



the brain injury charity

Headway Thames Valley
FOR THOSE WITH BRAIN INJURY
AND THEIR CARERS

www.headwaythamesvalley.org.uk

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Registered charity number: 900591

Music Therapy at Headway Thames Valley supported by Henley Town Council



Headway Thames Valley Christmas Concert, December 2018, at the Christ Church Centre

Headway Thames Valley supports those with acquired brain injury and their families and provides information, practical support and services. Based in Henley-on-Thames, we work with around 140 people each year throughout Berkshire and South Oxfordshire, helping them to adapt to life after brain injury.

Through a combination of community based programmes and support services, we work to help people regain a degree of independence so that they can live fulfilled lives. A brain injury is a long term health condition, and can often be a hidden disability; challenging every aspect of your life – walking, talking, thinking and feeling.

Our services include the following:

- One to one support either face to face or by telephone providing advice and counselling to people who may need initial information, enablement support or signposting to other services.
- Around 35 to 40 people each week access our Rehabilitation and Activity Centre in Henley, taking part in activities which include art and music therapy, enablement, cognitive rehabilitation, community based activities, neuro-psychology and occupational therapy.
- Our Outreach and Enablement Groups reach over 70 people per year in the Henley, Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell and Newbury areas, providing support including psychology, occupational therapy, clinical support, enablement and well-being. The aim is to provide coping strategies, practical solutions or establish routines to help people feel more in control and able to deal with anxiety, fatigue, poor memory or aid mobility.

Music Therapy

Music Therapy for people with brain injuries is supported by Henley Town Council Community Grants, £5,000 per year for three years (2018-20).

As part of our range of community-based rehabilitation activities, the grant of £5,000 provides 50% of the funding for one year for our specialist Music Therapy support for people with acquired brain injuries. In 2018 the grant was match funded by The Mulberry Trust and for 2019 is being matched by fundraising from the Reading office of Lambert Smith Hampton.

Around 30 people participate in Music Therapy one day per week at our Rehabilitation and Activity Centre in Henley. Music Therapy is available to clients through 1:1 sessions, small groups learning to play instruments, a group for up to six clients and the Headway Thames Valley Choir which often involves 15 or 20 people. **In the last year we have delivered over 700 hours of Music Therapy.**

Music Therapy can help multiple areas of brain function, improving memory recall, speech, attention, reduces anxiety and boosts coordination. It also promotes confidence, well-being and the opportunity to socialise with others.

The music groups have proved to be successful not only in terms of the groups working well, learning their instruments and playing music together, but also they have developed into a 'safe place' for the members to share their challenges and anxieties about their brain injuries. The groups are able to use the time to talk openly with each other and provide a support network and confidential space to share their problems and offer each other advice and strategies to deal with different issues.

As a result of attending Headway Thames Valley and the music sessions regularly, we are aware that the majority of clients have improved concentration and memory, reduced social isolation, reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression. At Christmas, the clients came together with the Music Therapist to put on a concert for family, friends and the local community at the Christ Church Centre in Henley. The concert helped to boost self-esteem and gave the clients a real sense of achievement and pride in their singing and for those that played an instrument.

Personal Story

We have a client who for many years (over eight years) did not like to participate in choir or any activity involving music. He would often wear ear defenders during choir or walk out of the room during a session, even though allowances were made to limit volume within the space. During the first year that the Music Therapist worked at Headway Thames Valley, this client continued to leave choir or request to do some activities in a separate room.

Over the past year, this client has made vast advances in his ability to participate in choir. He has stopped wearing his ear defenders entirely and now has a weekly routine in choir, sitting next to a member of staff and another client, receiving 1:1 support from the staff member.

Our music therapist has offered him opportunities for solos to sing during a choir song, which he has appeared to really enjoy, performing during our Christmas concert in front of approximately 50 people which was a great success! Due to his difficulties with reading, we have also offered this

client the option of sharing lyrics with the staff member and client, the staff member leading him through the lines. The weekly choir routine seems to have helped his confidence to soar over the past year, and indicates the way in which this client has slowly opened up as he has felt ready to, has worked through his difficulties and is now really thriving!



Headway Thames Valley Christmas Concert, December 2018

Headway Thames Valley Choir – Spring Concert

We will be holding our Spring Concert for family, friends and the local community on Wednesday 15th May, 11am at our Rehabilitation & Activity Centre, Brunner Hall, 84b Greys Road, Henley, RG9 1TF.