

# Headway Matters

WINTER 2024

The magazine of Headway Birmingham & Solihull



  
Headway  
the brain injury association

In recognition of the achievements of  
**David Chater**  
Winner of the  
**Stephen McAleese Outstanding  
Contribution to Headway**

kindly supported by Nos Barristers Chambers  
which celebrates the outstanding contributions to the work  
Headway made by survivors, carers, volunteers and  
supporters over an extended period

  
Luke Griggs  
Interim Chief Executive  
5 December 2024

## 25-years of service recognised!

We said thank you and goodbye to David Chater who stepped down as Chair of our Board of Trustees at the AGM in October. This followed 25-years of service with Headway Birmingham & Solihull where he has been pivotal in the charity's progression and growth.

Our CEO, Sue Tyler, presented David with an engraved glass plaque to mark his dedication and commitment to Headway over the years, and wished him health and happiness in his retirement.

Sue also nominated David for a national award from Headway, and in early December, David was pronounced the winner of the prestigious Stephen McAleese Outstanding Contribution to Headway Award at the awards ceremony in London.

Sue, who was shortlisted for an award herself (The Headway Extra Mile Award supported by Irwin Mitchell), said: "David has always been modest about the part he has played in helping 'steer the ship' in a positive direction, and probably underestimates what a difference his tremendous passion for the charity and his interest in clients and staff have made.

"He has gifted us not only his superb business expertise, but also his time, and even at the drop of a hat, he has always been available to offer his support whenever needed.

"Thank you, David. You are a very deserving winner and you will be missed by us all!"



*Above: Sue Tyler presents David with a framed certificate and plaque to mark his service to Headway Birmingham & Solihull  
Front page: David is presented with the Outstanding Achievement Award by Luke Griggs, Chief Executive of Headway - the brain injury association*



All welcome at our **New Year Celebration Disco & Buffet**

Saturday 18 January, 2024, 7—11pm

**The E57 Club, Kings Heath**

For tickets, please call Helen on 0121 457 7541 or Leanne on 0121 809 2080





## QE Hospital Link update

We are now into our third year of working jointly with our two neighbouring Headways (Headway Black Country and Headway Worcestershire) and our QE panel comprising Higgs, Slater & Gordon and CFG.

This consortium of legal firms helps fund our Hospital Link Worker at the QE, a key role that is making a real difference to people in the early stages of their brain injury journey.

We were pleased to welcome representatives from each organisation at our Rednal brain injury hub recently to hear an update directly from our Hospital Link Worker, Sarah Coaton (*pictured chatting to members of the QE panel ahead of her presentation*).



Sarah explained how the role is enabling us to reach out to more families at the acute stage in the trauma wards at the QE, providing vital access to support both in hospital and when they get home. It also helps us raise awareness of any financial or legal support available, and offer support choosing or meeting a solicitor in order to get the right support as soon as possible.



Congratulations to Forward Carers who celebrated their 10-year anniversary in early December!

We are proud to be one of their long-term partners and we were honoured to be presented with an award to mark our long association and our commitment to supporting carers and families.

## Connecting with Sigma Connected!

Sincere thanks to Sigma Connected for generously donating £1,000 to our charity and also taking the trouble to present their cheque in person!

This kind donation will be used to book client activities and buy new equipment and games, providing variety and enjoyment to all those who attend our Leighton House hub.

*Thank you again!*



## SFA Halloween Party

A 'spooktacular' time was had by those who came along to our Services For All Halloween Party at the Elwood Centre in Erdington at the end of October!

Those attending - a mix of clients, carers and the wider family - enjoyed the light lunch provided and some Halloween-themed activities which included a quiz, a Halloween-poem reading and a whole host of games, such as spider hoopla!

Certificates were also awarded for the best child and adult outfits!



## Circle Health Group

This year has seen a closer association between ourselves and Circle Health Group, with a member of our Family and Carer Services team visiting their Birmingham rehabilitation centre on a monthly basis to offer advice and support to those impacted by brain injury.



We were also grateful to receive a donation of £4,237.47 from the group following their summer fete.



Laura Millward, Operations Manager at Circle Health Group, explained: "As a specialist neurological rehabilitation centre, we witness firsthand the challenges brain injury survivors face, and we are passionate about supporting their rehabilitation and recovery.

"Headway's work in providing support, resources and advocacy for brain injury survivors and their families complements our commitment to neurological care. By partnering with them, we can contribute to a cause that directly impacts our patients' well-being and supports the broader brain injury community."

Becky Whenham, Head of Services at Headway Birmingham & Solihull, added: "A massive thank you to Circle Health Group for their support in recent months and for choosing us to benefit from their summer fun day. A donation of this size really will make a difference to a charity like ours and will mean we can do more again to improve life for our brain-injured clients and their families."

Becky Whenham, Head of Services at Headway Birmingham & Solihull, added: "A massive thank you to Circle Health Group for their support in recent months and for choosing us to benefit from their summer fun day. A donation of this size really will make a difference to a charity like ours and will mean we can do more again to improve life for our brain-injured clients and their families."

**VOLUNTEERS... We need new volunteers across a variety of areas - please call!**



## Our star fundraiser !

We first met our super supporter Louise Fisher when she organised a school disco charity night in aid of Headway Birmingham & Solihull back in 2019. Little did we know, she'd still be fundraising for us five years later and would raise over £5,000 towards our local brain injury services!

She has auctioned a signed football top, organised a series of themed raffles (including her legendary Mega Raffle!), taken part in a Zombie Run as well as several Headway fun runs and even completed a six-month spell of no alcohol, all to raise money for Headway. We wanted to acknowledge her amazing commitment to our charity and so invited her to Headway House to say a proper thank you.

Louise was given a quick tour of the hub before being presented with some flowers, a framed certificate marking her achievement and also a bound booklet of poems written by the Headway House Tuesday poetry group, and dedicated to Louise and her exceptional fundraising. Client Jayne Merchant also read out one of the poems.

Louise sent a message saying how lovely it was to meet clients and staff, and that she intended framing some of the poems to put up on the wall in her new house. She also sent through the proceeds of her latest fundraiser – a Halloween-themed raffle – bringing her new fundraising total to an incredible £5,821.95. *Thank you, Louise!*



*Louise (left) with client Jayne (front) with Emily Spurrier, CEO Sue Tyler & Julie Wedgbury from Headway*

## Family Fun

A fun time was had by all at our Family Fun Day at Rowheath Pavilion in October (especially by those who won prizes!).

Just over £700 was raised, and so thank you to those who took stalls or donated prizes (Express Solicitors, Higgs LLP, CFG, Slater & Gordon, Thompsons Solicitors and the shops in Rubery), to Blue Cross charity for the dog show and to everyone who turned up to support the day.



*A very happy 'Name the Bear' winner!*

## Santa Sleigh Run!

Thank you to Erdington Rotary Club for inviting us to be part of their Santa Sleigh Run this year. Again, a good time was had all, with a boost to our fundraising at the same time!

**DONATIONS... Don't forget we are always in need of your donations for our charity shops!**

## So much more from Rothley Law!

Huge thanks to Rothley Law for supporting us so comprehensively over the last 12-months.

As their chosen Charity of the Year, we have been fortunate to benefit from the sponsorship they raised through their epic 'Trail to the Three Peaks', a challenge they trained hard for all year and then completed in September.

But that is only half of the story!

They also sent along a team of volunteers to Leighton House to do a day of hard graft in the gardens during the spring, and then in August, they organised an online quiz.

In November, Andriy Buniak and Sophie Layton from Rothley's Court of Protection team shared their expertise by delivering an information session to a group of Carers at our Rednal brain injury hub. The pair covered a range of topics - capacity, lasting powers of attorney, deputyship, appointeeship, best interests - and answered the many questions put to them by those attending.

To round off the year, they invited us along to their offices in the Mailbox in Birmingham for an official cheque presentation. And it was a giant cheque in every regard! Their fundraising activities throughout the year raised over £6,000, an amount they generously match-funded to bring their total donation to Headway to a phenomenal £12,680!



Julie Wedgbury, Communications & Fundraising Manager at Headway, said: "We simply cannot thank Andriy, Sophie and all at Rothley Law for their efforts on our behalf. They are all so busy yet they have made time to focus on supporting our charity at so many levels. A heartfelt thanks from us all!"



**VOLUNTEERS... We need new volunteers across a variety of areas - please call!**



## Serving the Sangat

Our heartfelt thanks go to Serving the Sangat for their support. It started back in July when they organised their own Family Fun Day in Hamstead Pavilion in Handsworth to raise funds for ourselves and local charity, St Basils.

We were grateful for the generous donation of £1,300 that followed but it didn't end there! They then took a stall at our Family Fun Day at Rowheath Pavilion in October (*pictured right*) and then in early December, we welcomed Jag and Sat from Serving the Sangat at Sutton House for a tour of the hub.



Their visit also gave us opportunity to find out more about the great work they do helping organisations in the local community through their fundraising activities, and to thank them in person. *We look forward to working with Serving the Sangat again next year!*

## Fearless five take to the skies!



*Natalie, Tania, volunteer Lisa, Richard, Marilyn & Jack ahead of the jump!*

Congratulations to our brave skydivers (*pictured left*) for jumping out of a plane at 13,000 feet in September, all to raise funds for Headway's local brain injury services!

After waiting for the cloud cover to lift, the five all completed their tandem jumps at Hinton as planned and raised a total of £2,300 after costs.

Thank you to each and everyone of them and to all those who sponsored them. A special mention to skydiver Tania who was our top fundraiser and

kindly donated the prize she won straight back to us!

*We will be holding another skydive in early 2025 and a zipwire challenge, too!*

## Secure Trust Bank volunteers visit again

Several groups of volunteers from Secure Trust Bank have helped out at Leighton House in recent years, mostly doing gardening chores in the sunshine. However, the weather wasn't so kind in September when the latest team joined us.

Hats off to Gurvel, James, Katie, Laura, Michelle and Oliver who cracked on regardless, and didn't let the relentless rain deter them!



**DONATIONS... Don't forget we are always in need of your donations for our charity shops!**

## Rotary Round-up!



Sports & Social Club, Perry Barr, and Erdington Rotary Club who recently donated £325 to our charity after auctioning some whisky left over from a whisky tasting day they had organised together. *Thank you, all!*

We always welcome an opportunity to showcase what we do and so we were delighted to arrange a tour of our Sutton House brain injury hub for a group from Erdington Rotary Club. The members were able to chat directly to clients having rehab sessions on the ground floor of the building and see the new therapy suite on the first floor.

*Thank you for taking time out of your busy lives to visit us!*

We also want to extend our thanks to both The Paddock

## A first visit by Vanderlande!

We would also like to thank a team of ten volunteers from Vanderlande who joined us for the first time in November.

While one gardened, four helped erect a new garden shelter and the remaining five redecorated the counselling rooms at The Woodlands, all making an excellent job of their assigned tasks!

And their efforts on our behalf didn't end there. They took a supply of our Grand Raffle tickets which they sold to their colleagues back at the office and they also have some Christmas fundraising activities planned themselves.

Louise Pope from Vanderlande said: "We particularly wanted to volunteer at Headway as Dave Tansey, who attends the brain injury centre in Wylde Green, is the husband of a former colleague of ours, Anne Tansey.

"Anne has told us what a difference Headway's support has made to Dave since he had his stroke, and so we wanted to offer our help in return."



*Caron from Vanderlande helps with the painting!*



Registered Charity No 1008798  
Company Reg No 2686647

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

**Headway House**  
Moseley Hall Hospital,  
Alcester Road,  
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**New Sutton House**  
380-384 Birmingham  
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Wylde Green,  
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69 Thornbridge Avenue,  
**Headway Homes**  
71 Thornbridge Avenue,  
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Tel: 0121 357 1296

**Headway Fashion**  
183 New Road, Rubery,  
Birmingham B45 9JP



Thank you to everyone who donated prizes, sold tickets or bought tickets for this year's Grand Raffle. This is due to be drawn just after this newsletter goes to press and so we will give a full update in the Spring edition!

**Merry Christmas to all our clients and supporters!**