



CENTRE FOR
FORENSIC HOPE

RESEARCH · LIVED EXPERIENCE · RENEWAL

*Improving lives in forensic communities
through the advancement of hope*

Mission & Values

What we are here to do — and how we will hold ourselves to it

Version 2.0 · June 2026

Centre For Forensic Hope Ltd · A company limited by guarantee · Non-profit making

Company number: 17294992

"No one should be defined by the worst moment of their life."

forensichope.org.uk

Our Mission

“No one should be defined by the worst moment of their life.”

The founding conviction of the Centre for Forensic Hope

The Centre for Forensic Hope is an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the lives of people in forensic settings and formerly incarcerated people — through research, training, and lived experience work that takes hope seriously as a clinical, moral, and practical force for change.

We exist because hope is not a luxury. In the settings where it matters most — secure hospitals, prisons, probation, and the difficult years after release — hope is too often absent, dismissed, or actively undermined. The evidence tells a different story: where hope is cultivated, recovery becomes possible, desistance becomes achievable, and lives change.

People in forensic settings, and those rebuilding their lives after incarceration, deserve more than containment or exclusion. They deserve the conditions in which genuine recovery becomes possible. Building those conditions is our work.

How We Work

Everything we do flows from a single conviction: that hope is a necessity, whether someone is in a secure unit or rebuilding life after release. Our work rests on three pillars.

01 Research & Evidence

Rigorous, co-produced research that builds the evidence base for hope-centred practice.

We study what works, publish openly so that findings reach practitioners, policymakers, and communities without barriers, and advocate for change based on what we find. Our research is designed to change practice — not just describe it.

02 Training & Education

Transformative training for professionals in forensic settings and reintegration services.

Grounded in evidence, informed and co-facilitated by people with lived experience, and designed to shift culture from the inside — so that hope becomes a professional responsibility, not a personal disposition.

03 Lived Experience

The knowledge of people who have lived through forensic settings or incarceration sits at the heart of everything we do.

As researchers, educators, advisors, and leaders — not as case studies. We design our work with the people it is intended to serve: not for them, and never about them without them.

Our Values

Six commitments that shape every decision we make.

01 Hope is not optional

Hope is a clinical and moral necessity — not a luxury.

In forensic settings and post-release life, pessimism can become institutionalised. We actively resist hopelessness. We model, promote, and protect hope as a professional responsibility.

02 Lived experience leads

The people closest to the problem hold the most important knowledge.

We do not do research about people in forensic settings or those who have been incarcerated — we do it with them. Lived experience is central to our work, not supplementary to it.

03 Evidence drives change

Rigorous evidence is the most powerful tool we have.

We hold ourselves to the highest standards of intellectual honesty, and we are equally committed to translating findings into practice and policy.

04 Dignity above all

Every person deserves dignity and respect — in forensic settings, after release, and in every room we are in.

We see the full humanity of every person in a forensic setting and every person who has been incarcerated. Dignity is unconditional — it is not something that has to be earned, and it does not expire with a conviction. Respect is how we practise it: in our language, our research, our training rooms, and our governance.

05 Courage to speak plainly

We say what needs to be said, even when it is uncomfortable.

We name what we see — in the evidence, in the system, in ourselves. Kindness and candour are not opposites.

06 Belonging, not just access

Inclusion means people are genuinely part of the work.

We are building a Centre where people from forensic settings and the post-release community help design the work — not merely attend it.

Our Commitment to People with Lived Experience

Respect and dignity for people with lived experience are not sentiments — they are practices. This charter sets out what anyone with lived experience of forensic settings or incarceration can expect from the Centre, in every project, training room, publication, and decision.

We use respectful language. We speak of people first — never reducing anyone to an offence, a diagnosis, or a label. We avoid stigmatising terms in everything we publish, teach, and say, and we expect the same of our members and partners.

We share power, not just platforms. Lived experience belongs in our governance, not only our case studies. Lived Experience Membership (LCFH) is a distinct and equally valued grade of the Centre, our Constitution commits us to the meaningful participation of people with lived experience in research, practice, and governance, and our Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) ensures we are held accountable to these commitments from within.

We pay and credit lived experience expertise. Lived experience contribution is expertise. Where people with lived experience contribute to our research, training, or advisory work, we recognise that contribution properly — including fair payment where work is commissioned, and named credit and co-authorship where it is earned.

Nobody is required to retell their trauma. People with lived experience choose what they share, with whom, and when. Participation in our work never depends on recounting painful experiences, and consent can be withdrawn at any time without consequence.

We protect privacy and self-definition. Lived Experience Membership is granted on self-declaration, without intrusive verification. Nobody is asked to disclose convictions, diagnoses, or histories to belong here, and members control whether and how they are identified — including in our member directory, which is consent-based.

We design for genuine accessibility. Involvement is planned around the realities of licence conditions, supervision, security clearances, travel, cost, and digital access — so that participation is genuinely possible, not theoretically open.

We are accountable for all of this. These commitments are owned by the Board. Members can challenge us on them through advisory resolutions at the Annual Members' Meeting — which the Board must answer in writing — and through the member decision-making rights in our Constitution. If we fall short, we expect to be told, and we will respond.

Who We Serve

Our work is for and with people in forensic mental health services, prisons, probation, and reintegration services — and the professionals, commissioners, and policymakers who shape those systems. Above all, it is for the people inside those systems, who deserve better than they currently receive.

“We do not need more studies confirming what we already know. We need an organised, committed community willing to push until things actually change.”

David Adlington-Rivers · Centre Director & Forensic Hope Psychologist



Hope, built together.

Centre For Forensic Hope Ltd · A company limited by guarantee · Non-profit making · Company number: 17294992 · Mission & Values v2.0, June 2026 · Read alongside our Constitution and Membership Guide at forensichope.org.uk