

Club Together

Issue 50: Summer 2018

South

Independence matters

Our charity supports stroke survivors to **regain their independence** and help get their lives back on track. Our peer support network is a big part of this, and can be an **instrumental tool in a stroke survivor's recovery**.

For many stroke survivors, their recovery means adjusting to **life-changing disabilities and emotional difficulties**.

Our latest campaign, '**Independence doesn't happen on your own**', aims to help more people to **understand how stroke can affect people** and raise awareness of how our charity can offer **support and information** about life after stroke.

And here's why:

- In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, **84% of patients** leave hospital requiring help with their daily living activities.

- In Scotland, **more than half of stroke survivors** need assistance from another person to be able to walk.

Last year, we provided emotional, practical and peer support to **57,000 stroke survivors** and their loved ones through our face-to-face services. We supported **15,000 people** through our helpline and almost **6,000** through our stroke peer support groups. And, over **1,100** people were supported by our Life After Stroke Grants.

Many of these services are only possible thanks to the **generosity of our supporters**, who enable us to **continue to support stroke survivors across the UK**.

With your help and more awareness, we want to **share information about what support is available after stroke** and help stroke survivors **regain their independence**.

Find out more on our website:
stroke.org.uk/independence.

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Together we can conquer stroke

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When is it safe to fly after a stroke?

We work with AllClear Travel* who have given their tips on how to fly with confidence after a stroke.

Most medical professionals agree that if you've had a stroke, you **should not fly for a minimum of two weeks**, and in more severe cases, for **up to three months**.

Understandably, there is no exact rule for everyone, and you should **always confirm with your doctor that you're fit to travel**. But, there are further steps you can take to make you **more confident when travelling by air**.

Five tips for flying after a stroke

The main risk of flying after a stroke is **developing blood clots**, especially clots in your legs. Consider the following steps to **prevent blood clots**:

1. Book an aisle seat

Stretching out your legs is important.

2. Flight socks

They improve blood circulation by applying pressure.

3. Wear loose-fitting clothes

They ensure blood flow is not restricted.

4. Exercise

Walk around regularly and stretch, even while seated.

5. Fluids

Drink lots of water, and avoid alcohol, as it can cause your blood to thicken.

Medical travel insurance

Sometimes you can prepare perfectly and still be unlucky. **Medical costs for a stroke can be extremely expensive** - particularly when visiting the USA.

Make sure you have **comprehensive travel insurance** to give you extra peace of mind while travelling.

To get a quote or purchase **specialist medical travel insurance** with AllClear, please visit stroke.org.uk/allclear or call for free on **0808 168 8733** today.

*When you purchase a policy from AllClear Travel, they will make a contribution of up to 20% of your premium to the Stroke Association (excluding Insurance Premium Tax) at no additional cost to you. The Stroke Association is an Introducer Appointed Representative of AllClear Insurance Services Limited. AllClear Insurance Services Limited, registered in England No. 4255112. Registered Office: AllClear House, 1 Redwing Court, Ashton Road, Romford, RM3 8QQ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority firm reference number 311244. AllClear is a registered trademark

Give a Hand and Bake 22 - 28 October

Last year was fantastic - full of baking, fundraising and connecting with friends and family over a cup of tea and a slice.



Plans are well underway in our fundraising department, and we are almost ready to share our fundraising pack that will launch on **30 August**, full of tips and hints on how to make your baking event a sweet delight.

To tickle your taste buds, we wanted to share a delicious cake that is **low in sugar, and gluten free**, which went down a real treat in one of our local offices last year.

We hope you will join us in baking up a storm this October, so that we can support more stroke survivors and their families through My Stroke Guide.

Ingredients for one cake:

- ½ cup (2¾ oz) unsweetened dark cocoa powder
- ½ cup (2¾ oz) coconut flour
- 2½ tsp gluten free baking powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of sea salt
- 6 organic eggs
- ½ cup honey, maple syrup or your choice of sweetener
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup coconut milk
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C
2. Sift the cocoa, coconut flour, baking powder, cinnamon and sea salt into a mixing bowl.
3. Add the eggs, honey, vanilla, coconut milk and olive oil.
4. Mix well until smooth and combined – a whisk works well.
5. Pour into a 20 cm (9 inch) baking tin lined with baking paper.
6. Bake for 55-60 minutes or until cooked through. Best to test after 45 mins to make sure as oven temps may vary.
7. Remove from the oven and cool.

Inspired ideas

Now that the weather is warm and the flowers are blooming, why not bring some of the outdoors inside? **Indoor gardening** has a host of benefits, from enhanced well being, improved hand coordination, relaxation, a chance for people to work together and catch-up at the same time and a feeling of satisfaction as you see the results of your work.

You will need:

- Tables covered with plastic or old newspapers for protection.
- Some tools, potting mixture, pebbles, honey, pots and water.
- Succulent leaves, bulbs or cuttings.

Propagate succulents

Bring in some cuttings of succulents or leaves that have dropped off the plant. To propagate, lay the succulent leaves flat on top of the dry mix and place in bright, indirect light. Lightly mist the cuttings once a week at your meetings. Roots will soon emerge as the leaf looks for water. Succulents are very versatile, but don't like being too wet. Place them in partly shaded spots when growing and water only when dried.

Plant indoor bulbs

Spring bulbs are easy to grow and should bloom every time. Go for hyacinth, narcissus and amaryllis bulbs and place on window sills or other sunny areas. Place pebbles inside a container and arrange a few bulbs, (or just one bulb if the container is small) root side down, so that the pebbles cover half of the bulbs. Put a small amount of water in the container, just enough to touch the root of the bulbs.

Grow from cuttings

Geraniums are sturdy plants, and fragrant and beautiful. Take your cutting and cut it below the growth nodule. Next, take the leaves and flower buds out leaving only the smallest leaves attached. To boost growth, dip ends in honey and plant in potting mixture. You should water the pots once a week. Happy planting!

Our Policy and Influencing teams special thank you

Thank you to everyone who supported our **A New Era for Stroke** campaign. We're pleased to share that NHS England have agreed to work with us on developing a new national plan for stroke. We could not have done it without you.

We're working with NHS England and others from across the health system, to finalise the new national plan for stroke in England. The new plan will look across the **whole stroke pathway**, from the **moment stroke strikes** to support after **leaving hospital**, and suggest improvements.

This is a **huge step forward for our campaign** but we aren't done yet. We now need to ensure that the plan covers the **important issues** for stroke survivors, and that it will be **implemented locally**, where stroke survivors and their families tell us they need them.

The success of the campaign would not have happened without your help. Your commitment, passion and dedication helped us convince the **government and NHS England** that a new stroke plan is needed.

Everything you did helped us to achieve our goal of securing a national plan for stroke and **a better future for stroke survivors**.

To celebrate your involvement, we held **three thank you events**, and several **clubs and groups** also held their own **thank you tea parties**.

If you would like to get involved, or would like more information, please get in touch with us by email at campaigns@stroke.org.uk.

Thank you again, for not only all that you have done, but all that we know you will continue to do to show that **together we can conquer stroke**.



Celebrating volunteers



What volunteering means to you

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For **Volunteers' Week 2018**, we asked what volunteering means to you, and the results were really nice to see.

The word cloud above shows the words that we were sent. The purple words represent the largest amount of responses, with yellow showing the next amount and blue the smallest.

As you can see, the responses were all very positive. It's wonderful to see what volunteering means to you, and thank you for getting involved.

This year we shared a series of blogs on our intranet, and for the first time, on our website. If you haven't read them yet, visit stroke.org.uk/volunteering and find the 'Additional links' area to meet our volunteers.

There are some wonderful stories and we've had great feedback about them. We would love to continue sharing what our volunteers do this way throughout the year.

If you'd like to write a blog, please email clubtogether@stroke.org.uk and we can support you.



Our 2018 UKSCC

This year's **UK Stroke Club Conference** takes place on **Friday 28 – Saturday 29 September** at the **East Midlands Conference Centre**.

Invitations will be posted to the main contact of clubs and groups in **early July** with full details of the event. Places are limited, so book yours by the **end of August** to guarantee your place.

At the UKSCC, you can join other group representatives to **hear the latest news from the stroke community, gain ideas and tips about running a group** and learn from other groups from across the UK.

Jane Malone, pictured below, organiser for **Warwick and Leamington Stroke Support Group** attended the conference.

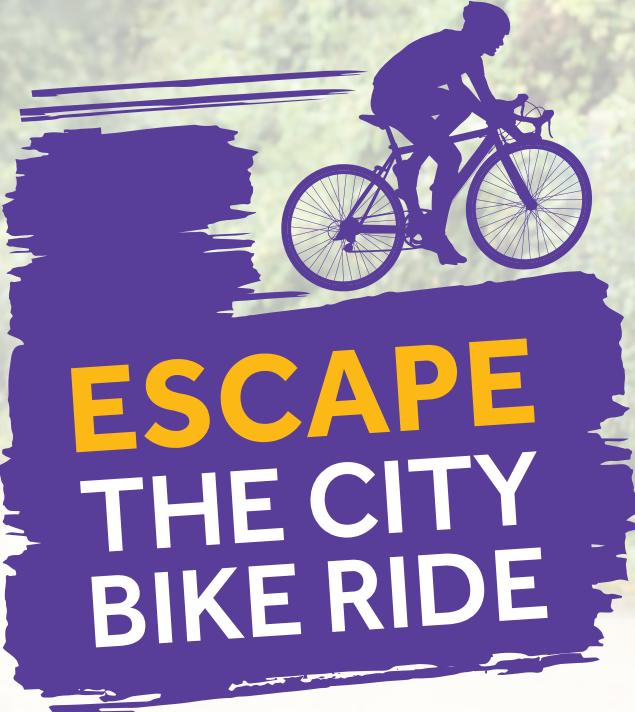
"We attended the Stroke Club Conference in Nottingham in 2017. It was great, well organised, informative and very much enjoyed by three of our members who attended.

There are always new things to learn and useful information to help our groups to thrive."

The programme consists of **talks, workshops, an exhibition** and plenty of **time to network** with others.

Visit stroke.org.uk/UKSCC to find out more about how attending the event can **enhance and inspire your club or group**.





ESCAPE THE CITY BIKE RIDE

Sunday 30 September 2018
**Kings House Sports Ground,
Chiswick, W4 2SH**

Choose your distance
30-mile, 60-mile or 80-mile

escapethecity@stroke.org.uk
0300 330 0740
#escapethecity



Enter online:
stroke.org.uk/Escapethecity

Together we can conquer stroke

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35 years of support to stroke survivors and carers



Gill Knight's mum had a brain stem stroke following a car accident in 1983. She went to live with Gill and became one of the first members of the **Emsworth Stroke Club**. Since then, the group has gone from strength to strength. They recently celebrated their 35th anniversary at an event attended by their local Mayor, who marked the occasion by cutting their cake.

Gill says that attending the club helped her mum to regain her sanity: "**This group made me realise how vital it is for both stroke survivors and their carers to meet and get support.**"

At the time her mum had her stroke, there was no stroke support in their local area, including stroke wards, consultants, nurses or Stroke Association services. This meant there was very little information available. Gill also didn't receive a Carers Allowance when she had to give up teaching to give 24/7 care, as she was a married woman.

Gill later joined the **National Association of Carers** campaign to extend this and was interviewed on the BBC. Later on, she was invited to give a series of talks at **The King's Fund** to give professionals a **better understanding of the effects of stroke on a family**.

Gill is very pleased that things have improved. However, as a service in the area has recently come to an end, she is **concerned about the decrease in support**.

Gill has been a volunteer for the Emsworth Stroke Group from the beginning and has chaired the group for the last **16 years**. She is still finding new activities for the group, such as a recent **music therapy session in which members played mini harps**.



Gill has lost count of all the **members and carers who have been helped by the group** as there have been so many.



Soup 4 You

At the **Hammersmith and Fulham Life After Stroke Group** there is a fantastic initiative called '**Soup 4 You**'. It's run by Sonia, Ana and their amazing team. Along with members of other clubs and groups, they plant and grow their own vegetables. Tomatoes, onions, courgettes, pumpkins and more are grown by the group, then used to create a soup that is prepared, cooked and eaten by stroke survivors. The soups are delicious and the group are really proud of their efforts.

Thank you, Ana and Sonia.

Ten years' hard labour

A poem, written for the tenth anniversary of Greenwich Stroke Club, by Geoffrey.



Ellen, some ten years ago
did most of the research
and found Time Court in Charlton,
beside St Thomas Church.

So Greenwich Stroke Club started
with Association backing
but it was down to Ellen
the whole shebang got cracking.

Time Court had it's drawbacks,
it's fence was quite forbidding
and halfway up a hillside
it had just one bus, no kidding!

But it did have first-rate coffee,
the chef there was a winner
and nobody who ate it will
forget his Christmas dinner!

Despite it being comfy
And that coffee on it's menu
Time Court's days were numbered
we must find a better venue.

At last we came to Eltham,
St Mary's, with it's plusses:
easy access, choice of rooms,
and high street full of buses.

Yes there is a downside:
there is no Christmas pud
And heyho, did I mention
the coffee's not so good?

But here we've had great volunteers
a post grad trail blazer
Bill, who showed another skill,
an excellent fundraiser.

But who has been the loyalest?
Who's proved the cat's pyjamas
at organising anything?
The laurels are Pat Palmer's.

There have been other bodies
which have made a great impact:
Lavinia and Juliet
and stars from InterAct.

And there's another comes to mind
and can you guess who this is?
He can speak Swahili
and he writes us loads of quizzes.

So let's all give a massive cheer
as now I introduce
the chair for the next hundred years
we all salute you, Bruce.

Sing Out for Stroke



Great fun was had by the patients and members of the **Sing Out for Stroke** group in **Bexhill Irvine Unit** where the choir performed well known songs as part of **Make May Purple**. The group wore purple t-shirts and encouraged everyone to join in with the fun, while choir leader **Kerry Everden** played the ukulele.

Nev Barnett, unit Chaplain, praised the work of the Stroke Association and quoted '**Together we can conquer stroke**'. Nev also asked the choir to perform at the unit on a more regular basis, as the patients enjoyed the occasion so much.

Swale donation



Chloe Braiford, a Stroke Association fundraiser, accompanied **Stewart Kitching** from the **Swale Stroke Association Voluntary Group** to accept a cheque for £1000 from the **Medway Royal Engineers Association**.

Stewart said, "The group is totally funded and organised by the members and helped by local organisations. They've been running for nine years and started with three members - they now have 50 members.

The group visits people at the Medway Hospital Stroke Ward and, sometimes, they pay for mobiles or CD players if the person is in hospital. They even pay for the car parking at Medway Hospital if a member has another stroke and hasn't got enough money. They collect people from their home for the support meetings. They answer a 24 hour telephone messaging machine and, twice a year, they do fundraising events for the Stroke Association. The group organise local trips for members, and they campaign for better NHS stroke services.

In 2016, the group won at the national Life After Stroke Awards. This money will help the group so much. Thank you."

Well done to all involved, and thank you to Medway Royal Engineers Association.

30 years a Chairperson



Over 30 years ago, Nell Wycherley attended a meeting about **community care in her area**, and was approached by Ann Slade from the '**Heart, Chest and Brain Association**', as the Stroke Association was called then. Somewhat surprised and curious, she found out more, and later filled out a form to help with fundraising.

When Portchester Stroke Club came together, there were already volunteers for Secretary and Treasurer. When they turned in her direction and asked her to Chair, she looked behind her, but there was no one there... 30 years later, she presided over the celebration of their anniversary. She shared anecdotes about people who have attended, past and present, the changes through the years and the shared fun and laughter.

Nell is good at recruiting new volunteers. She involves people from her church and the local community, and always keeps an eye out for stroke survivors and carers in the group who can be supported and encouraged to take on roles.

Nell is on the lookout for the next chair, but she'll be hard to replace. Thank you, Nell.



Winner of the 2018 Community Impact Award

The first ever **Pride of Maldon Awards** presentation evening took place on Friday 16 April at Maldon Town Hall. Nominations for the awards began in February and quickly came flooding in. The local community were encouraged through media and community initiatives to nominate those they thought deserved recognition.

The ceremony, which was hosted by **Maldon's Mayor Jeanette Stilts**, saw the work of Maldon residents honoured in front of more than 100 invited guests who were invited to come along and join the celebrations.

Our very own **Maldon and Dengie Stroke Support and Carers Group** were delighted to be awarded the **Community Impact Award**. This prestigious award recognises the superb work they do to support stroke survivors in Maldon and the surrounding areas.

"The Group are truly inspirational and are going from strength to strength." said **Louise Hornagold**, Volunteering and Community Officer for Essex. **"They have big plans for the future driven by a passion to reach and**



support more stroke survivors. Especially those who cannot easily access the group because of where they live, transport limitations and costs. I am so honoured to be working with such wonderful people."

Members benefit from a number of activities including **exercise, gardening, and an aphasia group**. They don't stop there: a thriving **carers group** offers much needed respite, and they all regularly come together for **social activities** such as nights out at the theatre or a trip to a wonderful local restaurant.

Dorchester Social Stroke Club raise a glass

Dorchester Beerex, an occasion savoured by connoisseurs of real ale and the odd cider, is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. To mark this milestone, the organisation has **raised over £155,000 for local charities** during its lifetime, and **Dorchester Social Stroke Club** is proud to be the **main beneficiary** this year.

With 85 real ales and 15 ciders and perries on offer, it would have been rude to refuse an invitation to the opening session and celebrate our new fundraising partnership.

Anne Richards and **Jackie Sherfield** needed little persuading to sample one of the ales, raising their glasses to a successful event and thanking the organisers for **choosing them as their charity for 2018**.



West Kent Stroke Choir



The air in Maidstone was filled with music as the **West Kent Stroke Choir** performed at this year's **Make May Purple** event that took place on 2 May at our Stroke Association regional offices at Turkey Mill.

The choir delighted the audience with renditions of popular classics such as Bring Me Sunshine and the Toy Story favourite, You've Got a Friend In Me.

The event, which was organised by West Kent Support Coordinator, **Kirsten Ormerod**, and members of the **West Kent Stroke Group**, was an amazing success. A large number of visitors took advantage of the free blood pressure checks; the tombola provided some lucky winners with a range of wonderful prizes; and everyone was treated to a sugary delight in the form of cakes, which were lovingly prepared by **Georgia Desborough, Dawn Curtis, Ruma Kinkead Weeks** and **Chloe Bradford** from the Kent team.

'How wonderful it was to see so many people enjoying the musical talent of the choir. It was quite a show.' said Kirsten.

Redbridge celebration



Elizabeth Davies, Louise Perry and Phillipa Haslehurst delivered a surprise celebration for **Doris and Alan Kaizer at Redbridge Stroke Group**, which has been going for 40 years. Photo albums from their first day were on show and amazing to see, especially with some of the members having been part of the group for 40 years too!



Make May Purple

Affiliated groups **Friends of Hove** and **Adur Stroke Club** enjoyed a **Make May Purple** afternoon in each other's company.

Afternoon tea was accompanied by songs from the past, and a very pleasant afternoon was enjoyed by both clubs.

Did you hold your own Make May Purple event? Get in touch and send your pictures to your local Volunteering and Community Officer, their contact details are on the back page.



Regional News

Contacts

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For a full list of training available, please contact your local
Volunteering and Community Officer.

Calendar

Monday 9 – Tuesday 10 July
UK Stroke Assembly South,
Stansted

Saturday 14 July
Step Out for Stroke Watford,
Cassiobury Park

Wednesday 18 July
• **Volunteer induction, Frome**
• **Volunteer induction, London**

Thursday 19 July
Volunteer induction, Plymouth

Sunday 22 July
Step Out for Stroke Surrey,
Goldsworth Park Lane

Friday 3 August
Health and safety for clubs and
groups, London

Tuesday 14 August
• **Health and safety for clubs and**
groups, South East
• **Befriending, London**

Wednesday 12 September
Stroke Ambassador induction and
awareness, London

Monday 24 September
Volunteer induction, Southampton

Wednesday 3 October
Volunteer induction, Exeter

Stroke Helpline: 0303 3033 100
stroke.org.uk