

Club Together

Issue 49: Winter 2018

North



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**.



Sign up to our online support tool

Stroke can change lives in an instant. Whether it's happened to you or someone close to you, **My Stroke Guide** can help.

My Stroke Guide's trusted online support is all in one place, **whenever you need it**, to guide you through your stroke journey.

Easy-to-read **information, advice** and **videos** from the Stroke Association explain everything you need to know after a stroke. And our chat forum can connect you to our **online community**, to find out how others manage their recovery.

Log on to **mystrokeguide.com** today.

"The video concept is fantastic.

I wish I had that when I had my stroke.

I felt like I always had to ask questions."

Tina Hughes, our Peer Support Development Officer and previous My Stroke Guide Coordinator, met **Prakash Kotecha**, from East Leicestershire, at **4Wards Stroke Leicester** group.

Tina presented My Stroke Guide to the entire group. As a result Prakash, with help from Tina, decided to buy a tablet to use My Stroke Guide. Prakash said:

"It has let me talk to other people that have had a stroke. I eventually want to set up a group for people who want to go on holiday and share a carer. I enjoy watching the videos of other people that have had a stroke. It helps me to realise I'm not on my own."



My Stroke Guide user, Mohamed Komara

As **My Stroke Guide** has grown into a trusted online community and support tool, we **closed our online forum, TalkStroke, on 5 February.**

You can keep the conversation alive in a **supportive and welcoming** community on My Stroke Guide. Registering is quick, easy and takes no longer than five minutes.

We'd like to **thank you** for all your commitment to TalkStroke and we hope you join us soon on My Stroke Guide.

If you have any questions, please call us on **0300 222 5707** or email us at **mystrokeguide@stroke.org.uk.**

Kicking off volunteer training in 2018



Our first training session of the year was about the **hidden and emotional effects of stroke**. Volunteers at the session also learnt about the **support strategies** that they can use to **help** their group members.

The course aims to help **build empathy** for stroke survivors living with these hidden effects and create a **realistic, workable action plan** to help you provide support in your group.

Although the session covered some challenging topics, everyone who took part enjoyed the day and gave **positive feedback**.

Each member wrote an **action plan** for how they will put what they learnt into practice within their own groups.

York Speakability members also joined us for their **Volunteer Induction** training. Everyone had a great day and found it beneficial, with members looking forward to **joining further training**.

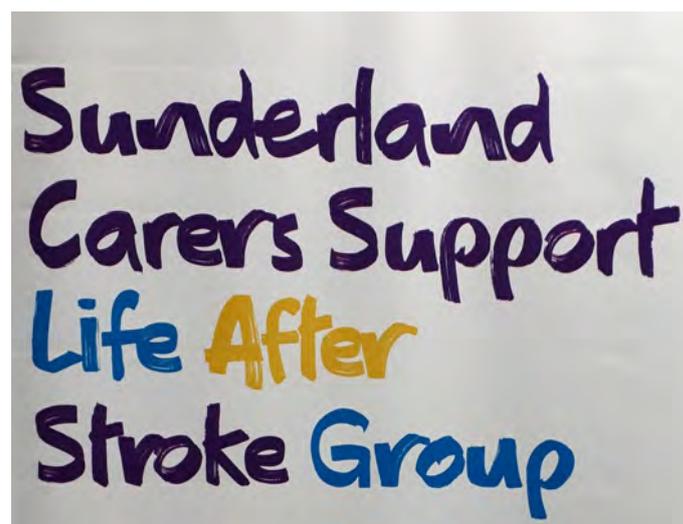
Our **training schedule** will be published and sent out soon. If there is any training that you would like to do, please contact your **regional team member**.

Welcoming a new group



We wish a very warm welcome to our newest group in the North East. **Gateshead Stroke Alliance** held their first meeting as an affiliated group in January. We wish them every success in the future.

Hub and spoke group for Sunderland carers



Volunteers at **Coalfields Life After Stroke Group** in Sunderland have been **striving forward** to make sure they are continuing to **meet their members needs**.

Recently, they **carried out a consultation** with their members and found that **carers** felt they would like **further support**.

With support from regional staff, the group have developed into a **hub and spoke group** with a **carers group** now being offered once a month.

Members of the carers group **greatly value** this session as it's an **opportunity to share and support one another**.

Our Life After Stroke Awards North West celebration event



Our **Life After Stroke Awards North West** celebration event took place at the **Holiday Inn** in Liverpool on **Monday 27 November 2017**.

We are grateful to **Randex Health** who supported the event.

Almost **50 nominees** were congratulated and presented with their certificates by **Professor Tony Rudd**, NHS England's National Clinical Director for Stroke, and our Chief Executive Officer, **Juliet Bouverie**, alongside former Liverpool FC footballer **David Fairclough**.

The **North West Stroke Community Choir** provided **great entertainment**, and were also nominated for the group award.

Our **Life After Stroke Awards** recognise the **courage** shown by **stroke survivors and carers** as well as the **great work and commitment** shown by **health professionals, stroke clubs and groups** and **supporter organisations**.

Nominations **are now open** for this year's Life After Stroke Awards. To nominate someone and to find out more, visit **stroke.org.uk/LASA**.

Get into Golf sessions

Stroke survivors who have been participating in **Get into Golf** sessions at various golf courses across Lancashire took part in a special competition at **Mytton Fold Golf Club** in October.

16 players took part in a **six-hole competition** out on the course, while a **further 20** took part in an **indoor putting contest**.

The sessions provide an opportunity for stroke survivors to **socialise with others** who are also living a life after stroke, **benefit from exercise, build their confidence and enjoy learning new skills**. The course has been really popular.

If you would like to get involved with **future sessions**, please get in touch with us using the details on page 12.



Some of the members of Fylde and Wyre Stroke Group who participated in the golf competition

Fabulous fundraisers

Two volunteers at the **Bolton West Stroke Support Group** have fundraised around **£1,500** for the group. **Ian Simmonds** (R) completed the **Manchester 10km run**, and **Steve Leng** (L) **walked up Snowdonia** to challenge themselves physically, and **raise money** for the group.



Giving back to the community



Volunteers and members of the **Merseyside Life After Stroke Group** wanted to do something to help others for Christmas. Instead of **sending Christmas cards** to one another, they very kindly **donated 51 chocolate selection boxes** to a local **children's hospice** for the children and their families to enjoy.

Anniversary celebrations



Congratulations to **Warrington Moving On Stroke Group** who celebrated their **five-year anniversary** in October 2017.



East Lancs Carers Group have also been providing **peer support** for the last **five years**, after **Susan Schofield** set the group up in response to a local need. Congratulations to them!

Our new team in the North

We value the work of clubs and groups across the UK. We've developed and invested in new structures to support you in your fantastic work. We're pleased to introduce the members of staff who will be supporting you in the North.



Donna Stott is **Head of Volunteering and Community** for the North of England. She joined our charity as a Communication Support Coordinator in Yorkshire 15 years ago, and then moved into a Regional Information Officer role where she began her work with clubs and groups and the stroke community. Donna's role has developed over the years, becoming Community and Partnerships Manager and now taking position as one of our zone heads. She is looking forward to continuing to build and maintain great relationships with our volunteers and groups across the North.



Leanne Gleave is our new **Volunteering and Community Manager** for the North West. She has lots of experience in community development and working with volunteers within both the health and housing sectors. Leanne's previous role was in long-term condition prevention, which involved organising regular blood pressure checking events and helping communities take charge of their own health and wellbeing.



Rebecca Murray is our **Volunteering and Community Officer** for the North West. She joined us two years ago. Rebecca has a background in communications and over twenty years' experience working in various health and community-based organisations in the UK and Australia. She loves meeting everyone at our stroke groups and volunteer events.



Laura Coleman is our **Volunteering and Community Officer** covering the North of England (much of Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire and Cumbria). Laura has most recently worked for our charity within the North West regional administration team, and prior to this volunteered for us for a number of years.



Elaine Pye is our **Peer Support Coordinator** in the North West. She has been with the us for an incredible 18 years, working as Information Advice and Support Coordinator in Wigan before taking on the role of Peer Support Coordinator.



Hannah Parrington is our **Volunteering and Community Manager** for the North East and Yorkshire. She has been with our charity for 9 years, starting as Family and Carer Coordinator and most recently took a role as Peer Support Coordinator in Sunderland where she set up and established voluntary groups. Hannah is really excited about her new role and is looking forward to meeting you all soon.



Danielle Cottrell is our **Volunteering and Community Officer** for the North East. She has been with us for two years. Danielle has lots of experience working with communities and groups in the North East, and is passionate about supporting people to make a difference in their community.



Grace Feeney is our **Volunteering and Community Officer** for Yorkshire (except Sheffield). She is new to our organisation. She has lots of volunteering experience and joins us following a gap year travelling. Grace will be based in York and is looking forward to visiting the Yorkshire groups soon.



Rowen Pymm is our **Volunteer Coordinator** for the North. She is new to our charity and joins us from British Cycling, where she looked after a variety of volunteer-led programmes across the UK. Rowen will be working closely with volunteers and delivering training.

We have a new Volunteering and Community Officer starting in Sheffield soon. We'll share further details in the next edition.

We look forward to working with you and getting to meet you over the next few months.

If you see any of us at your club or group, please do come and say hello!

Regional News

Contacts

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Calendar

Dates for your diary...

Sunday 4 March

Resolution Run

Manchester, Heaton Park

Sunday 11 March

Resolution Run

- Delamere Forest

- Teesside, Tees Barrage

Sunday 18 March

Resolution Run

Blackpool, Stanley Park

Sunday 8 April

Resolution Run

York, The Knavesmire

Stroke Helpline: 0303 3033 100
stroke.org.uk

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