

Hear Hear

News from Hearing Help Essex



Autumn/Winter 2023 - Issue 62

Registered Charity no. 1113498



A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

There is something about Autumn that brings renewed hope. The change in season often causes me to pause and reflect; look back at what has been achieved and look forward to review our plans in the coming months.

Something that has resonated recently is how the gift of sound brings comfort, awareness, and safety - and should be a basic human right. Something that we should be able to take for granted.

My Father passed away earlier this year, and his last phone call, the night he died, was to ask where his hearing aids were. He thought he had lost them and the panic in his voice reflected how vulnerable he felt in that moment. We couldn't communicate that they were on his bedside table because he couldn't hear on the phone without them.

My own personal challenges this year would have been insurmountable if I had not had a reliable pair of hearing aids in my ears. Navigating appointments, registering a death, planning a funeral, supporting loved ones, the list is endless. That is why I am more determined than ever before to lead the team to support as many people as we possibly can.

Securing funding is becoming increasingly more challenging. At the same time, we see an unprecedented rise in demand for our services. We have delivered support on 8,705 occasions during the first 10 months of 2023 - compared with 5,582 at the same point in 2022. **A staggering 56% increase in demand.**

We need your help to keep meeting the growing demand. We are launching a number of new initiatives; a Christmas Giving Campaign, a revamp of our existing Friendship Scheme, and a new Training programme, providing deaf awareness training to local businesses and organisations. Read on to find out more and to help us spread the word!

You are receiving this newsletter as you have supported us in some way in recent years and hope you will feel proud of what the Charity is achieving. Thank you for your help and support in 2023 - whether is be as a Volunteer, Friend, Funder, or other support, we are hugely grateful.

Sophie Ede

Our Impact to date 2023*

*figures up to 31/10/2023

2023 has already been the busiest year in Hearing Help Essex's history, and we still have two months to go!

It is safe to say that staff and volunteers have been working harder than ever before.

7,771

Hearing Aids Re-tubed

4,645

Hearing Aid
Support
Appointments

5,087

Information, Advice,
and Guidance
Interactions

943

Individual
Home Visits

585

Equipment Demo &
Loan appointments

378

Sessions in the
Community

2,092

New registrations for
support this year

98.6%

Service Users feel
our support has a
positive impact on
their wellbeing.


98.3%

Would recommend
our services to
friends and family




Can you give the gift of communication this Christmas?

Jean has been accessing both our NHS Hearing Aid Support and Information, Advice and Guidance services throughout 2023.




Jean is housebound and relies on family and carers to support her. Due to multiple challenges in Jean's life, she has been struggling to manage her hearing aids this year. Without amplification Jean cannot understand speech, or listen to her favourite television programmes. At times communicating with Jean has been almost impossible due to her hearing loss. This had led to feelings of frustration and isolation for both Jean and her family and carers.




Hearing Help Essex have been supporting Jean throughout 2023 by loaning her vital equipment, offering advice and visiting her at home to boost her wellbeing.


With your gift we can help more people like Jean.




Jean's story is not unique. Hearing Help Essex have delivered 943 home visits so far this year to people like Jean. ***A 68% increase in demand when compared to the same period in 2022.***




Our charity is just about weathering a challenging storm; the economic crisis, increased costs, and a huge rise in demand for our services means that we are having to work harder than ever before to raise the funds needed to keep these services available to everyone in need.




We are the only charity in Essex dedicated to helping those with acquired hearing loss.



Please help us to support even more people in 2024 and beyond.



Your generosity means we can support more people, so they're not isolated by hearing loss this Christmas and beyond.





Donate online today.

www.justgiving.com/campaign/hhe-christmas-2023

**or you can write a cheque payable to Hearing Help Essex
and post with the below form.**

If you would like to set up a regular donation to Hearing Help Essex, you can do this online via our website, or by setting up your own standing order.

Name:

Address (including postcode):

Telephone:

Email Address:

- ☐ I would like to make a one off donation of £_____ (cheque enclosed)
- ☐ I would like to make a regular donation. Please send me Hearing Help Essex Bank details to set up a Standing Order.

Gift Aid Declaration

- ☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation to Hearing Help Essex and any donations I make in the future. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

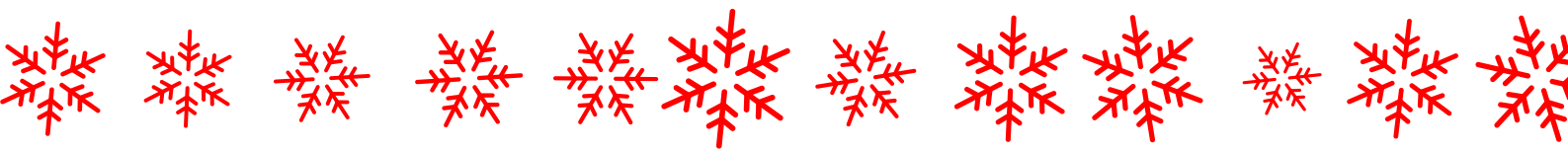
Please notify Hearing Help Essex if you want to cancel this declaration, if you change your name or address, or if you no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

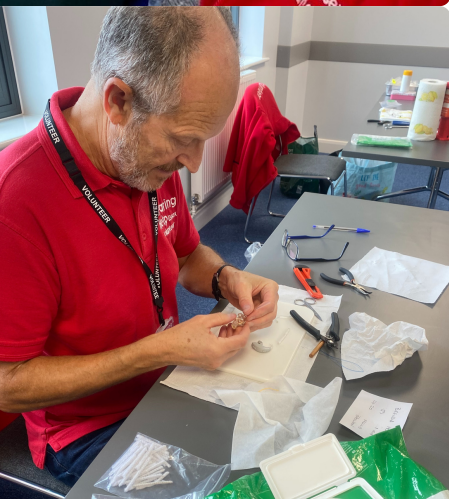
Thank you! Your support changes lives. Your details will only be used by Hearing Help Essex and we will never give your information to other organisations. Please choose how you want to stay in touch by ticking the choices below, and let us know if you change your mind!

- ☐ Email ☐ Phone ☐ Post ☐ Text Message

Please return the completed page to:

Hearing Help Essex, Suite 1, 158 Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0LD





NHS HEARING AID SUPPORT SERVICE

We are thrilled to report that shortly after the publication of our last newsletter, we were able to launch our new services in **Brentwood and Basildon Districts**. This project has enabled us to extend our NHS Hearing Aid Support Service and we now run monthly support sessions and can offer home visits for NHS hearing aid maintenance in Ingatestone, Brentwood, Billericay, and Laindon. This is the first stage of the planned growth of the service, and in 2024 we aim to open new sessions across Thurrock, Castle Point, Rochford, and Southend Districts.

Pitsea Library will be closing for a few years while the site is redeveloped, so we will temporarily relocate that session to **Vange Library from January 2024**. Huge thanks to the volunteers for supporting with this move, especially to Gill M who was quick to let us know of the proposed changes and assisted us with formulating a plan to keep the session going.

Our **Burnham-on-Crouch** session re-located to the Constitutional Club Hall, and has been working extremely well. Huge thanks to the committee at the hall for providing such a warm welcome to us.

We are currently looking for additional venues in **Maldon** and **Chelmsford** - if you live in those areas and know of any venues that might be suitable for our community sessions please do let us know. We are also looking for a Technical Volunteer to join the team in **Saffron Walden**. If you can help with either of these requests please let us know by emailing hass@hearinghelpessex.org.uk or calling us on 01245 496347.

We are pleased to see that the number of people booking appointments online is gradually increasing, and during October 2023, 17% of the appointments were booked using our online booking system.

A gentle reminder that we do not run any hearing aid support sessions for two weeks over Christmas to give our Volunteers a well earned rest.

If you need your hearing aid cleaning or re-tubing ready for Christmas please do try and book an appointment at your earliest convenience, as our sessions are already filling up in November and December.



NHS HEARING AID SUPPORT VENUE LIST

WHERE CAN YOU ACCESS OUR SERVICE IN ESSEX?

Billericay Chantry Centre CM11 2AP	Braintree St Michaels Health Centre, CM7 2QU	Brentwood St Thomas' Church Centre CM14 4DF	Burnham-On-Crouch Constitutional Club Hall CM0 8AA
Chelmsford Christ Church URC CM2 0AW	Chelmsford Moulsham Lodge Clinic, CM2 9NY	Chelmsford Parkside Community Hub, CM1 2DY	Coggeshall Christ Church, CO6 1UH
Danbury Mission CM3 4QL	Finchingfield Freshwell Health Centre, CM7 4BQ	Great Dunmow Rowena Davey Day Centre, CM6 1EQ	Hatfield Peverel Village Hall, CM3 2HP
Heybridge Plantation Hall, CM9 4AL	Ingatestone Seymour Pavilion CM4 0HH	Laindon Health Centre SS15 5PS	Maldon St Peter's Hospital, CM9 6EG
Vange Library SS16 4ET	Saffron Walden Community Link, CB10 1HX	South Woodham Ferrers , Crouch Vale Medical Centre, CM3 5QP	Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Office, CM24 8AQ
Thaxted Surgery, CM6 2QN	Wickford Library, SS12 0AG	Witham URC CM8 1AH	Writtle Parish Office, CM1 3DT

At these sessions you can have your NHS hearing aid cleaned and re-tubed free of charge by our dedicated team of volunteers. All volunteers are trained by local audiology departments.

Our sessions are no longer 'walk-in' and you must book an appointment prior to attending the session. Appointments can be booked by phone, email, text message, or online. Once registered, you can book an appointment online by visiting our website.

www.hearinghelpessex.org.uk/bookings



GENERAL NEWS

Hearing Help Essex were please to attend the Hatfield Peverel Community Engagement Evening held at the Village hall at the end of May. We were able to meet many local residents to provide information and advice, as well as raise awareness of our services in the local area. It was also a great opportunity to network with other local and voluntary sector organisations such as Essex Police and Community 360.

The Fun Walk 2023 took place in September with volunteers, staff members, and friends, joining in either a 5 or 2 mile route. We are thrilled to have raised £867 in sponsorship - after we have claimed Gift Aid and our Bonus cheque from The Fun Walk Trust, we expect this event to raise over £1000. Huge thanks to all those who sponsored us!

Our CEO, Sophie Ede, was honoured to be invited to collect a cheque totalling £2,078.38 from the Inner Wheel of Chelmsford Mildmay who chose to support us as their Charity of the Year in 2022-23. Special thanks to Geraldine Beaurain

Chelmsford VolFest 2023 was once again hosted by our friends at Chelmsford CVS during Volunteer's week. We had a fantastic day on the high street meeting many local people and talking all things hearing loss.

Hearing Help Essex continues to be recognised as an expert in the field with regular invitations to provide knowledge and guidance to help shape accessibility strategies across the County. We are now an active member of the 'SAFE Forum' - Stansted Access For Everyone Forum. We attend quarterly meetings at the airport to review any planned changes to their accessibility schemes and development.

Phoenix Radio station in Brentwood gave a very warm welcome to our CEO, Sophie Ede, back in August, to help us promote the new sessions running in the area. DJ, Bob Simpson, is friends with one of our volunteers, and was keen to learn more about the service.

Listen Up! Deaf Awareness Training

After several requests for training, we are excited to be formally launching our new deaf awareness training service to businesses and organisations based in Essex. Each training session can be designed to meet the organisations needs and can be delivered either online or in-person. If you are interested to learn more, or to book a session, please email info@hearinghelpessex.org.uk.



INFORMATION, ADVICE, & GUIDANCE SERVICE

We have had two new Outreach Workers join the team this year - Wendy who will be covering Tendring, Colchester and Braintree districts, and Julia who will be covering Uttlesford, Harlow, and Epping Forest Districts. We are thrilled to have been able to build the capacity of the outreach team, and know Wendy and Julia will be fantastic assets to an already brilliant team.

The Outreach team deliver home visits to those who cannot make it to our Resource Centre, and also regular Community Information Stands held at up to 8 different hospitals each month. They also deliver informal talks to groups and clubs, as well as at social gatherings at housing and residential settings.

From 1st November 2023, the Outreach team will also be delivering our new assessment service whilst on home visits. The assessment service, commissioned by Essex County Council, aims to improve safety for those who are housebound or vulnerable.

We have been pleased to extend the service to Thurrock residents this year, with thanks to a grant from the Lower Thames Crossing Community Fund.

Our equipment specialist, Janine, who is based at our Resource Centre in Chelmsford has been busier than ever before supporting people with the bluetooth hearing aids now issued by local NHS Audiology departments. The technology is impressive, but can be a little overwhelming at first, so Janine has been guiding and coaching people to become more confident with their new and improved devices.

Lipreading classes

Having a hearing loss often makes people feel isolated as they may find following general conversation is difficult (even if they are wearing hearing aids). Attending a lipreading class can help improve both their receptive communication and overall confidence levels - all done in a relaxed environment.

Jacqui is a qualified lipreading teacher and she is providing lipreading and managing hearing loss classes around Essex. If you, or someone you know would benefit from these classes, please register an interest by contacting learn.lipreading@gmail.com.



If you are a member of a group or club that books speakers, please do remember we deliver fun and informative talks!



Jane Smith wins The Pride of Essex 'Unsung Hero' Award

We are delighted to announce that former Trustee, Friend, and Volunteer for Hearing Help Essex, Jane Smith, was awarded The Pride of Essex 'Unsung Hero' award at a special ceremony on the 12th November 2023. We are beyond proud, and feel extremely pleased to see Jane's decades of dedication to those who are deaf and hard of hearing recognised in this way.



Jane has dedicated over 30 years of her life to improving the lives and health outcomes for those struggling with deafness, hearing loss, tinnitus, and other hearing-related challenges. This is exceptionally specialist work which she has delivered both as a Volunteer and in a professional capacity, working for local charities and hospitals over the last 30 years. Jane's work has improved the lives of thousands of individuals and in many cases helped people turn their lives around, after experiencing sudden and debilitating hearing loss and ear-related illnesses.

Nominator, Sophie Ede, said, "When Jane retired from the NHS in 2019, she immediately volunteered to help out, at local Charity 'Hearing Help Essex' as a Trustee. Jane is kind, humble, and beyond generous with her time. She has worked incredibly hard, to help steer 'Hearing Help Essex' through the pandemic, supporting the team of staff and volunteers, to deliver services, to over 5,000 individuals in the last year alone. Jane hates the 'limelight' and always shrinks into the background, never taking any credit for her life-changing, and in many cases, life-saving work. She has improved the mental health and wellbeing, of countless individuals, whom without support from Jane would have been left to cope with their unique hearing-related challenges alone. We think Jane is a real-life angel and hope you do too!"

StageText Captioning Charity moves to Essex

Our CEO, Sophie Ede, was delighted to join the Stagertext Gala event at Mercury Theatre Colchester on 12th November. The event was held to celebrate 'Captioning Awareness Week' and the new partnership between the Theatre and captioning charity who have recently relocated to Colchester from London.

Attendee's heard from Melanie Sharpe, CEO of StageText, and also from other staff and Trustees involved with the charity. They had a chance to network and share experiences of accessibility wins and challenges alike! An enjoyable evening was had by all.

We are thrilled to have StageText as local neighbours now, and are looking forward to working together to improve access to Arts and Theatre for deaf and hard of hearing people across the County and beyond.

For more information on StageText's services please visit:
www.stagetext.org



>> StageTEXT



HEARING HELP ESSEX WALL OF FAME

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE BELOW FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS:

**The Friends of
Hearing Help
Essex**

**Essex County
Council**

**Essex
Community
Foundation**

**The Provide
Foundation**

**Eastlight
Community
Fund**

**The Walter
Farthing Trust**

**Chelmsford
City Council**

**Uttlesford
District
Council**

**Fowler, Smith,
and Jones
Trust**

**Mid and South
Essex
Integrated
Care System**

**Heybridge,
Writtle, and
Stansted
Parish
Councils**

**Coggeshall
Nursing
Trust and
Christ
Church**

**Saffron
Walden
Building
Society
Community
Link**

**Danbury
Mission
Church**

**Thaxted and
Finchingfield
Surgeries**

**Chelmsford
Lions Club**

**Burnham
Constitutional
Club**

**Chelmer
Housing
Partnership**

**Tesco
Bags of Help**

**The
Childwick
Trust**

and all who gave so generously via our Collection tins.

Listen Up!

Deaf awareness training

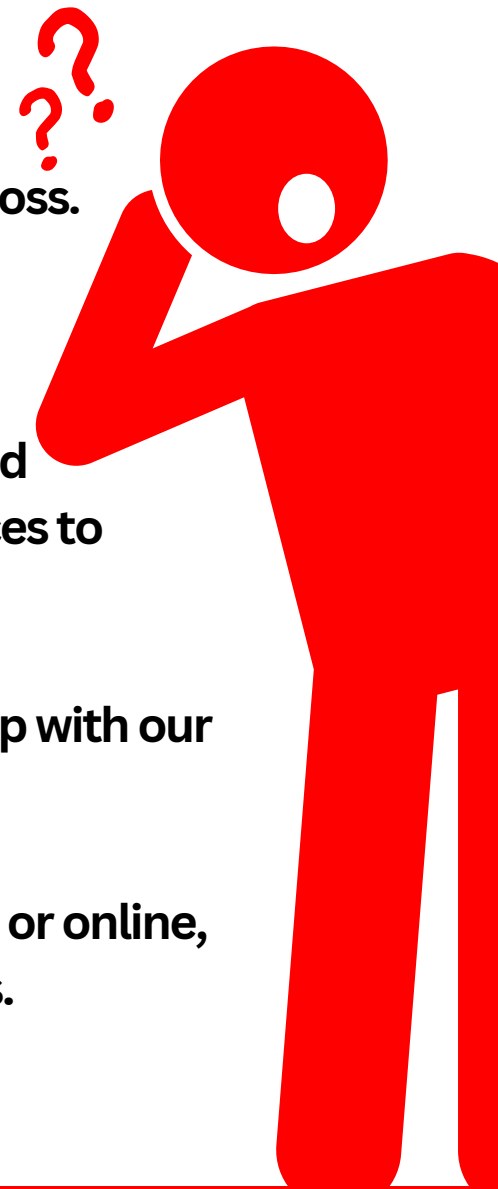
1 in 5 adults in the UK are deaf or have a hearing loss. That means over 350,000 residents of Essex are deaf or hard of hearing.

Are you and your staff equipped with the skills and confidence required to deliver top-quality services to your customers and service users?

Local charity, Hearing Help Essex, are here to help with our **BRAND NEW** training offer.

Training can be delivered in person across Essex, or online, and will be bespoke to your organisational needs.

For further information, please contact us:



www.hearinghelpessex.org.uk



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**Hearing
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