



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2026

Moving Forward Through Therapy

The Gaitway Organisation

What a period it has been for The Gaitway Organisation. From the opening of our very first permanent home, to the corridors of Stormont, to the stage of one of Northern Ireland's most prestigious leadership awards — **you are at the heart of every step we take.**

JANUARY 2026 · THE SEARCH BEGINS

Finding Our Fantastic Home

The new year brought with it one of the most important missions in Gaitway's history — the search for a permanent home. For years, we had delivered our programmes from a horse box and borrowed community halls, driven entirely by the dedication of a team who refused to let logistics stand in the way of world-class therapy.

In January, that search began in earnest. We were looking for more than just a building — we needed a space that could truly serve our children and young adults, support our clinical team, and reflect the ambition of the organisation we are becoming. After much searching, we found exactly that. **Our fantastic new home.**

From the moment we walked through the door, we knew. This was the place that would allow Gaitway to grow, to serve more families, and to deliver the intensity of therapy our children deserve.

MARCH 2026 · A HOME OF OUR OWN

We Officially Open Our Doors

March marked the moment we had been working towards — the official opening of our very first permanent base at **Crescent Vitality, 17 Clonard Crescent, Belfast BT13 2QN**. This is not just a building — it is a statement of intent. A space purpose-built around the needs of our children and young adults.

We were proud and emotional in equal measure. Everything that had been borrowed, improvised, and hauled in a horse box now had a proper home. We would like to extend our warmest thanks to all the staff at Crescent Vitality, who have made us feel so very welcome from day one.

A permanent home means greater consistency for our children and young people, a professional environment for our team, and a platform from which we can grow. Thank you to everyone who made this possible.



Media coverage at the opening, March 2026

APRIL 2026 • TAKING OUR CASE TO STORMONT

Making the Case Where It Matters

In April, Gaitway brought our story to Stormont. Our Operations Director presented to a policy audience, laying out the stark gap between WHO and NICE guidelines and what the publicly funded system actually delivers.

The presentation drew on the lived experience of families like yours. We were also joined by a parent who delivered another deeply **emotional lived experience** — speaking with courage about what it means to fight every day for your child's right to therapy.

Early intervention is not a luxury — it is a necessity. The earlier a child receives intensive, evidence-based therapy, the greater the impact on their development, independence, and quality of life.

We believe that families' voices, grounded in evidence, are the most powerful tool we have. That presentation was yours as much as ours.



The Gaitway team at Stormont, April 2026

RECENT MONTHS · POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Cross-Party Working

Effective advocacy means speaking to everyone. In recent months, our team has held meetings with **Members of the Legislative Assembly from three different political parties**, bringing the same message: the children and young people we support are not receiving the resources they need.

- We raised the urgent need for increased, sustained funding for **early and intensive therapy provision** — making clear that early intervention delivers the greatest outcomes, and that delays cost children dearly.
- We highlighted the absence of a life-course approach — the particular challenges families face as young people transition out of paediatric services.
- We made the case that organisations like Gaitway are filling a critical gap that statutory services cannot — and that this cannot be sustained on goodwill and grants alone.

The conversations were constructive. We will continue to push for concrete commitments.

Building Alliances, Chasing Every Opportunity

We have been connecting with a wide range of like-minded charities and organisations across Northern Ireland who are navigating the same challenges. Shared knowledge and shared advocacy make all of us stronger.

In parallel, our team has been working tirelessly on **grant applications** — **many of them** — pursuing every avenue of funding available. Every successful application means more therapy hours, more equipment, and more capacity to serve our families.

NEW PROGRAMMES · MAY & JUNE 2026

Exciting New Sessions for Our Families

Alongside all of the advocacy work, our clinical team has been busy building out our programme offering. We are delighted to share two new initiatives that are already making a real difference.

MAY 2026

Neuro Physiotherapy Sessions

Our specialist neuro physio sessions launched in May to a fantastic response. Grounded in evidence-based practice and already showing real impact for our children and young adults.

JUNE 2026

Conductor-Led Toddler Groups

June will bring our brand new conductor-led parent and guardian toddler sessions — bringing conductive education principles to our youngest families. We cannot wait to welcome you.

Both programmes reflect our commitment to meeting families where they are — from the earliest years through to adulthood — with world-class, evidence-based support.



Easter camp at Gaitway — the energy, the joy, the people who make it all worthwhile

COMING UP · NETWORKING ACROSS THE UK AND IRELAND

Exciting Dates on the Horizon

We are thrilled to share two exciting upcoming opportunities that will see members of our team at the forefront of international best practice in therapy and childhood disability.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT CENTRE

Birmingham

Cóirle and Rachael will be visiting the National Movement Centre in Birmingham — a world-leading facility for children with neurological conditions. This visit will deepen our knowledge and strengthen the evidence base underpinning everything we do.

EACD CONFERENCE

Galway

Some of our team will be attending the European Association of Childhood Disability (EACD) conference in Galway. We have already set up important meetings with key stakeholders while we are there — conversations that will help shape Gaitway's future.

These visits are a testament to our commitment to remaining at the cutting edge of therapy and disability practice — for the benefit of every child and young person in our care.

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION · A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

Registered with the Professional Conductors Association (PCA UK)

We are delighted to announce that Gaitway is now officially registered with the **Professional Conductors Association (PCA UK)** — a significant recognition of the quality and integrity of the conductive education we deliver.

This registration places us within a community of verified, professional conductors across the UK, and we should soon be appearing on the **PCA UK map** — making it even easier for families in Northern Ireland and beyond to find us.

Being recognised by the PCA UK is a mark of the standard of our work and the dedication of our conductors. It reinforces our commitment to delivering evidence-based, professionally accredited therapy for every child and young person we serve.

THE ICING ON THE CAKE · CO3 LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Recognised Among Northern Ireland's Best

The **CO3 Chief Officers' Awards** are among the most prestigious leadership honours in Northern Ireland's voluntary and community sector — and this year, Gaitway had a night to remember.

We are immensely proud that **three members of our leadership team were shortlisted**, a remarkable achievement that reflects the extraordinary calibre of the people working every day for our children and young people.

CO3 LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2026 · HIGHLY COMMENDED

Alan Elliott — Trustee of the Year

Alan was awarded Highly Commended — Trustee of the Year at the CO3 Leadership Awards 2026. This prestigious recognition celebrates exceptional leadership, vision, and governance within the voluntary and community sector, and there is no-one more deserving.

Alan's dedication to Gaitway and to every family we serve has been extraordinary. This recognition belongs to all of us.

★ **Congratulations, Alan**



Alan Elliott · CO3 Leadership Awards 2026 · Highly Commended · Trustee of the Year

What you have just read is not the work of a small charity doing its best. It is the work of an organisation that knows exactly what it is fighting for — and why. You, our children and young people, and our families are that reason.

We will continue to push, advocate, build and celebrate. And we will keep you informed every step of the way. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Moving Forward Through Therapy,

Cóirle & The Gaitway Team

Be Part of What We Are Building

Gaitway exists because people care. If this newsletter has resonated with you — whether you are a parent, a professional, a business owner, or simply someone who believes every child deserves the chance to thrive — we would love to hear from you.

There are so many ways to be part of our journey, and every connection matters:

VOLUNTEER

Give Your Time

We are always looking for warm, dedicated volunteers to support our sessions and events. Whether you have an hour or a day, your time makes a real difference to the children and young people we serve.

COME & MEET US

See Gaitway in Action

We would love to welcome you through the doors at Crescent Vitality. Come and see what we do, meet our team, and experience first-hand the difference that intensive, evidence-based therapy makes.

SHARE YOUR SKILLS

Offer Your Expertise

Do you have skills in communications, fundraising, legal, finance, HR, or any other area? We are always open to hearing how your expertise could support our work and help us grow sustainably.

CORPORATE & COMMUNITY

Partner With Us

We welcome conversations with businesses and community groups who share our values. Through sponsorship, fundraising, or collaboration — a partnership with Gaitway is a partnership with purpose.

If you can help in any way — big or small — please get in touch. We are a team that is always moving forward, and we would love to have you alongside us. Reach out to C  irle at coirle@gaitway.org.uk or visit gaitway.org.uk

Stay connected with Gaitway

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