

Club

Together

Latest news from clubs and groups

Rebuilding lives after stroke

Issue 53: Autumn 2019
Central Zone

Stroke
Association

The power of working together

Attended by 174 representatives from 80 clubs and groups from across the UK, our annual **UK Stroke Club Conference** (UKSCC) was held on 4-5 October 2019 in Nottingham.

The event continues to be a highlight of the year for many who support clubs and groups.

Since its introduction in 2005, the purpose of the UKSCC has been to bring leaders and volunteers of clubs and groups

together for celebration, sharing experiences and support.

At this year's event, we wanted to demonstrate the power of working together, reaching out to those in your local and national community and learning from each other. And we are pleased we did this.

Throughout the whole planning and delivery of the event, our approach shone through loud and clear.

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Hear about our UKSCC

We know that there are lots of amazing things that our network of stroke support clubs and groups do to help rebuild lives after stroke, and that you have many connections in your local communities. We explored how to make the most of these connections to fundraise and support with the long term sustainability of your group. We also talked about the various resources and support that our charity can provide to help run your group effectively, including making sure you're taking care of yourself, as well as your members.

Throughout the event, those involved in stroke clubs and groups helped chair the event and co-present many of the talks and workshops.

Learning from the wealth of expertise and successes from everyone there created an uplifting and motivational atmosphere over the two day event.

Julie King from **Aphasia Life Rotherham Group** spoke on the main stage about the strength of her group and how they've worked together to self-fund the group after it was threatened with closure after local funding cuts.

Julie's inspiring talk was given alongside **Jane Maber, Head of Brand**, who gave the latest updates from our Rebuilding Lives campaign and brought to life how clubs and groups are living our refreshed values.



"This was my first conference and I really enjoyed it, particularly the workshops and overall, the format of the conference. I'll take some momentum into my volunteering into the future." Kevin Leighton

"The conference was very interesting with lots of new and helpful ideas for clubs throughout the weekend." Lynn Hancock

"Although I was nervous, I knew doing the speech was something I really wanted to do. There were so many feelings and emotions wrapped up in doing the speech. A feeling of pride, not only in what our group is doing to support our members, but also in the Stroke Association and all it does to support stroke survivors. It's something I wouldn't have had the confidence to do before my stroke, and certainly not what I thought I would be able to do following it. I was told I might never talk or walk again, so it was a major personal achievement for me and a very proud moment! I was overwhelmed and humbled by the amount of people that took the time throughout the day to say how much they enjoyed my speech, and to congratulate me."

Julie King

National News

There was also the chance to hear the latest news from the Stroke Association.

Our Chief Executive, **Juliet Bouverie**, was interviewed by **Ian Cunningham, Chair of Wokingham Stroke Support and Recovery Group**. They spoke about Juliet's own reflections of the past year and what opportunities the new Stroke Association strategy holds for us all.

Juliet and Jane spoke about the ambitious new strategy that will allow us to raise awareness of stroke and ensure everyone affected by stroke has access to the rehabilitation and lifelong support they need.

Throughout the event, it was emphasised how we want to partner with clubs and groups and communities to rebuild lives after stroke, learning from the wealth of experience that our clubs and groups can offer and how can we best work together to realise the ambitions of the new strategy.

For more details about this year's UKSCC, please visit stroke.org.uk/uksc.



"We'll be back next year. Invaluable information. I have so much hope now. So great to connect."

The value of your voice



To help us understand what's important and what volunteers wanted from this year's event, we set up a UKSCC planning group. Made up of a team of club and group representatives and Stroke Association staff, they have been instrumental in shaping the programme to keep it relevant, fresh and interesting to all attendees.

Working with the planning group and listening to past event feedback, we revised the format, timings and content of this year's programme. All the changes were a great success and attendees valued the extra activities, more focused workshops and time for the important networking. Overall this made the event less tiring and even more beneficial for all who joined us.

If you'd like to take a more active role in next year's event, or join our planning group, please call on **01527 903717** or email clubconference@stroke.org.uk.



Bryan Hilton, Chair of Stowmarket Support Group and member of the UKSCC planning group, who co-chaired the event.

The latest from our charity



Give a Hand and Bake

Give a Hand and Bake events are a fun and easy way to raise money that helps us to provide life changing support to stroke survivors. Did you know you can hold a Give a Hand and Bake event at any time throughout the year? Visit stroke.org.uk and search for 'Give a hand' to find out more.



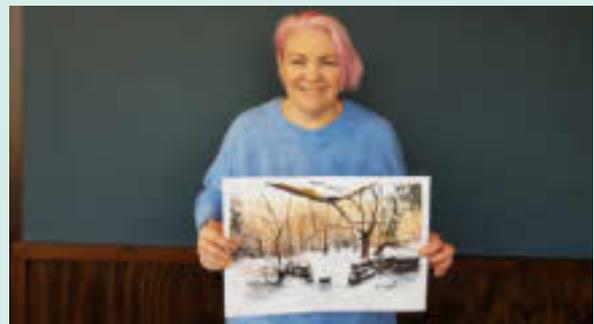
World Stroke Day

We marked **World Stroke Day** on Tuesday 29 October by publishing the last chapter of our Lived Experience of Stroke report. In 2018, we conducted the biggest ever survey of stroke survivors and their carers to find out more about their lives. You can read our report by visiting stroke.org.uk and searching 'lived experience'.



Rebuilding Lives

Our campaign is making a difference. One of our Helpline team reported "**Just took a call from a lady who had her stroke three years ago and hadn't reached out for support. She was prompted to call by our 'wonderful' TV advert, which had led her to see recovery and doing new things as a possibility. I was able to signpost her to our local service and a voluntary group.**"



Our Christmas shop

Our festive Christmas card range includes the limited edition winning design from our Christmas card competition, 'Winter Scene', created by stroke survivor **Jacky Baldwin**. If you'd like to place an order, visit stroke.org.uk/shop. For guaranteed Christmas delivery, orders need to be placed by **Wednesday 12 December 2019**.



AllClear Travel, the specialist medical travel insurance provider, has uncovered the top medical claims people make on their travel insurance, showing that protecting yourself against the unexpected is a must when planning for your holiday.

With the Association of British Insurers (ABI) reporting that medical claims accounted for more than half (52%) of the £399 million paid out to travellers last year* for their insurance claims, it's not surprising that medical issues abroad come up time and time again in AllClear's research.

Overall, the most common reason for requiring medical attention abroad is as a result of an injury or fall, with 26% of all people who have claimed citing it was for this reason.

Following closely behind are stomach upsets at 24%, and 12% are a result of pre-existing medical conditions.

Chris Rolland, AllClear CEO, says if you're living with a medical condition or have previously had a stroke, it's wise to be prepared.

"It's interesting that more than one in ten claims result from a pre-existing medical condition. This makes it even more important to declare everything and make sure you have comprehensive cover in place."

When you purchase a policy through AllClear, they will make a contribution of up to 20%** of your premium (excluding IPT[^]) to the Stroke Association, at no additional cost to you.

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,143 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 12th - 13th July 2018. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). * abi.org.uk

**AllClear will pay the charitable contribution of up to 20% of your premium (excluding IPT) to Stroke Association Trading Limited which donates its taxable profits to the Stroke Association (Charity Number 211015 England and Wales, SC037789 Scotland).

[^] IPT – Insurance Premium Tax is charged at 20% and is included in the total premium that you pay.

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Living active lives after stroke

You might have seen the **We Are Undefeatable** campaign on TV, or heard it on the radio. We Are Undefeatable encourages people with long-term conditions to be active.

We're supporting the campaign because we know that after a stroke, starting to move more can be a massive boost to your recovery. It can help your confidence, wellbeing and can help you stay healthy after a stroke.

One of the ways we support stroke survivors to get active is through the **Active Lives After Stroke** project. The project is funded by the National Lottery and Sport England, with the aim to learn more about how we can support people to get active and stay active through support groups.

Active Lives After Stroke has been running in four areas across England in Devon, Central Lancashire, Grimsby and Newham. So far, just over a year in to the project, we've worked with over 80 stroke survivors who have taken part in a range of different activities. These have included table tennis, badminton, seated exercise, bowls, circuit training, yoga, strength and balance exercises, and even surfing!

Everyone who has taken part has given feedback and shared what they've enjoyed, as well as what they haven't or what they would like to try. Some people haven't known what they wanted to do but have found something they enjoyed after trying a few different things first.

Some sessions have been with instructors who have led the activities and in others, staff and volunteers have taken the lead. But, across all of the sessions, people are getting more active, feeling more confident and motivated, and telling us that being more active is making a difference to their day-to-day lives.

Volunteers at the groups are also feeling more confident. In November, we'll see our first volunteers taking part in Inclusive Activity training with the Activity Alliance so they can take more of a lead in the sessions.

We're learning that there's lots of ways people can get active as part of a group, but what's important is that the activity is something people enjoy, that it's fun and that people motivate and encourage each other.

If you're thinking of getting active, whether that's on your own or in your group, why not visit our website and search for '**getting moving after stroke**'?

There are seven sections that you can use as a guide to getting more active, including information about how to start moving more, exercise ideas and staying motivated.



Visit weareundefeatable.co.uk to learn how Simone, a stroke survivor, stays active.

Here's a Central Zone shout out!



Celebrating 20!

Velma Hamilton, local Volunteering and Community Officer, visited the **Grimsby Stroke Club** and awarded them a certificate to mark their 20th anniversary. Many of the members are long standing childhood friends who also met at the group years later. We hope you enjoy many more years of friendship, fun and life after stroke.



Purple celebrations

Buckingham and District Stroke Group organised a wonderful evening at the Bell Hotel, Winslow, to raise awareness for stroke and funds for the group. Group members, family and friends enjoyed a delicious three course meal, live music by a local singer and a raffle. £500 was raised to support the activity of the group. Keep up the good work and celebrating life after stroke.

Thank you, Catherine



Catherine Clerkin has been involved with the **Haverhill Stroke Club** since it started in 2012. From a very slow start, the club has become well supported and well attended.

Catherine has given her time, compassion and understanding to the stroke survivors in Haverhill and will be greatly missed by all involved with the club.



Just the ticket!

Church Stretton and District Stroke Support Group went on an enjoyable outing on the Severn Valley Railway this summer. **'It was super to be on a steam train, the journey was very relaxed. There was great opportunity for chat and catch up for group members. A great day was had by all the group and perhaps we may go back!'** enthused **Jane Richmond**, Secretary of the group.

A successful change of venue

Eye Stroke Support Group recently moved into their new community premises at The Michael Burke Wellbeing Centre at Hartismere Hospital.

The fantastic centre includes a large open room, a smaller meeting room where communication support sessions are held, a kitchen, an outdoor gym, allotments and a sensory garden.

And, the stroke group have an allocated raised flower bed which volunteers have planted in the colours of the Stroke Association.

The Centre was created by the NHS in conjunction with GroundworkUK and is named after the local town and district Councillor who was also vice Chairman of the Hartismere Hospital League of Friends. The group provides support, fun and activities for stroke survivors and their carers.

Congratulations on your new home. We wish you many enjoyable moments there.

In the photo below are group members looking at items from the reminiscence box on loan from Suffolk Museums at their first meeting.



Summer fun for Redditch Stroke Support Group

Over 45 members and friends of the **Redditch Stroke Support Group** recently enjoyed a trip to the Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens. There were many beautiful and unusual plants and animals to see, and an additional treat was the drive through the gorgeous countryside - a special highlight was the poppy fields. Everyone agreed that it had been a fantastic day out!

Back at the community centre where they meet, highlights of the summer programme have been seated exercise with a parachute canopy that caused great entertainment and a performance by local 60's singing star Bobby Thompson.

Keep up the great work **Ann, Rita, David and team**. It's clear to see how valued the peer support and fun that is on offer at your group is to its members.

Exploring the magnificent Castle Bromwich Gardens

On Monday 12 August, members of the **North Birmingham Stroke Support Group** visited Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens.

This little known oasis of peace and tranquility was scheduled for housing development in the early 1980's but the chance discovery by a surveyor who happened to be a keen gardener ultimately led to the restoration of magnificent formal gardens in their original 17th Century layout.

The group arrived to a splendid welcome of tea and cakes, and then enjoyed a guided tour of the 12 acre site during which they learned the history of the gardens, and families associated with Castle Bromwich.

We certainly plan to return next Spring to marvel at the display of over 50 varieties of tulips. It is to be hoped the weather will be as kind next time!



Celebrating our volunteers

Volunteers **Paul Bailey** and **Debra Archer** very deservedly received **The Arts and Education for Recovery Award** for their work on the Snyed Stroke Ward at Haywood Hospital.

The ceremony was organised by the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to recognise and celebrate the significant contribution that patients, service users, carers and volunteers make to the trust.

The Snyed ward provides specialist and coordinated rehabilitation. Paul and Debbie attend weekly to provide reassurance to stroke survivors and their families and carers and to act as a link between the ward and Stroke Association local services in their communities. As stroke survivors themselves, Paul and Debbie offer huge motivation and inspiration to people affected by stroke.

Thank you for all your fantastic work both, it is very much appreciated by both us and the people that you meet with on the ward.

All Shook Up!



The **Great Yarmouth Stroke Group** were visited by Elvis recently. Much fun was had singing and dancing along!

New team members

Welcome to our zone!



Sally Darley
Volunteering and
Community Manager for the
Central Zone.



Velma Hamilton
Volunteering and
Community Officer for
Nottinghamshire,
Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.



Sonal Bhavsar
Volunteering and
Community Officer for
Northamptonshire,
Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire,
Leicestershire and Rutland.

Sun, sea and health checks



The **Heart of Birmingham Stroke Support Group** have been very active of late!

The group are gaining a well deserved reputation as a really positive and active group who thrive on having fun and lots of laughs.

They provide a wide variety of activities and events, a recent highlight being a visit to the group from **Dr Jacquie Halliday-Bell** and **Pastor Paul Howarth** who ran a diabetes and health check day, as pictured above.

And recently, they experienced their first holiday together!

Leona, Carol and **Alex** led the group volunteers and members on a two day trip to Torquay. The group had an amazing time, the weather was glorious and they enjoyed a boat trip while they were there, too.



Celebrating an amazing achievement for Stroke Support West Midlands

Stroke Support West Midlands have been honoured with the **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

Jonah Jones, Chairman of the group, pictured on the right with his wife, **Gertie**, explains "'Our family' has grown steadily since our beginning. The group aims to help not only the survivors but also their loved ones or carers, who often have some problems adjusting to the devastation that a stroke brings.

This is done by offering mutual support and guidance as required. With our direction of offering friendship and belonging but also knowing that many stroke survivors experience a lack of self-esteem and sometimes feel isolated. We recognise that these emotions are often shared by their loved ones.

We try to do this by working to build up confidence and thus reduce the feeling of isolation, having a laugh and a chat with people who have gone through similar problems."



Jonah continues, "We try to do this by working together to build up confidence and thus reduce the feeling of isolation, having a laugh or a chat with people who have gone through similar problems although all unique.

The club continues this good work in building confidence through our weekly exercise sessions which inspire the thought, 'if I can do this what else can I achieve?'"

Stroke Support West Midlands is one of 281 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year and attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to celebrate.

"Receiving this prestigious Queen's award is a great honour for all of our volunteers and members. I would like to thank each and everyone of them for all of their assistance and congratulate them on receiving this very special recognition on our 20th Anniversary year, this highlights their continuing efforts."

Indeed it does Jonah, our sincerest congratulations to you all.

Contact us

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Calendar

Saturday 7 December 2019 - 11:00-15.00

Christmas Fayre at The Life After Stroke
Centre, Church Lane, Bromsgrove, B61 8RA

Sunday 23 February 2020

Resolution Run - Derby, Markeaton Park

Resolution Run – Norfolk, Gorleston
Seafront

Sunday 1 March 2020

Resolution Run - Doncaster, Sandall Beat
Wood

Sunday 8 March 2020

Resolution Run - Northampton, Brixworth
Country Park

Resolution Run – Peterborough, Ferry
Meadow

Sunday 15 March 2020

Resolution Run - Nottingham, Rushcliffe
Country Park

Resolution Run - Slough, Black Park Country
Park

For more information, including news about
our 2020 1k lap, please visit:
stroke.org.uk/fundraising/resolution-run.

Helpline: **0303 3033 100**

Email: helpline@stroke.org.uk

Rebuilding lives after stroke

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