



Hearing Dogs
for Deaf People

Favour

The magazine from Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

Issue 65
SPRING
2022
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40th
Anniversary
Issue

Always there for each other

How volunteering has led
to life-long friendships

How a kind gift can change lives forever

A special note from
our co-founder
Dr Bruce Fogle

“ Harris has
given me back
my smile ”

Shmita says being part of the Hearing Dogs
family has changed her life



**The Ruby
Appeal**

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Ruby become a
hearing dog?



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Contents



Spring 2022



**LIFELONG
FRIENDSHIPS**
in the Hearing Dogs
family, page 24

Welcome!



When my mother, Lady (Beatrice) Wright, co-founded Hearing Dogs for Deaf People with Dr Bruce Fogle in 1982, she had no idea how many thousands of people the Charity would be helping 40 years later.

For this, I say a huge thank you to you all. Whether you donate to Hearing Dogs, volunteer, sponsor a puppy, have pledged to leave a gift in your Will, are one of our corporate

partners or major donors, or follow us on social media, your support is transforming the lives of deaf people and will do so long into the future.

However you choose to join us in celebrating our 40th anniversary this year, we thank you again and hope you enjoy this very special issue.

Faith Clark Chairman of Hearing Dogs

Favour

magazine is named after Hearing Dogs' very first dog, Favour.

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Cover photo and all photos on this page except Peggy and Wendy (page 24) by Paul Wilkinson.

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NEXT ISSUE
Look out for the
next issue in
Autumn 2022

Regulars

04 Newshound

Hearing Dogs turns 40, a special tribute, and exciting research

10 Training our dogs

How our dogs' training is tailored to meet the various needs and lifestyles of deaf people

18 Fundraising

How lots of kind people and companies are changing the lives of deaf people

26 Our services

How one website could change your life if you, or a loved one, have hearing loss

30 Paws for Coffee

Presenter Sophie Morgan talks about disability representation, Crufts and her visit to Hearing Dogs

Features

08 Appeal

Meet Ruby, our 40th anniversary puppy who will change a deaf person's life

12 Awareness

How one dog has given Shmita her smile back and is helping her every day

14 Puppy sponsorship

A special look at how our puppy sponsorship scheme has changed deaf people's lives for 20 years

22 'Successor' dogs

Jan tells us how the support of four hearing dogs over three decades has transformed her life

24 Volunteering

Meet people who have made lifelong friendships by being part of the Hearing Dogs family

28 Lasting legacies

A special note from our co-founder, Dr Bruce Fogle, on the bond between people and dogs

Newshound

Updates from our latest appeals and news about our favourite dogs – we sniff out the stories that matter to you...



APPEAL UPDATES



Chalky and Eddison

THANK YOU for supporting our appeal in the Autumn 2021 issue of Favour, in which we shared the story of Chalky and her hearing dog Eddison. Chalky constantly felt anxious and isolated. She was worried about missing sounds and about her and her daughter's safety. Since having Eddison, Chalky's anxieties have been 'completely lifted'. By donating to this appeal, you have helped to raise £18,284 towards the training and partnering of more hearing dogs.



James and Kandy

OUR 2021 CHRISTMAS APPEAL told the story of 10-year-old James and his hearing dog Kandy. James's deafness made him feel anxious and unsafe, especially at night when he was in the dark and silence. Kandy takes away James's anxiety, helps him feel safe and alerts him to important sounds. This appeal has raised £29,603 to help more deaf children and adults get a hearing dog. Thank you to everyone who kindly donated.



CELEBRATIONS

Hearing Dogs turns 40!

2022 marks our 40th anniversary and four decades of training life-changing hearing dogs and helping deaf people.

This year we reflect on the time when our very first dog was trained in the home of Gill Lacey, our longest standing staff member.

We have grown steadily but substantially since then, thanks to the support of everyone in the Hearing Dogs family. From supporters and volunteers to our deaf partners and staff, we want to say thank you!

We have vastly increased the number of clever hearing dogs we place with deaf people, moved to bigger premises in order to train more dogs, opened our Northern Training Centre, established our National Breeding Centre, and greatly expanded the services we provide to help anyone with

hearing loss as a result of our merger with Hearing Link.

Today, thanks to your kindness we are helping thousands of deaf people and those with hearing loss, practically and emotionally.

From March 2022 to March next year, we will be celebrating the Hearing Dogs family; by sharing inspiring stories of the people we help, showcasing the amazing things our hearing dogs do, and holding fun events across the UK. We'll also be highlighting how far we've come thanks to our kind and loyal supporters and volunteers and, most importantly, helping many more people who are deaf or have hearing loss.

Further details of how you can get involved in our 40th year celebrations will be made available on the Hearing Dogs website throughout 2022.

hearingdogs.org.uk



TRIBUTE



A tribute to a great man

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of Tony Blunt MBE, a key figure in the creation of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Here, Gill Lacey, our longest-standing staff member, who has known Tony well since 1982, reflects with love on just how important Tony was, and is, to our charity...

As we begin celebrating Hearing Dogs' 40th anniversary this year, it's not possible to reflect on the history of our charity without acknowledging the incredible contribution made by a great man – Tony Blunt.

When Dr Bruce Fogle and Lady Beatrice Wright came up with their plan to help deaf people by training dogs, it was to Tony that they entrusted their vision. Tony was instrumental in setting up Hearing Dogs and driving our charity forward until his retirement in 2003. We have him to thank, alongside our many kind supporters, for the thousands of deaf people we are able to help today.

Tony had been a police officer for many years and was one of the first four officers chosen to pioneer the Oxford City Police dog section. It was his experience in training highly skilled dogs that led him to become involved in Hearing Dogs when it was launched as a three-year pilot scheme in 1982. I have many memories of the challenges we faced during those early years, but Tony inspired such confidence that I never worried we wouldn't get through them.

One of Tony's first tasks was to find the right dog to pioneer the work of a hearing dog. In January 1982, he accompanied Pat Riley, an American dog trainer who had been training hearing dogs in the USA, to a National Canine Defence League (now Dogs Trust) rescue centre in Newbury, Berkshire, in search of a dog.

There, they came across a gentle,

affectionate crossbreed with beautiful brown eyes. His inquisitive nose pushed its way into Tony's pockets and searched his hands for a treat. Tony and Pat instinctively knew he was very special. They had just found the UK's very first hearing dog trainee.

He was named Favour by his sponsor, an American insurance company, and began his new life with Tony – and what a life it would be!

Tony put his heart and soul into demonstrating the work of Hearing Dogs with Favour. They travelled thousands of miles together, giving talks and demonstrations nationwide, raising awareness, inspiring support and donations to fund the training of more life-changing hearing dogs.

Tony was a hugely important figure in getting Hearing Dogs off the ground from the very start. As the Charity and his team grew, Tony was made director general. Yet he was still the first to arrive at an event, roll up his sleeves, carry boxes or set up tents and always the last to leave once everything had been tidied away. He was a wonderful leader, loved and respected by staff, volunteers, partnerships, indeed anyone who met him. In 2002 he was awarded his MBE for services to deaf people.

By his retirement in 2003, Hearing Dogs had created over 800 partnerships and blossomed from just the two of us to a team of 99. Tony's passion, dedication and hard work gave the Charity an incredibly

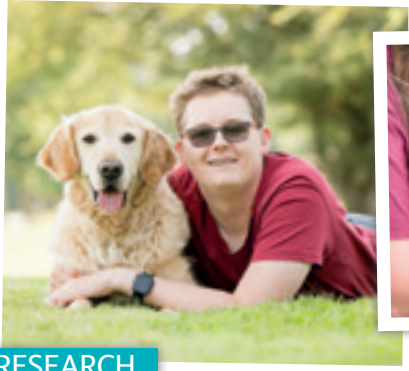
strong foundation – the very foundation on which it stands today, making it the best of its kind in the world.

Tony had a calm presence and treated everyone with respect. Tall and confident, he was a true gentleman, kind, honourable and dependable. He loved dogs and cared about people. He was able to recognise qualities in rescue dogs that others had failed to realise, and he treated them with kindness. He very much did the same with people. Even after his retirement in 2003, his focus very much remained on helping others. He would often call in at the Hearing Dogs centre to offer support, to see his friends and bring doughnuts!

“Tony dearly loved his Hearing Dogs family... and this love was returned in spades.”

We will remember Tony with great affection and admiration for his pioneering role in the story of Hearing Dogs. Above all, he is remembered as a loyal friend to so many of us as we continue his legacy – changing the lives of deaf people.

In tribute to Tony and his many fundamental contributions to Hearing Dogs, we will be sharing his full story in the autumn issue of *Favour*.



RESEARCH

Ground-breaking study shows hearing dogs significantly improve the lives of deaf people

A study by the University of York into the impact hearing dogs have on the lives of deaf people has found that they significantly improve wellbeing, mental health and independence and reduce social isolation and fearfulness.

The study is the first ever randomised controlled trial investigating the impact of hearing dogs on people's lives. It evaluated hearing dog partnerships created and supported by our charity. The study was funded by the National Institute for Health Research's School for Social Care Research.

More than 160 people with severe or profound hearing loss who had applied to the Charity for a hearing dog took part in the research.

The study showed that people who had received a hearing dog had significantly better mental well-being, were less dependent on others and had fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression compared to those in the study still waiting for a hearing dog. They were also significantly less likely to feel isolated and fearful, either in the home or when out and about. In addition, those with a hearing dog had used fewer NHS and social care services.

Professor Bryony Beresford, the study's Chief Investigator at the University of York, said: "We know that hearing loss can negatively affect many aspects of people's lives and, for people with severe hearing loss, hearing devices have limited impact. This means we need to know the best ways to support people as they live with hearing loss. This study provides, for the first time,

robust evidence on the positive and wide-ranging impacts hearing dogs can make on people's lives.

"This was a ground-breaking study. No-one has previously used a randomised control trial to evaluate the impacts of hearing dogs on people's lives, and within the world of assistance dogs more widely, trials are still incredibly rare. What this study has demonstrated is that this sort of research is possible. We would like to acknowledge the commitment of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People to ensuring the trial ran successfully."

Angie Platten, Director of Services at Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, said: "We see every day the difference hearing dogs make to deaf children and adults, but there was very little in the way of strong scientific research to evidence this before the University of York carried out their independent study. It has really shone a light on why our dogs are so important – they make life better for so many people who had previously struggled because of their deafness or hearing loss, particularly because many deaf people can feel very lonely and isolated.



Angie Platten

"This research is also really exciting as it could have wider implications in the way we measure the impacts of assistance dogs in the UK."

Graham, 31, from Wallingford in Oxfordshire, who has hearing dog Jovi, said: "Losing my hearing was scary. It made me feel unsafe, I couldn't follow conversations easily and I became more introverted and felt quite isolated. My hearing dog Jovi has changed all that. He alerts me to sounds and he's a huge part of my family. He's made me feel more accepting, and even proud, of my hearing loss. He improved my mental wellbeing enormously and I can't imagine my life without him. My wife Anna and I now have a little girl and it's comforting to know Jovi can alert me to a baby's cry and will add to the safety and security of our household."



Graham and Jovi

The paper, "Hearing dogs for people with severe and profound hearing loss: a wait-list design randomised controlled trial investigating their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness." is published in the journal, *Trials*.

For more information on the project visit york.ac.uk/spru/projects/pedrol/



TELEVISION

Lily and Orchid feature on BBC Children in Need

1 5-year-old Lily and her hearing dog Orchid featured in a special film aired by BBC Children in Need in November to highlight how important hearing dogs are to the deaf children they are partnered with.

Lily previously had hearing dog Thora, who completely transformed Lily's life – increasing her confidence, helping her feel less isolated and making her feel safe at night-time. Thora was Lily's best friend.

Lily had Thora for less than three years before Thora sadly passed away after being ill for a short time. Lily was absolutely devastated.

Things suddenly became incredibly hard for Lily again. She struggled to

sleep, felt exhausted and anxious, and she started losing the confidence Thora had helped her build. She also missed her best friend.

However, last year we had some good news for Lily – we had found another suitable dog for her! That dog was Orchid, a Cocker Spaniel. Orchid has continued Thora's legacy: transforming Lily's life and making her feel safe and happy.

The film on Children in Need, which provides funding to Hearing Dogs, told Lily's story and showed her meeting Orchid for the first time.

You can see the film on BBC Children in Need 2021: Live Show on BBC iPlayer, around 16:40 minutes in.

Diary dates



1. PAWS APPEAL

When: Launching just before Deaf Awareness Week (2-8 May), The Paws Appeal is a month of fundraising collections across the UK raising vital funds for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.



2. 40TH ANNIVERSARY

When: A busy summer of activity is being planned with events at The Grange, Beatrice Wright Centre and in the community.

3. SUMMER SHOW

When: 11 September at The Grange, Saunderton, Buckinghamshire.

4. CHRISTMAS MARKET

When: Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 November at The Grange, Saunderton, Buckinghamshire.

THANK YOU

Family-run bakery thanks volunteers in a delicious way

A family run, award-winning online bakery, Bumble and Goose, is kindly recognising the amazing contribution our volunteers make, by providing a complimentary box of Appreciation Gift Biscuits to our Volunteer of the Month every month throughout 2022.

Volunteer of the Month recognises one person each month who has gone above and beyond for our charity, showing professionalism, commitment, and big-heartedness.

Lynsey Bleakley, founder and CEO of Bumble and Goose said: "I wanted to help Hearing Dogs as I am so completely in awe of assistance dogs and the life changing work they do and the selflessness of volunteers who give up their time to support and enrich the lives of others. It's such a tiny thing that I'm doing in comparison with Hearing Dogs' volunteers who give so much of themselves."

Victoria Leedham, our head of volunteering, said: "We are so grateful



to Bumble and Goose for sponsoring our Volunteer of the Month award with a free box of their gorgeous Appreciation Gift Biscuits. Our wonderful volunteers are such an important part of the Hearing Dogs family, and this kind gesture means that our winning volunteer each month will get to enjoy some delicious baked goods as a thank you."

bumbleandgoose.co.uk

STAY IN TOUCH:  twitter.com/hearingdogs  facebook.com/hearingdogs  hearingdogs.org.uk

Can you help Ruby become a hearing dog?

£10
buys Ruby
a selection of
fun dog toys
and tasty
treats



Hi, I'm Ruby!



I love cuddles



...and toys

Today, Ruby is a cute puppy who likes tummy tickles. However, one day she'll become an amazing hearing dog, who will be her deaf partner's best friend, helping them practically and emotionally, day and night

M eet Ruby! She's certainly very pleased to meet you! She's an excited new puppy, whom we've named to celebrate forty years of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

She's a typical Cocker Spaniel – bright, affectionate, ears everywhere and seems to operate via an on/off button, either full-steam ahead or snoozing soundly.

One day she'll help a deaf person to reconnect with the world around them. This could be their first furry friend, or even a successor dog, continuing our commitment to a lifetime of support.

Right now however, for her first year, she's going to live with a volunteer puppy trainer

who will make sure she's happy and healthy.

They'll take her from the first cues – sit, wait, down – through to advanced routines like walking nicely on her lead ('heelwork'), returning when called ('recall') and being a well-behaved girl in public places such as trains or cafés ('settling').

They'll also gently introduce her to the wider world, taking her on walks, visiting parks, or even going on holiday together. This is all so that Ruby learns that new experiences are fun. She'll be a confident Cocker Spaniel!

Then, with that foundation in place, she'll acquire the skill that sets our dogs apart: how to alert deaf people to sounds, called 'soundwork'.

It begins with Ruby learning to nudge something with her nose – a post-it, a hand, a toy – and associate that with a sound, such as a clicker.

The full sequence eventually comes together: Ruby hears a sound such as the doorbell; she finds the trainer; she gives them a nudge with her nose; the trainer asks "What is it?" with their hands out; and Ruby leads them to it. It's so impressive to witness, and remains so even after 40 years.

Then, when she's matched with a deaf person, Ruby will help them practically, every day, in so many different ways. She'll give them nose nudges, for example if the baby cries, or the doorbell rings, or

£20

provides a year's supply of worming tablets, keeping Ruby happy and healthy

£30

fits her with a smart burgundy Hearing Dogs coat

£80

buys a puppy starter pack including a bed, toys, lead and training aids

£150

gives Ruby a dog grooming kit to keep her looking lovely

£350

buys Ruby food for an entire year – an incredibly kind gift indeed



I love toys



I really love toys



...and sleeping, so I can dream about helping a deaf person, and also about toys

YOU CAN HELP RUBY CHANGE A LIFE



With your help, Ruby will become a life-changing hearing dog. Will she become a child's hearing dog? Will she become someone's second, third or even fourth hearing dog? Or will she become someone's very first hearing dog? Her exciting journey is just beginning, and with your help a deaf person's life will be changed forever.

How to donate

🐾 If this magazine has been mailed to you, please use the donation form enclosed

🐾 Write a cheque to Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and post to: **Freepost RSGX-LSRG-UCGH, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, The Grange, Wycombe Road, Saunderton, Princes Risborough, HP27 9NS**

🐾 Donate online at hearingdogs.org.uk/ruby

the mobile phone text alert sounds. She might even jump on their bed when the alarm clock goes (it's a wonderful way to start the day!).

As importantly, she will also help them emotionally. If we've learned one thing over the years, it's that a lot of deaf people can feel very isolated. Sometimes, interacting with the world can just become too tiring or frustrating, and they withdraw. A happy hearing dog gets them out and about again, helping them renew old friendships and build new ones.

“Ruby will help her deaf partner practically, every day, in many different ways”

And you just have to look into a dog's eyes to feel the love that needs no words. This will always be a universal truth, for the next 40 years and beyond.

Life will also get easier through Ruby's burgundy Hearing Dogs coat, which will signal that Ruby is with a deaf person. This will be a profound change, turning frustration into friendly smiles and help.

So, as you can see, Ruby's journey starts with a small puppy and ends with a deaf person's life transformed, through the kindness of people like you. We can't wait to see how her journey pans out. Will she ever get the hang of her ears? Will she become a soundwork superstar? Will she become a child's hearing dog? Or someone's successor dog? With your support, she will.

We'll be updating Favour readers on her progress, so if you'd like to feel part of this, any donation you can give, however large or small, would be extremely welcome. Thank you. 🐾

Tailor-made training

Every person with hearing loss has different needs and lifestyles, so a great deal of our dogs' training is bespoke to the needs of individuals. This helps us to create long-lasting partnerships that transform lives

Animal-friendly

No matter how happy our hearing dogs are around humans and other dogs, they also need to feel comfortable around other animals. A refreshing walk in the countryside could be ruined if a dog gets worried when they see a sheep or a horse. Or, imagine if we partnered a hearing dog with someone who owns a cat, or keeps rabbits, and they really just do not get along.

This is why it's incredibly important for puppies to learn, through gentle and positive experiences (and lots of rewards), that other animals are not threatening, nor are they toys. Just leave them be, and all will be well.

For example Honey – who was a sponsor puppy, with training paid for by very kind supporters – was partnered with Katharine, who has six cats! As Katharine explains: "One cat, called Barah, befriended Honey with lots of kisses and now they groom each other. The fact that Honey's tongue covers Barah's whole face hasn't dampened their friendship." Honey's comfort around cats is due to having positive introductions to cats.



The truth about cats and dogs, and rabbits

Photos: Cats and dogs supplied by volunteer Zoe. Honey and post-it note supplied by Honey's deaf partner Katharine. All professional photos by Paul Wilkinson



Bringing up baby

A baby's particularly piercing cry is meant to grab our attention. This is why it can be especially worrying for people with hearing loss, if they can't hear their children in distress. We train our dogs to respond to a baby's cry as a bespoke alert, so that they can tell deaf mums or dads what is going on.

This can even encourage deaf people who want to start a new family. For example, hearing dog Mene helped Amy when she wanted to have children, but realised she would need support. She now has three children, and as Amy says, "Mene has allowed us to be a happy family that can function in a hearing world."

Our dogs also help families through the 'pouch' system. It can be ineffective shouting across the house to gain a deaf

child's attention. Instead, simply write a message, pop it in a pouch, and ask the dog to find the child! At the other end, the clever dog gets the child's attention, and the message is delivered.

A lot of our child partners love this alert, as it strengthens the bond between them and their hearing dog.



Slow and steady

We train all our dogs to walk nicely on their leads, which we call 'heelwork'. Sometimes however, they really need to major on this skill, if their deaf partner uses a mobility scooter or wheelchair, or relies on crutches or other mobility aids.

It's important that our dogs are happy to walk calmly next to a mobility scooter or wheelchair, or any other mobility aid, without getting too excited or inquisitive. We gently introduce a number of our dogs to these things and they become just another part of daily life.

It's incredible to see how our dogs behave after this training – just patiently walking alongside, wherever their partner wants to go, happily keeping them company. This makes the world of difference to deaf people who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids.



Made to measure

We don't stop there. In fact, we don't stop at all, until we're sure we've covered everything a deaf person might need.

For example, Katharine, whom we mentioned earlier, ran her own soft furnishings business when she became deaf very suddenly. She could continue working but realised that, if she was in the workshop, and someone came into the showroom, she wouldn't know, even when the doorbell rang.

So, we taught Honey that the doorbell was her cue to tell Katharine by nudging a pink post-it on her desk. It's a unique alert that only Honey is trained to do, and it makes Katharine much more relaxed, especially when she's on her own.

There are many more examples of tailor-made training. This training helps us to ensure that your support makes an even more genuine, profound difference to the lives of deaf people. 🐾



➡ More on training

Find out more about how we train and care for our hearing dog puppies at hearingdogs.org.uk/training

“HARRIS HAS GIVEN ME BACK MY SMILE”



When Shmita was just six years old she experienced a traumatic event that would change her life. It took away her smile and left her feeling sad, lonely and unable to communicate

Amidst a backdrop of political unrest in Uganda, the country that Shmita and her family called home, tensions regularly spilled over into gunfire on the streets. One day, in the melee of an angry crowd, Shmita became separated from her sister. Terrified, as soon as she caught sight of her, Shmita ran across the road in front of a speeding vehicle.

Miraculously, Shmita appeared unhurt but was taken to hospital as a precaution: “I don’t remember much about what happened as I was in shock,” she explains. “The hospital said I was okay and sent me home, but a few days later my family noticed I wasn’t hearing them. The doctor said it was probably post traumatic shock, from the accident. Over the weeks my hearing just got worse. It was very upsetting. Support for people with disabilities was very limited. We just managed as best we could.”

Shmita spent six more years attending school but receiving little education. “I went to a regular school in Uganda and as the only deaf child it was really tough. I got picked on by the other kids and I couldn’t hear the teachers.



**“IT WASN’T
UNTIL WE
CAME TO THE
UK THAT I WAS
ABLE TO GET ANY
SUPPORT FOR MY
DEAFNESS”**



Quick facts

ACUTE EMOTIONAL TRAUMA AND HEARING LOSS

When picturing a traumatic event, whether it be a road accident, warfare, or building collapse, it's clear that damaging noise levels and emotional and physical trauma often occur in unison. This has led to difficulties in establishing a clear causal link between emotional trauma alone and hearing loss.

There are anecdotal accounts of hearing loss in people who have experienced emotional trauma. For example, individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder, who have lived in war zones, may also have hearing loss. However, whereas exposure to damaging noise levels would have played a role, we cannot establish whether intense emotional trauma may have also contributed.

There's a clear mechanism through which a traumatic event could cause hearing loss. The hair cells of the inner ear need good circulation to translate sound waves into electrical impulses. When people experience stress, a spike in adrenaline diverts blood flow to where it is most needed to aid in the fight or flight response.

Some researchers believe that this diversion of blood flow could lead to poor blood circulation in the inner ear cells, which could cause cell damage or cell death in extreme cases. Cell death of the inner ear cells is an established cause of sudden onset sensorineural hearing loss.

Tinnitus, (distorted sound, and hyperacusis (sound sensitivity) are established symptoms in individuals with anxiety and long-term stress. The evidence supporting a link between these long-term negative emotional states and hearing loss, is a good starting point from which to investigate further the link between acute emotional trauma and hearing loss. Establishing this link could ensure that those who experience traumatic events can receive the care they need during the critical period following the incident.

If you have questions about your hearing, or need any help, contact our Helpdesk at hearinglink.org/helpdesk

"It wasn't until we came to the UK that I was able to get any support for my deafness. Between the ages of six and 12 my world had been silent, lonely and full of anxiety. My father was so grateful to have access to so much support for me. I felt very fortunate to be given hearing aids, to learn sign language and get an education, which enabled me to get a job."

A new set of struggles

When she married, Shmita moved to a new area. The newly-weds started a family but, without friends or family close by, Shmita felt very much alone throughout her pregnancy. "Trisha was my first child and that was quite an experience," she explains. "My sister came with me to every scan and appointment as there was no communication support offered otherwise. After Trisha was born, I held her all the time, so I'd know if she was crying or needed feeding or changing. I just had to learn how to do things on my own. It was a very lonely and anxious time.

"When my second child Devika came along, Trisha was three – old enough to understand that I couldn't hear important sounds – so she would let me know if Devika was crying. I came to rely on my daughters a lot. When they went away to university I was living on my own and the

loneliness hit me very hard again. That's when I applied for a hearing dog."


Shmita the 'smiling girl'

"Harris is amazing. The house no longer feels empty. The room lights up with Harris beside me and that makes me feel really, really, happy. I had been depressed and lonely for most of my life. Even after a cochlear implant five years ago, the feeling of loneliness was still there. I'm never lonely now. Harris also tells me about things I can't hear with the implant, like when the microwave pings or someone is at the door or if the smoke alarm goes. I feel I've got that safety net with me all the time."

Let's leave the final words to Shmita's daughter Trisha, who has helped her so much. "The meaning of Mum's name, Shmita, is 'smiling girl'. Mum smiles all the time now.

"Before, she would never have gone out by herself. Now, she takes Harris on the bus with her! He's opened up so many new experiences for her.

"You can just see the happiness in her face. She now feels able to embrace life and be herself. She meets so many people when they're out and about. People just come up to ask about Harris and he's given her the confidence to feel able to communicate with anyone.

"Mum suffered from depression for so many years because of her deafness. It took away her smile and that was so sad. Harris has restored Mum's smile and that means so much to the whole family." 

 **You may have seen Shmita bravely share her story in the BBC's Lifeline Appeal – a monthly televised charity appeal that we were fortunate enough to be chosen for in February. If you missed Shmita talking about her experience with hearing loss and how Harris changed everything for her, you can catch up on the 10-minute film on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/HearingDogs1**



Puppy sponsorship: twenty years of kindness

From the very early days, our puppy sponsorship scheme has grown to become a huge success. Here's a look at some of our sponsor dogs from right at the beginning to now, in all their glorious sizes, shapes, colours, and roles

We launched the Hearing Dog Friends regular giving scheme in 2004, with the help of Phillip Schofield. Seven years later it became the Puppy Sponsor scheme, this time launched by Ben Fogle, son of co-founder Dr Bruce Fogle and Hearing Dogs Patron.



Through this, people very kindly donate to a puppy's training and in return, we update them on the puppy's progress. So, as well as a vital part of our fundraising, we're able to show them the entire training journey, from cute, cuddly puppy right through to amazing hearing dog. Everyone wins!

Some sponsor puppies went on to help deaf children. Some help deaf adults. Some now represent the Charity in different ways, or are providing the next generation of hearing dogs. Here's just a small selection – a pick and mix of sweet sponsor puppies!

Sara and Spotty →

Spotty was our very first Hearing Dog Friend, and helped her partner Sara until she very sadly died in 2019.

Sara describes how Spotty helped her: "Spotty alerted me to all sorts of sounds – the fire alarm, doorbell, cooker timer, phone and door knock. At the time I was living as staff in a residential school, so if the fire alarm went off in the night she would wake me, then help me wake the residential students to evacuate them. She was so clever.

"She also offered tremendous emotional support. She seemed to know if someone was feeling down and sit by them.

"Spotty was practically the perfect hearing dog. I was so very grateful for her sponsors' kindness."



← Pippa and Specks

Pippa was one of our earliest sponsors, and supported hearing dog Specks.

She tells us: "I first saw a hearing dog in its coat on the bus to work one morning. I Googled hearing dogs that afternoon and immediately became a sponsor.

"The stories I've read over the years clearly show that hearing dogs help their owners to live a happier life. I definitely feel like I'm contributing to helping others. In recent years with access to videos and photos online, it's become much easier to feel more connected to my puppies.

"My last puppy to graduate was Luca. When I read the final Pupdate and how much difference he's already made to his partner's life, it brought tears to my eyes."



New sponsor pup Cooper is off to puppy class!



Verity and Benjy

You may remember Verity from the last issue of Favour: she swam the Channel, becoming not only the first deaf woman to do so, but raising over £7,600 for Hearing Dogs.

Verity had Benjy, one of our first sponsored hearing dogs. Very sadly Benjy died in September 2021, but his great work continues in successor dog Bow.

"Benjy was just so good at everything," says Verity. "He was brilliant at the fire alarm alert: he once did it during a Skype call, when a colleague's centre was testing their alarm. It was chaos as it kept blaring through our speakers, and each time Benjy insisted on alerting me!"

"Emotionally, Bow is also brilliant. I work as a counsellor with military veterans who have PTSD. He's so calm in groups: our veterans say they are calm because he is."

Hebe the Hearing Dogs mum... ➡

Hebe was a superstar at her training and, as she grew, it became clear that she had all the attributes we want in our future generations – intelligence, loyalty, and an eagerness to learn in equal measure!

This made Hebe a great choice for a Hearing Dogs mum. Now her sponsors can proudly say that she's helping not just one deaf person, but many.

Volunteer Fiona and her husband Rob have welcomed Hebe into their home. Fiona tells us: "It's very rewarding looking after Hebe as we have the pleasure of raising litters of adorable puppies. We get lots of puppy cuddles with the knowledge that those pups will grow up to change deaf people's lives."



... and her sponsored son Leo!

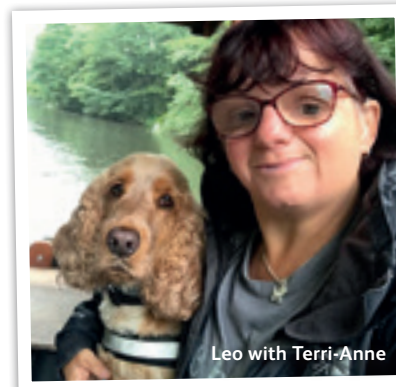
Hebe has already passed on her 'super genes'! Sponsor pup Leo was in her first litter, again looked after by Fiona and Rob.

Leo replaced Terri-Anne's first hearing dog, called Billy. When Billy died, she realised how much he'd helped her to be active and independent.

"Billy changed my life," she says. "He got me out walking and I made many new friends at the park. I hadn't noticed how lonely I'd been feeling."

Today, Leo is helping Terri-Anne again: "I have a very active life – boating, long-distance walking, horse riding and so on. He loves it all, and I feel confident with him by my side."

This continuity is captured beautifully by Terri-Anne's closing words: "Billy's favourite place was the beach, with the fresh sea air. Now, it is Leo's favourite place too."



DID YOU KNOW?

We train four breeds to become hearing dogs – Labradors, Cocker Spaniels, Miniature Poodles and Cockapoos. Over our 40-year history we have found that these breeds have all the traits that make for fantastic hearing dogs. They are friendly, affectionate, energetic, keen to learn and love being around people. All these traits are really important in a hearing dog.

Honey

Another one of our sponsor puppies, Honey, a lovely yellow Lab, received some unusual training which you can read about on page 11.

Hollie and Otto

While we want the very best outcomes for our sponsors, our dogs' wellbeing is the top priority. When sponsor puppy Otto's Inflammatory Bowel Disease made training challenging for him, we knew what he would excel at: being a Charity Support dog.

This means Otto is an ambassador at our training centre and public events, and acts as a 'mentor' to hearing pups in training. It's an important role. Otto was also able to continue living with his trainer Hollie, who adored him.

Today, he's doing great. Hollie tells us: "Otto enjoys the attention when he proudly wears his burgundy Ambassador uniform. Lots of people stop to ask about him and what Hearing Dogs does, and he gets plenty of friendly smiles!"



Gordon

Gordon is one of our current sponsor puppies, and the great news is that he's just completed his soundwork! This is the name we give to our dogs' amazing ability to respond to sounds.

Gordon started by learning to nudge an object with his nose. Then, gradually, he built on that so that now, if he hears a sound such as the doorbell, or cooker timer he'll go to his trainer, nudge them with his nose, they'll say 'What is

it?' and he'll lead them straight to it. This 'soundwork' is the practical way in which Gordon will help his eventual deaf partner, as well as being their faithful furry friend.

It's a big step for little Gordon, but he's taken it in his stride.

Gordon lives with, and is trained by, a family with lots of children. We will consider this when finding a suitable deaf partner because he would make a great child's hearing dog or fit into family life really well.



Lily



Cooper



Teddy



SPONSOR A PUPPY TODAY

From just £3 a month, you could help another deaf person to leave loneliness behind by sponsoring little Spaniel Lily, cheeky Cockapoo Teddy or Cooper the curious Labrador, either for yourself, or as a gift for someone special.

You'll receive a fabulous welcome pack, plus regular updates on your puppy's progress and exclusive access to the online Puppy Pen. Just visit hearingdogs.org.uk/sponsor



“Thanks to Victor, my life continues to expand”

Keith suffers from otosclerosis, a condition that causes abnormal bone growth in the ear and often causes hearing loss. After retirement, he found interacting with people increasingly difficult, but hearing dog Victor has helped him overcome this. Today, Keith beams.

“Victor is incredible,” he says. “He wakes me up every morning – lots of nose-nudges and affectionate licks! Then we go for a walk. He plays with his doggy pals, while I chat with my friends. They know I’m deaf, so they speak clearly for me.”

But it wasn’t always like this.

“My hearing loss didn’t affect me at school or work,” Keith tells us. “I worked as a jockey and then mainly outdoors in the building trade, where people

communicated by shouting and hand gestures, so I got by.”

Many deaf people tell us they rely on cues, such as seeing people’s mouths when they’re talking, or their facial expressions. Like Keith, they ‘get by’. But when circumstances change, these coping mechanisms can stop working.

So when Keith retired, and his deafness worsened, he struggled. He explains: “I’d always been around people who knew I was deaf, in places where it wasn’t too much of a drawback. But when I retired, that all disappeared.

“If I went out for a walk and bumped into someone I didn’t know, all I could do was say ‘hello’. It became frustrating, and so I stayed indoors to avoid these kinds of situations.”

His wife Jayne noticed this: “Keith was starting to feel really lonely. He could get quite wound up about it. I worried about him, especially when I wasn’t around.”

Then, one day, Keith saw a hearing dog in a supermarket.

“I was intrigued,” he says. “I realised that I might benefit too. When I approached Hearing Dogs, I knew I needed a cheeky dog, one that would be happy to meet people.”

We take a lot of time and thought over how we match deaf people with hearing dogs. With Keith, we could see that Victor – alert, energetic, mischievous but charming with it – might be perfect.

That was four years ago. How have things worked out?

Keith and Jayne both break into smiles. “He’s an incredible boy,” says Keith. Jayne agrees: “We adore him unconditionally.”

“It’s a complete change,” says Keith. “People approach me because they see Victor’s burgundy coat and are genuinely interested. When I tell them how he helps me, they become so accommodating: they’ll repeat what they’ve said or talk louder if necessary.”

“My life continues to expand,” he tells us. “I feel confident going anywhere, now that I’ve been blessed with Victor. I am overwhelmed with him. He has made a huge difference to my life.” 🐾

➔ **More real-life stories**




Read more inspirational stories at hearingdogs.org.uk/stories

Victor as a puppy



Fundraising partners

WAYS TO HELP

-  make us your charity of the year
-  name one of our puppies
-  payroll giving

A huge thank you goes out to our corporate supporters who have helped us to continue training our amazing dogs and changing the lives of deaf people, especially over the past two years

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the organisations who fundraise and support our work helping us to change the lives of deaf people throughout the UK. From sponsoring one of our gorgeous puppies, to making a monthly donation, to fundraising at your own events, it means so much to us and we wanted to highlight a few of our supporters.

HIDDEN HEARING

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People are Hidden Hearing's chosen charity, and we are so thrilled to have them on board with us. They have already made a large donation towards our work whilst sponsoring their named puppy, Luna! Throughout summer, they also toured around the UK with the National Campaign for Better Hearing, raising awareness of our work, and raising more vital funds!



DAF TRUCKS

DAF Trucks have long been supporters of Hearing Dogs and we were so pleased when they contacted us again to let us know they had raised more than £4,000 at Truckfest events over the summer. We thank them for thinking of us and their continued support over the years!



HEDSOR HOUSE

With dog attendance at weddings becoming increasingly popular, the beautiful wedding venue Hedsor House, in Taplow, Buckinghamshire, is supporting our work by making a donation when one of their customers books for their dog to join their special day. We are so grateful for their support and what a wonderful way to celebrate our work!



HYPNOS

Located close to our site in Buckinghamshire, Hypnos provided a generous discount for multiple mattresses to help with the refurbishment of our onsite accommodation for deaf partners and applicants. We're so grateful for their support!



LAKESHORE LEISURE GROUP

We're delighted that Lakeshore Leisure Group, who offer UK holiday accommodation, have chosen to support Hearing Dogs by donating £5 for every pet booking they take! Their holiday accommodation is pet friendly and they are also offering the opportunity for guests to match their £5 donation, meaning even more money raised to help support our work.



THANK YOU ALSO TO...

-  Specsavers
-  Paperchase
-  Amazon Smile
-  iLECSYS
-  Omlet
-  Ivy & Duke
-  All Pet Solutions
-  Window Film Company
-  Online Hearing Care

Think you can help?

If you know an organisation that may be able to help us, please get in touch by emailing jo.wengler@hearingdogs.org.uk or call **01844 340740** to start a discussion.

Pets at Home

We are absolutely delighted to share the exciting news that Pets at Home colleagues have voted for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People to be their chosen charity for their Summer Fundraising Appeal 2022!

**pets
at home**

The Summer Fundraising Appeal will take place across Pets at Home stores in the month of July, and we are so excited for this partnership. Money raised throughout the month will go towards supporting our work and this partnership will also help to raise crucial awareness of Hearing Dogs across the UK.

Amy Wilson, Fundraising Manager at Pets at Home Foundation, says: “We had a large number of charities who applied to be the beneficiary charity of the Summer Fundraising Appeal. Hearing Dogs for

Deaf People really impressed us with their commitment and enthusiasm for the work they undertake. This clearly resonated with our colleagues, who voted to select them as our partner for the appeal. We are so excited to be able to help Hearing Dogs celebrate 40 years of incredible work. Over the next few months we will be working together to deliver the best Summer Fundraising Appeal ever – helping to raise as much money as we can to support the partnerships that Hearing Dogs creates between amazing hearing dogs and deaf

people ... changing lives forever.”

There were lots of stages in the application process before it went to a colleague vote, and we want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers who supported us along the way – we couldn't have done it without you all!

And another massive thank you goes to all the Pets at Home colleagues who very kindly voted for our charity. You will all make such a difference to the lives of deaf children and adults throughout the UK!



Kes (left) and Tiggy (below) at their local Pets at Home stores



Raise funds, and smiles, with a fun challenge

A huge thank you goes out to all of you who have taken on a fundraising challenge over the last year, to raise money and change deaf people's lives

In the past year, lots of you have taken on a fun challenge to help deaf people.

From baking cakes to walking or running hundreds of miles, you have done all manner of amazing things to raise funds.

To underline this point, a fantastic 1,850 of you took on a challenge last year. You raised a whopping £229,000 which means more hearing dogs can be trained, and more personalised services can be provided to support people with hearing loss. Thank you.

Looking back with pride

The elephant in the room was of course the continued pandemic. We put our fundraisers' health and safety at the top of our list, and the results speak for themselves.

Last year started with The 28 Challenge in February. The challenge was simply to take the number 28 and be creative with it. There were people running 28 miles, producing 28 drawings of their hearing dog, or baking 28 cakes. And don't worry, we've already planned to call it

The 29 Challenge when we reach 2024!

The Facebook Barking Bake-off took place throughout October with the challenge being to bake sweet treats, savoury suppers, dog biscuits and showstoppers. There were no soggy bottoms on display here and you raised £13,128.92 perfectly at gas mark 5.

The year came to a close with the Santa Paws Festive Fun Run. While some of us preferred to indulge in sweet treats and showstoppers, others got their trainers on and undertook a running, jogging or walking challenge, many with their canine



companions, to raise nearly £25,000.

Throughout the year, our Great British Dog Walks proved extremely popular. They were clearly a very welcome opportunity for people to get out and about with their furry friends, walking through some of the most beautiful Great British countryside. All told, we had 2,406 attendees, and you raised £47,824.20.

To all who helped, thank you so very, very much. And if you'd like to fundraise this year, here are some events and ideas.



Looking forward to fun

Fingers crossed, 2022 will see us able to ramp up our community events again. Here's a taster, but please visit our website at hearingdogs.org.uk/support for more information, including any last-minute changes.

The Great British Dog Walk

We will be holding 14 Great British Dog Walks again this autumn, at beautiful locations across the UK, and there is also a virtual walk that you can do anywhere you like. Share your photos on our community Facebook Group, and help raise smiles as well as funds. You'll be able to find your nearest walk at greatbritishdogwalk.org from June onwards.

The Paws Appeal

Our Paws Appeal is good old-fashioned fundraising with collection buckets. Launching at the start of Deaf Awareness Week (2-8 May) and running throughout the month, we're aiming for one hundred bucket collections, to raise

funds and awareness of deafness and hearing loss.

If you know of a suitable venue that might allow us to hold a collection, or if you would be willing to spare a couple of hours by doing a collection in your local area, please email fundraising@hearingdogs.org.uk. Just two hours will make a huge difference.

Morecambe Bay Walk

For those of you in the Morecambe Bay area, we're planning a day's walk there on Saturday 23 July. You'll cross – as in, walk, splash and even wade – from Arnside to Grange-over-Sands with a guide, who will help you to enjoy in safety the bay's stunning beauty. Entry costs £20 for adults, £10 for children and £1 for dogs (assistance dogs are free). We're also encouraging participants to be sponsored this year.



The Great North Run

If longer distance running is more your thing, the 2022 Great North Run will take place on Sunday 11th September. We have a limited number of guaranteed places in this iconic event. It's the world's greatest half-marathon, with over 57,000 people already planning to run it this year. As you can read from Martin (right), it's a fantastic experience.

For more information or to apply for a place with us in 2022, visit hearingdogs.org.uk/support or email gemma.shaw-dunn@hearingdogs.org.uk. Don't wait, get in touch and secure your place today! 🐾



In 2021, the 40th Great North Run saw over 35 runners take part in support of Hearing Dogs. Martin, who is partnered with hearing dog Inca and ran his first Great North Run last year, said:

"As a life-long profoundly deaf person who has benefitted from a hearing dog for two years, I know what a difference my canine companion, Inca, makes. I wanted to give something back to help the Charity help others.

"At the Great North Run there were lots of other runners raising funds for Hearing Dogs and it was great to meet up with some of them. It was great to wear the Hearing Dogs colours and to publicise the Charity to people.

"The Great North Run was a magical experience. The smiling faces. The support. Not easy, but then again when was something worthwhile ever easy?"



If you are up for a challenge in 2022 that will change deaf people's lives, please visit hearingdogs.org.uk/support and take a look at what you could do. Thank you.

“HAVING A HEARING DOG MEANS EVERYTHING TO ME”



Janice out and about with Marti (left) and Humphrey (right)

For 28 years Janice has valued the support of having a hearing dog. Now, having just received her fourth dog, Janice reflects on the huge difference they have made to her life

Janice lost almost all her hearing overnight when seven months pregnant with her second child Sarah in November 1983.

“By the time Sarah was born in January of the following year, my hearing loss had caused a lot of problems emotionally (from the grief and shock of my hearing being gone for good) and practically, with being a mum to a son of six years, Martin, and a new baby, and with my family only knowing me as a hearing person.

“I felt very isolated. It affected my daily life greatly. For instance I would have to carry my baby daughter’s carrycot everywhere so I could see if she cried as I couldn’t hear her.

Night-time was particularly frightening and extremely hard as worried I would not wake up to her crying. ”

“Then I was partnered with my first hearing dog, Dolly. She transformed life for me. She gave me back my confidence. Dolly was by my side for nine years,

alerting me to sounds and giving me so much love and companionship. When I lost her, I felt heartbroken and lost.

“When I got my next hearing dog, Josie, she was very different to Dolly but equally wonderful. Unfortunately, I only had her for seven years when she passed away after not fully recovering from a complicated hip operation. I was devastated. My confidence plummeted again.

Long-term support

“The time in between hearing dogs is very traumatic. These amazing dogs build up your character just being by your side 24/7, making you feel safe by alerting you to important sounds and providing company and love. I didn’t feel whole without my hearing dogs. I was living alone when Josie died and felt very isolated again.

“I waited two years for Marti, but he was definitely worth the wait. When he came to me he changed my life overnight. He has been an exceptional dog. He not only rescued me from loneliness, Marti quite literally saved my life when a fire ripped through my kitchen, setting off the fire alarm. Without Marti I would never have gotten out in time. He’s my hero.

“Last year, when Marti retired, I felt a deep sadness come over me. For 12 years he had been such an exceptional hearing dog. When he was no longer able to work or come out and about with me everywhere, it was like going back to

“My hearing dogs have been so important to me over the past three decades”



Janice with new hearing dog Humphrey (left) and retired hearing dog Marti (right)

before I had Dolly, back to the hardness of living life with hearing loss. But it was even more difficult, as people were having to wear masks because of the pandemic, so I could no longer read their lips when they spoke to me. The good thing is my amazing Marti was still with me at home. Comforting me and showing me lots of love. I love him dearly, I always will."

Another life-changer

Just a few weeks ago, Jan was partnered with her fourth hearing dog, Humphrey. She says: "When I saw Humphrey for the first time I was overcome with tears of pure joy and relief. I'd lost all my confidence going out and not having Marti by my side and suddenly I felt all that anxiety drain away. Humphrey is a real sweetheart. He has restored my confidence in public places and, like Marti, his soundwork is

exceptional. I'm over the moon. Having Humphrey is a godsend. Humphrey and Marti sit like bookends either side of me and have become best buddies – even the cats are warming to their new housemate!

"I am so grateful to all the kind people who support and volunteer for Hearing Dogs. You have made a difference to my life in huge ways. Each of my hearing dogs has opened doors for me as a person to grow in confidence, to feel able to tackle things better in daily life. Their companionship, their love and devotion is truly wonderful. They are just so important to my interaction with other people.

"Deafness is no longer invisible when you have your hearing dog beside you. With their uniform on they communicate my hearing loss in such a positive way and that breaks down so many barriers. People are more interested and more

considerate towards me. It's quite an emotional thing for me to put into words just how much this means.

"My hearing dogs have been so important to me over the past three decades. Not only for alerting me to the vital sounds that I don't hear, but for their companionship and the unconditional love that they give. They never get impatient with you because you can't hear or make you feel embarrassed or a nuisance. Having a hearing dog just means everything to me."

More real-life stories

To read more inspiring stories about the differences our dogs make to the lives of deaf people, visit our website hearingdogs.org.uk/stories

Best of friends

today, tomorrow, and always

It is wonderful when long-lasting friendships form through our community. They're the reason why we really do believe in the Hearing Dogs 'family'. Here, three sets of 'besties' talk about how they met, what makes their friendship special, and what their friendship means to them

At Hearing Dogs, we have such a tightly-knit community that we often describe it as a 'family'. People are supportive, encouraging, sympathetic... and often share really terrible jokes, just like in real families.

The bond that can form between volunteer puppy trainers and the deaf people who have a hearing dog can be especially strong. There are often tears as a hearing dog leaves the volunteer home to start a fresh new life with a deaf person –

much like the feeling of children leaving home. So it really is wonderful – magical, even – when the volunteer and deaf partner of a dog strike up a friendship.

Rachel, Mandy and Malcolm

Rachel, who is partnered with hearing dog Archer, has become friends with Malcolm and Mandy, two of the volunteers who helped train and care for Archer during his puppy training.

"I got in contact with Malcolm by posting on the volunteer Facebook group," Rachel explains. "Malcolm and his partner Cindy very kindly sent me Archer's puppy photos. It was lovely to see how he'd developed.

"I chat with Malcolm via Facebook, about football and how our teams are getting on (I'm a big Brighton and Hove Albion fan and Malcolm supports Arsenal). We also share pictures of our dogs, and we recently all met up for a walk and a coffee, which was really lovely."

Malcolm and Cindy share Rachel's interest in Archer's life. "It's been wonderful to follow Archer's journey," says Malcolm. "We have made lots of new friends through Hearing Dogs. Meeting

“We have made lots of new friends through Hearing Dogs. Meeting Rachel and seeing Archer again has been the icing on the cake.”



Main photo by Paul Wilkinson, other photos supplied by Hearing Dogs volunteers

Rachel and seeing Archer again has been the icing on the cake. Our friendship with Rachel is really special."

Back to Rachel: "I first contacted Mandy the day I got Archer to say he had arrived safely, and to thank her for the beautiful photo book that she had included."

"We're still in daily contact, putting the world to rights, watching Bake Off together via WhatsApp and exchanging family photos. I can't imagine life without her now."

Over to Mandy: "When I added my email address to the photo book, asking if Archers' partner would be happy to let me know how he was getting on, I never in a million years expected to make such a good friend. At my age I thought it was statistically impossible to make new friends. It has been incredible to have Rach in my life and I am grateful every day."



Malcolm, Cindy, Rachel, Archer, Mandy and friends at The Grange



Lynn and Jane

When Jane was partnered with hearing dog Duncan, Volunteer Puppy Trainer Lynn sent her a photo book showing his training journey. In return, Jane then sent Lynn a book of his first year with her as a hearing dog. In 2011, Lynn's trainer Karen arranged a meeting between them, and they've been firm friends ever since.

"I have learned so much from Jane," Lynn tells us. "She's helped me understand what life is like for deaf people. It is also a pleasure to see my first ever puppy enabling Jane to enjoy new experiences. She's taken part in fundraising and even learned how to sail, which she wouldn't have had the confidence to do without Duncan by her side."

Jane has also learned from Lynn: "I've seen the hard work involved in training the puppies and appreciate every minute of it. We usually meet at least once a month, for a walk together or a coffee somewhere. We also email each other every fortnight."

Wendy and Peggy

Wendy has hearing dog Jinga, who was trained by volunteer Peggy.

"Wendy and I became friends gradually via email at first," Peggy tells us. "Then finally we met up at a garden centre about eight years ago. The rest is history!"

"We enjoy each other's company, have lots of fun and laughter when we see each other. I value the time we spend together."

"When I joined Hearing Dogs I was thinking about the puppies and didn't think about making friends, but I have made some wonderful friends. It is the best sociable 'hobby'! We are so fortunate to have had the privilege to call Wendy our friend and follow her and Jinga's journey together."

Wendy feels the same way about Peggy: "Since we met, it is like we have known one another forever. We speak often and she has a great sense of humour – her anecdotes can leave me in fits of giggles. We holiday together and she provides holiday cover for Jinga, although we live more than 200 miles apart."

"If I were given the choice between having my hearing back and losing my friendship with Peggy, I would rather keep Peggy. It is a privilege to have met her and her husband Mick. I can't thank them enough for what they have done for me, and here's to many more years of friendship."

If you would like to volunteer please visit hearingdogs.org.uk/volunteer 🐾



The website that could change your life

Anyone experiencing changes in their hearing will have questions as they try to understand what might be happening, and our Hearing Link Services website could well provide the answer...

Our Hearing Link Services website receives hundreds of thousands of visitors each year and is a valuable source of useful information and advice on everything related to hearing and hearing loss. From tips provided by people with hearing loss, to expert guidance and support from audiology volunteers, there is something for anyone with questions about their own or their loved ones' hearing.

Here, we have provided a brief summary about five of the most popular topics on the website.

How the ear works

The ear is a delicate, sensitive organ, made up of moving parts that convert soundwaves into electrical impulses.

Soundwaves are gathered by the outer ear and carried down the canal to the

eardrum, which vibrates. This vibration is passed by the three tiny bones in the middle ear to the fluid in the inner ear, or cochlea. The fluid's movement causes hair cells in the cochlea to bend, sending electrical impulses along the auditory

nerve and into the brain. Any disruption to that chain can cause hearing loss.

Our webpage on how the ear works explains all this in detail, with illustrations and videos. To visit it, just go to hearinglink.org/the-ear

What is a hearing loop?

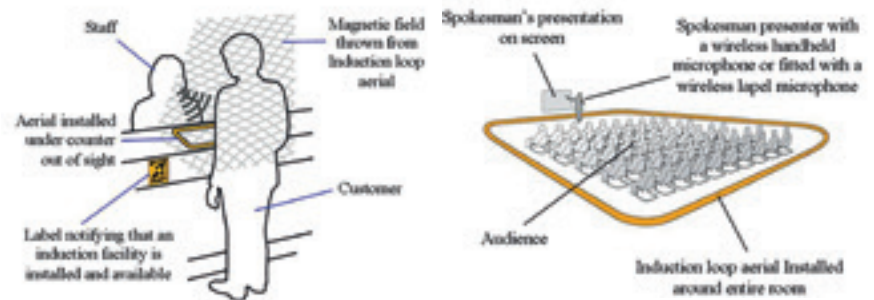
Hearing loops, also known as audio induction loop systems or audio-frequency induction loops, help people with hearing loss in many different environments such as the cinema, at presentations or over counters in shops.

There are different kinds of systems, but they all work in a similar way. A microphone captures sound from a source, such as a voice, cinema or audio system, and passes the signal to a loop made from copper tape or wire. This loop surrounds the audience and produces a magnetic field, which is picked up by a Telecoil (or T-coil) inside a hearing aid.

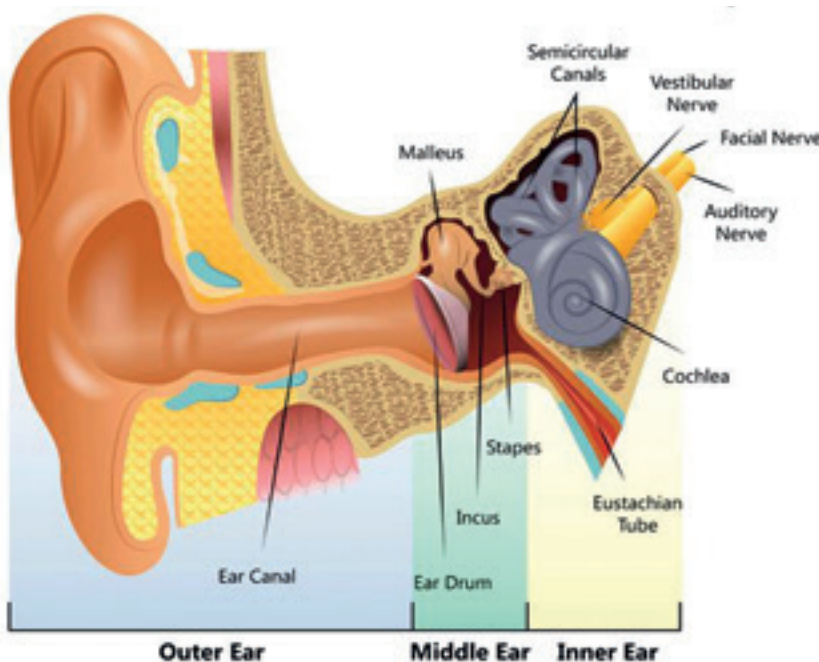
This system is great because nobody needs to wear a special headset, or invest in an expensive receiver.

If you'd like to find out more about how loops work and how they might benefit you, just visit hearinglink.org/loops

How a loop works



Loop images by Contacta





Common balance disorders

Balance disorders can be debilitating. There can be a general feeling of spinning or moving, even while sitting or lying down. More seriously, they can cause falls which can be especially concerning for the elderly.

As well as carrying sound, our ears are extremely important for balance. Disorders can come about from many ear-related issues, such as ear infections, or inner ear problems such as changes in

the connecting nerves and how the brain perceives them.

Some conditions are based on the name of their discoverer, such as Ménière's disease. Others can have quite complicated names, such as Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV), or Vestibular Neuritis. If you want a clear, concise description of what could be causing any dizziness, please visit hearinglink.org/balance

Tinnitus – what sounds do you hear?



Results:

More than one sound – 43%
 Ring – 15%
 White noise – 11%
 Buzz – 11%
 Shrill – 10%
 Drill – 4%
 Hum – 3%
 Other – 3%
 Pulsate – 0.5%
 Boom – 0.5%

vacuum cleaners
 phantom radios
 humming fridges
 escaping air
 crickets
 heavy traffic
 blackbirds
 singing
 squelching
 scrunching marbles
 bees
 steam trains

Tinnitus

If you usually have good hearing, and you've ever had ringing or buzzing in your ears, for example after a loud noise, then you may be experiencing tinnitus. For most people this is temporary, with a definite cause. However, tinnitus can have no direct cause, and can be a chronic condition.

Tinnitus does tend to result from underlying conditions such as an ear injury or, more commonly, age-related hearing loss. These conditions may be treatable but if not, the good news is that other approaches can reduce or mask the tinnitus and make it less intrusive.

If you, or someone you know, is being bothered by occasional or prolonged unexplained sounds in their ears, this page is a great first port of call: hearinglink.org/tinnitus

How to communicate with someone with hearing loss

Around one in five of us experience hearing loss to a greater or lesser degree. It's extremely likely that, even if you have good hearing yourself, you'll recently have come into contact with someone who does not.

Good communication in these situations is important for everyone – and indeed,



could be vital in situations such as dealing with medical matters. This has been brought into sharp relief by the wearing of facial coverings during the pandemic, which has been particularly difficult for deaf people who rely on lip-reading.

Fortunately, there are good, practical ways to make things easier for someone with hearing loss when you are communicating with them. Find out more at hearinglink.org/communication

Get in touch with someone who understands

Our website is helpful and informative, but sometimes you just want to talk to someone who understands. Our Helpdesk is staffed by friendly volunteers with lived experience of hearing loss, and they're waiting to help, from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. You can find out more here: hearinglink.org/helpdesk. If in need, please just ask. 🐾

A special note from our co-founder Dr Bruce Fogle

My name is Bruce Fogle. Back in 1982, I co-founded Hearing Dogs for Deaf People with Lady (Beatrice) Wright. Over the years, it's become obvious to me that our amazing dogs provide more than just 'ears'. Animals feel what we're feeling. We understand each other. It's a story with many chapters – one which I hope you can help continue.



One example remains in my mind, of a lady whose husband had died of cancer. I had immense respect for how brave she'd been. Yet, six months later, when we mutually agreed that her precious pet had to be put to sleep, she collapsed in my surgery, bereft and inconsolable.

This led me to think: why was this woman able to show such strength at the death of her husband, and yet the death of her dog was unbearable? It seemed this relationship between human and pet was much stronger than anyone knew at the time.

Another example showed how animals reflect this relationship. I recall a German Shepherd dog we were keeping overnight after an operation, many years ago. I went to check on its progress, and it put its head on my lap and looked up at me sadly. I sat down close by and, slowly, it put one front paw on my knee... then another... then a back paw... then gradually this enormous dog heaved itself into my lap and curled up. Instinctively I knew it was seeking solace and support from me.

Believe me, the idea that animals felt anything – love, or even pain – was not fashionable at the time. Certainly my training hadn't prepared me for this. Yet I came to understand that this bond really existed, that it was incredibly strong, and that it is felt by humans and animals alike.

This was one reason why I co-founded Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Lady Beatrice Wright provided the other reason.

Deafness is an isolating disability. It takes away a person's ability to communicate, freely and easily, with friends and family. And it's such a misunderstood condition – some people

aren't sure how to approach a deaf person, so often they just don't bother. This can lead to a loss in confidence and the deaf person avoiding contact with others, causing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

This is where I began to understand Lady Beatrice's Wright's reason. Most of us are aware of the comfort and companionship a pet dog can bring, but these attributes from a hearing dog are so much more beneficial for a deaf person. It's as if a dog's love, friendship, and loyalty is amplified because of the lack of interaction some deaf people encounter in human society.

If you add in the impressive sound-work which we teach our dogs, so they can alert deaf people to important and life-saving sounds like the alarm clock and smoke alarm, the benefits for their deaf partner become completely life-changing. And we are committed to helping as many deaf people as possible, for as long as they need. This is often decades, as they are helped by a second, third, or even fourth hearing dog.

Mutual understanding and support. This is why Hearing Dogs for Deaf People works. But it only exists because we are funded by people like you. Of our many sources of financial support, by far the greatest is legacies, which account for over half of our income.

To show you what we can achieve thanks to kind people who remember Hearing Dogs in their Will, I still remember the day we received a major legacy from an anonymous donor over 20 years ago. We had clearly touched this donor in some way, because the size of the legacy enabled us to do so much. Knowing that we had the money available, we were then able to plan – something we had found difficult until

then. We were able to extend our then-basic training facilities, we could hire more dog trainers, and we trained twice as many hearing dogs in a year. This kind, altruistic legacy put our charity on a much firmer footing for the next decade.

Today, deafness is becoming more prevalent, and we need help to rise to this challenge. Today, about one in five people in the UK have a hearing loss, but this is forecast to increase. This means significantly more demand for hearing dogs and our other services, which we are already seeing. An important way we can plan, and reliably meet this demand, is through the generosity of people who remember Hearing Dogs in their Will.

So perhaps, after you've made sure your family and friends are taken care of, you could consider helping deaf people in this way. If you have already decided to leave a gift to Hearing Dogs, then we thank you so much, and if you are agreeable to letting us know, this will help us plan for our future. If you would like to talk confidentially about this most private of gifts, please contact Zoe Cox on 01844 348130 or zoe.cox@hearingdogs.org.uk.

We are sincerely grateful for everything you have already done and continue to do for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Very best wishes

Dr Bruce Fogle,
Co-Founder and Trustee,
Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

“Odin has given me so much confidence”

“I used to feel very isolated, alone and unsafe because of my hearing loss. My hearing dog Odin has changed all that. He even makes me feel like I can be a better mum to my young daughter because he is trained to alert me to her crying. I feel lucky to have Odin, and to be part of the Hearing Dogs family. I know you will be there to support me for as long as I need.” – Jodie and hearing dog Odin



Paws for coffee...



TV presenter **Sophie Morgan** is an award-winning disability advocate, paralysed in a car crash when she was 18. Here, she joins us for a coffee and a chat...

Do you prefer tea or coffee?
I'm definitely a coffee drinker!

You're one of the first female TV presenters in the world with a physical disability. Why do you think representation is so important when it comes to disabilities?

For the same reason I find representation of any group important – until you see different people being represented it's hard to know what's possible. After I had my accident, I didn't really see much representation of people with physical disabilities on TV, so I had no idea what was possible. It's also important to show that there is no such thing as 'normal'.

Deafness is often referred to as an invisible disability. Do you, or a loved one, have any first-hand experience with deafness or hearing loss? One of my close friends is deaf, as is her partner, and I have family members with hearing loss, so it's something I see in my life.

Why do you think it's so important that deaf people have the same access and opportunities as hearing people do?
Because they should but they often don't.

It seems obvious to me that everyone should have equal access and opportunities and it is infuriating that that's not the case. I don't believe we can achieve real progress if certain groups are left behind, and it's just incredibly sad that discrimination or bigotry of any kind even exists.

It can be incredibly hard for people to adapt to life without their hearing. You had to adapt to a different life following a car accident in 2003, when you were left paralysed. How difficult did you find this, and did you learn anything about yourself through the experience? I learnt everything about myself. It taught me all the best things about myself actually. Adapting was incredibly challenging generally and adapting in my relationships was also very hard. Having to find my identity again was hard. There's also the other layer of other people's opinions about what you can and can't do when you have a disability. People will write you off and you feel like you're constantly having to explain yourself, which can be exhausting.

Hearing Dogs turns 40 this year so we will be celebrating our very own 'birthday'. You've said you consider the date you were paralysed to be like a second birthday – why is this? I nearly died in my accident and afterwards I had to start again in a 'new' body, and had to learn how to do everything again, so I very much felt like it was a rebirth, which is why I celebrate the date like another birthday.

Many of the deaf people we help have experienced loneliness and isolation because of the barriers they have to face. Have you ever felt like this because of your disability? I don't know anyone with a disability who hasn't at some point felt isolated. Especially if you don't know anyone else with a disability. It can sometimes feel like the world moves on without you if you've had to adjust to something like that. Finding a community is incredibly important. Finding people to lean on is too.

What would you say to anyone who is trying to adapt to an injury or disability? Be kind to yourself and understand that you are not alone.

“I don't know anyone with a disability who hasn't at some point felt isolated. Finding a community is incredibly important.”

Allow yourself to feel and recognise that your experience is valid, even if you think other people 'have it worse'.

What are your favourite things about dogs? What's not to love about dogs? Their loyalty, the fact they are so good at making you laugh, making you smile. Dogs really are the world's greatest gift.

You visited Hearing Dogs' southern training centre, The Grange, recently. What were your first impressions of the work our dogs do? Just extraordinary. Empowering. Amazing. Those are just three words I would use to describe what a hearing dog does. And just how life-changing it is. I would equate these amazing dogs to how important my wheelchair is to me.

We can teach our dogs how to walk nicely next to wheelchairs, and you tried out a bit of this training when you visited Hearing Dogs. How did you find this? I found it so interesting, and it made me appreciate just how clever dogs are.

Do you have a favourite breed of dog? I grew up with Labradors and Westies, so I would probably have to say those two!

Tell us about what you're up to at the moment. By the time this issue of Favour goes to print I would have finished presenting Crufts as part of Channel 4's coverage of the show, I will be presenting a new programme for Channel 4, and my new book *Driving Forwards* will have been published. I have lots going on!

Sophie's book *Driving Forwards: A Journey of Resilience and Empowerment* is available from all major book retailers, in all formats. 🐾



Sophie with one of Hearing Dogs' trainers Ailsa during a wheelchair training session at our southern training centre





Paws Appeal



Join a fundraising collection in your local area this May.

Make new friends – humans and canine – and help raise vital funds for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

The Paws Appeal ... so no one with hearing loss feels alone

hearingdogs.org.uk/pawsappeal