

## Emerging new-normals

I am delighted to report that our staff team are busy expanding the provision of our Covid-safe Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) Centres across the County and we continue to manage a high demand for our free postal battery service.

We are only able to resume our maintenance service because 40 volunteers have already returned. We are immensely grateful to all those volunteers for undertaking rigorous training and supervision, so that everyone who is volunteering and those who are using our services can know that we are Covid-safe. We have opened 12 HAM Centres at carefully risk-assessed and selected venues that provide the environments we want for both our volunteers and people accessing our services. We look forward to welcoming more volunteers and clients as we continue to open up more locations across Cambridgeshire.

It is great to see how people have been adjusting to our 'drop off and wait' service as we emerge from lockdowns and work towards a new-normal. We very much appreciate people embracing the new appointment booking system, whether the appointment is made via our website or by calling or emailing us. The advantage of this system is that carers, relatives and friends can bring the hearing aids on behalf of people who are unable to attend the appointments and they can obtain battery supplies too. Waiting times are usually short but we appreciate peoples' patience when it takes a little longer. We have also been able to collect hearing aids from residential homes and homebound people and these are also cleaned and batteries supplied through these same Covid-safe procedures.

We look to you all to please help us spread the word about the HAM Centres in your communities as it's so important that people know about them. If we can feature in local newsletters or other publications please let us know.

Thank you to everyone for feeding back on our services and the quality of the volunteering experience with Cambridgeshire Hearing Help. It is terrific to see how high the satisfaction is with these services, which our most recent survey report documents: [User-Satisfaction survey report](#). It is equally important to us that our volunteer surveys show a high level of satisfaction too. We would like to thank everyone who completed the questionnaires.

I wish to also acknowledge how fortunate we are to regularly receive donations from people who use our services, which is incredibly kind and so important in contributing to covering our costs.

Thank you all, including those of you I have already had the pleasure of meeting at some of our Hearing Aid Maintenance Centres.

**Fiona Kerr** Charity Director

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## CHH News

### Fran Mills has decided to retire

Fran worked for Cambridgeshire Hearing Help for more than 19 years and has been ever present at the charity. Nearly all our volunteers will have worked for her over the years and she certainly taught me all I know about hearing aids and the needs of the elderly in coping with their hearing loss. I am very grateful to her. We wish Fran a long and happy retirement. **Roger Hill**, Chair of Trustees

Fran says "I am retiring and I would like to thank all the volunteers for their support and their hard work, it has been much appreciated, and I wish all the best for CHH".

### AGM

Our AGM will take place on Wednesday 6 October 2021.

### C2Hear online

C2Hear is an online resource that has produced interactive videos designed to improve the lives of new hearing aid users. It provides valuable advice and information to help new hearing aid users to better use their hearing aids. The videos include instruction on how to insert hearing aids, how to care for them, communication tactics and trouble shooting ideas. For more information, please visit: <https://c2hearonline.com/>

### THANK YOU to our brilliant volunteers!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers, including those who have recently retired, for all your hard work and support throughout this past year. There have been so many challenges and changes to navigate and we recognise the valued contribution you have made.

A special mention goes to Alice who, after volunteering for us for 30 years, has decided to retire. Alice used to visit many of our Residential homes and the homebound. She says "I have enjoyed my time working with Cambridgeshire Hearing Help. Being a volunteer is a 2-way experience. I have benefitted as much as my clients who became friends". We wish Alice all the best.

## 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 £314**

**Batterson Chivers Foundation  
£1000**

**Cheque and Online  
donations £395**

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. 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 have now opened 12 HAM Centres across the county!

If you are an NHS hearing aid user and your HEARING AID NEEDS CLEANING AND RE-TUBING you can now make an appointment to come to one of our Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) Centres. Appointments can be made using our new online [booking system](#) and 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, 10.30am – 1pm:  
Soham Library, 5/7 Clay Street, Soham CB7 5HJ
- **Whittlesey Library** 4th Monday of the month, 2pm – 4pm:  
Whittlesey Library, 31-35 Market Lane, Whittlesey PE7 1BA
- **Cambourne Hub** 1st Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 1pm:  
High St, Great Cambourne, Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6GW  
(moved from the Cricket Pavilion back to Hub)
- **Ely Library** 2nd Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 1pm:  
Ely Library, 6 The Cloisters, Ely CB7 4ZH
- **St Ives Library** 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 4pm:  
St Ives Library, 4 Library Row, Station Road, St Ives PE27 5BW
- **Girton Baptist Church** 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 4pm:  
Baptist Church, 103 High Street, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0QQ
- **St Neots Library** 4th Wednesday of the month, 10.30am – 1pm:  
St Neots Library, Priory Lane, St Neots PE19 2BH
- **Great Shelford Free Church** 1st Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 1pm:  
Great Shelford Free Church, Ashen Green, Great Shelford CB22 5EY
- **Cottenham Community Centre** 2nd Thursday of the month, 2pm – 4pm:  
Community Centre, 250A High Street, Cottenham CB24 8RZ
- **Fulbourn Library** 3rd Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 1pm:  
The Swifts Meeting Room & Library, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5HD
- **Melbourn Community Room** 4th Thursday of the month, 2pm – 4pm:  
Vicarage Close Community Room, Melbourn SG8 6DY
- **Chatteris Library** 2nd Friday of the month, 10.30am – 1pm:  
Chatteris Library, 2 Furrowfields Road, Chatteris PE16 6DY

**This is a drop-off and wait 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](http://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.

## Has getting health and care been more difficult because of Covid?



What do you think about the health and care services you use? Good or bad, your views are wanted by Healthwatch.

There have been lots of changes to health and care because of Covid-19 – like more phone and online appointments with GPs.

We know that these are difficult for people with hearing loss so tell us how these are working for you. You may be struggling to lip read because of masks or find online or phone appointments hard work and tiring.

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire is your local health and social care champion. We make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care.

### The kinds of things you can tell us about...

- Covid vaccinations – tell us how they went
- Visits to the GP - are remote consultations working or are you struggling to see your local doctor?
- Have you put off seeking help because it's hard to access services?
- Are you being offered a choice of communication formats for information and appointments?
- Hospital waiting lists - we know many people are waiting for treatment and procedures. Tell us what would help you while you wait.
- Visiting a dentist
- Home care services
- Care homes
- Using the NHS 111 First service

Whether you've had a good or bad experience, we can use your feedback to improve services for everyone and we have the power to make NHS leaders and other care providers listen to what you have to say.

We're completely independent and impartial and anything you say is confidential. We also offer information and advice to help you to get the support you need.

Our service is free, simple to use and can make a real difference to people across our county.

### Get in touch

Give your feedback online at <https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/share-your-views>. We have a BSL version too!

Not online? You can also call 0330 355 1285 or text: 0752 0635 176.

## Frances' Blog Summer 2021

### Spotlight on Tinnitus

The **University of Manchester** has produced a 'one year on' study of the impact of Covid 19 on hearing conditions. Research is ongoing, and it is early days to draw conclusions, but it does seem that Covid can cause dizziness, tinnitus and earache, especially for people enduring long Covid. A few people who had Covid, suffered sudden hearing loss, but it is too early to tell whether this was caused by the disease.

The **British Tinnitus Association** (BTA) has seen a large increase in the number of people contacting them during the pandemic. These are both people who already had tinnitus before Covid 19, and have now found it aggravated, and people who have found themselves troubled by the condition for the first time.

It is not surprising that this long period of uncertainty and fear has increased the impact of tinnitus. The symptoms can be triggered by stress and the lockdown has exacerbated this. Young people and women, in particular, have found their symptoms bothersome during this time, revealing perhaps where the burden of homecare and home schooling has fallen.

The cause of tinnitus is still not fully understood and it is likely that a variety of underlying factors may trigger this neurological response, so it is unlikely that there will be one remedy to meet every patient's need for treatment. There is an interesting video on the BTA site which suggests that some men's propensity to tinnitus is genetic: <https://www.tinnitus.org.uk/where-does-the-cure-for-tinnitus-lie>. It is also known that hearing loss is linked to tinnitus and tinnitus can be an early warning sign of hearing loss.

Currently some treatments target the emotional response to tinnitus so that it becomes less intrusive. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or mindfulness help to adjust a person's reactions to the noise so they can tolerate the symptoms better.

Masking may also be helpful. Some hearing aids are specifically developed to introduce calming and distracting noises to divert the attention from the 'brain' sounds, and if there is also hearing loss, wearing a hearing aid increases the external sound landscape. Soothing sounds to listen to at night can calm the tinnitus effect. There is a device produced in America called a **Neosensory Duo** which stimulates by touch and sound. The person wears a wrist band that vibrates in a certain pattern and a sound message is also sent to the brain at the same time. The company make the ambitious claim that the 8 weeks programme reduces tinnitus in 87% of patients.

Tinnitus Retraining Therapy is widely used privately and is a combination of techniques.

There is ongoing research into drug therapies that treat the brain and reduce the activity that produces the unwanted sounds, so providing a cure. This is important as existing therapies require ongoing effort from the person with the condition, and, when life gets more challenging, their ability to engage with tinnitus therapies may be reduced, as we have seen in the last year.

More information can be found on the BTA website <https://www.tinnitus.org.uk/> or from **Cambs Tinnitus Support Group**, contact Alan Yeo:

tel. 01223 243570    email. alan.yeo622@outlook.com    website. <http://www.cambstsg.com/>

**Frances**

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

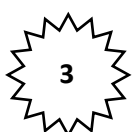
As a charity, we rely on charitable donations to continue our vital work. Any support you can give will make a real difference.



**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](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.*