

My name is Brett Harvey, I'm a Cornish screenwriter/film director. At the age of 37 I was diagnosed with young onset Parkinson's disease. It has (as I'm sure you will appreciate) impacted my life and career drastically. To be diagnosed at such a (relatively) young age felt like a cruel joke. No one can really understand the earth shattering feeling of receiving this diagnosis unless they have received it themselves which is why I'm writing to you.

I recently stumbled upon your website and reading about how you are tackling 'the dreaded D' is incredibly inspiring and relatable. I sometimes find it hard to stay optimistic especially in the knowledge that this awful disease will get worse, but reading about fellow Parkys' efforts, research and downright determination not to be defined by the disease really helps.

In terms of my own journey, after a difficult period I decided to process my diagnosis through my work by making a short film. HAND (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXyL08Vw5m0>) is a 9 minute documentary in which I try to talk honestly and openly about the condition, the diagnosis and it's impact on my life.

I made this film to process my own thoughts and feelings but also for fellow PD sufferers and for people who are new to the disease and it's intricacies. I released the film online on World Parkinson's Day 2021 and to date it has received over 23,000 views. I continue to get messages from members of the PD community and it really seems to have struck a chord. One person even used the film as a means to tell their family about their own diagnosis. HAND is now used by Parkinson's UK to train new carers.

It has far exceeded any expectation and ambition I could of dreamed of. It was also a timely reminder that art matters and has the power to help people.

I got to thinking about how to extend and build upon the impact of HAND. Prior to my PD diagnosis I was making narrative independent feature length films all set and produced in Cornwall (see my website www.bretharvey.co.uk). So I set about developing a narrative feature film **FULLSTOPS. NOT TADPOLES**, taking some of my real life lived experience and blending it with a fictional narrative. The resulting screenplay is I believe a world first: a feature length romantic comedy about Parkinson's Disease. This script deliberately tackles the subject matter in an irreverent and unexpected way and aims to capture the lows, highs and frankly weird quirks of this chronic condition wrapped around the frame of a relatable, comedic, modern love story.

Even though **FULLSTOPS. NOT TADPOLES**, explores a difficult topic, I believe the story has a broad appeal in terms of being funny, off the wall and at its heart, deeply romantic. It's a love letter to 'popcorn' cinema and ultimately a story about hope and acceptance. To date, the script has been incredibly well received by everyone who's read it.

I am now shifting my attention to getting the film made. It is my intention, like my previous work to make the film in Cornwall, employing local crew and talent. I am working with acclaimed local production company o-region (www.o-region.co.uk) Falmouth University and Screen Cornwall. I also intend to direct the film (another world first? - a Parkinson's sufferer, helming a feature film!) and will work with the films producers to adapt the way we schedule to allow me to fulfil the role despite the fatigue and recovery times my symptoms dictate.

Making a feature film is always an ambitious undertaking, making one in Cornwall makes things harder, working around the unpredictability of Parkinson's Disease adds yet more complication. And yet, I am determined to see this process through.

We have a plan for how to shoot the film over a period of about six weeks. We have key crew in place, several locations scouted, a Cornish Special effects company on board and an exciting lead actor Billy Howle committed in principal, to playing the lead role (Billy Howle: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_Howle). We are also reaching out to various celebrity PD sufferers (Michael J Fox, Billy Connelly, Ozzy Osborne) about playing cameo's in the film.

Financing an independent British feature film, let alone one entirely shot in Cornwall and a story of this kind, is always challenging – the budget is just under £1 million. We are aiming to leverage all the public funding available such as the UK tax credit as well as securing some private finance through advances on sales & distribution as well as individual angel investors.