

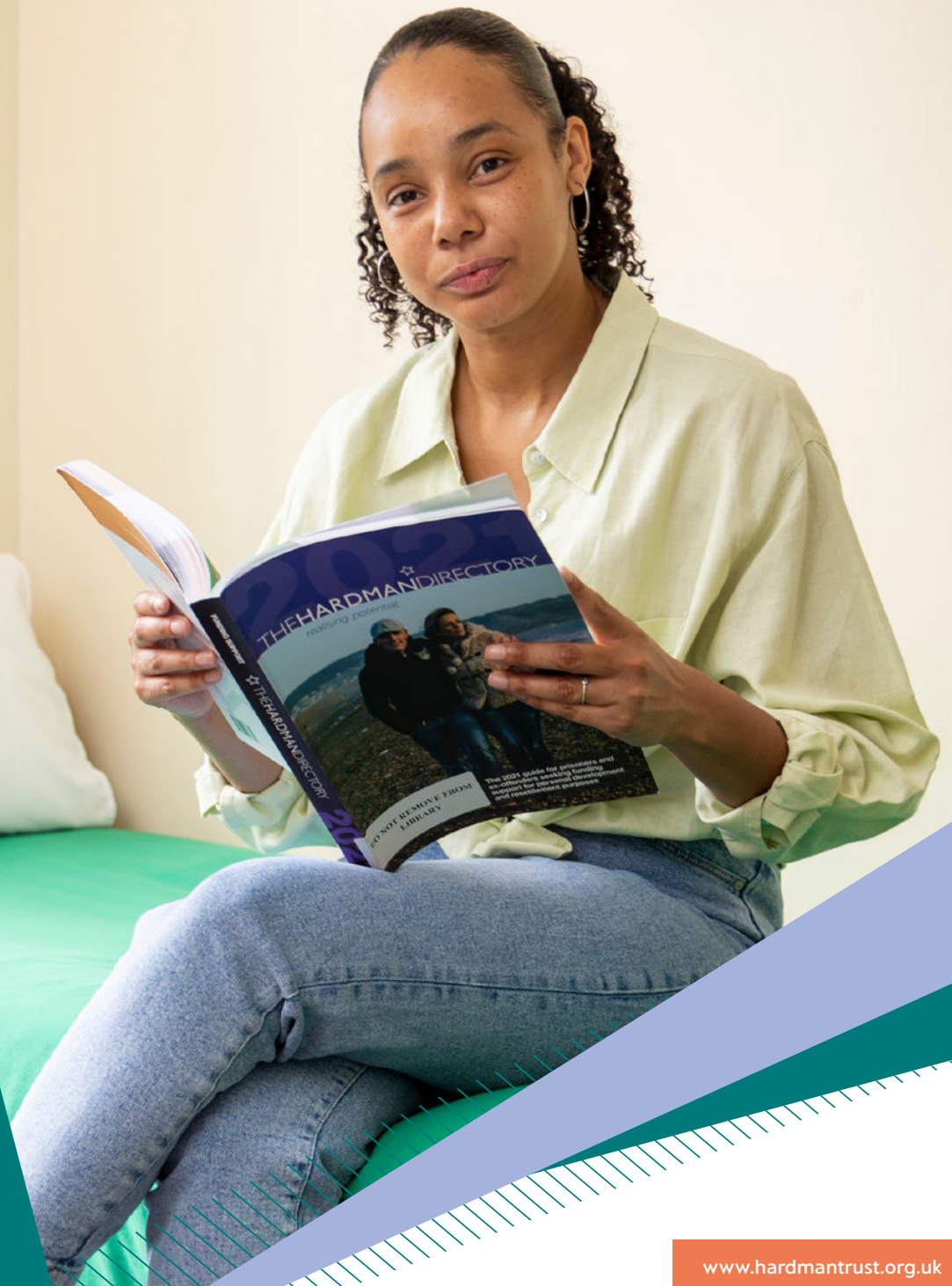


# The Hardman Trust

For the long term

# Our Strategy

2023 – 2026



# Introduction

## The prison population is growing, and sentences are getting longer than ever.

In the 30 years since The Hardman Trust formed, the prison population has increased by 75%. This number will continue to rise, with 20,000 new prison places being built in the next two years. As prisons fill up, sentences are getting longer. We now have some of the longest in Europe, with four times as many people sentenced to 20 years than a decade ago<sup>1</sup>. Sentences for serious crimes are getting longer, with more people spending

10 or more years in prison. The minimum term people spend in custody is also increasing, with longer proportions of the sentence spent in prison. Sentences for some crimes have lengthened by 80%. This is happening against a backdrop of low prison staffing levels and limited funding within a cost of living crisis: **There are more people in prison, doing longer sentences, with fewer resources to support them.**

## The Hardman Trust is the only charity in England, Wales and Scotland focusing on the unique needs of people on long term sentences.

We know people on long sentences have distinct needs, and require specialist support throughout their sentence and as they return home. Being in the early stages of a long sentence provokes different emotions and responses to those facing a shorter stay as they adjust to their new circumstances. People facing decades of prison time often completely lose connection with their family and friends on the outside. Depending on the sentence type, many don't know when they will be released, making it hard to maintain hope or create meaningful plans for the future. Those on an IPP sentence, for example, may face many years, even decades, of uncertainty.

Depending on the prison, there may be limited access to rehabilitative programmes and educational courses until later in the sentence. This can slow down progression through the system, and create spells of 'nothing time' (Making progress, Prison Reform Trust 2022) – wasted prison time where meaningful activity is limited.

<sup>1</sup> Prison Reform Trust – Bromley Briefing 2022

## Achieving potential, within and beyond prison

For those getting ready to leave, a different set of challenges appear. Over half of those leaving prison each year face homelessness, and this risk increases for those that struggle to find work, have lost family connections, or are struggling with their physical or mental health. Those emerging from long sentences speak of the lack of dedicated support - people leaving prison after 10 years will have different needs to those leaving after 10 months. The people we work with describe the challenges to adapting to life after prison following decades of time away. The internet, self-service checkouts, changing streets and communities, different habits and new social norms - the world has changed. The streets they grew up on are different and disorienting, people have moved on, prices have gone up, and it takes time to adjust.

Most are keen to find work, but face multiple barriers: a skillset that no longer matches the job market, a long gap in the CV, a lack of confidence, and stigma related to the offence. Others will be seeking work for the first time as an adult, having been in prison since childhood.

With the link between poverty and crime being clear, supporting people leaving prison into training, education or employment is one way to encourage financial independence, reduce the risk of homelessness, improve wellbeing and reduce recidivism. It is a simple, common sense approach that benefits us all.

We also recognise that a life beyond prison isn't only about finding work. Everyone's needs and goals are different, from practicalities such as how to open a bank account or register with a GP, to broader ambitions around how to create a life of meaning, connection and purpose. For many, wellbeing is a priority as they adjust to a new way of life. The Hardman Trust supports each person towards their own goals, starting where they are.

**We support people on long sentences to take their next steps in life. Our 2023-2026 organisation strategy maps out how we will continue to develop our services, and our ambitions for the years ahead. We hope you will join us as we support people on long sentences to achieve their potential, within and beyond prison.**



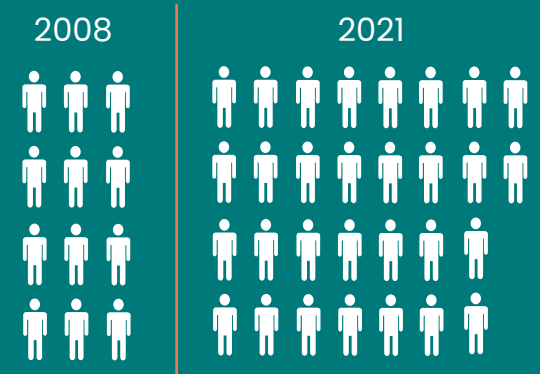
**England and Wales have more people on life sentences**

than Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland and Sweden combined.

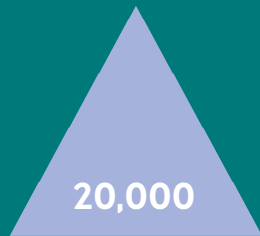
The average minimum sentence served for murder

20 years in 2020

13 years in 2000



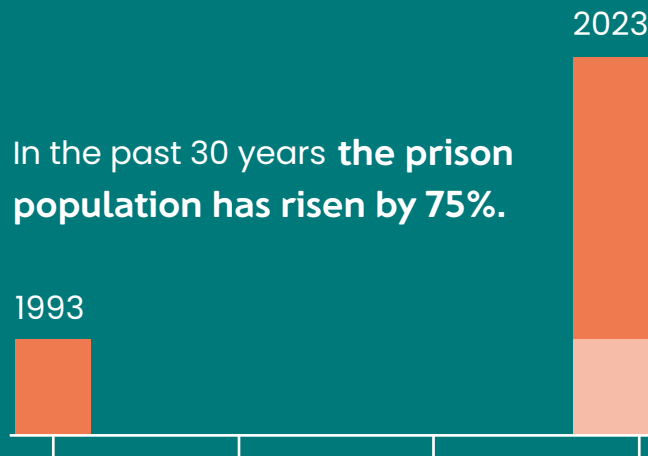
**In 2021 there were 2.5 as many people sentenced to 10 years+ than in 2008.**



More people are being sent to prison with **20,000 additional places being built.**

Each year **over 2000** people are released from prison after serving 10 years or more.

There are **3000** people serving the now abolished IPP sentences, unsure when they will be released.



In the past 30 years **the prison population has risen by 75%.**

**11,000**

people in prison in England and Wales today are serving more than 10 years.

**98%** of people on an IPP sentence are over their original tariff, spending more time in prison than originally sentenced.

# Our work so far

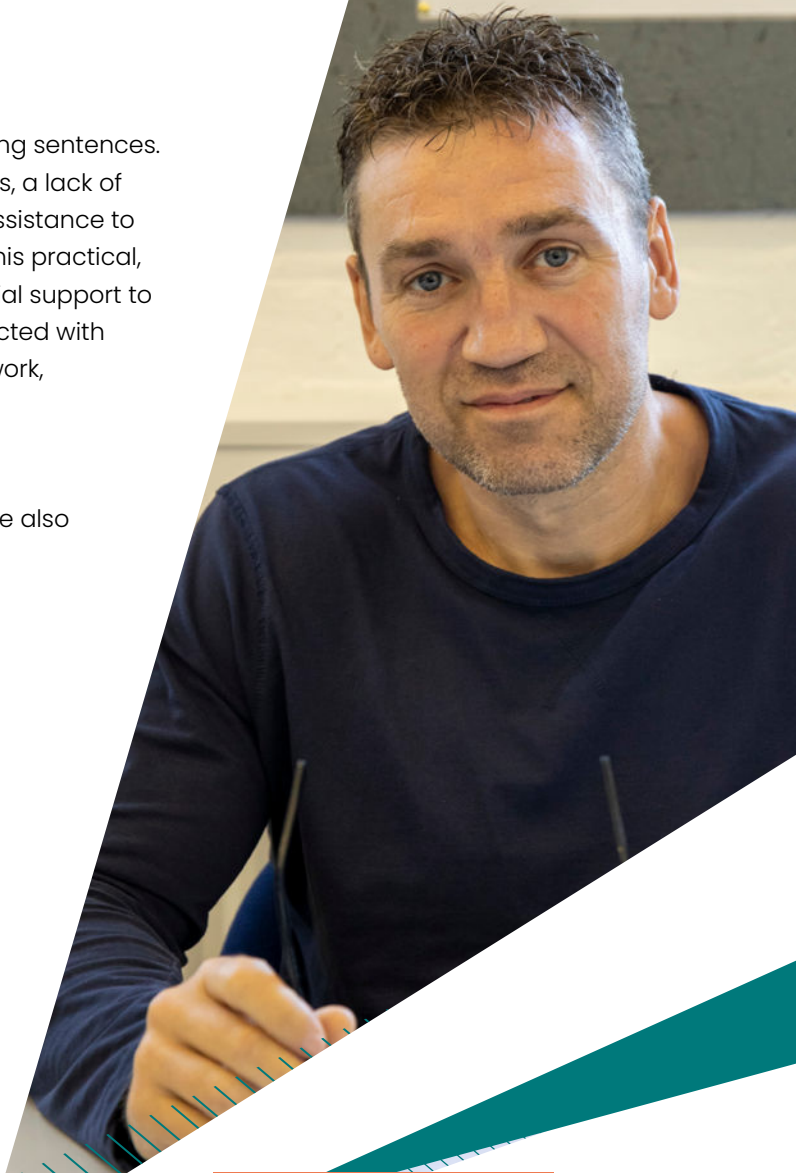
The Hardman Trust was formed almost 30 years ago, with the aim of helping people leaving prison after long sentences. Our founder, Guy Armstrong, was a prison Chaplain. He saw the challenges facing this group: homelessness, a lack of workplace skills, stigma, isolation, low confidence, and poverty. A fund was set up to provide the financial assistance to purchase tools and equipment, offering a helping hand into employment. We know from experience that this practical, common sense approach works - the people we've worked with over three decades have used this financial support to gain qualifications, start their own businesses, find employment and avoid homelessness. They've reconnected with family, gained a new direction in life, and avoided returning to crime. Now, in 2023, we are building on this work, with ambitions to do more for people leaving prison.

Last year we supported 159 people, granting over £130,000 towards education, training and employment. We offered ongoing support through the gate, and signposted into local and specialist support services. We also issued our Hardman Directory to every prison wing and prison library across England, Scotland and Wales. The Directory contains information on the various services and help available to people leaving prison.

Jake was given financial support from The Hardman Trust, to help him get the tools and training he needed to find work after prison. With his plan and our support, he was able to find work within days of leaving prison, and now has secure housing and a steady income. He's not returned to crime, and has rebuilt his relationships with family and friends.

**He told us: "Getting help from The Hardman Trust was tremendously uplifting. It felt like a welcome back to society and the promise of being viewed as a human being once again. It gave me a sense of achievement knowing you were willing to give me a life changing helping hand. It allowed me to put the past behind me and look positively ahead and plan my future.**

**This is a fresh start for me and I can finally see a bright future for myself in the coming years. The Hardman Trust is a godsend for prisoners like myself. Thank you."**





# Our vision, mission and purpose

## Vision

A future where everyone can achieve their potential within and beyond prison

## Mission

We provide tailored practical and financial support to help people find belonging, move into work or training, and reach their personal goals.

## Purpose

We support people on long sentences to take their next steps in life so they benefit, their families benefit and the wider community benefits too.



# Our guiding beliefs

**Help into education and employment drives down reoffending, diverts people from poverty and homelessness, and improves mental and physical health**

We know that when we invest in people leaving prison we are collectively building safer, more connected communities that thrive.

**Not everyone on a long sentence will leave prison, and for some leaving prison may be a long time away**

We believe in the dignity of providing opportunities for meaningful use of time and access to support and engagement throughout a sentence, not just at the point of release.

**Prison populations are increasing, and the needs and experiences of each person in prison vary. No single organisation can solve this challenge alone**

We believe in partnership working and connecting people to the services that can help.

# Values & behaviours

## Knowledge & evidence

We use data, research and evidence to inform and improve our work. We stay up to date and are open to changing our minds and our practices.

## Listening & learning

We ask, listen and learn from people in prison. We seek feedback and insight, adapting and improving our products and services as we learn.

## Performance & impact

We care about making a difference and we want to understand the difference we make. We are here to have a positive impact, and we do this with professionalism and integrity. We are results driven.

## Partnership & connection

We use data, research and evidence to inform and improve our work. We stay up to date and are open to changing our minds and our practices

## Challenge & Innovation

We challenge ourselves and others to try new things and learn. We build on what goes well, and learn from what doesn't.

## Person-centred & fair

We know needs and experiences of prison will vary. We tailor our approach to recognise each person's goals, strengths and agency. We strive for fairness, equitable access and inclusion.



# Our Theory of change shows how our vision, mission and purpose come to life in our work and what difference we seek to make

Who we are here for	What we do	To encourage	With the intention of	So that
<p>People on long prison sentences</p>	<p><b>Befriending</b> letter writing at all stages of a sentence</p> <p><b>Planning &amp; preparation</b> getting ready for release</p> <p><b>Financial support</b> turning the plan into reality</p> <p><b>Post-release</b> support and signposting to stay on track</p> <p><b>Raising the conversation</b> adding to the dialogue on long-term sentences</p>	<p><b>Meaningful relationships</b> &amp; connections with the outside world</p> <p><b>Purposeful use of time</b> better use of 'nothing time'</p> <p><b>A plan for life, in and after prison</b> for those that will and won't be released</p> <p><b>Training</b> &amp; access to educational courses</p> <p><b>Employment</b> &amp; self employment</p> <p><b>More conversations</b> around long sentences</p>	<p><b>Improving wellbeing</b> &amp; sense of self</p> <p><b>Improving aspirations</b> &amp; hope for the future</p> <p><b>Improving belonging</b> &amp; connection</p> <p><b>Creating positive resettlement journeys</b></p> <p><b>Alleviating poverty</b> through financial independence</p> <p><b>Avoiding homelessness</b></p> <p><b>Reducing reoffending</b></p> <p><b>Reducing stigma</b> &amp; improving understanding</p>	<p>Everyone can achieve their potential within and beyond prison</p>
	<p><b>Our activities</b></p>	<p><b>Our outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Our impact</b></p>	<p><b>Our vision</b></p>

# Strategic priorities

Between 2023 and 2026 we will:

Update how we offer financial support to prison leavers

Build on our support offer, pre and post release

Develop new products and services, based on need

Become a respected voice on long term sentences

So that everyone can achieve their potential within and beyond prison, and we can all enjoy safer, connected communities that thrive.



# 1. Update on how we offer financial support to people leaving prison

## What happens now?

We provide funds to support people leaving prison to get into work, training, education or other activities that contribute to their wellbeing and aid connection with friends, family and the wider community. We know the power of providing financial help directly to the people that need it. Through this support, people can find work, break out of poverty, avoid homelessness, develop their confidence and sense of self, alleviate mental health challenges and find belonging. This improves quality of life, reduces reoffending and encourages resettlement. Giving autonomy around how this money is used allows for choice, responsibility and personal agency.

With prison populations increasing and sentences getting longer, the need for our work is growing. We can't always support everyone that comes to us. We want to be clearer about who we are here to support, and we want to develop our ability to support more people. We will review our criteria, and develop our approach to income generation to help us help more people. We will update our systems and processes to enable us to receive more applications.

# We recognise the need to modernise our approach to giving financial support, to reflect a changing environment.

## What we will do

**Re-focus on our core purpose:** The 'Hardman Awards' will become 'Hardman Grants', with a focus on improving access to our financial support. We will provide additional help before and after release, working with people to create a plan for life beyond prison, and provide access to the grants that can turn that plan into reality.

**Review our criteria and decision making processes:** We will review our processes to ensure our approach to grant giving is fair, accessible and equitable, using a new criteria-based approach to determine who receives support from us. We will update our grant criteria based on current prison population data; establishing the areas of greatest need, and prioritising our support accordingly. Everyone involved in decision making will have unconscious bias training, and we will seek a diverse group of decision makers.

**Grow our income:** We will follow our income generation strategy to grow our income, helping us to increase the number of grants we are able to make and the number of people we can support. With the cost of living increasing, we will aim to increase the amount we are able to grant to each person.

**Celebrate success:** Rewarding people for their achievements is important to us. We will hold an annual event to celebrate the achievements of people who have achieved their goals after prison, and provide hope and inspiration to those on the same path. This will replace the smaller scale Hardman Award Ceremonies.

**Know our impact:** We will embed effective evaluation measures to understand the difference our financial support has made.

## How we will measure progress and success

- **By 2024** we will have fully transitioned from 'awards' to 'grants. We will have raised awareness of the support available, to encourage more people to apply. We will see an increase in applications from Cat C and Cat D prisons.
- **By 2024** we will have updated our criteria and decision making processes. We will see a shift in the demographics of people receiving financial support, reflective of the demographics of people on long sentences.
- **We will have increased our income** sufficiently to increase our grant giving by at least 5% each year.
- **In 2023** we will hold our first annual celebration event, celebrating our grant recipients, showcasing their achievements, and thanking our supporters.
- **By 2024** we will have a new monitoring and evaluation framework in place, to understand and communicate the difference we make.

# 2. Build on our support, pre and post release

## What happens now?

The Hardman Trust focuses on the unique needs of people on long sentences. There is a lack of specialist provision for this group, from the start of their sentence through to release. For the past 2 years we've provided one-to-one telephone support to people leaving prison, which has helped us learn more about the needs of those we work with and how we might do more. We've found that when someone has been in prison for a long time they are often being released without a clear plan. They might not know what to do when they leave, or what opportunities are available. The working world has changed, and the skills people need are different. It's difficult to plan for employment without access to the internet to search for jobs or understand the entry requirements.

Often a person's own training is out of date once they leave prison, or their abilities no longer match the job market. They may be facing a career change, or have lost confidence. Others have been in prison since childhood and have never had a job. We want to respond to this by offering more support to plan for life after prison, access to the financial support to turn the plan into reality, and ongoing support and guidance to help stay on track after release. We want to provide more preparation and planning for release, to make each person's transition from prison to the community a positive one.

# We will build on our support offer to support people to plan for a life beyond prison.

## What we will do

**Develop a pre-release support offer:** we want people on long sentences to find fulfilment and thrive on release, and we know this starts with effective planning and preparation before leaving prison. We will develop a pre-release support offer, working with people to prepare for their life after prison. We will help each person understand the options available to them, conduct research on their behalf, and support them in creating a personalised plan. We will listen to each person's aspirations and goals, and work with them to make these a reality.

**Build on our post-release support offer:** We will develop our post-release support to ensure it connects with our pre-release work. Offering ongoing support and guidance to each person as they leave prison and settle into their communities, our aim will be to help them problem-solve, overcome challenges and stay on track with their plan on release. We will embrace partnership working, signposting to local and specialised support services to build a personalised package of support.

**Share experiences and increase engagement:** We will invite former Hardman Trust grantees to visit prisons and share their experiences. Our aim will be to inspire hope and broaden people's understanding and aspirations around what is possible after prison, through the use of personal, real-life stories. People with lived experience will be able to contribute to our broader work, helping us better reflect the views and experiences of the people we're here to support, and better meet the diverse needs of people on long sentences.

**Know our impact:** We will embed effective evaluation measures to understand the difference our pre and post release support has made.

## How we will measure progress and success

- **By 2024** we will have recruited a programme development and delivery manager to lead this work.
- **By mid 2024** we will have tested approaches to delivering our support offer, with a set of recommendations gathered for broader roll-out.
- **By 2024** we will have gathered a team of people with experience of long sentences to share their stories in prison. We will have more lived experience engagement and input at all levels of the organisation.
- **By 2024** we will have a new monitoring and evaluation framework in place, demonstrating the impact of this work.

# 3. Develop new products and services, based on need

## What happens now?

The Hardman Trust currently run the Hardman Awards and develop and distribute the Hardman Directory to all prisons in England, Wales and Scotland. Following the Covid-19 pandemic and prison staffing shortages, prisons are changing. New prisons are also being built, bringing with them new opportunities. Digital development is gaining momentum, with some in-cell technology now available.

We want to update The Hardman Directory so that it remains useful and accessible in this changing environment. With a focus on long term prisoners, we are keen to understand what more we can do to support this group and develop our products and services accordingly.

# We will continue to connect people to the services they need through the Hardman Directory, and we will listen to people in prison to develop new products and services.

## What we will do

**Review the Hardman Directory book:** We will seek feedback on the book from people in prison and partner agencies to understand what works and what could be improved. This will include its content, format and where it can be accessed. We will use this feedback to create a new version of the directory to be rolled out in 2024.

**Relaunch the digital Hardman Directory:** With digital opportunities developing across prisons, and the opportunity to offer the directory to people on release, their families and partner agencies (probation, approved premises, other charities and services), we will upgrade the digital version of the directory to ensure it provides a quality user experience.

**Review the financial model behind the Directory:** With printing costs rising, we will explore how to ensure the directory is self-sustaining. We will assess its financial model, exploring sales, licensing and sponsorship options. We will add new services and partners to the directory, increasing its usefulness to those seeking information and support services.

**Roll out letter-writing support:** We will merge with Prisoner Penfriends to offer letter writing support and connection to people on long sentences, adding to our existing products and services.

**Listen, test and learn:** We will encourage a culture of feedback and will listen to people in prison, partner agencies, sector research and data to understand the needs of those we are here to support. We will try new things and learn, devising new products and services to ensure we meet the changing needs of people at all stages of their long sentence, helping us to stay relevant, responsive and up to date.

## How we will measure progress and success

- **By the end of 2024:** We will have an updated version of the Hardman Directory book based on feedback from people in prison.
- **By the end of 2023:** We will have upgraded the digital directory. It will be available on various platforms within prison and the community.
- **By 2024:** We will have a new financial model in place to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the Directory. The number of partners featured in the directory will increase.
- **By the end of 2023:** We will have added the Prisoner Penfriend letter writing programme into the Hardman Trust's set of activities.
- **By 2026:** We will have tested and rolled out at least 2 new products or services directed at people on long term prison sentences.



# 4. Become a respected voice on long term sentences

## What happens now?

The Hardman Trust has supported people on long sentences for almost 30 years. We want to raise the conversation around long term sentences, challenge stigma, increase understanding and better inform public opinion. We want to create the opportunity for people who have served long sentences to share their experiences and add to the conversation to influence policy, strategy and delivery across the sector.

We want to use our knowledge and expertise to become a respected voice on long term sentences and the needs and experiences of those who have served them.

# We will use our expertise and knowledge to highlight issues related to long prison sentences.

## What we will do

**Raise the conversation:** We will work with other specialist agencies already campaigning in this area. We will add our voice to the issues related to long term prison sentences, to include IPPs, being guided by The Hardman Trust clients, our operational experience, research and data. We will increase our outward facing communications and build the profile of The Hardman Trust as experts, seeking opportunities to contribute to conversations around sentence lengths and the provision of support and purposeful activities for people on long sentences.

**Create a Hardman Trust advisory board:** We will invite former Hardman Trust clients to join an advisory board. The board will define its own remit, but will have the ability to advise on and contribute to policy, strategy and delivery issues within Hardman Trust.

**Research:** We will seek out opportunities to be involved in research related to long sentences, contributing to the growing body of knowledge within the sector. We will stay up to date with available research and data from HMPPS and partner agencies to improve our knowledge.

## How we will measure progress and success

- **By 2024:** We will have agreed a communications strategy for external audiences, with associated key performance indicators
- **By 2025:** We will have an active advisory board in place.
- **By 2026:** We will have been involved in at least 1 research study related to long term sentences.

# Supporting factors and enablers

## Income generation

To fulfil the aims of this strategy, we have developed an income generation strategy that will see us:

- Build on our successes with trusts and foundations, seeking more multi-year relationships
- Develop our approach to individual giving and legacies
- Attract new corporate sponsorships
- Explore sustainable and commercial income opportunities through the Hardman Directory

## People and culture

We will invest in our staff and volunteers to ensure we have a skilled, motivated and high performing team of professionals to drive us towards our vision. We will instil our values in all that we do, creating a culture that we can feel proud of. We will encourage more people with lived experience to join our team, fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging. Embracing and encouraging diversity of experience and perspectives, we will build a working environment where everyone feels encouraged to contribute their skills and share their insights. We will develop our staff benefits to make sure The Hardman Trust remains an attractive, fulfilling place to work, and we will continue to seek partnerships and pro bono support from people that share our values and vision for the future.



# Supporting factors and enablers

## Brand awareness and communication

We will use our profile and our voice to influence and inform policy around long term sentences, engage in debates and conversations on this topic, and advocate for those we are here to serve. We will raise awareness of our work, and build on our internal and external communications.

## Systems and processes

To make the changes mapped out in this strategy we require effective systems and processes that work for our staff and the people we support. We will embrace innovation and technological advances and will make sure our systems are efficient and useful. With a focus on performance and impact, we will ask ourselves: “does this help us get closer to our vision?”

# Jim's story

**Jim served 13 years in prison. With a long gap in his CV, he was being released into a working world that had completely changed. His skills and qualifications from before prison were out of date, and he needed to start again.**

The Hardman Trust funded a NEBOSH health and safety course in construction, which he was able to complete whilst still in prison. As a result, he was able to find a job immediately. Being released on a Thursday, he was already in paid employment by the following Monday. This gave Jim the ability to find a place to live and the funds to support himself and his family. He gained independence, structure and security immediately after leaving prison - a time of uncertainty and stress for many that often leads to homelessness, mental health challenges, loss of hope, and a return to offending.

Jim is now an Assistant Project Manager and is working on a housing development. His goal is to become a Project Manager, and to eventually move into one of the homes being built on the site.



# Come with us

## Support us financially

We rely on the generosity of our donors to fund our work. We are the only charity specialising on the needs of people on long sentences and the need is growing. We have 30 years of experience, and the work we do makes a difference to prison-leavers, their families and the wider community. If you are interested in donating, funding or sponsoring our work, please get in touch.

## Donate your time, expertise or skills

Do you have a set of skills that could help us in our mission to support people on long prison sentences? Do you have an interest in our work and time to spare? Contact us to discuss how you could volunteer your time, expertise or skills.

## Partner with us

Partnership is key to our approach. We know we can achieve more when we come together. Can you think of a way we might be able to work together?

## Get in touch

If anything you've read here sparks a question or idea please email us at [info@hardmantrust.org.uk](mailto:info@hardmantrust.org.uk)

[www.hardmantrust.org.uk](http://www.hardmantrust.org.uk)