

We welcome Fiona Kerr, our new Charity Director

I am delighted to be joining Cambridgeshire Hearing Help as Charity Director at the start of May 2021. I am already most grateful for the warm welcome of the Board, staff and volunteers who I have had the pleasure of meeting.

I have lived, worked and volunteered in Cambridgeshire since 1990 and remember referring people to CAMTAD. I have continued to learn about the impact of hearing loss and how crucial the services of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help are to local residents, communities, organisations and in support of the NHS.

I bring many years' experience of working collaboratively across health and care sectors, always being led by people who use services and thereby who know best as to what is needed to improve the quality of people's lives. My experience has been gained by working my way up through volunteering, direct service delivery and management and on to being a Chief Executive and consultant, mostly in the charity sector. I was also a Project Manager with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough NHS Hospitals Trust after gaining my Master's degree.

I am very aware that our main priority will be re-establishing the full range of local services, support, workshops and training we provide across Cambridgeshire. I have already seen how diligent staff and volunteers are in how we do this safely and how well supported we are by key stakeholders. It's great to know that together we will build up full provision again throughout the County.

I am very much looking forward to working with the whole Cambridgeshire Hearing Help team and getting to know our customers who use our services and partners, including those who commission, grant funds, purchase and so kindly fundraise for, our services.

Fiona Kerr

Charity Director, CHH

The way back to normality after the pandemic

It has now been a full year since we last worked normally as a charity. I would like to give you all an update on where we have got to and what we will need to do to return to anything like a normal service, helping our 6,500 service-users maintain their hearing aids across Cambridgeshire.

Over the last year we have posted some 15,000 battery packs to our users and since we re-opened our operations last autumn have re-tubed almost 1,500 hearing aids. These numbers are rising as our users become more aware of our currently open sessions. I offer my sincere thanks to all our volunteers and staff who have made this possible in the most difficult of circumstances.

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You will have read our further good news in that we have appointed Fiona Kerr as Charity Director to manage Cambridgeshire Hearing Help! Fiona will start on Tuesday 4th May and I warmly welcome her to the charity. Fiona has all the skills we need to help us return to normality after the pandemic and beyond and I know she is very much looking forward to meeting you all.

Regarding our current operations, we are now operating in nine locations across Cambridgeshire – Ely Library, Soham Library, St Ives Library, Chatteris Library, Fulbourn Swifts Library, Cambourne Cricket Pavilion, Girton Baptist Church Hall, Great Shelford Free Church Hall and Ely Methodist Church Hall. We are now also using an appointment-based system; appointments can be booked by calling the office or by booking online via our website.

However, there are still several restrictions in place which prevent our immediate return to normal operations:

- We are required to keep to strict social distancing rules and our venues will not allow more than a small number of people in any venue at any one time. This means we cannot permit our hearing aid users inside the venues. This has compelled us to introduce an appointment only 'drop off and pick up 15 minutes later' system.
- We are following strict Covid safe re-tubing procedures developed jointly with Addenbrooke's Hospital during periods of high Covid infection rates both before and during the vaccination process. This has required the use of two supervisors at each session, limited the use of our volunteers and limited the number of venues we can open.

All our staff and volunteers currently working with us are now vaccinated and of course we also expect the great majority of our users to be vaccinated. Although there is a gradual lifting of lockdown restrictions we will need to wait until Step 4 of the government's lockdown roadmap on 21st June before we can even think of returning to normal. In the meantime, we plan to begin to make the following changes to help us return:

- Reduce the complexity of our Covid safe procedures in consultation with Addenbrooke's Hospital to a match general reduction in risk as the pandemic recedes to enable one supervisor and a group of volunteers to manage each session.
- Increase the number of sessions by opening more locations at the same time and day of the month as before the pandemic.
- Find alternative venues to those currently held in GP surgeries until their restrictions are lifted.
- Re-introduce limited drop-in times at our sessions but also retain the telephone and online booking system to better regulate the management of sessions.

I know you are all as frustrated as I am about our inability to help our users as much as we would wish. I would hope this pandemic will prove to be a once in a lifetime occasion for us all and that, as soon as restrictions are raised further, we will be able to return to helping those most in need in the community.

Roger Hill

Chair, CHH

Our new online battery request and HAM Centre appointment booking system is now live!

If you are a NHS hearing aid user and your HEARING AID NEEDS CLEANING AND RE-TUBING you can now book online for an appointment at one of our Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres. You can also use it to request batteries by post.

Our HAM Centre opening dates are as follows:

- **Soham Library** 1st Monday of the month:
Soham Library, 5/7 Clay Street, Soham CB7 5HJ
- **Ely Library** 3rd Monday of the month (except in June when it's the 2nd Monday)
Ely Library, 6 The Cloisters, Ely CB7 4ZH
- **Lower Cambourne Cricket Pavilion** 1st Tuesday of the month:
Lower Cambourne Cricket Pavilion, Woodfield Lane, Cambourne CB23 6FB
- **Ely Methodist Church Hall** 4th Tuesday of the month:
Methodist Church Hall, Chapel Street, Ely CB6 1AD
- **St Ives Library** 2nd Wednesday of the month:
St Ives Library, 4 Library Row, Station Road, St Ives PE27 5BW
- **Girton Baptist Church** 3rd Wednesday of the month:
Baptist Church, 103 High Street, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0QQ
- **Great Shelford Free Church** 1st Thursday of the month:
Great Shelford Free Church, Ashen Green, Great Shelford CB22 5EY
- **Fulbourn Library** 3rd Thursday of the month:
The Swifts Meeting Room & Library, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5HD
- **Chatteris Library** 2nd Friday of the month:
Chatteris Library, 2 Furrowfields Road, Chatteris PE16 6DY

This is a 'drop off and wait outside' 15-minute service, **by appointment only**.

To book an appointment at a HAM Centre or to request batteries by post, please visit our website www.cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk or telephone the office on: 01223 416141.

We continue to send batteries by post

Please use our online battery request service or leave a telephone 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 can also pick-up batteries from the **Cambridgeshire Mobile Library**, which visits 85 villages and communities throughout the county: www.mobilelibraries@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Call for new Trustees

We are looking to recruit two new trustees to the Cambridgeshire Hearing Help (CHH) Board. Our Trustees are critical to the functioning of CHH. They provide a range and depth of understanding of the effects of age-related deafness on the lives of older members of our community as well as enthusiasm and commitment to our aims. Trustees come from a range of backgrounds but share a desire to be involved in the development of the charity and see it thrive in these challenging times.

The Board meets four times a year and is responsible for the strategic direction of CHH as well as ensuring it is appropriately and legally managed. If you would like to find out more about being a Trustee, please email our Chair, Roger Hill, at chair@cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk for an informal discussion.

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...

**HAM Centre
donations £90**

**City & University of Cambridge
Masonic Charitable Trust £2000**

**Online & cheque
donations £1045**

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 and click on the 'Make a donation to Cambridgeshire Hearing Help' button on the bottom right of the screen.

Please make cheques payable to: Cambridgeshire Hearing Help CIO.

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

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).

We thank you for your continued support.

Ways to help fundraise by shopping!

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 CHH. 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. When you make a purchase, the retailer then sends us a free donation, at no extra cost to you. Please visit: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cambridgeshirehearinghelp/

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 Spring 2021... with a round up of recent news

We received the sad news this month of the death of Prince Philip and all feel the loss of such a distinctive and distinguished member of the royal family. From 1958, he was a patron of Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID), his interest arising from his mother Princess Alice of Battenberg, who was born deaf. But like many, he wasn't always willing to wear his hearing aids. The *Sun* reported "*the Queen was said to be overheard saying he wouldn't use his hearing aid, which means we have to shout*". Our sympathies go to the Queen and the Royal Family.

RNID have a campaign to collect reports of short-comings in ear wax removal services across the UK. Removal of ear wax is a service available on the NHS but surgeries are increasingly unwilling to provide ear syringing which is no longer considered safe practice. Alternatives are now available, and it is important to get ears checked for wax build up. If you have experienced difficulties, you can report this to our local **Healthwatch** as well as RNID.

The national charity **Hearing Link** now have a help desk. This is serviced by volunteers and is accessed through an e-mail: enquiries@hearinglink.org or via their website: www.hearinglink.org. They are available to answer questions about hearing loss and deafness or just to chat about concerns. For those without internet access the number to contact is 01844 34811.

The future is in mind control. The *Hearing Journal* reports a breakthrough in research to measure hearing loss. In Belgium, researchers have measured brain wave activity through a cochlear implant. This potentially allows the audiologists to observe brain responses to sound, without relying on the conscious responses of the person being tested, and people could be tested in real life situations, not just the sound-proof audiology booth. A much more nuanced understanding of hearing loss could result, allowing for more subtle cochlear implant adjustment. The hearing instrument could even be configured to adjust itself.

2021-2030 is the World Health Organisation's **UN Decade of Healthy Aging**. This is an ambitious plan to reduce the inequalities that come with age. The whole world's population is aging, but quality of life is not keeping up with length of life, and the pandemic has exposed this as one of the ways in which unequal societies have suffered more. One of the issues they address is ageism and the stereotyping of older people. While hearing loss/deafness is not explicitly identified, this is clearly a significant component of the stereotyping and prejudice that makes up ageism. WHO activity is at a high level, conducting research and building partnerships with global leaders. It may take generations for the impact to be felt. But designing new developments around the needs of the whole population including older people is the minimum we should expect.

And finally, our former head of audiology at Addenbrookes, is leading research into the impact of Covid 19 on hearing loss. The **COVID and Hearing (CHEAR)** study aims to recruit around 100 participants who have had COVID-19.

Professor David Baguley, said: "*There has been a steady flow of reports of hearing loss, tinnitus, or imbalance following COVID-19 infection and treatment, and the CHEAR study represents a huge opportunity to investigate this. The Hearing Theme of the Nottingham Biomedical Research Centre are ideally placed to explore these issues, and with the information gleaned to design and implement new pathways to rapid hearing and balance care.*"

Enjoy the Spring

Frances

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 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.