The Nerve

The Brain Charity

National support for all neurological conditions September/October 2024



Johnny Vegas opens our Neurodiversity Arts Festival

Pippa Sargent's first year at The Brain Charity

Autumn reading

Introduction to **The Brain Charity**

The Brain Charity

The Brain Charity offers emotional support, practical help and social activities to anyone with a neurological condition and their family, friends and carers.

There are hundreds of different neurological conditions, from stroke, brain injury, dementia and cluster headaches to many rarer ones, such as stiff-person syndrome, too – we endeavour to be here for every single one of them.

The impact of a diagnosis can be devastating. People can lose control of their lives, and many face unemployment, poverty and social isolation as a result.

Our mission is to enable all those affected by neurological conditions to live longer, healthier, happier lives.

We offer:

- Information and advice
- Neuro Gym
- Counselling
- Legal advice
- Neurodiversity training
- Room hire
- The Brain Food Café

Address:

The Brain Charity,
Norton Street, Liverpool, L3 8LR

E: info@thebraincharity.org.uk

T: 0151 298 2999

Looking back, moving forward:

My first year as CEO of The Brain Charity


Pippa Sargent, CEO of The Brain Charity

Hi everyone, it's Pippa here. I can hardly believe it's been a year since I joined The Brain Charity. As I sit here writing this, the sun is shining through my window, just like it was on my first day.

I remember being struck by the warmth and openness of everyone I met and by the dedication, skill and compassion that, like a golden thread, runs through everything that happens at our charity.

One of my first experiences was to represent our community at a parliamentary meeting in Westminster launching the It's all in your head report. It was an important moment for The Brain Charity, to raise our voice on a national platform and help improve the lives of people with neurological conditions.

Throughout the year we've had some amazing events, like the technicolour celebrations at the AGM and the Electro Circus, and I'm really behind the forthcoming Neurodiversity Arts Festival, and I've been blown away by the generosity of our supporters and the creativity of our fundraisers. A special thank you to the amazing people at Malmaison, who've raised more than £50,000 for us so far!

I've been a curious apprentice, finding my feet this year, and I'm so grateful to all the staff, volunteers, and trustees who've helped me along the way. I'm excited for what's to come, including the development of new strategic objectives.

Looking forward to another year helping people with neurological conditions live longer, healthier, happier lives.

Warm wishes, Pippa

Rose's speech therapy story

A Brain Charity volunteer with aphasia has received free speech therapy - so she can help other people express themselves.

Kellyann, of Finding YOUR Voice with Kellyann, chose to sponsor Rose, the Aphasia Social group leader. Rose, who has lived with the effects of a stroke for nearly 10 years, experienced significant changes to her speech and language, including foreign accent syndrome.

She was determined to improve her communication so she could run a social group for people with aphasia.

Speech therapist Kellyann says: **"It was my absolute pleasure and delight to work with Rose. It was clear her goals in speech therapy were not just for herself but for others' benefit. Rose wanted to be able to communicate with people with aphasia who come into The Brain Charity.**

"Rose is inspirational, and to see her creating goals bigger than herself, despite her own battle with communication, is the true definition of courage."

Rose wants the group to be supportive, helpful, informative and social. **"You've got to laugh"**, she says!

The group meets on Wednesdays from 2.30 to 3.30 pm at The Brain Charity.

Rose adds: **"You can even come early, I'll be here at the Cafe, and if you want to stay on, we have the choir from 4 to 5pm. Singing was so helpful to me when I had lost my speech."**

Kellyann is now offering free speech therapy to another Brain Charity client.



KellyAnn and Rose

Book corner – Autumn 2024

Three inspiring books about learning differences, resilience, and the journey to recovery that you can find on Amazon.

Count Dyscalculia by Mischa Pearson



Join Cal, or Count Dyscalculia, in a heartwarming tale of a boy who turns his struggles with numbers into triumphs. This book includes a fun read-along soundtrack, activity sheets, and a final hunt challenge. Mischa Pearson uses her own experiences to create a relatable story promoting empathy and celebrating diversity. Cal's journey teaches young readers about acceptance and finding their unique strengths.

Jo's Hidden Secrets by Emma-Louise James



Jo's Hidden Secrets is a poignant, first-person account of a woman navigating life with epilepsy, mental illness and trauma. Following a childhood accident, Jo's life spirals into challenges with domestic abuse, poverty, and PTSD. She finds comfort in the NHS and various charities. Emma-Louise James captures Jo's resilience and the kindness of those who help her. This book is a raw, hopeful narrative, championing understanding and supporting those facing multiple adversities.

The Broken Few by Mariss Ijaz



In The Broken Few, Mariss Ijaz presents a compelling collection of poetry and prose that delves into mental health, family struggles, and the path to recovery. Written by a young author who personally battles mental health issues, it offers raw, authentic insights. Mariss inspires and provides solace to those feeling isolated in their struggles. Her debut is a testament to resilience and the shared experience of overcoming life's hardships.

Trigger warning for sensitive readers



Liverpool to host UK's first Neurodiversity Arts Festival

Get ready, Liverpool! This September, The Brain Charity is set to launch the UK's very first Neurodiversity Arts Festival. From the 20th to the 29th, our city will become a vibrant hub of creativity, showcasing the incredible talents of neurodivergent individuals.

This groundbreaking festival promises a rich array of artistic showcases, including new art commissions, theatre performances, musical acts, and cabaret shows. Not only will it highlight the diverse perspectives within the neurodivergent community, but it will also promote understanding and acceptance.

We're thrilled to announce that Johnny Vegas, the much-loved comedian, actor, writer, and director, will be joining us for our opening night. As someone with a neurological condition himself, Johnny's involvement perfectly embodies the spirit of the festival. He'll also be sharing his artwork, providing a unique peek into his creative world.

In collaboration with prestigious institutions like Tate Liverpool, National Museums Liverpool, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and the Bluecoat, the Festival aims to leave a lasting impact on our community and beyond.
"We believe the Neurodiversity Arts Festival will not only spotlight the talents within this community but also foster a deeper understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity," said Chris Beaumont, festival organiser.
Don't miss out on this unique celebration of neurodivergent creativity.

Follow The Brain Charity on social media for live updates. To support this pioneering event, consider making a donation at **www.thebraincharity.org.uk.**
Mark your calendars for **20th–29th September 2024,** and join us in celebrating the unique minds that make our community shine!

We've got 20 events already confirmed, but here are three Festival highlights to whet your appetite:

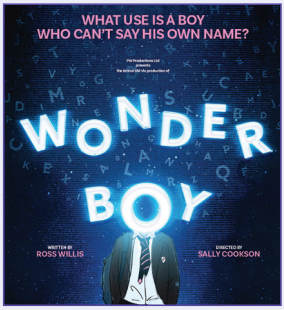
Bliss Comedy Night at The Brain Charity



Join us for a night of neurodiverse comedy with Bliss Comedy at The Brain Charity. Hosted by Mary Cross, the event promises laughter, joy, and inclusivity with accessible features for everyone. Enjoy cabaret-style seating and a licensed bar.

Date & Time: September 26, 7:00 pm
Tickets: £6
Venue: The Brain Charity, Liverpool

Wonder Boy at Liverpool Playhouse



Experience the heart-warming play "Wonder Boy" by Ross Willis at the Liverpool Playhouse. Directed by Olivier Award-winner Sally Cookson, this inspiring story about a boy with a stammer is filled with humour, dazzling visuals, and original music.

Date & Time: September 25-28, 1:30 pm or 7:30 pm
Tickets: £11 - £36
Venue: Liverpool Playhouse, Williamson Square, Liverpool

An Evening with Ruby Colley at Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room



Join composer and violinist Ruby Colley at the Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room as she discusses her new work "Hello Halo" and performs compositions inspired by nature.

Date & Time: September 26, 8:00 pm
Tickets: £6
Venue: Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room, Sugnall St, Liverpool

For more information about these and other events, please visit: **www.bit.ly/NDAF24**

NEURODIVERSITY ARTS FESTIVAL 2024

The ND Arts Festival is taking place all over Liverpool.
Find something near you!

The Brain Charity, Norton Street, Liverpool

1. **Bliss Comedy**
   Date: Saturday 21 September
2. **Disabilarity Comedy Night**
   Date: Saturday 28 September

Lady Lever Art Gallery, Lower Rd, Port Sunlight, Bebington

3. **Make Your Own Personalised Soap**
   Date: Saturday 21 September
4. **Splatter and Stick**
   Date: Saturday 28 September

Walker Art Gallery, William Brown St, Liverpool

5. **Big Art for Little Artists**
   Date: Sunday 22 September
6. **Career Day for Neurodivergent Individuals**
   Date: Wednesday 25 September

Tate at RIBA North, 21 Mann Island, Liverpool

7. **Panel Discussion on Neurodiversity and Contemporary Art**
   Date: Wednesday 25 September

Liverpool Playhouse, Williamson Square, Liverpool

8. **Wonder Boy**
   Date: 25 to 28 September

Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room, Sugnall St, Liverpool

9. **Ruby Colley Discusses Hello Halo**
   Date: Thursday 26 September

World Museum, Liverpool

10. **Relaxed Visit to the Museum**
    Date: Friday 27 September
11. **Jordan's Museum Adventure**
    Date: Saturday 28 September

The Unity Theatre, 1 Hope Pl, Liverpool

12. **Monster Disco**
    Date: Saturday 28 September

The Black-E, Great George St, Liverpool

13. **Willful Misfits Showcase**
    Date: Saturday 28 September


Willful Misfits

Museum of Liverpool, Pier Head, Liverpool

14. **Little Liverpool Session**
    Date: Sunday 29 September

Lush Liverpool, 38 – 46 Church St, Liverpool

15. **Blue Room Takeover at Lush Liverpool**
    Date: Sunday 29 September

If you need more details about any specific event, visit: **www.bit.ly/NDAF24**

TICKETS!

How to get tickets for the Neurodiversity Arts Festival 2024

The Neurodiversity Arts Festival 2024, hosted by The Brain Charity from September 20th to 29th, will transform Liverpool into a hub of creativity, celebrating neurodivergent talent and diverse perspectives.

Partnering with institutions such as Tate Liverpool, National Museums Liverpool, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and the Bluecoat, the festival is dedicated to showcasing neurodivergent artists and improving accessibility for neurodivergent individuals.

Tickets for events within the festival vary depending on the host and venue. Some events are free but still require advance booking to secure a spot. Others have ticket prices, which may differ based on seating or the specific event. It's important to check the booking details on the festival's official page or through the hosting venues' websites.

As the festival emphasizes accessibility, efforts have been made to ensure that events are welcoming to all, particularly those within the neurodiverse community. This includes features such as accessible venues, clear signage, and support for various communication needs. Attendees are encouraged to review the accessibility options provided by each venue when booking their tickets.


Monster Disco


Lush takeover

For comprehensive information on all events, ticketing options, and accessibility features, visit the festival's official website:
www.thebraincharity.org.uk/neurodiversity-arts-festival

The Neurodiversity Arts Festival 2024 marks the first of what we hope will be a powerful and enduring annual event, dedicated to celebrating neurodivergent creativity and fostering greater understanding and inclusion within our community.

2024 NDAF

The Brain Charity

What's on at the Neuro Gym

NEURO GYM

DAY	MORNING	AFTERNOON	Virtual Sessions
Monday	Open gym access 9.30am – 12.30pm	Boccia 1 – 2pm Boccia (overflow) 2 – 3pm Open gym access 3 – 4.30pm	Seated gym 1pm
Tuesday	Open gym access 10.30am – 1.30pm	Tai chi 2.30pm	Boxing 9.30am
Wednesday	Open gym access 10.30am – 12.30pm Circuit classes 11am – 12pm	Women only workout 1 – 3pm Seated dance/movement 3 – 4pm Open gym access 3 – 4.30pm	Seated exercise 10.30am
Thursday	Open gym access 9.30am – 12.30pm	New age kurling 1 – 2pm Men only Thursday 2 – 4pm	Weekly support groups 11.30am
Friday	Open gym access 9.30am – 12.30pm Circuit classes 11am – 12pm	Yoga 'move it or lose it' session 1 – 2pm Gym inductions 2 – 3.30pm Table Tennis 3.30pm	Mindfulness 10.30am Strength & balance 11.30am High intensity training 12pm

To find out more about any of these activities or to join our gym please email Scott at **gym@thebraincharity.org.uk** or call our reception **0151 298 2999**.

Step up your fitness at The Brain Charity

We're thrilled to announce the arrival of an exciting new addition to our gym – a state-of-the-art core rehabilitation treadmill!

With over 40 specialised training programs, this machine is designed to enhance balance, movement, core strength, and walking or running speeds.

It's a fantastic boost to our Neuro Gym and our personal trainers and physiotherapists can't wait to start using it to help you take your fitness journey to the next level.



Visit our gym to give it a run today!

We'd like to thank The Hemby Trust for their generous contribution towards the cost of this equipment.

Social Activities September - October

Coffee mornings: 10.30 am till 12 noon on Monday 2nd September and 7th October.

	Monday	Wednesday	Thursday
Mornings	Art for wellbeing 10am – 12.15pm	Knit and natter 10am – 12pm Gel plate printing 10am – 12.15pm	Ukulele for all 11am – 12pm
Afternoons	Maths 1.30pm – 3pm	Drawing group 1.30pm – 3pm	
		Aphasia social 2pm – 3pm	
	Shared reading 3pm – 4pm	Sing and a social 4pm – 5pm	

Gel plate printmaking

At The Brain Charity on Wednesdays from 10am to 12.15pm (temporarily replacing craft club)

Whether you're an experienced artist or a complete beginner, this unique and satisfying art form offers a fun and accessible way to create beautiful prints.

Connect with fellow art enthusiasts and unlock your creativity in a relaxed, playful setting at The Brain Charity!



Art for wellbeing

Mondays 10am – 12 noon at The Brain Charity. The next 8-week course starts on 9th September.

Our art for wellbeing group helps you develop a personal creative practice. No prior art experience is needed; you'll learn to respond intuitively, focusing on your thoughts and emotions.

While the sessions do require commitment, many people find them very rewarding.

To register for any activity, or for more information, head to our website calendar at **www.thebraincharity.org.uk/events** or call us on **0151 298 2999** and choose activities from our menu.

Ways you can support us

We are very grateful for any support during these challenging times. Here are some of the ways you can help:

Donate online

Making a regular or a one-off donation will help The Brain Charity continue to do the amazing work it does on a daily basis. Donating couldn't be simpler. Just visit: **www.thebraincharity.org.uk/donate** to give an amount of your choice today!

Give as you live

Give as you Live is a simple way for you to support The Brain Charity every time you shop with any of the major brands – at no extra cost to yourself.

Give as you Live®

Getting involved is easy – just register at **www.bit.ly/GAYLTBC** to start raising money for The Brain Charity today.

Donate by text

Give just £3 now by texting **BRAIN** to **70460**. Texts cost £3 plus one standard rate message.

If you'd like to give £3 but do not wish to receive any marketing communications, text **BRAINNOINFO** to **70460**.

Website shop

We offer all our charity-branded items for sale through our online store: **www.thebraincharity.org.uk/shop**

Donate via QR code

Scan the QR code (right) on your mobile phone camera now to donate:

Ways to be involved

If you wish to be added to our mailing list, to receive news and fundraising updates including The Nerve, please go to **www.bit.ly/signupTBC** or ask our information team (on the number and email address below) to add you to the list.

The Nerve is available in large text on request and as a PDF on The Brain Charity website.

Connect with us: @thebraincharity

The Brain Charity

Responsibly sourced paper

RECYCLABLE PAPER

The Brain Charity is registered as a charity (No: 1114999) and a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (No: 05741930)