

Herefordshire Headway End of Year Review 2025

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Rebuilding Lives, Restoring Hope

For over 25 years, Herefordshire Headway has been a lifeline for people living with acquired brain injury (ABI) and their families in our County.

Founded by those directly affected, we understand the challenges because 65% of our voting members have lived experience.

At our fully equipped Day Centre, we offer a vibrant mix of reablement, and recreational activities designed to restore confidence, rebuild skills, and bring joy back into everyday life. From speech support to creative workshops, every session helps people rediscover independence and purpose.

Our Social and Support Groups create a welcoming space for survivors and families to connect, share experiences, and learn together. We also offer peer support for carers, brief respite opportunities, and enjoyable social events—from theatre trips and meals out to quizzes and bowling—helping families strengthen bonds and improve wellbeing.

We welcome clients from across Herefordshire and beyond, tailoring services to individual needs, interests, and abilities. Our dedicated team works tirelessly to make a real difference—helping survivors adapt to physical, emotional, and social changes and embrace life after ABI.

Our Mission

To be recognised as the expert provider of support for people with ABI in Herefordshire and its borders. We also campaign on behalf of those with ABI, increasing knowledge and awareness of the profound impact on individuals and their families.

Our Objectives are to:

- ✓ Deliver therapeutic and holistic activities to aid recovery after ABI.

- ✓ Support families and carers with opportunities and guidance.
- ✓ Provide clear, accurate information on available benefits and services.
- ✓ Offer regular, confidential support for people living with ABI.
- ✓ Educate professionals and carers on best practices.
- ✓ Organise social events to strengthen community ties.
- ✓ Build partnerships locally and nationally for collaborative support.
- ✓ Raise awareness of ABI and promote our services.
- ✓ Continuously improve and expand our services.

The Difference we make

Clients: Making a Difference

We measure success by the voices of those we support. Every year, we ask our clients if we're meeting their needs—through surveys, newsletters, and regular forums. Over the last year the answer has been clear:

- ✓ **100% of respondents said they were extremely satisfied with our services.**
- ✓ **100% agreed our support helps them manage other aspects of life.**

Their words say it best:

- *"I don't know where I would be without the dedicated support I've received from Herefordshire Headway—amazing!"*
- *"Staff are superb. Always there to talk to me. Always friendly."*



Clients enjoying the Music Group with Music Therapist Hilary

Carers: Understanding Their Journey

In mid-2024, we surveyed carers and partners and held a dedicated forum to uncover the realities of life after ABI. The findings were powerful:

- **Relentless fatigue** was the most common challenge for new carers.
- Many **felt invisible** to medical services, leading to a **loss of identity and isolation**.
- **Guilt and grief** surfaced as carers missed their old lives and sometimes wished to escape the new reality.
- ABI shattered the sense of a stable future, creating deep uncertainty that often **led to anxiety and depression**.

In response, we launched a **Carers Training Programme** in August—providing practical skills, emotional support, and a community where carers can regain confidence and hope.

Volunteers: The Heart of Headway

Our volunteers are the backbone of everything we do. When asked, **100% said they feel valued for their contribution**. That's something we're proud of, but it drives us to keep raising the bar.

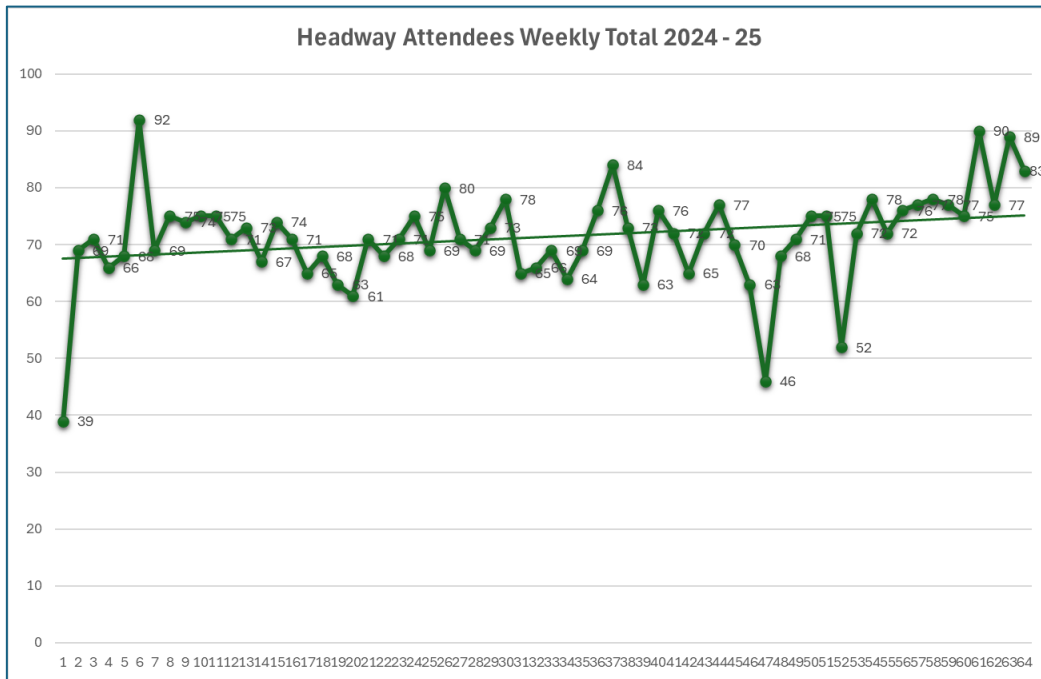
At our recent Volunteer Training Day (21/11/25), we asked why they choose Headway. Their answers spoke volumes:

- ✓ *"To make a difference. To give back. To bring hope."*
- ✓ *"Helping people to be the best they can be and seeing them progress."*
- ✓ *"Atmosphere always jolly and happy."*

Number of Beneficiaries

Throughout 2024–2025, Herefordshire Headway consistently supported an average of **75 attendees per week** at the Day Centre, with minor fluctuations attributable mostly to adverse weather conditions. This figure does not include the daily assistance provided to carers, family members, or participation in social activities, which collectively engaged **an additional 100 individuals during the year**.

Attendance patterns vary according to individual needs. Some clients attend regularly, while others engage intermittently or seek support during periods of change or crisis. Despite these variations, overall **attendance has demonstrated a steady upward trend since early 2024**, as reflected in the accompanying data.



Building Strong Partnerships

Our Centre is more than a Hub for ABI support—it's a thriving community space. By sharing our facilities, we create opportunities for collaboration and inclusion:

- **Growing Point** – A Horticultural Therapy charity supporting people with learning disabilities and older adults within our extensive garden area.
- **Armed Forces Covenant** – we are proud to stand by our local military families in Credenhill and beyond.
- **Taurus Healthcare** – Monthly health reviews for all our members.
- **Herefordshire Wood Turners Trust** – Meetings and training in our workshop.
- **Parish Church** – Messy Church, Café Church, and Communion for those with limited mobility.
- **Community Groups** – Knit and Natter, Nutty Crafters, and monthly coffee mornings.
- **HATS Network** – Active member of Herefordshire Activities Together Services, strengthening local day services.

Together, these partnerships amplify our impact—creating a network of care, creativity, and community.

We have also undertaken several **public speaking events** to showcase Herefordshire Headway as well as sharing general information related to ABI, *i.e. our CEO recently gave a 'Concussion Update' to Chartered Physiotherapists at Wye Valley NHS Trust.*



Steve, our CEO teaching a group of Chartered Physiotherapists (16/09/25)

Funding Support: Keeping Hope Alive

Our work depends on vital funding to maintain services and cover essential costs. This year, Herefordshire Council funded 14 client places and Powys Council supported 4. However, the majority of clients self-fund, with discounts offered to ensure affordability for all.

Rising core costs continue to challenge small charities like ours. Our Centre, built in 1948, requires ongoing upkeep—this year alone, we invested £22,000 to repair the roof. Our therapy garden and the raised borders also required attention. The kitchen urgently needs refurbishment to make more accessible, but resources remain limited currently.

Thanks to the **National Lottery Community Fund**, we expanded our workforce and services. We also received generous support from **EF Bulmer's, The Eveson Trust, Garfield Watkins, and the Jordans Foundation**. Alongside this we were indebted to incredible fundraising efforts from local businesses including **Luctonians RFC, Redline Telecom, Holly House Classic Car Show, and Burghill Golf Club**. Other supporters including **Lanyon Bowdler, Ady Watts, Kyrle House Practice, the Nutty Crafters and Crafty Ladies** as well as countless individual donors have also shown extraordinary generosity.

Every contribution helps us rebuild lives after brain injury. Despite the wonderful support shown we still work to very tight margins. Ongoing support remains essential.

Highlights of 2025: A Year of Progress and Possibility

2025 brought change and achievement. Following the retirement of key leaders, new staff joined and introduced fresh initiatives while maintaining seamless client support.

New Services

- ✓ **Professional Counselling**
- ✓ **Carers Training Programme**
- ✓ **Hospital Liaison Visits**
- ✓ **Say Aphasia Support Group**
- ✓ **Expanded creative opportunities within our Workshop and Pottery Class**
- ✓ **Monthly Health Reviews in partnership with Taurus Healthcare**
- ✓ **Expansion of services beyond our Centre – including Racquetball**

In July, we marked our **25th Anniversary** with a BBQ attended by 98 guests, serenaded by a ukulele band—a true celebration of resilience and community.



Our Racquetball team wearing 'Hats for Headway'

Showcasing Ability Beyond Disability:

Our clients shone at the **ABI Games hosted by Worcester University**, competing in sports, arts, and cookery against teams from across the UK. Everyone was a winner that day! The joy in achieving and sense of belonging was magical.

In November, our **Arts Exhibition** opened at **Herefordshire Archives & Records Office**, showcasing woodwork, art, and pottery that powerfully proves life after ABI is creative, vibrant, and full of possibility.



Herefordshire Headway resplendent in their yellow tee shirts at the ABI Games

Working Together to Make a Difference:

One of the most important developments during this year was a **data sharing agreement with Wye Valley NHS Trust**. In practical terms, this allows representatives from Herefordshire Headway to visit the Stroke Ward at Hereford County Hospital and chat with patients about how we might be able to support them. This has led to much closer collaboration between us and our NHS colleagues within the hospital and community.

A Big Thank You

Herefordshire Headway wish to thank you for your support and interest in our charity during 2025.

Please help us to keep our momentum going. Your support—*whether through donations, volunteering, or partnerships*—assists us towards our aim, rebuilding lives and restoring hope for ABI sufferers and their families in Herefordshire and its borders.