



NEURODIVERSITY ARTS FESTIVAL 2024

A festival of beautiful thinking

Meet Scott: The driving force behind
our Neuro Gym

Run through London for The Brain Charity

Introduction to 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

Meet Scott: The driving force behind The Brain Charity's Neuro Gym

Scott Black is expanding The Brain Charity's impact with his dedication and passion. As the Neuro Gym grows, Scott remains at the forefront, inspiring both staff and clients.



Scott Black
Neuro Gym supervisor

The Brain Charity opened its Neuro Gym in November 2023, offering a new dimension of support for people with disabilities, mental health challenges, and neurological conditions. At the heart of this development is supervisor Scott Black, whose dedication and passion are among the gym's key assets.

Scott was delighted to get the gym supervisor role. Before The Brain Charity, he spent more than 9 years in employment support, helping people with various challenges.

He said, “I’ve previously worked in employment support for people with disabilities, health problems, mental health problems. With that experience, The Brain Charity seemed like a perfect fit.”

A diehard Everton FC fan, Scott brings the same passion for his team to his work at The Brain Charity. He is enthusiastic about raising awareness of the charity's broad range of services.

He said, “I wish everyone knew exactly where we are and what we do. People think it’s just support for head injuries, but we deal with over 600 different neurological conditions. We offer help with diagnoses, care and support, advocacy, information, employment support, and more. It’s amazing.”

Scott chose three words to describe the charity: “**positive, passionate and proud.**” This sums up the vibrant atmosphere he helps create. He’s also proud of the achievements of the charity’s clients.

“We spotlight everyone, every staff member, and every client. We have monthly award winners for our gym clients.”

Ryan: Runner and aspiring marathoner

At 31, Ryan is an enthusiastic runner. With his sights set on iconic races, Ryan will be running the Adidas Manchester Marathon for The Brain Charity in 2025.



Ryan first discovered his love for running after giving up smoking in his 20s. A keen runner for 7 or 8 years, he had played a bit of football during his school years. Now, it's his dream to run the London Marathon for The Brain Charity, proudly wearing a Brain Charity T-shirt.

He said, “You can run in a club T-shirt, but it’s a different feeling in a charity T-shirt.”

Ryan is committed to running around five times a week. Every week, he amasses around 20 to 30 miles. He takes part in 10-mile club runs on Tuesdays, park runs on Saturdays of up to 6 miles, and adds extra miles on other days.

Since January, Ryan has been a regular at The Brain Charity’s gym. His partner, Maria, also joins him at the gym, focusing on weight loss, while Ryan builds strength for running.

He said, “Joining the gym is helping and I love coming here. I am getting stronger and fitter”.

Ryan’s love for running extends beyond physical benefits. “I’ve got tons and tons of medals at home. I’ve lost count of the number of 5Ks and 10Ks I’ve done,” he said. The Liverpool half-marathon is a favourite: “It’s so relaxing, with the waves as you are going by.”

Ryan also engages in yoga to enhance his overall fitness.



Run through London for The Brain Charity!

An exciting opportunity for all you runners! The Brain Charity has secured 10 places in the iconic London Landmarks Half Marathon, taking place on Sunday 6th April 2025. And one of them could be yours!

This unique event was created for charities by charities and is the only half marathon to go through both the City of London and City of Westminster. Take in the sights of famous landmarks like the London Eye, Big Ben and the Tower of London on a closed road route while raising funds for The Brain Charity.

To make this event even more fun, all participating charities line the route with themed cheer points, so you are celebrated every step of the way! As we only have 10 places at this amazing event, we will be allocating them via a random draw to give everyone a fair chance of taking part.

Email fundraising@thebraincharity.org.uk to enter your name into our ballot by **Monday 15th September 2024**. Successful participants will be contacted on **Friday 20th September 2024**.

By entering our ballot, you agree that if successful you will pay an entry fee of £25 (saving £40 compared to purchasing your own place through the event organisers) and commit to raising a minimum £350 for The Brain Charity.

Good luck!



Mindful creations: An exhibition of therapeutic art

In the heart of Liverpool, amidst the vibrant hum of city life, an exhibition unfolded, inviting visitors into the realm of art as a tool for healing. The Brain Charity's Art for Wellbeing group showcased their creations at Cass Art on School Lane from 10th to 23rd June.

At the helm of this creative voyage was Jens Welch, a person-centred creative arts practitioner with a passion for unlocking the therapeutic potential of artistic expression. Through weekly gatherings, Jens guided participants in exploring the profound connection between art-making and mental wellbeing at The Brain Charity's Norton Street centre.

“It’s like taking a walk in the fog. You’re not quite sure where you’re headed, but as the mist clears, revelations emerge,” said Jens, reflecting on the transformative journey of art therapy. Our Art for Wellbeing group sessions are for anyone who is neurodivergent or living with a neurological condition. The sessions aimed to support participants in developing a personalised creative wellbeing practice.



No arts experience was necessary; attendees learned to respond instinctively, focusing on the process and their own thoughts, emotions, and experiences. In these sessions, Jens supported each participant in reviewing and reflecting upon the work they produced.

The sessions required a level of commitment but were hugely rewarding, supporting

participants' capacity to develop a mindful, reflective approach, greater insight, and an individual creative toolbox. Members worked both independently and as a group. Participants were welcome to attend with a support worker or a carer.

The exhibition wasn't just about demonstrating great artwork; it was a testament to the transformative power of self-expression. Jens emphasised, **"We weren't setting goals here; success was self-defined. People left feeling lighter, more positive, having glimpsed new aspects of themselves."**

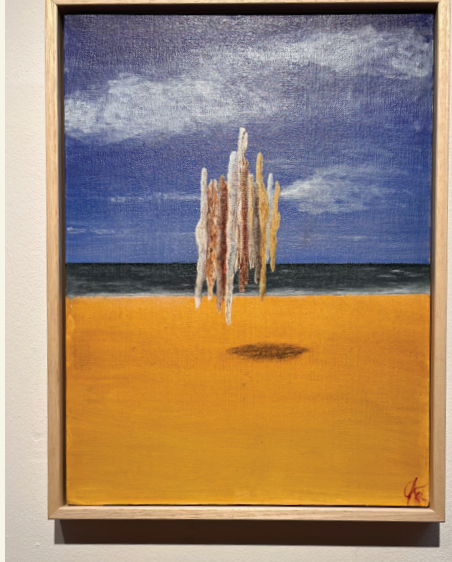
Each artwork told a unique story, offering insights into the subconscious and fostering a sense of community among participants. Jens highlighted the process-oriented nature of the sessions:

It was process-based. We weren't just creating art; we were creating space for healing and self-discovery."

As the curtains rose on this remarkable exhibition, it was an invitation to witness the beauty that emerged when creativity met compassion. Visitors joined us on this journey through the labyrinth of the mind, where every stroke of the brush was a step towards healing.

Cass Art: Championing creativity and community

Cass Art has been on a mission to fill every town with artists, underpinned by the company's long-standing manifesto. Cass Art is committed to encouraging everyone to realise their creative talents.





THE NEURODIVERSITY ARTS FESTIVAL

**Mark your calendars for 20th to 29th September 2024!
The Neurodiversity Arts Festival is coming,
showcasing the incredible talents of
neurodivergent artists.**

This vibrant event features stunning art exhibitions and live performances from neurodivergent musicians, dancers and actors, offering a fresh perspective and celebrating diversity.

Festival Director Chris Beaumont shares, *"When we are at home, my son is not 'disabled' by being autistic - everything he needs is at his disposal, and he can live his life on his own terms. If we begin to notice the barriers that society puts up for neurodivergent people, the way they are labelled and restricted and have to constantly make adjustments to fit into with a world that doesn't work for them, perhaps we can start to make some space. Perhaps we can start to loosen our parameters and our thinking, and create a world where everyone can be who they are, as they are, on their own terms. This festival is a first step to achieving that aim."*

The festival includes interactive workshops, insightful panel discussions and community art projects that will bring everyone together. With a mission to celebrate neurodivergent talent, raise awareness and open doors, the festival aims to ensure neurodivergent individuals and their families feel valued in all arts spaces.

Special thanks to Havas Lynx for their generous support and stunning artwork featured on the festival programme cover. This truly is a Festival of Beautiful Thinking.

Visit www.bit.ly/NDAF24 and stay tuned on social media for updates.

The Value of You

Motivation
Upskilling
Self-esteem
Progression

Confidence-building
Positivity
Wellbeing
Prosperity

Do you want to see personal progress and move forward in your goals in life?

Register now for our latest **FREE** personal development programme designed to improve your skills and self-confidence.

The Value of You is a series of one-to-one coaching and group workshops for people with neurological conditions to access support, develop skills and build confidence and help you change your employment situation.

What support do YOU need to express YOUR value?

To register, contact: valueofyou@thebraincharity.org.uk

Mandy: **07888 301 735** Karen: **07360 205 156**

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What's on at the Neuro Gym **NEURO GYM**

DAY	AM	PM	Virtual Sessions
Monday	Open gym access 9.30am – 12.30pm	Boccia (1) 1 – 2pm Boccia (2) 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's 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**.

Join the Neuro Gym and access our top-quality exercise machines, including the THERA-bike Tigo – our most popular piece of equipment!

The THERA-bike Tigo is a fully accessible motorised bike which can be used for exercise and rehabilitation. It helps to develop strength, endurance and mobility in the legs and the upper body. Its motor function can be used to support passive exercise, making it suitable for all abilities and conditions.

The Neuro Gym is currently the only place in Merseyside where the THERA-trainer Tigo can be accessed completely for free.

So far, Neuro Gym members have cycled 1,964km on the THERA-trainer Tigo – can you help us hit 2,000km? Register for your induction and join the Neuro gym for free today!



The THERA-bike Tigo

Social Activities July - August

	Monday	Wednesday	Thursday
Mornings	Art for wellbeing 10am – 12.15pm*	Knit and natter 10am – 12pm	
		Crafters club 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	

* Full, email activites@thebraincharity.org.uk to be added to the waiting list.

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.

New chair-based dance/movement

We trialed this activity at our recent Access to Exercise & Wellbeing Open Day and received fantastic feedback!

Now we're excited to officially include it in our timetable of activities.

These fully accessible sessions are led by Grayson, on Wednesdays from 3 to 4pm at The Brain Charity, right before the singing group.

Knit and natter

Wednesdays, 10am to noon at The Brain Charity

Everyone is welcome at our warm and friendly knitting group! Whether you're a seasoned expert or just starting out, this is the perfect opportunity to relax, chat, and enjoy the company of fellow knitting enthusiasts.



There's no need to worry if you're still mastering the basics, or if following a pattern feels like a challenge – it's all about the joy of knitting, laughter, and having fun together.

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



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