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NEWSLETTER

Summer 2017

Issue No. 50

Our very best wishes from all the staff, volunteers and trustees at Hearing Help Essex. The past six months have seen a huge amount of change here at Hearing Help Essex, so we hope we manage to cover everything in this summer edition of our newsletter.

New manager Sophie Biebuyck, along with hearing dog Rusty joined Hearing Help Essex in May and have settled in well. Sophie had a busy start managing not one, but two office moves (more on this later!), as well as lots of important meetings to ensure funding is secure for future plans. Both our new projects 'HearAbility' and 'Community Connect' have been a great success; please read on for updates on these.

Farewell to Heather Stuart, Manager of HHE since 2012 & Anita Glover, Admin Support since 2015



At the end of May we gathered together to say farewell to our wonderful Manager, Heather Stuart, who celebrated five years in post at HHE. We held a celebratory afternoon tea at Sadler's House, and we were thrilled that many volunteers were able to attend. Heather and her husband John have taken early retirement together, and have already enjoyed several wonderful holidays. We are delighted that Heather has chosen to stay within the Hearing Help Family as a volunteer, and look forward to working with her in this capacity, although we hope she doesn't make us too envious with her tales from various sunnier climes!

In June we said farewell to Anita Glover, who has been working in the Resource Centre for the last two years. Anita started off as a volunteer with HHE, and then gradually began to support with administrative tasks in the office; she was formally employed by HHE in 2015 and has been a wonderful support to the whole team. We will miss Anita terribly, but we are thrilled that she is also staying on with us as a hands-on volunteer.



With the increased cost of printing and postage, if you are able to receive our newsletter via email it would help us, please could you send an email to;
info@hearinghelpessex.org.uk

Hearing Help Essex – News & Events

New Resource Centre

We have now settled in to our new premises in Moulsham Street, Chelmsford. We are thrilled to have been able to remain in Chelmsford town centre, and now have two rooms, which means we have a wonderfully welcoming resource centre, which allows privacy for visitors. It is situated on the first floor, so for those unable to manage the stairs please call the office as our outreach worker is happy to make home visits. We wrote to you in May with our temporary address; **please see our updated address at the top of this newsletter.**

Visits to the resource centre are by appointment only; please call in advance to make an appointment.

PLEASE NOTE

We now only have one telephone number which is **01245 496347**. Please delete any old numbers which you may have for us.



Autumn Meeting

More than Fires!

Tuesday 10th October

2.15 pm - 3.15 pm

Hearing Help Essex is pleased to invite you to our October meeting where you will have the opportunity to hear from our guest speaker, Paul Pemberton, Disability Officer Essex County Fire and Rescue Service about the variety of services on offer to those living with hearing loss.

Venue:

**Saffron Walden Day Centre
3 Hill Street
CB10 1EH**



The Hawthorns
RETIRE WITH STYLE

The Hawthorns Retirement Complex in Braintree very kindly donated the use of their Activities room for our Volunteer Updated Training Day on 11th April. They also provided us with a fantastic buffet lunch and kept us supplied with tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Thank you to Michaela and everyone at The Hawthorns for helping to make it such a successful and enjoyable day.

Purchasing Equipment?

The following companies send us a donation if you mention our name when ordering. For further advice please contact the Resource Centre.

Action on Hearing Loss

Telephone: 01733 361199

Text phone: 01733 238020

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop

Please quote 'HEARHESS' which will also give you a 5% discount.

Hearing Products

Telephone: 01614 808003

www.hear4you.com/shop

Please quote HHE/REF

Sarabec

Telephone: 01642 247789

Text phone: 01642 244148

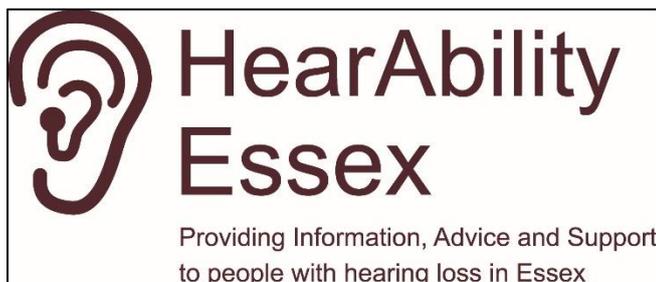
www.sarabec.com

Please quote HHE



We are delighted to announce that volunteer Christine Menzies has recently been employed by Hearing Help as our new Community Connect Coordinator. Christine will be a valuable addition to our great team here at HHE and we are looking forward to working more closely with her.

Christine will be responsible for coordinating our befriending project, which is funded by Essex County Council and delivered in partnership with Support 4 Sight and Royal Association for Deaf People. The project aims to reduce isolation for people across Essex by matching them to our befrienders, a team of trained volunteers who are able to be a listening ear and give information on local social and support groups. For more information please contact Christine direct at befriending@hearinghelpessex.org.uk



Our ECC funded information, advice and guidance project 'HearAbility' has been a huge success. This year we have reached over 1000 people affected by hearing loss via this project, either by visiting their homes or by running information sessions at various clubs, libraries and hospitals. Our outreach workers Julie and Kay have been extremely busy, and are now reaching over 100 people each month – a huge achievement given they only work 15 hours a week! This means that Janet, our HearAbility Coordinator, is kept extremely busy, keeping on top of the figures and administration of the project, ensuring we help as many people as possible.

All Ears - Living with Hearing Loss

Friendly & Informal Sessions during 2017 for people who are new to wearing NHS hearing aids or want to learn more about hearing loss. Practical Information, advice and guidance on how to best adjust to wearing hearing aids and managing hearing loss.

FREE to attend

Please join us and ensure you don't miss this opportunity to meet others and share experiences. Places for sessions are limited and we encourage you to book in advance by calling the office.

Learn about assistive equipment and technology that can really help you. Meet others and share experiences. We are busy planning more of these sessions across the county, with dates to be confirmed in Colchester, Chelmsford and Epping.

Future All Ears sessions:

**The Education Centre, Southend
University Hospital
Monday 23rd October 2017 3pm – 5pm**

**Basildon University Hospital
Education Centre
Thursday 30th November 2017 3pm-5pm
Thursday 1 February 2018 3pm-5pm
Tuesday 15th May 2018 3pm-5pm**

Booking Essential:

Phone: 01245 496347 **Text:** 07950 406173

Email: help@hearinghelpessex.org.uk

We are on the lookout for opportunities to deliver more of these valuable information sessions. If you are a member of a club, church or society who may benefit from one of our HearAbility presentations, please do contact the office to request further information or to put us in touch with a contact who may benefit.

Mid-Essex & Uttlesford Hearing Aid Support Service

Our fantastic team of volunteers were able to support over 4000 people with their hearing aids in financial year 2016-2017. We aim to increase our reach this year, striving to meet our objective of supporting those living with hearing loss in Mid-Essex and surrounding areas.

We have recently started a session in Pitsea Library, supported by a grant from 'Heart of Pitsea' and are looking at ways we can work more closely with Basildon Audiology department.

Telephone Numbers for Audiology Departments:

Addenbrooke's Hospital
01223 217797

Broomfield Hospital
01245 513237

St. Margaret's Hospital
01279 827126

Colchester Hearing Aid Repair Line
01206 744532

Southend Hospital
01702 385019

Basildon Hospital
01268 394732

Guest Contributor – Rusty the Hearing Dog

I am not usually one to put paw to paper, but the feeling in the Hearing Help Office was that our friends might be pleased to hear from me!



Two and a half years ago I was introduced to a new human – she went by the name of Sophie (I had to learn that pretty quickly!). She seemed rather nice, and told me that she needed my help. I didn't mind helping her as I had spent 18 months at a special school called Hearing Dogs for Deaf People learning how to be a star Hearing Dog. You see, Sophie has a profound hearing loss, and whilst her super power hearing aids are pretty good, they can't help her all the time, and that is when I have to work extra hard.

I have been trained to alert Sophie to everyday sounds such as the alarm clock, doorbell, cooker timer, telephone, fire alarm and other similar sounds. I worked very hard to become a registered assistance dog, which means I accompany Sophie wherever she goes. I have full access rights, like a Guide Dog, which means I am allowed to go to all the places she usually goes – sometimes this is great fun, but I must say, I am not a big fan of shopping! To ease my boredom when clothes shopping I invented a good game when we are in changing rooms where I stick my head out from behind the curtain and make the shop assistants giggle, but Sophie says this is not professional behaviour.

When I first moved in with Sophie she was a teacher, Director of Music at New Hall Preparatory School. I loved going to school with her and made lots of lovely new friends – they were great fun and there was always something exciting happening! After a few months, Sophie wasn't very well and her hearing deteriorated further; she was very sad during this time, as she realised that she wouldn't be able to continue teaching music. I

gave her lots of cuddles, and she promised me we would find a new job soon where her ears wouldn't be so important. I must admit that I quite enjoyed not being at work as it meant we didn't have to get up so early and I got lots of fun walks in new places.

In 2016 Sophie and I started working at Essex County Council managing one of the county education teams. We met lots of lovely new friends, but our office was huge and very noisy. Our team tried to find solutions, but Sophie found the background noise too much and began to look for a new role in an environment which would be better suited to her hearing loss. We looked and looked and then one day she saw an advert for Hearing Help Essex – I had a quick read and told her that we must apply!

Here we are several months later, all settled in to the new HHE Office



(don't worry, I sniffed out a decent park nearby) with a wonderful new work family. I have my own bed, and get to sleep for a large part of the day, but do occasionally get up to ensure our visitors get a warm, waggy welcome and Rusty cuddle when needed. I have noticed that Sophie is really enjoying her new job, and has been super busy putting all her passion and energy in to her new role. As she has a hearing loss herself, she feels passionate that we help as many people across the county as possible, so she has been seeing how we can make that happen.

If you would like further information on my role, and the clever humans that trained me, please visit www.hearingdogs.org.uk and if you scroll to the bottom of the page you will see my story. You can then click through as there is even a little film all about me!

I look forward to meeting more of our wonderful friends in due course.



Volunteer Contributor – George Turner

Heather did not know how perilous it was asking me to write a bit for our Newsletter, unaware that I secretly love a bit of a write. The truth is that I find myself so busy with Footpath affairs and fixing hearing aids, that apart from form filling and signing Visitors Books, I don't write much! But her suggestion to write about my Rambling and Footpaths activities gives me a pseudo-legal excuse to indulge.



I guess most of us reading this are doing so because we are more curious about people rather than rambles on Rights of Way, so before sounding off about the niceties of Section 119 of the Highways Act, I had better introduce myself; my name is George Turner, one of the two Hearing Help operatives in Saffron Walden who are under threat as an endangered species. Disregarding all the clinic sessions I have taken part in, in the last 12 years as a volunteer I have made about 500 home visits attending 150 people, even going on a village call out on the day my last wife died. Well – life goes on.

Saffron Walden is where I have settled for the last 47 years. The previous 30 years were spent moving around a bit. I was born when the war was still a gleam in Adolf's eye, and it did not take long for my Dad to get sunk and taken prisoner, leaving my Mum to do her bit at lubricating Anglo American relations. As a toddler, leaving hospital after meningitis, I was in effect parentless. The intervention of my Grandfather saved me being sent to one of those ghastly colonial orphan homes we are now hearing about. Some kindly neighbours let me live with them and finally adopted me when I was ten.

Seven years later I joined the R.A.F. which found me in some amazing situations: a two-year sunshine holiday in Aden, going on safari in east Africa – with guns, and being ready to do my bit frying Russia with nuclear bombs if

the Cuban crisis did not resolve. Upon discharge, I met a rather special girl and took her on a camping trip to Spain on my motorbike, but that did not satisfy the urge to travel further. A holiday with a friend aboard a yacht soon put pay to the notion we had of sailing round the world; we had not got that kind of money.

We ended up travelling by the means we knew and could best afford - by motorcycle. A friend and I hatched a plot to ride to Australia – well, until we hit the Indian Ocean. We built a sidecar outfit based on a 650 BSA twin and became the second sidecar to reach Kathmandu after riding through 12 countries. After some rather tough jobs in Australia like, farming, cray fishing, welding and building a railway bridge in the tropics, settling down did not seem so difficult. Back in England, my special girl had married my best mate and eventually I met and married another English girl in Melbourne. She came with a ready-made young son, whom I adopted. We eventually returned to England, got a job in Saffron Walden and had two more girls. Settled at last, I got my first dog.

Settling down does not necessarily mean that you stop journeying - it just continues in another medium. This I found out when, after 16 years, my wife left me and the children to return to Australia. She never made it, but I stumbled upon a powerful spiritual conviction that continues to this day, carrying me through divorce, marriage, grief from losing a wife and a daughter, cancer and getting into hot water of my own making. The mate who married the girl I took to Spain died, and incredibly, after 20 years, the lady and I met up. We married and so I became step-father to his children. But this was not the end of a fairy tale; after 23 years of marriage we were separated by her death from Motor Neuron Disease. The journeying continued when I married another widow four years ago. Perhaps we had better get back to rambling on about footpaths.....

It was having to take the dog out every day that started me walking the local footpaths. The same walks soon became repetitious so I joined the local Footpaths Association who offered lifts to those like us who did not have a

Social Media & Publicity

We have an active Facebook and Twitter feed, where you can see information, news and events that we are involved with. In the last month we have communicated with over 2000 people using these platforms.



We have recently appeared in several local newspapers, and our manager Sophie has made two recent appearances on BBC Essex. We are working hard to raise the profile of the charity across the county but need your help – after all, word of mouth is the best way to spread our good news. If any of your family members or friends use social media, please do encourage them to ‘follow us’ – they can find us by searching for ‘Hearing Help Essex’ on either Facebook or Twitter.



If you know of any local publications, or have any links that you would be happy to share with us, who may be willing to feature us in a publication (or two!) please do let Sophie know by calling the office on 01245 496347. We are particularly keen to raise the profile of our hearing aid support service county wide.

Volunteer Recruitment

We are currently looking to recruit new volunteers in Chelmsford, Maldon, South Woodham Ferrers, Braintree, Halstead, Brentwood, Thurrock, and across the Uttlesford district.

Volunteer role descriptions are available on our website and include:

- Hearing Aid Support Service technical volunteers for sessions and home visits
- Hearing Aid Support Service ‘Meet & Greet’ hosts for large sessions.
- Befriending
- Admin/Office support.
- Photographer
- Ambassadors to help with presentations and information stands.

Please do spread the word and contact the office for further information.

car, and walked places further afield. It surprised me to learn that each footpath has an identification number and this is recorded by the County Highways Department on a legal document called a Definitive Map. This may be examined by the Public (widely On-line now) and shows the exact route of these often obscure, ill-defined and overgrown paths.

Because they are upheld legally, the paths are called “Rights of Way”. It follows that destroying the course of RoW, say by digging it up, growing things on it or just lack of use, does not destroy its legal status. It takes another Legal procedure to do this. To make a change to a footpath requires a legal ‘Order.’ Such Orders can be objected to by the public, but if there are no reasonable objections then the new path changes are recorded on the Definitive Map by a ‘Confirmation Order’, and the Council marks the new route on the ground for all to see.

Troubles come when land owners ignore the legal process and try to close a Path without an Order, by blocking it. Passive obstructions like fencing and crops are generally easy to circumnavigate. Less easy are personal confrontations, which on occasions become interesting by the flourishing of shotguns, or worse still, by letting several dogs out on you. We have had all this.

Legal footpaths come in three categories: Footpaths which are for use by walkers only, Bridleways which allow walkers, cyclists and horses, and Byways which are open to all traffic (assuming your vehicle is suitable for the unpaved surface). Wherever a RoW joins a proper paved road, it is supposed to be shown by a finger signpost. Further away from the road, direction changes might be shown by a marker post but one cannot rely on this, so a map, compass and careful observation are generally needed. This is where I obtain a great source of pleasure - exploring new routes and footpaths and being in the countryside.

Well, I think that is enough writing for a bit. Time now to stretch my legs and get outside to find a new route for our Footpaths Association’s next walk - and escape any hearing aid calls!
G.T 2017

Fundraising & Thanks You



At the end of February, our former manager Heather, had the pleasure of receiving a cheque from New Street United Reformed Church Friendship Group, Great Dunmow. The cheque was for £1,000. We were nominated to be their charity of the year by volunteer Keith, who is a member of the group.

A big thank you to Rotary Club of Saffron Walden who donated £200 from their Christmas Collections to the work of Hearing Help Essex.



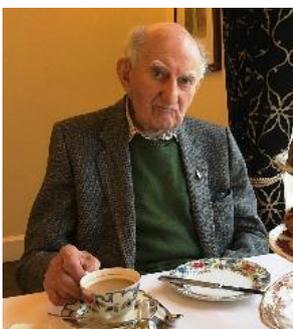
We would like to thank Chelmsford City Council for their continued support.



We were grateful to receive a grant from Uttlesford District Council to support our valuable work undertaken in that district.



Uttlesford
District Council



Donation in Memorial – Arthur Murdey

We were grateful to the family of Arthur who choose Hearing Help Essex to receive donations in lieu of flowers at Arthur's funeral. The family wished to support a small local charity.

Donation in Memorial – Jean Leech

By Mike Nel

Jean Leech, who died recently aged 93, was a remarkable lady. She was one of the first volunteers with a part of Hearing Concern called CAMTAD, that later became HHE. Jean had difficulty with phones because of her hearing loss, so was mainly involved in documenting the results of calls. Later, HHE was formed in the mid 90s when it was felt that an activity local to Mid Essex was more appropriate.



Jean was mainly responsible for the Little Waltham session in the local surgery, but always took a close interest in the other activities.

Jean and Norman were generous hosts in organising fund-raising strawberry teas beside the pool in their wonderful garden. The pool was always on offer for use, my grandchildren swam there many times, as did Joyce and I in bygone days. Jean was a very active person throughout her life. She swam daily throughout the summer in their pool, and had a diploma for the sport of synchronised swimming that she enjoyed in the Witham Pool. Norman has a private pilot licence, and in order for Jean to be his sole passenger, she decided to take specific flying lessons to learn how to control and land a plane in an emergency. This didn't work out, but the skill was fortunately never needed.

Apart from HHE she was a volunteer with many other organisations, including Samaritans, Meals on Wheels, and Little Waltham Church. After sustaining an injury in the garden, Jean's active days were sadly over, although she never ceased to be her usual bubbly self, and a considerate hostess.

Our sincere sympathies are extended to her husband Norman, daughters Alex and Jackie, and their respective families. We are truly grateful for your donation in memory of Jean.

Donation Tins and Friendship contributions

In the last financial year we received £3555 in donations through our collections boxes at our sessions. A further £2057 was raised through Friendship contributions; these donations with Gift Aid bring us to a total of almost £7000.



Thank you all for your continued support.

Billericay Fun Walk!

Volunteers Mike, Ray and his wife Beryl, along with trustee Richard and wife Jenny took part in a fun walk in May 2017 to raise money for Hearing Help Essex. They raised £661 in sponsorship, and in September we will receive a bonus cheque from the organisers of the walk, which should bring our grand total close to £1000.



Friends of Hearing Help Essex Reminder



Thank you for being a Friend to HHE; as an organisation that continually strives to put the needs of our clients first we work hard to raise money to support the charity and we ensure donated money is used

appropriately by keeping overheads to a minimum.

Our friendship scheme is a valuable source of donated income to the charity. We have looked at how we can get maximum benefit to our clients from this money. To cut down on the overhead of postage we moved the renewal date for everyone who pays via cheque or cash to 1st August each year.

If you have not sent your 2017 payment yet and wish to remain as a friend of Hearing Help Essex please send your donation to the address on the top of this newsletter.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and continued support of Hearing Help Essex.

Legacy Giving



If you have benefitted from the work that Hearing Help Essex delivers, or would like to support the charity, a legacy gift is an easy way to say 'thank you'.

Our service is free to our users and we rely on grants and donations from companies and individuals to keep the charity viable. Please ensure the full details of the charity are included in the will 'Hearing Help Essex, Registered Charity 1113498, Suite 2, 158 Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0LD' and always consult your solicitor.

Finally but by no means least, we would like to say a huge THANK YOU to all of our loyal, dedicated and hardworking volunteers, without whom Hearing Help Essex could not exist.

Whilst every care is taken to provide accurate information in this Newsletter, we accept no liability for any error or omission. The inclusion of third party information and products does not constitute an endorsement by Hearing Help Essex Limited

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