

Annual Review 2021 – 22

Why we're here

Hello, we're Headway East London. We're here to support those in our city affected by brain injury.

Each year in the capital, tens of thousands of people are admitted to hospital with a brain injury. This might be the result of an illness like meningitis, stroke, or head trauma.

Brain injury can have a significant impact on the life of the individual and those closest to them. For many, it becomes a long-term condition which requires long-term support.

Headway East London was founded in 1997, and opened its doors to members* one year later. To begin with, we just worked in Hackney, but we've grown significantly and today help people from across 13 London boroughs.

In 2021/22, we supported over 700 brain injury survivors, family members and carers. Over the next five years, we've got ambitions to reach more people than ever before.

*we call people who use our services members

977
hospital admissions
for acquired brain
injuries per day

=

1 person every
90
seconds

What we do

We combine expertise to do things a little differently.

Brain injury is complicated. It affects people in lots of different ways, and not all of them are visible. In fact, brain injury is often referred to as a hidden disability.

In many cases, people with a brain injury are offered generic support for a physical disability, which makes only a limited difference. This not only represents poor value for money for commissioners, but it can also lead to a deterioration in health, wellbeing and relationships; requiring additional intervention for both survivors and their families.

At Headway East London, we offer services specifically tailored to the needs of people affected by brain injury. Most importantly and uniquely, we always work in partnership with those we support. We know our members are experts in their own injury and needs; that only they can tell us what is most important to them. We combine this expertise with our own, empowering people affected by brain injury to explore new identities; developing new skills and interests along the way.



How we work

We understand and support the whole person.

We believe in the power of connection and creativity to create better futures for those affected by brain injury. Our holistic approach means that projects are co-produced in response to members' needs, desires and ambitions, whilst the breadth of our work reflects the diversity of Headway East London's community.

Our art studio – [Submit to Love](#) – provides a means of discovery and expression, whilst our kitchen project encourages people to work together on a shared goal. Weekly dance, music, writing and exercise groups provide several ways for members to gain skills, share stories and find agency in their own journey. Meanwhile, partnerships with leading organisations like the Barbican celebrate our members' work and talents on a national stage.



All of this sits alongside our established day services, neurological therapies, community support and casework and advocacy services. We take a responsive approach, so that members can access the support and projects they feel will most benefit and interest them.

Who we are

We are one big team.

At Headway East London, members, staff and volunteers talk about feeling part of one community in which every person is valued and respected. We're all equal partners, combining our collective experiences to make a difference.

Members have a feeling of belonging and can be themselves, or find themselves again. Since many of our volunteers have personal experience of brain injury, they also bring invaluable insight to our work. Decisions and ideas are shared, and we place a strong emphasis on peer support in all that we do.

Each day we come together to discover what's meaningful in life; forging friendships and connections along the way. While we have ambitious plans to grow, we are dedicated to maintaining this philosophy and community. It's what makes us so special.



Why it Matters

Our work is important – to people affected by brain injury and their families, but also to the communities they live in.

The impact of brain injury on someone's life can be severe. We help people to not only navigate this unimaginable experience, but move towards a place where they can meet their potential and thrive. At the same time, we also reduce pressure on non-specialist services and ensure public money is spent more effectively.

Every person we support should be able to live the life they want, without facing marginalisation and lack of understanding. That doesn't only affect our members: it benefits entire communities and health and social care economies. Together we can discover new ways of looking at the world, and ensuring it is accessible to everyone.



The Future

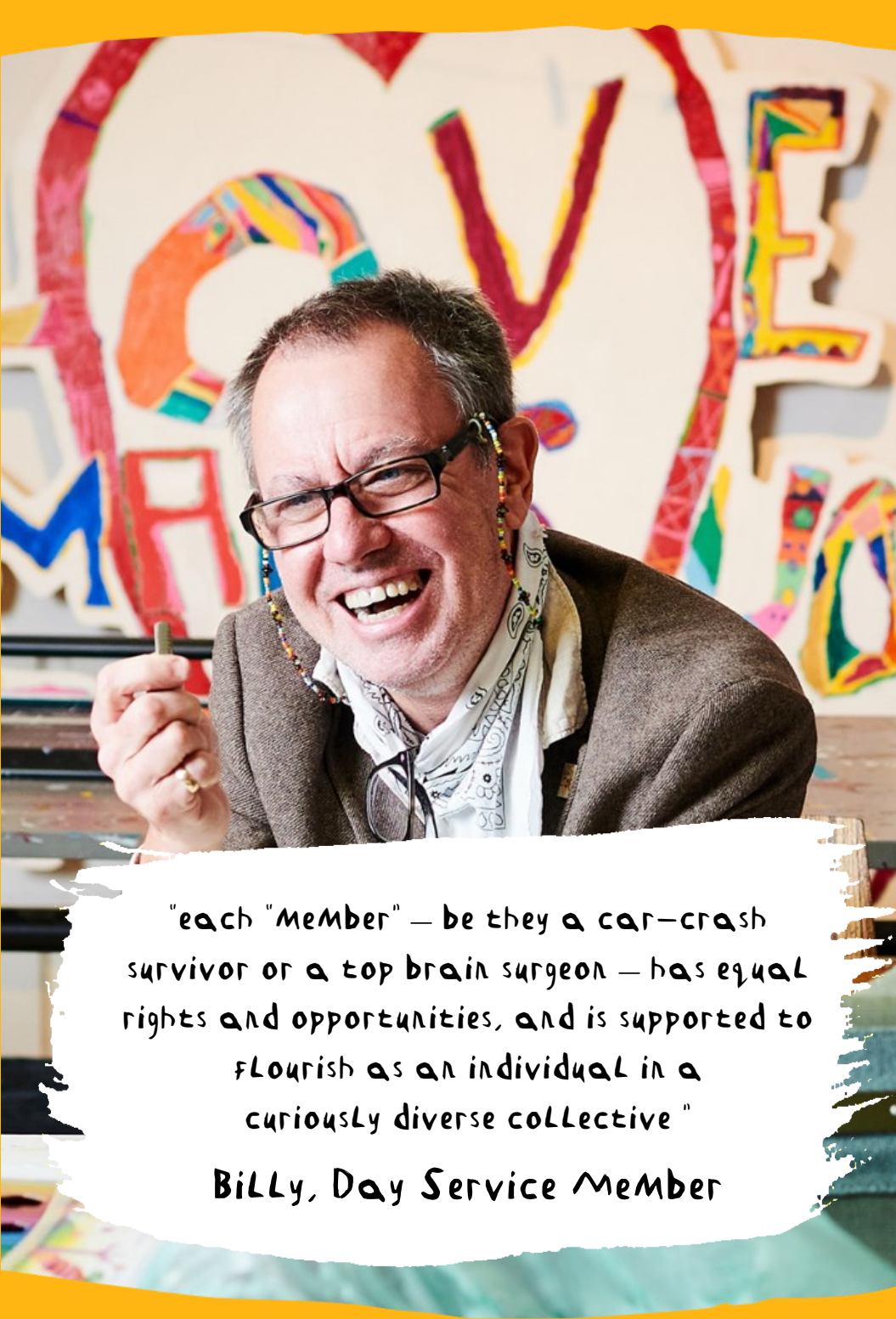
We've got big plans.

We've got ambitious plans for the next five years. We want to be the leading brain injury organisation in London providing high quality, innovative specialist support, and to have a strong voice across the health and social care sector. We also want to create more opportunities for our members to share their contributions and talents, and to interrogate what true collaboration looks like in the process.

There is no shortage of people who would benefit from our help. In 2016/17, the most recent year for which data is publicly available, almost 40,000 people were admitted to a London hospital with an acquired brain injury. That was a 15% increase over the 10 years to that point.

Our aims for 2022-2026 are to:

- Help more people than ever before; we want to double the number of people we reach each year across London to 1,500 by 2026
- Provide new innovative and creative ways of supporting brain injury survivors, and different opportunities for people to connect with us
- Continue to fight for equity for brain injury survivors and develop our social justice voice; raising awareness of the impact of brain injury and our work
- Make sure that everyone who is part of Headway East London enjoys their role and feels they are contributing towards the same goal



"each "Member" — be they a car-crash survivor or a top brain surgeon — has equal rights and opportunities, and is supported to flourish as an individual in a curiously diverse collective "

Billy, Day Service Member

Our Mission

We empower our community of brain injury survivors and their families to imagine new possibilities — ones filled with creativity, embracing diversity and backed by specialist support.

Our vision

Brain injury survivors experience a world which is accessible to them, and where their contributions are valued and celebrated.

Our principles

- **Coproduction:** Members are at the centre of everything we do; they are actively involved in designing new projects, developing new ideas and helping to make decisions at all levels.
- **Equity, diversity and inclusion:** We are committed to valuing every person as an individual and ensuring that our members, staff and volunteers do not experience discrimination at Headway East London. We will continue to work hard and create space for these conversations with everyone involved in the organisation.
- **Sustainability:** We want to be around for the long term, to support survivors of brain injury now and in the future. To do this we will make sure our systems and processes are efficient and effective to support our work, and work hard to make sure our financial position remains positive. We care about broader sustainability too. That's why we're committed to cutting our carbon footprint, including through reducing our dependence on non-renewable energy sources.

A message from our CEO and Chair

This year we fully re-opened our doors, as the Day Service returned to as 'normal' as possible after the pandemic. We began the year offering hybrid support for our members, working on half capacity within the day centre to allow for social distancing. While our community of members, staff and volunteers were pleased to be back, it wasn't quite the same and our usual buzzing atmosphere was missing.

We were delighted to re-open at full capacity in August 2021, and gradually bring our community back together. It was wonderful to hear the hum of people talking and being together again as we resumed all our usual groups and activities, which had been paused or had to work differently through the pandemic. Over the year we reduced our infection control measures in line with government guidance, and staff continued to wear masks with members and test regularly.

Our Community Support Work Service continued to support people in their homes and in the community, providing crucial support to help people stay connected, independent and reduce isolation. The Board made an important decision to move our Community Support workers to permanent contracts, to help us recruit and retain great staff by providing more stability and opportunity in these roles.

The Casework team supported individual members with issues including housing and benefits, offered monthly support groups in Hackney and Romford, and re-launched our work in the Royal London Hospital. Our 'Better Together' project with the Royal London Hospital now runs weekly sessions on the neuro wards of the hospital.

We developed new partnerships, including with French Connection and Bonnier books, providing our artists in the Submit to Love studio with opportunities to design t-shirts and book covers, as well as continuing our relationship with the Barbican as their Community Collaborator. We ran several art sales, including at Osbornes Law's offices.

We embarked on a programme of organisational change following the start of our new CEO. By Autumn we had recruited a new senior management team, including promoting staff internally into new roles, and began work on our new mission, vision and values. In the second half of the year we brought together members, volunteers, staff, trustees and stakeholders to co-create our five-year strategy, launched in May 2022. This was a major piece of work to ensure that everyone's voices were heard, and we are pleased with the exciting and ambitious strategy we developed.

Covid-19 continued to bug us, with staff sickness absence higher than usual making service delivery challenging at times, and staff having to adapt quickly to make sure our services were safe. Our amazing staff team were resilient and despite these external pressures, continued to deliver high quality support to our members.

We restructured our Finance, Admin and Comms teams to better meet the needs of the organisation, and are looking forward to new staff joining us in 2022. We also said goodbye to five trustees, and welcomed Alice Kershberg to the board, whose expertise as a clinical nurse specialist will be invaluable as we look to the future.

Like most charities and social care providers we're still working in a very difficult environment living with Covid-19, but we all know how important our services and support are to our members and the difference that it makes. We're grateful to all our supporters, funders and volunteers who give money and time to help us keep making a difference, and we're excited about a bright future of opportunities and developments coming up.

Anna McEwen, CEO

Glenn Hodgson, Chair



Headway in numbers 2021 – 2022



719

brain injury survivors
and families supported



£177K

fundraised for
Headway East
London

4,347

Day Service
contacts made
(calls, groups,
emails, deliveries)

487

Casework contacts
made, advising on
finance, housing,
isolation

1500

activities attended
by day service
members



611

Therapy contacts,
including 383 on
mental health

"Thank you for being a Light in the
dark when times were difficult"

Headway East London
Casework Member

Coming back from Covid

Service Update

In March 2020, like the rest of the world, we had to close our doors and adapt our services to keep staff, members, and volunteers safe in the height of the pandemic. After redesigning our services to online support and limited face to face, in 2021 it was time to support our members to come back together. We wanted to be a driving force in social care to ensure that members accessing our services were given the opportunities to socialise and join activities in the same way as the rest of society.

The aim was to revert to our 'normal' service provision for each of our services. This meant running the Day Service for full days with up to 40 members per day, enjoying all the activities on offer prior to the pandemic. It meant all Community Support Work sessions happening face to face, offering the same level of support accessing the community and our Therapy and Casework support being face-to-face when this was best for the members involved.

There were a lot of logistical challenges, particularly within the Day Service. We were constantly adapting our services in line with government guidance and support from Public Health. We started the year running a hybrid service of in-person and online support with staff, members and volunteers in bubbles to ensure reduced numbers. We managed double the transport provision and increased infection control procedures, including regular testing for staff, the use of face masks and other PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), and extra cleaning throughout the day.

When the guidance changed about social contact, we successfully reverted to a full in person service. Staffing was a challenge with staff needing to isolate if they were in contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19. Extra staffing was supplied to continue to run our vital services.

Members were continually consulted during the process of returning from lockdown through surveys, discussion groups and in conversation with their key workers, support workers, case workers and therapists. They gave great insights into the excitement of returning to 'normal', reservations about being in large groups again and ideas of how to alleviate these concerns.

In true Headway style everyone pulled together to support this transition and to make it as seamless as possible. Staff from all departments supported the services to enable the specialist support we offer to brain injury survivors. In time, outings, events and public engagement work began again, giving back the members the opportunities that provide them with a real sense of identity.

The continuation of infection control procedures such as staff wearing masks throughout the day can have a negative impact on our work with members, and is something we are all hoping will change soon. Members often feedback that they want to see staff faces and that communication is easier without masks. We will continue to work with our colleagues in local authorities and public health on these issues.

There are elements of support we adopted during the pandemic which we have found helpful to continue. Working with members online, for example, has proved helpful in some services and there are plans for services to use more online support to extend our reach of brain injury survivors in the future.

We are looking forward to another year of supporting members in the best way we know how – together.



Jackie's Story

Before her brain injury, Jackie was working at a large law firm as a solicitor that specialised in crime. **"I always knew I wanted to go into law. At school I was very inquisitive, and I used to watch The Bill and all those types of programmes! My mum used to take me to the courts to listen in to the cases and I just loved it."**

After sustaining a brain injury due to a bleed on the brain 2009, Jackie spent 9 weeks in a coma before waking up to a very different life. **"I couldn't walk or talk so I was transferred to rehab. I had a whole team helping me. I'll never forget the OT, she told me "You are going to walk", and I said "You're joking!" and she said "You will." They helped me 24/7."**

Jackie had to relearn many skills from scratch: **"It's relearning the basics again, how to use the washing machine, how to make a cup of coffee. The simple things were so hard. I managed to get through making a coffee by doing a checklist, that's how they taught me, that's how we re-did the brain."**

Jackie made huge progress in her recovery, but the biggest shock was the prejudice she encountered as a result of her hidden disability: **"You're seen as less than. Society doesn't help, especially when it's invisible. You'd be surprised by how people react out there. A lot of changes need to happen."**

Since joining Headway East London as a day service member in 2017, Jackie has become an active member of the Kitchen Project team, making lunch twice a week for our members and cooking up a storm at our Headway Eats events. **"It has helped me be part of society. The kitchen has helped me a lot because I can talk about food in a really positively way. I was a dreadful cook before. Now I'm the complete opposite."**

Jackie has big plans for the kitchen project — from experimenting more with vegan food to taking our supper club menus to new heights — and continues to inspire us with her enthusiasm for the kitchen and all things Headway. We look forward to her meals prepared with love twice a week, and cakes on birthdays!



"I discovered cooking at Headway, I discovered that passion in the Kitchen, which has helped me in my recovery."

Cooking as a community

Kitchen Project

Our newly expanded kitchen staff team consists of four members of staff, who make lunch with day service members and volunteers throughout the week. Alongside this the team run and support events, from supper clubs to the annual winter feast, which help to reach new audiences and fundraise vital funds for the organisation.

Headway Eats

September 2021 saw a return of our successful supper club series, Headway Eats, initially at a reduced capacity due to Covid restrictions. Members devised, prepared and served a three-course meal inspired by Thai flavours, along with a welcome drink enjoyed by guests in our canalside garden. A group of members involved in a dance collaboration with Whitechapel Gallery shared their work at the event. The evening marked a long-awaited return to welcoming the wider community through our doors, and members were thrilled to serve food and perform for 30 paying guests (down from our pre-Covid capacity of 50). Feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

"The whole menu was delicious. It was just so lovely to be back at Headway Eats"

In January, we served a Burns Supper in an event led by a new member of the kitchen staff team, Paul McKay. Members shared their writing and poetry with guests at a sold-out evening, with a menu which borrowed from the classic Burns night staples of haggis and clapsnot, adding a new twist with slow cooked beef ribs and finishing with a whisky-infused sticky toffee pudding. The original concept behind the Eats events was to give people who wouldn't otherwise have an opportunity to come to Headway a chance to experience first hand the feeling of being a part of our vibrant and welcoming community, and to give our members the opportunity to showcase their many talents. The response from guests was overwhelmingly positive, praising the atmosphere, the food and the performances:

"Food was amazing! Very warming and welcoming... never been before but feel like part of Headway just for one evening"

For March's supper club, we returned to a South-East Asian theme, this time devising a Korean-influenced menu. Beginning to explore ways of widening involvement to more members, Zuber and Tasneem, our day service manager, ran a kimchi workshop with a number of day service members who aren't regularly involved in the kitchen. The sensory baking group, which runs once a month in collaboration with the therapy team, was tasked with creating the dessert, a Korean fried biscuit with jinro (Korean fortified rice wine), sesame oil and honey. This gave some of our members with higher support needs an opportunity to contribute to the event. On the night itself, three members who had not previously been involved in a Headway Eats worked alongside staff and volunteers in the kitchen. Entertainment came in the form of a compilation of traditional Korean music put together by one of our members who has had a long career as a world music journalist. Capacity for this event increased to 40 guests, and the night was again a sell-out and a huge hit:

"The food was incredible! Looked amazing and tasted great too. I also really liked the playlist! Reminded me of a trip to Korea"



Headway Eats September 202



Cooking as a community

UKABIF Dinner

In October, we hosted UKABIF's pre-conference dinner for the conference organisers and key delegates. A team of members, volunteers and staff provided a three course 'bowl buffet' on the Sunday before the conference began. This was our first foray into external catering, and was a resounding success, raising £1600 and building our reputation in the world of brain injury rehabilitation. Feedback from the event was excellent and this led to a further catering opportunity in the spring through Irwin Mitchell Solicitors.

The members involved in these public events regularly affirm the significance of working in them in terms of increased confidence, and taking on a meaningful role which can be seen and appreciated by the community beyond the confines of Headway East London.

"To go out and do it in the community it's like being part of the community. Seeing their faces — no-one knows the difference between food cooked by us and people who are doing it professionally. People think we can just make simple food, but we go over and above."

"It's amazing going in there — it's like going in a different world. My brain goes a million miles an hour, but being in the kitchen slows it right down. I'm a good cook and you can put your input here. It's like being in a restaurant! I love seeing the outcome. It's great fun. I let loose!"



Winter Feast

Our second Winter Feast took place in December 2021, after a 2 year hiatus due to the pandemic. Kindly sponsored by Irwin Mitchell, 34 people attended, including corporate partners BBK.

With fundraising as a key objective, the event was targeted at corporate supporters and provided more opportunities to raise money through a higher ticket price, raffle and seasonal merch stall, and was promoted as a unique Christmas meal option for staff teams.

A special 3 course menu was devised and prepared by the members, staff and volunteers at Headway. Art studio staff and artists created hand-strung ribbon garlands to decorate the space, and menu cards featured work by one of our artists. The Music Co-ordinators facilitated a musical performance for guests by members Margi and Sue. In this way, members were able to share their creative work with a wider audience, and guests found out more about our creative projects.

The event raised over £2,600, an increase on the total raised in the 2019 inaugural event (£2,200).



UK ABIF Dinner October 2021

"The daily Lunch we make at
Headway really feels like
an act of care."

Thomas, Kitchen Manager



Better Together

We launched our Better Together project in October 2021, a collaboration between Headway East London and the Royal London Hospital, kindly funded and supported by Bolt Burden Kemp law firm for the next 4 years. We had previously had a hospital project in this hospital which had been evaluated and demonstrated excellent outcomes both for the patients on the ward and hospital staff, as well as significant savings for the system.

Since then, we'd been trying to secure new funding, and navigate the health system post-covid which was more challenging than ever.

But we finally launched, and the deputy mayor of Tower Hamlets came along to our launch event with clinical staff and therapists from across the neuro ward.

The project involves staff from our casework team, including our peer support worker Dean who has lived experience of living with a brain injury, spending one afternoon a week on the neuro ward providing information, advice and guidance to patients and family members. Our staff work along side the trauma nurses to help patients understand what has happened, what it means and what the journey ahead might hold. We also talk to them about support that is available when they leave hospital so that they know where they can go for help. Dean says:

"My role is to provide my personal experience of the 'journey', and people relate to me on a whole different level. We all bring something different to the team, that's what makes us a unique project! For me personally to be able to share my experience of MY journey it is so rewarding to see that others can benefit, and it gives them hope about what lies ahead."

Our team provide a range of support on everything from:

- Benefit and housing advice
- Accessing emergency grants and funds
- Linking in with support networks via GP's
- Working alongside the homelessness team

Since we launched we've so far worked with 187 patients, and we know that support has made a difference, given people hope and the knowledge that they are not alone. We also help to start the complex navigation processes of accessing statutory rights and entitlements, so that patients can focus on their rehabilitation, rest and exploring who they are now with a brain injury.

By linking people in with the correct support networks ensures a smoother and more holistic discharge onto their next stage of their journey. Educating patients and families allows them to feel a greater sense of control when, so far, nothing has.

We're really grateful to Bolt Burden Kemp for funding this project, along with funding our peer support worker and providing a mentoring role for this member of staff.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

At Headway East London we celebrate difference, and want to ensure that everyone feels welcome and valued no matter what their role in the organisation. This year we've created our Statement of Intent which outlines our commitment and intentions to make this a reality. We know that there is more work to do, but we are committed to continuing to talk about issues and do all that we can to make our organisation feel safe and accepting for everyone.

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion group is made up of staff, volunteers, trustees and members. The group meets once a month and has been busy making sure that inclusion sits at the heart of everything we do. We also run a monthly EDI space for staff to come together and talk about issues. The EDI group developed a Statement of Intent for the organisation that outlines our commitment to inclusion, a zero tolerance policy against any type of discrimination and to develop a culture of anti racism.

When our new CEO, Anna McEwen, joined she began chairing the group to signify the commitment and importance of this work to the organisation at all levels, and broadened its remit to tackle issues of diversity and inclusion. We organised unconscious bias training for staff and made a video about micro aggressions with one of our members sharing her personal experiences. We have training planned on gender and identity later this year for staff.



This year we celebrated Black History Month, Pride, Race Equality Week and Refugee Week. These celebrations included discussions and awareness raising with our members, sharing information and space for staff to talk about their own experiences, and amazing food! We joined the **#MyNameIs** campaign to include phonetic spelling in email signatures to help others correctly pronounce our names, and discussed why this is so important for identity.

We commissioned an external organisation, Mabadiliko CIC, to complete a diversity audit of our staff and volunteers sharing both their personal information and their experiences at Headway East London. This was a really useful piece of work and included a set of recommendations that we are working on implementing.

We are proud that we successfully challenged our pensions provider for not catering for non-binary employees, by insisting on using the pronouns Mrs, Ms or Mr. Our challenge led to the pension company changing their registration process so that non-binary staff are now able to join using the pronoun and identity of their choice.

We will continue to work hard on all issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, listening to and learning from each other.

Financial Overview – Treasurer

Despite emerging from the economic difficulties caused by the global pandemic, it has continued to be a challenging year owing to limited resources and funding constraints. Despite this, with a focused strategy and careful financial management, the charity has managed to deliver a healthy surplus for the year.

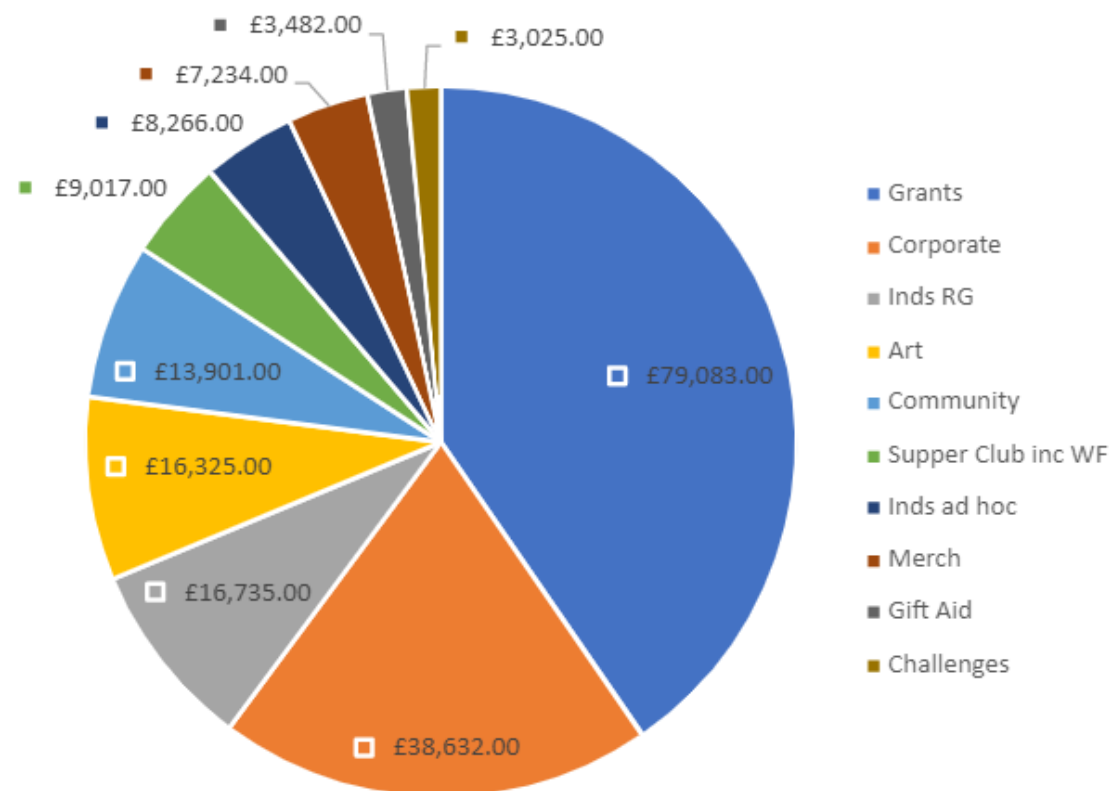
Income was down 8.8% on the budgeted income target, with expenditure down 10.8% on budget. The planned surplus for 2021-22 was £5,111 and the actual surplus was £37,494, up £32,383. Savings were made in Transport costs and Staff costs. The total income for the charity was £1,883,656, which represents a 9.5% increase on the previous year after excluding furlough income received of £47,296 in 20-21. Total expenditure was £1,846,162, an increase of 4.6% on the previous year.

Total staff costs were £1,415,178, a decrease of 4.8% on 2020-21. The decrease is attributable to savings in senior management team, a restructure in response to the covid-19 pandemic and lower CSWS casual staff costs in response to lower budgeted income. However, despite this lower figure a 1% cost of living increase was awarded to all staff.

Raising Money

Whilst a large proportion of our income is derived from service incomes, we rely on fundraising from our community and supporters to bridge the gap between fees income and all the services we want to provide for our members. It was another challenging year in the fundraising environment, and we are very grateful for the continued support of our corporate, trust, Headway Friends, and community supporters to see us through, putting us in a strong position for future growth.

Our fundraising streams were split into: Grants £76,583, Corporate £27,717, Individuals £25,000, Art £16,325, Community £7,900, Supper Club & Winter Feast £9,017, Merchandise £7,234, Gift Aid £3,482 and Sponsored Challenges £3,025.



Supporters

Arts Council Jubilee Fund
BBK
BlackRock
Credit Suisse
Derek Hill Foundation
February Foundation
Five Points Brewery
Felix Project
Forrester Family Trust
Gallagher RE
Garfield Weston Foundation
Henry Smith Charity
Irwin Mitchell
Joseph Strong Frazer Trust
London Borough of Hackney
London Catalyst
M89 PLC
MJ Hudson
National Lottery Community Fund
Osbornes Law
Rathbones
Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust
Square Mile Coffee
Souter Charitable Trust
St James Place Charitable
Foundation
Worshipful Company of Fan
Makers
Volkerfitzpatrick Ltd

Fundraising highlights

Our fundraising performance of 96% against target represents the amazing support we receive from our community, grant-making funders and corporate supporters in what was a very challenging fundraising environment for all charities.

Individual donors and supporters:

As restrictions eased our supporters were able to return to sponsored events. Enormous thanks to Noel Sainsbury and OLSGEIRE, who carried out their annual London-Essex cycle ride in support of our work, and to Alex Sensier who undertook a whole year's worth of sponsored activities in memory of his father.

We are tremendously grateful to all those who give to us, but especially our Headway Friends, who make regular donations in support of our work.

Grants

We receive incredible support from trusts and foundations and are especially grateful for the following:

- Sport England supported members to undertake physical activities;
- National Lottery Charity Fund continued funding of our Casework Service and gave an additional grant to help us to improve our outcomes monitoring and reporting;
- Henry Smith Charity continued support of our Day Service;
- Garfield Weston Foundation made a grant to our Community Support Worker Service;
- the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers and the February Foundation for renewing their support;
- London Borough of Hackney Culture Department;
- the Let's Create Jubilee fund via the East End Community Foundation.

Enormous thanks go to our corporate supporters: **Osbornes Law** who sponsored our website and hosted a highly successful art auction; **M J Hudsons**, supporting us through a two-year partnership; **BBK** and **Irwin Mitchell**.

We undertook our first campaign through The Big Give and, thanks to the generosity of our community, raised £4,000 towards our Submit to Love studio.



Alex Sensier
Headway Hero



Alex Sensier
Headway Hero

Thank you so much to ALL
our supporters for your
generous and inspirational
contributions to help us
provide ALL the services we
can to our Members.

We could not achieve this
without you!



OLSGEIRE
Headway Heroes

"Headway has been a total Lifeline.
To be with people every day even
through ALL this has truly saved My
Life after I've Lost a Lot.

I just want to carry on ALL together
and Keep Making art and dancing."

Sandra, Member



Whitechapel Gallery August 2021

Additional Information

Structure, Governance & Management

Headway East London is a Charity and Company limited by guarantee. If the Charity must be wound up the Directors of the Company (Trustees of the Charity) would have a maximum liability of £1 .

On 31 March 2022 there were 8 Trustees, each with different skills and interests reflecting the needs of the charity, a full skills audit took place during the year. Trustees usually meet four times a year to oversee the running of the charity with an additional meeting for the Annual General Meeting which took place on 14 December 2021.

The Board was supported by three sub-committees which meet quarterly online: Finance & Audit, Governance and Creative Committee. A trustee strategy working group also met during the development of our new strategy.

We would like to extend thanks to Jez Stockdale, Katharine Hibbert, Marilene Antoni, Dan Smith and Daniel Hilton who stood down as Trustees during the year for their contribution and input to the work of Headway East London. We welcomed Alice Kershberg who was appointed as a Trustees on the 21st of March 2022.

New trustees undergo a comprehensive induction to brief them on the structure and governance of the charity, the organisational strategy, business plan and budget together with recent financial performance, as well as their obligations under the Trustees Code of Conduct. Trustees are also invited to attend in-house training relating to brain injury and to spend time in the Day Service engaging with staff, volunteers and members. Trustees are provided with relevant information from the Charity Commission on a regular basis.

Day to day responsibility for the running of the charity was delegated to the Chief Executive, Anna McEwen, and the senior management team.

Public benefit

The trustees have given due consideration to the Charity Commission's published guidance on the Public Benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. As well as improving the lives of people affected by brain injury, Headway East London provides benefits to the wider public by equipping its members to make a positive contribution to society and through its occupational, training, campaigning and awareness raising activities.

Reserves

The trustees' policy is to maintain unrestricted reserves at a level that allows Headway East London to be managed efficiently, to provide a buffer for interrupted services, to provide for future potential relocation and service development and to cover costs in the event of the charity needing to wind-down services due to significant loss of income, and or increases in costs.

The charity's approach in the event of significant income reduction and/or cost escalation would be to anticipate this as far as possible, and to respond by modifying services in a planned way to meet the new situation, while at the same time taking steps to seek alternative sources of funding, and thus continue to provide a sustainable and effective service to as many people as possible.

There has been a further review of level of funds required to be allocated to a contingency reserve and we have determined that the minimum amount will be set at £369,600. This has been increased by £60,000 (19%) to provide against an uncertain economic outlook.

Robust contingency plans are in place to enable the charity to respond to possible situations, as identified through the risk management process. For example, steps are being taken to respond to the situation when current high demand services will be affected with the likely end of major grants.

£656,687 of reserves was held, as at 31 March 2022, increased from £619,193 as at 31 March 2021. £169,573 of reserves is restricted. £369,600 of unrestricted reserves is held in a contingency reserve; £73,718 of unrestricted reserves is fixed assets. There is £43,796 of available free reserves. The trustees have agreed to set aside the full amount of £43,796 of free reserves as a provision for increased costs and the inflationary headwinds anticipated in 22-23.

Fundraising statement

We employ staff to carry out fundraising duties. We did not employ external professional fundraisers or undertake commercial fundraising activities. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and adhere to and fully support the Code of Fundraising Practice standards and values: Legal, Open, Honest, and Respectful. When supporters undertake sponsored events or fundraise on our behalf on a voluntary basis, and this is known to us, we encourage them to register with a compliant third-party donation processing supplier or to give directly through our website. We also provide supporters with information to comply with standards on seeking and handling donations.

Our overarching safeguarding policy and processes ensure that safeguards and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within our services, including our fundraising activities, and to protect vulnerable supporters from undue pressure, unreasonable intrusion, and unreasonably persistent behaviour in connection with our fundraising activity. All our fundraising staff undergo a full induction and receive ongoing training in relation to safeguarding adults at risk. Our complaints procedure is available on our website and at our premises, and applies to funders, supporters, and anyone who comes into contact with Headway East London. In 2021-22 we received no complaints from donors or supporters and none were reported directly to the Fundraising Regulator.

Staffing

At the end of the 2021-22 financial year Headway East London had 52 employees with a staff turnover of 30% during the year. We rely heavily on volunteers to provide our services, add value and bring additional skills and experience to enhance our members' experience in all our services. During 2021-22 we had a total of 30 volunteers, 15 of whom were brain injury survivors. We also had 3 student therapist placements and 2 therapist volunteers, providing counselling, art therapy and craniosacral therapy as part of our neurological therapy team. Rebounding from the pandemic all our staff and volunteers continue to be an incredibly dedicated team who work with passion and enthusiasm for the benefit of brain injury survivors and their families.

Risk Management

An updated Risk Register is maintained that identifies potential risks and the impact of those risks. The register details the controls in place to mitigate each risk, together with the associated monitoring processes. The risks, control and monitoring procedures are reviewed and reassessed regularly by the Senior Management Team. Areas of potential improvement are identified and timetables for action implemented. The Risk Matrix can be added to at any time and is reviewed by the Board of Trustees regularly. The Finance and Audit Committee has responsibility for monitoring the financial risk areas, identifying new risks and proposing amendments as necessary. The Governance committee has responsibility for monitoring other governance risks, including issues such as safeguarding, health and safety, and data protection.

Trustees Responsibilities' Statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Significant Challenges and Opportunities

Statutory Funding:

Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide support to people who have an assessed need under the Care Act 2014. There are no other specialist brain injury support providers in our area and so we have a significant waiting list for our services. In 2021/22 we did some detailed work on our costings for our day service and community support work service so that we can ensure we are charging local authorities the true costs of the services. Trustees made a decision in 2021 that we can no longer subsidise statutory services with charitable funds which are used to provide support to anyone with a brain injury regardless of meeting a criteria.

Awareness & Brand Recognition:

We have continued to raise awareness and build our brand as an organisation through our social media presence, developing relationships across the social care and brain injury sectors and getting back out into the world post-Covid with members and finding opportunities for members to tell their stories. The campaign for, and subsequent development of, an ABI strategy has given us opportunity and recognition with the Department of Health and Social Care that we've not had previously. Our new strategy has a big focus on awareness raising over the next five years.



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