



Headway Essex News

Winter 2021



A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER

We look back on the Christmas 35 campaign and the people that made it possible (page 7)

INSIDE

SERVICE NEWS

Find out how our Centres celebrated Christmas and their plans for the New Year

Page 4



GET INVOLVED

Get 2021 off to a flying start and help us bounce back this year!

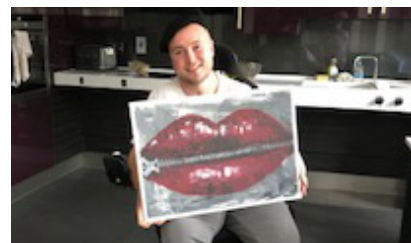
Page 9



REECE'S STORY

Read about Reece Clarke's inspiring journey of recovery after his brain injury

Page 10



Contents

Winter 2021 Issue

04 Service News

Find out the latest news from Headway Essex services, clients, staff, volunteers and more

07 Fundraising

Find out the latest on our Christmas 35 campaign from the fundraising team

09 Get Involved

Help us bounce back this year by supporting Headway Essex with your own fundraising ideas

10 Reece's Story

Discover Reece Clarke's amazing story and his inspiring recovery journey after being injured on duty

12 Thank You

To everyone who raises vital funds for Headway Essex. Your support makes a huge difference to the lives of those living with the effects of an acquired brain injury

About Headway Essex

Headway Essex is an independent charity, which provides support to people living with acquired brain injury (ABI) and their families in Essex. We support around 500 people a year across Essex, in the community and at our day centres.

As a charity, our mission is to ensure that everyone in Essex living with an acquired brain injury can live a fulfilling life and families and carers are better able to cope within their caring roles.

Our two day centres in Colchester & Benfleet, offer a specialist person-centred approach to rehabilitate, educate, inform and support each client with their own personal recovery journey. In the community we provide emotional and practical

support to address health and social issues faced by our clients and their families, as a result of brain injury; visiting clients in hospital, in their homes, providing telephone support, and support group meetings across all localities in Essex.

Registered Charity Number: 1008807

Patron: David Tennant

Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England and Wales No. 2674755

CEO'S MESSAGE FROM JOANNA WRIGHT



Happy New Year to all our readers!

Happy New Year and thank you to everyone for your support over what turned out to be a very challenging year for everyone.

Coronavirus disrupted our lives and our plans, but we were determined it would not stop us in our tracks. I am so proud of how the team at Headway Essex rallied to respond and adapt to new ways of working to ensure we could continue to support our clients with their health, wellbeing and development needs. I would also like to thank our service users who embraced the new ways to engage with us and each other. And to all our supporters and the grant providers who responded so quickly and generously to help in our hour of need.

My heart goes out to all those who have had COVID and my condolences to those who have lost loved ones. It may not be the best start to the New Year we could have hoped for but as I reflect over the last 10 months there is much to be grateful for and much more still to look forward to in this coming year.

In an unsettling and difficult 2020 there were many successes we are proud of. Within a few days of lockdown, we had planned and were providing virtual day services using a digital platform, offering rehabilitative virtual sessions. Underpinning this we had to ensure that all relevant policies and risk assessments were in place to support the new service provision and working practices.

Our fundraising events were all cancelled including their income and we were facing a £100,000 deficit. We responded with new ideas for fundraising campaigns and virtual fundraising events and are very grateful for the support of our Patron David Tennant who helped to boost engagement with our campaigns.

We were also fortunate that the government and many grant giving organisations were quick to react with opportunities to apply for emergency funding. As a result of fundraising and our cost saving efforts we expect to move from a deficit to hopefully a breakeven position at the end of our financial year, which is a real cause to celebrate amid a pandemic. We are bracing ourselves for 2021 now.

Through our social media feeds and website we were able to engage with supporters and service users providing vital information, advice, support and ideas for keeping motivated and active during the pandemic.

We took a big step towards securing our future sustainability when we at last took ownership of the Headway Centre in Colchester and we look forward to a time when we can properly celebrate this momentous occasion. Our special thanks to all our funders and particularly to the Catalyst Trust who were indeed a catalyst for this building purchase project.

Our work did not stop there as restrictions lifted and the virus came under control in the summer we were busy creating a COVID secure environment at our Headway Centre including adaptations, equipment and reconfigured offices and space. Sadly, with rising cases in Essex, we are currently closed again but we are sure it won't be long until we are welcoming our service users back.

So I look to 2021 and see only hope and a bright future of better days to come. Our Centres in both the North and South will reopen and our virtual services, that have proved so successful, will continue to run alongside the day centre activities. This provides more choice and flexibility for adults with acquired brain injury in Essex.

Thank you all for your support and for taking the time to read our Newsletter. A happy, healthy and prosperous 2021 to you all.

Joanna Wright
Chief Executive, Headway Essex

Service News

MESSAGE FROM STELLA KERINS

Happy New Year to you all

I would have loved to talk to you about everything positive but sadly we are still in the midst of this pandemic, hopefully you will all be taking heart from the fact that the vaccine is now being rolled out.

In the brief relaxing of restrictions our centres operated differently due to space restrictions and the ability to social distance.



Stella Kerins outside our Colchester centre

In our South and West Hub we were able to offer face-to-face assessments and carried on providing virtual activities, carers groups and support groups.

In our North and Mid Hub we were able to re-open our day centre on the 1st October. Our clients and their families were very pleased to be back and I am very pleased to say that all of the staff and clients remained safe in our COVID secure environment. Sadly Essex County Council advised us to close our doors and revert to virtual and outreach services in January. We also carried on with virtual carers groups and support groups.

We will continue to provide the best support to our current service users, through telephone support, our virtual day centre and our virtual activity sessions. Alongside this we are talking to colleagues in health and social care to ensure that they and their teams know about our services and have access to referral information.

Our support email abisupport@headwayessex.org.uk and our helpline 01206 845945 are available Monday to Friday 08.30 – 16.30 should you or anyone you know wish to contact us.

I would like to say thank you to our amazing team for their continued dedication and the wonderful energy they bring to our services and to our clients who make it all worthwhile.

Until the next time, I hope that you and your family and friends stay safe and well.

Stella Kerins
Head of Brain Injury Care Services

Urgent Appeal

**Support Headway Essex by texting
us a donation of your choosing**

TEXT 'HEADWAYESSEX' FOLLOWED BY THE AMOUNT
YOU WISH TO DONATE TO '70450'

EXAMPLE: TO DONATE £5, TEXT 'HEADWAYESSEX 5'

TEXTS COST THE AMOUNT YOU DONATE PLUS ONE STANDARD RATE MESSAGE

North & Mid Essex News

Happy New Year to all of you

I'd like to formally welcome Alan, Danielle, Tasha to the hub support team, whilst they have now been with us a while you may or may not have spoken with them.

On reopening the Headway Centre, we were very happy to see a majority of our clients returning. Most of the activities returned in-house, within the centre, all facilitated in a COVID secure way. I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who made that happen.



North & Mid Essex centre re-opened its doors on the 1st October 2020

Whilst we did not have our usual Christmas socials this year at Stoke by Nayland, in the community support groups or at the centre, the staff did manage to make it a special occasion for people who were attending the centre. We provided a buffet for each day leading up to Christmas, with activities and a raffle (for those that won, your prizes will be waiting for you).

Fast forward to 4th January when we were due to open after the Christmas break, we find ourselves in lockdown again, and saying hello to our old friend Zoom.

Fortunately as we had already mobilised staff to work from home, with the necessary equipment, this time we were prepared, and were able to restart almost immediately.

It is really important that we continue to support clients throughout the lockdown as some would otherwise be isolated completely. Whilst I understand it is not the same as meeting in person, it does offer a form of contact, so thank you all for your patience and continued support to Headway Essex.

Alan and I will be looking to recommence the community support groups (yes via zoom/WhatsApp), so please bear with us, we will contact those of you who previously attended to advise of days/times etc.

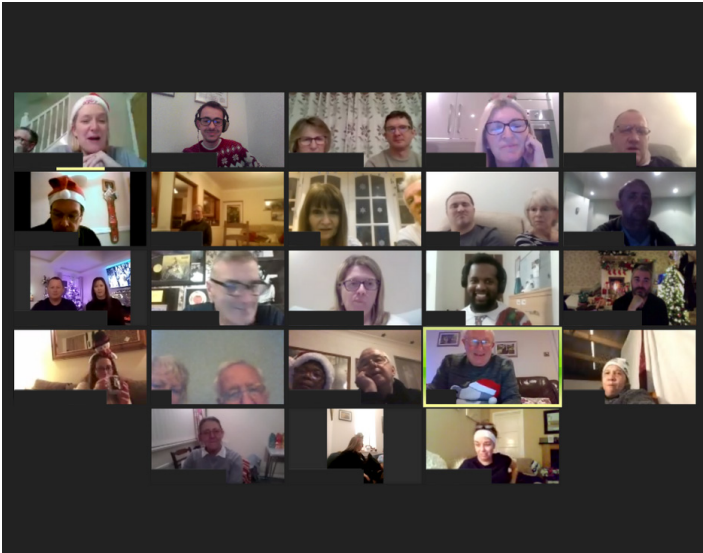
Please stay safe and hopefully we will all see each other in person in the not to distant future.

*Angie O'Toole
Service Manager North & Mid Essex*



Left to right: Henry, Annabelle, Angie, Marilyn (volunteer), Peter, Bruce (volunteer)

South & West Essex News



Benfleet hosted a Christmas Zoom party with clients

How time flies...

It only feels like I was writing our last update a few weeks ago. However, our South and West Hub have been busy, especially leading up to the Christmas period. We finished our Brain Injury and Me Group which was a success. We have also commenced our Creative Writing Group. So far our stories have included, Aliens, Detectives, Unicorns and Minks. Yes, this may sound a little odd, but we are having great fun producing some short stories. InterAct Stroke Support, also attended one of our Groups and inspired our attendees to put a list poem together.

Before Christmas we were due to hold our Annual event at Barnard's Farm. Unfortunately due to restrictions this could not take place. Instead we held this online and it proved to be a huge success on the Night, with lots of clients and loved ones attending. We even held a raffle and gave away some fab gifts, with help from local businesses.

So, what does the next three months have in store for us? Hopefully we will be running some seated Yoga classes, with the help from a local instructor. We will also aim to run another Brain Injury and Me online before the spring and of course we will continue with our Virtual Hub.

I want to assure our clients that as soon as we are able to, we will resume face to face activities, which I know we are all looking forward to.

*Gemma Baines
South & West Essex Hub Manager*

I AM HAPPY

I am feeling hot with the sun on my back
I am being lifted up by someone else's smile
I am clearing the jungle of my garden
I am beach picnics
I am being remembered with a bouquet of flowers
I am rice, peas and fried chicken
I am knowing an animal has a safe new home
I am the vitamin D of a positive person
I am lots of trips to the tip
I am 24/7 Rossi at South End
I am the bit of wire that connects me to new families
I am making messy vegan banana bread with my daughter
I am a Christmas card out of the blue
I am sitting outside really late
I am relaxing in warm weather, on a summer evening, with the sun setting, when you are
abroad, with a glass of something

Benfleet held their 2nd creative writing group and made a list poem with the help of a guest from Interact Stroke Support

Fundraising

News on recent donations and fundraising

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN FUNDRAISING

35 Years of Headway Essex

To celebrate 35 years of supporting adults with acquired brain injury in the community, last November we launched our Christmas appeal.

With the pandemic continuing to have a direct impact on our ability to fundraise, our usual Christmas fundraising activities were unable to go ahead. So, we had to get creative and find another way to raise much-needed funds.

Facing a shortfall in our income this financial year, the Christmas 35 Campaign encouraged people to either donate or fundraise £35 or more to help us keep our day services running.

Our Patron, David Tennant supported the appeal, and a signed David Tennant card was offered to everyone who raised over £35 or more.



David Tennant implored the people with his appeal video

"I know it's tough this year, and this time of year there are so many people asking for your help but I implore you, if there's anything you can do to help us out, support the Christmas 35 campaign"

David Tennant

Under the banner 'Your campaign gift today will ensure Headway Essex's tomorrow', you have helped us raise an incredible £13,695!

£13,695

Raised by 379 Supporters

To the 379 people who took part, and those who shared our appeal, we thank you. We would also like to say a special thank you to four amazing supporters who took on a challenge to raise money:

One of our clients, James Murray, bravely challenged himself to walk 3.5 miles and raised an incredible £1,025!

Louise Lane and her sister Kerry walked and ran over 35 miles to raise money in memory of their grandad Albert, who was supported by Headway Essex. Together they raised £468!

Carla Amey and some of her family took part in a 24 hour sponsored silence and raised £185!

Naomi Goodwin, who is only 12 years old, cycled 5 miles and raised £44!

From everyone at Headway Essex, thank you so much, at a time of such uncertainty, it is heart-warming to know that we have your support.

We're pleased to say that we have some signed David Tennant cards still available, so if you would like to donate or just see the special video message from David Tennant, you can view it here www.justgiving.com/campaign/christmas35



James Murray finishing his 3.5 mile walk

*Tracy Wellsted
Fundraising Manager*

What a lovely way to start the New Year, by giving to this great charity. God bless you all for the work that you do

Happy Christmas and fingers crossed for a better 2021. Thanks to David Tennant for bringing this charity to my attention.

I send love and support to everyone, we are gonna go through this together. Merry Christmas!

Here's to a happy Christmas and a successful new year for all!

May we all get through this together.

You're amazing people giving a hand to people in need. Merry Christmas and may God bless you! Keep safe!

Congratulations on 35 years of providing exemplary support for those in need, long may you continue!

I would have been lost without you.

I would like to at least give happiness to those who are living hard in a difficult world. May everyone be wrapped in love.

Thinking of you all and thankful for the great work that you do. Wishing you all the luck in the world for your campaign and hope you all have a wonderful Christmas.

It feels good to know that this little amount of money can help someone be happy.

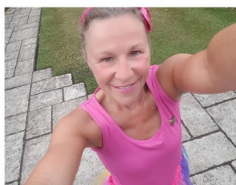
Thank you Headway. Your day centre is amazing. The staff and volunteers are brilliant. So grateful for all you do.

So inspired... keep up the good work!

Happy to help this amazing charity, who have given me so much support.



Get Involved



A few of Headway Essex's 2020 fundraisers

Fundraise for us

Help us get 2021 off to a flying start, after a year of cancelled fundraising events, help us bounce back this year!

Whether it's signing up for a sponsored challenge or holding your own event, fundraising is a fantastic way to support Headway Essex and can be a great personal achievement. Events are taking place online and all around the UK; from fun runs to skydives and virtual events, there's something to suit everyone!

Our advice is to pick something that's achievable and you love to do – for example, a dance/karaoke marathon, cake decorating competition, or a face mask-making session (and sell them afterwards).

We would love to hear from you with your fundraising ideas, send us an email at fundraising@headwayessex.org.uk if you are up for a challenge this year!

WATCH THIS SPACE...

Following the success of our Virtual Colour5K in 2020, we're already making plans to launch our second event to be held this Summer. Keep your eyes peeled over the next couple of months for information about how to get involved.

We are also fortunate enough to have two guaranteed places for this year's Virgin Money London Marathon. This will be the first-ever October marathon and places are very much in demand. If you're interested in applying for one of these places, please email us at fundraising@headwayessex.org.uk. We will be looking for runners to raise a minimum of £2,500, and in return we'll support you with your fundraising and provide you with a Headway Essex running vest and lots of cheer!



VIRTUAL colour5K 2021

Reece Clarke's Amazing Story

In our latest client story, Reece Clarke tells his amazingly inspirational story of how his creativity and determination has helped him rebuild his life after brain injury.



Reece Clarke with one of his paintings

"It was the evening of my late shift as a police special constable about 10 years ago, when a car crash on duty left me with a brain injury, which I still don't like to admit I have.

Some days I still feel like my old self, but mostly, I'm reminded by the wheelchair I am sitting in. I then get out of it, walk with my frame, go to the gym, cook, climb, laugh and more recently.... paint!

Therapies have become the norm and I would like to think I have made some good friends through my therapy team and support workers along the way. I go to physio three times per week, without fail and choose to live an active life as much as possible. I live for the gym and love swimming too. My OT generally gives me a good reason to chase my dreams and challenges me to better myself. I continue to fight for my own independence and beat the expectations that are assumed of me.

The Headway South Essex Hub has become like a second family to me. A place where I feel understood by others who had suffered similar injuries to me. I completed the "Brain Injury and Me" course, which provided useful tools and techniques to compensate for the effects of my brain injury.

I also attend the social support groups where I was able to practise my presentation skills, through giving a talk about my experience and some of my projects.

My creativity stems from my days as a musician and saxophonist. I was a member of a jazz band and lived for the improvisation solos. I also seemed to have a way with humour and this has thankfully not left me. Since the accident, I had to say farewell to certain things, like being able to arrest people. Although technically, I still can, just need the cuffs, so watch yourselves!

I started rock climbing as part of my therapy in 2016. It wasn't long before I was hooked and started a climbing

group, called “Project Climb”. This group is still going at The Lock in Harlow, focussing on accessible climbing for young people who have sustained a head injury.

I have also embraced my quirky way with words and completed an advanced creative writing course, enjoying writing dark thrillers and humorous short stories.

Like for many of us, lockdown hit hard and robbed me of much that I enjoy doing. However, it has also benefitted me in that I had to look at the half full rather than half empty glass. I have always felt that creative activities stimulated my mind and soul. I started to explore painting.

It all started with the birth of my beautiful niece, Amelia and me wanting to paint for her. The first was a series of acrylic tulips. It took a few practices; however, they were all pretty great in the end. I received some requests from close family and friends with demands for paintings rolling in. I had to think carefully about my techniques and equipment due to the muscle tone in my hands. I discovered some great tutorials from professional artists online, who I could learn from and discovered my own style. I am working towards being able to attend more art workshops and courses once lockdown has lifted.



My highlight (and biggest challenge) was a commission piece to paint the cover of a Capability Brown album. The funds are being donated to Headway Essex (South Essex Hub) for their support, services and friendliness! However, as much as I stressed about it, it always works out in the end.

P.S Officially, I am still a copper, but without the handcuffs, so watch out!”

Reece Clarke

Generate free donations for us when you shop the perfect Valentine's Day gift

Give as you Live[®] Online

BLOOM&WILD blossoming gifts w.bunches buyagift ERNEST JONES LOVE & LIFE Etsy F.HINDS FIREBOX GOLDSMITHS

Harrods HOTEL CHOCOLAT H.SAMUEL THE JEWELLER Interflora moonpig PANDORA Papachase SELFRIDGES

Snapfish SPABREAKS SWAROVSKI Thornlows PHOTOBEX scribbler Clintons funkypigeon.com cardfactory

Thank You

To everyone who raises vital funds for Headway Essex, whether by having a collection tin, organising an event, taking part in a sponsored event, making a personal donation or making a donation in memory of a loved one. Your support makes a huge difference to the lives of those living with the effects of an acquired brain injury.

To everyone who has supported our Christmas 35 Campaign, we cannot explain to you how much we value your help. Thanks to your contributions, we have raised over £13,650. This money is being used to keep our services running at a time where our clients need us more than ever. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts

Thank you to the Courtenay Chapter of Upminster for their very generous donation of £1,000

Thank you to our Hive members and regular donors. Whether you have been supporting us for a while or you have recently joined us, your support is greatly appreciated by all of us here at Headway Essex

Thank you to Agile Technical Solutions for your kind donation of £200

Thank you to The Big Yellow Self Storage Company who kindly donate valuable storage space to Headway Essex

Thank you to everyone who has donated anonymously, or online through Facebook, EBay, PayPal, Just Giving and Virgin Money Giving. Although we cannot thank you individually, we are very grateful for your support

Thank you to Maggie Cooper and her granddaughter, Lauren for securing a Christmas hamper of L'Oreal products for the Headway Centre raffle

Miss M Rowsell from the Fountain House Tea Room for their generous donation of £80 from their annual Christmas hamper raffle.

Thank you to SES Mechanical Services for your kind donation of £200

Thank you to the following supporters

Mrs K Cornish - £150

Mr Brian Wilson - £150

Dr Joseph Huber - £150

Jack Harker - £100

Mrs G Regan £100

Tracey and Simon Nice £100

Legacy

We are very grateful to the late Mick Pywell who left a generous legacy to Headway Essex in his Will. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his family and friends; he was a loving husband, father and carer to one of our service users. His legacy has enabled us to continue our work to help people with an acquired brain injury during a very challenging period.



Donations In Memory



We thank the family and friends for the kind donations made in memory. Our thoughts are with you at this difficult time.

The Reverend Canon Alan Cross

Ella Alexander

Jonathan Wright

Edgar John Woodiwiss

Become a Hive Member

In Essex, every 58 minutes, someone is admitted to hospital with a brain injury. Quite often, their life and the lives of their family members will forever be affected. By making a regular donation you can make a huge difference to improve their lives.

Whatever your regular gift, it will help ensure we can be there for many years to come; taking clients and their families from a place of surviving to thriving.

By joining the Headway Essex Hive, your commitment will bring you closer to our work through updates on the impact your gift is making. We promise every penny you give will go towards continuing our work, supporting people living with acquired brain injury.

For further information about becoming a Headway Essex Hive member, please contact our fundraising team fundraising@headwayessex.org.uk or visit our website www.headwayessex.org.uk.



In Memory Donations

We are always incredibly touched and grateful to receive donations in memory of someone special.

Fundraising in memory of someone is a touching way to remember a loved one - creating a lasting tribute by celebrating their life, whilst helping others at the same time.

We realise that everyone is different, so there are a number of ways you could choose to fundraise for Headway Essex in memory of someone dear to you:

- Make a donation in the name of your loved one
- Hold a collection at a funeral or memorial
- Take on a fundraising challenge in their memory
- Create an online tribute fund either through Virgin Money or Just Giving



We will always respect your privacy and ensure your donation is used for the greatest impact.

You can find more information about In Memory Donations on our Website, or please call our fundraising team who will handle your enquiry sensitively and help to guide you.

**You can reach the fundraising team on 01206 845945
or email fundraising@headwayessex.org.uk**

Thank You

to all our supporters, partners, commissioners, trustees, volunteers and funders. There are so many ways you get involved!

To find out how you can help raise funds, visit
www.headwayessex.org.uk/i-want-to-help



Contact us

FUNDRAISING:

fundraising@headwayessex.org.uk
01206 845945 (Option 5)
6th Floor Annex, Wellington House
90-92 Butt Road, Colchester,
Essex, CO3 3DA

COMMUNITY SUPPORT:

abisupport@headwayessex.org.uk
01206 845945 (Option 1)
6th Floor Annex, Wellington House
90-92 Butt Road, Colchester,
Essex, CO3 3DA

THE HEADWAY CENTRE:

dayservice@headwayessex.org.uk
01206 845945 (Option 2)
The Headway Centre, Woodland
Walk, Colchester,
Essex, CO4 6DH

FACEBOOK: @headway.essex **TWITTER:** @headwayessex **INSTAGRAM:** @headwayessex

www.headwayessex.org.uk



**Headway
Essex**

Registered Charity Number 1008807



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**