

News & Views



A Veteran in our Midst!

We couldn't be more proud of our client Neil Davis (pictured left), who was recently presented with his HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge.



Neil, a former Naval Officer, has been accessing our specialist brain injury services since he suffered a stroke in 2015. He hadn't realised he was eligible for the award until he started chatting to Jenny Robertson, who joined Headway as a volunteer and is now employed as a Skills Trainer at our Leighton House brain injury centre.

Jenny was in the Women's Royal Army Corps herself and so knew all about the Veteran's Pin, and she not only helped Neil

apply for his badge but also organised for the Birmingham Sherborne Sea Cadets to formally present it to him. It was touching to see the young cadets saluting a former officer, and the presentation was thoroughly enjoyed by our clients and staff as well as Neil's partner Mel who also attended.

Huge congratulations to Neil and thank you to Jenny and the sea cadets for making this a day to remember!

Laughter is the best medicine!

In January Carers Services arranged another trip to the pantomime, thanks to the Aylesford Family Charitable Trust who donated £500 towards the trip.

This has become a firm family favourite, and this year was no exception. It not only provides a great day out with lots of laughs, but is a welcome break for families, many of whom may have experienced a stressful time over Christmas.

Here's hoping we can raise some funds for another trip in January 2021!



Sharni shows how a little determination goes a long way!

The New Year has certainly started well for our client Sharni Haque.

Sharni experienced a first shunt blockage back in 1995 and then a brain haemorrhage in 2003. She has always had difficulty walking but became less mobile and dependant on a wheelchair following a second shunt blockage in 2014. She has been attending our Leighton House brain injury centre for a couple of years now and has gone from strength to strength in that time. She has delighted us with her writing skills and artistic talent, and has gradually grown in confidence in the time she has been with us. Her personality has really started to shine through – as has her steely determination.

She was determined to get out of her wheelchair and started to transfer from the wheelchair to an armchair at home. Her next aim was to start walking with the aid of a walker – and we are proud to announce she has since had the confidence to stand up unattended and walk 60 steps along the corridor with our trained staff nearby monitoring her progress.

Congratulations to Sharni for achieving this massive personal goal!



Peer Support

Hannah Weston is 25-years-old and was a passenger when the car she was travelling in was involved in a road traffic collision.

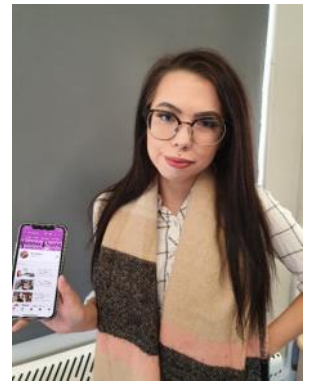
When Hannah first came to Headway, she found the changes due to her brain injury hard to accept and was intolerant of others. She lacked insight into her own difficulties and suffered with severe emotional mood swings.

Following our programme, Hannah has gained confidence, a better understanding of her deficits and approaches her 'bad days' with a different vigour! Her approach is to share her experiences in the hope of educating and giving support to those in a similar situation to herself.

One way she does this is through YouTube, the online sharing platform for video and multimedia. Her YouTube user name is **Han Weston**, and she currently has 87 followers reading her blog about her journey after brain injury.

Hannah has also delivered a make-up class to the ladies at Headway, offering beauty hints and tips. Her dream is to work in brain injury rehabilitation and share her first-hand experience and advice.

Well done, Hannah, on finding your inner strength to help you along your own brain injury journey.



Have cane, will travel!

Our Lifestyle client Sue Smith is partially sighted and so was keen to visit the Sight Village exhibition at Queen Alexandra College in Birmingham last summer with her Support Worker Bev Cooper.



There were all sorts of wonderful new products on display at the event, including a new UltraCane, an electronic mobility aid for use by blind and visually impaired people. Using state-of-the-art 'narrow beam' technology, the cane has sensors at both ground level and chest height, and vibrates to alert the user when it detects an obstacle ahead, allowing them to navigate safely around it.

Sue was immediately interested in the cane, and so with Bev's help, applied for funding to help buy one, and thanks to a grant from the Florence Nightingale Trust, she is now the proud owner of her very own UltraCane!

Sue is still building her confidence going out and about using the cane (with her trusted dog Sonny) and will undoubtedly be looking forward to the warmer weather and longer days to explore further.

Boccia (pronounced bot-cha) is a sport similar to indoor bowls.

It can be played by anyone, irrespective of age or disability. It requires tactical thinking and decision-making, and can have positive health benefits by improving flexibility and strengthening muscles, as well as promoting social interaction and team spirit.

It is an activity enjoyed by many of our clients as part of our Sports & Wellbeing programme. However, our existing boccia set had seen better days and so we applied for a grant from local supermarket Jack's to buy a replacement. This was under their Jack's Supports scheme where the proceeds from the sale of carrier bags are donated to local good causes.

We were delighted to receive £250 from the scheme, and to welcome Emma Dipple and Joshua Dipple from the Jack's store in Rubery to see first-hand how the game is played and the difference their support is making. Thank you!

What is Boccia?!



VOLUNTEERS ...if you have at least half a day to spare, please get in touch. We need you!



Dreams do come true!

Staff and clients at Headway House were delighted to receive a donation from the Galsinh family towards a new interactive whiteboard. While our own fund-raising for the project has been going well, their generosity has tipped us over the target of £2,000, meaning we can finally buy a whiteboard to use in our training sessions. We simply cannot thank them enough!

Left: Manny Galsinh presents the cheque to staff at Headway

Father's Footsteps!

A huge thank you to Graham Leighton (pictured right), son of our founder Stafford Leighton and his wife Ann. Graham fundraises tirelessly for Headway Birmingham & Solihull, by managing charity collection boxes in his local area. We send our congratulations to Graham for his continued efforts on our behalf, and to The Marston Green Tavern for reaching their £1000 milestone!



Grand Raffle

Sincere thanks to everyone who supported our Grand Raffle. Whether you donated a prize, bought tickets or persuaded your family and friends to buy some, your efforts helped us raise an amazing £1,542.45 towards our local brain injury services. Thank you all!



Big-hearted company

If there was a prize for the 'Most Christmassy Company', for sure it would be awarded to recruitment agency Morgan Parkes, based in Hockley Heath! They ran their 'Twelve Charities of Christmas' initiative in December, volunteering or raising funds for 12 different local charities. We were delighted to be selected as one of their charities following an online public vote and they chose to hold a mobile mince pie morning for us, which not only raised £68 for Headway, but also raised awareness about the work we do across the Birmingham and Solihull area. Thank you again to the amazing team at Morgan Parkes!

Left: Rachael Farrell-Johnson and Rachel Argue from Morgan Parkes head out with their mince pies!

Local support

We would like to thank The Cavalier pub in Northfield for their ongoing support. Not only do they collect money for us on a regular basis by having one of our collection tins at their pub, they also held a Charity Fun Day in the autumn, raising a whopping £1,000 towards our local brain injury services. Thank you again from everyone at Headway Birmingham & Solihull.



The sheep brain being dissected

Brain Day

Special thanks to Dr Emma McDonald and the psychology students at Birmingham City University for donating £210 to Headway following their recent 'Brain Day'.

This was undoubtedly one of the most unusual forms of fundraising we have ever seen – but absolutely one of the most relevant!

Dr McDonald arranged for Dr Guy Sutton from the University of Nottingham School of Medicine to visit BCU where, in return for a small donation to Headway Birmingham & Solihull, he delivered a fascinating presentation on Mind & Brain and then invited students to participate in the dissection of a one-year-old sheep brain.

Eleanor Niblock, one of the BCU students who attended, said: "We have been learning the theory but this was really useful in helping students have a real-life application of brain structures."

Sue Tyler, CEO at Headway Birmingham & Solihull added: "We are so grateful to BCU for not only fund-raising for us, but for promoting a greater understanding of the working of the brain to a new generation of students."

DONATIONSDon't forget we are always in need of your donations for our charity shopsclothes, toys, books, small furniture, bric-a-brac, furnishings etc.

A samosa sale is an increas-



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

Headway 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



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Sad farewell to dear friends

Our fondest thoughts are with dear clients who have passed away recently:

Stephen Wyatt - aged 51

Kevin John - aged 50

Tiago Leandro - aged 41

Our deepest sympathy to their families.

Through the lens!

The community sports and wellbeing department ran a photography competition at the end of last year. We had over 70 amazing entries and the winners were picked by an online vote in January. The winner was Paul Taylor's photo of Jake the spaniel. Runners up were Harry Hickman and Denise Taylor.



Samosas in Sutton!

ingly popular choice for workplace fundraising and it certainly worked well for staff at Sutton Coldfield Jobcentre who recently raised £70 for Headway Birmingham & Solihull in this way. Thank you!

This fundraising is especially welcome now that our new brain injury centre in the north of Birmingham is open – and we'd love to attract more work-based fundraising in this area. Email fundraising@headway-bs.org.uk if you would like some ideas for fundraising in your own place of work.

Action for Brain Injury Week



This year's Action for Brain Injury Week will focus on the devastating impacts of memory loss. Our teams will be out and about in the community raising awareness of this issue and we will also be holding our annual Hats for Headway Day on Friday 15th May to raise funds towards our local brain injury services. Email fundraising@headway-bs.org.uk to get your Hats for Headway poster.



Our Easter Fun Run is getting greener!

Our annual Easter Fun Run returns to Cofton Park on Sunday 5 April, thanks to generous sponsorship from Frenkel Topping for the fifth year in a row. And while the medals and the Easter eggs are sure to make the event as popular as ever, participants will notice a small change for 2020 as we provide water at the finish line in recyclable paper cups rather than the individual plastic bottles offered previously. That has to be a step in the right direction! Our Easter Fun Run has sold out in the last few years – so book your place now if you haven't already!

Headway Birmingham & Solihull's

EASTER FUN RUN

at Cofton Park

Full details at: www.headway-bs.org.uk/events

Hurry... places limited!

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