

HEAD START

The latest news and events from **Headway Suffolk**

Summer 2020

Getting through Coronavirus and beyond



The last few months has been nothing like we've seen before. The coronavirus stopped us all in our tracks and closed most of Headway Suffolk's services, such as our hubs, therapies, community support and Brainy Dogs.

We had to adapt how we delivered rehab to continue to support our clients in new and different ways and assist the local authorities to provide even further care to patients leaving hospital.

The services included a **virtual hub**, which allowed clients to stay in touch by video, taking part in activities and socialising, which helped reduce anxiety and isolation and keep everyone mentally well. Our Ipswich reception became a **helpline** for anyone with concerns or questions, with a friendly ear at hand to provide reassurance.

Our dedicated and hard-working support team we're able to deliver vital **homecare**, including increased commissioning from Suffolk County Council, to ensure clients received care and help at home during a difficult time.

Clients continued receiving **counselling** but this time done remotely by phone and video, so they could share their worries safely and to keep everyone mentally well. We also sent out **activity packs** to clients to engage in fun and stimulating activities to relieve the boredom of lockdown and to keep the brain healthy.

We prepared and delivered **freshly-cooked meals**, as well as **food parcels**, to ensure clients who needed them, particularly if they couldn't use a conventional oven, ate healthy and nutritiously. **Brainy Dogs** was also able to adapt with regular videos, blogs and staying in touch with those who needed help with their four-legged friends.



As we begin to gradually phase a return to some of the normal services, we'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who helped us and our clients through such uncertain times. Whether that was with a donation, supplies of PPE or any other way, we simply couldn't do it without you.

Due to lost funding from social care and the cancellation or postponements of fundraising events, we estimate we face a shortfall of £100,000 in funding, which is why we launched our **Coronavirus Appeal**.

If you would like a donation, you can do so by card at www.headwaysuffolk.org.uk/coronavirus. You can also pay by cash or cheque by calling us on 01473 712225 or email info@headwaysuffolk.org.uk.

Cycle Ride & Walk - Saturday 5 September



After being postponed in May, our Cycle Ride and Walk is rescheduled for Saturday 5 September!

The ride starts and finishes at our hub on West Road in Ipswich (IP3 9FJ) and comprises 30, 40 and 50 mile routes through Ipswich, Felixstowe, Newbourne and Martlesham. There's also a 10-mile walk through Ipswich town centre.

It's free to take part if you gain sponsorship of £10 minimum, or just a £10 registration fee. All participants receive a warm welcome and free refreshments at the finish! It is open to everyone and is an ideal team-building exercise for companies with the Headway Shield presented at our Awards Dinner to the team that raises the most sponsorship.

Everything you need, including forms, is available on our website: www.headwaysuffolk.org.uk/events.

Neuro Conference - Wednesday 7 October



Our all-day annual Neuro Conference will go ahead on Wednesday 7 October.

We hope to accommodate 50 delegates at Wherstead Park, near Ipswich, with social distancing and hygiene measures in place. In addition, the event will be streamed live to delegates who purchase virtual tickets.

Keynote speakers: **Dawn Astle**, daughter of former England striker Jeff Astle, will talk about the links between heading and dementia. Speedway rider **Sam Norris** will discuss his recovery from a brain injury with his mum Claire. **Dr Michael Grey** will explore football's impact on the brain. **Dr Sajid Alam** will focus on strokes.

Tickets are £40 for Wherstead Park and £20 for the virtual version. Call 01473 712225 or email helenmfairweather@headwaysuffolk.org.uk. Full details at www.headwaysuffolk.org.uk/events.

Jody runs London Marathon to thank Headway Suffolk



Jody Smith is running her first London Marathon on Sunday 4 October to raise money for Headway Suffolk to say thanks for supporting her father Gary after he suffered a stroke.

Gary is a big personality and inspiration to others at our Ipswich hub, and he has made great strides with his speech, balance and cognitive functioning. Jody has already raised over £1,800 but let's get her to £2,000! **You can sponsor her at the hub or online: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/constancefield.**

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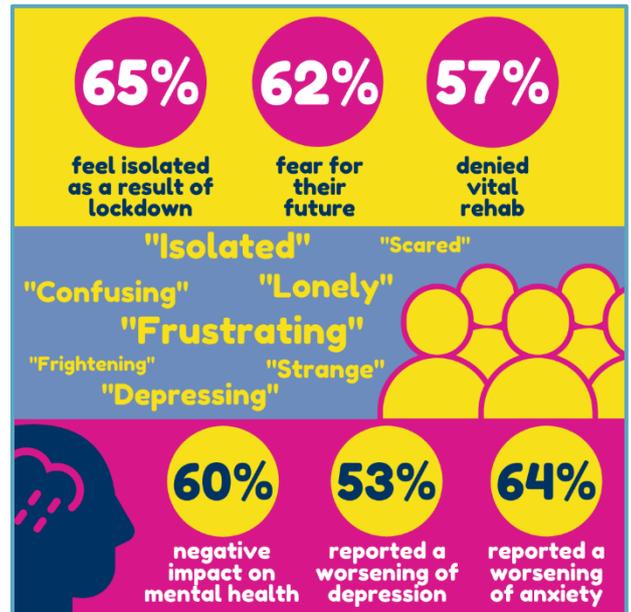
Headway services in need more than ever

Headway Suffolk is needed now more than ever, according to the results of a survey published by Headway UK.

The survey, which explored the impact of COVID-19 on people affected by brain injury, found that more than half of brain injury survivors have lost access to rehabilitation services as a result of lockdown.

Early rehabilitation following brain injury can be crucial in helping survivors to regain a degree of independence and relearn lost skills, including walking and talking. But 57% of those who sustained their injuries within the past two years say their access to specialist treatment has been negatively impacted.

A further 64% of those living with the long-term effects of brain injury reported a deterioration in their mental health as a result of the measures implemented to control the spread of COVID-19, while almost two thirds say they now fear for their futures.



Headway Suffolk says that the stark findings highlight the importance of ensuring those affected by brain injury are provided with appropriate physical, psychological and social rehabilitation and support.

Helen Fairweather, CEO of Headway Suffolk, said: "The results of this study are deeply concerning. The first two years following a brain injury are very important in terms of a patient's long-term prognosis and any delay to receiving specialist rehabilitation can impact their ability to lead an independent life in the future.

"Headway Suffolk is going to extraordinary lengths to ensure help remains available to vulnerable individuals and their families during the lockdown and has responded swiftly to the outbreak by tailoring remote services to help brain injury survivors cope with the situation. This has included homecare visits to free up hospital beds, a virtual hub so clients could stay in touch, food deliveries, virtual counselling, a helpline and Brainy Dogs remote support.

"However, with local authorities under increasing financial pressure, charities such as ours are facing an uphill battle to survive. Unless the government provides local authorities with adequate funding for community-based rehabilitation services, thousands of brain injury survivors and carers will either be left without support or be forced to rely on more costly state-funded care."

Many of the specialist rehabilitation and support services provided by Headway Suffolk are commissioned by the local authority. Following the outbreak of the pandemic, only 4% of Directors of Adult Social Care from councils across England are confident that their budgets in 2020/21 are sufficient to meet statutory duties.

Helen Fairweather concluded: "If the specialist support and rehabilitation services we provide were not recommissioned, many vulnerable people living in our area would lose the vital support they rely on. Headway Suffolk needs to be here long after this pandemic, so we are able continue to improve the lives of people affected by brain injury."

Feeling thankful for Headway Suffolk



Anna Leggett, a Suffolk mum of three, is feeling thankful for Headway Suffolk after sustaining a mild brain injury in a road accident over three and a half years ago.

We supported Anna in her first year of recovery, including an Understanding Brain Injury course, counselling and Brainy Dogs. She later made a substantial donation to thank us.

"Thank you so much for the care and support you provided for me," she said. "It was fantastic and really helped my recovery. The Brainy Dogs were a great pick me up for us."

If you want to share your story with us, email David at davidcrane@headwaysuffolk.org.uk.

Working with local companies & community groups



Working with local companies and community groups is a key part of raising awareness of Headway Suffolk's services and how we support local people.

We are very grateful to the **Seven Group, Ashtons Legal, East of England Co-Op, Irwin Mitchell** and **Slater and Gordon** for their continued and valued help. And we have also been delighted to welcome collaboration with new organisations.

IPRS Group is a UK-wide company that is based in Ipswich and provides a range of clinical products and services. Their team has been undertaking challenges for a year, including a London Marathon walk, and have raised an amazing £2,700!

Timberwolf is the UK's leading wood chipper manufacturer and are based in Stowmarket. They have adopted us as their charity of the year and adapted their fundraising challenges after Covid-19. They have raised a fantastic £1,700 already!

Pupils at **Thomas Gainsborough School**, based in Great Cornard, carried out a year of fundraising challenges, including bag packing, and raised a brilliant £2,600!

We are also thankful to: **Travel Stop**, a travel agency with three shops in Suffolk, who raised £1,100; to law firm **Fosters Solicitors**, who have an office in Bury St Edmunds, for sponsoring our Awards Dinner; **Try Financial**, an independent finance broker in Ipswich, for donating a percentage of their profits.



If your organisation, community group or school would like to support Headway Suffolk, call us on 01473 712225 or email davidcrane@headwaysuffolk.org.uk.

Awards Dinner & Neuro Conference in Pictures



Our award winners Alan, Adam and Gary



Speaker Chris Tarrant at our Conference

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