risks.
- Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the Charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability.

## Governance

- Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the Charity.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board of Trustees.
- Encourage positive change where appropriate and address and resolve any conflicts within the Board.
- Appraise the performance of individual Trustees, and the Board on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge, and experience needed to govern and lead the Charity effectively and which also reflects the wider population.
- Work within any agreed policies adopted by the Charity.

## External Relations

- Act as an ambassador for the cause and the Charity.
- Maintain close relationships with key members of the Government and with other key influencers.
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate.
- Represent the Charity at external functions, meetings, and events.
- Facilitate change and address any potential conflict with external stakeholders.

## Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the Board of Trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process.
- Ensure that Trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the Charity and that the Board takes collective ownership.
- Foster, maintain and ensure that constructive relationships exist with and between the Trustees.
- Work closely with the Chief Executive to give direction to Board policy making and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of Trustees.
- Monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.



## Relationship with the Chief Executive and the Wider Management Team

- Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive, ensuring they are held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives.
- Support the Chief Executive, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- Ensure regular contact with the Chief Executive and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges.
- Liaise with the Chief Executive to maintain an overview of the Charity's affairs, providing support as necessary.
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer in consultation with other Trustees.
- Ensure that the Chief Executive has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

---

## KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

### Essential:

- Clear understanding of the role of Chair in delivering effective strategic leadership to an organisation, and of leading and developing a strong and diverse Board.
- Experience of leading at a senior strategic level and of working collaboratively to develop organisational strategy, outcomes and impact in a complex organisation.
- Successful track record of achievement through their career.
- Experience of representing organisations externally on public platforms and managing stakeholders.
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees.

### Desirable:

- Lived experience of past offending, substance misuse or other mental health challenges, including close connection to someone with such lived experience.
- Experience and expertise in one of our areas of service delivery – employment, homelessness and housing, mental health, rehabilitation of offenders, or addiction.

## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

### Essential

- Broad knowledge and understanding of the Charity Sector and current issues affecting it.
- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together.
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues.
- Good understanding of charity governance issues, including charity law and compliance.

### Desirable:

- Specific experience in financial accounting, audit, and financial management at an organisational level and understanding accounts and scrutiny of financial information.
- Marketing experience, including digital, brand development and business development.
- Experience in leadership in people management, including HR, equality, diversity and inclusion, and policy development.
- Skills and networks that add value to our fundraising efforts.

## STYLES AND BEHAVIOURS

- Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the Charity, its strategic objectives and cause.
- Personal gravitas to lead a significant national organisation.
- Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role.
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively with all stakeholders, including our clients.
- Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the Charity.
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment.
- Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events out of office hours.

# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

---

## REMUNERATION & TIME COMMITMENT

This appointment is unremunerated and offered on a voluntary basis. The time commitment for the role is an estimated 2-3 days per month.

In addition to chairing the main Board meetings, the Chair may also choose to attend the four subcommittees, which all meet quarterly.

## TERM OF APPOINTMENT

The Chair will serve for an initial three-year term and will then be eligible for reappointment for one additional term.

## LOCATION

Board meetings usually take place at our head office is Kennington, London.

# HOW TO APPLY

---

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Katy Giddens at [katy.giddens@starfishsearch.com](mailto:katy.giddens@starfishsearch.com) and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <http://starfishsearch.com/jobs/forward-trust-chair> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides) or equivalent biographical information
- A covering letter that explains your motivation and availability and confirms that you would not be subject to any conflict of interest
- Please tell us if there are any dates during the selection process (outlined below) when you would not be available to participate

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

**Closing date:** Monday 23rd September 2024

**First stage meetings with Starfish:** Early October 2024

**Interviews with Forward Trust:** w/c 21st October 2024