



# HEADWAY MATTERS

## ***New therapy suite open for business!***



It has long been our ambition to offer a choice of clinical therapies to complement the rehab we currently offer to those with a brain injury, and this dream finally came to fruition in November when the doors to our new therapy suite opened and we treated our first client.



(L to R) Emma Hale (Therapy Helper), Brigitta Kertesz-Akinniyi (Physiotherapist), Geraldine Green (Wellbeing Coordinator) & Kate Stafford (Therapy Helper) with client Chris Hawker.

Located on the first floor of our Sutton House brain injury hub in Wylde Green, the new therapy suite has been launched with funding from The National Lottery and will ultimately offer physiotherapy, speech & language support as well as a range of wellbeing activities.

Client Chris Hawker, who also uses our ABI (Acquired Brain Injury) Services, was the very first client to have a physiotherapy session, and so was invited to cut a ribbon to mark this new milestone for our charity!

We will have much more to share with you over the coming months as the new service rolls out further. In the meantime, visit [www.headway-bs.org.uk/wellbeing-therapy](http://www.headway-bs.org.uk/wellbeing-therapy) for more information or contact Becky Whenham on **0121 457 7541** or at [headofservices@headway-bs.org.uk](mailto:headofservices@headway-bs.org.uk).

## ***Birmingham Disability Resource Centre partnership!***

We are delighted to have a new partnership in place with Birmingham Disability Resource Centre (BDRC). Set up in October, it involves providing advice, information and guidance to disabled people and their families across the whole of Birmingham, with Headway having the specific focus on those with neurological conditions.

The project aims to support people to maximise their income, and our Fast Track team will be able to offer help in many areas, including support with PIPs (Personal Independence Payments), appeals, debt management, obtaining funding for white goods and much more.

Please contact our Carer & Family Services team for further information or to access support. Call **0121 457 7541** or email [ajit.matharu@headway-bs.org.uk](mailto:ajit.matharu@headway-bs.org.uk).

## ***New equipment from IT giveaway***

A shortage of computers had been a challenge at the beginning of our new Vocational Assistance Programme (VAP), but a generous donation of laptops and Chromebooks from Birmingham City Council's Connected Services Programme has completely resolved this issue and the frustrations this created.

*Our sincere thanks go to Birmingham City Council for donating this equipment to us as part of their digital inclusion focus. It has made an immediate difference to our VAP clients and will also help improve computer access for clients across all three of our brain injury hubs moving forward.*

Our VAP lead Helen Bourke said: "Clients have increased their computer skills dramatically since starting the VAP programme, from setting up their own email addresses and using them independently, to searching online for college placements and voluntary positions to apply to. This new equipment is helping no end!"

## ***VAP Presentation***

The VAP programme also includes in its comprehensive timetable some sessions on Public Speaking, and as part of this, clients have been using the new IT equipment to create a Power-Point presentation about their individual brain injury journey and their future goals.

One client, Simone Taylor (right), has already used her newly-developed skills to good effect. She accompanied our Head of Services, Becky Whenham, to Ward 8 of Moseley Hall Hospital to assist in delivering a presentation to around 15 occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech/ language therapists, on the services Headway offers.

Simone talked in detail about her stroke, the impact it had on her and how she has benefitted from Headway's many services, including the Vocational programme she is currently part of. Several of the staff at the hospital remembered Simone from when she was a patient at Moseley Hall and commented on how wonderful it was to see the extent of her recovery.

Simone herself said: "I never imagined having the confidence to stand up in front of so many professionals and talk about my own brain injury and recovery."

She said she had really enjoyed herself and would be keen to take an active role in assisting in delivering presentations in the future.

Congratulations, Simone! What an advocate for our new VAP programme!



## ***New wheels!***

Many of you will have seen our shiny new minibus out and about, transporting clients from our Sutton House brain injury hub to their offsite activities.

Its purchase was only possible because of grants received from ten different charitable trusts, including Birmingham Airport Community Trust Fund.

*Our sincere thanks to them all!*

The new minibus is a 13-seater Citroen Relay L4H2 with features like a low access roll-out side-step and an electrically-controlled tail lift making it fully accessible for all of our clients, including our wheelchair users.



*Client Yiang heading out to his offsite bowling session*



*Safety first!  
Congratulations to Richard  
for passing his minibus  
driver training course!*

It also meets with the approval of our driver, Richard Hall, who recently completed his MiDAS minibus assessment course in the new vehicle – and passed with flying colours!

The new minibus is sure to be used on a daily basis for many years to come, enabling our clients to access a sport or activity of choice out in the local community, enriching their lives no end.

*Thank you again to everyone who contributed so generously towards its cost.*

## ***Offering support from the outset***

Our Hospital Link Worker, Sarah Coaton, is a regular visitor to the Neuro wards at the QE Hospital, thanks to ongoing sponsorship from the legal panel (CFG Law, Higgs LLP and Slater & Gordon).

She is pictured (*right*) with Ward Clerk, Jackie Welcome (*left*), who is always so helpful in providing the information Sarah needs in order to support families in the early stages post brain injury.



### **Success for Ki-Lim**

When our Leighton House client Ki-Lim Cheng-Snipe (*pictured right*) expressed an interest in helping to make drinks for other clients, she was told she would have to do the necessary training, just the same as our staff and volunteers have to before they can serve food or drinks at the centre.

And this is just what she did, successfully completing an e-learning food hygiene course!

Congratulations, Ki-Lim, on a fantastic achievement!



### **Marking our 40th year!**

While we were not formally registered as a charity until February 1992, our story began back in 1983 when a group of local families came together and found mutual

support from sharing their brain injury experiences.

Headway Birmingham & Solihull as we know it today grew slowly and steadily from those humble beginnings and so we felt it was only right to celebrate the 40th anniversary of when it all started.

To mark the occasion, we took a group of our 'Services For All' clients on a fabulous day out, starting with a wellbeing session at the Donkey Sanctuary in Sutton Park followed by a delicious meal at the nearby Toby Carvery.

*Our sincere thanks go to the donkey sanctuary for letting us spend the day with their wonderful animals and to Irwin Mitchell for enabling us to offer the meal afterwards.*

*Alan & Cheryl Nicholls at the donkey sanctuary*

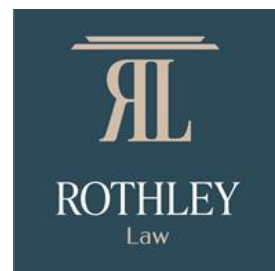


### **Rothley Law**

We are delighted to have been chosen by Rothley Law as their Charity of the Year.

The firm has a Birmingham office in The Mailbox and assists many people with acquired brain injury through its Court of Protection work, and so linking up with a local charity like ours was a natural choice!

Rothley Law staff are planning to complete a Three Peaks Challenge next summer and are already doing a 'Monthly Miles Challenge' to improve their fitness. We look forward to working with them over the coming months and wish Sophie, Andriy and the team all the best with their training!



## **National Grid donation**

Thanks to a grant from the National Grid's Active Communities Fund, we have been able to add both seated yoga and indoor bowls to our timetable this autumn.

Both activities bring recognised health and wellbeing benefits, whether through the increased range of movement involved or the opportunity to try something new and mix socially with others.

Our ABI Services Manager, Sarah Wood, said: "These sessions are proving very popular and are definitely encouraging our clients to be more active.

"We simply couldn't offer these activities without the funding in place, and so thank you again to the National Grid for their support with this.

"It really is making a difference!"



*Client Richard Clarke perfecting his technique at Erdington Court Bowls Club!*

## **Support from Sport England**

*And more good news on the sporting front...!*

We have also received a grant of £11,415 from Sport England which will allow us to continue offering seated yoga into next year, and add fishing, climbing, ten pin bowling and wheelchair dance to our programme of activities

Due to its seasonal nature, we will not be adding fishing to the timetable until next spring. However, we have been able to use a portion of the grant to offer a one-off guided fishing session at Albrighton Moat for our Sutton House clients.

This was the first time fishing for some, and they relished the opportunity to travel offsite together, be outside and learn a new skill. They caught plenty of fish and thoroughly enjoyed the day, despite the weather!

***Huge thanks to Sport England for awarding this generous grant.***

It will enable us to offer a wider range of activities to encourage more of our clients and families to participate in sport through our ABI and Services For All programmes, and enjoy the associated health and wellbeing benefits.



*Client Stephen Edwards shows off his catch!*

## ***Positive steps***

Pictured right is 29-year-old Ivory Hall creating an eye-catching window display at our Rubery charity shop.

Ivory has come a long way since her brain injury. In her late teens, she suffered a bleed on the brain after being knocked over by a vehicle on a pedestrian crossing, leaving her with poor balance and coordination, difficulty walking and short-term memory problems.

Since then, she has made a good recovery physically and is also taking positive steps to improve her memory and organisational skills.

The support of her Lifestyle worker is instrumental in this, encouraging Ivory to believe in herself more and use her wonderful artistic talent not only at the art group she attends and enjoys, but also by volunteering at the Headway charity shop. It is proving an opportunity to enhance her skills, meet new people and build her own self-confidence, hopefully bringing her a step closer to achieving her goal of finding paid employment in the future.

*Thank you, Ivory, for your help at the shop and for showing others with a brain injury just what can be achieved with some positivity and determination!*



*Lifestyle client Ivory using her creative flair to good effect at our Rubery charity shop*

## ***Mayor's Community Weekend***



A great time was had by all at our Mad Hatter's Tea Party back in September!

The event, which was funded through a National Lottery Community Fund grant as part of the West Midlands Mayor's Community Weekend, provided an opportunity for some of the families we support to come together for an afternoon of fun.

With staff dressed up in some amazing Alice in Wonderland themed costumes, an array of delicious food on offer and an assortment of indoor and outdoor games for all to try, there was something for everyone!

Our Family and Carer Services Co-ordinator, Ajit Matharu, pictured right with client Teena Beck, said: "Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time, and so thank you again to all involved, especially the National Lottery for making it possible!"

## **Sunflower success!**

Several of our clients submitted entries to this year's ABI Games organised by our neighbours, Headway Worcestershire.

Congratulations to all who took part and a special mention to our Leighton House client Sean O'Gorman who was awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 'Grow the Tallest Sunflower' category!

We reckon his sunflower was taller than Sean himself!!



## **Onwards & upwards!**



Our thanks and congratulations go to former Headway House client Emma Jewiss who climbed Snowdon in the summer and raised an amazing £630 for ourselves and two other organisations that supported her following her brain injury.

Emma, in her own words, managed to "find the determination" she needed and "dig deep" to reach the summit, despite "the relentless wind and rain" on the day.

Helen Bourke, ABI Services Manager, said: "Emma planned the climb to mark a year after her discharge from hospital following a severe brain injury, and managed to complete the challenge despite the terrible weather conditions. She really is an inspiration!"

## **10 out of 10 for the 15 from V12!**

THANK YOU to V12 Vehicle Finance in Solihull for responding to an appeal on our social media pages for some help with the gardening at our Leighton House hub.

They sent along a team of seven and a team of eight volunteers on two consecutive days in October, and each and every team member worked hard to tidy up our garden spaces, by mowing, weeding, leaf-clearing, sweeping etc.

This type of help is invaluable to us as we strive to keep our gardens and paved areas safe and well-maintained for our brain-injured clients to use and enjoy.

*Thank you again to Jay Bowles and all from V12. We hope you'll come back again in 2024!*



*The first team from V12 stop work to pose for a quick photo!*

## Thank you!

In November, we were awarded a grant of £1,414.93 from the Co-op Local Community Fund to help with costs associated with our offsite services. This will be used to subsidise entry fees for clients accessing sporting activities and provide accessible transport for travel to these sessions. *Thank you so much to the Co-op and everyone who selected us as their local cause!*



It's what we do

## Head for heights?!

If you have a bucket list and doing a skydive is on it, then look no further!

The Headway super-high charity skydive will take place on **Saturday 11 May 2024** at Hinton Airfield and we still have places available.

Email [fundraising@headway-bs.org](mailto:fundraising@headway-bs.org) for more information or to reserve your place!



## Grand Raffle 2023

While we don't have the final figure on how much this year's Grand Raffle raised, we do know that it wouldn't be such a success without the generosity of our supporters and suppliers.

A sincere thank you to everyone who donated a prize, and special thanks to Irwin Mitchell for the £100 Amazon gift voucher, Sharp Business Systems for the printer and the Coventry City FC tickets and Pure Cloud Solutions for the Birmingham City FC tickets.



*A Christmas hamper, kindly donated by Becketts Farm*

## A grand donation!

Sincere thanks to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire for kindly donating £1,000 towards our local services. Ongoing support of this kind makes a tangible difference and is very much appreciated.



## A Christmas message from our CEO, Sue Tyler

Despite another very challenging year, we have managed to continue to deliver a wide range of services across all our hubs and in the community, thanks to a great team of staff & volunteers, and all our fantastic supporters.

Best wishes to each and everyone of you for a wonderful Christmas!



Improving life after brain injury

Registered Charity No 1008798  
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