



News & Views

Next steps

As a charity, we have long relied on the many volunteers who help, week in, week out, at our centres, in our charity shops and with our fundraising activities. We value each and every one of them, and simply couldn't provide the level of service we do without their contribution.

Some of our volunteers have been with us for years, while others stay for a few months and move on, having learnt a range of new skills to take with them. But volunteering brings far more than just an opportunity to gain experience in the workplace – and that's why we are keen to promote it to our clients as a stepping stone to the next phase of their brain injury journey.



On that note, we're pleased to report that several of our clients have taken up volunteering roles since lockdown eased, including Mikayla Berrey and Elaine Forbes who attend our Sutton House brain injury hub in Wylde Green. Both have been helping out at the St Giles Hospice charity shop just a short walk away from the centre.

They help sort donations, steam clothes and stock shelves and Mikayla has already progressed to some till work. Like so many volunteering roles, it's proving to be a great way of acquiring new skills, meeting new people and building self-confidence. Funds raised in the St Giles shop support the local hospice and so it is also meaningful work, with a wider community benefit.

Joe Stokes, Headway's ABI Coordinator at Sutton House, explained: "Mikayla and Elaine are enjoying their volunteering at St Giles and getting such a lot from it. They have been able to go at

a pace that suits them, and take on extra responsibility when they feel ready for it. It is highly motivational for both of them".

He also thanked St Giles for providing such worthwhile volunteering placements.

Inspired by her volunteering at the charity shop, Mikayla also offered to help run a stall at Headway's recent Christmas Fayre. She confidently took charge of the Children's Lucky Dip stall, which all but sold out of presents due to her enthusiasm and hard work. Thank you, Mikayla!

Sue Tyler, CEO at Headway Birmingham & Solihull, added: "We are looking to introduce a pre-vocational course to our service offer in the near future, aimed at supporting more people with an acquired brain injury to take that next step towards voluntary or paid work."



More details to follow soon!



Beat it!

Music has been on the timetable at Sutton House since the autumn, thanks to funding from NNS Sutton, the local Neighbourhood Network Scheme run by Birmingham City Council.

The music sessions, delivered by Beat It Percussion, will run once a week for 12-months and will include a different theme each month. Clients have already enjoyed some relaxation classes and some interactive rhythm sessions.

Sarah Wood, ABI Services Manager at Headway, said: "We would like to say a big thank you to NNS Sutton for enabling us to run these sessions, and to Lynn at Beat it for such great classes. Everyone is really loving them!"



Client Stephen Lynch in a relaxation session

We held our first event at Sutton House in early December – a traditional Christmas Fayre with a tombola, a raffle and a variety of Christmas-themed stalls. The talents of some of our clients were also on display, with hand-crafted cards from Tina Cox, crocheted doilies from Teena Beck and some delicious desserts made by one of our Sutton House clients.

We would like to thank everyone for their support with the fayre, from local businesses in Wylde Green and Sutton Coldfield who generously donated prizes, to staff and their families who came in at the weekend to help and of course, all those who came along on the day. Special thanks go to Irwin Mitchell who donated a prize and volunteered on one of the stalls, and to client Mikayla Berrey who ran the Lucky Dip while her mum, Julie, helped out with the tombola.

A great effort from everyone, raising £700 towards our brain injury services!



Lynn Kay from Beat It Percussion delivering the first music relaxation session

She added: "The funding also means that we can get our own set of instruments for use after the NNS sessions finish, which will allow us to train some of our own staff to deliver music therapy classes."

It is hoped that music sessions and the wellbeing benefits they bring can then be offered at our other hubs, too.

Festive Fundraiser



Keeley Parkes from our Lifestyles team helping out on the card stall

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED... We have many volunteer vacancies, so please spread the word!



Celebrating 20 years!!



Huge congratulations to our Head of Services, Becky Whenham, for completing 20-years with Headway Birmingham & Solihull.

Becky joined the charity back in 2001, having worked in a residential setting in the UK and then with Camp America, both roles specialising in helping those with learning disabilities. Her first role at Headway was as an Activity Leader (known as a Skills Coach today!) and she progressed from that role to become a Co-ordinator and then ABI Manager, before being promoted to her current position as Head of Services.

She has acquired a wealth of experience in brain injury during the two decades she has been with us, and is highly regarded by both those at Headway and by our partners In Social Services and Birmingham City Council.

“I think the length of time I have been here shows just how much I love my job!” said Becky. “Every day is a new challenge and I

enjoy every element of it, especially the direct contact with the clients and their families, and of course, working with such a great team!”

A ride in the park!

Clients look forward to their weekly cycling sessions in Sutton Park, offered through Midland Mencap’s Parkride and their ‘Cycling with Confidence’ scheme.

The initiative allows each client to have a bike that suits their individual needs and they can cycle in safety on the tarmac course. It’s a fantastic opportunity to get more active and have fun, and we are already seeing some excellent progress in ability and fitness.

Client Adam Larkin, for example, was using a three-wheeler to start with but is now cycling confidently on a conventional two-wheeled bike, while all clients, including Richard Clarke, pictured right, are thoroughly enjoying every session. Well done, all!



Greater awareness

TSB in Perry Barr have chosen us as their Charity of the Year and were keen to find out more about the work we do. We arranged for several members of their staff to spend a day volunteering with us, either at our Sutton House brain injury centre or at our Great Barr charity shop. They were a fantastic group who got stuck in and turned their hand to whatever needed doing. They also went away with a much better understanding of the issues surrounding brain injury. Thank you, TSB!

NEW LIFT... Work is commencing on our new lift at Sutton House... watch this space!



Improving life after brain injury

Registered Charity No. 1008798
Company Reg No. 2686647

Leighton House
20 Chapel Rise,
Birmingham Great Park,
Rednal,
Birmingham B45 9SN

Headway House
Moseley Hall Hospital,
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183 New Road, Rubery
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A marathon effort!



Last year's London Marathon was cancelled completely due to the outbreak of COVID and this year's event was moved from April to October.

However, it proved as popular as ever and Headway Birmingham & Solihull had three participants - Julie Wedgbury, our Communications & Fundraising Manager, who ran the actual marathon in London, plus Lucy Badnadge and Rich Stevens, who used to work in our Lifestyles team, and both ran the virtual version of the event. The trio raised over £1,300 between them. Congratulations to all three for finishing, and also to this incredible chap

from Headway Jersey who actually completed the 26.1 miles dressed as a giant brain! *Truly a marathon effort!*

Co-op Cause!

With the backing of our local store in Rubery, we were selected as one of the Co-op's local 'causes' to receive a grant from their Local Community Fund towards our sports and wellbeing activities.

Not only have we received grants totalling £2,252.28 from this initiative, we have also been supported by our local Co-op store on numerous occasions over the last year. Their charity ambassador, Peter Nash, has been a regular visitor at Leighton House, and he has helped secure donations of compost to help our gardening group as well as several prizes for our Easter and Christmas raffles. The store also invited us to join them at the Rubery Festival and donated many prizes for our tombola at the event.

Sincere thanks go once again to Peter Nash and his colleagues at the Co-op!



Jade Foxall from Headway with Peter Nash

Thank you!

A heartfelt thank you to Erdington Rotary Club for inviting us along to tell them more about the work we do and for calling by at our Great Barr charity shop to drop off a cheque for £1,000. This generous donation is very much appreciated and will make a real difference in these challenging times.

Right – Chas Le Maistre from Erdington Rotary with Caroline Cullen from our Great Barr shop



More thanks!

We would also like to thank Wootton Wawen Country Club for donating £410 to Headway following a recent quiz evening and other fundraising events!

Left : Tina Sater from Wootton Wawen Country Club presents the funds raised to Headway's CEO, Sue Tyler



We wish all our users and friends of Headway Birmingham & Solihull a very

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR!