

## We wish all our readers a safe and Happy New Year!

Our aim at Cambridgeshire Hearing Help is to ensure that those of us with hearing loss can continue to hear as well as possible by providing a hearing aid maintenance service, supplying batteries and giving advice. This coronavirus pandemic has tried its best to stop us doing that and many of the things we've tried over the last year often seemed like two steps forward and one step backwards!

And so is the case now as we enter 2021, when having operated a successful reduced service throughout October, November and December, we have been forced to close our centres in January as a result of staff shortages because of the pandemic and the introduction of greater restrictions by government. We hope to resume in February but will need to make a decision about that when we see how the virus reacts to the effects of the latest lockdown. Keep your eyes on the website for the latest information! If you find your hearing aid is not working properly, Addenbrooke's Audiology Department are operating a postal service; please telephone 01223 217797 and give your name/address/date of birth, left/right/both and posting instruction.

Despite everything, we can only be optimistic from now on! We're fortunate in that we expect most of our hearing aid users and volunteers to have been vaccinated by April and then we can think of returning to our more normal operations. The five Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres in Soham, Ely, St Ives, Cambourne and Fulbourn have worked well despite the complex Covid-secure procedures we have adopted. Many thanks to Fran, Gaynor and Claire for the big changes you have managed and also to our willing and able volunteers who have helped keep us going!

Our battery postal service has now supplied around 22,000 battery packs since the start of the pandemic and answered over 6,000 requests. Well done to our office administrators Ruth and Rachel who have continued to work throughout the crisis!

When we re-open our Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres again for one day each week we also hope to begin to return to some of our usual Hearing Help Session venues at their normal monthly times and days when venues allow. In December, we were able to open a monthly HAM Centre at Soham Library at its normal time and day once per month and although we had to close in January we will revert to that timing again once the latest lockdown has been lifted. We will also slowly go back to normal times at other venues but it will be a while before we will be permitted back into GP surgeries and, so long as our Covid safe procedures are required, we may well need to continue on an appointment-only system.

I wish you well for the New Year and look forward to returning to a more normal world in 2021.

**Roger Hill**

Chair, Cambridgeshire Hearing Help

### In this edition:

[Page 2](#)

[Update to our service](#)

[Page 3](#)

[AGM News](#)

[Page 4](#)

[Donation Wall](#)

[Page 5](#)

[Frances' Blog](#)

[Page 6](#)

[3 Ways to Support CHH](#)

## Coronavirus 2021 Update: Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres are closed throughout January.

Due to staff shortages and government restrictions, our Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres will be closed throughout January. We aim to re-open in February.

Please check our website and telephone answering message for updates.

Our Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres will re-open as follows:

- **Soham Hearing Aid Maintenance Centre**, open 1st Monday of the month, 10.30 to 3.30pm at Soham Library, 5/7 Clay Street, Soham CB7 5HJ
- **Ely Hearing Aid Maintenance Centre**, open 2nd, 3rd and 4th Monday of the month, 10:30am to 3:30pm at Ely Library, 6 The Cloisters, Ely CB7 4ZH
- **Cambourne Hearing Aid Maintenance Centre**, open every Tuesday 10:30am to 3:30pm at Lower Cambourne Cricket Pavilion, Woodfield Road, Lower Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6FB (please note the address has changed)
- **St Ives Hearing Aid Maintenance Centre**, open every Wednesday 10.30am to 3.30pm at St Ives Library, 4 Library Row, Station Road, St Ives PE27 5BW
- **Fulbourn Hearing Aid Maintenance Centre**, open every Thursday 10.30am to 3.30pm at The Swifts Meeting Room & Library, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn, Cambridge, CB21 5HD

**This is a drop-off and wait outside 30-minute service, by appointment only.**

To book an appointment please contact the office on telephone: 01223 416141  
or email: [enquiries@cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk)

### We continue to send batteries by post

If you require batteries please contact the office and leave a message clearly stating your name, full address including postcode and what SIZE battery you require: this will be 312 Brown, 13 Orange or 675 Blue.



You will find the size printed on the bottom left hand side of the packet.

You can also pick-up batteries from the **Cambridgeshire Mobile Library**, which visits 85 villages and communities throughout the county: [www.mobilelibraries@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:www.mobilelibraries@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

## AGM 2020

Cambridgeshire Hearing Help held its delayed AGM for the year 2019-20 on 27 November 2020 by video conference on Zoom because of the coronavirus pandemic. Our Chair, Roger Hill, reported on the year ending March 2020, which he said had been very successful for the charity. Of course that was before the pandemic had really shown itself so he said it felt strange talking about our successes when there seemed to be so much gloom around. But it was a good year! During the year our wonderful volunteers successfully provided a hearing aid maintenance and battery replacement service and advice to nearly 6,500 people with hearing loss in Cambridgeshire and Fenland and serviced almost 16,000 hearing aids in our 43 Hearing Help Sessions across the region.

We had also been successful in implementing a pilot project funded by the National Lottery and Evelyn Trust which involved recruiting a new team of volunteer [Hearing Help Community Leaders](#) in South and East Cambridgeshire. The main purpose of the project is to provide a hearing aid maintenance and advice service to the housebound and those living in residential homes in the communities where our volunteer Community Leaders lived.

The pilot project met its targets in the first year including enlisting 18 residential homes new to CHH, recruiting 10 new volunteers and creating 12 senior volunteers from our existing team. Our thanks go to Amanda Morgan for setting up the project and Claire Davenport for implementing it so well.

Part of the project also comprised the setting up of two [Hear for You](#) community groups run by Norman Hardy in St Neots and Kate Hopkinson in Ely to provide peer group support for those who have found themselves increasingly isolated by hearing loss. These self-help meeting groups were held monthly over a cup of tea or coffee and proved to be a popular and helpful forum for all those who regularly attended. The groups were made up both of members who already suffered serious hearing loss and those who were beginning to feel the early onset of hearing loss and wanted to understand how they might cope in the future.

Roger attended the group meetings in Ely and saw the feeling of relief many felt when discussing their own hearing problems with their peers and realised they were not alone in feeling the distress of not being able to hear clearly. And of course everyone learnt some tips on how to cope with the various (often embarrassing and amusing) situations they came across!

The challenge for the charity now is to try and return to our successful ways when the pandemic is over. We are preparing for this by submitting a new funding bid to the Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group and Peterborough City Council for the funding of our service for the next five years, including expansion into Peterborough.

We hope that the independent pro bono study carried out by [Costello Medical](#) during the year, which estimated that the economic impact of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help's services gave an estimated social return on investment of £6.15 for every £1 invested in 2017–2018, will demonstrate to our funders that we improve the lives of people with hearing loss in Cambridgeshire and that they realise the important economic benefits our service gives to the local council and wider community. The total value of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help's services was estimated to be over £1 million per year, excluding volunteer time.

Finally, we were pleased to be able to give thanks to our wonderful volunteers without whom none of this would be possible. We reserved particular thanks to Roger to whom we gave a 20-year award and to Patricia, Brenda, Sue, Angela and Maureen to who we presented 10-year awards.

## Donation Wall

Every donation goes towards the amazing work carried out by Cambridgeshire Hearing Help. This quarter we are grateful for the following donations/awards...



If you would like to make a donation you can do so by either posting us a cheque or making an online payment via our website. Simply visit [www.cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk) and click on the 'Make a donation to Cambridgeshire Hearing Help' button on the bottom right of the screen.

We also accept contributions at our HAM Centres. Any amount will be gratefully received.

Please make cheques payable to: Cambridgeshire Hearing Help.

If you are a UK tax-payer and would like to make your donation go further then please consider filling out a Gift Aid declaration (see page 6).

## Ways to help fundraise by shopping!

Did you know that there are ways in which anyone can support us with our fundraising without any cost to you? We have signed up with **Amazon Smile**: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/>. If you already shop through Amazon then why not try the Amazon Smile portal instead; 0.5% of what you spend will go to our charity. All you need to do is select Cambridgeshire Hearing Help as your chosen charity.

If you like to shop online through other stores, then you can sign up to **easyfundraising** where you can also support us at no extra cost. Use the easyfundraising website to choose from more than 4,000 well known online stores like Argos, John Lewis, ASOS, Boden, eBay, and M&S. When you make a purchase, the retailer then sends us a free donation, at no extra cost to you.

**Raise funds for Cambridgeshire Hearing Help every time you shop online**

Find us on easyfundraising to start:  
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cambridgeshirehearinghelp/>

Shop with over 3,300 online stores

amazon.co.uk John Lewis ebay M&S  
Argos Booking.com Boden next  
DEBENHAMS GAP viking Sainsbury's  
SCREWFIX JUST EAT moonpig OSOS

easyfundraising  
£20 Million raised 1.2 Million users 100,000+ causes

Please visit our easyfundraising page:

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cambridgeshirehearinghelp/](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cambridgeshirehearinghelp/) and click 'support us'.

**Cambridgeshire Hearing Help CIO, 153 St. Neots Road, Hardwick, Cambridge, CB23 7QJ**  
**☎ 01223 416141, Text: 07852 699196. ✉ enquiries@cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk**  
**www.cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk**  
**Office opening times Mon – Fri 9.30am to 1.00pm. Registered Charity No 1154071**

## Frances' Blog Winter 2021... with a round up of recent news

### Happy or at least happier new year to CHH.

2020 was a particularly challenging year for people with hearing loss and the impact will be felt for a long time to come. The hearing loss community has been promoting the importance of hearing for many years and have had some successes with the Accessible Information Standard for the NHS and Social Care, and the NICE guidelines for hearing aid dispensing. However, the pandemic has been a significant set back which many of you may be experiencing.

The Hearing Loss and Deafness Alliance (a national group of the main charities, audiology societies and hearing aid representatives) reported at the beginning of December that there were continuing access issues for audiology services as well as for other health provision that was impacting particularly on people with hearing issues. The problems included reliance on phone calls or video conferencing where the quality of sound was poor, as well as the reduction in the number of available appointments so minor problems got exacerbated. Cambridgeshire Hearing Help is not alone in finding it very difficult to provide repair and maintenance services, with other voluntary groups having to reduce or stop services across the country. This means that fewer people are getting hearing aids and that those that have them may be using them less.

What has also become startlingly apparent is the digital divide. For some people with less severe hearing loss, the move to video chats has actually improved communication, compared to the telephone, because the poorer quality of sound is compensated for by lip-reading. (Now I've got used to video conferencing, I'm finding that I'm not handicapped by where I sit in a room as I can see everyone's faces more or less equally.) But there's a huge problem for people who have not got access to the internet, either because they do not feel confident using it, or it's too costly, or the service is just not very good in their area. They are doubly isolated by the COVID restrictions and the lack of the modern means of communication that is making this physical isolation bearable for the rest of us. Talking to people is really important. This is currently having an impact on their mental health and, as research has shown, leads to increase health problems in the future including a higher risk of dementia.

While it's unlikely that that these problems can be resolved in the current crisis, it is crucially important to keep awareness of hearing loss in the public consciousness and that of health decision makers. There is a fear that when the reckoning for the cost of the pandemic is made, free hearing aids will yet again be an easy target for cost cutting. There will be a very important role for Cambridgeshire Hearing Help in rebuilding people's confidence and supporting people back into social activity, encouraging them to use their hearing aids to the best advantage.

Happy Vaccinations!

## Frances

### For your information

According to the *Cambridge Independent*, a new type of clear single-use mask is now in use at Addenbrooke's Hospital, made by a UK company based in Gamlingay called LJA Miers. They expect to be able to sell masks online soon and at the moment you can buy a box of 50.

RNID (formerly Action on Hearing Loss) is now working in partnership with the company *Connevans* to sell assistive technology such as loop systems, amplified phones and listeners.

## Three ways you can support Cambridgeshire Hearing Help...

As a charity, we rely on charitable donations to continue our vital work. Any support you can give will make a real difference.



**LEAVE A LEGACY IN YOUR WILL:** If you are interested in leaving a legacy in your Will, we can send you all the paperwork you need to complete and include in your Will. It only takes a few minutes to complete. Please just get in touch with our office.



**MAKE A DONATION ONLINE:** Simply visit [www.cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk) and click on the 'Make a donation to Cambridgeshire Hearing Help' button on the bottom right of the screen. You will be able to make a one-off donation or set up a standing order using your bank card/Paypal account via our Virgin Money Giving Page.



**MAKE A DONATION BY POST:** If you would like to make a donation by post (e.g. send a cheque or set up a monthly standing order), please complete and return this form with any cheques to: 153 St Neots Road, Hardwick, Cambridge CB23 7QJ.

### GIFT AID DECLARATION

**Please complete for all donations if you are a UK tax payer.**

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate!  
*I want to Gift Aid my current donation and any donations I may make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Cambridgeshire Hearing Help. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I will notify Cambridgeshire Hearing Help of any change in my personal circumstances, such as name and address, or that I no longer pay UK Income or Capital Gains tax.*

In order to Gift Aid your donation  
please tick  the box and complete:

I want to Gift Aid my single or regular donation of  
£\_\_\_\_\_ to Cambridgeshire Hearing Help

### YOUR DETAILS - Please complete for all donations.

Title:..... First name .....

Surname: .....

Home address:.....

.....

Postcode:.....

Email address:.....

Signature:.....

Date: .....

**CHEQUES:** I enclose a cheque made payable to  
'Cambridgeshire Hearing Help' for the sum of £\_\_\_\_\_

### STANDING ORDERS

*Please complete if you wish to make a monthly donation via your Bank/Building Society account.*

Name of your Bank/Building Society

.....

Address of your Bank/Building Society

.....

Sort code:.....

Account number:.....

Please set up a monthly standing order  
and debit my account the sum of:

£\_\_\_\_\_ per month

Starting from (date): .....

Signature.....

Date.....

until further notice, and credit the  
following account:

Account Name:

Cambridgeshire Hearing Help

Sort Code: 60-83-01

Account No: 20323864

Address: Unity Trust Bank,

9 Brindleplace, Birmingham, B1 2HB

*Please notify us if you: want to cancel your declaration or standing order, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income ad/or capital gains.*

*Thank you for your support, it will make a real difference.*