

the hearing care centre

2019 AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

THE AUDIOLOGICAL SOLUTION

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*For a list of our other
centres across Essex,
please see back page*

**'North Essex's leading,
multi-award winning
independent
hearing care experts'**

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**Don't miss our
Open Days
and other events!
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Welcome to our Autumn newsletter. What a mixed bag of weather we experienced this summer. I hope you all managed to catch some sunny days with your family and friends in between the showers!

I am looking forward to my favourite time of year, when the nights start drawing in and the trees turn gorgeous autumnal colours. Since becoming a dog owner, I feel much more in tune with the changing seasons and the huge variety of birdsong in our countryside.

On this note, an interesting concept was on display from Action On Hearing Loss at our recent Colchester Hearing Show. Many people lose some of their high frequency hearing, which means they can miss out on beautiful birdsong. The organisation has developed a birdsong recording inside a tiny bird box, taking it out to the public to raise awareness of hearing loss and encourage regular hearing checks.

It was very kind of our friend and colleague, Arcot Maheshwar, Consultant ENT Surgeon, to spare us the time to give a very informative talk at our Hearing Show. Especially as he squeezed us in prior to a visit to Buckingham Palace! He had been invited to a Royal Garden Party to mark his 25 years' service to the NHS.

If you prefer not to come into the town centre to visit us, don't forget that you can be seen at our handy clinic at the Oaks Hospital in Colchester on alternate Tuesdays – and with free parking right outside too.

For those of you who currently use the latest Phonak Marvel hearing aids, keep a look out for a special open day we hope to hold soon - where we will demonstrate a super new accessory to enhance hearing in extreme background noise. A warm welcome also to our new part-time audiologist, Danielle Barker.

All the best,

Vicki

**Vicki Skeels RHAD FSHAA
MD, The Hearing Care Centre**



Fresh hope

Trudy Bassett (39) of Colchester became a client of The Hearing Care Centre only recently, in July, but is already reporting dramatic results with her new Phonak Marvel aids. She looks back on her journey back to hearing:

'I was about 16 or 17 when I first noticed I wasn't hearing so well,' says Trudy. 'But it wasn't till I had my first child at 28 and, worried I wouldn't hear him cry, that I booked a test where I was shocked to discover how bad my hearing actually was. I was given an NHS hearing aid but – wow - the noise of everyday life was so loud. I persevered, but it was too much to wear all the time and I eventually stopped. Then I had my second son at 32 and my hearing really become a problem.'

Trudy has hereditary otosclerosis and her mother was one of the first in the UK to have a successful operation for the condition. After much deliberation and, aware of the risks, Trudy also decided to have a stapedectomy in her right ear in 2016.

'My operation was not a success. During surgery, a bone broke and could not be repaired. I cried my eyes out and was sofa bound for four weeks. I could hardly walk and, when I did, felt like I was on a boat. Eventually I healed, but the hearing in my right ear is virtually non-existent. I was again fitted with NHS aids, but couldn't get on with the right one so didn't wear it. The hearing centre at the hospital tried to do their best, but couldn't offer me the quality of hearing I really needed.'

'I'd seen an advert on tv for hearing aids at a large national chain. I booked an appointment, but there was no way for me to test them and they weren't cheap, so I came away disappointed. I then looked up 'hearing centres in Colchester' on Google, and The Hearing Care Centre came up. I booked an appointment with Richard Lusher-Seaman,



Trudy Bassett

taking along my partner, James.

'Richard did a hearing test and gave me a pair of aids to test out on a walk into town. It was amazing! We walked through the high street and I could hear people talking in the shops and what James was saying when on my right. I also suffer with tinnitus and that had gone. I ordered the hearing aids that day. Richard set the aids up to my phone, along with the app to help me control volume - all while being supplied with coffee and biscuits by the lovely ladies on the desk.'

'We went home and I could hear the birds sing and the cars go past outside. These things sound silly, but when you haven't heard them in 10+ years it's pretty amazing! I could hear my little boy in the next room, chatting to himself, and rain on the window.'

Trudy is still having follow ups for various adjustments and to find the best size of in-ear domes. But she says, 'It's not a problem for Richard and the staff. They genuinely are a lovely team and I can't thank them enough for their time and helping me find my hearing again.'

The team expands



Danielle Barker joins us in October

We are delighted to welcome a new audiologist to the team, Danielle Barker, who will join us in a part-time capacity from October, working Mondays and Tuesdays.

Danielle hails from Yorkshire and studied Hearing Aid Audiology at Aston University in Birmingham, before qualifying as an audiologist in 2017. She explains more about her background and approach to her role:

'My key focus point, as the passionate audiologist that I am, is to ensure that all of my clients' hearing is to the best levels they can be. It gives me so much satisfaction, seeing a customer walk away as a different person to the one who walked in. The simple gift of being able to hold a conversation with a loved one more easily, having the enjoyment of listening to music or even those precious moments like hearing their grandkids' laughter makes my job so rewarding.'

'I have worked in various clinics in North Yorkshire, before relocating south to Essex to progress my learning and development. To this very day I thrive on evolving my skillset to help others.'

'Joining the amazing team at The Hearing Care Centre is an exciting opportunity for me. I can't wait to meet you all and continue to provide you with the very best service that you and your hearing deserve.'

Coming soon

Phonak is enhancing the connectivity of its Marvel range of hearing aids by extending telecoil (T-coil) capability to the rechargeable models.

The new T-coil aids will provide direct connection to induction-loop systems found in theatres, churches, auditoriums, shops, banks and increasingly more venues. The benefits of telecoils include helping to decrease the cognitive load those with hearing loss may experience.

Marvel rechargeable T-coil hearing aids are due to be launched this Autumn. Ask your audiologist for details.

**20th
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on all packs
of hearing
aid batteries**

*Until 31 October
(while stocks last)*

Flexible approach

Unitron's 'Log It All' Flex Trial experience helps you try hearing aids in the real world, without upfront costs.

For those considering new hearing aids, 'Log It All' is a diagnostic monitor that can be worn for a one- to two-week period, continually during waking hours. Important information about changes in your listening environments are all logged. Your hearing lifestyle is evaluated, to help ascertain the correct level of technology required to address your hearing loss.

At the next consultation with your audiologist, the logged information is downloaded and evaluated with you. This allows an accurate overview of your hearing requirements. We will then be able to demonstrate how various customised technology levels will perform within your own lifestyle. You can choose where you want to start, with the option for upgrades as your needs change.

Unitron's latest hearing aids are powered by the Discover technology platform, which processes sound to your individual prescription. This ability to recognise, classify and adjust to acoustic environments, with no manual adjustments, provides for a natural, seamless listening experience, even in the most challenging listening situations. You can also wirelessly stream video, music,



audiobooks and more directly to both hearing instruments, from any device.

Richard Lusher-Seaman

About Unitron

Unitron is a Canadian hearing aid manufacturer, founded in 1964. It is part of the Sonova Group, along with Phonak, which is present in over 100 countries and has a workforce of more than 14,000 employees. As part of this leading provider of innovative hearing care solutions, Unitron benefits from synergies in research, development and manufacture, along with the Phonak brand.



Open up your world

The Oticon family continues to expand, now with a range of custom styles that includes its smallest hearing aid ever – the IIC (invisible in canal). The Oticon Opn IIC is ultra-discreet and covers hearing loss from mild to moderately severe. It also offers full connectivity with your wireless devices and tv.

All new styles feature the groundbreaking 'BrainHearing' technology, which is based on

the fact that you don't just hear with your ears, you hear with your brain. Oticon Opn scans the environment 100 times per second, to give you access to constant, 360-degree sound that supports the way your brain would naturally make sense of it.

With Oticon Opn, you can experience the benefits of a hearing aid that 'opens up your world', as one of our clients recently put it. You're able to listen to more than one person speaking at a time, while the advanced noise reduction system helps reduce your



listening effort. It gives your brain access to the relevant sounds around you, putting you in charge of which sounds you focus on – and not your hearing aid.

Hear from the experts

The main speaker at our Colchester Hearing Show in May was Mr Arcot Maheshwar, Consultant ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) Surgeon at Colchester General Hospital, the Oaks and Chelmsford's Broomfield Hospital.

With a catchy title for his talk on 'Is my hearing normal?', Mr Maheshwar delivered an engaging and expert overview of hearing and hearing loss. He visually presented the working of the ear and the hearing system, describing it as 'quite fascinating'. On hearing loss, he explained: 'There are different kinds and causes of hearing loss, but what we most commonly deal with is age related loss, or presbycusis. It is progressive, irreversible and the most common ailment after arthritis, affecting around one in two people over the age of 75 years.'

Using an illustration of the cochlea in the inner ear, Mr Maheshwar was able to show the audience why the higher frequencies are the first to be affected by hearing loss – merely



Arcot Maheshwar makes a point about getting your hearing sorted before it's too late

because this part of the tightly wound cochlea is closer to the ear drum and source of sound, so it gets more 'hits' from vibrations and wears out faster.

He also added that 'what constitutes a severe hearing loss for you can depend on your lifestyle, job etc. But the best treatment is hearing aids and it is vital to get your hearing sorted out before it gets too late.'

Loraine MacDonald is a qualified, accredited and registered counsellor with the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists and a lay tinnitus counsellor, working closely with The Hearing Care Centre. She was also a featured speaker at the Colchester Hearing Show, on the subject of CBT (cognitive behaviour therapy) for Tinnitus, stating that about 1 in 10 people in the UK experience some form of the condition.

'It's very common,' said Loraine, 'yet very individual in its symptoms and how it feels for each person. But it can really affect your thoughts and behaviour, making you stressed, irritable and even depressed.' Loraine revealed that she, too, has a degree of tinnitus and hearing loss.

Members of the audience agreed, with comments including: 'I miss words and have to make up sentences, which makes me cross and frustrated.' Another said: 'I just want to switch it off, but I can't.' Getting back to sleep was also a shared problem.

Loraine explained the concept of habituation, which affects how you feel about tinnitus. She cautioned against unhelpful thinking habits and said you have a choice about how deeply you get affected by it. 'But it does take practice and there are many techniques out there for relaxation, distraction and self-help.'



Loraine MacDonald analyses the triggers that aggravate tinnitus

Our first hearing show

Our first ever Colchester Hearing Show, held on 9 May at The Holiday Inn in Eight Ash Green, was a resounding success. A steady flow of visitors attended throughout the day to view the diverse exhibition, hear engaging talks, enjoy free ear and hearing checks and network with other hearing aid users or those seeking support.

The exhibition featured leading manufacturers showcasing the very latest in cutting-edge hearing technology, along with charities like Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and local support groups. Exciting developments in the future of hearing aids were demonstrated, such as Starkey's new Livio device – the world's first hearing aid that monitors brain and body activity, provides heart rate information and detects any falls.

The full programme of talks included subjects such as tinnitus and therapies, a client's hearing aid experience, technological progress and a presentation by special guest speaker, Arcot Maheshwar, ENT consultant surgeon. Mr Maheshwar explained how hearing works, the different types of hearing loss and he encouraged people to get their hearing sorted out before it gets too late.

Thank you to all who supported the event, including manufacturers, other exhibitors, guest speakers and our visitors.

Feedback from visitors included comments such as: 'very informative', 'great to have the support and charity groups, together with the manufacturers, all in one place', 'good to be among people who understand your hearing problems' and 'are you going to do it again?'



Keynote speaker Arcot Maheshwar, ENT consultant surgeon (centre) with Vicki and Richard



Guest speaker Loraine MacDonald enjoys meeting Malcolm Powell (centre) and Brian Platt of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People



Representing Help for Heroes (l-r): Lindsey Hutton, Abbie Griggs and Ann Scott



Paul McDermott (right) of Puretone explains hearing protection



Gareth Heal of Signia demonstrates the latest technology



Starkey included a fun history of hearing aids in their talk



Colchester Hearing Support Group members (l-r): Pat Marshall, Ken Marshall (back), Mary Bevan, Jenny Bridge and Allan Murrells



Client Kevin Bell examines the latest from Phonak



Brian Platt with his hearing dog, Elton



Action on Hearing Loss was also an exhibitor



Manufacturers gave talks - here Adam Johnson of Widex



Debbie Lawrence has fun with her audience as she wraps up the day with a talk on tinnitus

An old advert for 'Fortiphone' hearing devices, with a link to Colchester, as seen in the Deaf Gazette of 15 July 1958. Thank you to our client, Mr Owen Hay, for forwarding to us this interesting piece of history. We note that the message about 'light and inconspicuous' is still the same today!

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Lend an ear



Manning the stand at the Colchester Hearing Show are Gillian Shrimpton (left) and Jeanne Webster

'The Friendly Ear' hearing support group in Colchester has been meeting for the past five years and membership is gradually increasing. Not a charity, we just share ideas about new developments and ways of coping in a hearing world.

Recently, we were proud to take part in the Colchester Hearing Show and chat to visitors about our group. It was good to see the presentations from other contributors, too.

If you or anyone you know is a bit low because communication is sometimes difficult, do pop in - we know how that feels. We meet on the third Monday each month in Lexden, Colchester. It's all very friendly and informal. **Gillian Shrimpton**

Contact: gill_shrimpton@hotmail.com

Coffee time



Debbie cuts the cake for guests (l-r) Richard Jarvis and Margaret and David Nicholas

I hosted our first Coffee Morning (with homemade cake!) for clients this June, at our main Colchester centre. The event was an opportunity to hear a short talk, share experiences as hearing aid users and get further useful advice.

At our first event, we discussed how to clean hearing aids correctly and also opened the floor to suggestions for future gatherings. A thank you note from one of the attendees expressed how much they enjoyed the interchange about hearing issues with others, encouraging them to persevere.

Our next event will be a Christmas Coffee Morning on Friday morning, 6 December, with lots of seasonal goodies. Please register your interest with myself or our reception desk.

Debbie Lawrence

Free Draw!

We are giving away a Phonak TV and Music set for streaming music and TV audio directly to your hearing aids. Only compatible with Phonak Quest and Venture ranges.



The winner's name will be drawn at random at 4pm on the last day of our Hearing Health Week, 20 September.

If you want to be in the running, please give your details to our receptionists in person or tel: (01206) 760839 or email: reception1@skeelshearing.co.uk

Diary Dates

Hearing Health Week	16-20 September
Open Day, Tiptree	7 October
Open Day, Manningtree	14 November
Christmas Coffee Morning	6 December

Hearing partner

At our Colchester Hearing Show in May, we were delighted to meet Brian Platt and his hearing dog, Elton. Brian gave a heartfelt talk about the tremendous difference Elton has made in his life as a young man with hearing loss.

'I was working as a policeman, when I developed a sudden hearing loss in my left ear at the age of 28,' Brian explains. 'It made my job very difficult and, when the hearing in my right ear began fluctuating, I had to leave my dream career.'

Brian was not a suitable candidate for a cochlear implant and was able to obtain Elton from Hearing Dogs for Deaf People three years ago. Elton is now five years old and a 'great family dog', says Brian, who has young children. 'Elton is trained to respond to the baby monitor, which I can't hear, with a nudge or a touch. Night times were worrying for me, if my wife was working, but he provides reassurance and is a great alarm clock – his batteries never run out!'

'I now work in an open plan office and bring Elton with me. At first, my colleagues were worried that he might run around, chew paper etc, but he is extremely well behaved and more popular than I am. He is allowed access everywhere I go and is so well trained. Hearing



Brian Platt and Elton at our Colchester Hearing Show

Dogs for Deaf People do well in matching a dog to you and your lifestyle. When he has his Hearing Dogs coat on, he becomes a confident working dog, but when we take it off at home, he is just our normal family pet.'

Old dogs, new tricks

For the second year, The Hearing Care centre participated in the Great British Dog Walk fundraiser organised by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

On 12 May, Vicki, Richard and Jon, together with furry friends Herbie and Harry, walked the 3km route around Ickworth Park in Horringer, on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds. Both Herbie and Harry decided to learn some new tricks by entering the dog agility course, which was very entertaining to watch.

Jon Lusher-Seaman

Humans (l-r) Richard, Vicki and Jon, with dogs Harry and Herbie raring to go on the Great British Dog Walk



the hearing care centre

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Your local, multi-award winning independent hearing care experts

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CO1 1NU

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120 Mile End Road
Colchester
CO4 5XR

West Mersea

Tim Humphries Physiotherapy
and Back Pain Clinic
12 Yorick Road
West Mersea
CO5 8HT

Frinton

Coastal Physiotherapy
93 Connaught Avenue
Frinton CO13 9PP

Manningtree

Foundry Court Community Centre
Colchester Road
Manningtree
CO11 1EJ

Tiptree

David J Russell Opticians
100 Church Road
Tiptree
CO5 0AB

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