

## **“She has deteriorated so much” – Sheffield Resident’s anguish at impact of fireworks on friend with PTSD**



*More than a week after bonfire night, Sharrow Community Forum is lit up by some nighttime fireworks*

A woman with PTSD has “deteriorated” because of “continuous” fireworks in Nether Edge according to her friend, who has called for their use to be limited to official displays only.

Beth Speake said her friend, who did not want to be identified, suffers from PTSD due to domestic abuse. The period around bonfire night has massively impacted her mental health.

She said: “After having been really quite well over the last three weeks, she has deteriorated so much. She feels physically sick a lot of the time.

“And she's really, very jumpy. She's flinching now - you could just make a movement to get a cup out of the cupboard and she flinches because she's so on edge, because the fireworks have been continuous over the last few weeks.”

Ms Speake, 34, provided some words her friend had written about how it affects her.

They said: “It's not about being a fun sponge, or moaning for the sake of it. It's that split second of panic that propels me back to the worst moments of my life. It's that sudden inability to breathe, the fight or flight response kicking in.

“It's every bruise, every beating, every argument no matter how arbitrary...It's the worst nights of my life on repeat, on a loop, played out with no respite for weeks on end.”

There have been multiple incidents in Sheffield more widely in the past few weeks involving fireworks, including teenagers reportedly throwing lit fireworks through the [open window of a bus in Batemoor](#).

This has led to heated debate on social media, with some calling for the banning or limitation of fireworks, and others defending their connection to tradition and fun. Ms Speake said that they should be made illegal outside of organised public displays.

Peter Garbett, Green Councillor for Nether Edge and Sharrow, said that he does not believe fireworks should be banned - but could see "good reason" to licence them outside of the period around Guy Fawkes night.

Not everyone sees banning the sale of fireworks as a controversial issue. Allison Rossiter, 58, is originally from Texas - but now lives in Norfolk Park.

She said: "I come from one of the most gun-loving states in America, and even we aren't allowed to use fireworks unless you are outside of city-limits.

"I don't see it as a big deal, why can't people enjoy it at an official display instead?"