

Sheffield-Based Short Film 'Hooked' To Partner with National Addiction Charity

Hooked, a short film set in Sheffield, is partnering with national recovery charity The Forward Trust as it prepares for production next month.

[Hooked](#) is a BFI-shortlisted script by Rotherham-based writer Jade Strain and explores addiction, mental health, stigma and systemic failures within recovery services. The script, and forthcoming film, are based on the true story of a young Sheffield resident, Caleb Hancock. Caleb passed away in supported living accommodation in December 2024 following a long-term addiction to prescription painkillers. The film is being developed with the full support of Caleb's family.

Writer and director Jade Strain explains;

"From the beginning, Hooked has been about telling Caleb's story honestly and without sensationalism. When Caleb died it didn't even make local news. It's become so normalised to pass away in housing meant for recovery."

The film is fully cast and the lead role will be played by Macaulay Cooper, known for his recent work on Emmerdale. Credits within the core crew also include House of The Dragon, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire and The Bay. Local company TM Travel have also offered the use of one of their buses for several scenes in the film.

[The Forward Trust](#), whose Patron is Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales, supports people affected by substance misuse, mental health needs and complex life experiences across the UK. By partnering with the Trust, the hope is that the film's core message around how easily addiction can begin and the stigma associated with getting help, will reach a wider audience and encourage more open, informed conversations.

Mike Trace, CEO of the Forward Trust and former Deputy Drug Czar said;

"A staggering 6,751 people in the UK died from drugs last year. This is a tragedy for every single person who has lost their life and for their loved ones. Behind the shocking statistics are people like Caleb, people who are living with an illness that isolates and devastates too many lives."

Addiction isn't a marginalised issue in society. It runs deep and spreads wide. People are living with addiction all around us but stigma, misunderstanding and the fear of judgement are holding people back from getting the help they need.

We hope that this powerful film of Caleb's story will help to change the perception and understanding around addiction, and serious action is taken to reduce the level of avoidable deaths."

The project has received a £500 grant from The Cutlers' Charitable Trust and a public Crowdfunder will launch on Friday the 30th of January to raise the remaining £6,500 needed to bring the film into production. Rehearsals are well underway and filming is scheduled to take place in Sheffield in March 2026. The completed film will be circulated freely.

Crowdfunder link, live from January 30th: www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/hookedshortfilm

Notes to Editor:

- Hooked is a short film in development exploring addiction, mental health, stigma and recovery.
- The script was shortlisted by the British Film Institute's Short Film Fund in 2025.
- The film is inspired by the experiences of Caleb Hancock who was 27 when he died following a long-term addiction to Tramadol. Hooked is being developed with support from his family.
- The Forward Trust is a social justice charity that supports people to recover from addiction or leave behind crime, helping them move on in life with family, friends, jobs, homes and a sense of belonging.
- The project has received £500 of funding support from The Cutlers' Charitable Trust.
- Filming will take place in Sheffield, South Yorkshire between 8th-15th of March 2026.

Key Information:

- **Project:** Hooked (Short Film)
- **Writer/Director:** Jade Strain
- **Lead Actor:** Macaulay Cooper (Emmerdale)
- **Crowdfunder Launch:** Friday 30 January
- **Director of Photography:** Heather Crompton (House of The Dragon, The Bay)
- **Producer:** [Catherine Walker](#) (Location, Location, Location, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire)
- **Planned Shoot:** March 2026
- **Location:** Sheffield, South Yorkshire

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