

Club Together

Issue 49: Winter 2018

Wales



William had a stroke in 2015, while getting ready for work. His partner found him on the floor and noticed his **fallen face** and **slurred speech**. Remembering the **FAST test**, she rang **999** immediately.

William has permanent brain tissue damage and has psychological, emotional and cognitive difficulties as a result of his stroke.

However, he has since completed more than **70 Parkruns** and the **Berlin Marathon** for our charity.

'I was so lucky to be found so quickly and treated so quickly, that someone had recognized the FAST signs and had the foresight to call 999.'

Would your family and friends know how to do the FAST test?

Face: look at the person's face and ask them to smile. Has their face fallen on one side?

Arms: ask the person to raise both of their arms and keep them there. Are they unable to raise one arm?

Speech: ask the person to tell you their name, or say 'hello'. Is their speech slurred?

Time: it's time to call 999 if you spot any of the above signs.

Help us make more people FAST aware. Share **FAST cards** in your **community** and with your **family and friends**.

Learn it. Share it. You could save a life. Find out more about the FAST test and other signs of stroke at stroke.org.uk/FAST.

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Together we can conquer stroke

Stroke
association

Find out about our support restructure

Our **volunteering teams** across the UK have **recently undergone a change** in the way they are **structured**. We hope that these changes ensure that you know who to go to for **support in your area**.

All of our teams have been through a period of transition and recruitment in order to make sure we have the **right people in the right roles** in each area.

As part of this restructure, we've **divided England into three zones**, but our **countries boundaries remain the same**.

The teams across our England zones and countries will consist of the following roles:

- **Head of Volunteering and Community**
- **Volunteering and Community Manager** (in some areas)
- **Volunteering Coordinator**
- **Volunteering and Community Officers**

We've also renamed our **Life After Stroke Services directorate to Stroke Support**, and we have a key focus and responsibility for supporting volunteering activity across the UK. We're sure you'll meet our new staff along the way; please do give them a warm welcome!

As a result of these changes, **Club Together has also restructured**.

We now have issues for the following zones and countries:

- **England – North**
- **England – Central**
- **England – South**
- **Wales**
- **Scotland & NI**

This has been done to make sure the news from clubs and groups across our **zones and countries** still gets **shared** and **celebrated**.

Inspired ideas

Although you probably know your fellow club and group members quite well, you'd be surprised what you can learn when you have the opportunity to really focus on each other.

The following game allows you to do just that, and all you need is a bag of coloured sweets, or if you're being healthy, a bag of coloured beads. You'll need enough for a **few goes each**.

First, sit **in a circle** so that you can see each other. Then, **pass the bag around** the circle. As it goes round, each member should pick a sweet or bead from the bag and **say something about themselves** depending on the colour drawn. Below are some suggestions for what you can say for each colour:

Red: something about yesterday

It could be something you saw or did, read or organised – anything that comes to mind.

Orange: something you do well

We all have different skills and talents, let the group know one of yours.

Yellow: something you can't live without

This could be something you love eating or doing, or perhaps something that makes your day-to-day life that little bit easier.

Blue: something you learned last week

There's an abundance of new information coming at us daily - what did you find interesting?

Purple: something about your childhood

Is there something your group would be surprised to know from your early years, or did you have an interesting hobby that shaped your childhood?

Green: something you watch or listen to

Someone might take your recommendation and find their new favourite book, TV show, radio play or podcast.

This game is a great way to encourage people in the club or group to talk about themselves.

Essential Aids



A stroke can lead to a multitude of new **everyday challenges**. Getting dressed, preparing a meal or even taking a bath can present previously unforeseen problems. That's where our shopping partner, **Essential Aids**, can help out.

Their website has a **big range of products** designed to **assist you** in all sorts of tasks around the home.

There are **grab rails** and **walking aids**, plus equipment to help with **food preparation**, **bathing** and **getting dressed**.

Essential Aids also supplies **easy-exercise rehab** products that can help **improve muscle strength** and **coordination**.

Visit essentialaids.com/stroke-association or call **01273 719 889** for a catalogue.

If the item you're buying is for a stroke survivor, please **tick the box at the checkout** and Essential Aids will donate **5% of the item price** to us.

Visit stroke.org.uk/daily-living-aids, essentialaids.com or phone Essential Aids on **01273 719 889** for more ideas and information about aids around the home.

More news on our national plan for stroke

We are thrilled to share the good news that the **Government has committed to a new national plan for stroke**, and **NHS England** will continue to support its development.

As we've said before, this is a direct result of your support. From **signing petitions**, **contacting local politicians** and **sharing your experiences**, we couldn't have done it without you.

In November, **Sir Bruce Keogh**, the previous National Medical Director at NHS England, **publicly stated his support** for a new national plan for stroke.

And then in December, the Government announced their response. **Lord O'Shaughnessy**, stood up in the **House of Lords** and said: "**On the stroke strategy, there is a follow on plan being developed by NHS England and partners, including the Stroke Association and others, which will take forward that approach.**"

"**It is an integrated service approach, so it is including ambulance, community as well as secondary care.**"

This is a great campaign victory. We continue to work with NHS England to write our plan, and we hope it will bring **key organisations together** to improve **stroke care and treatment**. We hope that it will be published soon.

We will update you again when the details of the plan are refined and put into action, and we'll let you know how you can help with the next stage of our **A New Era For Stroke** campaign.





All over the UK, there are people who show **amazing courage, determination and compassion** on a daily basis, in an effort to overcome the **debilitating effects** of stroke. We want you to **help us find them**.

Do you know someone affected by stroke who's an inspiration? Nominate them for a **Life After Stroke Award** and give them the recognition they deserve. Whether they're a **stroke survivor, carer, professional or volunteer**, let them know just how remarkable they are. You can nominate them for an award in these categories:

- **Award for Volunteering**
- **Stroke Group Award**
- **Carer's Award**
- **Courage Awards:**
 - Children and Young People's Courage Award
 - Adult Courage Award 18-64
 - Adult Courage Award 65 years and over
- **Award for Creative Arts**
- **Professional Excellence Award**
- **Fundraiser of the Year Award**

You can nominate online at stroke.org.uk/LASA, or request a nomination form in the post by emailing lasa@stroke.org.uk or by calling **01527 903 927**.

Did you know that if you've nominated someone in a previous year but they didn't win, you can **nominate them again**, year-on-year?

Wales' Neath Port Talbot Stroke Group's 2017 win

The group were presented with the **Stroke Group Award** at The Dorchester Hotel in London on 1 November, by **The One Show** Welsh presenter, **Alex Jones**, and star of **Cold Feet**, actor, **Robert Bathurst**.

The group were recognised for **providing much needed long-term support** to stroke survivors in South Wales. They're a **welcoming and vibrant** group, who organise all sorts of exciting activities together - from **African drumming** to a **trip to Ibiza** - and are committed to **raising money and awareness of stroke**. They said: **"It was an incredible event, we were spoilt rotten. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves."**

If you think your club or group is a worthy winner, why not **nominate them** for a Life After Stroke Award this year? Head to stroke.org.uk/LASA.





There's still time to join a Resolution Run

Our runs continue into April, so there's still time to join us across the UK as hundreds of supporters take to local venues to be part of our **Resolution Runs**.

Our runs are designed to be fun and suitable for **all ages and abilities**. Whether you **run or walk**, our Resolution Runs are not only **enjoyable for all** but **raise much-needed funds**.

Each run has a minimum length of **5km** with some venues offering **10** and **15km** routes.

Each participant receives a **T-shirt, water, training emails** and a **medal** for taking part.

Why not encourage **friends, family** or **members from your group** to come and take on the challenge by **taking part**, or by **helping as a volunteer** on the day?

If you can't attend one of our scheduled events, you can still take part by joining our **Virtual Resolution Run**.

To find out more about your nearest Resolution Run and our Virtual Resolution Runs, please visit stroke.org.uk/resolutionrun.

You can also call **0300 330 0740** or get in touch with your **local fundraising team**.

Join us at a UKSA

Our **UK Stroke Assembly** events are the largest gatherings of stroke survivors in the UK. We bring together people affected by stroke to **have their say, share experiences** and hear the latest developments in **stroke care and research**.

Going to a UK Stroke Assembly event is a great opportunity to **meet others** in a similar situation and **learn from them**, be **inspired** and **gain encouragement**. Many people make great personal achievements in attending.

Together with members from his stroke group in Plymouth, **Darren Hall** attended our UK Stroke Assembly South event.

"We found the UK Stroke Assembly very informative and very enjoyable. All the stroke survivors were so inspirational. We also had a chance to meet Stroke Association staff throughout the region. The amount of work that is happening right now and is planned for the future is phenomenal."

Why not join us at an event in 2018?

UK Stroke Assembly North

Monday 4 to Tuesday 5 June at Radisson Blu Hotel, Manchester Airport

UK Stroke Assembly South

Monday 9 to Tuesday 10 July at Radisson Blu Hotel, Stansted Airport

For more information and to book your place, visit stroke.org.uk/UKSA or call **01527 903917**.



Our first ever Wales UK Stroke Assembly

Stroke survivors and carers gathered at Wales' first ever **UK Stroke Assembly** in Cardiff in November to **share their stories, knowledge and experiences** of life after stroke. The event was a **great success**.

Stroke survivor, **Chris Maddocks**, spoke of her experience of **hidden disabilities**. Chris was a former Cardiff police officer who had **three strokes in her 50s** that led to her being diagnosed with vascular dementia.



Chris said: **"After my stroke, I was discharged from hospital and was just left. I had to find help myself for anxiety and depression, and I felt totally lost and alone before I found support at the Stroke Association.**

After my talk, so many people said that that was exactly how they felt, but couldn't put it into words. Some even came up to me in tears. Such hidden disabilities are harder for people to understand because if someone has a physical impairment it's obvious, but a psychological problem is invisible and you have to make others understand how you feel – even those in the medical profession.

Talking about things makes me feel useful, not useless, because when you've lost your job and had to give up so much, it's nice to be able to give back and feel needed."

Attendees also got the chance to learn more about **living with fatigue, negotiating the benefits system and how the brain can re-wire itself after a stroke.**

Neath Port Talbot group shine at Life After Stroke Awards



1 November was no normal day for six members of the **Neath Port Talbot Stroke Group** last year, as they were **transported to a world of glitter and glamour** in one of London's most prestigious hotels, and recognised for their **passionate dedication** to improving life after stroke.

Sitting among stars from **television, radio and music** in the **Dorchester Hotel**, the committee members were there to pick up the award for **Best Stroke Group**.

The group won the award based on the **huge footprint** they have left in the county of Neath Port Talbot in the **three short years** since they formed.

Famed for their **out-of-the-ordinary activities and huge fundraising efforts**, the judging panel agreed that this group were the worthy winners for this category in 2017.

If you would like the chance to have this incredible experience, and to make a nomination, visit **stroke.org.uk/LASA**.

Community Steps

We want to share some **exciting news** about a **project** that will be **starting very soon** here in Wales. Our team of **Statutory Fundraisers, Sarah and Philippa**, have been **successful** in applying for **Big Lottery Funding** to roll out the **Community Steps** programme.

The project is in response to people affected by stroke telling us that:

- **They are anxious and lack confidence to find stroke specific support.**
- **They don't know what is available or how to access support in their local community.**
- **The public lack understanding of stroke.**

Community Steps will **create support services** for stroke survivors in communities across Wales, **integrate them** in existing services and ensure their **needs are considered** when local organisations and decision makers are creating or changing **local facilities and activities**.

Community Steps will do this over a **four year period** via a **three step approach**:

Step 1: Peer Support

Step 2: Community Integration

Step 3: Community Influence

We are recruiting **five** new members of staff throughout Wales to roll out the project. We'll introduce them to you once they're in post.



Fundraising in 2018

We had a record-breaking year for our **Step Out for Stroke** events, both nationally and in Wales. In 2017, you helped us raise over **£200,000** nationally, with over **£35,000** of this being raised by the seven walks in Wales.

With your support, we're confident that we will continue to **build upon last year's success**. Our walks are suitable for all ages and abilities, and are wheelchair and dog friendly too. Whether you walk 20 yards or the whole mile, every step makes a real difference. The full list of dates and venues can be found at stroke.org.uk/stepout.



This is also the time of year when many local companies, groups, clubs and Mayors start thinking about which charities they will support as their charity of the year for the next financial year.

If you know anyone who works for a **local business** or is a member of a **sporting club or group**, then why not ask them to consider supporting us as their **nominated charity partner** for the year ahead? In return, we can offer **full professional fundraising support and materials** during their time fundraising for us.

Toyoda Gosei UK, Swansea, chose us as their charity of the year in 2017. Ann-Marie Foligno, HR Administrator at the company, said: **"I can honestly say that you guys have been the best charity experience we have had to date, I would like to personally thank you for that."**

For more information, call us on **02920 524426** or email fundraisingwales@stroke.org.uk.

Contacts

Contact us by email:

clubtogether@stroke.org.uk

Regional contacts:

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Our Cardiff office has moved

At the end of January this year, our national office for Wales **relocated to Caerphilly**.

A lot has changed after **10 happy years** in the old office in Tongwynlais, and an office of that size was no longer needed.

It was also agreed that the we need to be **more visible** in the community to help more people know **who we are** and **what we do**.

Therefore the search for a new, smaller and cheaper office began last summer, and after scouting locations across South Wales, it was the green grass banks of **Caerphilly castle** that won the day.

The newly refurbished office at Tŷ Cenydd, Castle Street, Caerphilly offers breath-taking views over one of the most famous landmarks in Wales, as well as placing us just off the main street of bustling Caerphilly town.

Please update your records with this new address if you need to.

Please note, **our phone lines** and **email addresses** have all **stayed the same**, as have details for our St Asaph office.

Calendar

Dates for your diary...

Sunday 11 March

Resolution Run Cardiff

Sunday 18 March

Resolution Run Anglesey

Sunday 29 April

Newport Marathon

May

Make May Purple

Monday 9 to Tuesday 10 July

**UK Stroke Assembly South
Radisson Blu Hotel
Stansted Airport**

Friday 31 August to Sunday 2 September

**Ring o' Fire Ultra Marathon
Holyhead**

Tuesday 9 October

Cardiff Half Marathon

New office details

Address:

Tŷ Cenydd, Castle Street,
Caerphilly CF83 1NZ

Tel: 02920 524 400

Email: info.cymru@stroke.org.uk

