

Welcome to This Month's Newsletter. Here are some of the headlines:

The Autumn Budget
Benefits – Money Saving Expert
A Tall tale of Franks

Places to Go
Branch Announcements and Miscellany
Social Media Presence



HEADWAY NEWS – Autumn Budget

Increases in NHS spending but no new funding for brain injury services.

While NHS spending is increasing overall, there are no specific commitments on financial support for brain injury survivors.

The Chancellor also announced increases to the employer's national insurance contributions. This could potentially have a devastating effect on local independent headway charities amid ongoing financial pressures.

Increased NHS spending in England

The government's Autumn Statement includes an increase in day-to-day NHS spending of £22.6bn.

There's also a further increase of £3.1bn for the NHS's capital spend for buildings

and infrastructure. The day-to-day spending increase is to support NHS England to deliver 40,000 extra appointments a week in line with Labour's manifesto commitment.

The latest NHS England figures show that the overall number of people waiting for neurology services is 236,621 (August 2024).

No new funding for ABI services

Despite increased NHS spending, the budget does not prioritise dedicated investment in services to support brain injury survivors and their loved ones.

Speaking after the Budget, Headway's Director of Communications, Colin Morris, said: "The new government has missed its first opportunity to increase funding for

brain injury survivors and end the neurorehabilitation postcode lottery.

“While the Chancellor’s real terms increase in NHS funding is welcome, better financial support is needed for essential community-based rehabilitation and reablement services for brain injury survivors.

He added: “It was good to hear the Chancellor reiterate the intended shift towards more preventative and community-based health services such as those offered by independent Headway charities, and we look forward to working with the government to inform this shift which will give greater support to brain injury survivors.

Headway has previously written to the government explaining that local Headway charities, which provide specialist services for people living with the effects of brain injury, were facing financial crises.

As well as the often-devastating impact on the individual and those close to them, brain injury creates a huge burden on the UK economy, with an estimated £15 billion spent each year across multiple government departments.

The impact of traumatic brain injury and stroke together is estimated to be nearly 2% of UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

[Slightly edited from the original Headway article at <https://t.ly/VQvfO>, where further information can be found]

Carer’s Allowance and Earnings

The Carer’s Allowance Weekly Earnings Limit is being increased to the equivalent of 16 hours at National Living Wage level. This will allow working carers to earn £196.00 per week and claim Carer’s Allowance. This change will enable carers to earn more from separate employment and income sources before losing their allowance, which could help ease some financial strain for families.

BIRTHDAYS

November

21st David Jenkins

January

23rd Eric Jones

26th Ian Hopwood

Committee Vacancy

Since David Jenkins has stepped down to pursue other opportunities, a vacancy has become available on the Headway Sefton Committee.

We invite members to express their interest in becoming the next valued member of the team.

Full details available on request.

If you are interested in becoming a committee member, please contact our branch secretary Carol Hopwood by email:

carol.hopwood@btinternet.com

BENEFITS

Money Saving Expert and Council Tax

Do you or a household member have a severe mental impairment (SMI)? You may be due a discount.



In 2016, we started campaigning about the SMI ('severely mentally impaired' - a horrid term, I know) Council Tax discount after our research showed not only was it under-claimed, even many council frontline staff didn't know it existed and wrongly put people off.

We've had many successes here too, like Louise, who emailed: "A massive thank you for making me aware of the severe mental impairment issue. After watching your show, I contacted our council to look into this for my mum, and after a few phone calls and forms, the council backdated mum with £3,500. Without you making people like me aware, this wouldn't have happened!"

Someone with an SMI is disregarded for Council Tax purposes, and as many with SMIs live with just one other adult, this effectively means their home is eligible for

the single person 25% discount, 50% if it's their carer. To be eligible, someone must meet two criteria:

- 1 You need to be medically certified as being 'SMI'. Defined as 'a severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning that appears to be permanent'. This can come from dementia, profound learning difficulties, brain injuries, severe strokes, some with severe Parkinson's and more (such as MS, as below). It's up to a doctor.
- 2 You're receiving a qualifying benefit. This includes means-tested and non-means-tested benefits; e.g. Attendance Allowance (itself highly under claimed), Personal Independence Payment, Severe Disablement Allowance and some parts of Universal Credit. In England & Wales, you must be getting them. In Scotland, just being eligible can be enough. See all qualifying benefits.

While there's no legal rule that requires local authorities to backdate, some do, back to the first diagnosis. Though in 2019, the Welsh Government took up our recommendations, streamlined the process, printed brochures to help aid awareness and ensured all Welsh councils' payments are backdate-able (diolch Cymru!)

Copied and edited from:

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/tips/2024/11/12/>

Headway Sefton phone number: 07736774496

Ethan – another tall tale by Frank Horan

Ethan is a bright, young man, who loved football, Scouts and basketball, and not always in that order, and who can eat for Ireland. He would never dream of leaving the house unless he dressed smartly from head to toe; in fact, in the words of the 1973 Kinks song, "A dedicated follower of fashion," but Ethan was terribly untidy. He never picked up his wet towels after a shower; never cleaned his dishes after tea and never put his clothes away after his mum had washed and ironed them.



In his dreams one night, he met a leprechaun who told him that if he did all the household chores for a month, he would grant Ethan two wishes. The dream felt so real that when he awoke the next morning, he just couldn't be sure, so he thought, 'I've got nothing to lose. I'll give it a try!'

His Mum and dad were flabbergasted; in fact, never had their flabber been so gasted. Is there something wrong with him, worried his mum. Should we take him to the hospital? worried his dad. But as sensible parents who never looked a gift horse in the mouth, they let him carry on cleaning. His mum bought him his own

pair of washing up gloves. His dad bought him his own kit for washing the car!

And for an entire month, Ethan was as good as his word as his word.

At the end of the month, nothing had happened, other than his parents smiling at him all the time, rubbing his hair and calling him a grand lad.

So, Ethan carried on into the second month despite going to bed most nights disappointed and, with all the extra chores, exhausted.

Then one night towards the end of the second month, the Leprechaun appeared in his dream again. "You've done as you were asked, and now two wishes are yours."

Ethan asked his name. "Taffy," the Leprechaun replied.

"Taffy?"

"Yes, what of it?" snapped the Leprechaun. "My mother's from Wales,"

"Whales? Oh! Wales, the country, not whales that swim in the sea! Oh! I don't believe it!" Ethan shook his head.

Before the Leprechaun could change his mind, Ethan asked for his two wishes.

His first wish was to have the best left foot ever, and in case he had to go into goal, the second wish was to have the safest pair of hands ever.

Ethan awoke the next day, all smiles once again, and skipped down for breakfast.

"Tea?" dad said and tossed an empty cup over to him. It was fractionally short, but Ethan reached out and touched the cup with the tip of his left fingers, sending it over his head.

He spun round, stretched out his left leg and the toe of his slipper touched the cup, flicking it over his head and once again it flew into the air. Ethan reached at with his right hand at full stretch and his fingertips just managed to... Crash!

The cup smashed across the floor into many pieces.

He looked at the broken cup as shattered as his broken wishes. "It must have been a dream after all," he said out loud.

As he brushed up the broken china, he heard Taffy's voice whisper in his ear, "Sorry lad. I thought you said safe legs. Well, you didn't fall over."

Places to Go

CHRISTMAS



The Light Before Christmas
29th November - 7th December

Liverpool Cathedral

❄️ **STEP INTO A MAGICAL CHRISTMAS JOURNEY!** ❄️

This immersive sound and light installation will transform Liverpool Cathedral's iconic Gothic interior into a stunning canvas of light, sound, and storytelling.

What to expect:

Immersive Light and Sound: Dazzling projections and bespoke soundscapes that bring the Nativity story to life.
Stunning Architecture: See Liverpool Cathedral in a whole new light as the Gothic interior becomes a magical wonderland.

Family-Friendly: An unforgettable Christmas experience for visitors of all ages.

The Light Before Christmas

On the left is a poster for the highly praised Liverpool Cathedral Sound and Light experience.

Tickets can be obtained from www.ticketquater.co.uk. Type "The Light Before Christmas" in the search bar.

Christmas Lunch Details

Friday 6th December. at
"Inside Number 4" – 4a
Carnegie Avenue, Crosby, L23
3BR. 12-30pm start.

Please see Cathy or Carol to confirm your place, your menu choice, and pay your £10 at November's drop in.

Menu on page 8.

Carols by Lantern Light



This event takes place on 10th December. Again, search on Ticketquater

Branch Announcements and Miscellany

Drop-in Charges

As you will know, Headway Sefton is entirely self-funding. We raise funds from our volunteer-led fundraisers, like Michelle's Afternoon Tea in July, Craig's Charity Walks and the occasional corporate sponsorship. We receive no funds from Headway UK. All of this goes back to the members as drop-in, adventure holiday, Christmas lunches, days out, etc. Everyone you see in volunteer t-shirts and sweatshirts gives up their time for nothing.

Each last-Thursday of the Month Drop-In costs in the region of £150, when factoring in costs such as tea, milk and sugar; sandwiches are not cheap and the hall is charged at a commercial rate.

Newsletter Back issues

From September, all newsletters have been made available on the website at <https://www.headwaysefton.co.uk>

Select "News" from the menu and find the links at the bottom of the page.

Newsletters prior to this are available in Google Drive folder at:

<https://t.ly/a94Oq>



We ask for a minimum donation of £1 at each drop in to help cover some of these costs. If you can afford £2 or even £3, please drop another coin or two in the cash box.

That said, we also understand that even £1 can be a stretch for some at times, so don't be embarrassed to talk to one of the organisers.

Next Issue and Deadline



You won't be surprised to hear that there won't be a Newsletter in December because Boxing Day falls on the last Thursday.

So, there is no excuse for missing the deadline for the next Newsletter, which is:

Sunday January 19th

HEADWAY SEFTON SPONSORS

carpenters group



Carol Hopwood,
Head of Serious and
Catastrophic Injury

cmh@carpentersgroup.co.uk
Phone: 07866 367886

 CARERS CARD UK

Leanne Jones

Date of birth
12-01-1988

Number
667GFRG6754H

Emergency contacts
07719 123675
07719 567556

In association with


Identifying carers

www.carerscarduk.co.uk

Social Media Presence

Headway and Headway Sefton are each available online both dedicated websites and social media.

FACEBOOK:

Headway - the brain injury charity
Headway - the brain injury association
Headway Sefton

INSTAGRAM:

HeadwaySefton

X (Come on! It's Twitter):

@HeadwayUK
@HeadwaySefton

YOUTUBE:

Headway - the brain injury association

Social IRL Presence

K.I.T (Keep In Touch group)



Every Wednesday Wetherspoons in South Road, Waterloo, hosts our K.I.T from 10am. This is a peer-led, less formal, drop in where all are welcome.

While the K.I.T. Group is for brain trauma survivors, we encourage family members, carers, support workers, and therapists to come along too. And the tea is so cheap.

Monthly Dop-In

At 11.30am on the last Thursday of every month, Headway Sefton opens the doors at Waterloo Community Centre, Great Georges Road, Waterloo for its drop in.

Tea/coffee, sandwiches, and an encouraging ear or two are all offered for the small donation of £1 (or more if you can afford it). Regular activities are arranged from talks to days out.

And, finally





INSIDE NO4

Christmas Lunch

Monday - Friday 12- 4pm

2 course £20

3 course £24

STARTERS

Roast Parsnip & Butterbean Soup (VG, GF)

A velvety blend of roasted parsnips and butter beans, topped with crunchy croutons and crispy onions

Chicken Parfait (GF)

Smooth and creamy chicken parfait served with a red onion chutney and crispy focaccia crisps

*Traditional Roast turkey
with all the festive trimmings.*

Garlic mushrooms (GFOA, VG)

served on sourdough with garlic cream & shaved Italian cheese

MAINS

Traditional Turkey (GF)

With all the festive trimmings

Salmon with crab & parmesan risotto & cheese.

Haddock Fillet (GF)

Pan-seared haddock fillet served with garlic mussels in a creamy sauce with parsley mash

Traditional Nut Roast (VG)

With all the festive trimmings

DESSERTS

Xmas pudding with brandy sauce (GF, VGOA)

Vanilla cheesecake with mulled wine compote

Festive Eaton Mess

with seasonal berries whipped cream and crispy meringue

GFOA - Gluten Free Options Available . GF- Gluten Free.

V - Vegetarian. VG - Vegan

