**Transcript: Mark’s story**

Set in the coastal town of Dunbar in East Lothian, this story explores why giving up booze is only half the battle.

“Before I went to prison, I was just a no-good, waste of space. An alcoholic. Every day, morning to night, drink. Nothing else mattered, kids, money, nothing. Just alcohol.”

“It was the biggest shock of my life, because I’d never been to prison or anything else like that, I didn’t know what to expect. First two or three nights, was probably the worst three nights of my life, just because of not knowing. I got to see an alcohol counsellor in prison, got that within the second week of being in there. I was just seeing the counsellor for the whole period I was in, a hundred and nine days, one day a week. I continued seeing him for nine months when I came out of jail.”

“When I came out of jail, nobody wanted to know me, my daughter told me if I had any wauk tae ga, that was us, so I promised that would be it, I would never drink again, and I haven’t yet, and I hope not to. Prison got me off it, my daughter gave me a reason to stay off it.”

“In the space of coming out of jail, I think it was within four weeks, I found out my son was working up in the Backlands, and I thought I’d go up and see if they were looking for any volunteers.”

“Came up, volunteered for one day a week, to begin with, just to get me out the house, something to do, gradually get myself working as a day labourer, if I could, basically because it gave me something to do, stopped me thinking of drink, and it wasn’t hard. I wasn’t getting paid or nothing, I just come up because I enjoyed it. It gave me a reason to get up in the morning, basically.”

“A year and a half ago, we got a stonemason to come in, because we were going to be working with historic walls in the gardens. After going on about four courses, I’m now employed with Rich one day a week, doing stonemason work. But on top of getting paid one day a week, I come in the other four days anyway, volunteering, because I like it that much. What I get here is much better, it’s worth a lot more than money. It’s always been hard, outdoor graft I’ve done all my life anyway. I couldn’t see myself going to sit in an office for eight hours a day, five days a week, it’s no’ for me.”

“The people I know now, it’s a whole different circle of friends that I have now, people that I didn’t know before I went to prison, so I don’t get judged on what happened in my past or anything. They know what happened in my past, but there’s no judgement or anything. I’m just taken for who I am, and they can see I’m not just a bum that drinks all the time. It’s honestly how I want to live my life, and that’s all I’m wanting, see.”