

News & Views

'Ready, steady, safe to go!'

Undoubtedly, the coronavirus outbreak has been a challenge for us all, and probably the biggest faced by Headway Birmingham & Solihull in its 33-year history. However, we've come a long way since we first closed our doors and suspended our normal services back in March, and so want to update you on where we are now.



Our **Carer Services** are running near to normal services. Information and advice is available as usual via our Enquiry Line and our support workers continue to assess clients and offer family support. Carer Support Groups resumed in August and will take place on the third Tuesday of every month at Headway House, 4-6pm, with those attending asked to wear a face-covering and bring their own drinks. Carers Lunch Clubs will also be held on the first Thursday of every month between 2.45-4.45pm, now at Sutton House, where there is more space to accommodate everyone safely. Contact Nancy Khan on **07925 034899** or at nancy.khan@headway-bs.org.uk for more details.

Our **Lifestyles Services** are also running near to normal services, although there are a few community-based activities that are not possible due to social-distancing restrictions. Our Lifestyles Workers are offering support remotely to any client who needs to shield and will continue to do so for as long as needed. All Lifestyles Clients will be advised when lunch clubs and sports activities can resume. Contact Vanessa Hughes on **07442 502001** or at vanessa.hughes@headway-bs.org.uk for further details on Lifestyles Services.

Our **ABI** (Acquired Brain Injury) staff meanwhile have been working hard behind the scenes preparing our brain injury centres for re-opening. A range of social-distancing measures have been implemented, with new screens installed, new signage displayed and new procedures introduced to ensure the safety of all clients as they return to each of our three hubs.

Staff have received training on the new working practices and will be operating in 'bubbles' to minimise the risk of spreading the virus. We will also be running a training week for clients to acquaint them with the new procedures.

We are still providing remote services to those isolating at home, with welfare calls, doorstep visits and a range of online information and live sessions, and these will continue until all clients can resume their rehabilitation programme at our centres. Indeed, some elements of our Remote Services have been so well-received (quizzes and exercise sessions via Zoom) that we are looking at extending these indefinitely.

Our Sports programme has been hit hard but we have been fortunate to have been awarded some funding from Sport Birmingham which will allow us to run some sports activities from our centres in the short-term (boccia, adapted archery & table-tennis). We will take a fresh look at Community Sports as

DON'T FORGET!

Washing your hands remains the single most effective way of reducing the spread of coronavirus.



social-distancing guidelines start to relax. Thank you once again to everyone who donated kit or funds following the theft of our fishing and archery equipment in May.





Text appeal launched for lift

Can you believe a whole year has passed since we first opened our doors at our new brain injury centre in Wylde Green? Unfortunately, our plans to extend the number of days and the range of sessions at Sutton House were interrupted by the coronavirus outbreak, and our plans to hold an official open day have also been put on hold.

However, we are still looking to install a lift at the two-storey premises at the earliest opportunity, and the extra space this will create will benefit us more than ever in the light of COVID-19 and the need for social-distancing.

We have well over half the funding in place for this project but in these difficult times, it will be more of a challenge to secure the balance needed to get work started. We have therefore launched a text appeal to help us reach our fundraising goal.

Simply text **LIFT** to **70085** to donate **£3** towards this vital project. *Note texts cost £3 plus your standard message rate and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £3 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text LIFTNOINFO to 70085.*

There are also options to donate **£5, £10 or £20** to the appeal by texting **5LIFT, 10LIFT or 20LIFT** to **70085**.

You can also donate online at www.headway-bs.org.uk.

All donations will be very gratefully received and will help directly to complete the installation of the lift at Sutton House, enabling everyone to use both floors of the premises with ease.



Hats off to Hannah!

Headway House client Hannah Weston, aged 25, has been keeping very busy during lockdown. She took advantage of the peace and quiet to make a great start to achieving one of her long-term goals - learning to drive!

Hannah was revising every day and answering on-the-spot questions from ABI Coordinator Sarah Kelly, and her hard work is really starting to pay off. She passed her driver's theory test first time and has had her first lessons with an instructor now that lockdown regulations are easing. She has already mastered 30mph and reverse parking!

This is a real achievement for Hannah, who struggles with anxiety since her brain injury, which happened when she was a passenger in a car involved in a road traffic collision.

We are super-proud of Hannah for her determination to overcome her fears around driving. Congratulations Hannah! Your success is well-deserved!

Lockdown legacy!

We love this picture (right) of our Lifestyles client, Chris McNamara and his gorgeous dog Honey, relaxing in their freshly decorated living room!

Chris decided he would like to like to decorate his flat with the money he had saved during lockdown and so asked Lifestyles staff to help him choose paint, flooring and a new sofa and book the tradespeople to do the work. He had the hall and bedroom decorated too, and is over the moon with the end result.

No wonder - it looks fabulous!



VOLUNTEERS... if you have at least half a day to spare, please get in touch. We need help at our charity shops in Rubery & Great Barr! You can really make a difference!



Our War Hero Weds!



You may recall reading about ABI client Neil Davis in an earlier edition of our newsletter as he was presented with his Veteran's Pin for service in the Royal Navy.

Congratulations are due once again as Neil married his partner Mal in a civil ceremony at their home during lockdown. Neil hasn't been too well of late but both he and his new wife looked absolutely radiant on their wedding day, made extra special by family and neighbours who decorated their garden and arranged a cake, flowers, balloons and more! Congratulations Neil and Mal from us all!

Learning more about the work of Headway Birmingham & Solihull, neighbour Ann Ellard has since organised a charity day in the local community to raise much-needed funds towards our brain injury services. Through a table-top sale, tombola, raffle, cake sale and general donations, £535.68 was raised with a second event planned soon. A big thank you to Ann and her neighbours in Devon Road, Frankley for their amazing fundraising efforts!



We are open!

Our charity shops play a vital role in generating funds for our brain injury services and raising the profile of our charity in the local community. We are delighted to have all three open again, and would like to thank everyone who has dropped off donations to help replenish our shelves.

Anyone visiting our shops will have noticed the changes. To follow social-distancing rules, we have a maximum number of people in each shop at any one time, and ask everyone to wear a face-covering, unless exempt from doing so. We also have hand-sanitiser at the entrance and screens at our tills offering further protection to customers and staff.

As we now have to quarantine donated goods for 72 hours before they can go out on the shop floor, we are urging people to ring ahead before dropping off donations. This helps avoid turning away donations when we reach capacity, something we really don't like to do! Please call Rubery shop on 0121 452 4798 or the Great Barr shops (Fashion & Headway Homes) on 0121 357 1296/0121 357 6561.

We are also looking for volunteers to help in our shops, and a volunteer buddy to support our driver for collecting furniture for our Headway Homes store. Please call Vanessa on 0121 457 7541 or email vanessa.hughes@headway-bs.org.uk for more information.



Julie Harvey, Assistant Shop Manager at Rubery



New role in Carers Team

Thanks to funding from Forward Carers, we have extended Sue Ward's role in our Carer Services team. For some years, Sue has worked as our Macmillan Case Worker, supporting families affected by both acquired brain injury (ABI) and a cancer. She is now a Macmillan/End of Life Case Worker, and can offer support to families affected by ABI and any terminal diagnosis, whether it is the person with the brain injury or

their carer affected. She can offer advice and information on benefits, housing and care; help understand treatment and come to terms with diagnosis; provide emotional support and also make referrals to other agencies/support services. We wish Sue well in her new role, and have every confidence she will be a great help to the families she supports. For more information or referral, please contact our Carer Services on 0121 457 7541.

DONATIONS.... Please do not leave any donations outside of our shops!



Improving life after brain injury

Registered Charity No 1008798
Company Reg number 2686647

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

Headway House
Moseley Hall Hospital,
Alcester Road,
Birmingham B13 8JL

New Sutton House
380-384 Birmingham
Road,
Wylde Green,
Sutton Coldfield B72 1YH

Website:
www.headway-bs.org.uk
enquiries@headway-bs.org.uk

Contact telephone:
0121 457 7541

Our Charity Shops:

Headway Fashion
69 Thornbridge Avenue,
Headway Homes
71 Thornbridge Avenue,
Great Barr,
Birmingham B42 2PW
tel: 0121 357 1296

Headway Fashion
183 New Road, Rubery,
Birmingham B45 9JP
tel: 0121 453 4798



Easter Fun Run – The Virtual Version!

We were disappointed to have to cancel this year's Easter Fun Run, initially arranged for Sunday 5 April, but delighted to give supporters the chance to take part in The Virtual Version! This involves walking, jogging or running the 5k distance at a time and a place to suit you. Simply send us evidence that you have completed the challenge, and we will post your medal out to you (along with a little something chocolatey, in best Easter tradition!). It is open to those who had already paid for a place in the Easter Fun Run earlier in the year, and to anyone who fancies doing it now. It is just £12 for adults and £8 for under 14s, with all proceeds going directly to support our local brain injury services.

The 2020 medals, generously sponsored by Frenkel Topping once again, are very collectible, and would be a lasting memento of a race that never was and a very unusual year!

Sign up now at www.headway-bs.org.uk. Closing date: 28 September.



Grand Raffle 2020

We are in the process of finalising the prizes for this year's Grand Raffle and will send out full details very soon. It is proving a fantastic way of raising unrestricted income for our charity, meaning it can be spent just where it is needed most. You can help by buying a few tickets yourself – and taking a few books to sell on to your friends and family. Please contact julie.wedgbury@headway-bs.org.uk for more details.

Hevey Heroes!

Joanne Hevey and her daughter Lauren are both regulars at our Easter Fun Run, with Lauren being the first female finisher at last year's event, despite being only 12 at the time!

Both have been busy during lockdown raising funds for Headway Birmingham & Solihull.

Joanne made some beautiful cross-stitch rainbows she sold for £6 each, raising £100 and a further £100 in match-funding from her employer, Barclays. Lauren, meanwhile, held a bake sale and raised an impressive £170.

A big thank you to Joanne, Lauren & Barclays!! We really appreciate your efforts on our behalf.



Jack's Supports us again!

Thank you to local supermarket Jack's for their donation of £500 to help us with the extra costs associated with delivering our services during the coronavirus crisis and to help us get back on our feet more quickly afterwards. Jack's Supports helped us previously by funding a new boccia set for Leighton House, and we really appreciate this ongoing support.



Brave head shave in memory of Sam

Heartfelt thanks to Peter Simpson who shaved his head in memory of his dear friend Sam Baker who passed away earlier this year following a brain aneurysm.

While we didn't have the privilege of knowing Sam ourselves, it was clear from the many lovely comments left on Peter's Just Giving page that Sam was a real personality and held in high regard by those who knew him. He must have been quite a man if the amount raised in his memory is anything to go on.

Just short of £10,000 was raised, an incredible amount that will go towards helping others whose lives have been changed forever by brain injury. It will really make a difference to our charity, especially with the impact of coronavirus on our regular fundraising.

We would like to take this opportunity to pass on our condolences to all who knew Sam, and to say thank you to everyone who donated so generously in his memory, including the company Autodesk who gave a match-funded donation of £2,373.03.



Peter, before.....and after!