

Headway Sefton News



August 2025

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

Tower Wood 2025

Carter's Homework #2 – Frank Horan

A Week in the Life

Introducing Abigail Cuffe

Leaving Hospital #5 -Jan Johnston

Dates for the Diary



Tower Wood Review – Carol Hopwood

From the moment we arrived, the energy was electric. The lake became our playground as we plunged into a variety of water sports—stand-up paddle-boarding, kayaking, and sailing. Whether gliding across the water or wobbling into it with laughter, everyone embraced the challenge and the fun. For those with a head for heights, the onsite climbing frame offered a thrilling ascent and a chance to test their mettle. For others, just enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the beautiful countryside was enough.



As the sun dipped behind the hills, the evenings came alive with entertainment that truly reached new heights. Chris and Barry led the charge, delivering performances and activities that had us all in stitches and singing along. Their enthusiasm was infectious, and their creativity made each night feel like a “night out. “

Welcoming new members into the fold was especially heartening. Watching our community come together—supporting each other, sharing stories, and forging new friendships—was a powerful reminder of what Headway Sefton is all about. The camaraderie, the belly laughs, and the shared experiences continue to strengthen the bonds that make our group so special.



Behind the scenes, a huge amount of work goes into making this trip the success it became - from those driving the fundraising to cover the bulk of the costs, shopping for snacks and drinks, allocating bedrooms, sorting out evening



entertainment, completing risk assessments, booking specialist equipment, and even ordering favourable weather! A heartfelt thank you to everyone who played a role in bringing everything together. Particular thanks go to Cathy Johnston, whose leadership and dedication are the driving force behind this annual adventure.

Whether we were paddling, climbing, laughing, or just soaking it in, Tower Wood reminded us that joy is best shared.

Same time next year?

Photos by: Carol, Chris, & Michelle

BIRTHDAYS

August

Paul Flynn - 8th

Emma Seasman - 17th

September

Paul Heywood - 26th

Colin Finlanson - 29th

Jan Johnston - 29th



Carter's Homework #2 – Frank Horan

[EDITOR'S NOTE: You may remember way back in May, Frank began the story of Carter's homework on WWII. At long last, here's part 2]



On the waterfront, the Three Graces (the Liver Building, the Cunard Building, and the Port of Liverpool Building) were not bombed. However, five-hundred yards away on Water Street, bombs struck the India Building, causing severe damage. It remained closed until 1953. The old Customs House and a large part of the area now known as Liverpool One, was little more than a hole in the ground, overlooked by Queen Victoria.



After an air raid, we used to collect shrapnel (fragments of bombs) in dried milk tins; scrap iron for the war effort. Often, bombed buildings became our playgrounds. When several houses were bombed in one place, emergency water supply tanks were often built. Although

against the law, people sometimes used them for swimming, which was very dangerous.

Nowadays, we consider animal welfare and have more concern for factory farm animals. Where I lived, just off Heyworth street was the local dairy, taking up the space of two or three terrace houses. They kept two or three cows for daily milking - "Milk to churn, churn to cart." The cart was called a float, which was a horse-drawn, low-axled cart, suitable for street deliveries.

People came out with their own jugs to buy milk. Like pit ponies, these cows and horses never saw a grassy field.

You could find farriers in side streets shoeing horses and perhaps making iron gates. There was one off Breckfield Road North and, if we were well behaved, we were allowed to stand and watch.

After the war, my good friend's dad came home severely shell-shocked. My uncle Andy survived the war, but Uncle Bill didn't. He died as a prisoner on the infamous Burma railroad. Twelve-thousand Allied soldiers and ninety-thousand civilians died building this railway, as portrayed in the movie Bridge on the River Kwai.



When the war ended, street parties erupted with flags, bunting, and bonfires. But we soon crashed back to reality. And had to endure rationing for a further 10 years.

The government of the day provided us with coupons, which we needed to buy clothing, sweets, meat, and petrol, as everything was in such short supply. We were each allowed one egg a week, and a small amount of tea, and sugar. Vegetables weren't rationed, but availability was unpredictable, so people joined any queue they found!

Although coal mining continued uninterrupted, the majority was exported to raise money, as the country was close to

bankruptcy. Therefore, it too was rationed. I recall queuing for coal bricks (coal dust cemented together) during the exceptionally harsh winter of 1946/47, then dragging them back to my house on a homemade sledge. I cried because my hands were so cold.

Radios were powered by batteries similar to a car battery. These were very heavy, made of thick glass, and had a wire carry-handle. They had to be taken to a shop to be charged and then lugged through the streets without consideration of health and safety.

The toilet roll worries of COVID weren't even a thing; we would tear The Liverpool Echo or Daily Post into pieces and nail it to the wall in our "privy" (outside toilet).

Newspaper sellers walked the streets back then, shouting "EXY ECHO!"

I have often said I never had a bath until I was twenty-one. Well, we didn't have a bathroom or a bath; in those days people bathed at public washing baths. My nearest was on Donaldson Street, by Liverpool's football ground, and they allocated us ten to fifteen minute slots.

No one owned a washing machine back then. Women (it was always the women) washed their laundry in a washhouse, often carrying baskets of washing on their

heads. And women who worked in factories listened to "music while you work", which were songs with a faster tempo, which were geared to make them work harder and faster.

Though it might seem grim, it wasn't; it is just how it was. My sister and I had two loving parents, and we had a happy childhood.

If you went to a butcher's in those days, you could see a whole side of beef hanging on hooks. You handed in your coupons and got a small amount of meat in return. But some people would eat offal, such as tripe (animal stomach), intestines, 'lights' (which were lungs), and brawn (animal's brains with a consistency like paste).

My own favourite, though seldom available, were pigs' feet. My mouth still waters at the thought!

[EDITORS NOTE: "And you try and tell the young people of today that, and they won't believe you."]



A Week in the Life of Our Chair Cathy and Branch Secretary Carol

At Headway Sefton, the heartbeat of our success lies in the dedication and teamwork of our committee. This week, we shine a spotlight on the dynamic duo who keep our branch thriving—Chairwoman Cathy and Branch Secretary Carol Hopwood.

Monday: Planning and Booking

The week kicked off with Carol contacting the Liverpool Empire to explore options for a group outing to see Fawlty Towers in November. Meanwhile, Cathy was already deep into planning next year's Ball, scheduled for 3rd July at The Crowne Plaza. With the venue and entertainment secured, four tables have already been snapped up—everyone is welcome!

Tuesday: Archery and Ideas

On Tuesday, Carol coordinated with Blundellsands Archery Club to arrange an October taster session for our members. She and Cathy also exchanged ideas via email, refining plans for upcoming activities.

Wednesday: AGM and National Updates

Midweek saw Carol finalising AGM minutes and submitting them to Headway UK. She also joined a call to share updates on our branch's activities, feedback from the Tower Wood trip, and discuss key topics like fundraising, event risk assessments, and volunteer-to-member ratios.

Evening Meetings and Strategic Focus

Both Cathy and Carol attended evening meetings, demonstrating their unwavering commitment. Carol drafted an article for our next newsletter, while

Cathy focused on strategic planning and committee coordination.

Administrative Excellence

Throughout the week, Carol managed a steady flow of emails from Headway UK, ensuring committee representation at mandatory meetings. She and Cathy also reviewed updates to our member database to maintain accuracy and security.

Safety and Support

In her ongoing commitment to member safety, Carol researched first aid course providers to ensure someone in the branch is trained. Cathy worked with Jan to source and price BI Games T-shirts for Headway Worcs and explored coach hire options. She also finalised the Tower Wood bill and discussed catering arrangements.

Personal Dedication

Beyond her Headway duties, Cathy continues to support those around her—caring for her terminally ill father, mourning her mother's recent passing, and helping Jan visit his own elderly mother and attend hospital appointments. Carol balances her Headway role with her full-time position as Head of the Catastrophic Injury Team at Carpenters Solicitors.

Conclusion

Their week was packed, but their energy and enthusiasm never wavered. Thanks to their positively charged teamwork, our members continue to benefit from a vibrant, well-organised, and supportive community.

INTRODUCING - Abigail Cuffe

Meet Abigail Cuffe, Headway Sefton's latest volunteer advisor.

Abigail's career began in 2012, at the Department for Work and Pensions, with responsibility for assisting in the recovery of overpaid benefits and outstanding loans.

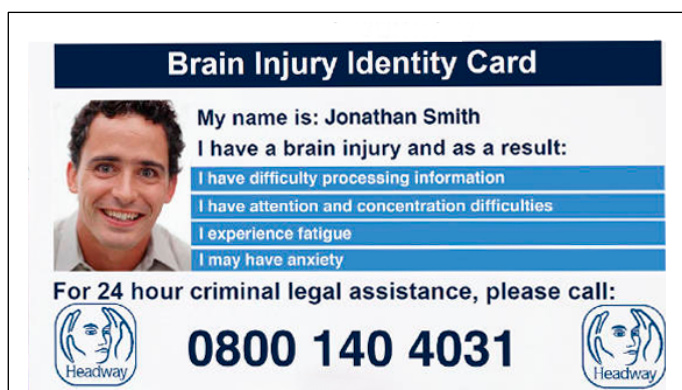
Abigail moved into the legal industry in 2014 as a Court of Protection Paralegal and Benefits Expert, working in several similar roles across the region.

Abbi handles every step of the Welfare Benefits process, including applications, decisions, mandatory reconsiderations, benefit appeals, and accompanying clients to medical screenings.

Her diligent approach ensures no overpayments or unclaimed benefits go



unnoticed, covering disability benefits, personal independence payments, Employment Support Allowance, and Universal Credit.



The Brain Injury Identity Card is designed to help police personnel and staff readily identify brain injury survivors so they receive an appropriate response and support.

It gives brain injury survivors added confidence in everyday situations.

The card is personalised to help the holder explain the effects of their injury and request support they may need.

The Card is one way that Headway can support you after a brain injury. It is available free at <https://t.ly/RNKuK>



HEADWAY SEFTON SPONSORS



LEAVING HOSPITAL #5 – Jan Johnston



9. Personality Traits More Prone to TBI

- **Impulsivity and Risk-Taking Behaviour:** Individuals engaging in dangerous activities are at higher risk.
- **Antisocial Personality Traits:** Aggression and disregard for safety contribute to increased injuries.
- **Substance Abuse History:** Alcohol and drug use impair judgment, leading to accidents.

Personality Types and Demographics Prone to Brain Injuries

Certain personality traits and demographics may influence the likelihood of sustaining a TBI:

- **Risk-Taking Behaviours:** Individuals exhibiting impulsivity or engaging in high-risk activities are more susceptible to TBIs.
- **Gender Differences:** Males are more likely to sustain TBIs than females; maybe because of men's greater participation in high-risk activities.
- **Age Factors:** Young adults and the elderly are at higher risk, with falls being a common cause in older populations.

Common Types of Brain Injuries and Associated Side Effects

TBIs can vary in type and severity, leading to a range of complications:

- **Frontal Lobe Injuries:** Damage to the frontal lobe can cause changes in personality, impaired judgment, and motor function difficulties.
- **Temporal Lobe Injuries:** Injuries here may affect memory, speech, and auditory processing.
- **Occipital Lobe Injuries:** These often lead to visual disturbances or loss of vision.
- **Parietal Lobe Injuries:** Such injuries commonly cause difficulties with spatial orientation and sensory perception.

Associated Side Effects

- **Tinnitus and hearing loss:** individuals may experience ringing in the ears or partial to complete hearing loss.
- **Visual Impairments:** TBIs can lead to blurred vision, double vision, or complete vision loss.
- **Understanding these aspects is crucial** for providing appropriate care and support to individuals with TBIs and their carers.

Headway Sefton phone number: 07736774496

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Sunday September 14th

Monday September 15th

Prince of Wales Hotel Tours

Heritage Open Days; 10:30 AM – 2:00 PM



Sunday October 19th

Blundellsand Archery Club

Taster Session

Time to be confirmed

Sports Field at - Spinney Crescent, L23 8TZ

We will put in on the WhatsApp chat and people can register an interest.



Friday December 19th

Headway Christmas Lunch

Inside No4, 4A Carnegie Ave, Crosby

Cost to members is £20 a head

Menu will appear in October's newsletter



Thursday September 25th

Nutrition Talk by Sian Riley



Waterloo Community Centre, 45-minute talk and discussion on nutrition in neuro-rehabilitation, hosted by Sian Riley.

This is at our next drop in session

Wednesday November 13th

Faulty Towers

Liverpool Empire

14:30 (2:30pm)



Sunday September 14th

ARTICLES AND ITEMS FOR NEWLETTER

DEADLINE



Tower Wood Outdoor Activity Centre – Feedback Questionnaire

We'd love to hear about your experience! Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts so we can continue improving.

1. Food

How would you rate the quality of the meals provided?

Excellent ☐

Good ☐

Fair ☐

Poor ☐

Were there enough options to suit your dietary needs?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Any comments or suggestions about the food?

2. Accommodation

How comfortable was your accommodation?

Very
comfortable ☐

Comfortable ☐

Adequate ☐

Uncomfortable ☐

Was everything clean and well-maintained?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Any comments or suggestions about the accommodation?

P.T.O.

3. Activities

How enjoyable were the daytime activities?

Very enjoyable ☐ Enjoyable ☐ Neutral ☐ Not enjoyable ☐

Were the activities well-organised and safe?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Which activity did you enjoy the most?

Which activity/activities did you enjoy the most?

4. General Enjoyment

Overall, how would you rate your stay at Tower Wood?

Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐

Would you recommend Tower Wood to others?

Any other comments or feedback?

YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Looking Ahead

Would you like to return to Tower Wood in 2026?

YES ☐ NO ☐

What other activities would you like to see offered in future visits?