Headway
the brain injury association



Headway UK Impact Report 2025

Every 90 seconds, someone is admitted to a UK hospital with a brain injury.

Whether because of head injury, tumour, stroke, haemorrhage or neurological infection, the effects of a brain injury can be life-changing and life-long.

That's why, when the unthinkable happens, expert help is vital.

Headway UK - the brain injury association **supports survivors, their families and carers, every step of the way.**

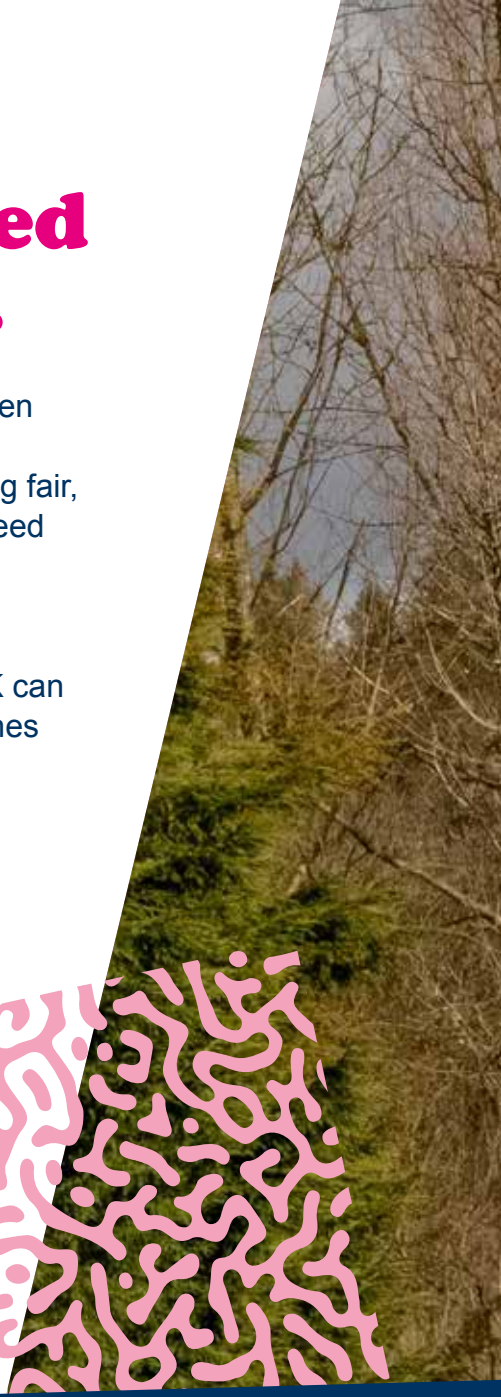
As the UK's leading source of brain injury information and support, we offer specialist help at all stages. We boldly campaign and advocate to increase awareness and understanding of brain injury.

With increased demand and ever-rising costs, 2025 demonstrated that raising the funds needed to keep our services running is getting harder.

But despite the challenges, the difference we've been able to make for those affected by brain injury has remained constant. And our commitment to ensuring fair, equal access to the support survivors and carers need has never faltered.

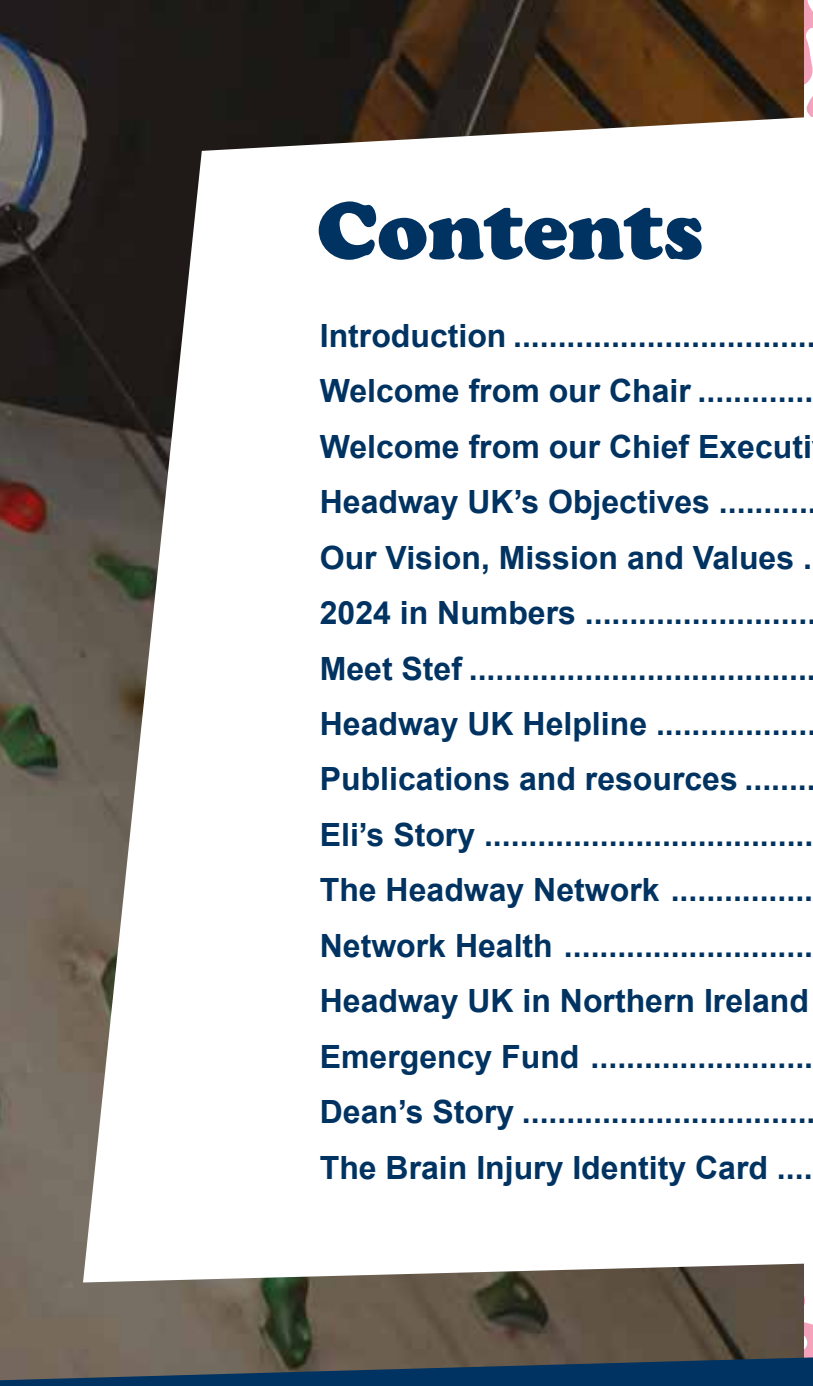
Because we know we need to do more.

And because when we work together, Headway UK can be there for brain injury survivors and their loved ones – when they need us, for as long as they need us.









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Chair's welcome

I was honoured to join the board of trustees in June 2025 and take on the role of Chair of this very special charity, which means so much to so many.

My reasons for taking on this important role are similar to thousands of other Headway volunteers across the UK. On Christmas Eve in 2023, my husband sustained a brain injury when his car overturned on a wet country lane.

The support we received – and still receive – from Headway provided us with a lifeline and I cannot imagine how we would have coped without it.

It therefore brings me great pride to report on the numerous ways in which the charity has helped families like mine to rebuild their lives after brain injury, while championing the need for the sustainable funding of specialist brain injury support and rehabilitation.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the incredible support of our inspirational volunteers, talented colleagues, and generous supporters.

To each of you, I offer my sincere thanks for all that you do to improve life after brain injury.

Belinda Moore,
Chair of trustees









A note from our CEO

Welcome to the 2025 Headway UK Impact Report.

Against the backdrop of a changing and unpredictable economic landscape, specialist support for those affected by brain injury has never been more vital. And so I'm proud to showcase in this report the outstanding difference Headway UK has made in 2025 to enable that support.

There is no doubt that 2025 brought significant challenges to the charity sector. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis and rising inflation placed considerable pressure on income generation, while operational costs continued to grow.

Yet despite these difficulties, Headway UK has remained steadfast in its commitment to supporting brain injury survivors, their families, and carers. We've continued providing free training for both survivors and professionals, and offering high-quality support materials through publications and webinars. We've issued Brain Injury Identity Cards which enable survivors to face the world with confidence, and provided compassionate, expert advice on our free Helpline.

We also strengthened and invested in key services, including training for health and social care professionals and those working within the criminal justice system. And our Approved Provider scheme, which recognises and drives excellence in specialist residential brain injury units throughout the UK, continues to grow.

A key focus has been uniting and supporting the incredible network of Headway charities and volunteer-led branches – organisations that are feeling the economic pressures intensely. The value of these services cannot be overstated and make such an important difference for families and their communities.

Our parliamentary reach grew considerably in 2025 with the recruitment of seven new Parliamentary Champions and the release of our ‘When Funding Fails’ report, highlighting the significant financial challenges the Headway network is facing. This has in turn directly fed into the government’s Acquired Brain Injury Action Plan.

The collective strength of everyone here at Headway UK, together with the wider Headway network, continues to be both inspiring and essential as we strive toward our shared mission of improving life after brain injury.

To our supporters; to those who donate their hard-earned money, run marathons, gift their time, support our shops and events – thank you. We are so truly grateful for the support you’ve shown to the survivors you’ll read about in this report.

Families and professionals alike tell us our services provide an essential lifeline – and it is only because of ordinary people doing extraordinary things that these services are possible.

We know the challenge is big. And the need is even bigger. But I know that together, we can continue helping those affected by brain injury face the future, safe in the knowledge that our dedicated support is there – when they need it, for as long as they need it.

Thank you.

Luke Griggs,
Chief Executive of Headway UK



Headway UK's Objectives

Headway UK's mission is simple; to ensure those affected by brain injury have access to specialist, compassionate support when they need it, for as long as they need it.

We relentlessly campaign to increase awareness and understanding of brain injury, and its consequences – advocating for survivors at grassroots and governmental level.

And we won't stop. Because we know that brain injury can affect anyone. And because we also know that with the right help, at the right time, there can be life after brain injury.





Our Vision

Our vision is of a society where:

- Every individual and family affected by brain injury has fair and equitable access to all the support they need to lead a positive, fulfilling life.
- Understanding and awareness of brain injury is prevalent in all walks of life.
- There exists a shared commitment to eliminate avoidable brain injury or otherwise minimise its impact.

Our Mission

We will drive change across society by:

- Ensuring equitable access to high-quality brain injury services, support and information.
- Increasing awareness and understanding of brain injury across society.
- Campaigning to reduce occurrence and the impact of brain injury.

Our Values

We care

Compassion and empathy are at the heart of everything we do and integral to the support we provide to those affected by brain injury

We are bold

We are unafraid to challenge the status quo to drive innovation and improvement

We collaborate

We believe in the power of working together to amplify our impact

We celebrate diversity

We actively embrace inclusivity

We give you a voice

We give a voice to those affected by brain injury by putting the lived experience at the heart of everything we do



2025 in numbers

10,294 enquiries through the helpline

34,603 factsheets and e-booklets downloaded

403,199 website visits

1,171 live webinar attendees and **9,022** webinar recordings

618 grants from the Emergency Fund given to **211** families and individuals

65 Headway UK Approved Providers operating in 2025

1,714 new Brain Injury Identity Cards issued with a further **455** reissued

68 training sessions delivered to over **897** attendees

Supporting the UK-wide network of **66** Headway charities and **49** volunteer-led branches





Meet Stef...

Back in 2016 I was a busy mum and wife with a job that I absolutely loved. But a kayaking accident early that year changed life as I knew it, sending me on a very different, unexpected path.

After hitting my head when the kayak flipped, I had a really bad pain above my left eye and was shivering uncontrollably – a potential indication that the hypothalamus part of my brain might have been impacted, meaning I couldn't regulate my temperature. I was stuttering so much I couldn't speak or find words; a symptom consistent with left-brain injury.

CT scans weren't showing anything amiss, and I wasn't offered an MRI scan, so I was just sent home – by this point I'd lost command of my limbs and couldn't speak a sentence. I couldn't even recall my full name.

Arriving home, everything seemed new. My daughter asked if I wanted a drink – I didn't know if I wanted a drink – I wondered how I could know if I did. I didn't know who lived here, anybody's name, and the relationships I had with everyone.

My language skills disappeared, and I just wanted to sleep for hours every day.

I had to relearn everything, even how to speak. I tried to write sentences but didn't have any grammar. It took a long time to say more than just 'hello' to someone. In the end, I just drew what I wanted to communicate on a notepad, which I took everywhere.

I'd become very depressed and was beyond desperate to get back to my normal life. I'd lost all the relationships I knew with family and friends, I'd lost my work – I'd lost myself, my identity. I didn't know anything about the world anymore. I'd just had enough of being alive.

I went to visit colleagues at work, convinced I would be able to go back – but they could see what I couldn't. Realising I needed specialist help, my colleague called Headway. They were brilliant – they referred me for an MRI scan, and speech and language therapy so I quickly realised 'OK, this Headway can do stuff!'.



Stef receiving the Alex Richardson Achiever of the Year award at the Headway Annual Awards

Headway showed me that there are people – an organisation – who can support you, who understand what's going on and help you understand yourself.

When a brain injury happens, you need an organisation that sees you for more than what you are at that moment; to make you feel that you're still of value – that there is a future – to take your hand and guide you through it. Headway sees the potential and helps you make decisions so that you're in control. They help you plan a practical route to get to where you want to be and achieve more than you thought possible.

I'd always said 'absolutely not!' to a support group – I imagined sitting in a circle and talking about how terrible everything is. But discovered it's not that. The peer support groups I attend at Headway Hertfordshire are people who *really* know – they understand when you say 'I need to sleep right now' and then you close your eyes and put your head on the desk. It's a place to just 'be' whatever is honestly and truly you, and to celebrate that.

Headway is people who won't judge or be patronising, and who can come up with strategies to help me through situations so I feel less alone and alienated.

And my Headway ID card gives me confidence in so many everyday situations – it means I don't have to explain or try and remember what my issues are.

I now work part time in a hospital and meet people with brain injury who need support, so I've phoned the Headway Helpline number for them.

The path before my brain injury seemed the only path, but I found a side route, which is very adventurous – it's fun and interesting and unexpected! I've found skills that I never knew I had, and I've ended up places that I wouldn't have otherwise.

Headway has shown me that brain injury isn't the end, that I am still full of potential and have so much to give.



Headway UK Helpline

We're here to listen. Headway UK's free, nurse-led helpline offers a specialist, confidential service and is available to anyone with a question about brain injury, including survivors and their loved ones, healthcare professionals, students and employers.

In 2025, the helpline team answered enquiries ranging from isolated brain injury survivors in need of reassurance and support, to family members or professionals seeking expert information about the effects of brain injury. Our compassionate team comprises knowledge and experience in a range of specialisms, including acute care, rehabilitation, social work and occupational therapy.

The Headway helpline answered **10,294** enquiries during 2025.

The importance of this service for survivors is profound, and we remain proud of the impact it has for survivors and family members at all stages of injury.

- **4,641** calls were from brain injury survivors
- **2,465** from family members and friends
- **987** from professionals
- **2,201** other

- **86%** felt better informed about how and where to get the information and support they need
- **79%** of Helpline callers said they had a better understanding of brain injury and its impact following a call
- **78%** felt more supported than before they contacted the Helpline
- **71%** felt better able to cope with the impact of brain injury

*Based on a 2025 survey of 131 callers



"Thank you for listening to me. I don't know where I'd be without you all. You should be so proud of what you all do. You're all amazing and I'm so grateful to have the pleasure of calling you."

Headway Helpline caller

Publications and resources

Our library of award-winning, free-to-access publications remains a crucial source of information and support to brain injury survivors and families, as well as those working to support them.

They cover a wide range of topics, including symptom management and practical advice, as well as information for families and carers.

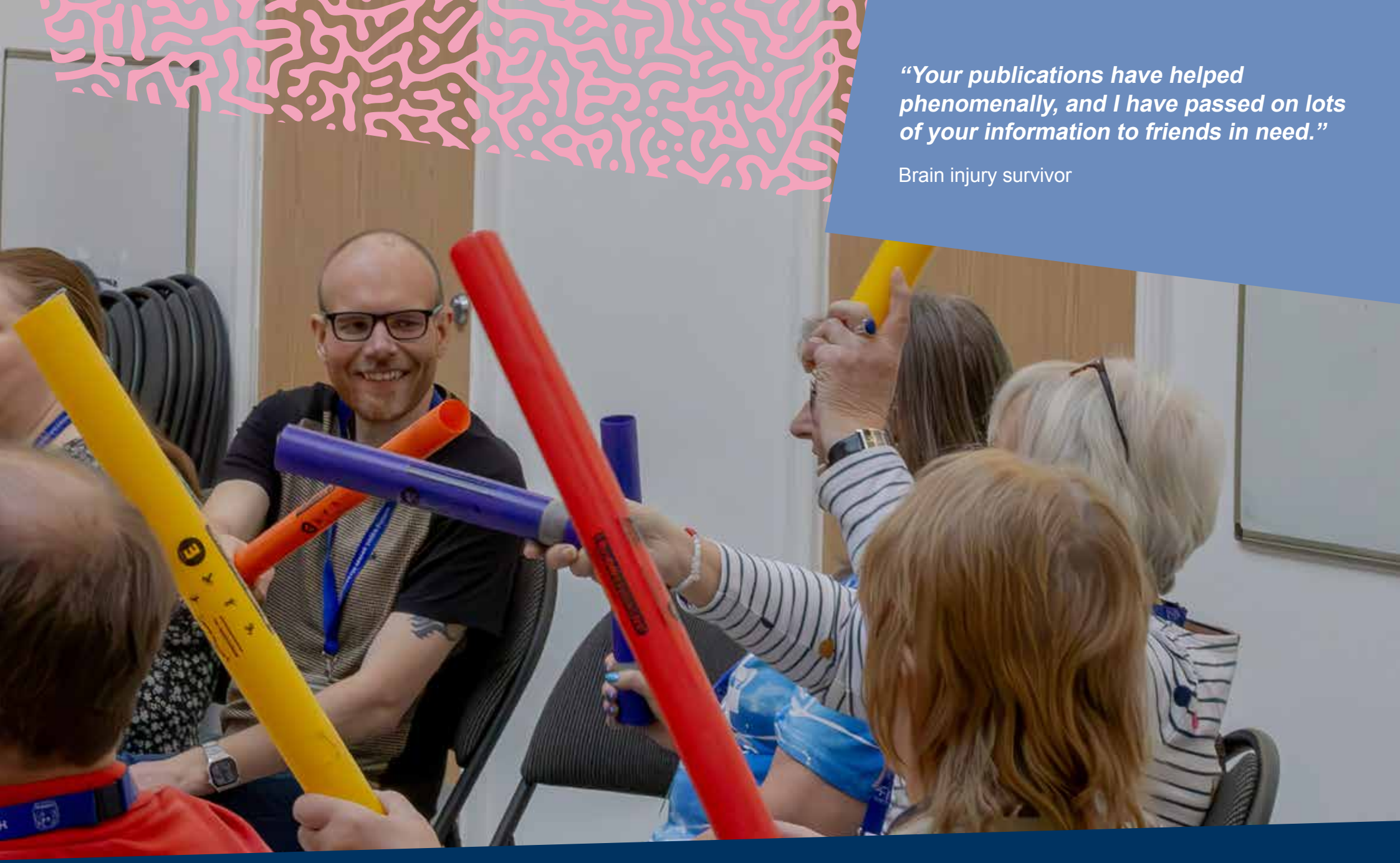
Our publications are widely regarded by both those affected by brain injury and professionals wishing to learn more, providing a wealth of specialist, expert and research-led information.

A total of **34,603** factsheets and e-booklets were downloaded from our website in 2025.

The following publications and e-booklets received the highest number of downloads in 2025:

- Mild head injury
- Fatigue after brain injury
- Managing fatigue
- Driving after brain injury
- Mild head injury and concussion
- Mild head injury discharge advice





"Your publications have helped phenomenally, and I have passed on lots of your information to friends in need."

Brain injury survivor

Eli's Story

Until March 2023, I didn't really know much about brain injury. Like all of us, I guess, I thought 'that's not something that could ever happen to me.' Little did I know how life-changing a ski weekend would turn out to be.

The day of the accident started as normal – but from lunchtime onwards, my memory is sketchy so I have to rely on others to tell me.

We went over a lip on the mountain and as I landed, my skis went downwards and got stuck in the snow. My feet came out and my head (I was wearing a helmet) hit some hardened snow and ice in a rocky ditch.

When my brother found me, I was unconscious and barely breathing - and we were miles from everywhere.

We waited for two hours on the slopes until the helicopter arrived. The medics intubated me so I could breathe (I had a seizure while they did this) and put me in an induced coma before taking me away to hospital.

My brother wasn't allowed to come with me, so he had to see me flying off in a helicopter – with no idea whether I would survive. He said it was the worst experience of his life.

Doctors warned that I'd had a haemorrhage on my left frontal lobe and were convinced that, if I ever woke up, I'd be permanently paralysed on the right side of my body and would be a very different person.

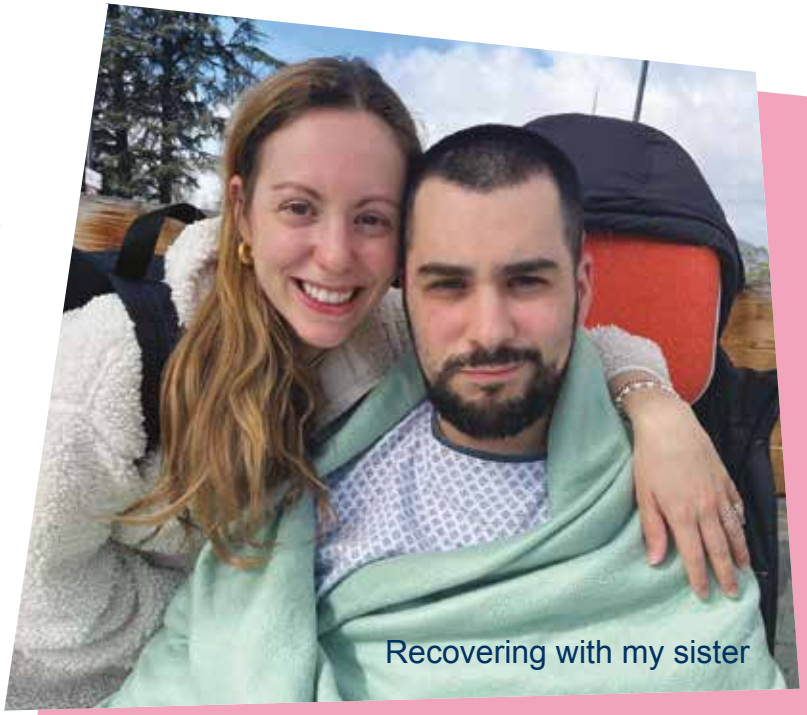
It was truly horrendous for my family, and it was at this point that they came to learn of Headway UK. There was so much information and medical jargon that they had to understand really quickly. The information Headway UK provided was a complete lifeline to them – it helped break everything down in a way that was easy to absorb, and gave them comfort that they weren't alone. Even, that there was hope.

I woke from the coma ten days later, and had no idea where I was or what had happened. My injury meant I didn't trust anyone, so even when the doctors or my family told me what had happened, I didn't believe them.

But over the next few days, I started to make unexpected progress. I slowly – so slowly – started learning to walk again. But it was also then that I started to understand the scale of my injury. I had to relearn almost everything.



Relearning to walk



Recovering with my sister

Daily goals were as simple as just managing to stay awake for one hour, being alert enough to have a conversation, being able to count. I was almost childlike.

After returning to the UK to continue my treatment, I couldn't be left alone. But as my recovery continued, I was able to return to work and eventually, live independently again.

My ability to sleep well, or recall words is definitely harder than before. But in a funny way, I'm grateful for this experience. I learned so much about myself and how I deal with adversity. So to anyone going through something similar right now, try to hold on to a bit of hope.

When I was able to read again, my sister showed me the Headway website and downloaded loads of their booklets for me. I read as much as I could physically muster – it really helped. Because that's the dangerous part, right? When all you can do is just be in your own head and imagine the worst-case scenario – which it could so easily have been.

I'm so glad the information from Headway UK was there to help me overcome that – and that it's there for others too. Because you never know when you, or your loved one, might need it.



The Headway Network

The Headway network of independent charities and volunteer-led branches provides a wide range of vital services for brain injury survivors and their loved ones in communities throughout the UK. From practical advice and therapies to workshops and peer support, the network is a lifeline for those affected by brain injury.

In commitment to our strategic aims, we continued to grow and develop the Network Learning Exchange (NLE). The NLE offers a programme of online training, discussion groups and webinars for the network of independent Headway charities and volunteer-led branches covering a wide range of topics. The initiative continued to grow in 2025, with attendances increasing for the third consecutive year.

2025 saw a total of **642** participants, a 65% increase from 2024, reflecting the value the network place on the Network Learning Exchange. We delivered a total of **58** sessions, marking a 25% increase compared to 2024.

Key factors in this increase included adding more expert-led sessions, and introducing focused discussion groups, giving attendees greater opportunities to share ideas and learn from each other.

Sessions included trustee welcome events, community groups, and workshops focused on strategic planning and safeguarding.

100% agreed that the facilitator was knowledgeable in the subject

100% said that they would recommend the Network Learning Exchange to others

96% agreed that sessions will benefit them in their role going forwards

95% rated the sessions as very high or high quality

93% agreed that the session they attended will benefit their service going forwards

93% agreed that the session increased their knowledge of the subject

In a 2025 survey of 56 participants





Headway North Staffs

"I'm finding these sessions very helpful and am recommending them to the rest of the team as much as possible."

Session attendee

We held our third annual Network Day, which featured a combination of presentations and workshops. It provided an opportunity for discussion and shared learning.

2025 also saw us complete development of *My Brain Star*, a brain injury-specific, person-centred, strengths-based outcomes tool, and delivered training to 137 staff and volunteers across the network. This has enabled Headway charities to track progress and outcomes over time, strengthening how support is tailored and evidenced. The use of a shared tool across the network also provides a consistent way to demonstrate impact, helping Headway UK to build a clearer national picture and campaign more effectively for the support people affected by brain injury need.

Alongside the launch of the 'Community of Headway Trustees', encouraging greater unity, peer support, collaboration and knowledge-sharing, 2025 also saw us introduce the branch 'VOICES' forum. The forum enables volunteers from across the branch network to come together to share ideas, access peer support and have a forum to voice their ideas and concerns.

It is through these actions that Headway charities and volunteer-led groups feel empowered to continue growing the vital support and have a forum to share their ideas and concerns.

Network health

Many Headway charities throughout the UK are thriving and are continuing to provide and develop their services for brain injury survivors.

But for others, financial pressures increased significantly in 2025 as a result of high inflation and the cost-of-living crisis.

Headway UK continues to dedicate a significant amount of resource to supporting affiliated Headway charities in crisis, providing direct assistance with restructuring, crisis appeals, trustee recruitment, and mergers or the absorption of services by neighbouring network partners.

In addition to the **66** autonomous Headway charities, the team supports **49** volunteer-led branches operating throughout the UK.

Support at a local level, run by hugely committed, compassionate volunteers, are a lifeline for brain injury survivors. They offer the chance to meet with others who understand, as well as sign-posting to other specialist support.

Without these services, for many, no other dedicated provision for those affected by brain injury would exist within their communities.





Headway Meirionnydd

Headway UK in Northern Ireland

Throughout 2025, Headway UK delivered commissioned support services across Northern Ireland for brain injury survivors and carers. Person-centred support was provided through ten weekly, fortnightly and monthly support groups.

The service consistently supported more people than originally commissioned, with between approximately 80 and 90 people accessing support at any one time. As well as social activities, participants chose and benefitted from a range of activities. These included accessible sports such as boccia and yoga, crafts and creative writing, and discussion sessions to build understanding of brain injury, helping people to manage its ongoing impact.

A strong emphasis was placed on involvement and voice. Participants contributed to creative projects showcased during Action for Brain Injury Week, as well as awareness-raising events at Stormont, and took part in shared learning engagement activities.

These services were delivered during a planned period of transition, with reduced provision from midyear ahead of the transfer to a new provider, the Cedar Foundation. Headway UK worked closely with commissioners, partners, volunteers and group members to ensure continuity of support until the service concluded in December 2025, marking the end of more than 12 years of Headway-delivered services in Northern Ireland.









Emergency Fund

Headway UK's Emergency Fund provides financial support to ensure families can be with their loved one at the acute stage of brain injury. As you'll hear from Dean (page 32), without this fund, many would struggle to afford the associated travel and accommodation expenses.

And with almost one thousand UK hospital admissions for acquired brain injury every day, together with the cost-of-living crisis and high inflation of recent years, the Emergency Fund has continued to be in huge demand.

In 2025, we supported **211** families through **618** grants, providing £44,122 in total assistance — an average of £209 per grant.

However, the Emergency Fund has faced ongoing challenges. Reduced funding in 2025 has had a clear impact on the support we have been able to offer. This resulted in the number of applications falling by 23%.

The amount awarded through the Emergency Fund also fell by 27%, reflecting the need to carefully manage limited resources.

We are especially grateful for the continued generous support of the Stewarts Foundation, which continues to be a loyal and generous partner of this programme.

Dean's Story

Friday 17 May 2013. That date will stay with me forever. It was a day that started out like any other – but was one that changed my life. And if it hadn't been for Headway, I really don't know where I'd be now.

Before that day, I was a very outgoing, energetic 26-year-old who loved dancing – especially street and body-pop style. I danced and played pool every weekend. And I worked as a sign-maker. I loved it, and I'd done it straight from leaving school.

I'd been working with a friend on the day of the accident – we were on our way home. The driver of another car didn't give way at the signs and hit us, sending our van rolling six times into a ditch.

I was trapped inside, and all the tools and equipment – everything in the back of the van – lunged forward, smashing my head open.

I don't really remember what happened next. I'm told the ambulance took 45 minutes to arrive. At the hospital, they put bolts into my skull to relieve pressure from the fluid that was building up around my brain, and put me in an induced coma. I still have scars all the way around my head from those bolts.

I was in that coma for six weeks. **I can't imagine how hard it must've been for my family. But I'm just so glad Headway UK was there from the start to help them. Their Emergency Fund meant that my mum could be there with me in the hospital. It wouldn't have been possible without it because she lived so far away, but with Headway's help, she was able to stay and be there with me in the hardest moments. It really mattered – for both of us.**

Coming out of the coma was when my recovery really started. The whole left side of my body didn't work – I didn't have any muscle at all, but I was determined not to spend the rest of my life in a wheelchair.



In the immediate aftermath of my injury

I left hospital after about six months. With my left arm still in a splint, I learned how to write with my right hand (typically, I'm left-handed). It took a couple of years before I could use my left arm again. I was in a wheelchair, I couldn't work, couldn't dance, couldn't socialise – life as I knew it had totally changed.

I started visiting my local Headway as soon as I came home – and I still go now. The group helps me feel less alone and gives me something to look forward to. They've even helped me learn to walk again, though I still struggle with balance and need walking sticks.

Because of Headway UK, people like me have the support they need to recover and rebuild their life – it gives us hope, and the help we need to keep going. It means we can talk to others who understand, otherwise people would hide themselves away. I wouldn't like to think where we'd be if Headway wasn't here.

I have a reminder on my phone for the 17 May to say another year has passed since the accident. But when that date comes, I'm usually busy doing something else, which is good – because I have to keep going, keep setting goals and never give up.



Before my injury

The Brain Injury Identity Card

The Headway Brain Injury Identity Card gives brain injury survivors added confidence in social situations. It enables support services, including police officers and other agencies to identify survivors, ensuring they receive an appropriate response and support.

Each card is personalised and displays the primary ways in which the survivor's brain injury affects them. It contains a 24-hour criminal legal assistance number which can be called to request legal advice or representation from solicitors trained in understanding brain injury.

A total of **1,714** Brain Injury Identity Cards were issued in 2025. A further **455** cards were reissued to ensure accuracy, continuity of support, and ongoing engagement with survivors. This reflects both the longevity of the initiative and the continued need for accessible identification.

What brain injury survivors said*

- 87% of survivors with Brain Injury ID Cards said they actively use their card
- 94% of survivors with Brain Injury ID Cards find them helpful when used

**Based on a 2025 survey of 942 brain injury survivors*



"I have the Headway Brain Injury ID Card – which I absolutely honour! It's so visible and lists my epilepsy and all my difficulties. Brain injury can be a hidden disability which is still so misunderstood and sometimes ignored. Just carrying my brain injury ID card in my purse gives me confidence and helps people know and understand that I need support."

Imogen, brain injury survivor

The Headway Justice Programme

The Headway Justice Programme delivers a range of initiatives to ensure better treatment, support and opportunity for brain injury survivors in the criminal justice system.

Throughout the year, the Justice Programme continued to support justice professionals across multiple agencies, providing specialist advice, guidance, and problem-solving support in complex cases involving brain injury.

In 2025, the Justice Programme strategy was reviewed and strengthened to align more closely with funding opportunities, ensuring long-term sustainability and clearer pathways for growth.

The programme also played a key role in supporting the wider Headway network on justice-related matters, acting as a central point of expertise and strategic leadership.

We delivered targeted training at HMP Five Wells, strengthening staff understanding of acquired brain injury (ABI) and its impact on behaviour, compliance, and rehabilitation outcomes.

The success of this training has led to us securing funding from HMPPS South Central for the development and implementation of a five-module rehabilitation course. This marks a significant step forward in embedding structured, evidence-informed support within custodial settings.

The programme has maintained its position as a leading voice within the justice network, contributing to national conversations around policy, practice, and systemic change for people with brain injury in contact with the justice system.

David's Story

When David, a dad-of-two and former Merchant Navy Chief Officer, survived a near-fatal motorbike crash, life as he knew it was changed in an instant.

A track day at Oulton Park in 2017 resulted in David breaking his spine in five places and sustaining an injury to his frontal lobe – he was in a coma for 11 days following the accident.

Frontal lobe injury can result in a variety of symptoms, including changes in behaviour – such as impulsivity or irritability, as well as having difficulty with social interactions and emotion regulation – all of which affect David.

"I don't react to emotions properly and people don't expect it because I don't look like I have a brain injury. I look healthy and can speak with people and do certain tasks," said David.

"Things that should be funny will make me cry, or things that should make me angry maybe make me laugh.

"Everyone is full of sympathy and understanding right up until they're on the receiving end of certain behaviour, like irritability.

"It's so hard to explain to people and can be humiliating."

It was thanks to a conversation that David's wife had with their GP that he came to learn of Headway – and the brain injury ID card, which he has since been issued with.

"The Headway Brain Injury ID card has made a massive difference in my life. It helped me get out the house again.

"It was terrifying because I thought what if I have an aggressive or emotional moment in public?

"Having the card meant I had something there which I can show to people, use it to explain my symptoms, and ask people to give me 10 minutes and some space for the emotions to pass.

"It really has made a massive difference."





Training and Learning

Training

Headway UK's CPD-certified training courses are available throughout the year and are suitable for professionals working with survivors of brain injury. We also offer a range of training and workshops for brain injury survivors.

We delivered a total of **68** training sessions, attended by **897** people. Attendees came from a range of backgrounds, including healthcare organisations, law and insurance firms, other charities and the Ministry of Defence, as well as brain injury survivors and carers.

"The session gave me the sense of belonging. Often folk are embarrassed by announcing you have had a severe stroke. I went to my brother's funeral and people walked past me in case I didn't show emotion."

Brain injury survivor

Webinars

In 2025, we continued our series of monthly webinars. They continue to be free and open to all, including brain injury survivors, carers, family members, health and social care professionals.

Topics have included *Frontal Lobe Problems After Brain Injury, Emotional Lability Following Brain Injury and Understanding Personality Change After Brain Injury*.

A total of **1,171** people attended the webinars at an increase of 19% compared to 2024. This was complemented by **6,498** views on YouTube – a 38% increase compared to the 2024 webinar video views.

"This is by far the best , clearest seminar on TBI and PTSD. THANK YOU."

Webinar attendee

Approved Provider scheme

Headway UK's Approved Provider Scheme is a voluntary, standards-based accreditation for both NHS and independent care providers, covering a range of settings which offer comprehensive support and rehabilitation for brain injury survivors.

The Approved Provider Scheme gives families, commissioners and funders confidence that services supporting people affected by brain injury meet consistent, evidence-informed standards, while also driving continuous quality improvement, with lived experience at the heart of services.

The scheme continued to grow in 2025. The team was expanded with the recruitment of four new Lead Assessors, two Service User Perspective Assessors (both of whom have lived experience of brain injury), and a part-time Associate Approved Provider Manager.

This collaborative approach ensures that both professional expertise and lived experience are consistently embedded within the assessment process, ultimately enabling better outcomes for brain injury survivors.

In addition, work is currently underway to review and update the Approved Provider Standards, with the aim of launching revised standards in 2026.

This review reflects Headway UK's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and to ensuring that the scheme remains relevant, rigorous, and aligned with evolving best practice in brain injury rehabilitation and support.

There are currently **65** approved units within the scheme, with services predominantly located across the Midlands and the North West of England, reflecting strong regional uptake and engagement with quality standards in brain injury rehabilitation.

During 2025, we received **44** new enquiries from organisations seeking further information about the scheme, indicating sustained and increasing interest from providers wishing to demonstrate quality, transparency, and best practice in brain injury support.

Solicitors Directory

The Headway UK Head Injury Solicitors Directory continued to be a key resource for people affected by brain injury during 2025, supporting access to specialist legal advice at a critical time.

The Directory lists solicitors with proven experience in handling brain injury cases, all of whom have agreed to work in line with the Headway Personal Injury Lawyers Code of Conduct, which sets out the standards of service clients can expect.

In 2025, the Directory included 174 law firms from across the UK, helping individuals and families to identify and choose appropriate legal support with confidence.

Headway UK Conference: Neuroplasticity in Action

In October 2025, Headway hosted its first national conference in a number of years. *Neuroplasticity in Action* brought together 400 professionals from across the brain injury sector to explore how advances in neuroscience are reshaping understanding of recovery. Attendees included clinicians, case managers and legal professionals and created the opportunity for learning, discussion and crosssector collaboration.

The conference focused on both the science and practical application of neuroplasticity, highlighting growing evidence that the brain's capacity to adapt and change continues throughout life. Expert speakers shared insights into rehabilitation approaches, emerging technologies and interdisciplinary working, alongside case studies that demonstrated how research is being translated into realworld practice.

The conference received positive feedback from delegates and marked an important step in Headway UK's role as national expert and thought leaders within the brain injury sphere. It also highlighted our ongoing commitment to promoting evidence-based practice and improving understanding of recovery after brain injury.


Headway
the brain injury association
presents
Make your donation today.
Neuroplasticity in Action
Transforming brain injury rehabilitation and law
#headwayconf25
Organised by
ABI Solutions
CPD MEMBER
APIL Accredited Training
rwk goodman

Policy and public affairs

In 2025, Headway UK's Policy and Public Affairs function led data gathering, write-up and analysis for the *When Funding Fails* report, exposing the financial pressures facing the local Headway network. We launched the report at a parliamentary event to strengthen the case for investment in community-based rehabilitation.

The report has raised greater awareness among MPs and the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Acquired Brain Injury, and has directly fed into the ABI Action Plan which the Government has committed to publish in 2026. It has also been a valuable asset for the network to highlight at a local level, demonstrating that their financial struggles are part of a much wider issue.

Our parliamentary reach grew considerably in 2025 with the recruitment of seven new Parliamentary Champions – increasing the total from eight to 15. This included our first MSPs and House of Lords Champion, alongside regular engagement with parliamentarians across the UK. This has forged stronger links between elected representatives and local Headway charities.

And alongside regular engagement at APPG meetings, we also supported local Headway charities with policy and parliamentary engagement, and spoke at the Headway Network Day, delivering a practical session on influencing MPs.

While the publication of the Government's Action Plan for brain injury was delayed, we worked with other brain injury charities to secure a parliamentary debate in December 2025, maintaining momentum and political scrutiny – while also highlighting the work of local charities.

We also responded to five major government, parliamentary, and NHS consultations, while securing recognition of our annual Action for Brain Injury Week campaign across all four UK parliaments, with events in Westminster and Stormont and motions in Holyrood and the Senedd.





Action for Brain Injury Week 2025

During our 2025 Action for Brain Injury (ABI) Week campaign, the work of our champions and influential stakeholders secured recognition of ABI Week in all four parliaments/assemblies for the first time.

New Parliamentary Champion Ian Byrne MP (Labour) tabled parliamentary motion recognising the campaign, while existing champion Sir John Hayes (Conservative) hosted an event in Westminster where MPs and peers heard from Headway UK about the ABI Week campaign including two brain injury survivors.

In Scotland, Emma Roddick MSP (SNP), also tabled a similar parliamentary motion which was supported by our Parliamentary Champion Colin Beattie MSP (SNP) and MSPs from other parties to raise awareness of ABI in Scottish Parliament.

And in the Senedd, John Griffiths MS (Labour) also spoke about ABI Week, while there was an event held in the Northern Ireland Assembly during the campaign week.

Headway UK in Parliament

Acquired Brain Injury Action Plan

Existing Champion Sir John Hayes MP (Conservative) secured a parliamentary debate, with support from Headway UK, for MPs to debate the Government's Action Plan. Sir John spoke about our work, including ABI Week statistics and financial pressures facing local Headway charities throughout the UK.

Other champions also discussed brain injury and the role of Headway, including Wendy Chamberlain MP (Liberal Democrat) and Liz Twist MP (Labour). Between our attending champions and other supportive MPs, details from our Action for Brain Injury Week 2025 Report and W*hen Funding Fails* report were highlighted to the Minister responsible for Acquired Brain Injury.

This debate directly pressured the minister to confirm the delay to the Action Plan, firmly committing it to the first half of 2026. It also raised crucial awareness of the Headway network's challenges, successes and issues facing brain injury survivors.

In 2025, we were pleased to welcome the following new Parliamentary Champions:

- Ian Byrne MP (Labour)
- Wendy Chamberlain MP (Lib Dem)
- Mims Davies MP (Conservative)
- Paul McLennan MSP (SNP)
- Baroness Morris (Labour)
- Alistair Strathern MP (Labour)
- Colin Beattie MSP (SNP)


WHEN
FUNDING
FAILS

Campaigns and Awareness

Throughout 2025, Headway gained significant media coverage, raising awareness of brain injury and advocating for improved support services.

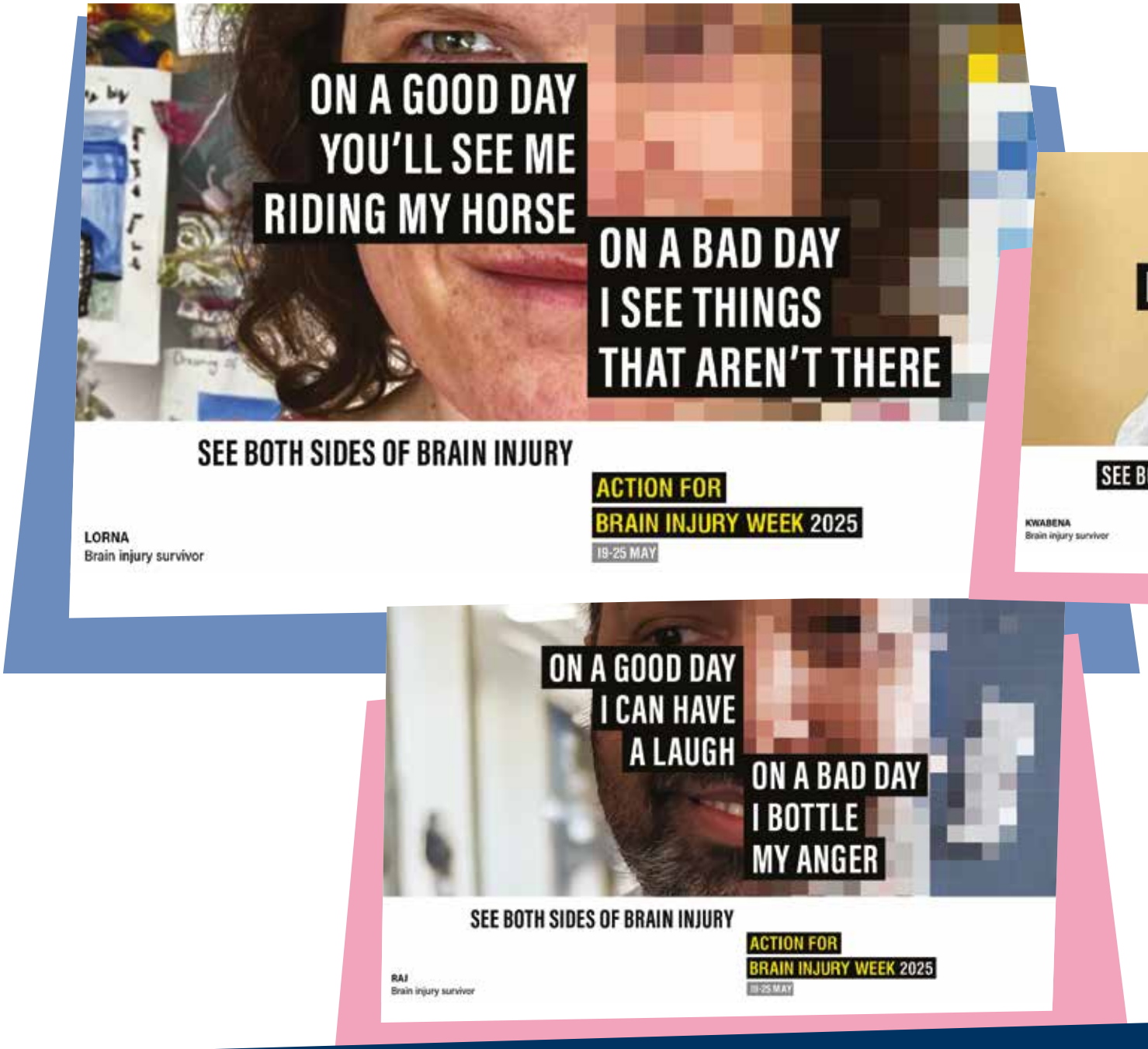
Headway UK campaigns, reactive narrative and opinion, fundraisers, news and updates were featured in a range of print and online media including national and regional news publications, print titles, radio and broadcast.

Between March-December 2025, we secured approximately 150 pieces of national and regional media coverage for Headway UK and the Network across online news, print (newspaper and magazine), radio and broadcast.

Topics ranged from brain injury advocacy and awareness, survivor stories and lived experience, and sport-related reactions and injury commentary.

We continue to be a trusted voice of authority on sport-related brain health, with numerous commentaries on issues such as concussion and the long-term cumulative effects of repeated blows to the head. Interviews and comments appeared on national television, radio, newspapers and online channels throughout the year, helping to further raise our profile and increase awareness of the associated risks.

Our annual Action for Brain Injury (ABI) Week awareness campaign, *On a good day*, also illustrated the fluctuating and debilitating nature of brain injury. It resulted in record numbers of people visiting our website, and significantly elevated social media reach.


ON A GOOD DAY
YOU'LL SEE ME
RIDING MY HORSE
ON A BAD DAY
I SEE THINGS
THAT AREN'T THERE
SEE BOTH SIDES OF BRAIN INJURY
ACTION FOR
BRAIN INJURY WEEK 2025
19-25 MAY
LORNA
Brain injury survivor
ON A GOOD DAY
I PLAY SCRABBLE
ON A BAD DAY
I CAN'T FIND MY WORDS
SEE BOTH SIDES OF BRAIN INJURY
ACTION FOR BRAIN INJURY WEEK 2025
19-25 MAY
KWABENA
Brain injury survivor
ON A GOOD DAY
I CAN HAVE
A LAUGH
ON A BAD DAY
I BOTTLE
MY ANGER
SEE BOTH SIDES OF BRAIN INJURY
ACTION FOR
BRAIN INJURY WEEK 2025
19-25 MAY
RAJ
Brain injury survivor

Fundraising in 2025

Throughout 2025, we focused on growing and strengthening relationships with our incredible supporters, ensuring they felt connected to the value of their support and the real difference they make.

Alongside our annual programme of events, we introduced new initiatives such as the virtual Walk 90km challenge, The BIG Headway Cuppa, Summer and Christmas Appeals. These activities have enabled us to welcome new supporters and strengthen relationships with those already connected to us.

From record-breaking ultra marathons to bake sales, swimathons, quizzes, raffles and totally off-the-wall challenges around the world, every precious pound raised and donated by our incredible supporters really matters. And the lengths that supporters go to help those affected by brain injury never fails to amaze us.

Put simply, Headway UK could not – and would not – exist without you.

Thank you.




Headway
the brain injury association
Headway
Headway
the brain injury association

Trusts and foundations in 2025

We send our sincere thanks to the trusts and foundations that kindly supported us in 2025, notably:

- Stewarts Foundation
- The Thompson Family Charitable Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Card Factory Foundation
- The James Tudor Foundation
- The Light Fund
- Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust
- The Hospital Saturday Fund

Our corporate partners

A partnership with Headway UK can drive a wealth of benefits to any business, and is a powerful way for your organisation to make a lasting, meaningful impact for those affected by brain injury.

Whether through sponsorship, attending events or matched giving, we're incredibly thankful to all the organisations who've done so much to help improve life after brain injury in 2025.

We extend our grateful thanks to:

- Active Care Group
- Anthony Gold
- BCLP
- Charles Stanley
- EMG Solicitors
- Hastings Direct
- Irwin Mitchell
- John Lewis Partnership & Waitrose
- Ovidus Solutions
- RWK Goodman
- Slater & Gordon
- St Johns Building Chambers
- St Phillips Chambers
- Thompsons Solicitors



Annual Awards

For a quarter of a century, the Annual Awards have been an opportunity to celebrate and showcase the inspirational achievements and dedication of brain injury survivors and those that support them. The awards are a key moment for Headway and have a profoundly positive impact on the finalists and their loved ones, as well as the wider brain injury community.

Our 2025 finalists embodied the incredible work being done by local Headway charities and volunteer-led branches across the UK. Some demonstrated the transformative impact of Headway's services; others were celebrated for their voluntary support, which has been crucial in ensuring services can continue at a time when charities are operating under unprecedented financial pressures.

We are truly grateful to everyone who supported the 2025 awards, especially our corporate event sponsors whose generosity is instrumental in making the event possible, and in helping us continue our work throughout the year.









With thanks to our event sponsors:

- Anthony Gold Solicitors LLP
- Charles Stanley
- EMG
- Irwin Mitchell
- Karen Burgin
- Slater & Gordon

Headway UK Retail in 2025

Our retail shops extend the impact of Headway UK beyond our formal services; they provide a local, everyday presence in the communities they serve. As well as generating funds to enable our work, they do so much to raise awareness of brain injury and signpost to our support services.

In 2025, we celebrated a series of initiatives to help drive donations to and footfall in our shops, as well as increase our cohort of wonderful retail volunteers.

We also introduced a Headway UK offering on Vinted, allowing us to sell specialist, premium items to a wider audience.

The average bag of donated items could fund a call to our free helpline providing specialist advice to brain injury survivors.

2025 retail highlights:

- 13 million items sold
- 678,000+ transactions
- 296 positive reviews on the new Headway UK Vinted platform
- 500+ Headway UK retail volunteers
- One new shop opened in Huddersfield



Volunteering at Headway UK

Since the charity was founded over 40 years ago, volunteers have been the backbone of the organisation. We are immensely grateful to the individuals who have continued to give their time, skills, and compassion in 2025. From volunteering at local branches to serving as trustees, committee members, or charity shop volunteers, volunteers give thousands of hours each year, having a direct impact on brain injury survivors and their families.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life, many are themselves affected by brain injury. Volunteering offers the opportunity to learn and connect – helping build skills and confidence.

To all of our wonderful volunteers, thank you. Every hour given does so much to help support those affected by brain injury – we couldn't do it without you!







"I got really depressed because I had to retire from my job, but then I started volunteering at the Headway UK shop in Sheffield. I love helping out and being a valued member of the team – it lifts my spirits. I love talking to customers, pricing up items and the mannequin arrangement. I volunteer pretty much every day for a couple of hours a day. It helps with my mental health - it's probably the best role I've ever had!"

Charlie

Meet Headway UK retail volunteer, Charlie

Charlie has been volunteering at Headway UK's shop in Sheffield since it opened after being diagnosed with a grade 2 astrocytoma brain tumour in 2019, aged just 21.

He underwent surgery at the time, going four years without recurrence. However, in 2023, Charlie was diagnosed with a grade 4 glioblastoma, with doctors giving him the prognosis of six months to live. He had a craniotomy while awake and combined radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

He now lives with fatigue and cognitive issues including struggling with his memory, finding words and recognising faces, but volunteering at Headway UK has given him a new sense of purpose.

Looking to the future

Headway's five-year strategy, launched in August 2024, sets out a clear roadmap for improving life after brain injury, ensuring the charity remains responsive to the needs of survivors, families, and carers. We are currently well underway with delivery of the strategy.

There are four key strategic priorities within the strategy:

Strengthen

the network of independent Headway charities and volunteer-led branches

Increase

awareness and understanding of brain injury

Develop

new support services to help people to live well after brain injury





Support

research to evidence the need for better access to specialised services for people affected by brain injury

A core focus has been reinforcing the UK-wide network of local Headway charities and volunteer-led branches.

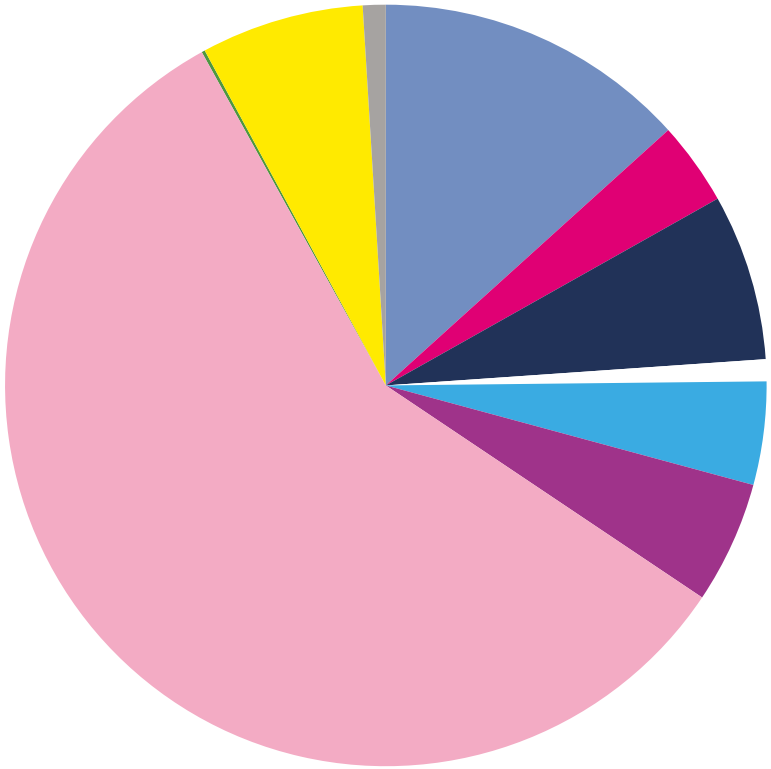
Raising awareness and understanding of brain injury also remains a key priority, as well as aiming to diversify support services, and developing new, tailored programmes.

Finally, we we are continuing to support and promote research to highlight the long-term impact of brain injury and the effectiveness of specialist rehabilitation.

Strengthening the case for sustainable funding, we will continue advocating at the highest levels for improved policies and resources to secure long-term support for survivors.

Financial review

Headway UK's 2025 finances at a glance



Total Income
£6,040,691

Voluntary Income:

Donations	**£803,200** (13.30%)
Legacies	**£213,847** (3.54%)
Grants	**£426,745** (7.06%)
	Total £1,443,792 (£23.90%)

Charitable Activities:

Training	**£56,085** (0.93%)
Services to/by groups & branches	**£264,346** (4.38%)
Publications & awareness	**£313, 644** (5.19%)
	Total £634,075 (10.50%)

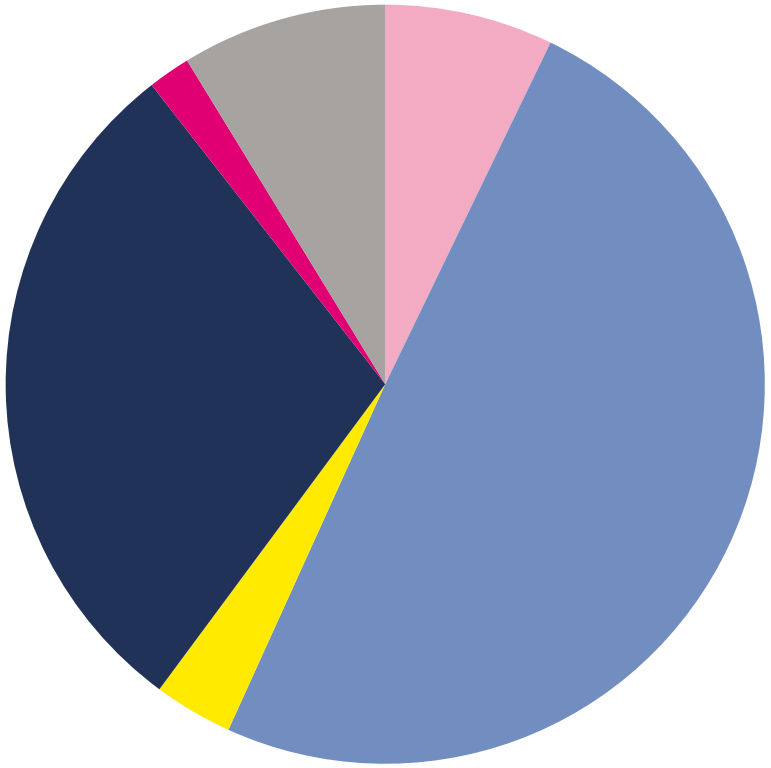
Other Trading Activities:

Retail Activities	**£3,477,712** (57.57%)
Sale of merchandise	**£8,564** (0.14%)
Events & conferences	**£417,959** (6.92%)
	Total £3,904,235 (64.63%)

Investment & Rental Income:

	£58,589 (0.97%)
	Total £58,589 (0.97%)

Total Expenditure
£6,664,251



Raising Funds:

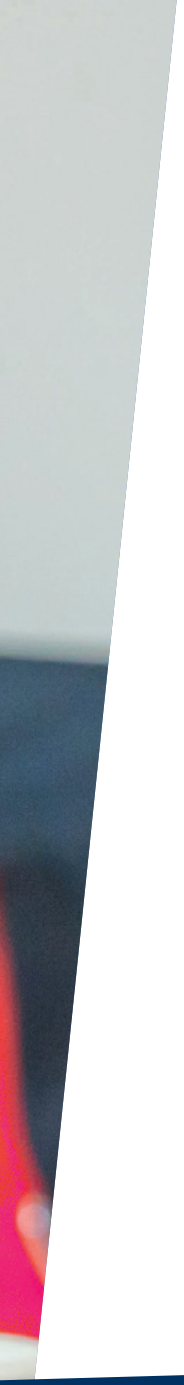
Fundraising	**£477,982** (7.17%)
Retail activities	**£3,305,947** (49.61%)
Events and conferences	**£224,141** (3.36%)
	Total £4,008,070 (£60.14%)

Charitable Activities:

Services provided	**£1,953,106** (29.31%)
Grants distributed	**£120,477** (1.81%)
Publications & awareness	**£582,598** (8.74%)
	Total £2,656,181 (39.86%)

Our 2025 financial reports and accounts have been prepared under the conditions set out by the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).





Elected Trustees

Denzil Lush (Chair) (until June 2025)
Belinda Moore (Chair) (appointed June 2025)
Evelyn Vincent (Deputy Chair)
Dr Colin Reeves CBE (Treasurer) (until June 2025)
Rob Callan (Treasurer) (appointed June 2025)
Allistair Renton (Company Secretary)
Jane Allberry CBE
Dr June Gilchrist (until February 2025)
Rev Abraham Lawrence
Brendan McKeever
Dr Colin Shieff (until September 2025)
Andrew Harding (until June 2025)
Dr Andy Tyerman (until September 2025)
Alexa Charnley
Adrian Hawley
Mario Ganau
Khadija Ali (appointed June 2025)

Co-opted Trustee: Andrew Green MBE (until February 2025)

Key management personnel

Chief Executive: Luke Griggs
Director of Finance and Administration: Ruth Ormston
Director of Fundraising: Jen Murgatroyd (until July 2025)
Director of Communications: Colin Morris
Director of Services: Ruth Owens
Head of HR: Rosheen Hodgkiss Bernard

Principal and registered office

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

Auditors

Saffery LLP Westpoint Peterborough Business Park Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6FZ

Bankers

Lloyds Bank Plc 12-16 Lower Parliament Street Nottingham NG1 3DA
Registered in England company number: 2346893 Charity Commission number: 1025852 Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator number: SC039992

If you need help or support, or have a question about brain injury, contact our freephone nurse-led helpline:

0808 800 2244
helpline@headway.org.uk

0115 924 0800 | enquiries@headway.org.uk

www.headway.org.uk

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

Headway – the brain injury association is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales [Charity No. 1025852] and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (Charity No. SC 039992).
Headway – the brain injury association is a company limited by guarantee registered in England [No. 2346893].

