

Welcome to This Month's Newsletter. Here are some of the headlines:

Poetry Competition

Tower Wood the First – Frank Horan
But They Had My Details

Sort Your Life Out

Managing Isolation After an ABI
Your Stories and Some Errors to Avoid



Poetry Competition

Poetry is truth in its Sunday clothes. (*Joseph Roux*)

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlighting the challenges unpaid carers face and recognising the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. This year it will run from the 8th to the 14th June.

For the last couple of years, we have run a Carers Week poetry competition to highlight the invaluable contributions of carers across the UK. This has been well received, and so we are launching our 2026 competition for people with an acquired brain injury to write a poem, haiku, or ditty that demonstrates their appreciation of their carers, whilst

celebrating the positive impact that they have on their life.

We know that caring for someone can be very challenging. We want our carers to know that their individual worth is recognised, very much valued, and that they are not alone.

Alternatively, the entry can be from a carer creating a poem from their perspective too.

We will announce the competition more widely in our spring Headway News, but we wanted to let you all know as early as possible to ensure you have plenty of time to support people to get involved.

Headway

Carers

Week

Competition



the brain injury association

Carers Week
8th - 14th June 2026

1

Write or record a poem, haiku or ditty that demonstrates your appreciation of your carers.

We'd love to hear poems from a carers perspective too.



2

Send your entries, videos or quotes to:

marie.peacock@headway.org.uk



3

First, second and third places will all feature in Headway News, the Headway website and social media platforms.

Videos will also appear on our social media throughout Carers Week



The closing date for the competition is
Sunday 3rd May 2026

There will be a first, second, and third prize, and the winners will feature in the Headway News magazine summer edition, as well as on the Headway website.

During Carers Week in June, we will feature some of the poems on social media, so please send us videos of individuals performing their poems too, if they're happy to share. If poetry isn't their thing, we are also collecting quotes from people with an acquired brain injury about their carers. We will include some of these as a feature in our summer edition of Headway News, as well as featuring on our website and social media during Carers Week.

I have attached a poster for you to share about the competition.

The closing date for the competition is Sunday, 3rd May 2025. Please send entries, videos, or quotes to:
marie.peacock@headway.org.uk.

Dates for the Diary and Stuff

BIRTHDAYS

February

Ellen Brookman - 4th

Tommy Hankin - 8th

Heidi Kirkham - 24th

March

Michelle Kelly - 2nd

Cath Ormesher - 4th

Janet Horan - 7th

Andrew Ormesher - 11th

Michael Cunningham - 12th

Missed

Gayle Yankiah - 9th Dec

Alison Bower 25th Jan

NEXT DROP-IN Thursday March 26th
Waterloo Community Centre, L22 1RD

KIT: 10am – 12 every Thursday at
Wetherspoons Waterloo

Blundellsand Archery Club taster session
Sunday April 19th,

12.30



DEADLINE

Articles for March Newsletter to
hwnews@johnmc.co.uk
By Sunday March 15th

Tower Wood the First – Frank Horan

My first visit to Towerwood experience was in 2019 BCE (Before Covid Era)

Because of a hospital appointment, I was late to arrive.

My first night there was not a relaxed one. Tired enough to sleep, I retired to bed, but slumber evaded me. Eventually, I found myself beside the lake known as Windermere, eager to catch the sunrise. Okay, technically it is not a lake.

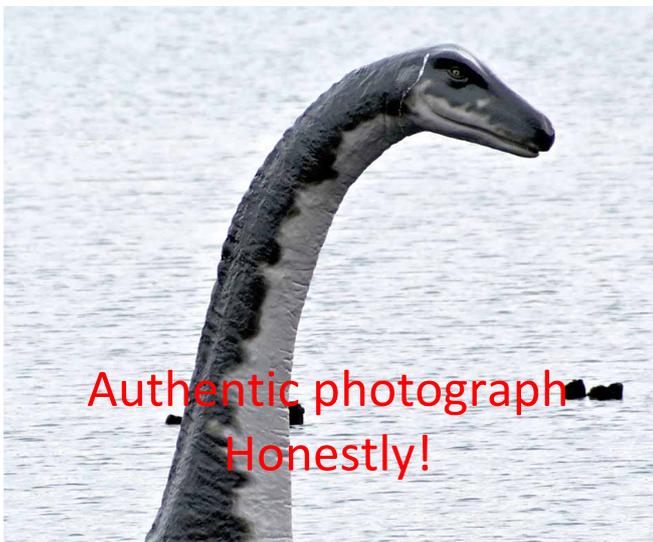
What happened next, I swore I would never reveal. No one will ever believe you, I told myself. Never say a word!

But here goes anyway.

To my amazement, the large head of a large creature emerged from the water. I was surprised; no, I was shocked!

I heard a booming voice say, "HELLO!" I almost fell out of my seat. "You seem surprised," came the voice again. Understatement, I thought. Surprise doesn't cover it.

I stuttered a nonsense reply, well, nonsense to me. The creature, obviously, read my thoughts. "It must be a shock to see me," it said. "You recognise me, of course. "



Well, no, I thought. "But wait," I said, "you couldn't be... No, it's not possible. You're just like those pictures I've seen in Loch Ness."

"Well now, there you are. You do know me. I understand I'm quite famous."

"But this is Windermere," I said. "Loch Ness is a long way away."

"Oh, I get around. Ocean swims, underwater tunnels. In fact, I'm on my way back from the USA. Over here you call me Nessie, over there they call me Champ."

"Why?"

"Because I am seen on Lake Champlain."

"Where?"

"A vast lake shared by New York, Vermont, and even Quebec in Canada. I came across a right divi on my last visit. A beefy guy with a tanned, no, orange face and fair, stiff hair that looked more like a crash helmet. It didn't waver in a stiff breeze. He was hitting little white balls from the deck of a big yacht; one hit me on the head. 'Get back to where you came from!' he screamed.

"A salmon I know said his name began with the letter T. But fart springs to mind. Thinks he's better than everyone else and doesn't care who gets trampled on in his desire to get what he wants.

"One nasty man. And they call me a monster." And with that Nessie slipped back into the water with hardly a ripple.

When I woke up in my room, my first thought was, what a strange dream! There again, my trousers, coat, and shoes were soaking with morning dew. In the bedroom? Weird! A complete mystery.

Headway Sefton phone number: 07736774496

But They Had My Details – Scammer Methods

People often say, “But they knew my bank’s name,” or “They had the last four digits of my card, so it must have been genuine.”

Regrettably, that is how many scams succeed.

Scammers rarely start with nothing. They build information, often from several sources, until it sounds convincing.

One common source is a data breach. Large companies sometimes lose customer data through hacking or poor security. Even when banks themselves are not involved, leaked information from retailers, utilities, delivery companies, or subscription services can include names, addresses, phone numbers, and partial payment details. Criminals then sell and resell that information.

Another source is previous scams. If someone has ever responded to a scam call, email, or text — even without losing money — scammers may keep and share their details. Even confirming your name, date of birth, or bank can be enough to mark you as a future target.

Scammers also use phishing messages. These are emails or texts that look as if they come from a bank or well-known company. If someone clicks a link or enters a few details, even accidentally, that information can be captured.

Social media plays a part as well. People often share birthdays, addresses, family names, and even photographs of bank cards or documents without realizing it. Taken together, these fragments can build a clear picture.

Sometimes the information is obtained through guessing and testing. Scammers

make large numbers of calls and refine their approach based on what works. When someone reacts with concern, the caller learns they are on the right track.



It is important to understand this: having some correct information does not make the caller genuine. It simply means they have done their homework.

Real banks already have the information they need. They do not need you to confirm it over the phone.

The safest approach is always the same. If someone contacts you unexpectedly, do not assume the call is real (nay, assume it is a scam) , no matter how convincing it sounds. End the call, pause, and contact your bank yourself using a number provided on bank documents or cards. Preferably, use a different phone to the one they called you on.

Some precautions the writer uses:

Never include your real phone number on online forms unless you know that the company needs to contact you (like banks, lawyers, etc).

Set up a disposable email address, which you use just for online forms. Renew this with a new one regularly.

Caution is not paranoia. It is protection.

BBC's Sort Your Life Out

For the upcoming series of Sort Your Life Out, the producers would like to reach and help households whose lives have been affected by stroke or an acquired brain injury (and related neurological conditions), including families navigating recovery, long-term changes, and the ongoing impact on day-to-day home life.

For some households, the pressures of treatment, hospital appointments, or caring responsibilities can make home life harder to manage.

Through the programme, the makers plan to offer support and raise awareness of these realities. Stacey Solomon and the team offer practical, hands-on help to declutter and reorganise the home, giving families a space that feels transformed. Many previous families have described the experience as life-changing.

Is this something you or your family would find interesting?

ADVERTISING COPY

BBC One's Sort Your Life Out is returning in 2026 and is looking for households across the UK where clutter has taken over daily life.

The show sees Stacey Solomon and her team help families declutter, reorganise, and transform their homes in just one week.



The poster features a group of four people (two men and two women) smiling and standing in a bright, circular frame. The text on the poster includes: 'optomen HIT BBC ONE SHOW', 'SORT YOUR LIFE OUT IS BACK FOR 2026', 'We're looking for families and shared households ready for a life changing declutter to bring calm and joy back into their home', 'APPLY NOW', and the website 'www.optomen.com/sort-your-life-out'. At the bottom, it states: 'Applicants must be aged 18 or over and based in the UK | T&Cs apply To see how we process your data go to: www.optomen.com/contributor-privacy-notice'.

Has life made your home harder to manage? Do you feel your home needs to change but don't know where to start?

We're looking for families and long-term shared households living in houses, flats, and all kinds of other homes.

If your home is in desperate need of a declutter, Stacey and the team would love to hear from you.

Apply now: www.optomen.com/Sort-Your-Life-Out

NOTE: previous episodes of Sort Your Life Out can be found on BBC iPlayer

BRAIN INJURY CARD

The brain injury card, shown below, is a useful identity form of ID, which conveys that the wearer has suffered a brain injury and may need assistance or extra consideration.

Search "Brain Injury Card" on sefton.org.uk Or call the number shown



The card is titled 'Brain Injury Identity Card' and features a photo of Jonathan Smith. The text on the card reads: 'My name is: Jonathan Smith', 'I have a brain injury and as a result:', followed by three blue bars with white text: 'I have difficulty processing information', 'I have attention and concentration difficulties', and 'I experience fatigue'. Below these is another blue bar with white text: 'I may have anxiety'. At the bottom, it says 'For 24 hour criminal legal assistance, please call: 0800 140 4031'. The Headway logo is visible in the bottom left and right corners.

Managing Isolation After an ABI

First published on the Headway.org.uk website

We've put together a list of top tips to help you cope with and overcome the challenges of isolation, suggested by brain injury survivors and experts in the field.

Remember that different things will work for different people, so don't be afraid to experiment! Try a few of the tips, adjust them to suit you, and keep track of your feelings to help build your plan for managing isolation.



Find things to do

If you are isolated at home, make a list of things you want to do and the goals you want to reach, big or small, to give your days structure and purpose.

Get outside if you can - fresh air is good for mental health, and small day-to-day interactions such as saying hello to people who pass by can help you to feel less isolated.

Consider volunteering, which can be very rewarding, allowing you to develop skills while meeting people who share your interests.

Focus on the little things

Try to take time out to appreciate small things, especially in nature, such as watching the clouds in the sky.

Remember that recovery after a brain injury takes time, and any improvements, even if they are small, are worth celebrating.

Try mindfulness - a technique that allows you to focus on how you are feeling in the present moment rather than being distracted by things around you or unhelpful thoughts.

Seek professional support

If your isolation is causing you to

experience negative emotions such as depression or anxiety, talk to your GP. They may be able to refer you to specialist services such as counselling, psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or a neuropsychologist.

You can also contact the Headway helpline on 0808 800 2244 or helpline@headway.org.uk to talk through your feelings and get guidance on further support if you need it.

Above all, remember that things can and do improve.

While brain injury can cause many difficult changes in your life, it is important to remember that things can improve over time and that you will gradually come to adjust to things.

It can help to remember that even if you are feeling isolated now, things can improve over time and you may form friendships and good memories even in your 'new' life with brain injury.

We hope that this information offers some useful tips for coping with isolation after a brain injury. Thank you to all the brain injury survivors who contributed to this article by sharing their experiences of isolation after brain injury.

Join the Mailing List

The Headway Sefton Newsletter is a useful source of information about your local branch and what it's up to. However, the newsletter is limited in its scope and size (there are practical and technical reasons for it being eight pages).

Headway Sefton's website is another valuable resource, full of stories and



information. You will also find a store of previous newsletters there.
headwaysefton.co.uk

Headway.org is Headway UK's own website where you'll find advice, stories from a wider variety, and information on services, etc.

Want to keep up-to-date with current brain-related news and how Headway is improving life after brain injury? If you are not yet on Headway's mailing list, sign up now and ensure you don't miss the latest news from Headway. Go to www.headway.org.uk and search for "Mailing List."

Making a donation

Headway Sefton relies on voluntary donations as well as fundraising events to continue to provide services and fun events to brain survivors and their families. On our homepage (headwaysefton.co.uk), you will find a button named "PayPal" where you can donate. You don't need a PayPal account, as there is a card-payment option on the donation page as well



HEADWAY SEFTON SPONSORS
carpenters group



Carol Hopwood,
Head of Serious and
Catastrophic Injury
cmh@carpentersgroup.co.uk
Phone: 07866 367886

 **CARERS CARD UK**

Leanne Jones

Date of birth
12-01-1988

Number
667GFRG6754H

Emergency contacts
07719 123675
07719 567556

In association with



Identifying carers

www.carerscarduk.co.uk

Your Stories and Some Errors to Avoid

And Finally -

I'm sure there are some really talented writers among our members. We haven't had a good origin story in a while.

What's your story? How did you get here? When did it happen? Who told you about Headway?

Please tell us about yourself. Don't stress about grammar and spelling; I've got it covered (that's my job); just get it on the page and send it to me - hwnews@johnmc.co.uk.

However, here are a few writing mistakes I see a lot - often from those who are supposed to be professionals.

An Ellipsis (three dots like this... - not five, six, or seven), is an oft-abused member of the punctuation family. It IS NOT a pause, a replacement for a dash, or a variation on a comma, semicolon, or other such punctuation. Originating from the Greek for "to leave out," the word indicates an omission.

For example, "...it is the east and Juliet is the sun," suggests that the first part of the quote ("But soft, what light through

yonder window breaks...") has been omitted. If you have more than one, then you are probably using them wrong. Best to avoid them.

From, to, between, and: Mixing Prepositions & conjunctions: from, to, between, and, etc. "Between twenty to Thirty," is an incorrect form, it should be "Between twenty and Thirty," OR "From twenty to Thirty." BETWEEN goes with AND, and FROM goes with TO.

At least/at most: Too often I encounter people committing this crime against grammar. "At least," "as few as," "as little as," all mean a minimum; "at most," "as many as," "as much as," all indicate a maximum. And a minimum is a fixed quantity or amount - not a range; similarly with a maximum.

So, "As many as fifteen to twenty," IS WRONG because "fifteen to twenty," is not a fixed number. Is it as many as fifteen, or is it as many as twenty?

We look forward to your stories.

BUT PLEASE REMEMBER THE DEADLINE

YOUR NOTES, DOODLES, OR WHATEVER YOU FANCY:

NEXT DROP IN: 26th March.

KEEP IN TOUCH GROUP: Every Wednesday at 10am