

HEADWAY HERTFORDSHIRE

Improving life after brain injury



Headway Hertfordshire Newsletter – July 2020

Message from John Archer – CEO

We are going through a really unique and challenging period of time that has brought with it some tough situations for us all. I wanted to let our friends - clients, carers, volunteers and supporters, know that I am constantly reviewing the pandemic situation, the easing of lockdown measures and the rules on social distancing to see when it would be safe to move from our virtual support model towards more face-to-face contact. At the time of writing I do not see it as safe to change anything yet.

I will keep you informed of any changes as soon as we know about them. We will be reviewing the whole situation at the end of August. Remember to look at our web site and Facebook page.

Please be strong and bear with me. My only aim is to ensure the safety of everyone involved with Headway Hertfordshire and this will be my goal in any easing of how we “meet” each other in the near future.

Thank you for your patience and resilience during these trying times.

John

Welcome Alan Smith, our new patron

When asked to become a patron of Headway Hertfordshire, it was a natural fit. It hadn't been long since I'd written my autobiography, entitled Heads Up, due partly to my ability as a good header of the ball during a thirteen-year football career with Leicester City and Arsenal. Because of that, I was naturally concerned about recent findings linking dementia and brain damage with heading in football. Though there is a lot more research to be done in this particular field, it now seems certain that a lot of heading over a period of years can cause serious problems in later life.

Still, not much I can do about that now. What's done is done. But my history as a player did create an affinity with this particular charity. It was good to get on board and help those who have suffered in some way.

I joined Leicester as an 18-year old, playing as a striker alongside Gary Lineker for three of my five years in the East Midlands.

When Arsenal came calling, I didn't hesitate. To join a club of that standing, felt like an honour.

It was also great timing, since I joined the club at the start of something special. Within a year, we had won the league championship by beating Liverpool at Anfield in perhaps the most famous

game in football league history. Within another year, we had clinched the title again, losing only one game along the way. By this time, I had become part of the England set up, and went on to win 13 caps for my country. I'll never forget standing there at Wembley singing the national anthem for the first time. With my family watching from the stands, it was an incredibly proud moment.

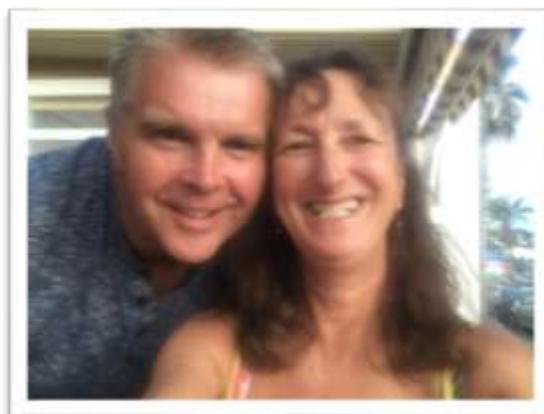


In 1993, Arsenal became the first team to win the FA Cup and League Cup in the same season and a year later I scored the only goal in the European Cup Winners' Cup final, which felt special at the time and even more so now, given that Arsenal haven't won a European trophy since.

But then misfortune struck the following summer when I was forced to retire with a knee injury. Yet since that sad day in 1995 I have thankfully stayed involved in the game via the media. After working for the Daily Telegraph for twenty years, I now write a weekly column in the Evening Standard.

Alongside, I've been a commentator for Sky for nearly all of that time, as well as helping voice FIFA, the incredibly popular computer game. **Life, in short, has treated me kindly. It will be a great privilege, then, if I can somehow contribute to the vital work undertaken by Headway Hertfordshire.**

The COVID-19 lockdown has caused change to the lives of us all, and for some brain injury survivors like Mike Perry, who rely on routine, this change has been difficult to come to terms with.



Brain injury survivor Michael Perry has found that taking part in virtual activities and group sessions with his local Headway group in Hertfordshire has been a great way to maintain a sense of routine.

51-year-old Michael found Headway Hertfordshire after an accident at home resulted in a hypoxic brain injury and he was just about to start attending the group's community outreach programme when the lockdown started.

Luckily, Michael has still been able to access the support he needs through Headway Hertfordshire's online services which were developed in response to the pandemic.

He is now a member of the group's Helping Acquired Brain Injury Together – or HABILIT – project which gives survivors the skills and knowledge they need to return to work or volunteering positions, and he also has one-to-one sessions with an Occupational Therapist.

Michael says that having these plans in place have helped him to develop a sense of routine and normality during the uncertainty of COVID-19.

“The online sessions with Headway Hertfordshire have been really beneficial for my recovery,” he said. “They help to keep me and my brain active and engaged.

“It's also great to be able to speak to other people who have gone through similar experiences and know how you're feeling.”

Headway Hertfordshire have also been supporting Michael's wife Karen during lockdown by offering a listening ear and someone to talk to.

Karen said: “It's been so helpful to be able to speak to people at Headway Hertfordshire. If I have any questions or worries, I know where to turn to.”

Michael hopes that once lockdown restrictions ease, he'll be able to carry on the HABILIT project face-to-face and take advantage of the community outreach and support available.

Busy Lockdown

Peter Holgate has had a busy lockdown!! Not only did he start cycling again, several years post head injury, but he also put his hands to an upcycling project!! Peter was firstly given a broken up and weary looking table. Several weeks later and after a lot of tinkering in the shed, he has fully put together and refurbished this lovely table.





Once a year, Headway's members, friends and supporters come together to pay tribute to some very special people: brain injury survivors, carers, volunteers and campaigners whose personal achievements have earned the admiration of everyone around them. Their stories are moving and inspirational. Headway Hertfordshire have nominated one Carer of the Year and one Achiever of the Year.

We will let you know how we get on.

Congratulations Joyce and Paul



Joyce Stubbs is a great supporter and volunteer who helps to run our peer support group in Borehamwood. She and Paul had a civil partnership over Lockdown Best wishes from all of us at Headway Hertfordshire

It's your ride, your way, for Headway Hertfordshire, the charity of your choice!



<https://myridelondon.co.uk/>

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a catastrophic effect on the UK's charities, with the cancellation of thousands of fundraising events and the loss of billions in income.

Many charities have had to reduce or stop services at a time when vulnerable members of society need them most. The sector as a whole faces a funding gap of more than £10 billion in 2020.

Over seven years, the Prudential RideLondon festival of cycling has inspired hundreds of thousands of people to get on their bikes, raising £77 million for thousands of charities in the process.

This year, we can't all ride together, but we can unite for My Prudential RideLondon to celebrate cycling and support the UK's charities.

Get on your bike – or scooter, skateboard, trike, tandem, penny farthing, roller skates, uni-cycle – to help save the UK's charities!

The event is due to take place on 15 and 16 August 2020 and we want to keep the wheels moving and celebrate the event by encouraging people to get on their bikes – or any other non-motorised wheeled transport! – and help save the UK's charities in the process.

My Prudential RideLondon is building on the success of The 2.6 Challenge created following the postponement of the London Marathon.

My Prudential RideLondon is your chance to take part in the world's greatest free festival of cycling. Whatever your age or ability, you can join in – wherever you live in the UK and with whoever you like – family, friends or by yourself.

Got a Spare Exercise Bike?



Has anyone got an exercise bike that they no longer use? One of our clients wants to take part in the Prudential My Ride London and wants to do it in the safety of his own home. Please contact John on Phone 0300 330 1455

Thank you

If you would like to organise a team to run, walk, swim or do any other crazy fun events to raise money for us at Headway Hertfordshire we would be delighted to hear from you - John Archer CEO



All about Memory

Memory loss is common in people following an Acquired Brain Injury and many of our clients are aware that their memory is not as good as it used to be.

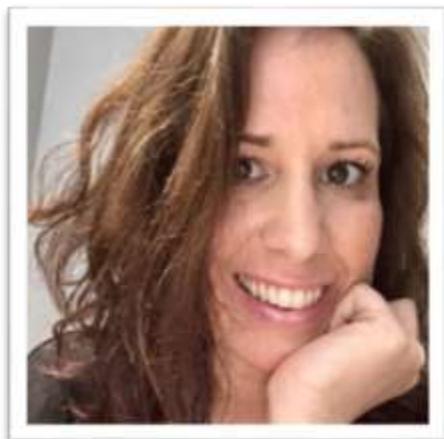
Therefore, Occupational Therapists, Anna and Annette, plus Rachel Campbell, a Trustee at Headway Hertfordshire have recently developed some useful resources for our clients, which are all located together on our website. You can find out all about Memory and practical things that you can do to help yourself.

These include a short video clip about how a memory is made, plus information on:

- Tips to help memory
- Useful Apps and websites that you can use
- Interesting facts about memory
- A 'remembering' worksheet
- Have a Look on our website. Here's the link to **'All about Memory'**:
- <https://www.headway-herts.org.uk/all-about-memory/>

If you do not have a computer or IPAD, please contact me on: 07939-673928 and I will send you some paper copies.

Annette Ward, Occupational Therapist.



Introducing Nikki Evans

a former member of the Headway Habit Group in Hemel Hempstead. You may remember that Nikki won the ‘Achiever of the Year’ Award at the last Headway National Awards in December last year. See link below:

<https://www.headway.org.uk/news-and-campaigns/news/headway-annual-awards-2019/hemel-hempstead-stroke-survivor-scoops-national-award/>

Nikki has recently trained to become a Yoga Instructor and went to India for a month in the Spring (just before lock-down) to undergo her Yoga Training.

She now wants to share what she has learnt with others who have suffered an ABI and has produced this ‘You Tube’ Video on Yoga, especially for some of our Headway Hertfordshire clients.

You will need to be able to get down on to the floor safely and lay down on the floor in order to do the featured exercises. However, Nikki will be working on some chair based Yoga exercises in the future and hopes to be able to run her own Group Yoga sessions at a later date, once it is safe to do so.

Have a look at this link and you can see what Nikki is doing:

<https://youtu.be/2skNdoa7qfo>



Don't feel alone during this strange time. Here are some important phone numbers that may come in useful:

MIND 24 hour line – 0300 123 3393

Samaritans – 116 123

CRUSE Bereavement – 0808 808 1677

CALM – 0800 585858

Childline – 0800 1111