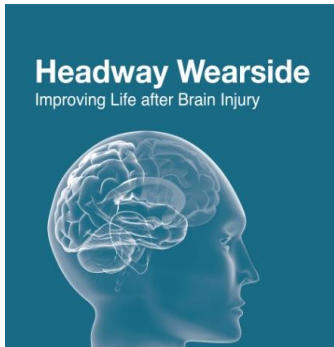


# Headway Wearside

Improving Life after Brain Injury



## Annual Report



# 2018 – 2019



Headway Wearside is Registered under Charity Number: 1140910 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England no 07504702

“Affiliated to Headway UK, the brain injury association ”

## **Welcome**

Headway Wearside is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, it is affiliated to Headway UK the national brain injury association.

Headway Wearside was formally launched on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009, by the Mayor of Sunderland at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland.

## **Who is it for?**

Headway Wearside is open to anyone with an acquired brain injury, their family members and carers or health and social care professionals with an interest in acquired brain injury.

## **What is an Acquired Brain Injury?**

The term 'acquired brain injury' or 'ABI' includes traumatic brain injuries, such as open or closed head injuries, or non-traumatic brain injuries, such as those caused by strokes and other vascular accidents, tumours, infectious diseases, hypoxia, metabolic disorders (e.g. liver and kidney diseases or diabetic coma), and toxic products taken into the body through inhalation or ingestion.

Acquired Brain Injury is known as the 'Hidden Disability' and people rarely realise the challenges that caring for a person with a brain injury can bring. Living with an Acquired Brain Injury can mean having to cope with mobility difficulties, memory loss, extreme fatigue, cognitive and behavioural difficulties and personality changes. We often hear brain injury survivors describing themselves as being 'completely different people' following their injury.

## **Aims of the organisation**

Headway Wearside aims to provide information, support and social activities for brain injury survivors, their families and their carers in Sunderland and surrounding areas.

We aim to provide support and social activities to individuals who have an acquired brain injury in order to promote and increase social independence and in turn reduce isolation and issues relating to depression, anxiety and reduced confidence.

We hope to increase the confidence of those who have an acquired brain injury to enable them to take part in their community. This in turn will hopefully help them to feel safe in their community thus increasing their feeling of wellbeing.

We aim to reduce the stigma often experienced by those who have an acquired brain injury by raising public awareness of issues surrounding brain injury.

We provide signposting and information about local services for brain injury survivors, their families and carers.

## **What does Headway Wearside do?**

The unique combination and variety of problems faced by individuals with Acquired Brain Injury frequently leads to isolation and the inability to access appropriate services.

We are a person-centred organisation, so instead of telling our group members what to do, we aim to empower and enable people by supporting them to develop their skills and abilities to cope better with the difficulties which arise from having an acquired brain injury.

Therefore at Headway Wearside we aim to offer the following:

- ❖ To increase awareness of brain injury and its consequences
- ❖ To initiate activities and campaigns which will reduce the incidence of brain injury
- ❖ To provide information and support for people with acquired brain injuries, their relatives and carers and concerned professional people
- ❖ To promote improved approaches to acquired brain injury screening, acute care, assessment, rehabilitation and social re-integration
- ❖ To assist people with acquired brain injuries to return to community living, including access to appropriate accommodation, social outlets, and productive activity
- ❖ To Signpost people to relevant local services for persons with an acquired brain injury
- ❖ To hold regular social meetings and activities so people with acquired brain injuries, their relatives and carers can come together to take part in a range of activities that they themselves choose.
- ❖ Facilitate social opportunities for members to attend regional and national Headway events and meet with other members
- ❖ Provide volunteering opportunities and enable supporting professionals to come together to support its members
- ❖ Break down barriers of discrimination by working with local groups and individuals to dispel any myths or issues about acquired brain injury.

## **Who can be referred to Headway Wearside?**

Referrals must be for someone who has had an acquired brain injury (ABI).

Anyone can make a referral to Headway Wearside and we will consider all referrals whether from a health care professional, social worker, family member, carer or self-referral.

The person being referred should be at least 18 years of age. If the person is under 18 you may want to contact the Child Brain Injury Trust (CBIT) (see [www.childbraininjurytrust.org.uk](http://www.childbraininjurytrust.org.uk))

To make a referral please contact Kim Hunter Business and Community Development Officer on 0191 522 7113 / 07830346985, Email [kim.hunter@headwaywearside.org.uk](mailto:kim.hunter@headwaywearside.org.uk)

## **Chair Persons Report 2019**

I am delighted as Chairperson for the charity to say that Headway Wearside has continued to develop and grow the range of services and support we offer to our members. The AGM report provides a details of the various initiatives we have ran over the last twelve months. We are very proud to have been part of the Time for Change campaign and attended the launch of the report in Parliament last year which made a series of important recommendations for Brain Injury Services covering a number of key areas.

I am pleased to say that the charity continues to engage with its members and we have a number of Brain Injury survivors, carers and family members on our committee who volunteer their time and ensure that we are delivering activities and support that our members need. This holistic person centred approach is an important part of the charities business plan and I hope to report again next year on our 10th anniversary about further progress being made on our objectives.

I must pay particular tribute to the work carried out by Kim Hunter our fantastic Business and Community Development worker to whom as a committee we are extremely grateful.

I also pay tribute to Charlotte O'Keefe who continues to work for Headway Wearside within the NHS for the Sunderland and Gateshead Community Acquired Brain Injury Service (CABIS). This role is something which shows Headway Wearside's commitment to working collaboratively to support brain injury survivors and their families and carers in the Sunderland and surrounding areas.

As many of you will note Headway Wearside depends upon ongoing funding from various sources including charitable trusts, individual fundraising, company fundraising and most importantly ongoing funding from Sunderland City Council and the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). We are therefore very thankful for the financial support we have received.

I would therefore like to pay special tribute to all those that have been involved in fundraising for Headway Wearside. I would welcome anyone who is thinking of fundraising for us to please do so. We really do appreciate any contributions big or small to the charity.

The Sunderland and Gateshead Community Acquired Brain Injury Service (CABIS) team has been something that Headway Wearside have long lobbied for and we are thankful for the support of our three local MPs the Rt Hon Julie Elliott MP, Bridget Phillipson MP and Sharon Hodgson MP for supporting the continuation of this vital service. It is hoped that through raising the profile of Acquired Brain Injury that Brain Injury survivors, their families and carers will get the support that they need following discharge from hospital as we all know how vital that long term support can be.

**PAUL BROWN**

Chairperson of HEADWAY WEARSIDE

SERIOUS INJURY ASSOCIATE SOLICITOR AT BURNETTS SOLICITORS NEWCASTLE

## Secretary's Report

A person with a brain injury may find it very difficult to relate to others, carry out activities of daily living, or remember life before their accident. They may seem a different person to those around them and lack insight to understand the seriousness of what has happened them.

Brain injury survivors, their family and carers often feel isolated and vulnerable. It is therefore important that we continue to develop the services that Headway Wearside can provide to brain injury survivors, their families and carers in Sunderland and the surrounding area.

I would direct everyone to our fantastic web site ([www.headwaywearside.org.uk](http://www.headwaywearside.org.uk)) which provides in-depth information on brain injuries and the impact this can have not only on the individual but also on their family, friends and carers. Our website features a tribute to Margaret Ellens who was our amazing chairperson from 2012 to 2017. Links to further information including leaflets and brochures, our activity timetable, and some memorable photographs of our social events.

For those interested in fundraising we also have a Virgin Money Giving account whereby sponsorship monies for a broad range of different events can be sent to Headway Wearside. In September 2018 many of our committee members ran the Great North Run which was a huge success. We have organised further places for September 2019 as this provides a great source of revenue to allow us to continue to fund the great work of Headway Wearside.

We are continuing to develop our services and over the past year have secured further funding for Kim Hunter's post as our Business and Community Development Officer. We also have Headway worker Charlotte O'Keefe who works within the NHS Community Acquired Brain Injury Service (CABIS). Both Kim and Charlotte continue to do a fantastic job in providing our members and brain injury survivors across Sunderland and the surrounding areas with a wealth of support and guidance.

We have a regular calendar of activities enjoyed by many of our members which currently include gym sessions, relaxation therapies, peer support and art sessions. If there are further activities which you would like to get involve with then please provide us with details at our AGM and we will look to take forward as many of the suggestions as possible.

We have also been involved with the organisation of another successful Look Ahead in the North Event which took part at the Calvert Trust, Kielder, Northumberland in March this year. At the event our members enjoyed a residential weekend with activities such as rock climbing, archery, zip slide, swimming, massage and alternative therapies, quizzes, and a talent competition.

I would like to thank on behalf of Headway Wearside all the individuals and organisations who have helped and supported Headway Wearside over the past year. These include not only our fantastic committee who volunteer their time but all those who have helped to organise and host social meetings and activities and assisted with the promotion of Headway Wearside.

We are always pleased to receive suggestions about our development so feel free to contact me at [claire@holistic.org.uk](mailto:claire@holistic.org.uk). Overall, another fantastic year and I look forward to supporting the charity during the next year.

**Claire Blackbourne - Secretary of Headway Wearside**

## **Treasurers Report 2019**

## **Neurohounds - Andrew Patterson**

As part of the AGM in 2018 I presented on the previous work of NeuroHounds, which has been exploring the potential benefits of the greyhound dog working specifically within Neuro-Rehabilitation.

A 6 week pilot study was completed in 2014, which used retired greyhound dogs in therapy at a Neuro-Rehabilitation Centre. The findings of this service evaluation was the first step in developing an evidence-base of a wider initiative, known as NeuroHounds.

Four main themes were identified:

- Service structure
- Traits of the Greyhound
- Client Benefits
- Implications for therapy & staff

The results of the service evaluation indicated that with some minor adjustments to the structure of the service there is potential for added therapeutic benefits. The results strongly advocate for the use of the retired racing greyhound dog in ABI therapy, bringing personal enjoyment and meaning to one's life, helping them to develop new roles and learning to adapt to their newfound deficits. The initial review of the Neurohounds project showed promise of a 'Grey'ter' future for neuro-rehabilitation in healthcare.

There has been a significant timeframe since the pilot study and progressing NeuroHounds. It is now at the stage where additional qualitative and quantitative research options are being explored to establish further evidence about the potential benefit of this special breed as a positive addition to the often complex Neuro-Rehabilitation process.

### **Carers support**

We have several carers registered with us that attend a range of carer support and information sessions. Andrew has attended some training with Sunderland Carers Centre as part of their .....

### **Andrew Elkington – Carer [lead]**

Headway Wearside continues to manage an impressive portfolio of support for Brain Injury survivors and their carers. As always, funding is a major issue but we also have great support from the University of Sunderland and local therapists which enables us to offer services we might otherwise struggle to afford.

I am keen to see more carer engagement since, as a carer myself, I know the benefits of peer support. Sunderland Carers Centre provides a great service in general to carers but there is little specific help for carers of Brain Injury Survivors, this is where Headway can step in.

I have attended pilots for some of the exciting projects run by Health Education North East in partnership with the University and Carers Centre in regard to Out of Hospital Support, enabling carers to better understand and monitor their cared-for as well as how to communicate effectively with medical/emergency teams and create Emergency Healthcare Plans. Hopefully this will become an invaluable resource for our carers.

# **Community Acquired Brain Injury Service - CABIS**

## **Headway Co-ordinator**

The Headway Service Co-ordinator, works within the Community Acquired Brain Injury Service. The role includes providing benefits and housing advice, and running peer support groups. Here are some of this year's highlights.

### **Peer Support**

The peer support provides support to people who have had a brain injury and their families. The group gives people an opportunity to meet others who share similar experiences to support one another and develop friendships.

The group has been successful in helping people make new friends and try out new activities. The group has also provided an introduction to Headway Wearside Activities, including accessing Headway ID cards, education sessions and Christmas meals.

### **Benefits Advice**

Over the past year 48 people have had support with their benefits. This has included help to complete benefits applications, ask for reviews of benefits decisions and to attend benefits appointments. Over the past year, across Sunderland and Gateshead clients have confirmed that the Headway Co-ordinator has helped people claim or retain £292,000.

For example due to time spent in hospital a gentleman with a severe brain injury incurred overpayment of his benefits, which should have been suspended while he was an in-patient. He was not in a position to inform the benefits agency and his family were too focused on his recovery to consider that they needed to do this. As a result the family faced having to repay thousands of pounds of benefits. Working in partnership with local MP Bridgette Phillipson we were able to get the DWP and Inland Revenue to right off over £6000 of overpaid benefits. Additionally, the family were helped to challenge a Housing Benefit decision, resulting in them receiving £900 of back dated housing benefit, and to have their council tax liability reduced.

### **Housing Advice**

Clients have received support to apply for housing, avoid eviction from their property and understand the housing process.

For example a client had received a court date seeking possession of her home due to rent arrears, she was very anxious and upset about the thought of losing her home. She needed to access specialist support from Shelter in Newcastle, she was very anxious about getting to the appointment and was unable to afford transport, Headway where able to assist her with the cost of transport and the Headway Coordinator was able to attend the appointment with her to ensure that she was able to access this support. With help from Shelter and she was able to retain her tenancy and focus on her recovery.

### **Conclusion**

The Headway Service Coordinator's role is currently funded until June 2019, there is ongoing work being undertaken to ensure that the role is included in a future regional CABIS service.



## Core Services and Activity Time

The Activity and Therapy Centre is a base where planned activities and learning opportunities can take place. It has also enabled survivors to call into Headway Wearside at any time during the week by providing a relaxation area stocked with a jigsaws, reading materials and art and craft materials. Refreshments are always available at any time so that families and members can meet.

This year has seen the continuation of our Dreams Project. An opportunity for Brain Injury Survivors and their carers to meet new people, share experiences and increase confidence by developing new friendships with people who understand what they have gone through.

The project has helped members to feel supported to improve their health and wellbeing, reduce the impact of negative life events (such as loneliness, depression, disability) and decrease stress levels. The project has offered opportunities for survivors to be more independent by attending sessions at regular times with same people where they feel comfortable to come to the same environment where they feel relaxed and amongst friends.

We have worked with carers and held supported carer groups discussing a range of issues including benefit advice, relationship management, stress relief, one carer accessed training on how to support someone with anger issues. We have given information booklets and signposted to specialist carer support.

Alongside DREAMS and with funding and support from a range of sources we have been able to provide the following.

- ❖ 1598 Times the activities have been accessed
- ❖ 144 Gym sessions in partnership with Sunderland University
- ❖ 48 Art and Craft sessions with Julies Arts
- ❖ 18 Relaxation therapy sessions with Klaire from Natural Selection therapies
- ❖ 10 Social outings for meals.
- ❖ 1 Residential Weekend [lookahead in the North]
- ❖ 1 Trip to London
- ❖ 2 Carers Groups
- ❖ Transport to 45 activities
- ❖ 1 Campaign event [Time to Change]

**Face to face support has included a range of help with the following with a total of 300+ hours during the year.**

**Benefits** – support to complete pip forms, mandatory reconsiderations, DLA assessments, Universal credit set up.

**Utility bills** – support to understand bills/statements and stepping in when transfers have gone wrong ending in disconnection of service. Fuel poverty

**Fines** – Prescription charge difficulties.

**Transport** – arranged emergency transport

**Crisis Support** - Hospital and Dental appointments, Housing enquiries, Shopping vouchers/finance, Relationships, and bereavement

## **Sports**

Sport plays a large part of our DREAMS project. A fully developed programme of sports and exercise in partnership with Sunderland University City Space. Members use the gym for an hour then take part in fun games and exercises to help strengthen core muscle groups and aid balance and co-ordination.

Meeting for lunch after the sessions also helps to form great friendship groups and an opportunity to talk to others in the same position.

University Students play a vital role as they also volunteer within the sessions, offering support, guidance and encouragement.

Transport was provided from a grant from Peoples Health Trust to space for those that had no access to transport and found it difficult to access public transport unaided.

The Gym sessions have become so successful that they have increased to three times a week.

## **Tennis**

Working in partnership with A690 group we have provided twice monthly tennis sessions, these at first were held in the main hall at Headway Wearside office, but reviewed and then transferred to be a bolt on added extra to the gym sessions at Sunderland University

## **LAN 8 – Look ahead in the North**

The Look Ahead in the North Event in March 2018 This was a residential weekend for 126 people from Headway groups and branches mainly from the North East of England attended and took part in a range of activities and entertainment at the Calvert Trust, It included a range of physical activities eg king swing, high ropes, use of the pool, relaxation therapies, walks. A selection of more sedate and relaxing activities were also provided such as sand art, card making. There was also a birds of prey demonstration and a mobile zoo allowing members to get up close to handle animals they would not normally encounter. Raffles and auctions, all of which helped to fund the residential.

One of our members this year entered LANs got talent singing.

Headway Wearside would like to say a special thank you and goodbye to Alastair White Regional network support Manager who has been instrumental in setting up and the smooth running of the Lan since its conception in 2000, Alastair started a new post at Neural Pathways 2018.

## **Relaxation Sessions**

Massage and therapy sessions were provided by Natural Selection, twice monthly sessions have enabled members to have regular opportunities to massage, reiki and aromatherapy sessions.

## **Art By julie**

Weekly art and craft activity classes were held in the activity room. Julie a local artist and carer working in the community has helped members to plan and complete a range of creative activities.

## Relaxation with Klaire From Natural Selection



This year the massages at Headway Wearside have had very positive affects with and on the people accessing this service.

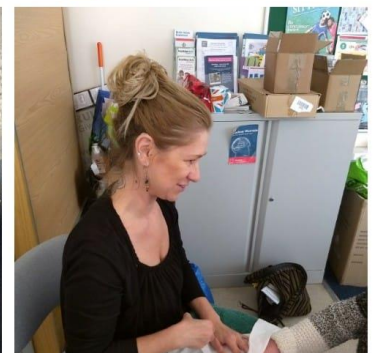
I come twice a month to offer a range of therapies, hoping people will gain some relief from pain, mild improvement in movement of muscles and joints as well as feeling positive mentally from the sessions. People get around 20 minutes per session. We work with what their needs are on that day, but they find doing work on the same muscle groups and regularly is having a positive effect on their bodies.

I offer massage, reflexology, neck and shoulder and hand and arm massage, reiki and allow people to talk freely about their struggles or gains.

There are a mix of people and needs of those who access these sessions. Men and women come of a varied age. It is wonderful that the men come, as men can find it harder than women to 'look after themselves'. However, the benefit they get totally outweighs any embarrassment they could feel from accessing sessions with a therapist, particularly if they need to expose any skin.

We use either a chair to sit on or an on-site massage chair for the therapies. I use base oils and essential oils which gives a boost to their immune system or helps encourage less muscle ache and pain.

This year I really feel we have met these targets we have set ourselves.





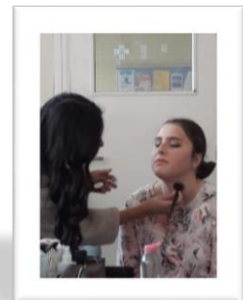
## Ladies Group

Because we are all different, but all the same [ ladies with an acquired brain injury or ladies that care ] and no matter what type or shoe you wear join our ladies group . - This was the information we out to our Ladies.



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We were lucky enough to hold sessions on a Saturday Morning and Georgia Mordey World Supermodel England Finalist came along to help us all learn about skin care, and how to apply make up in a professional way. We tried face masks, moisturisers and yes even fillers.



## Volunteering

The sessions were supported by young volunteer Grace Brown who was on placement the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Grace also helped out in the office designing posters, helping with mail outs, filing and generally the place tidy and organised.

Thank you Grace.



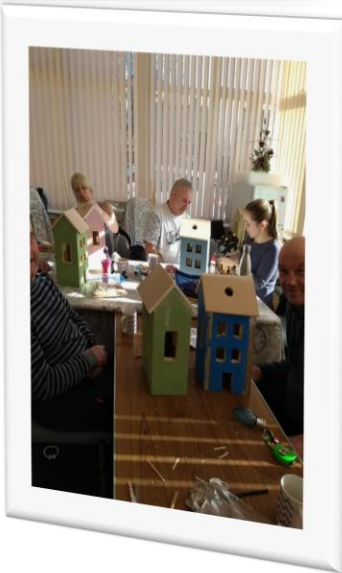
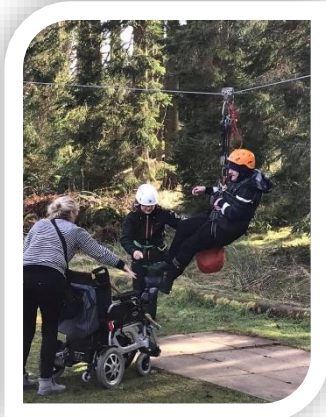
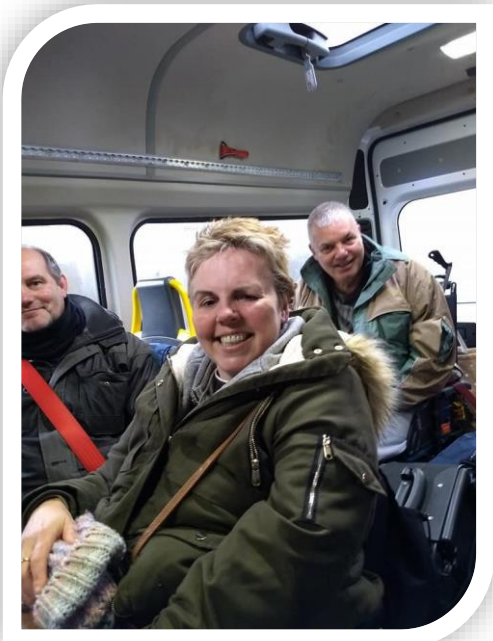
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The Gallery





## **I went to London to meet .....???? Read more about Neil, Jimmy and who they met in London.**

What was the reason for the trip to parliament , who did you meet and what happened?.



**Neil** – I went to London to meet with the MPs, it was my own MP Bridget Philipson and Julie Elliott who had come to the gym last month to talk to us and Sharon Hodgson

We travelled by train and taxi and got there and Bridget Philipson was waiting for us. We talked about what we did at headway Wearside, we said how important it was. I told her that without it I wouldn't be doing much, I told her how I had made new friends and how we meet up on another day and go bowling. I told her about Jimmy who is my mate now and he even comes with me to the stroke club. I also said about how the funding is always being cut and how kim has to find more so that we can do things at the centre.

We went by train and then taxi and just made it in time. We had to go through the security.

**Jimmy** - I only found out I was going the night before. I went to meet my MP Bridget Phillipson, I told her that I had firstly gone to the CABIS [Community acquired brain injury service] and then they had took me to visit Kim at headway Wearside. I told Bridget about the things I do at headway, I go to the gym 3 times a week and go to the art group. I have also met new friends and before that I didn't go out very much except when my wife took me out. Now I can sometimes get the bus to headway with my friends.

### **Planning did the trip go to plan and did you learn anything from it ?**

**Neil** – before we went on 9<sup>th</sup> we did a practice run. I was so glad we did as I hadn't been on a train in my wheelchair and I was "bricking it" the practice was good as it meant that I knew what to expect , it gave me confidence to go.

Kim did all the planning she asked if I would be able to get to the train station, we had to arrange for my carer to come in early to do my laces as I needed to be in the taxi early to get to the station. It took along time to book the assistance for the tickets on the train. I had to remember dates etc and times to tell them on the phone as it was booked in my name.

I have now learned how to do that and I have booked my own train journey to visit my friend for a week . I would not have been able to do that before.

When we got there we couldn't go the normal way to the room as it had stairs and had to wait for someone to take us through the back way to get there.

**Jimmy** - I met Neil early the next morning and we got a taxi to the train station, Neil knew where he was going as he had already been there. I just went with him . We were very early for the train but that was better.

## **Where there any accessibility issues?**

**Neil** - We had to go a different way around at parliament. The maps didn't show a route for us but they were very helpful and escorted us in and out.

## **What did going to parliament mean to you ? what was your favourite part of the day?**

**Neil** – it meant that I was a star. I'd never been anywhere like that before and I felt very special to be able to go to parliament. I could just be myself and talk in my own words and didn't have to use long words. "I even used a swear word because I forgot the right word to use and she didn't tell me off"

**Jimmy** – Getting my point across was good as they listened to me and it felt good, the MPs put me at my ease and made me feel comfortable.

## **How has being involved with Headway Wearside benefitted you ?**

**Neil**- Helps me try to communicate with others better. Before I would always use swear words because I couldn't remember the right words. Now I have to think more. It also means I can help other people more. "I lead by example and ask them to join in and to meet up to do more stuff like bowling." I have been able to help new people and made new friends

**Jimmy** – "attitude towards living has improved, it has helped me to talk up more and to be more confident, it brings out my confidence. I never used to have many people that I would talk too. Now I have a new group of friends that understands me.

I was nominated for a Headway Wearside star award which I got a trophy for and a Headway uk award." If I did not come to Headway and do the activities and meet new people this would not have happened.

## **Sharon Hodgson – House of Commons 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018**



Headway Wearside, whose representatives I met recently at the rally in Parliament, provides information, support and social activities for brain injury survivors, and works with the local community, relevant professionals and organisations to promote understanding of ABI. I spoke to Neil and Jimmy, who use the Headway Wearside service, and was touched when they explained that Headway had brought them together as a community, and they had formed friendships that they never expected to form. Headway Wearside does not just teach new skills, but helps people to form and develop friendships at a time when doing so might otherwise be hard. When I met with Neil and Jimmy we feared that this service might soon be lost, and I am pleased to say that it has been extended to June 2019, and I hope it will be extended still further so that patients can have access to this life-changing service. I pay tribute to Headway Wearside and all the work it does for the local community, and I will continue to support it so that this vital service can continue to support patients.

## Just to say thank you

The Trustees and staff at Headway Wearside would just like to thank all of our funders,

- Gareths Gift
- CABIS
- Cultural Spring
- Greggs Foundation
- Sunderland Clinical Commissioning group
- Peoples Health Trust

We would also like to thank our partners, supporters, organisations and staff that we have worked with during 2018/19

Burnetts Solicitors

EMG Solicitors

Holistic Case Management

JSP LTD

St Mary and St Peters Community Project

Sunderland University City Space

Headway Uk

Ukabif - UK brain Injury forum

Robert Whitelaw

Glenn Kirby

Klaire Ferry

Julie Foster