

Autumn 2024

Headway News



The magazine of Headway - the brain injury association

Nature after brain injury

Exploring the therapeutic benefits



**Poetry
for carers**

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brain injury**

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**Michael's
books**

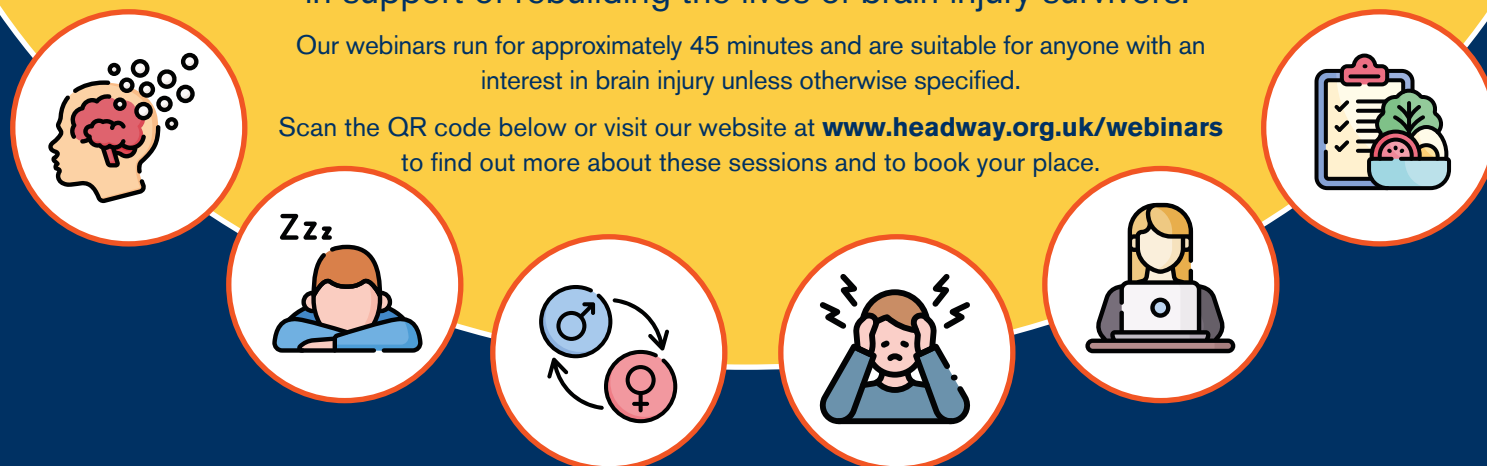
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HEADWAY WEBINARS

We're delighted to be continuing our series of free Headway webinars across 2024, covering a range of topics delivered by experts, in support of rebuilding the lives of brain injury survivors.

Our webinars run for approximately 45 minutes and are suitable for anyone with an interest in brain injury unless otherwise specified.

Scan the QR code below or visit our website at www.headway.org.uk/webinars to find out more about these sessions and to book your place.



Recordings of past webinars are available to watch on our YouTube channel and include the following titles:

Managing sleep after brain injury

Managing memory problems after brain injury

Identity change after brain injury

Disability discrimination in the workplace

Understanding and responding to behaviours that challenge following ABI

... among many others.

UPCOMING TOPICS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR INCLUDE:

11th September

Fatigue after brain injury

Professor Avril Drummond

24th October

Coping with anxiety and depression

Dr Benjamin Marram

28th November

Returning to work after brain injury

Paul Morris

5th December

Diet and nutrition after brain injury

Sheri Taylor

For more information and to register interest, visit our website or scan the QR code.



Welcome

As the days grow cooler and the vibrant colours of autumn begin to blanket our surroundings, there's no better time to embrace the outdoors and reconnect with nature. In this edition on page 18, we explore the therapeutic benefits of nature for individuals recovering from brain injury.

Autumn also marks a significant milestone for Headway as we unveil our strategy for the next five years. On page 10, we detail our objectives and areas of focus, outlining the steps we will take to enhance our support and services for those affected by brain injury.

At the heart of our success lies the dedication of our volunteers. Whether assisting at local Headway branches or contributing to our retail shops, volunteers are the backbone of our organisation. On page 22, we celebrate Volunteers Week by paying tribute to these incredible individuals whose generosity and hard work enable us to raise vital funds and provide essential services.



Colin Morris

We are thrilled to announce the opening of a new charity shop in Sheffield, specialising in vintage clothing. This exciting addition to our retail operations is featured on page 26, where we share the highlights of the grand opening and the unique items available at the shop.

We are equally grateful to our fundraisers, whose tireless efforts ensure we can continue our work and on page 23, read about Andrew Jenkins' remarkable journey. You may recall Andrew as the face of our recent ABI Week campaign, now Andrew is undertaking an extraordinary 1,200km walk to raise crucial funds for Headway. His inspiring story showcases the incredible lengths our supporters go to in order to make a difference.

We hope this edition of Headway News inspires you to get involved, stay informed, and continue supporting our vital work. Enjoy the read!

Colin Morris
Director of Communications



the brain injury association

Who we are

Headway is the leading UK-wide charity that supports people to rebuild their lives after brain injury through the provision of information and support services across the UK. To find out more, visit www.headway.org.uk or you can call the freephone helpline on 0808 800 2244 if you need support.

Go digital!

Subscribe to our monthly Headway News Bitesize email at: headway.org.uk/join-our-mailing-list

Essential contacts

Headway office:

Bradbury House, 190 Bagnall Road, Old Basford, Nottingham NG6 8SF

Telephone:

0115 924 0800
enquiries@headway.org.uk

Nurse-led freephone helpline:

0808 800 2244 (9am - 5pm, Mon to Fri),
helpline@headway.org.uk

Website:

www.headway.org.uk

Advertising:

CommunicationsTeam@headway.org.uk

Fundraising:

community@headway.org.uk

Volunteer!

Would you like to help us improve lives after brain injury? You can join us today in our shops or at our events as a Headway Volunteer. Read more about volunteering on our website: www.headway.org.uk/donate/volunteer

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Volunteer at a Headway shop!

We're on the lookout for some amazing volunteers to join our team and have fun while making a difference!

A few hours a week at Headway can truly be life-changing. You'll be helping us raise vital funds for our services to support people with brain injuries, all while getting stuck into the fun world of charity retail. Volunteering at Headway is a fantastic way to develop new skills that look great on any resume. From mastering the art of customer service to becoming a whiz at creating eye-catching displays, you'll gain valuable retail experience you can use anywhere.

Plus, the best part: our shops are full with friendly faces from our communities! You'll meet new people, make lasting friendships, and have fun along the way. It's the perfect way to add some excitement and purpose to your week.

So, if you're looking for a rewarding experience where you can learn new things, be part of a fantastic team, and help a worthy cause, then Headway wants you! Head over to your local shop and apply to volunteer today. Visit headway.org.uk/volunteer to find out more.

Your views

Fatigue management

We have recently updated our free-to-download publication on fatigue after brain injury. As part of this update, we asked our HealthUnlocked community of brain injury survivors how they manage fatigue on a regular basis.

You can read some of the responses below.

"I needed 18 months to stop fighting the need for sleep but some things you just have to accept - like poor memory and slow recall. It's all part of the new you."

Justafall

"For me in addition to the many key strategies that other people have highlighted here, one of the most useful things I did post brain injury was to work with a Headway Neuro OT to understand what particularly triggers fatigue for me. Keeping fatigued diaries, so noting activities done during a day, for how long and how my fatigue / headaches were that day. Importantly then looking at in the broader context of what I had been doing in the days around that day to help me understand the interplay of different activities and how they impact me. For me I found a neuropsych assessment was helpful in highlighting where my deficits lay, so hence what would be harder for me and therefore be more likely to cause fatigue."

Greg

"The most important for me is good sleep to start with. Waking with a nearly full battery means a more "normal" day. Without sleep it's an entire day of conserving energy. Regular exercise has helped as my sleep is better and I maintain energy levels better when I have done regular light cycling or running."

Lisa

"I try to have one-to-one conversations. More than one person and I cannot deal with people talking at the same time. Shopping is a nightmare; lights, noise, conversation around me, and when the tannoy kicks in, well, my brain goes into overload, so I try to order online deliveries. Doing more than one task at a time is impossible, so I try to organise a rota for doing things. Sometimes I put in foam earplugs as they block distracting noises. Most important is realising when fatigue is likely and resting, sometimes just 10 minutes can be enough. Five years in and I am still learning, but I do know that I cannot handle big groups, parties etc."

Haverfordwest

"I find I have to plan far more. So, I get rest periods in and don't overdo it. Pretty opposite to how my life used to be. Far less last-minute arrangements now sadly."

Nemo24

"I find my BI fatigue brings out my symptoms a lot more in hot weather and strenuous situations. These days I take a rest/sleep, whether I need it or not, in the middle of the day, for about an hour."

James1984

News in brief

News of Headway's ongoing work to improve life after brain injury

Headway Trustee Andy Tyerman awarded British Empire Medal

Headway would like to offer congratulations to leading Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist and Headway UK Trustee Andy Tyerman, who this month received a British Empire Medal.

Dr Tyerman was Clinical Lead and Head of Service at the Community Head Injury Service, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust where he planned, developed and oversaw provision of the service.

Dr Tyerman, who has over 40 years' experience working with brain injury survivors, was recognised in the

King's Birthday Honours, announced on Friday 14th June 2024. The honours recognise people who have given exceptional service to the UK.

Dr Tyerman said: "Reflecting on this award, the courage and resolve of people affected by brain injury has inspired me throughout my career. Working with people with brain injury, their families and friends has been a great privilege. Whilst I am no longer involved directly in service provision, the 'Aylesbury model' of community brain injury rehabilitation continues to evolve through the current team. Long may this continue, along with other community brain injury service provision and the vital support of Headway."

The Headway Helpline

Headway's freephone nurse-led helpline provides confidential support and information for those affected by brain injury.

"I feel blessed and very grateful for you being there each and every call with kindness, reassurance, and information. Thank you."

(A brain injury survivor who called the helpline.)

If you need support, please call **0808 800 2244** or email helpline@headway.org.uk. The helpline is available Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm.



Headway's Annual Awards to return this December

Headway – the brain injury association is preparing once again to host the Annual Awards, this year taking place on Thursday 5th December 2024.

Once a year, Headway's members, friends, and supporters come together to pay tribute to some very special people: brain injury survivors, carers, volunteers and campaigners whose personal achievements have earned the admiration of everyone around them.

This year's categories include:

- The Alex Richardson Achiever of the Year Award, sponsored by Slater and Gordon
- The Carer of the Year Award, sponsored by Hugh James
- The Volunteer of the Year Award, sponsored by Anthony Gold Solicitors
- The Stephen McAleese Outstanding Contribution to Headway Award, sponsored by No5 Barristers Chambers
- The Headway Extra Mile Award (NEW), sponsored by Irwin Mitchell LLP

Thank you to our category sponsors and to everyone who nominated someone wonderful. Look out for news of the shortlist this autumn.



Headway asks the new government to support brain injury survivors

Headway – the brain injury association welcomes the formation of the new government at this critical time for people affected by acquired brain injury (ABI).

As Headway supporters may remember, in 2021 the government at the time committed to developing a cross-departmental ABI strategy. Progress with the strategy has been slow. However, Headway has been fully engaged with the process throughout, and we remain committed to supporting its development. In the short term, this means ensuring the new government commits to the continued development of the ABI strategy.

To support the Government in the production of the strategy, ahead of the General Election, Headway launched a manifesto, *From awareness to action, demanding better care for people affected by brain injury*. The manifesto focuses on five key priorities for brain injury survivors.

Headway wants to see:

- Increased understanding and awareness of brain injury
- An end to the neurorehabilitation postcode lottery
- Investment in local brain injury reablement services
- Enhanced support for brain injury survivors' loved ones
- And a reform to social care, making it equitable and sustainable

It is crucial that the new Government understands brain injury, prioritises it, and invests in services to support survivors and their loved ones. By adopting our five calls for change, we believe that this government can help us to transform the lives of those affected by brain injury.

Headway looks forward to working with the new government to help them deliver much-needed change for brain injury survivors and their families. Keep an eye on the Headway social media channels for updates.

You can see the Headway General Election Manifesto, *From awareness to action*, at www.headway.org.uk/news-and-campaigns/campaigns/general-election-2024

Headway's FIVE ASKS of government



FAIR ACCESS

end the neurorehabilitation
postcode lottery



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

invest in local brain injury
reablement services



INCREASE UNDERSTANDING

raise awareness of
brain injury



FAMILY CARE

enhance support
for brain injury survivors'
loved ones



REFORM SOCIAL CARE

make social care equitable
and sustainable

HEADWAY POETS PUT CARERS ON THE MAP

We held a poetry competition for this year's Carer's Week, which took place in June, giving brain injury survivors the opportunity to celebrate the impact that carers have on their lives through creativity - be that through a poem, haiku or ditty.

Diane Derbyshire, Network Support Co-ordinator at Headway, said: "Carer's Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlighting the challenges unpaid carers face and recognising the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK."

"The brief for the competition was for people with an acquired brain injury to write a poem, haiku or ditty that demonstrates their appreciation of their carers whilst celebrating the positive impact that they have on their life.

"We know that caring for someone can be very challenging. We want our carers to know that their individual worth is recognised, very much valued and that they are not alone."

This year the theme for Carer's Week was *Putting Carers on the Map*.

The poems were seen by a panel of expert judges; Stef Harvey from Headway Sussex, Jim McGregor who runs Headway Glasgow's Writers group and is producing a book of their work, and Jean Roberts, who runs an online creative writing workshop for Headway branch members.

Jim said of the experience: "It was a privilege being asked to be one of the judges for the Carer's Week poetry competition. What came through in the writing was a sense of 'being in it together' - and needing a sense of humour."

"I've found with Headway Glasgow Writing Group there is, without fail, a lot of laughter. With Glasgow, most of the group had never written a poem or a story before they had their brain injury.

"To think that they can come up with a poem or story of such high quality in a week always amazes me.

"Although everyone puts their name under their work, I already know who they are by their writing and their individuality."

Diane concluded: "A huge well done to everyone involved. It certainly has been a hard-fought competition, and everyone has put in an enormous amount of work."

A big thank you to Fletchers Solicitors who generously provided the prizes for the three winners.

"It's a pleasure to be able to provide a prize for the brilliant poems from across the Headway network. We loved reading them and the competition has showcased some really talented poets!"

Tara Evans, Charities and Partnerships Coordinator at Fletchers Solicitors



1ST PLACE
Nicky Webber

Nicky's winning poem was recited via audio file which was wonderful to hear. You can read it below.

You actually do help me
Carers are such a vital kind of piece to the disabled person's life
Because I can't be me without you
And you obviously help me sculpture myself and my future
Which gives me dignity and pride
Which also meets the platforms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
And I believe that once you stimulate the platforms
And meet the person's own individual personality traits
Then the disabled person becomes a more stable person
Which then leads everywhere
Because it kind of ignites the passion and the confidence
Within the disabled platform of life
We all have to fit into the mainstream somewhere
And without you I can't be me
So, thank you to all the carers out there



What the judges said:

*"Great imagery and use of language!
'Without you I can't be me' says it all.
A lovely piece of work
and well delivered."*

3RD PLACE
Louise Burrows

2ND PLACE
Diane Wilson

THE BRAIN INJURY SISTER

How that day changed our life
Maybe for the better
Teaching her skills of daily life
Of her fatigue
Or maybe her ability
The fun, laughter, tears and moods
Listen to frustrations
Both learning of ways achieving goals
Giving her independence
Keeping her safe
And living this new life to the full

What the judges said: "A poem of realisation, change, hope, warmth, the many emotions, the sense of duty and the sense of love."

S
KILLED IN HANDLING MY DIFFICULTIES
U
NDERSTANDING BRAIN INJURY
P
ROVIDING SUPPORT IN MANAGING MY HOME
P
RACTICALLY INTELLIGENT
O
UTSTANDING IN CREATIVITY
R
EADY SENSE OF HUMOUR
T
OTALLY RELIABLE
W
ONDERFUL ENERGY
O
RDERLY IN ALL SHE DOES
R
EADILY SPONTANEOUS
K
IND AND WARM
E
NABLING ME TO LIVE A FULFILLED LIFE
R
EVITALISING AND ONE IN A MILLION!



What the judges said: "A cleverly coordinated use of words that highlights the warmth, appreciation and thanks to her carer, that enables her life to be fulfilled."

Headway unveils five-year strategy to improve life after brain injury

Headway has launched a new five-year strategy focused on **rebuilding lives, relearning skills, and maximizing independence for brain injury survivors as well as supporting families and carers.**

The new strategy was developed through listening to as many voices and opinions as possible. This inclusive approach highlighted the key concerns and needs of the community, shaping the charity's four strategic priorities for the upcoming years.

1. The first priority is to bolster the network of local Headway charities and volunteer-led branches that provide essential rehabilitation and social support. Headway plans to foster this network by promoting collaboration, sharing best practices, and investing in new support methods.

2. Increasing public and professional awareness of brain injury is the second priority. Headway aims to educate not only the public but also health and social care professionals, including GPs and welfare benefits assessors, about the complex, fluctuating and often hidden impacts of brain injuries.

3. The third strategic aim focuses on developing support services to help more people live well after brain injury. This includes diversifying the types of support offered and leveraging new technologies to enhance services.

4. Finally, Headway is committed to supporting research that demonstrates the impact of brain injuries and the benefits of specialised neurological rehabilitation, something that will strengthen the case for support services to be sustainably funded.



"We are committed to improving life after brain injury, and our new five-year strategy reflects the voices and needs of those directly affected."

“By strengthening our network, raising awareness, expanding our support services, and supporting research to demonstrate the value of rehabilitation services, we can make a significant impact over the next five years.”

"Together, we will be relentless in our pursuit of a better future for brain injury survivors and their families."

Luke Griggs, Chief Executive of Headway
- the brain injury association

Scan the QR code below to view the full strategy document and watch the new animated video.



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Amnesia and identity

Following a brain injury, survivors often experience a wide range of symptoms and challenges, which can include adjusting to a new sense of identity and issues with memory.

In this article, we look at amnesia and hear from brain injury survivor Sandi, about her personal experiences of living with the condition and how it's impacted her self-identity.

What is amnesia?

Memory problems are one of the most common effects of brain injury, with people often having difficulties remembering everyday things or events from before their injury.

'Amnesia' is a term that specifically means 'a lack or absence of memory.' However, nobody forgets absolutely everything, so amnesia refers to a failure of some part of the memory system(s), of which there are several different types, with various parts of the brain involved.

For instance, old memories are stored differently in the brain from new memories. This is why people are sometimes able to remember things that happened many years ago but fail to remember what they did the previous day.

Information from before the brain injury may be forgotten. For most people with brain injuries, this gap in memory from before the injury will range from a few minutes to a few months. This type of memory loss from before the injury is known as **retrograde amnesia**. Memories laid down well before the period of retrograde amnesia are likely to be retained well.

Problems with memory for information learned after the injury are known as **anterograde amnesia**.

Sometimes the term 'amnesia' is used to mean any kind of memory disorder, and sometimes it is used to mean a very pure memory problem, for instance if memory impairment is the only problem faced by an individual. However, it is much more common to find people who have a memory problem along with other

problems, such as impaired reasoning or fatigue, which can collectively impact on the person's sense of identity.

Some of the information on this page is adapted from Headway's publication *Memory problems after brain injury*, which includes more details and practical strategies to help live with memory problems.

More information on brain injury and memory problems can be found on Headway's website. You can also contact the Headway helpline to discuss any of the issues covered in this article.

Sandi's Story

"Amnesia robs you of your sense of who you are."

Sandi survived multiple brain injuries and, as a result, has struggled with both retrograde and anterograde amnesia. She wants people to understand the significant problems memory issues can cause and the impact they can have on someone's sense of identity.

She said: "Before sustaining this injury, I could speak different languages, enjoyed playing sports, and travelled extensively. After my brain injury, my inability to encode, hold, and retain new memories and retrieve dormant decades of my past was severely impacted."

Post injuries, Sandi had no memory of Christmas, Easter, family, where she had lived, or what she used to eat and is still very much learning about her former life many years after sustaining her injuries.

"Daily, I was unable to remember things people take for granted, like whether I had eaten or not," said Sandi. "When you are unable to understand the value of money, people take advantage of you. I couldn't remember if I had house visits, what a birthday was, or even the significance of Christmas."

"I was unable to understand context, so although I had always been known for my sense of humour, with amnesia

I believed literally when a lot of things were meant figuratively. If someone said to me, 'you're family', I would believe they were actually my family. As you can imagine, this makes you incredibly vulnerable and leaves you exposed to dangerous situations."

Over the years, Sandi has found ways of coping with the challenges her situation brings and has found ways to aid her memory.

"Repeat, repeat, and repeat again," she said. "Just because you don't recognise something immediately, doesn't mean hope is lost."

Three things that helped Sandi's recovery

1. Jigsaws and dictionaries

"Headway suggested I buy jigsaws for one-year-olds: transport ones, fruit ones, and animal ones to name a few. They also suggested buying various child picture dictionaries. This was the foundation of linking a picture to a word."

2. A visual library

"Using paid support, I created a visual library which took several years. For example, using the addresses of where I previously lived from my records and photographs of the outside of these places, I was able to slowly piece together memories of my life at these locations."

3. Spices and herbs

"Memory is linked with your senses, so familiar smells can help retrieve them. Now, I feel I am being reunited with my past."



"Amnesia robs you of comparisons and your sense of who you are. Without being able to hold context, you are living in constant chaos, misunderstanding, and confusion. Without memory, you have no ability to know where you are - let alone who you are!"

"I have no idea what would have happened to me had Headway not stepped into my life. The past few months are now like living in a world of wonder as I'm now constantly recognising so much more."

Shopping without the stress after brain injury

Whether it's a necessary trip to replenish our cupboards, or a browse to see what's new in the market, shopping is a regular part of many people's routines. However, it can become a challenging and stressful chore after brain injury.

In this series, we look at everyday activities that brain injury survivors may need to adapt. Here we discuss shopping after brain injury, tackling some of the common issues reported by brain injury survivors when shopping, as well as what can be done to make this an easier task.

Lack of understanding from others

People with brain injury may need assistance, or care and understanding from others while shopping. For example, they may need to take extra time with paying for shopping, moving around or choosing items. Staff and other shoppers may fail to recognise when someone with a hidden disability needs this level of support and may become impatient or even unkind.

- **Use your Headway Brain Injury Identity Card** to quickly explain why you may need assistance
- **Don't be afraid to ask for help, patience, or understanding from others.** It may help others to be more considerate if they understand why you may need to take longer with things
- **Request assistance with packing your shopping bags** so you can focus on taking your time with paying
- **Consider buying and sticking a 'hidden disabilities' awareness sticker on your car** as these will reduce the risk of getting hassled by others for using up Blue Badge parking spaces
- **Go shopping with someone you trust**, such as family or close friends

Overstimulation

One of the issues reported to be especially problematic when shopping with a brain injury is 'overstimulation with sensory stimuli'. This means struggling with too much light or noise, or other information coming through the senses from the environment. Supermarkets can be especially busy and noisy places, with a bombardment of colours, sights, sounds and smells that can all feel overwhelming after brain injury.

- **Go at a quieter time.** Many supermarkets now have 'Quiet Hours' suitable for people with hidden disabilities, making the environment easier to cope with. You could also avoid shopping at times when it is likely to be especially busy, such as weekends or just before Christmas
- **Wearing noise-cancelling headphones or sunglasses** can often reduce the noise or bright lights that cause you discomfort
- **Take some time to adjust when you get there.** Some supermarkets have cafes on site that you can sit in beforehand to adjust yourself to the environment
- **Keep shopping trips short and plan for rest.** Making sure you spend minimal time in the shopping environment and allowing time for breaks can change the whole experience

Memory problems

Short-term memory is commonly affected by brain injury, and this can interfere with the ability to remember what needs picking up from the shops. Brain injury survivors with memory problems may also forget what they have already bought after shopping.

- **Rely on shopping lists and introduce a system that you are likely to stick to.** For example, keep a running shopping list at home and add items to it as soon as you realise that you need to buy them. Consider whether you are more likely to use a shopping list on your phone or written on paper
- **Cross items off a list as you shop**, so that you can keep track of what you have already picked up
- **Request printed copies of receipts and store these properly**, so that you have a written record of items you have already in case you forget
- **Keep a list of items you need to take with you when shopping** (keys, wallet, shopping bags, Headway ID Card, coins for parking machines, trolley tokens), and stick it somewhere where you are likely to see it when you leave the house
- **If you are visiting a large car park, take a photo on your mobile phone before you leave your car with a notable landmark that will help you to remember where you have parked.** Delete the picture from your phone when you have returned so that you do not get confused between previous visits

General tips

- **Consider online shopping**, as this allows you to take your time with selecting items and removes the necessity of being in overstimulating environments or feeling rushed to pack your shopping and pay
- **Consider seeking psychological support for learning to manage episodes of anxiety**, if shopping causes you to feel especially anxious, and refer to the information in our publication *Anxiety after brain injury*
- **Contact your local authority for a needs assessment** if you need help with more activities of daily living than just shopping
- **Find out whether there are any local voluntary community services that can help with shopping.** Some local councils have this information available on their websites or check community noticeboards
- **Ask family and friends** if they would be willing to pick up a few items for you while shopping



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BROTHERWOOD
ENGINEERING TO ENABLE

Lewis' story: The Headway Brain Injury Identity Card

Headway's Justice Programme raises awareness and advocates for the significant number of people in the justice system with an acquired brain injury (ABI).

One aspect of the Justice Programme is the Headway Brain Injury Identity Card. The card is designed to help police and staff identify brain injury survivors and ensure they receive appropriate support. The card is free of charge and personalised, helping the cardholder to explain the effects of their brain injury and request support they may need.

There is also a 24-hour legal assistance helpline number provided by Thompsons Solicitors on the card. This number can be called to request criminal legal advice or representation from solicitors trained to understand brain injury.

We spoke to the mother of a brain injury survivor whose son successfully used the card and the support of Thompsons Solicitors, to help navigate the justice system.

"We were told about the Headway Brain Injury Identity Card when Lewis was arrested. Lewis's Headway mental health nurse suggested we apply, and it was rushed through for us. The police were not really interested in the card and didn't really seem to take Lewis's brain injury into account, although he did get to talk to a mental health worker at the police station."

"Lewis struggles with letting people know he has an ABI. He doesn't want to be treated differently, which can hamper situations. Lewis has frontal lobe damage so he can be reckless in his behaviour."

Lewis was originally assisted after his arrest by the duty solicitor. However, things really began to change for the better when Lewis was supported by Thompsons Solicitors, which has staff specialising in brain injuries.

"After it was decided Lewis would be going to court, Thompsons Solicitors were great. We arranged to meet our solicitor as Lewis deals with things better if he can see the person. Whilst Lewis was very anxious and very concerned about the outcome, his solicitor did his best to reassure Lewis that the best would be done for him."

"We also had a barrister, who was absolutely fantastic. She met Lewis, explained things to him, and made him feel more at ease. She didn't falter and managed to get a fair result for him. Both of them were very professional but also sympathetic to the situation, which was great, we can't thank them enough."

With the support of Thompsons solicitors, his mental health nurse, and Headway Suffolk, Lewis avoided a custodial sentence and is moving forward with his life.

His mum added: "In my opinion, the police service needs to be better educated in brain injuries and the wide range of issues and symptoms these can cause. Duty solicitors would also benefit from education on brain injuries. Society needs help to understand ABIs; hidden disabilities are real and there is a real person with feelings behind the injury."

As a continuation of the Justice Programme's vital work, Headway has recently written to all the newly elected Police and Crime commissioners to continue to raise awareness of brain injury and the Brain Injury Identity Card.

To find out more about the Justice Programme or to apply for a Brain Injury Identity Card, visit www.headway.org.uk/supporting-you/headway-s-justice-programme/



NATURE AFTER BRAIN INJURY

As summer begins to dip into autumn, the days are growing shorter, the wind is growing cooler and the light outside is shifting from bright summer sun to deeper golden hues. The leaves are changing, the conkers are falling, and vegetable growers are preparing to pull up their crops for the harvest season, while the squirrels scurry about gathering their supplies for next year.

Nature is all around us through all the seasons, whether we are indoors or outdoors, at home or abroad, awake or asleep, aware or unaware of it. It is accessible, it is free, and did you know... it can be a form of therapy?

Here we look at the therapeutic benefits of nature after brain injury.

What is nature?

If you check a dictionary definition of 'nature', it is described by Merriam-Webster as "the external world in its entirety" – and the world is a very large place! Nature is everywhere. It is the ocean and the mountains, the flora and the fauna, the weather and the seasons.

Nature relates to the world around us. Many of us enjoy nature when the weather is nice, when we plan a trip outdoors, or even when we want to relax. Nature can also be harsh, such as during cold winter months or when natural disasters strike. For many, nature in all forms holds metaphors, symbolism and meaning, for instance in its resilience, its endurance and its ever-changing ways.



How can nature help after brain injury?

We can all say first-hand how good it feels to spend time outdoors, breathing in the fresh air and appreciating the beauty of a spectacular sunset, a stretching beach, the ripples on a lake or the gentle rustling sound of leaves in the trees. Nature is good for everyone's well-being, with research finding benefits for both physical and emotional well-being, as well as having a positive impact on cognition (the skills we use when learning or processing information). Research studies that have looked into the impact of nature specifically after brain injury have found that nature-based rehabilitation may improve the impact of brain injury, including improving motivation and engagement in rehabilitation, mood and emotional regulation, sensory-motor and cognitive functions, positivity and identity formation. Nature therapy has also been found to improve quality of life and mental fatigue in people affected by post-concussion syndrome.

How can brain injury survivors connect with nature?

- **Keep it simple** – remember, nature is everywhere, all around us, so you do not have to go far to look for and enjoy it. Open your curtains and look out of the window, buy a houseplant to tend to, grow your own vegetables, or simply look up at the sky
- **Explore** – think about more explorative forms of nature, such as going to the beach, the countryside, the mountains or a local nature reserve. Consider nature-based activities such as foraging, forest bathing, surfing or hiking, depending on your skills and ability
- **Spend quality time** - make your time spent in nature good quality. Research has found that the quality of time spent in nature is more impactful than the actual amount of time spent. For example, pay attention to the different types of trees around you, or try to distinguish the different types of birdsong you can hear in the morning's choir
- **Use your senses** – use your sense of touch, taste, smell, hearing or sight to explore nature. If some of your senses have been affected by brain injury, try compensating by using your remaining senses, for example using nature-based oils for aromatherapy, touching the different textures on a tree or listening to the different types of bird song outside
- **Include nature in your routine** – involve nature in part of your daily routine, such as having your morning coffee beside an open window or going for a short walk outside each day
- **Reflect** – think about how nature makes you feel, what you observe, what questions it makes you ask, what metaphors you take away from it. Allow yourself to feel emotions such as awe, curiosity and appreciation.



LIAM'S STORY

“My recovery journey is still ongoing, it has been and still is a mental and physical battle every day.”

Liam sustained a life-changing traumatic brain injury at work nearly three years ago, which changed his life. He's now set to run 10k for Headway.

In February 2022, at the age of 19, Liam Hamilton from Ware, Hertfordshire was working as an apprentice electrician on a building site in Bury St Edmunds when he was hit by a load that fell from a forklift truck in windy conditions.

Despite the fact he was wearing a hard hat, Liam was seriously injured. “I was resuscitated at the scene and taken to Addenbrooks Hospital in Cambridge, where I was placed in an induced coma for four days,” he said. “I then had to stay in hospital for three more weeks before being discharged to a completely 'new normal' at home.”

Now 22, Liam suffered a fractured skull, bleed on the brain, facial and rib fractures, and now has a metal plate in his head after having nearly half of his skull removed during surgery.

“My recovery journey is still ongoing, it has been and still is a mental and physical battle every day,” he said.

After Liam sustained his brain injury he and his family turned to Headway – the brain injury association.

“Understanding and accepting myself after my brain injury has been hard, but the information Headway provides has made it that little bit easier for me to be able to accept and try to move forward with my new, re-written life,” said Liam.

“I am now at the point in my recovery where I feel confident enough to attempt a 10k race for Headway – the brain injury association in October at Regent's Park, London.

“Since September 2023, I have had an intense rehabilitation team around me with therapists helping me with different

aspects of my new life. I have had help from an occupational therapist, personal trainer, neuro-physio, neuropsychologist, dietician, and speech and a language therapist. They've all worked as a team to help me feel more confident overall as I look to getting back to some form of work in the future. Me and my personal trainer are currently working towards running the 10k.

“I want to raise as much money as I can for Headway as they have provided both me and my family with vital information and advice to help all of us understand who I am now, as dealing with the aftermath of a TBI has been a life-changing experience for everyone involved.”

Due to his injuries, Liam struggles with his short-term memory, leading him to forget small tasks or to forget what he's saying at times.

“This has been damaging to my confidence regarding going back into the workplace and it's going to take a lot of practice and trial and error to get used to it all again,” said Liam.

“The biggest difference and challenge I face daily is fatigue, especially mentally. Small simple chores or conversations can drain my mental 'battery' very quickly and it takes me a while to feel more energised, even with strict rest routines.”

“The main thing I wish people could understand more about brain injury is the significant change in fatigue, if I or another brain injury survivor are feeling mentally fatigued, we find it extremely hard to have motivation for basic tasks, to have any form of conversation even with loved ones, and sometimes to be able to get up and out of bed in the morning.

“It takes a lot of effort and energy just to complete all these things which would seem basic to someone who hasn't been affected by a brain injury, so it would mean a lot to everyone who has been affected for people to understand that more.

“I hope people will be inspired by my recovery and resilience and will hopefully help me raise money and awareness for Headway and brain injuries.”

To support Liam's fundraiser for Headway – the brain injury association, visit his GoFundMe page by scanning the QR code below.



SCAN HERE





Volunteers' Week is an annual celebration and a chance to recognise the incredible people freely giving their time to enrich the lives of those around them. This year we were excited to join in with the 40th anniversary of Volunteers' Week in June.

Alongside fantastic staff, Headway is fortunate to have many amazing volunteers across the network all helping to improve lives after brain injury. We want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to each and every one.

"We absolutely love our volunteers at Cheadle and the shop thrives because of them. We were delighted to present them with our bespoke Volunteer Awards for Volunteers' Week this year, along with pin badges for their lanyards. Without them volunteering for the shop, the shop wouldn't be the best community Charity shop in Cheadle."

Clare Riley, Assistant Manager



"There is a real camaraderie and joy in the group. There is a real sense of people listening to problems and being listened to. It's a great support network to witness and be part of."

Trevor Hall, Secretary of Headway Hartlepool



"I'm a neuropsychologist and I have supported Headway one way or another since 1986. Part of the gain for me is that I am able to connect with generally lovely people who are interesting. The absence of financial reward is one of the strengths of the work – I like the fact that seeing them as a volunteer demonstrates that they are important in themselves."

Dr Rodger Weddell,
Consultant Neuropsychologist



"I enjoy contributing my time. It is evident that it means a great deal to our members. Especially feeling able to meet up with familiar faces in a safe environment, where, importantly, they feel both valued and heard. Our members really are such exceptional wonderful individuals and often bring joy and make me smile."

Helen Shaw, Vice Chair of Headway
South Cumbria



ANDREW'S BIG TREK FOR HEADWAY

Andrew Jenkins, a recent finalist on the highly successful BBC TV show *The Traitors*, is undertaking a remarkable 1,200km fundraising walk for Headway, the brain injury association.

Earlier this year, Andrew captivated audiences as he disclosed his near-fatal car crash in 1999. Feared dead at the side of the road, Andrew had sustained a severe brain injury, and doctors initially told his parents he would never walk again and might not even wake from his coma. Against all odds, Andrew made a miraculous recovery, being described as a "miracle patient."

Called 'The Big Trek', Andrew will raise funds and awareness for Headway by walking between castles in the UK in September. Starting from Ardrross Castle in Scotland where *The Traitors* was filmed, down to Cardiff Castle in his home city, his journey will include stops at Lancaster Castle in England and Carrickfergus Castle in Northern Ireland, covering all four home nations.

Reflecting on his journey, Andrew said, "I defied the grim prognosis given by doctors after spending four weeks in a coma. Despite the predictions of severe brain damage and permanent disability, I not only regained consciousness but was able to walk and talk."

"Some of the physical injuries I had were horrendous, but the worst thing

for me was the psychological impact of my accident and the challenges around mental health. That's why I'm taking on this challenge, to raise money and awareness of the impact of brain injury and dealing with trauma and mental health challenges."

Andrew's appearance on *The Traitors* not only highlighted his incredible recovery but also shed light on the mental health challenges he faced. His journey aims to inspire others by talking about trauma and the importance of addressing mental health openly and Andrew will be putting his advice into practice by talking to different groups about mental health during his trek.

Jen Murgatroyd, Headway's Director of Fundraising, said "We are immensely grateful for Andrew's dedication and efforts in taking on this challenge for Headway."

"The money raised will go towards things like our Emergency Fund, which helps family members be at the bedside of their loved one in critical care, or our nurse led helpline, which provides essential information and emotional support to brain injury survivors and their families."

"We are proud to have Andrew champion our cause and I'm sure his journey will give hope and inspiration to other brain injury survivors."



Andrew's walk will start on September 29th and is expected to take over 40 days.

Supporters can contribute to his cause by donating at Andrew's Givestar page, or by scanning the QR code.





MICHAEL'S BOOKS

A huge well done and thank you to Michael Melia, Sales Assistant at Sale, who has raised £220 for Headway from being savvy with 'unsaleable' books!

Michael, who started as a volunteer at Headway's Sale shop, is a big fan of books of all kinds. Michael often goes out of his way to find books for customers in his Headway shop when they come in with special requests.

Michael repurposed and fixed up a selection of books which were unable to be sold in a Headway shop due to their condition. He then took them to his local community cafe in Stretford, where the owner allows fundraising for small local charities, and sold them to keen readers for £220! Michael attends a book club at the cafe so is very much part of the local social hub.

Michael explained: "In June, Headway was the charity of the month at Uplift, a cafe in Stretford mall, a mile from the Sale shop. Through donations from the various community groups that use the cafe such as the knitters, language groups and my own book

club - in addition to a couple of raffles and a book stall I ran one Saturday morning - I was delighted to have raised £220."

Assistant Manager at Headway's Sale shop, Gerry Wild, created her very own 'giant cheque' for the presentation to say a big thanks to Michael.

David Byrne, Head of Retail at Headway, said:

"Michael is well known for his love of books. They're his absolute passion. It has been so lovely to see the impact his efforts have had on his community, on the environment and on the Headway community he's been a part of for so long. A big thank you and well done to Michael and the Sale team!"



"What a fantastic legacy Sue leaves."

Headway's Whitchurch charity shop has bid a fond farewell to Sue Sealy whose hard work has seen her and her team raise nearly one million pounds for Headway.



Sue has been the Store Manager of the Headway Whitchurch shop since 2017. She has now retired and has reflected on her time at Headway.

"To see the final figure of my time as manager on paper for the shop as £950,000 was mind-blowing," she said. "Also knowing that by the end of this year, it will be a million, all of which helps people who have suffered a brain injury and their families.

I remember the opening day with the queues outside waiting for the door to open. Having just recently moved into the area myself I knew no one and very little about Whitchurch. However that all changed very soon! With a strong

team of staff and volunteers, we became very much a part of the community, and the donations of saleable goods came flooding in and have never stopped from day one.

My most important highlight of all is knowing I have helped so many people who came to volunteer with us to learn new skills, gain confidence, and be able to provide them with a reference for their jobs, university references or even being their assessor for their Duke of Edinburgh volunteering section.

I will miss my colleagues, volunteers, customers, and donors and the challenges of running the shop. I'm now looking forward to getting a riverboat to explore more of the UK, returning to my passion for painting and drawing, and spending more time with my family."

A big thank you to Sue from everyone at Headway.

To find out more about Headway's charity shops, including how to donate and volunteering opportunities, visit <https://www.headway.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/charity-shops/>

"Sue has been at the helm ever since the Whitchurch shop opened in August 2017, always putting Headway firmly at the very heart of the local community. The shop supports local events, has a strong donor and gift aid base, and a loyal group of volunteers and customers.

Sue and her team have raised £950,000 during this time, and Sue leaves the shop team well-placed to continue building on her success. Maddie as manager, Jane, Christine, April, and the volunteers will take the shop to its first million pounds this summer! What a fantastic legacy Sue leaves!

We all wish Sue a happy and fulfilled retirement."

Andrea Hogan, Area Manager at Headway

CELEBRATING SHEFFIELD!

Mayor joins Headway to open a brand-new retro clothing store



This summer we opened a brand-new Headway – the brain injury association shop in Sheffield, with help from the Lord Mayor Jayne Dunn.

"We were thrilled to open our first Yorkshire shop in Sheffield. This pioneering venture marks a significant step forward for the charity, as we are offering a unique retail experience with a focus on beautiful vintage items specifically for this branch. The shop will play a vital role in raising funds to support individuals living with brain injury. We look forward to fostering strong relationships with the local community and working together to make a real difference."

David Byrne, Head of Retail



A FIRST OF ITS KIND

Sheffield is the first Headway shop to stock specifically modern vintage clothing, with retro 90s lines from Nike, Levis, Columbia, and other brands.



How YOU can get involved

The new shop is looking for friendly volunteers to help in several ways, including greeting and serving customers, sorting donations, and ensuring the shop floor remains tidy and welcoming. Donations of good quality small electrical items and clothing, especially menswear, would also be most appreciated.



Address
549 Ecclesall Road, Sheffield



Opening hours
Monday - Saturday: 9am - 5pm
Sundays - 10am - 4pm



Phone number
0114 3499095



SECOND-HAND SEPTEMBER

Headway celebrates sustainability and style!

This September, Headway will proudly participate in Second-Hand September again after a successful 2023 campaign, encouraging people to embrace pre-loved clothing and household items. We're thrilled to share the positive impact our shops have had on the environment and the local community.

The power of second-hand

The fashion industry's environmental footprint is significant, contributing heavily to carbon emissions and waste production. Thankfully, charity shops like Headway offer a fantastic alternative.

Thanks to our amazing customers who chose second-hand in 2023, Headway shops collectively saved a staggering **1,597,048.60 kg of CO2 emissions** based on the clothing purchased and reused by our customers.

Think about that! It's the equivalent of planting **811,152 trees** that will continue to absorb CO2 for years to come.

Beyond the numbers

The environmental benefits are clear, but the positive impact goes further. Many customers expressed appreciation for the clear information displayed in our shops.

"Ethics and sustainability-wise, fashion is not great. I try to avoid fast fashion shopping if I can and buy at charity shops as it's sustainable and cheaper."

A Headway customer

Leading by example: environmental commitment beyond second-hand

Headway's commitment to sustainability extends beyond encouraging second-hand shopping. We're proud to announce that all of our retail shops have recently undergone a lighting upgrade. By transitioning to energy-efficient LED lighting, we're further reducing our environmental impact and lowering our energy consumption.

Join the movement

Headway offers a fantastic selection of donated clothing, furniture, books, and more, all at affordable prices. By shopping second-hand, you're not just saving money, you're making a real difference for the environment and supporting a vital cause.

Here are just a few reasons to shop second-hand year-round:

- **Reduced landfill waste:** We divert mountains of items from landfills, contributing to a cleaner and healthier planet
- **Unique finds:** You'll discover unique treasures you won't find anywhere else, adding a touch of personality to your wardrobe or home
- **Affordable style:** Stretch your budget further while still looking your best
- **Supporting your community:** Proceeds from Headway shops directly support our vital services for people living with brain injuries

Join us in making a difference! Shop second-hand, donate your unwanted items, and be part of a more sustainable future. Or volunteer your time to be part of the Headway community.



HEADWAY CHRISTMAS CARDS 2024

Support Headway this Christmas and improve life after brain injury



Peace Dove



Christmas Fish Tank



Robin Present



Santa & Reindeer



Headway London Bus



Santa Chimney



Christmas Tree Globe



Snowman

WHERE TO BUY

Visit shop.headway.org.uk or scan the QR code to order online.



SCAN ME!

You can also call the Headway offices in Nottingham on **0115 924 0800** to order!

Do you live near a Headway shop? Find our 8 designs at one of the following outlets!

North

- Alsager
- Altrincham
- Lymm
- Poynton
- Whitchurch

East

- Beeston
- Harborne
- Mapperley
- Yardley
- Sheffield
- Glossop
- Barnsley

Midlands

- Alcester
- Ashby
- Loughborough

Kindly sponsored by

Bolt Burdon Kemp

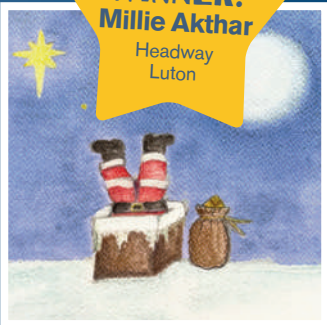
specialist brain injury solicitors
boltburdonkemp.co.uk/brain-injury
020 7288 4800

COMPETITION WINNERS

This year, two of our cards have been designed by Headway service users for our annual Christmas Cards competition. Congratulations to this year's winners! Read more about them in the Christmas issue of Headway News.



WINNER!
Paul Park
Headway
Gloucestershire



WINNER!
Millie Akthar
Headway
Luton

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLACE AN ORDER BY POST?

Simply cut out this box, fill it in and send it completed along with payment to:

Fundraising Department, Headway – the brain injury association, Bradbury House, 190 Bagnall Road, Old Basford, Nottingham NG6 8SF
Cheques can be made out to Headway - the brain injury association.

Place your order

Step 1. Please indicate how many packs of each design you would like, at £3.50 each:

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Fish Tank | <input type="checkbox"/> Headway London Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Robin Present | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa & Reindeer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Tree Globe | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace Dove | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Chimney | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowman |

(Please note, if cards ordered are out of stock a substitute pack will be sent.)

Step 2. Please select the correct postage:

- ☐ 1-10 packs - **£3.50** ☐ 11-20 packs - **£6.50**

More than 20 packs - please call 0115 924 0800 and ask for 'Fundraising'

Step 3. Would you like to make a donation to Headway this Christmas?

Yes, I would like to make a donation of

TOTAL:

Cost of cards and postage

£

GRAND TOTAL:

£

*Last postal orders to be received by 16 December.

Step 4. Please make your payment in one of the following ways:

- Please make a cheque payable to Headway - the brain injury association.
- Please debit my Visa/Mastercard for the sum of £ Date:

Card No:

Expiry Date:

Cardholder's Name:

Security Code:

(3-digit security code usually found on the back of your card)

giftaid it

Gift Aid will increase the value of your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you.

- ☐ I confirm I am a UK income or Capital Gains taxpayer. I have read this statement and want Headway – the brain injury association to reclaim tax on the donation above, made on the date of this declaration. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p on every £1 that I have given.

GOOD TO KNOW

This is the first year that Headway Christmas Cards aren't being sold in plastic clear wrappers, but instead in cardboard wraps.

BY THE BEDSIDE
Give the gift of **presence** this Christmas

Support our 'By the Bedside' campaign and help us keep families together when they need each other most.

Christmas will see thousands of people unexpectedly admitted to hospital after a brain injury.

Your support can provide the gift of presence, ensuring that no one has to face these challenges alone.

Join our mailing list to be the first to hear about this campaign: www.headway.org.uk/join-our-mailing-list



HEADWAY TRAINING

More information

☎ 0115 924 0800

✉ training.admin@headway.org.uk

INTRODUCING OUR EXCITING NEW TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR 2024!

Headway delivers a range of online training courses focussing on a range of issues and effects of brain injury. Our 2024 training programme has expanded this year to include **three new courses**.

We have courses available for those living with a brain injury, their families and professionals working within the brain injury field. Find the right course for you or your team, from tried-and-tested courses to brand-new sessions.

HEADWAY TRAINING PROGRAMME 2024

Understanding MY brain injury

A 40-minute session about the hidden effects of brain injury and the rehabilitation journey: delivered by and created for brain injury survivors.

Navigating life after brain injury

New for 2024! If you are caring for someone with a brain injury or have a relative being treated in hospital, then this session will help you to understand more about brain injury.

An introduction to brain injury

This session has been designed to provide awareness of the hidden effects of brain injury. It is aimed at professionals new to the world of brain injury.

Understanding acquired brain injury (CPD Accredited)

Designed for care professionals and those working with brain injury survivors, this session will aim to give delegates a better understanding of brain injury and its effects on survivors.

Effective communication strategies

New for 2024! This session aims to provide frontline staff and other professionals with effective communication strategies when interacting with individuals who have experienced a brain injury.

Behaviours that challenge

This session will examine the main models explaining challenging behaviour and explore proactive and reactive strategies to manage those behaviours.

Goals training

New for 2024! This session has been created to assist professionals and care staff in establishing SMART goals while working with individuals who have experienced brain injuries.

Solicitors training (CPD Accredited)

This course has been designed for solicitors and their colleagues who are involved in brain injury cases.

Understanding brain injury training for criminal justice professionals

The training combines specialist brain injury knowledge and understanding to provide participants with an understanding of the often-hidden consequences of brain injury.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) and brain injury

Survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) suffer from traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) at a high rate. This condition can be misunderstood and difficult to spot due to the hidden consequences. This course further explores IPV.



Leading Personal Injury and Medical Negligence Lawyers



Boyes Turner is proud to be an active supporter of Headway. Kim Milan, head of our Personal Injury team, is a Trustee of Headway Thames Valley.

Our specialist lawyers and brain injury support team have the knowledge, experience and commitment to ensure that you and your loved ones get the result you deserve and the support you need. We are more than happy to visit you in hospital or at home at times that suit you. We provide national coverage.

A special thank you to my lawyer Kim. Her input has changed everything for me. She has given my life a level of security and stability that I never thought I was capable of achieving post-accident.

Jessica Stevens

Contact Kim Milan on
0118 952 7137 or
claimsadvice@boyesturner.com
boyesturnerclaims.com

Personal yet professional legal advice.

Freeths vastly experienced Personal Injury team, led by the highly respected Jane Goulding has an unrivalled reputation for handling brain injury claims, helping our clients receive the life-changing rehabilitation and compensation they deserve.

Please call Jane today for a free introductory chat on **0345 050 3296** or email jane.goulding@freeths.co.uk



freeths.co.uk

FREETHS

Putting your life back on track

It's what we do



Prince Evans LLP is a specialist brain injury practice that focuses upon representing the interests of our clients and their families to the full.

We are understanding and knowledgeable of the multiple complexities that are experienced by all when a loved one is affected by brain injury.

We provide a free nationwide no obligation consultation to discuss respective claims and where our expertise can assist; including with potential interim payments, rehabilitation and case management and support. We offer no win, no fee funding.



For more information on how we can help, contact
Gary Smith, Head of Personal Injuries

Call free on 0800 019 0991

Email: gary.smith@prince-evans.co.uk

Gary Smith is a member of Headway – the brain injury association's Personal Injury Solicitors list



PRINCE EVANS
S O L I C I T O R S L L P

Prince Evans Solicitors LLP. Craven House, 40-44 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, London, W5 2BS www.prince-evans.co.uk

www.headway.org.uk

