



Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021



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Cambridgeshire Hearing Help Trustees' Annual Report For the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

1. Chair's message

This has been a challenging year for Cambridgeshire Hearing Help as we have battled to cope with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and provide support to our clients. However, I am pleased to say we continued to run services during the year. Initially this was through the supply of batteries by post and then eventually by re-introducing a highly controlled re-tubing and Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) service through Covid safe operating procedures.

The beginning of the financial year coincided with the first national Covid lockdown and all our 43 Hearing Aid Maintenance session venues became unavailable to us. Shortly after that it was necessary to furlough our supervisors. We started a telephone battery replacement postal service. A limited opening of Hearing Aid Maintenance centres began in October 2020 on an appointment-only basis following strict Covid safe procedures developed jointly with Addenbrooke's Hospital Audiology Department. By the end of the financial year this had expanded to openings of HAM Centres in Cambourne, Fulbourn, Soham, Ely, Chatteris, Girton, Shelford and St Ives on an appointment only basis as a result of Covid restrictions.

Following the departure of our Chief Executive, Richard Howitt, in August 2020 the Trustees continued to manage the charity on a day-to-day basis with the supervisors and administration staff, for the remainder of the financial year. Once it became clear that vaccinations would have a chance of controlling the course of the pandemic we began a recruitment process for a new Charity Director. We are delighted to welcome Fiona Kerr as the new leader of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help. Fiona started shortly after the end of this financial year in May 2021.

Not only have we needed to cope with the pandemic but we have been involved in what will be a major re-bidding process for the funding of our service by our statutory funders Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and the NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CPCCG) who are also being joined by Peterborough City Council. We understand that our current funding is secure up to April 2022 but our statutory funding requires confirmation beyond that date. As has been the case for the last few years our statutory funding is not able to cover the core costs of our service and we try to balance our finances through external fundraising.

The Community Leaders Project to take our services to more care homes and the community funded by the National Lottery and Evelyn Trust completed 12 months of its 18 months pilot before it was halted by the pandemic. As a result of payments made to finance the project which could not be spent as a result of the pandemic, monies have been held in reserve and you will see in our accounts that this combined with a most kind legacy has resulted in a surplus in our annual accounts for 2020-21.

I am extremely grateful for the commitment shown by our volunteers and staff enabling us to continue to maintain such a high quality of service in times of great difficulty.

Roger T. Hill
Chair

2. Charitable objectives and activities

The charity's charitable object, as set out in the Constitution is:

“To relieve the needs and help people with hearing loss or deafness in or near Cambridgeshire, for the purpose of removing or reducing the limitations caused by those conditions on the ability to communicate and to enjoy life.”

The charity works across Cambridgeshire and its main activities are:

Providing community NHS hearing aid maintenance

Pre-Covid we were running 43 community-based Hearing Aid Maintenance sessions (1 weekly, 1 bi-monthly, 32 monthly, and 9 quarterly), visiting housebound people in their own homes or in residential care, and visiting inmates at HM Prison Littlehey, to clean, re-tube, and supply batteries for NHS hearing aids.

Training residential home and care agency staff

We look forward to again providing hearing aid maintenance and hearing loss awareness training and presentations for care staff of residential and community based teams.

Providing hearing loss information, advice, and signposting

As part of our normal service provision our information and advice are often provided by peers who have lived experience, who additionally support people with hearing loss by suggesting coping strategies and offer information about assistive technology. We also offer online information on our website and distribute 'Living Well with Hearing Loss' information, signposting pamphlets and a regular bulletin (by email or post) and have delivered 'Living Well with Hearing Loss' workshops.

Educating the general public

We have done much more of this over the telephone, emails and through our website during the pandemic. We do though look forward to doing more again in terms of hearing loss awareness presentations, information stalls at events, support groups and meetings with stakeholders.

Providing valuable peer support

A highly valued aspect of the added quality we provide across our services is attributable to the majority of our staff and volunteers having hearing loss and being older people.

Providing a wide variety of rewarding volunteering roles

Although our volunteers all had to stand down during lockdowns we are so grateful to the many who have been returning and providing our Covid-safe HAM sessions and new model services. This has necessitated us creating new volunteer roles, requiring new skills thus broadening out and increasing the opportunities we create, in local communities for people with and without hearing loss who enable us to deliver the charity's services.

Lip-reading classes in Cambridge.

We look forward to providing classes again post-pandemic.

Promoting the interests of people with hearing loss.

Our work continues to provide a lifeline for those who face barriers to accessing mainstream audiology services for routine hearing aid maintenance because they are older, frail, have other disabilities, or live-in rural areas. These barriers include: lack of public transport in rural areas; inability or reluctance to use transport due to mobility issues and the sense of vulnerability that hearing loss causes; inability to hear on the telephone to make an appointment or get information; and difficulty maintaining hearing aids at home due to limited dexterity and poor eyesight.

It is well evidenced that left unmanaged, hearing loss can lead to loss of wellbeing and independence. In particular, it increases the risk of loneliness and isolation, reduced quality of life, poor physical health, falls, dementia, depression and other mental health conditions. It also puts a person's safety at risk. For example, it can cause people to miss important signals that alert them to danger – fire alarms and the doorbell; and leave people vulnerable open to abuse and exploitation. Older people are more at risk because of reduced social networks or family member support and increased vulnerability to other long-term health and medical conditions. Unmanaged hearing loss also increases the burden on carers and can put a tremendous strain on relationships.

The Trustees confirm they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

3. Achievements and performance

There is an ever-increasing demand because of the ageing population, amongst whom hearing loss is a widespread and growing issue:

Hearing loss is understood to be affecting approximately 145,000 people in Cambridgeshire, including 41.7% of over 50-year-olds, and 71.1% of over-70-year-olds. Over the next 20 years the 65-74 age group is forecast to increase by 36%, the 75-84 age group by 71%, and the 85yrs+ age group by 154% (Cambridgeshire County Council).

Consequently, we face a continual increase in demand for our work, reflected in the performance figures below.

NHS hearing aid maintenance client age range:

We have supported as many of our 6,500 clients who have used our services per year through our Covid-safe versions of NHS hearing aid maintenance services and battery supplies, as we can this year. This has been important as 36% of our client base are aged 85+, 34% are aged 75 to 84, 20% are aged 65 to 74, 5% are aged 55 to 64 and 5% are aged 54 or under.

The normal 'core' services of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help are our Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) sessions, which pre-Covid were run in 43 venues throughout the County. Although these had to be suspended during Covid lockdowns we have begun re-opening them during 2021 and they are proving to be as much in demand as ever and satisfaction continues to be high.

Our clients tell us:

- *“This service is invaluable to me as I am housebound and being able to have my hearing aids maintained at my home is ideal. A great service”*
- *“Informal, friendly help by knowledgeable people, reliable. Been using for 5 years”*
- *“I was inspired to start volunteering 40 years ago because my youngest brother was born deaf. I enjoy the volunteering immensely.”*
- *“I joined Cambridgeshire Hearing Help because I wanted to give back and help others with hearing loss. I love the volunteering because there is a great camaraderie within the team and huge appreciation for the work that we do.”*

Community based Hearing Help drop-in sessions

During the 2020-21 financial year all 43 Cambridgeshire drop-in hearing help session venues were closed when there was the first nationwide lockdown in March 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We assisted Cambridgeshire County Council Sensory Services at the start of the pandemic to identify those of our homebound clients who were at particular risk of isolation owing to their hearing loss. However, by May it was necessary to furlough our session supervision staff.

During the period between July and September 2020 we redesigned our hearing aid maintenance procedures with Addenbrooke’s Hospital Audiology team to be Covid safe to enable us to re-start a restricted service in October 2020. However, the service was required to close again during January 2021. We re-opened again in February and by the end of March 2021 CHH had opened nine newly named Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) centres across Cambridgeshire.

The detailed work required to restart the service comprised a re-writing of our procedures in conjunction with our medical Trustee, Dr Stuart Findlay, and Addenbrooke’s Hospital to ensure they were Covid-19 safe; carrying out risk assessments of our procedures and operations at each work location; and negotiating new locations to act as Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) centres across the county. HAM centres were identified and set up in Ely Library, Soham Library, St Ives Library, Shelford Baptist Church, Girton Parish Hall, Chatteris Library, the Cambourne Hub, Ely Methodist Church and the Swifts centre in Fulbourn. In adjusting our model these sessions had to be turned into drop-off and collect sessions. Advantages of the new HAM model have been that people’s relatives and neighbours can bring people’s hearing aids for them where the person is housebound and the whole sessions have been based on pre-booked appointments.

Our supervisors were retrained to operate the Covid safe re-tubing procedures, and we have further trained couriers to transport hearing aids from and back to housebound people and care home residents. These supervisors have then trained all returning volunteers in Covid-safe practices and new HAM session roles.

The complexity of the Covid safe procedures required the presence of two supervisors at each session providing our services with a small team of trained volunteers. The service became established as one based on people booking appointments by telephone or booking them online for what is continuing to be a ‘drop off and pick up 10 minutes later’ based service. The success of this new model was in part dependent on developing a new online booking system through which people select a convenient time to drop off their hearing aids for maintenance.

We also converted all our session-based record keeping to an online logging process. These two innovations have improved the efficiency of our operations and will be retained alongside our drop-in service once the pandemic is over.

Our hearing help sessions have provided an important and regular point of contact for our clients, some of whom experience isolation or manage long term physical and/or mental health conditions. But for the pandemic we would normally provide a greater opportunity for clients to speak with our staff, volunteers and other people with hearing loss. We are then able to identify where our clients can benefit from support from our other services, by other providers and by statutory services. During the pandemic our contact with our clients has mostly been by telephone and email owing to social distancing rules, through which we have still provided extensive information and advice. It is only recently that people have also been able to gain information and advice when waiting in drop-off and collect locations outside our re-emerging HAM sessions.

The HAM sessions were delivered during the pandemic by a small team of enthusiastic volunteers, led by our three supervisors, Gaynor, Claire and Fran. Following the introduction of vaccinations, all our staff and volunteers working for CHH or likely to come into contact with potentially Covid contaminated hearing aids were vaccinated as frontline social workers.

We are grateful for the cooperation of all venues who have hosted us with particular thanks to the Cambridgeshire Library Service who made their library locations available to us in Ely, Soham, Chatteris and St Ives during the restart of our services during the pandemic.

HM Prisons Littlehey and Whitemoor

We normally also train and visit residents at HM Prison Littlehey, to clean, re-tube, and supply batteries for NHS hearing aids, and supply batteries to people with hearing loss at HM Prison Whitemoor. Whilst visits to prisons were not possible during the pandemic battery supplies were supplied on request to HM Prison Whitemoor.

Organisational change during the pandemic

Our Chief Executive Richard Howitt completed his role and left the charity in August 2020. The Trustees offer their warm thanks to Richard for his help during this period.

For the remainder of the financial year Cambridgeshire Hearing Help was managed by the Trustees and the Chair, Roger Hill, took over the day-to-day management role of the charity for the rest of the financial year.

Performance

Throughout the pandemic our telephone service continued to supply hearing aid batteries by post and almost 15,000 battery packs have been distributed over the year and we are increasingly providing tubing by post too.

Hearing Aid Maintenance (HAM) centres were open for the maintenance of hearing aids for five months of the financial year (October to December 2020 and February to March 2021) owing to closures imposed by the Covid pandemic and CHH staff availability during January 2021. A small number of hearing aids were maintained by post during the closures. Attendance at the nine maintenance centres varied in accordance with the lockdown regulations in force at the time. Further we noticed an understandable reluctance of many of our elderly hearing aid clients to venture out of their homes during the year.

The attendance figures for 2020-21 (below) show that over the whole year of the pandemic we were contacted by 3,956 clients for batteries, re-tubing and advice. This accounts for about one third of the clients who would have attended our Hearing Help Sessions during previous years. After the opening of the maintenance centres during the year 1,536 hearing aids were re-tubed (847 clean and retubes and 689 open fits).

	Attendance Figures for the Year							
	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Total HHS, Home & Care Home								
Attendances at sessions/requests	3,956	12,075	12,951	13,221	12,688	11,225	10614	9955
Clean Retube	847	9,999	11,467	13,053	13680	12,699	12039	11820
Battery Packs	14,714	37,984	38,769	34,916	32914	29,086	26010	23477
Open Fits	689	5,997	5,528	4,636	3539	2,480	2064	1654
Advice	273	1,023	1,412	1,257	1263	1,422	1029	1254

Cambridgeshire Hearing Help Community Leaders Project

The Community Leaders pilot project seeks to significantly extend our service to people with hearing loss who are housebound or who live in residential homes, by training local Volunteer Community Leaders to provide our service within their local communities.

The project, led by our coordinator Claire, is focused for the pilot period on South and East Cambridgeshire, and has been kindly funded by the Evelyn Trust and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Access to care homes was stopped at the start of the pandemic and the community social groups led by Kate and Norman for the hearing impaired as part of the Community Leaders project supported by the U3A were also closed. CHH therefore stopped all work on the Community Leaders project and a proportion of the monies are being carried over to next financial year to conclude the first phase of the project.

During the first year of the project in 2019-20 we increased the number of care homes we were able to visit by 18 throughout Cambridgeshire, with 978 home visits and 1,334 visits to residents in care homes. This represents assistance to 275 individual people with hearing loss who are housebound and to 542 people with hearing loss living in residential care or nursing homes.

This was achieved with 16 trainee Community Leader volunteers who joined our service and 12 senior volunteers appointed and trained from amongst our existing volunteers. During the 2020-21 pandemic year our volunteers were unable to work on the project and we look forward to welcoming them back to our Covid recovery version of the project.

Warm thanks to them all.

The CHH Community Leaders project co-ordinator was initially furloughed but brought back and redeployed to supervise the HAM centres with Gaynor and Fran, who together introduced the Covid safe re-tubing process and trained volunteers in the new procedures and roles at the HAM sessions.

Lip-reading classes

Our free lip-reading classes held in Cambridge were unable to take place during the year as a result of the pandemic. Lip-reading can be a very effective strategy for people with hearing loss to improve communication, building confidence, control and independence.

Many people who come to us are unsure in advance, but we reassure them that they can come once, simply to try. The classes are held in a friendly and informal atmosphere – and with a sense of humour. We hope to restart the classes once the pandemic ends.

Raising awareness about hearing loss in the wider community

Whilst we normally undertake public education through the provision of hearing loss awareness talks, information stalls, a website and publicity materials this has mostly not been possible this year.

This would normally include raising awareness through organising stalls and participating in events at the Clinical Commissioning Group offices in Cambridge, at the Cambridge Network Wellbeing Event, the Waterbeach Feast, at Histon Fete and at Shelford Feast.

For example, during the year 2019-20 we delivered talks and presentations including Deaf Awareness Training at Addenbrooke's, at Victoria Homes in Cambridge and The Spinney GP surgery, to Friendship Groups in Somersham and Whittlesey, the neighbourhood team in St Ives, Camsight, the Rhee Trefoil Group, the AMNET network and at Peterborough Dementia Café. Such talks were not possible during 2020-21.

Providing a wide variety of rewarding volunteering roles

We continue to be a volunteer-led organisation with an active group of Trustees and over one hundred individual volunteers registered, supported by just six part-time staff. Volunteers play an indispensable part in delivering our Hearing Aid Maintenance sessions, and undertake a wide range of other activities including fundraising, call handling in our office, assisting with our awareness-raising activities and in representation on fora and at events.

Of course, this helps many of our volunteers to develop and share their skills, to build confidence and to maintain their own community participation. We are proud that the majority of our volunteers come from amongst our clients, while we welcome volunteers who are both with and without hearing loss, without whom we would not be able to deliver the charity's activities.

All new volunteers 'shadow' existing volunteers when they first come, which is important in gaining confidence and experience.

If you are reading this and feel you might like to do more to assist Cambridgeshire Hearing Help, please contact us at enquiries@cambridgeshirehearinghelp.org.uk.

4. Client Satisfaction Survey

We have been conducting a client satisfaction survey at our community NHS Hearing Aid Maintenance (previously Hearing Help sessions) drop-in sessions across Cambridgeshire on a rolling basis since November 2012. This year the survey aimed to understand people's experiences of how CHH responded throughout the Covid-19 pandemic with a drop-off and collect, appointment-based model for the sessions and postal services.

The results presented came from survey questionnaire data collected during February and March 2021. A total of 130 questionnaires were returned, 78 were specifically for Batteries by Post and 53 were for Hearing Aid Maintenance.

Battery by post questionnaire:

Survey results show 91% of respondents were in the 65 years and above age categories (page 10).

The survey also showed that 96% of respondents were very satisfied with the CHH battery by post service.

- *"First time to use this service. Excellent!"*
- *"Thank you for the excellent service throughout the pandemic and always! Keep up the good work!"*
- *"I want to say a huge thank you. It is just a wonderful service, I can't thank you enough, it was such an efficient service."*
- *"Thank you so much for this service! It helps me and my deaf clients to get needed batteries on time! Especially when all my clients are shielding!"*
- *"Brilliant service - better than I could have expected."*
- *"Following my telephone call this week, I am writing to thank you for supplying replacement batteries for my Oticon hearing aid. I am most grateful for your help and very speedy response. If only other organisations were as efficient!"*
- *"Thank you so much, so quick and efficient. To be commended."*
- *"As someone who works fulltime and long hours, this service has been brilliant as I often struggle to get batteries from sessions as can't get there during the opening hours so would love it if batteries by post could continue after covid."*
- *"Very, very grateful without our hearing aids we would be lost."*
- *"I would like to thank you for the hearing aid batteries you sent me. They arrived very quickly. A very good service. First class and very appreciated."*
- *"Thank you for the batteries. I left a message on the answer phone and within 2 days I had these delivered through the letter box. Thank you!"*
- *"Thank you so much, batteries arrived this morning, I am very impressed at the speedy way you responded."*

Hearing Aid Maintenance sessions by appointment questionnaire:

Survey results (page 11) show 92% of respondents were in the 65 years and above age categories. 96% of clients agreed or strongly agreed CHH responded well to client needs and their requests were responded to quickly.

The survey results show 67% of respondents indicating they strongly agreed or agreed that the Hearing Aid Maintenance centre service helped to improve their mental or emotional wellbeing.

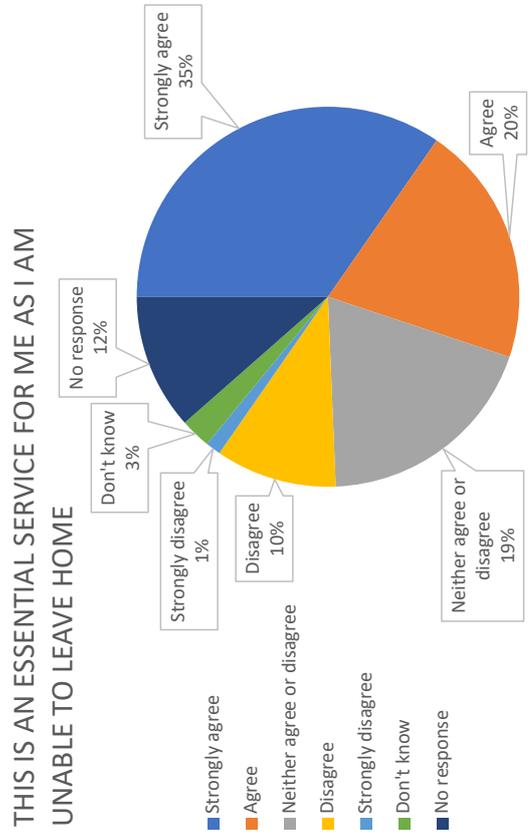
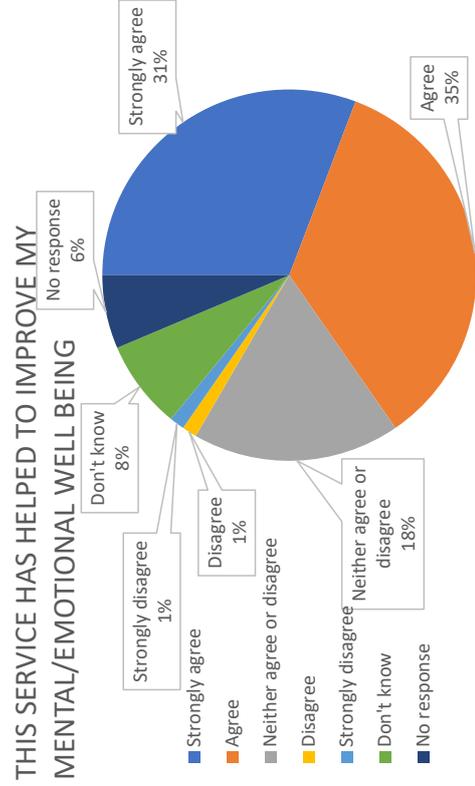
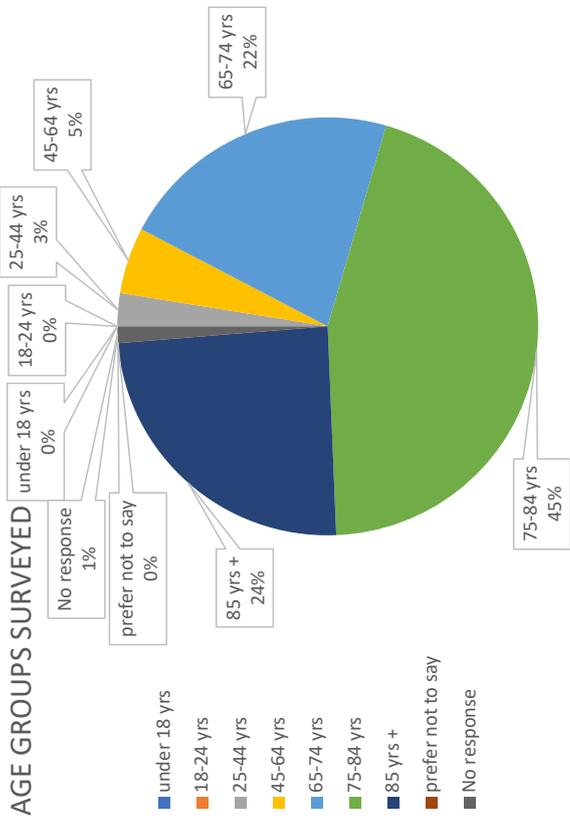
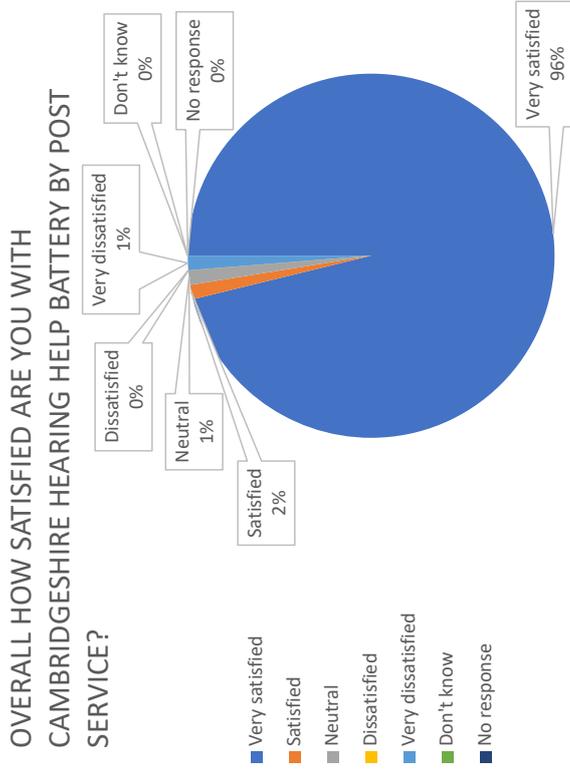
Overall, the survey results show 94% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the hearing aid maintenance appointment service.

Recommending the service of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help:

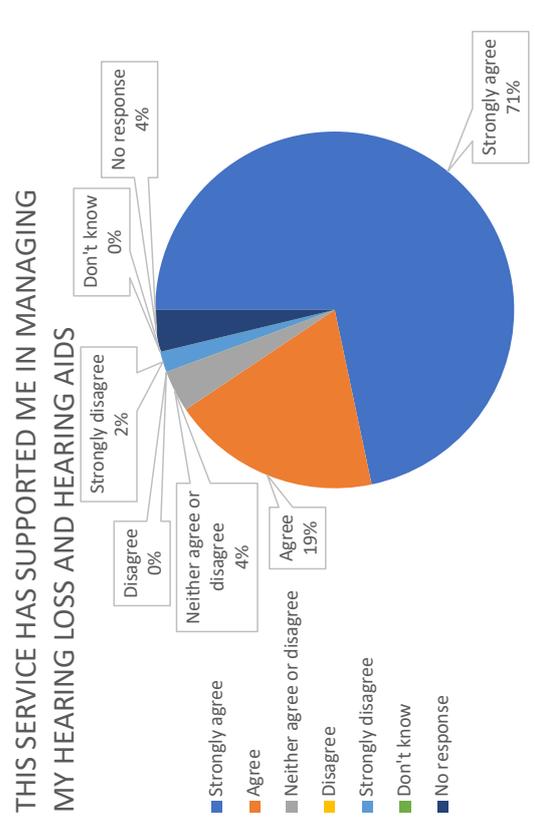
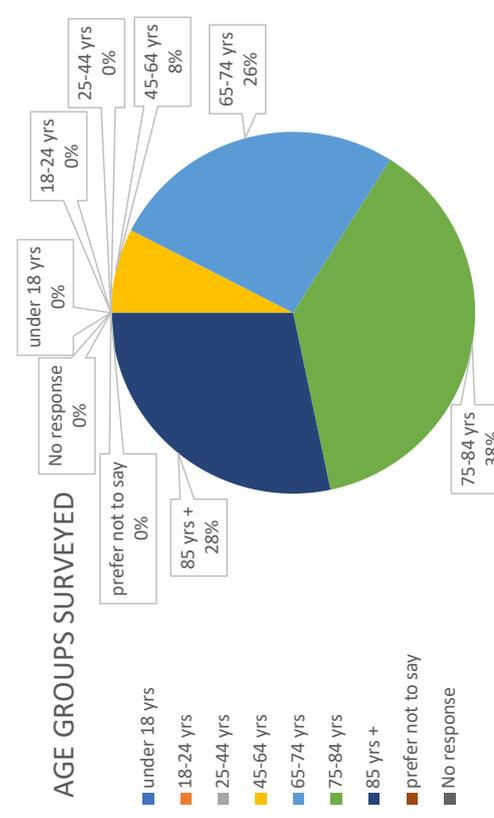
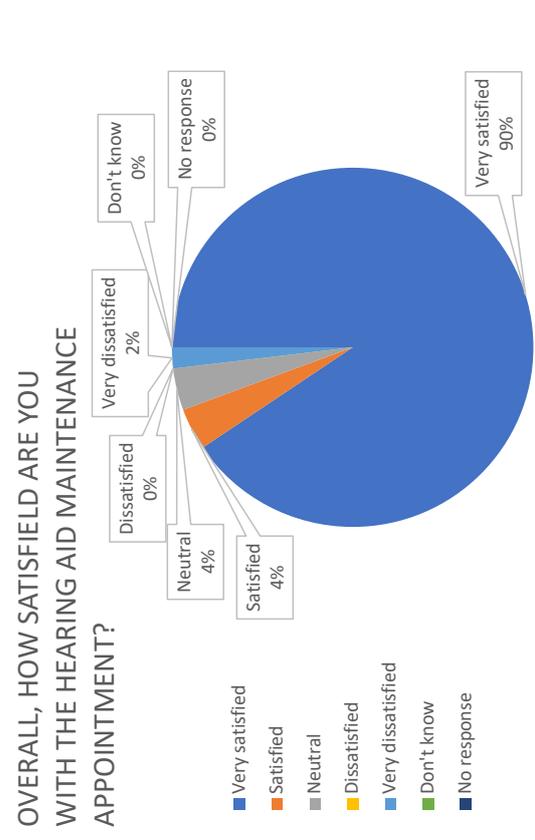
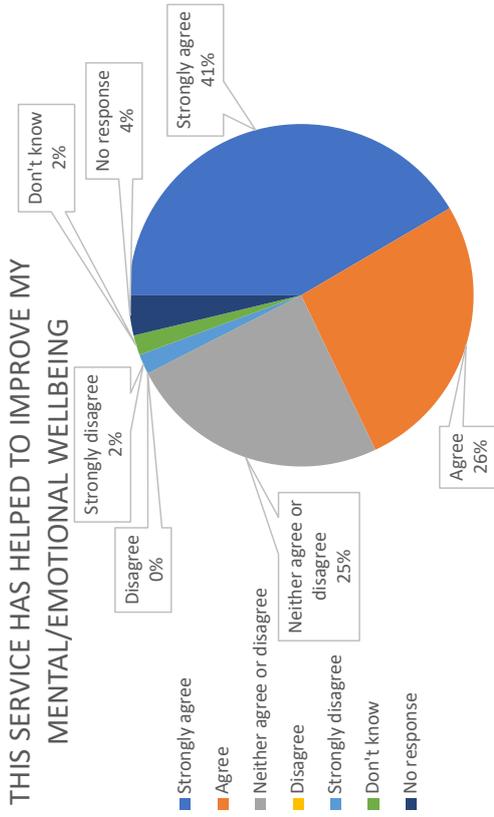
98% of our clients at Hearing Aid Maintenance sessions recommended the service to others.

- *“An absolutely wonderful service, many thanks”*
- *“Thank you so much. Really can’t say how appreciative I am.”*
- *“Many thanks for such prompt service.”*
- *“Definitely recommend. Many thanks to all volunteers.”*
- *“Thanks, you are a lifesaver!”*
- *“Thank you so much for this service. We value and appreciate you all.”*
- *“I just want to thank you all for picking up messages and carrying out the necessary instructions left on the phone/computer. You are doing a marvellous job and am so pleased to say my 4 packets of batteries arrived safely so quickly after I had left a message. Thank you for providing such a wonderful service.”*
- *“Take care from one very happy old deaf person.”*
- *“I want to say a huge thank you. It is just a wonderful service, I can’t thank you enough, it was such an efficient service.”*
- *“Thank you for making that appointment for me. I would like to feedback to you what an efficient service it is. I arrived early but my hearing aids were taken straight away by a very pleasant lady, and were ready to collect on my return 20 minutes later. It is admirable that you are continuing to deliver such an efficient service in these difficult times.*
- *“Thank you so much, so quick and efficient. To be commended.”*
- *“I just wanted to say how very efficiently everything went today for my appointment at 12 noon at Fulbourn. It all worked very well and, in fact, only took 8 minutes! I now have plenty of batteries and aids retubed. It is an excellent service – thank you.”*
- *“I just wanted you to know you are doing a fantastic job! Thank you.”*

Battery by post questionnaire survey results



Hearing Aid Maintenance questionnaire survey results



5. Quality

For Cambridgeshire Hearing Help, it is important not just to provide a service, but how well we provide that service. We value the relationships with and between our staff, volunteers and clients, seeking to give time and attention to maintaining a caring and supportive environment in which we all work.

We seek to maintain high standards in everything we do. In the lockdown periods imposed because of the Coronavirus outbreak, we have taken the opportunity to fully review our policies and procedures, to keep them up-to-date.

The statistics and other evaluation data you will find throughout this report, are regularly reviewed by our Trustees and our staff team, and improvements pursued. Thank you to all volunteers and staff who help us maintain our meticulous record-keeping, in particular to our administrators, Rachel and Ruth, and office volunteers Anthea, Claire (Duffett) and Jenny.

This year we have enhanced our computer systems by changing to an online sessions attendance logging system linked to the 'CharityLog' records system and developing an online appointment system to enable us to operate during the pandemic. The appointment system was developed by our volunteer Anthea to whom we offer our grateful thanks.

We normally review changes in technology and maintain up-to-date standards by holding a quarterly 'Best Practice Group' meeting to hear feedback and review any problems encountered with our staff and volunteers although this has not been possible this year.

However, we have been very grateful to receive the expert guidance of Dr Elizabeth Hough, Clinical Scientist (Audiology) at Addenbrooke's Hospital in the development of our Covid safe re-tubing procedures and risk assessments without which we would not have been able to resume our hearing aid maintenance services. We extend a very warm thanks to Elizabeth.

Of course, with the range and amount of different activity in which we are involved, it is inevitable problems will arise. This year, all concerns raised have been successfully resolved informally, but we continue to place important emphasis on conducting a robust and objective complaints system open to all.

6. Grant Funding

We are very grateful for the 'core' grants which underpin our work, provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group and by Cambridgeshire County Council both of which were extended for another year.

Meanwhile, this year the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council moved to a joint competitive tendering system. This has presented significant challenges to CHH this year, the outcomes and impact of which are unknown to CHH at the time of reporting.

7. Fundraising

All of our activities are only possible, because of extensive fundraising efforts through the year. This year the pandemic has meant that fundraising events have not been possible.

However, a number of organisations kindly nominated us for charitable donations.

We have also started to benefit by asking people to include us in their shopping!

We have encouraged people to sign up on our behalf to Amazon Smile: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/>, which benefits us by 0.5% of what is spent if you nominate Cambridgeshire Hearing Help as your chosen charity.

We have also established an easyfundraising page, where you can shop online at other stores including Argos, John Lewis, eBay, Booking.com and M&S, and nominate us to receive a free donation: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cambridgeshirehearinghelp/

It is important that we provide a free service, but we are grateful to the many clients of our services who choose to make a voluntary donation online, by post and through Hearing Aid Maintenance sessions.

We are exceptionally grateful for a legacy this year that has proven to be crucial to our survival and we encourage other people to kindly add us to their wills.

We would like to thank all the charitable Trusts and Foundations, parish/district/town councils, community groups, companies and individuals who have given during this difficult year.

The banner features a light blue background with the text 'Raise funds for Cambridgeshire Hearing Help every time you shop online'. Below this, it says 'Find us on easyfundraising to start:' followed by a URL: 'https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cambridgeshirehearinghelp/'. There are icons for 'GET IT ON Google Play' and 'Download on the App Store'. Below the icons, it says 'Shop with over 3,300 online stores' and lists various retailers: amazon.co.uk, John Lewis, ebay, M&S, Argos, Booking.com, Boden, next, DEBENHAMS, GAP, Viking, Sainsbury's, SCREWFIX, JUST EAT, moonpig, and OSOS. At the bottom, there are statistics: 'easyfundraising feel good shopping', '£20 Million raised', '1.2 Million users', and '100,000 causes'.

8. Financial Review

As would be expected the Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on the charity's finances. The Community Leaders Project had to be suspended, but the National Lottery allowed us to divert £22,000 of their £24,654 grant to support our day to day running costs. This decision enabled us to continue to employ Claire Davenport to support the enhanced Covid secure procedures required when we introduced our HAM sessions. The three supervisors were furloughed for part of the year, and we received £22,415 from HMRC by way of furlough grants. After Richard Howitt left the charity in August 2020, Roger Hill assumed the Chief Executive's role on a voluntary basis, saving employment costs of a little over £18,000. We also received a legacy of £35,000 from the estate of a former service client.

We maintain tight control of day to day expenditure. The introduction of batteries by post resulted in a 240% increase in postage costs, but this was offset by a reduction in the cost of premises hire and travelling costs because we were unable to operate our normal services. We incurred additional costs during the year on the recruitment process for our new director.

There was no activity on the Community Leaders Project, but £6,210 was received from the Evelyn Trust for work carried out during 2019-20 and £2,654 allocated from the National Lottery grant. This leaves a balance of approximately £20,000 that will be used to conclude the first phase of the project during 2021-22.

During the year the Cambridge Hard of Hearing Club decided to cease its activities and we received £1,216 from their funds to continue our lip reading service. £1,300 was paid from this fund for work undertaken by the lip reading teacher during 2019-20.

Overall, the accounts show a surplus of £47,013, compared to a surplus of £16,402 last year, which has primarily been possible because of a sizeable legacy for which we are immensely grateful and reduced employment costs.

Declaration The Trustees declare they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed by the Chair of the Trustees, Roger T Hill, on behalf of the Trustees:

Signed: **Roger T. Hill**

Date: **8 September 2021**

9. Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 on pages 18 and 19.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent Examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,

follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and

state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which:

1. gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements: to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Alan Clements MA, ACIB, FCIE

Signed: Alan Clements

Date: 16 September 2021

Address: 15 Carleton Road, Great Knowley, Chorley, Lancs, PR6 8TQ

Relevant professional qualification:

Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners

10. Reserves Policy

The Accounts show unrestricted reserves of £170,001. Going forward, in accordance with our Reserves Policy, our absolute critical level of reserves is around £120,000. This would allow us six months to wind down and give our 6,500 service clients enough notice to source alternative services and support. It would also cover the cost of staff redundancies and some contingency for unforeseen operational costs.

At the moment, our activities and fundraising abilities are being severely curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic and like many other charities we may have to accept that our free reserves could be substantially depleted during the coming year.

11. Future Challenges

Our most significant future challenge will be to seek to resume our services to provide vital support to people with hearing loss, as the country emerges from the Coronavirus crisis.

What is certain is that the need amongst our current and potential clients remains as great as ever. Over the next 20 years, hearing loss is expected to increase dramatically in Cambridgeshire.

Changes by statutory service providers and in technology will continue. Cambridgeshire Hearing Help will need to contribute to the integration of health and social care across Cambridgeshire and the emphasis on early intervention and prevention that helps people to maintain independence.

As a small organisation, with very limited resources, we will need to work with our funders to ensure financial stability in what will continue to be a highly challenging financial environment.

12. Risk Management

The Trustees have considered their responsibilities towards risks to the charity and have assessed the main areas of risk.

They have taken, or are in the process of taking, steps to minimise risk, through the action plan incorporated into the Business Plan.

We recognise the following risks:

Operations: The uncertainty of timing on our ability to return to normal operations, in particular the return to some 15 Hearing Aid Maintenance sessions previously held in GP surgeries, as a result of restrictions or new restrictions imposed by government due to the pandemic.

Financial: The uncertainty regarding our Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group funding; potential limitations on tendering for contracts in 2021/22; and the continual need to ensure diversified sources of funding to cover annual costs.

External relationships: Maintaining our visibility within the CPCCG and CCC and a strong partnership with NHS Audiology providers, plus with our wide-ranging voluntary and public sector colleagues and suppliers.

Staff: Increased staff workload and flexibility needed to generate significantly more fundraised income, and to manage increased demand through new models and locations of our services.

Reputation: The challenge of maintaining an even quality of service across district boundaries.

Operations and technology: The security of data and IT systems; the need to train sufficient numbers of volunteers to meet demand, and to provide them with a suitable level of support and recognition. This includes training and supervising volunteers in new roles and tasks.

Risk to Vulnerable Adults: The Trustees are aware of the good practice of undertaking DBS checks, as and when necessary, and undertake DBS checks on new employees and volunteers to the charity. We also understand our responsibilities, with other agencies to adhere to and implement local Safeguarding Protocols and our procedures when safeguarding alerts arise.

13. Financial Statements

Cambridgeshire Hearing Help: Annual Accounts 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds			Total this year	Total last year
		Community leaders project	Our Voice Lip reading	Living well with hearing loss		
Receipts						
Charitable activities						
Hearing aid maintenance sales	-	-	-	-	-	213
Talks and training	-	-	-	-	-	298
Other charitable activities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support given to Littlehey Prison	-	-	-	-	-	912
Fundraising activities						
Fund raising events	-	-	-	-	-	1,027
Other fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	120
Grants received						
Cambridgeshire County Council	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
NHS Clinical Commissioning Group	36,520	-	-	-	36,520	36,520
Furlough grants	23,108	-	-	-	23,108	-
Other grants	22,000	8,864	-	-	30,864	83,908
Donations received						
Donations from individuals	2,944	-	-	-	2,944	2,287
Donations from community & faith organisations	2,000	-	1,216	-	3,216	10,217
Donations from corporate organisations	2,820	-	-	-	2,820	530
Hearing Help Sessions & Home Visits	426	-	-	-	426	5,256
Legacies received	35,075	-	-	-	35,075	-
Bank interest	1,475	-	-	-	1,475	1,639
Other income	374	-	-	-	374	156
Total income	176,742	8,864	1,216	-	186,822	193,083
Payments						
Cost of providing charitable activities						
Consultants' costs	2,391	-	1,300	213	3,904	10,515
Supplies and equipment	1,068	-	-	-	1,068	1,831
Room hire	1,768	-	-	-	1,768	4,175
Refreshments at meetings	14	-	-	-	14	15
Fundraising costs	-	-	-	-	-	40
Administration						
Bank charges	207	-	-	-	207	243
IT equipment and support	3,487	-	-	1,404	4,891	5,938
Office equipment & supplies	646	-	-	-	646	1,707
Postage	3,294	-	-	-	3,294	1,397
Printing	1,795	-	-	-	1,795	3,976
Publicity	-	-	-	-	-	120
Subscriptions	204	-	-	-	204	229
Telephones	3,808	-	-	-	3,808	4,463
Premises costs						
Rent, rates & insurance	10,837	-	-	-	10,837	10,626
Repairs & renewals	-	-	-	-	-	187
Staff costs						
Salaries and NI	89,417	-	-	-	89,417	111,861
Pensions	6,332	-	-	-	6,332	6,980
Reimbursed travel and expenses	2,032	-	-	-	2,032	5,234
Training	-	-	-	-	-	-
HR Consultancy	3,356	-	-	-	3,356	1,905
Other staff costs	2,500	-	-	-	2,500	-
Recruitment costs	2,465	-	-	-	2,465	-
Volunteer costs						
Reimbursed travel and expenses	769	-	-	-	769	3,228
Training	-	-	-	-	-	-
DBS checks	20	-	-	-	20	214
Volunteer entertainment	-	-	-	-	-	190
Governance						
AGM expenses	207	-	-	-	207	276
Trustee's expenses	-	-	-	-	-	842
Trustee meeting expenses	-	-	-	-	-	96
Independent examination	150	-	-	-	150	150
Sundry expenses	125	-	-	-	125	243
Total costs	136,892	-	1,300	1,617	139,809	176,681
Surplus(deficit) for the year	39,850	8,864	(84)	(1,617)	47,013	16,402
Balances brought forward 1 April 2020	130,151	11,142	4,749	5,928	151,970	135,568
Balances carried forward 31 March 2021	170,001	20,006	4,665	4,311	198,983	151,970

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds			Total this year	Total last year
		Community leaders project	Our Voice Lip reading	Living well with hearing loss		
Statement of Assets & Liabilities						
Cambridge & Counties Bank deposit account	51,402	20,006	4,665	4,311	80,384	79,021
Cash in hand	337	-	-	-	337	870
Unity Trust current account	98,136	-	-	-	98,136	37,326
Virgin Money deposit account	23,024	-	-	-	23,024	22,912
Money owed to Cambridgeshire Hearing Help	-	-	-	-	-	12,808
Money owed by Cambridgeshire Hearing Help	(2,270)	-	-	-	(2,270)	(603)
Lloyds bank business credit card	(628)	-	-	-	(628)	(364)
Total assets at 31 March 2021	170,001	20,006	4,665	4,311	198,983	151,970

14. Structure and governance

Type of governing document: Constitution

How the charity is constituted: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Trustee selection method: Elected

Trustee Name	Office (if any)
Roger Hill	Chair
Paul McCloskey	Vice Chair
Robert Andrews	Treasurer
Stuart Findlay	
Kirk Forrest	
Joan Wall	

It is considered that all Trustees and any others who could be understood to be ‘managers’ in the activities and affairs of Cambridgeshire Hearing Help are deemed to be ‘fit and proper’ persons under the terms of the Finance Act 2010.

With reference to Public Benefit in following the Charity’s aims and objectives, the Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission’s published guidance in complying with their duty as expressed in section 17(5) of the Charity Act 2011 on Public Benefit. The contents and obligations of the Equality Act 2010 are known to the Trustees and complied with to the best of their ability. The Trustees seek to fulfil the 2018 General Data Protection Regulations at all times.

There is a Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures in place in respect of persons dealing regularly with vulnerable adults and young people.

Appointed officers for this year were Richard Howitt (in position between 13th January 2020 and 14th August 2020) and Paul McCloskey. Whilst it is impossible to eliminate all risks and their consequences, efforts are constantly made to minimise such occurrences.

The charity has a policy of supplying all new Trustees with copies of the most recent minutes; budget and current financial information; the last Annual Report and Business Plan. All new and returning Trustees are encouraged to attend training in the role, provided by our local Council for Voluntary Services. Before appointment prospective Trustees meet with the Chair and Director to discuss their role and future plans for the charity.

15. Reference and administrative details

Charity Name: Cambridgeshire Hearing Help CIO

Other names Charity is known by: CHH, Cambridgeshire Hearing Help

Charity Registration Number: 1154071

Principal address: 153 St Neots Road, Hardwick, Cambridge, CB23 7QJ

Thank you to all of our Volunteers, many of whom are gradually returning during 2021. We are immensely grateful to all the volunteers who have been undertaking rigorous training in order to re-open our Covid-safe services.

Thank you to all our staff:

Staff Name	Position
Richard Howitt	Chief Executive Officer (resigned during the year)
Fran Mills	Volunteer/Session Supervisor
Gaynor Curry	Volunteer/Session Supervisor
Claire Davenport	Project Coordinator
Rachel Hamilton-Meikle	Office Administrator
Ruth McAllen	Office Administrator