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Gary Smith is a member of Headway - the brain injury association's Personal Injury Solicitor's List

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Autumn 2016

Headway News



The magazine of Headway - the brain injury association

*Top tips
for managing
anger*

**The
dramatisation
of ABI:
A help or
hindrance?**

Warren's road to recovery



All photos of Warren McKinlay courtesy of Scruffy Bear Productions/Darren S Cook.

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TEAM BRIT
BRITISH RACING INJURED TROOPS

HEADWAY CHRISTMAS CARDS

Support Headway this Christmas and improve life after brain injury. Look out for our order form in this issue of Headway News.



With gold foil!



With glitter!



the brain injury association

To place your order complete the order form, call 0115 924 0800 or order online at shop.headway.org.uk

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.



the brain injury association

A case of Finding Dory but forgetting the facts?

In the previous edition of Headway News, we spoke with actor Ben Price about the challenges of playing a brain injured character.

Getting the right balance between the exaggerated drama required to attract viewers and the desire to be as accurate as possible when depicting brain injury is no easy task, it would seem.

This summer, the latest in a long line of Disney characters created to capture our hearts (and wallets?) was unleashed upon us. Dory is a fish. Not just any fish, but the adopted sister of Nemo...remember him? Well, Dory does despite suffering from memory problems.

Finding Dory is yet another Hollywood production that builds a storyline around memory loss. Whether a drama, comedy or cartoon, it's a topic that seems to obsess scriptwriters the world over.

But how often do they get it right? Is it even possible to portray the effects of brain injury with any degree of realism? Looking at what you're all telling us on social media, it would appear the answers to those questions are 'rarely' and 'no'!

But should that concern us? Yes films like Finding Dory could be accused of trivialising memory loss and brain injury, but equally they bring these very real issues to the public's attention.

Articles in The Mirror and Sunday Telegraph following the launch of Finding Dory provided us with an opportunity to remind people of the realities of brain injury and how memory loss can impact on lives and relationships.

Sure, we'd all love to be lauding a blockbuster that accurately portrayed brain injury – without the magic 'cure' at the end of the film. While we wait for Hollywood to draft the script, perhaps all we can do is watch, try to enjoy, and grab with both hands (or fins?) the opportunity to set the record straight.

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The magazine of **Headway - the brain injury association**

Your views...

Following our interview with Coronation Street's Ben Price in the previous issue of Headway News, we asked on social media how you feel about the portrayal of brain injury in general on TV and in film...

More needs to be done to realistically and un-sensationally educate the public, particularly with regard to fatigue.

bonfire

On the whole I think brain injury is trivialised. I understand that they have to consider viewers staying engaged and they would be loathe to represent the actual length of time taken to achieve an acceptable recovery.

Kirk5w7

The only drama concerning the effects of brain injury which I believed was Recovery. The issues raised were portrayed with such accuracy that no over-dramatization was needed and the storyline and script were faultless. Its authenticity moved me to tears.

Cat3

They don't get it correct, but at least it portrays brain injury. Before I had mine, I don't recall anything on TV regarding brain injury.

Kay Thompson

As the wife of a survivor of an SAH and stroke, I think that the general public would think that most people recover fully from a brain injury, with maybe just the odd relapse occasionally!! In my experience, this is definitely not so.

Molly15

I suffered a TBI six years ago and lost my sight. I am still waiting for rehab and counselling. It has been life changing, affecting every aspect of my life. This is never reflected on TV.

Carol Downworth

I think any exposure, good or bad, is a good thing as people really struggle to understand this hidden unfortunate problem we all have.

Nik

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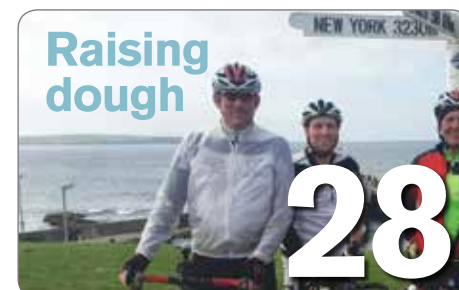
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#HeadwayHeroes

news you may have missed...

New support service launched in Omagh



Headway support for people affected by brain injury in Northern Ireland has been boosted with the launch of a new service in Omagh.

The charity's latest branch will offer support, advice and guidance to individuals affected by brain injury, along with their families and carers. In addition, regular social meetings will

be held to help individuals rebuild their confidence and enjoy the company of other people similarly affected.

"We have been overwhelmed by the positive response from the local community welcoming the launch of our new brain injury support service," said Johny Turnbull, Network Support Manager for Headway in Northern Ireland.

"Following the success of our Headway Ennistrone branch, we identified a need to create similar frontline services in Omagh to ensure nobody feels isolated or alone after sustaining a brain injury.

"The strong turnout at the launch of Headway Omagh has demonstrated that together we can make a real difference to improving the lives of local brain injury survivors and their families."

Stalwart Headway members Dympna and Vincent Brogan are among the volunteers signing up to support the new services on offer by Headway Omagh. The couple got involved with Headway Ennistrone when it started almost 20 years ago after Dympna sustained a serious traumatic brain injury in a road traffic accident.

"The support offered to Dympna and I over the years has been phenomenal," said Vincent, who currently serves on Headway Ennistrone's committee.

"We have benefited greatly from the network of social support Headway provides across Northern Ireland. Dympna and I are pleased to not only have received support ourselves, but now to have the opportunity to support others too, making friends with many like-minded people along the way."

Funding boost for brain injury services in Scotland

People affected by brain injury in Scotland are set to benefit from a significant financial boost thanks to a generous grant from The Crerar Hotels Trust.

The organisation, which awards grants to help communities improve the quality of local lives, has kindly donated £5,000 to facilitate the work of Headway across Scotland.

The grant has been awarded specifically to aid the work of the charity's two

Scotland-based Network Support Co-ordinators, who are responsible for developing and supporting families affected by brain injury throughout the country.

Sarah Firth, Marketing Manager at Crerar Hotels and Chairman of The Crerar Hotels Trust, said: "We are delighted in every way to support Headway. The charity's tireless work makes a massive difference to countless families struggling with the physical and emotional effects of brain injury and its treatment."

Maria Burnett, Network Support Co-ordinator for Scotland East, said: "We are immensely grateful to The Crerar Trust for investing in our brain injury services.

"At Headway, we know that with the right support, at the right time, there can be

life after brain injury, and this generous donation will make an enormous difference when helping to rebuild the lives of many local families affected."



Maria Burnett receives the donation from Crerar Hotel Manager Brian Angus

....news you may have missed

Date set for ABI Week 2017

ACTION FOR

BRAIN INJURY WEEK 2017

8-14 MAY

The date for Headway's next annual campaign week has been set as 8-14 May 2017, with the ever-popular Hats for Headway Day taking place on Friday 12 May.

"Action for Brain Injury Week provides a fabulous opportunity for Headway to raise awareness of brain injury and the excellent work being done day-in, day-out across the UK to support those affected," said Luke Griggs, Director of Communications at Headway.

"Following on from the success of this year's ABI Week, which saw the charity launch its Concussion Aware campaign alongside a huge variety of events run by Headway groups and branches, planning is well underway for 2017.

"For now, please put the date in your diary and start hunting for that extra-special hat!"

TBI costs £15 billion a year, says new research

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) costs the UK's economy a staggering £15 billion each year, according to new research published by the Centre for Mental Health.

The figure, which does not account for other forms of acquired brain injury, was calculated by looking at the costs of lost work, health and social care needs, and premature mortality.

In addition, the report adds to the body of evidence suggesting that people who have sustained a TBI face an increased risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

According to the researchers, as many as 60% of adult offenders in the UK have sustained a TBI.

Peter McCabe, Chief Executive of Headway, said: "We already know the

devastating human impact a brain injury can have on individuals and families, but this research provides a stark reminder of the significant financial consequences to the UK economy.

"The frustration is that this cost could be reduced if people were given access to appropriate and specialist rehabilitation and support in their communities, such as that provided by Headway groups and branches across the UK.

"Without that support, which is increasingly under threat due to cuts to local authority budgets, people affected by brain injury will find it harder to regain independence and may therefore be more reliant on costly state support."

The report also focused on the prevalence of brain injury in offender populations.

Peter said: "There is a clear evidence that brain injury is over-represented

in the criminal justice system and this needs addressing.

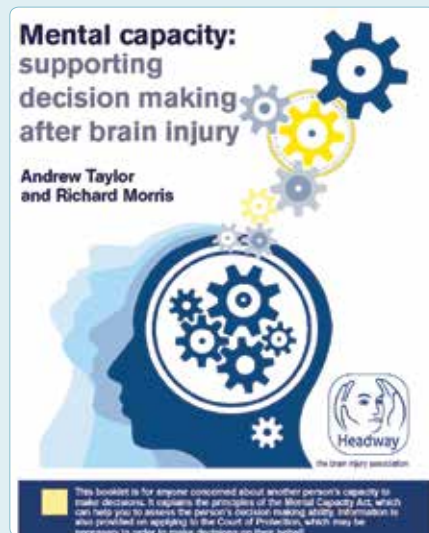
"It is vital that all agencies better identify brain injury at the earliest possible stage. Doing so can ensure that people receive appropriate support – whether perpetrators, victims or witnesses of crime.

"More must be done to provide prisoners living with brain injury with rehabilitation and support services to help reduce reoffending behaviour."

"It's also worth remembering that rehabilitation can often be more effective than incarceration."

To keep up-to-date with all the latest news visit www.headway.org.uk **07**

Mental wellbeing the focus of new publications



Headway has produced two new publications to help people understand the often complex interaction between brain injury and mental wellbeing.

The factsheets, entitled Mental health and brain injury and Lack of insight after brain injury, complement Headway's existing booklet *Mental capacity: supporting decision making after brain injury*, which has been revised and made available to freely download from the website.

Tamsin Ahmad, Publications and Research Manager at Headway, said: "The issues surrounding mental wellbeing after brain injury can be

confusing, with the overlap between mental health conditions and brain injury being a particularly complicated area.

"Nevertheless it's important to be aware of the signs of a mental health condition after brain injury. This is especially the case when considering the implications that a mental health condition can have, such as personality changes, depression, or even lacking capacity to make one's own decisions.

"We hope that the new factsheets will help people to better understand and manage their mental wellbeing after brain injury. The publications should also act as a guide on what to do if they suspect, or have been diagnosed with, a mental health condition after brain injury."

The new publications follow the publishing of research that suggests having a brain injury can almost double the likelihood of developing a mental health condition.

Author of the study, Michael Parsonage from the Centre for Mental Health, said: "There is a wealth of research dating back many years that has identified an association between brain injury and mental illness.

"Although these are separate conditions, research has shown that having a brain injury can increase the chance of developing a mental health condition. This can, in turn, result in a range of other problems in areas such as employment, functioning in society and relationships."

All Headway publications are available to download for free from the Headway website at www.headway.org.uk/information-library.



Supermarket proves to be highly co-operative!

A three-month customer donation scheme has led to Headway Lincolnshire receiving a cheque for £43,000 to support its frontline services.

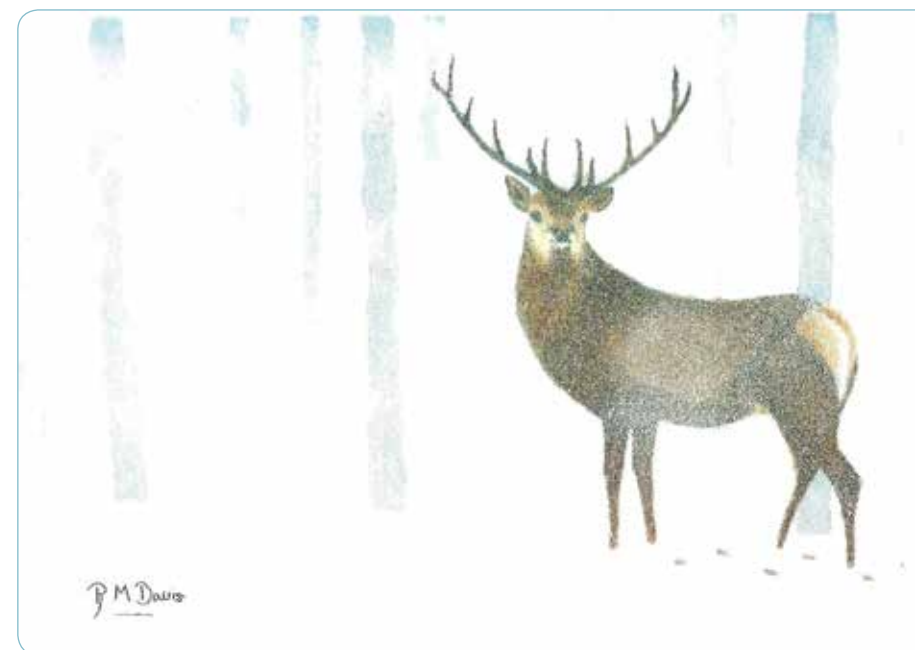
As part of the Co-op's Community Champions project, every time a member shops at an outlet using their dividend card, a donation goes to the chosen champion at that time.

A stunning £86,000 was raised in Lincolnshire alone in March, April and May, with the proceeds being shared equally by the Headway group and the local branch of Rethink Mental Illness.

"It's a fantastic amount and will make such a difference to the people we support and their families," said Headway Lincolnshire trustee Jane Reams.

"The effects of brain injury are often hidden, so having our logo in Lincolnshire Co-op stores has hopefully raised the profile of Headway and what we do to support those affected.

"We will use the money to fund training, support groups and social days out for members. Our charity is all about showing that life doesn't stop after a brain injury, and this donation will help us prove that."



Talented Rodney wins Christmas card competition

An artistic Folkestone man who used art therapy to help rebuild his life after a stroke left him with a severe brain injury has won a festive card competition run by Headway and Thompsons Solicitors.

Rodney Davis, 69 and from Hawkinge, in Folkestone, joined hundreds of other brain injury survivors from across the UK in submitting a design for this year's official Christmas card for Thompsons Solicitors, which sponsored the event.

Rodney's stunning depiction of a stag was voted the overall winner by delegates at this year's The Way Ahead conference.

Rodney first began attending support sessions at Headway East Kent's Folkestone hub after he suffered a severe stroke in 2005. The stroke left Rodney with weakness down the right-hand side of his body. He was also left with severe aphasia and was unable to return to his job as a printer.

With the continued support of the charity, Rodney slowly began to rebuild his life and was encouraged to join a beginner's watercolour art course to build up strength in his muscles.

"I'm over the moon that my stag design has been chosen for Thompsons Solicitors' official card," said Rodney.

"Art sessions at Headway really helped build my confidence and enabled me to

move forward in my new life after brain injury. Since joining the charity, I've never looked back and continue to get immense satisfaction from drawing.

"I've always been very critical of my own artwork, but the positive feedback from my Headway friends about the stag painting helped me to feel more confident putting my work forward for consideration in the competition."

"I hope the competition helps to raise awareness of the hidden consequences of brain injury and the enormous challenges that people living with a brain injury face on a daily basis."

Liz Hatfield, Facilitator at the Headway hub in Folkestone, said: "Art therapy workshops can be a useful rehabilitation tool for people to redevelop their co-ordination, concentration, mobility and even social skills after brain injury.

"We are thrilled that Rodney's beautiful stag design struck a chord with the conference delegates and judging panel."

Samantha Hemsley, from Thompsons Solicitors, said: "We're delighted to have partnered with Headway on this new competition to celebrate the achievements of people with brain injuries.

"We know from our work with people with brain injuries, and their families, just how vital Headway is in providing an invaluable network of support. This competition is a celebration of art as a form of rehabilitation and a fantastic opportunity to promote the strength of brain injury survivors."

Headway shops bring out the birthday balloons

Birthday balloons were aplenty as three Headway charity shops recently celebrated their first anniversaries.

Members of the public joined forces with brain injury survivors, carers and

volunteers for afternoons of fun to mark the first birthdays of Headway's shops in Swinton, Droylsden, and Winsford.

The charity's shop in Swinton has gone from strength to strength since being opened last July by former soldier Paul Morville, 55, who sustained a traumatic brain injury while serving in the line of duty.

At the shop's first birthday celebrations, Shop Manager Ellie Brooke was delighted to announce the launch of the charity's donation collection service.

Headway staff and volunteers in Droylsden made sure they involved the local community in their celebrations, with a plentiful amount of cake available to all.

Meanwhile in Winsford, local supporters enjoyed a host of birthday festivities, while Shop Manager Tina Cheswick also took the opportunity to reveal that the shop will now be open

on Sundays (11am-3pm), thanks to the dedication of the volunteer team.



Party time at Headway's Winsford shop

Carol Tennet, Head of Headway Retail, said: "We would like to thank all our loyal customers, our exceptionally hardworking team of volunteers, and everyone who has donated stock to create such a great sense of community spirit at these three shops.

"The incredible support we continue to receive from the local communities has turned our new shops into real hubs for brain injury support and work experience.

"A big thank you also goes out to our fantastic retail teams who work tirelessly to help more families affected by brain injury by making each new project such a success around the country.

"I'd also like to say a big thank you to everyone who has kindly donated stock to all our shops. Without your generosity, we simply wouldn't be able to operate."

If you would like to donate stock, volunteer or simply pick up a bargain, visit www.headway.org.uk to find your local Headway shop.



Celebration time at Headway Worcestershire

Headway group praised for 'outstanding care'

The quality of services at Headway Worcestershire has been labelled as outstanding following an inspection from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which regulates all health and social care services.

The Headway group, which is the first charity in Worcestershire to be awarded the honour, received the 'outstanding' rating in the category of caring and a

'good' rating for being safe, effective, responsive and well led.

The hugely positive news comes just after Headway Worcestershire recently celebrated its 25th anniversary.

"We are delighted to be one of the first organisations – and the first charity – in Worcestershire to receive an outstanding rating for caring," said Laura Hall, Manager at Headway Worcestershire.

"For our wonderful staff it is well deserved. The CQC inspector spoke with our members and their families, our staff, and care professionals who know the service. It is reassuring to get such positive feedback. We employ some very dedicated people who will always go the extra mile for our clients, who are often involved in the staff recruitment process to ensure we only hire people who don't just say they care, but are genuinely caring people."

Iconic singer to perform for Headway



The singer, who sprang to fame as the frontman of group Soft Cell, has been a strong supporter of Headway following a motorbike accident 12 years ago, which left him with a range of injuries that took two years for him to recover from.

"Headway is a charity close to my heart," said Marc.

"My head injury affected me significantly in the early days. I had problems with my speech while I also suffered from mood swings.

"But I was fortunate as I was able to make a good recovery, other people are not so fortunate and need the support of Headway to help them rebuild their lives."

Emma Gaudern, MD of EMG Solicitors, which manages trusts and deputyships for people with catastrophic brain injuries, said: "Last year was the first time we ran the WonderLAN Ball and it was a huge success.

"We are already very excited about this year's Willy Wonka-themed evening and the fact that we now have someone of Marc's calibre and reputation performing really will put the icing on the cake."

Tickets for the WonderLAN ball are £55 each and available by contacting EMG Solicitors at events@emgsolicitors.com or by calling 0191 383 7425.

A Willy Wonka-themed ball raising funds for Headway has had some sweet support – in the shape of legendary pop singer Marc Almond.

The WonderLAN Ball, run by Durham-based EMG Solicitors, will take place in Newcastle for the second time on 10 November, to raise money for Headway's Look Ahead in the North event.

And now organisers are thrilled that the iconic performer – who has sold more than 30 million records worldwide – has given his services for free and will be performing at the ball.

'I've got my drive back!'

For army veteran Warren McKinlay, a passion for sport has proved the ultimate driving force for recovery after a motorcycle accident left him with a severe brain injury in 2005.



Warren races around Rockingham Motor Speedway during Team BRIT training.

All photos courtesy of Scruffy Bear Productions/Darren S Cook.



Warren McKinlay with the Team BRIT racing car

A decade on from his injury, Warren is now a member of Team BRIT, a motorsports group comprised of injured service personnel. He credits following his passion for motorsport with helping him to rebuild his life.

His message? Whatever your passion, drive, or goal – find it and follow it!

'Anger became a serious life obstacle'

"Even when I joined the army, aged 19, my real love was always cars, motorbikes and racing, which is why I became a Recovery Mechanic in the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME)," said Warren.

"On 23 May 2005, I'd been travelling home on my motorbike from the RAF base near Honington when I lost control of my bike. I had swerved to avoid hitting another biker and came off the road."

Warren was in hospital for three months followed by a six-month stint in Headley Court, the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre. He was eventually medically discharged from the army and, after finally being diagnosed with a brain injury, he began his uphill battle to rebuild his life.

"Anger, lack of motivation and then a growing dependency on alcohol became serious life obstacles," said Warren. "My mood swings after brain injury also became a big problem both for me and my wife Sarah, particularly as she was three months pregnant with our first child at the time of the accident."

"For a while I let the hidden effects of brain injury overwhelm and control

me. No matter what I tried, my brain just wouldn't play ball."

In early 2016, Warren discovered KartForce, a charity that introduces injured troops to train for endurance racing.

The power of sport

"Sarah and I have always shared a passion for motorsport," said Warren.

"Before my brain injury, we would always go and watch the racing together, and it is great to see Sarah turn out and watch my races now I'm back in the car."

"Even when I joined the army to become a Recovery Mechanic, my dream was to get into racing. When I sustained my TBI, I thought I'd never get an opportunity to race."

"In April 2016, I was invited to step up to an endurance car racing team

and was given the opportunity to join Team BRIT, which is made up of former veterans living with a range of disabilities.

"My love of motorsports was re-awakened and I have now re-discovered my competitive drive and determination, which is something I thought I'd lost forever after brain injury."

"It is hard to explain what motorsport has done for me. It has literally given me my life and spark back."

"I use racing as a goal-orientated rehabilitation tool and it boosts my motivation to succeed and keep getting better."

"In the early days of recovery, I struggled to concentrate for long periods of time. Racing gives my mind a focus."

"Imagine you are in a crowded room and everyone is talking at the top of their voices. That's how I feel most of the time, but the moment I put on my racing helmet the shouting stops."

"As soon as I climb into the seat and that visor goes down – everything is quiet and calm. My idea of heaven!"

'My wife is a special kind of person'

"I would not be here talking today if it was not for my wife," added Warren. "It takes a special kind of person to live with someone who has sustained a serious traumatic brain injury, and Sarah has been incredible."

"Like anyone in her position, she has had moments of feeling the strain, but she has always stood by me and helped me rediscover my passion for racing."

"I also attended a few social meetings run by Headway Essex, which helped at the time. The events encouraged me to get out of the house and allowed me to be around others who understood what I was going through."

“My issue was that I’d go along for so long and then feel so much better that I thought I no longer needed support. I’d stop going and spiral downhill again.”

Follow your passion

“Even today, I struggle with various hidden effects of my brain injury,” said Warren.

“For instance, my memory is so poor now that I have to write everything down and repeatedly read back my notes to remember key things.

“Two guys on Team BRIT have missing legs and limbs. People see their injuries and gravitate towards them, knowing immediately what we are about. It’s different with brain injury. When you have to explain to people what your injury is it can be very difficult.

“Just because you can’t see someone’s struggle, that doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist.

“I want people living with a hidden disability to know that sport is not just for top athletes. It can be an emotional outlet and key driving force in your life and recovery.

“You don’t have to be winning gold medals at the Olympics to feel a real benefit from these kinds of activities.

“Motorsport saved my life after brain injury. Whether you gain pleasure from going for a swim, bike ride, or session at the climbing wall – there are so many sports out there for all ages and abilities that accommodate disabilities and could be your new passion after brain injury.

“My motto is that life is a path well-trodden – so go out and explore!”

For more information about Team BRIT, visit www.teambrit.co.uk or to find out more about Warren, visit www.warrenracing.co.uk.



Headway’s sporting heroes

There are few things in life that can evoke the same level of passion as sport.

It’s all around us and offers something for everyone, whether you’re an Olympian or Paralympian, a racing driver, or just enjoy being active.

Warren is a proud member of TeamBRIT, but Team Headway doesn’t do too badly for sporting heroes...

Warren Veale

If there is one thing that Warren Veale, from Lancashire, has proven it is that you don’t have to be an Olympic medallist to be a true sporting hero.

In 2005, Warren was involved in a near-fatal motorbike accident. He suffered severe head injuries that caused bleeding in his brain, leaving him in a four-week long coma with a traumatic brain injury.

Doctors warned Warren’s partner of two years, Molly, that it was unlikely he would ever walk again. Committed to helping her partner rebuild his life after brain injury, Molly helped Warren relearn how to walk with the support of Headway Lancashire and Morecambe Bay. Together, Warren even went on to complete a charity triathlon with Molly by his side.

“During the early stages of recovery Warren’s prospects of making a good recovery looked bleak,” said Molly. “I am so proud of Warren for completing what has now been two charity triathlons as part of his rehabilitation.”

Dominic Hurley

Cycling has been a key driving force for Dominic in his rehabilitation after a moped accident while on a work placement in Cyprus left him with a serious brain injury, with effects including one-sided weakness that hampers his mobility.

Wanting to get active as part of his rehabilitation, Dominic tried several sports before realising cycling was something he could do and enjoy. By continually setting himself targets, Dominic used cycling to help drive his rehabilitation.

Over the years he has raised in excess of £60,000 for various charities, including Headway, by doing non-stop endurance rides for up to 48 hours at a time on static bikes. He was even part of the British Paralympic cycling training squad, only for injuries to scupper his chances of competing in the London 2012 games.

Sarah Whitchurch

Four days before her 11th birthday in 1997, Sarah Whitchurch, from Guernsey, fell seriously ill with meningitis, causing the youngster to sustain a life-changing brain injury that was to leave her wheelchair-bound with long-term partial paralysis.

Although Sarah faces daily challenges as a result of her injury even today, she rekindled her passion for sport as part of her rehabilitation and has gone on to compete – and win – national swimming and cycling competitions.

After years of recovery with the support of Headway Guernsey, Sarah was made an ambassador for the local group and has won awards



Images top to bottom:
Dave Bowes, ice-climbing
Sarah Whitchurch, cycling
Molly & Warren Veale, swimming
Dominic Hurley, cycling

ranging from the charity’s Achiever of the Year accolade to Guernsey’s Sporting Achievement Award.

Dave Bowes

When World Cup para-climber Dave Bowes, from the Wirral, sustained a traumatic brain injury in a motorbike accident in 2007, he began to experience severe behavioural changes and other hidden effects that cost him his career and challenged his marriage.

Before the accident, Dave had been terrified of heights. For better or for worse, brain injury affected the part of Dave’s brain that processes danger, and he soon became open to trying new challenges. Para-climbing became a key part of Dave’s physical and cognitive rehabilitation.

Now a member of Headway Wirral and Team Leader of the Team GB Para-Climbing, Dave this year entered the Para-Climbing World Cup for the second time and won the silver medal in the European Championships.

It is now Dave’s personal mission to raise awareness of brain injury and Headway across the country.

And of course, there’s always our Vice President, the double-Olympic gold medallist and endurance athlete James Cracknell, not to mention every single person who has helped Headway by running a marathon, cycling to Paris, climbing a mountain... You’re all heroes to us!

If you’ve been inspired to get active and want to help Headway, check out the charity challenges on offer at www.headway.org.uk/get-involved





ARE YOU
MANAGING
YOUR ANGER?

OR IS
ANGER
MANAGING
YOU?

Of all the effects of a brain injury, difficulties managing anger can be one of the most distressing for the survivor and their loved ones. Anger problems can put a strain on relationships, work life and other activities, making everyday life a challenge.

Damage to the brain, particularly around the frontal lobe, can cause emotional and behavioural changes. This often leads to problems with managing anger, from a 'short fuse' in response to everyday frustrations, to more severe destructive and aggressive behaviour.

We've put together a list of top tips for managing anger. It's based on comments from members of our online communities as well as experts in the field, and is aimed at brain injury survivors as well as family members, carers and friends.

Tips for brain injury survivors

Learn to appreciate just how powerful your thoughts are.

They are automatic and can cause you to become angry for no apparent reason.

It is only your interpretation of a situation that makes you angry. You may be right, but always think about other interpretations first.

Write down how you feel when you are angry. You can then show this to someone you trust and get another point of view.

Practise noticing how tense your body feels when you are angry, then relax and feel the difference. You will then be able to measure how angry you are, when compared to how you feel when relaxed.

Try to notice the warning signs of your anger, such as shoulders rising up, breathing faster, clenching fists etc. Remove yourself from situations when you feel those warning signs.

Practise relaxation and breathing exercises to calm down.

Distract yourself by doing something you like, for example listening to music.

Remember, everything becomes more difficult when you are angry. Remind yourself that you deserve to keep yourself calm in order to make good decisions or put your point across.

When you feel yourself getting angry think of someone who normally calms you down. What might they say to you if they were there? Or think of a special calming place, piece of music or picture. Try to make this part of a routine that you can use regularly to help you cope.

Record when these ideas have helped. This will make it more likely that you will use them again when you have angry feelings in the future.

Remember, managing anger is not about taking it away, it is about giving you control and choice. Anger is a natural emotion and can play an important role in communicating your messages at appropriate times.

Don't forget, if anger is causing a problem you should always speak to your doctor, who may be able to refer you to a specialist such as a neuropsychologist for further assessment and support.

My anger and me

Shared by Gaia_rising on the Headway HealthUnlocked community

I get angry a lot. It's an enhanced version of how I was pre-BI, and I've had to re-adapt my coping strategies because there's always that niggle at the back of my mind, the worry that someone might deem me incapable if I actually throw the bubbling tantrum when someone chews with their mouth open, or stands too close to me (or a million other things that don't bother 'other' people).

Immediately after the haemorrhage, I was an absolute nightmare. I spent a couple of months in that state similar to banging your shin on the corner of the coffee table, and just wanting to throw it out of the window. (The coffee table has always been there, it didn't ask you to walk into it. Don't blame the coffee table.)

I had two sessions with a neuro-psychologist roughly a year after the original rupture, and he gently pointed out that leaving the room was a 'behaviour', albeit something of a diffusion-strategy at the same time. Grown-ups can't just dash out of the room 17 times a day; that's what teenagers do. I had to re-model my coping strategy, because leaving the room was, at best, an avoidance tactic.

I'm much more settled now. I do still find myself becoming incredibly angry about things that, on reflection, don't deserve that level of emotional input, but I'm learning to deal with it increasingly well.

In essence, what helps me is to stop and think before I react, not so much 'count to ten', as 'take a breath'. When something provokes my usually-irrational anger, I stop, I make myself still, and ask myself what it is that I'm angry about. Seven times out of ten, it's my skewed perspective, my problem, and I can just shelve it and move on.

Read more of Gaia_rising's reflections at www.healthunlocked.com/headway.

Tips for family members, friends and carers

Living with someone who has anger problems can be extremely difficult, but with time and effort, you can often find ways to defuse a difficult situation, helping the person to control their anger.

You may feel you already know what triggers their anger. However, rather than tell them what to do or what to avoid, help them discover it for themselves.

Design some experiments (or do some tests) with them, and ask them to rate their anger on a scale of 1-10 when they are close to possible triggers, e.g. loud noise.

When you both discover a trigger, help them find another way to look at the situation.

Agree on a prompt or sign that you can use when you believe that they are

getting angry. For example, you could blow over your shoulder, indicating "blow away your anger", to prompt them that they need to calm down.

Busy places can be difficult for someone with a brain injury, as it can be difficult to process all the information. If you see them getting angry in such a situation, encourage them to move away to somewhere quieter.

If the person is getting angry try to direct their attention away from the cause.

You may not always know what is making them angry. You will need patience to work out what triggers the anger. Even simple things like watching people chatting freely can bring up feelings of sadness and injustice.

Recommend that your friend or relative looks through the Headway factsheet *Managing Anger after Brain Injury – Tips for Brain Injury Survivors*, which can be downloaded from the Headway

website. You could work through the factsheet with them and help them to use the suggested strategies.

Think about strategies to help yourself. If they have had a bad day, and they dump their anger on to you, you can think of your own coping statements such as:

"That felt very hurtful, but I know you didn't mean it that way."

"What's this about? You must be feeling in a bad state to be that rude to me."

Showing such empathy can be challenging though, particularly if tired or stressed. Therefore it is important for family members to have their own outlets for expressing their anger or frustration.

"How have I coped? Basically recognising the problem, which is not so easy. Oh, and learning to count to ten...even twenty when needed!"

Paxo05

"If I do snap at someone I apologise as soon as possible. Actually talking it over with them, they sometimes admit it was their fault or they can understand why I snapped. Be honest with yourself and those around you."

FatigueMox

"Acceptance of what had happened and who I am now was key to a lot of good changes in my new life as a survivor of massive TBIs."

Gary Kearney

"I've learned, after a couple of years of frequently 'losing it' that I have to close my mouth and walk away as soon as my humour deserts me."

Cat3

Top tips from brain injury survivors

Get support

If you or someone you know is having difficulty managing anger after brain injury, don't feel like you have to deal with it alone.

Headway groups and branches offer support and services to individuals and families affected by brain injury to help them adapt and cope with the effects. They provide a place to talk to people in a similar situation, and many can offer specialist intervention.

Our booklet *Managing anger after brain injury* is full of useful information, guidance and tips for managing anger. You can download the booklet from www.headway.org.uk/information-library

Contact our free, confidential helpline on 0808 800 2244 or helpline@headway.org.uk for more information and to discuss any of the issues covered here.

My Story...

Talking therapy

On 30 January 2011, 39-year-old James Piercy from Norwich set out for an ordinary Sunday morning drive. But after 30 minutes on the road, the day quickly turned into anything but ordinary.

A nail punctured one of the car's tyres, causing the vehicle to spin off the road and smash into a tree. The whole accident took less than a minute to happen; just a few seconds in time that would change James' life in an instant.

He was flown 60 miles by air ambulance to Cambridge University Hospitals and was induced into a coma for five days before later being moved to Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital for rehabilitation. When he awoke from the coma he had little memory of the accident.

James said: "I'm told that I always recognised people who came to visit me but I had about three-and-a-half weeks' post-traumatic amnesia and my short-term memory wasn't great for at least another two months.

"During the first year of my recovery I was often extremely tired. My fatigue was such that I often fell asleep in strange places – including a library and even a church yard!

"My brain injury also left me with weakness down the right-hand side of my body, this coupled with damage to my eye meant getting around was tricky. I could still walk but judging

distance and walking up and down steps was hard. I also struggled a little with my speech when fatigued."

James said he was often impatient during these early stages of his recovery and pushed himself too hard at times.

"I wanted to do too much too soon, instead of taking my time," James continued.

"Until people have experienced cognitive fatigue they can never understand what it is like to be disabled by tiredness."

"I found shopping extremely difficult. Visiting a supermarket was such hard work; lots of people, bright lights, music, and people chatting. Plus, with three million different types of baked beans to choose from, even a small shop would leave me exhausted."

Before the accident, James worked as a science communicator. The role took him into schools to talk about the subject and present demonstrations. Despite his challenges, around six months into his recovery, James realised that he was going to get a big part of his old life back.

"I travelled from Norwich to Bristol to attend a conference," said James. "I stood up and spoke to friends and colleagues about what had happened to me and shared some things I had learnt about brain injury.

"I still get very emotional remembering how people cried as I spoke and how they stood and clapped when I had finished. It made me realise that I would be able to work again and, despite my problems, I still had something to give."

James has made great progress since his accident but said he found it hard to come to terms with lowering his expectations of himself.

He said: "I can cope with fatigue when it happens and I am much better at avoiding situations which will leave me very tired. I have had to learn to change the way I live. I plan my time carefully and try very hard to avoid situations where I'm uncertain about what will happen.

"I've also gained a huge amount from talking about my brain injury and meeting many other people at Headway who are living with the impacts of this hidden disability. I found it helpful to know I wasn't alone."

"I recently took this one step further when I had the chance to make a radio programme on BBC Radio 4 telling my story.

"It involved meeting people that helped me after the accident and talking to researchers who are working in the field of brain injury. The programme entitled My Head, recently won a Royal Society Radio award and was a fascinating piece to make."

James is now committed to continuing his recovery and sharing his passion of public speaking to inspire other brain injury survivors.

He said: "I hope to continue my recovery, get better at coping with the new me and having more opportunities to try new things.

"Some people say you have two years of recovery and then you won't get any better, but research shows this isn't true. Recovery is a lifelong process and the brain is hugely powerful.

"It's easy to say, but try to see how far you have come rather than how far you still have to go."

Share your experience of brain injury at www.headway.org.uk **21**

MAKING A DRAMA OUT OF A CRISIS

Television and film may have changed dramatically over the years, but one thing audiences of countless generations have in common is witnessing warped portrayals of brain injury.

From cartoons showing little birds flying in a circular pattern above a person's head to films depicting memory loss in comedic fashion (often with a romantic and happy ending!), it's fair to say that brain injury in fiction isn't always true to life.

Memory is often the effect chosen as the hook for dramas, almost invariably without any other symptoms of brain injury even mentioned! The latest Hollywood production to go down this route is Finding Dory, a sequel to the hugely-popular Finding Nemo cartoon.

The film is based around Dory – a fish who sets off to find her long-lost parents, battling many challenges along the way as a result of short-term memory loss.

But how concerned should we be about a lack of accuracy or the portrayal of brain injury in such a light-hearted fashion?

"The portrayal of brain injury in the media, particularly in films or

cartoons, is invariably and perhaps understandably inaccurate," said Headway's Director of Communications, Luke Griggs.

"Whether it is a depiction of someone serenely waking from a coma and having instant recognition of their surroundings and loved ones, or memory loss being 'cured' by a secondary blow to the head, the realities of brain injury are often sacrificed to suit the script.

"The true impact of brain injury and the effects it can have on individuals and families alike would not provide much in the way of light-hearted material. However, movies about memory loss often provide an opportunity to raise awareness of brain injury and the help available to those affected."

Recent articles in the Sunday Telegraph and Daily Mirror reinforce that point. On the back of the release of Finding Dory, both papers ran features highlighting the realities of brain injury, providing Headway with an opportunity to raise awareness and set the record straight.

Adrian Ellis is 51. Just over a decade ago, Adrian sustained a traumatic brain injury when he fell from a gantry. Despite the time that has passed, Adrian thinks he's still in his early 40s due to no longer being able to retain new memories.

Speaking to the Sunday Telegraph, Adrian and his 73-year-old mother Dylis chose to share his reality of memory loss.

"Adrian will read the paper to me and say 'Oh, Mum, look at this,'" said Dylis. "Then, maybe 10 minutes later, he will tell me the same thing again.

"My husband and I are Adrian's carers and his memory. I will say to him that one of his sons has a birthday and suggest he buys a card. But then he forgets where he's put it or whether he's sent it and panics. It's so sad."

For dad-of-two John Mills, a lack of oxygen led to his memory being irreversibly damaged.

John, who is supported by Headway Cardiff, requires constant supervision from his wife Jackie to stop him repeating the same actions over and over again – including eating a meal.

"We can have a rip-roaring curry and the house is smelling of it afterwards, but by the time he's loaded the dishwasher he's completely forgotten he's eaten anything," Jackie told the Daily Mirror.

Jackie also provided an insight into how memory loss can affect more than just the individual.

"I know it's not deliberate," she said, "but sometimes the fact he can't

remember anything can be incredibly hurtful.

"It's also had an impact on our children. Sam, who was 13 when John sustained his brain injury, did pretty well and hasn't been affected too much psychologically.

"Megan was only 11 and was a lot more traumatic in her teens and our relationship suffered. I think that was partly down to the fact she couldn't argue with her dad – so I got double the dose."

Cope not cure?

Like many other brain injury survivors, Adrian Ellis, who attends Headway Swindon and District, has had to learn how to adapt to life after brain injury.

He ties a knot in his t-shirt immediately after completing a run to remind himself he's completed it; every inch of his newspaper is covered with post-it notes to remind him of what he's read.

"If it's important, I'll write it down," he told the newspaper. "It's about coming to terms with what you've got and learning to live with it."

Tamsin Ahmad, Publications and Research Manager at Headway, said: "Too often, memory loss in films is a temporary thing. It somehow gets better as time goes on, without explanation or reason.

"Sadly there are no cures available, but there are a number of ways of coping and making life easier, as explained in our *Coping with memory problems: practical strategies* factsheet and our booklet on the subject."

In the film, Dory uses carefully-placed pebbles to navigate the oceans and find her way. Although you're unlikely to see such a niche coping strategy in any Headway publication any time soon, perhaps this time Hollywood isn't too far off the mark.

The factsheet *Coping with memory problems: practical strategies* and booklet *Memory problems after brain injury* can be downloaded for free at www.headway.org.uk/information-library.

For further support, contact the Headway helpline on 0808 800 2244 or helpline@headway.org.uk.



John Mills



Adrian Ellis with his sister Gillian

NORTH WEST ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY NETWORK MANCHESTER



Proud winners of Headway's #HatsForHeadway Photo Competition

We are a non-profit making organisation which connects voluntary, public and private sector organisations and individuals who specialise in providing services for brain injured adults and children in the North West of England.

We meet twice a year at Mersey Valley Sports Club Manchester and enjoy the opportunity to network with people who have an interest in Acquired Brain Injury whilst raising money for local Headway groups.

You can join the network free of charge by registering here:
www.groupspaces.com/NWABINetworkManchester/

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#HeadwayHeroes

From lollipops to laughter

as baton holders get creative



This year's Headway Challenge Baton holders are a creative lot, judging from the array of innovative challenges and activities that have helped the three firms collectively raise more than £40,000 to date.

Teams from St John's Buildings Chambers, Majestic Wine Warehouses, and Sportscover have run, climbed, spun and laughed their way to the impressive total – with several months of the year remaining to raise the fundraising figure even higher.

Humour and hard work have been the hallmarks of St John's Buildings' efforts, with the barristers' chambers holding a football tournament while a team took part in the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge.

But perhaps the bravest effort of all was from a quartet of Sally Harrison, Fran Heaton, Samantha Hillas and David Watson who swapped the court room for the stage to try their hand at stand-up comedy.

Chris Ronan, Chief Executive of St John's Buildings Chambers, said: "We are proud of the money we have raised so far. The activities are bringing together staff and members from all our sites allowing us to get to know teams better."

Staff at Majestic Wine Warehouse have raised money by selling lollipops in store and holding wine tasting events across the UK.

Autumn 2016

Commercial Managing Director Ben Nicholl also took part in the London Marathon, while other events included a raffle and pizza lunch.

John Colley, Managing Director at Majestic Wine, said: "We're delighted to be supporting such a fantastic charity where the money we raise will make such a huge difference to brain injury survivors and their families.

"We aim to raise more than £50,000 for Headway through collection tins in store, staff activities such as the Marathon du Medoc in Bordeaux, and many other initiatives."

For a seven-man team from Sportscover, including CEO Martin Crannis, getting down and dirty was the way to go!

A Tough Mudder challenge, requiring the team to crawl through mud, plunge into icy water, and endure electric shocks, followed less extreme fundraising methods, such as office sweepstakes during the recent Euro 2016 tournament.

Martin Crannis, Chief Executive of Sportscover, said: "Headway has been an ideal charity partner for Sportscover. The charity's Concussion Aware campaign conveys a message that is entirely relevant to our business of reducing risk in sport."

Jo Plant, Director of Fundraising at Headway, said: "We are in awe of the fantastic efforts that have been made by our three baton holders so far this year.

"It's great to see so much money being raised to support our work – and so much fun being had in the process!"

Inspired to join in the fun? Contact partnerships@headway.org.uk to see how your organisation can partner with Headway.

The SJB team brave the conditions as they conquer the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge



Majestic Wine's Ben Nicholl takes on the London Marathon



Who's your #HeadwayHero? Tell us on  or  **25**

AWARDS HONOUR FOR TRACEY

The manager of Headway's charity shop in Kirkby in Ashfield has won an award for helping young disabled students gain valuable work experience.

Tracey Iliffe was presented with the Employer Partner of the Year 2016 award by renowned explorer Fiona Thornehill MBE, who was guest of honour at the ceremony hosted by Portland College, on Nottingham Road, Mansfield.

The award, which recognises the efforts of local organisations in the community, comes after Tracey launched a partnership with Portland College to encourage learners with disabilities to volunteer at the shop, help people within their community and build their work portfolios.

For the past two years, the scheme has seen students from the college volunteer at the Headway shop to build up their confidence, sense of independence, and even achieve qualifications in areas such as health and safety.

Principal of Portland College, Dr Mark Dale, said: "We are delighted to recognise Tracey and her colleagues

at Headway. The team really goes above and beyond every day to create opportunities for young people who might otherwise never experience the world of work. Their commitment is outstanding and they find a way to include every learner we have referred. We can't thank them enough."

Upon receiving Headway's award, Tracey said: "Being nominated for this award means the world to everyone at the charity.

"When one of our work placement students first started volunteering at our Headway shop she was quite

withdrawn and shy. It makes me so proud to see her now chatting and working well with the volunteers and customers!

"I hope this award helps people to see the important purpose shops such as Headway serve in the community in building up people's confidence, work experience portfolios, and providing a listening ear to local people living with a brain injury."



Delighted Tracey Iliffe receives her award from Fiona Thornehill MBE

Orla is pride of Guernsey



Orla with the Headway Guernsey art group

A kind-hearted member of the Headway Guernsey team has been nominated for the Specsavers Carer of the Year Award for helping rekindle a man's love of art after he sustained a traumatic brain injury.

Services Manager Orla Manning was nominated for the honour by Headway Guernsey service users Norma and Hagan Ferbrache to thank her for helping rebuild their lives after Hagan was involved in a racing accident in 2002.

Former commonwealth cyclist and keen racing driver Hagan had been competing on the renowned Vazon Sprints route in Guernsey when his car crashed, leaving the 57-year-old with spinal damage and a serious traumatic brain injury.

With the support of Orla and her colleagues at Headway Guernsey, Hagan slowly began to rebuild and rediscover his passion for art which he lost after his brain injury. She has

done such a good job aiding Hagan's rehabilitation that he now leads the local group's art sessions.

"Orla made me believe in myself and I hugely value that," said Hagan.

"All of the Headway Guernsey members really appreciate Orla's work at the support group, and she is loved and respected by everyone she helps.

"She has gone beyond the responsibilities of her job as Service Manager of Headway Guernsey to encourage me to rekindle my love of art."

Orla has been involved with the charity since Headway Guernsey was launched more than a decade ago, following her own personal experience of a family member sustaining a head injury.



#HeadwayHeroes

Baker raises *dough* for charity



A Leamington bakery owner has raised almost £4,000 for Headway Coventry and Warwickshire by cycling the iconic trail from Lands End to John O'Groats.

Ray Savage, 56 and owner of Savi's Bakery in Leamington Spa, and his tenacious team of fundraisers covered

almost 1,000 miles in just nine days to raise funds and awareness of the charity.

The fearless foursome of Ray, Alex Cook, Steve Bowen, and Jamie Kirk spent more than 11 hours each day in the saddle, racking up a total of 970 miles, 11 punctures and one accident.

Indeed, the expedition got off to a rocky start as the first day saw Ray's son Alex take a tumble on a steep hill and bend, thankfully leaving him with little more than a few minor wounds.

Ray first discovered the charity when his wife, Carol, became involved with running acquired brain injury courses while working at Warwickshire College five years ago and joined Headway Coventry and Warwickshire as a committee member.

Speaking of his latest challenge in support of the group, Ray said: "At 116 miles, day one from Lands End to Okehampton was by far the hardest part of the route due to the amount of hills to climb.

"After day five we got into our stride and cycling 1,000 miles no longer seemed so concerning. Reaching Scotland at Gretna Green gave rise to a proud cheer.

"The knowledge that we were fundraising for such an important reason kept us pedalling through the tough times. Whether you made a donation or loaned us a bike pump – every ounce of support and encouragement has gone towards improving life after brain injury for families across Coventry and Warwickshire.

"Great ride, great weather but, most importantly, a great cause – bring on the next one!"



Ray Savage, Alex Cook, Steve Bowen, and Jamie Kirk arrive at John O'Groats

#HeadwayHeroes

Sister act of kindness

A Leeds university student whose younger brother sustained a devastating brain injury has tackled a half-marathon to raise funds for other families affected.

20-year-old psychology student Lauren Brown raised almost £300 for Headway Leeds after completing the Leeds half-marathon.

When Lauren's brother, Kieren, was knocked down by a car while riding his bike on 13 April 2013, the 14-year-old was left in a five-day coma with a life-changing traumatic brain injury.

Having turned to Headway Leeds for carer support, Lauren is now determined to reach out to other families affected.

"Supporting people affected by brain injury is a cause that is very close to my heart," said Lauren.

"Kieren's brain injury was severe, and being part of his uphill battle to recovery has inspired me to put my background in psychology to good use and work with other brain injury survivors and their families.



Lauren with her brother Kieren

"Even though I've only been a member of Headway Leeds for a short time, I see just how important their work in the community is."

Mike Sharp, Chair of Headway Leeds, said: "As a branch run entirely by volunteers, we rely upon community support for funding and upon the help of those who generously give their time organising events and fundraising for us.

"Through attending our sessions, Lauren has experienced first-hand the vital role Headway plays in supporting those people with brain injuries and their families in Leeds. We are extremely grateful to Lauren for choosing to raise funds for us."

To support Lauren, please visit her JustGiving page at www.justgiving.com/Lauren-Brown31

Who's your #HeadwayHero? Tell us on [f](#) or [t](#) **29**

#HeadwayHeroes

Anyone for ice cream?



It started off with a long walk for an ice cream – and ended with a 65-mile trek in the name of charity!

Northumberland musician Derek Allan and his nine-year-old daughter, Ellie, put their best – and now slightly blistered! – feet forward to complete the iconic coastal walk from Berwick to Cresswell to raise funds for Headway.

The pair, who live in South Broomhill, completed their epic quest – called Footprints for Others – over three days to raise more than £1,100 for people affected by brain injury across the country.

Derek, who suffers from epilepsy, chose to support Headway after being inspired by the charity's Vice President, James

Cracknell, who battled to overcome his personal life challenges despite developing epilepsy as a result of his traumatic brain injury.

Derek explained: "Two years ago, when Ellie was seven, we went on a spur-of-the-moment walk with two backpacks. We walked a 17-mile round trip to get an ice cream from Cresswell.

"Since then, we have been casually training in the build-up to do something bigger and now we have completed this adventure.

"Headway has supported a lot of people, including people like James Cracknell.

"I have been inspired by his story, and I admire how much he continually aspires to new challenges even after sustaining a head injury and getting epilepsy as a result of this.

"I've done many different kinds of fundraising over the years, but now my focus is to raise money to help people affected by brain injury through walking. What better way to start than by doing it while spending time with Ellie. So, we trekked from Berwick to Cresswell – home of the aforementioned ice cream!"

Derek and Ellie's JustGiving page is still open at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/footprintsforothers

Inspired?

If you've been inspired by Derek and Ellie - or any of our #HeadwayHeroes - there are many different ways for you to get active for Headway and have fun doing it.

Every person who chooses to fundraise for Headway has their own personal reason for wanting to support the charity. However you choose to help Headway, you can be sure your efforts will go directly to improving life after brain injury.

So whether you're a wild wanderer, a motivated mountaineer, or just fancy an ice cream, you can make a difference!

For a full list of events, cycle rides, treks and other challenges, please visit www.headway.org.uk.



Derek and Ellie at the start of their epic walk

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