

# inTouch

News for our Hearing Dogs & Hearing Link Services communities

ISSUE 22

## 40 wonderful years of Hearing Dogs

Celebrating four  
decades of life-  
changing support  
for deaf people  
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May and Mary's  
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VISIT US: [hearingdogs.org.uk](http://hearingdogs.org.uk) and [hearinglink.org](http://hearinglink.org)

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## Saying goodbye to Rusty

Sophie on her heart-breaking decision to end her hearing dog partnership – p16



Sophie and hearing dog Rusty  
© Photography by Paul Wilkinson

## Welcome!

Thanks for reading *inTouch*. We hope you enjoy this issue which celebrates the 40th anniversary of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

We meet the wonderful deaf partners and beneficiaries who have been supported by the Charity through the decades.

We tell the story of Mary and May, who have been helped by our wide range of services. And Kim talks about the life-changing difference that three hearing dogs have made to her.

There are also details of how our services can help you or a loved one today, forthcoming fundraising events, and a visit to our Technology Corner.

The next issue of *inTouch* will be published in winter 2022.

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### inTouch

News for our Hearing Dogs & Hearing Link Services communities

*inTouch* is accessible in BSL via the links at: [hearingdogs.org.uk/intouch](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/intouch)

If you no longer wish to receive a postal copy of *inTouch*, please contact us by emailing [dataprotectionofficer@hearingdogs.org.uk](mailto:dataprotectionofficer@hearingdogs.org.uk)

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# Introducing...



**Y**ou may have noticed a few changes recently to our charity brand. Since the merger between Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and Hearing Link nearly five years ago, we have been embedding and integrating our hearing loss services and gently combining our messaging, but the two organisations have always looked different.

We have now taken a common-sense approach to demonstrate that we are all part of the same charity family, as we bring the two visual brands together with a more consistent and seamless approach.

Underpinning the changes, we wanted to retain Hearing Link's reputation,

identity, and heritage. We hope you will see that 'Hearing Link Services' keeps the same distinct name while making it easier for our audiences to understand how the services lie within the wider charity.

We have also kept our butterfly symbol – a positive image that denotes personal transformation, freedom, and hope. Its representation of the hearing loss journey offers a wonderful platform for story-telling.

The story relates to the hearing caterpillar, the isolation and change within the chrysalis, and the emergence of the deafened butterfly reconnecting with the world.

With this in mind, we have evolved

our symbol to be more illustrative, while colour and font changes better unite the two brands.

We have focused on evolution, not a big, expensive re-brand exercise.

Keeping the costs low, we will gradually roll out the updated Hearing Link Services branding over the coming months when the time is right.

These are gentle changes, but we hope you will agree that they make such an impact in bringing us all together as one charity with a vision to see a time when no deaf person – or anyone with hearing loss – feels alone.

To find out more, please visit [hearinglink.org](https://hearinglink.org)

## Hearing loss product range added to the online shop

**W**e had a fabulous response to the launch of our online shop last September, where you can purchase our range of thoughtfully chosen gifts for your home, loved ones, and for your dog.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us. You are helping the Charity to continue to train life-changing hearing dogs, and also provide our range of hearing support services for people with hearing loss, their families and friends.

In addition to our gift collection, we have also previously offered

products, via our Hearing Link Services shop, which support hearing and communication.

This summer, as part of our efforts to bring our charity activities and brand closer together, you can now access both collections of products in the one place.

With our full range of products available together, it is quick and easy to purchase what you need using our express checkout and new payments methods that include Apple Pay and Google Pay.

To view our large gift collection and

range of hearing loss products please visit [shop.hearingdogs.org.uk](https://shop.hearingdogs.org.uk)





# Hearing Dogs turns 40!



Throughout 2022 we are celebrating 40 years of the Hearing Dogs family, by sharing the inspiring stories of the people we help and showcasing the amazing things our hearing dogs and range of personalised services do

**2**022 marks an incredible milestone for Hearing Dogs – 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 serving 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, and their family and friends too.

From now until the end of March 2023, we will be celebrating the Hearing Dogs family; by sharing inspiring stories and showcasing the amazing things our hearing dogs and range of services do.

We are also holding fun events across the UK to mark the occasion. At our sites in Buckinghamshire and East Yorkshire, a marquee took centre stage over June and July to host our anniversary events. It was a wonderful platform to herald our achievements in the past 40 years.

So far, we have hosted volunteer and staff celebration events, plant sales, puppy classes, Community Days, Hearing Information Days, and much more! We've also been highlighting how far we've come thanks to the support of you, and our Hearing Dogs family, which has meant we are helping more people who are deaf or have hearing loss than ever before.

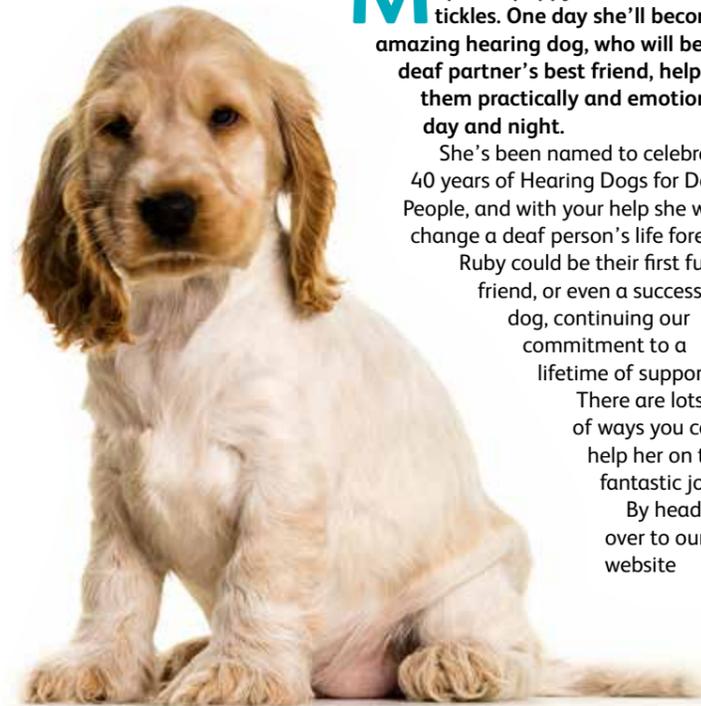
**You can get involved in our celebrations by coming along to our Late Summer Show on 11 September, from 11-4pm at The Grange. We would love to see you there! To book, visit: [hearingdogs.org.uk/summershow](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/summershow)**



Lots of events have been held, including our first Hearing Information Days

Photo by Alexandra Agass

## You can help Ruby to change a life



**M**eet Ruby! She's a cuddly Cocker Spaniel puppy who likes tummy tickles. 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.

She's been named to celebrate 40 years of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, and with your help she will change a deaf person's life forever.

Ruby could be their furry friend, or even a successor dog, continuing our commitment to a lifetime of support. There are lots of ways you can help her on this fantastic journey. By heading over to our website

[hearingdogs.org.uk/ruby](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/ruby) you can donate to her appeal, choosing from single/one-off or regular donation. Or you can make a real difference to the lives of deaf people by setting up a birthday fundraiser and asking friends and family to donate to it in lieu of presents or cards. You can even set up a fundraiser for your dog's birthday, or adoption date, if you wish.

See below for ways to donate or set up a birthday fundraiser.

### How to donate

- Donate online at [hearingdogs.org.uk/ruby](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/ruby)
- 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, Sanderton, Princes Risborough, HP27 9NS**
- Set up a birthday fundraiser online at [hearingdogs.org.uk/birthday](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/birthday)

# “We just ‘clicked’. We could fully empathise with each other.”

Mary and May’s paths crossed at a Hearing Link Services support group – and the rest, they say, is history. Through their wonderful friendship, they support other people living with hearing loss in the community and raise funds for our charity

**F**or many years, Mary and May had separately navigated the challenges associated with living with hearing loss. Before the merger of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and Hearing Link in 2017, they had taken steps to get help from the individual organisations.

## Hidden disability

Mary has experienced hearing loss since birth, and spent many years dealing with the frustrations associated with living with a hidden disability.

Then, she applied for a hearing dog, and eight years ago Bailey the Golden Labrador X Retriever was matched to become her life-changing partner. Mary recalls: “I was experiencing all the frustrations of

going through life as a deaf person, the discrimination and casual dismissal by hearing people, and I needed to let folk know I had this hidden disability. Bailey came along and was a sign to everyone that I’m deaf and should be shown respect and consideration.

“He makes a huge difference when I’m out and about, and people are so much more accommodating and friendly, often stopping to chat.

“Awkward encounters are more or less a thing of the past. Bailey gives me confidence and I now feel as though I can go anywhere I want. We are the ideal pair!”

## A different route

May experienced hearing issues from her early 20s, which led to problems in her career as a teacher. It took her more than a decade to seek help and be prescribed with her first hearing aid.

She attended local lipreading classes, which helped, but she continued to struggle with many aspects of her life. May found out about Hearing Link and applied to attend a support group.

She said: “The support group helped me to turn several corners. I finally accepted my deafness as a non-negotiable fact which I had

to face up to and move forward with. The boost to my self-esteem of being in charge of living my life again was immense.”

Both ladies went on to volunteer for their respective charities, before they merged in 2017.

## Support group

Leaping forward two years, Mary applied to attend a residential LinkUp group in Edinburgh.

She found herself in a room with lots of other people, with similar experiences to her own, as well as a team of Hearing Link volunteers who used their lived experience to help the participants. One of those volunteers was May. This was the first time they had met and their connection was instant.

Mary recalls: “The event brought together a lovely mix of staff and volunteers, along with a group of participants. Some had hearing loss while others were partners or friends.

“We all enjoyed getting to know each other, exchanging stories and experiences, socialising and giving support. I was a little apprehensive at first, but everyone was so friendly, so encouraging and so supportive. May, who was a support volunteer, was part of that and someone who understood what it was like to live with deafness.”

May added: “This was the first time Mary and I had met, but we quickly



Mary (left) with hearing dog Bailey and May (right)

From support to friendship – May and Mary’s story

## “To enjoy such a friendship is good for everyone’s mental wellbeing.”

became friends over the course of that weekend. We found we had faced so many similar experiences throughout our lives where having hearing loss had created the same challenges for us. We just ‘clicked’. We found we could fully empathise with each other.”

## Friendship and more!

Since meeting at the LinkUp, Mary and May have developed a lovely friendship. Their deep connection, and living close to each other, meant they have spent lots of time together – and the rest, as they say, is history!

May has joined Mary and Bailey in their fundraising activities for the Charity, taking part in can collections and the Great British Dog Walk.

They have also supported other people with hearing loss in communities across

Scotland, by visiting groups to talk about the work of Hearing Dogs and Hearing Link, and attending Community Days.

Away from these activities, they have joined a weekly Paths for Life walk, where they meet other people, exercise Bailey and enjoy a cup of coffee (and maybe a cake) afterwards.

Mary said: “I think the connection we made at the LinkUp, and the sharing of experiences, meant that we wanted to keep in touch. After we went home we realised we lived quite close to each other and we were able to introduce each other to our friends and contacts, and invited each other along to various activities and social events.

“Fundraising has been something we both enjoy, whether can collecting, supporting the annual Great British Dog Walk or visiting groups together to talk about our charities or giving peer support in the community.”

May added: “Our stories are so similar, we understand each other without the need to explain how we feel. We have lots of interests in common so we always have lots to talk about.

“Bailey is a great ice breaker and helps

start so many conversations where people open up about their own, or a loved one’s experience of hearing loss. We also love going along to the Charity’s Community Days together.”

## Thankful

Mary and May have enjoyed celebrating the 40th anniversary together this year as they are thankful for the support they have received and for the friendship they have formed.

Mary said: “Hearing Link helped us to better understand and manage our hearing loss.

“The fact that it promotes peer support, recognises that our deafness hugely impacts our relationships, our family lives and on our careers has been important to us both.

“We find the insight we have gained into living our lives with our hearing loss has helped us grow as people, enabled us to be more confident and independent to do the things we want to do.

May added: “We encourage each other to step outside our comfort zones and try something new. To enjoy such a friendship is good for everyone’s mental wellbeing.”



Mary and May at a local bucket collection

# “The support I’ve received for nearly 30 years has been incredible!”

Former nurse Kim shares her remarkable story of hearing loss and being partnered with three life-changing hearing dogs – Charlie, Eva and now Bear



Charlie



Eva



Bear

**I**f you see Kim now, especially with her hearing dog Bear, it’s hard to reconcile this cheerful lady’s demeanour with her comment that “for a large part of my life, I have felt like a criminal, in a prison”.

But that was how Kim felt for years – until three hearing dogs helped her to turn things around.

### A shattering blow

Kim has always been driven to help others, and she trained as a nurse. Her profound deafness – caused by an operation on one ear which went wrong and nerve damage to the other – was no barrier.

With the help of a hearing aid, she fulfilled her duties capably, often managing the ward.

Then one day in 1986, as Kim says: “My life fell apart.” A doctor noticed her hearing aid and told Kim she was a liability to her patients.

Kim said: “My confidence was completely shattered. I felt I couldn’t stand up to him, or explain that I am more than my deafness.”

Kim resigned from her job. She recalls: “I felt so very lonely, isolated and worthless. I hadn’t just lost my job. I’d lost my identity. I actually lost everything that was important to me... After helping so many people, when I needed help, nobody was there for me.”

### Enter Charlie

Finally, after finding out about Hearing Dogs and applying for her own life-changing partner, in 1994 Kim welcomed Charlie into her life. He immediately made a huge difference, waking Kim each morning when

“After helping so many people, when I needed help, nobody was there for me.”

the alarm went off and alerting her to important sounds.

Kim said: “I was so blessed with Charlie – a little dog with so much confidence, he gave me back mine.

“He made me see that it’s OK to be deaf. I started to believe in myself again and slowly, through Charlie, I got to know my neighbours better too.”

Kim found that being out with Charlie encouraged people to smile at her, or stop to talk. She gave talks about the Charity and started working again in the care sector.

### Friend for Eva

Kim loved her time with Charlie but, after nine years, he succumbed to heart disease.

It wasn’t only Kim who was upset, but her neighbours with whom Charlie had helped her build relationships and trust.

Happily, Kim knew that Hearing Dogs was already looking for Charlie’s successor: “Then along came the wonderful, free-spirited Eva. As soon as we met, our eyes locked, and I knew she was going to be my next hearing dog.”

Kim and Eva represented Hearing Dogs at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2007, at which a new yellow rose “Faithful Friend” was named in celebration of the Charity’s 25th

Bear is Kim’s third life-changing hearing dog

© Photos by Paul Wilkinson



Kim and her hearing dog Bear

anniversary. The following year, Kim started her own dog walking business. She said: “It was such a lovely way to get out and about, say hello to people, and feel a productive part of the world around me.”

### Along came Bear

Kim and Eva enjoyed 16 years together before Eva died on 24 July 2018. She said: “I wondered if I would ever get over Eva enough for me to have another dog and then along came Bear.

“From the moment he walked into my flat he made himself welcome. He just settled himself down, and that was that.”

Bear has followed in Kim and Eva’s pawprints. “That’s OK,” says Kim, “because his paws are massive!”

When Kim and Bear are out and about, Bear’s smart burgundy jacket prompts many people to stop and ask Kim about him. Bear is very chilled-out, despite his name, which helps to keep Kim relaxed.

As a result of his training, Bear alerts

Kim to sounds she should know about, with a nudge of his nose or by lying down if a smoke alarm goes off.

His favourite is the doorbell, because he gets to meet and greet people with a waggy tail.

Kim sums Bear up like this: “Bear has taken over where Charlie and Eva left off and allowed me to get on with my life.

“He’s my knight in shining armour! More than that, he’s my soulmate.”

### Amazingly lucky

Reflecting on her years of love and companionship with Charlie, Eva and Bear, Kim says: “Together Charlie, then Eva, and now Bear have taught me to be myself, to help people, to be who I am, and enjoy what I have to give. So I’ve been both terribly unfortunate, and amazingly lucky.

“That horrible comment about my deafness nearly ruined me, but the support I’ve received from my hearing dogs for nearly 30 years has been incredible.”

“Together Charlie, then Eva, and now Bear have taught me to be myself, to help people, to be who I am, and enjoy what I have to give.”

### ➔ Read more about Kim

Kim is one of our many beneficiaries whose lives have changed for the better, thanks to Hearing Dogs. To help others, visit [hearingdogs.org.uk/kim](http://hearingdogs.org.uk/kim) or call 01844 348109.

# How we can help you today

For four decades our charity has been helping deaf people to leave loneliness behind by training incredible hearing dogs. More recently, following the merger with Hearing Link, we have helped even more people to reconnect with life through our range of personalised hearing support services. So, how can we help you or a family member today? Find out here...

**W**e believe that nobody with hearing loss should feel alone. This is why we train highly-skilled hearing dogs and provide a wide range of personalised hearing support services.

We understand that hearing loss affects far more than a person's ears. The consequences can impact on every part of their life; relationships, status at work, confidence and self-esteem.

Our wonderful hearing dogs help deaf people by providing constant companionship, and alerting them to

life-saving sounds like the smoke alarm and intruder alarm, and other important sounds such as the oven timer and baby monitor. This combination of practical assistance and emotional support is life-changing.

However, a hearing dog might not always be the right solution for you or a family member.

By contacting us and starting a conversation about your hearing and the challenges you are facing, we can help you find the solutions that work best for you.

### Personalised services

That's where our Hearing Link Services come in. We offer a useful website, Helpdesk, support groups, community outreach, Hearing Hub service, and online shop with products to support hearing.

Each one offers emotional and practical help for people whatever their hearing level.

We believe in the power of peer support and shared experiences. Everything we do is powered by our trained volunteers, who have either lived or professional experience of hearing loss, and understand the daily challenges it brings.

Together they form our peer support team who deliver these personalised support services.

Read on to find out more about our range of support available.

### Get in touch today

If you need support to work out the next steps to take, please contact us:

Visit: [hearinglink.org](http://hearinglink.org)  
Call: 01844 348111



## Our services



### Online resources

Through our website [hearinglink.org](http://hearinglink.org), we provide extensive information about hearing loss, meaningful ways to connect to others and access to our hearing support services.



### Helpdesk

Our responsive Helpdesk offers information, guidance, and support to help you take the next step whether you, a family member or friend are experiencing hearing loss.



### Support groups

Our free groups, offered online and in person, are a chance to share solutions and explore coping strategies and technology to help manage the challenges of hearing loss.



### Community outreach

Our volunteer network and staff work in communities to support your hearing. We host sessions and attend events to offer practical and emotional advice.



### Hearing dogs

We train dogs that help deaf people by alerting them to life-saving sounds, like the smoke alarm, and providing companionship and emotional support.



### Online shop

Our online shop offers visible and discreet solutions for alerting others to your hearing level. Items include badges, cards, technology, and hearing aid batteries.



### Hearing Hub

Our free and confidential Hearing Hub service offers personalised support and guidance via our volunteers and staff to help you meet the challenges of hearing loss.

## More ways we can help... coming soon



### LiveChat

Instant messaging is available via our website [hearinglink.org](http://hearinglink.org) during weekdays and we plan to extend these hours in 2022. It's an opportunity to ask our team any questions you have about hearing loss. To access this service look out for the LiveChat icon.



### Helpful hours

We are building plans to offer online and in person sessions that cover helpful content on subjects relating to managing your hearing loss. These sessions will last up to an hour and may take the form of group sessions, online presentations or demonstrations.



There are lots of ways you can support us through microvolunteering

### Interested in microvolunteering?

**W**e believe in the power of peer support and shared experiences. Everything we do is powered by our team of trained volunteers and together they make up our Peer Support team.

However, if you've limited time to spare, you might be looking for ways to use your experiences of hearing loss, but on a flexible basis.

Did you know that we offer microvolunteering roles that mean you can get involved whether you have five minutes, two hours or half a day to spare? We are looking for people to help us start conversations about hearing loss. Roles include helping out at a Community Day, distributing literature or raising awareness on social media.

To find out more visit [hearingdogs.org.uk/micro](http://hearingdogs.org.uk/micro) or email [enquiries@hearinglink.org](mailto:enquiries@hearinglink.org)

# Out in the community



Our hugely popular Community Days are back this summer and autumn – and for the first time, they are open to anyone wanting to find out how we can help you, if you have hearing loss

**W**e are delighted to announce our exciting calendar of Community Days – heading to a local venue near you in 2022.

In recent years, our Community Days have become very important for our partnerships, giving them the opportunity to meet other hearing dog recipients and applicants, and to connect and gain support and advice.

At each one, we do different things. Sometimes we do activities and games. Sometimes we run a workshop or have a guest speaker. Sometimes we might offer information about technology to support those with hearing loss.

This year, for the first time, we are welcoming more people to these events who are looking to start a conversation

about their hearing and how our services may support their individual needs or those of a loved one.

Please look at our map (above) for our planned Community Days taking place from July to December 2022, and contact us if you would like to be involved.

We also organise community dog walks, held regionally throughout the UK. These are for our hearing dog partnerships to meet for a social dog walk, often followed by a cup of tea at a local café.

**We're online too!**

We also run Community Days online. These are held on Microsoft Teams and are an opportunity for our hearing dog partners to jump online with a cup of tea in the comfort of their own home, and to chat to others around the UK who also have hearing dogs.

Our virtual get-togethers use instant speech-to-text captions which helps to make the conversation much easier.

**How to attend**

If you are interested in taking part in any of these events, please contact us for more information as follows:

- If you are a hearing dog applicant, please contact your Support Advisor.
- If you are a hearing dog partner, please contact your Partnership Instructor.
- If you are a member of the public, please contact us at [helpdesk@hearinglink.org](mailto:helpdesk@hearinglink.org)

**If you want to learn more about what is happening at your local venue, please let us know. Call 01844 348111 or contact your Partnership Instructor.**

# Return of LinkUps

After a two-year absence, our popular residential LinkUp groups are back to support you, and we couldn't be happier



Selection of images from our first LinkUp Group in 2022, held in Edinburgh



**I**n the past couple of years, we've delivered our highly regarded LinkUps in an online format. These sessions, known as LinkUp Online, have been incredibly successful, with participants, and their partners and friends, learning to better manage their hearing by sharing experiences – and all from the comfort of their own home.

While these have been extremely beneficial to many people, we are very excited to announce that our in-person LinkUp groups are back for 2022, in addition to our LinkUp Online sessions.

Our groups take place across two days in residential settings, with volunteers and facilitators who have personal or professional experience of hearing loss.

We have held LinkUp groups in Edinburgh, Scotland; Cookstown, Northern Ireland; and at The Grange so far this year; and the return of these support groups has been welcomed across the Charity.

Andrew James, Head of Services at Hearing Dogs, said: "Our brilliant team of volunteers and staff have successfully shown how offering our services online can make a real difference in people's lives.

"In fact, the feedback from our service users has been so positive that our online sessions are here to stay!

"It's especially wonderful now, to also be able to resume in person LinkUp groups too.

"We've all missed connecting with people face-to-face and we know many of you have been eagerly awaiting news on this.

"Once again, people with hearing loss and their partners can meet others in similar situations in person, discuss hearing loss, coping strategies and solutions – and, above all, know that they aren't alone."

Volunteer Ann, who facilitated the sessions at our recent support group in Edinburgh, was delighted to meet our beneficiaries once more.

She said: "We're back! LinkUp groups had their first post-pandemic outing at Edinburgh recently. Some nervous anticipation was in the air – and that was just the volunteers!

"Then the participants arrived and immediately the connections began, the sharing and the ever more confident communicating around key issues in our hearing loss lives.

"This peer support model, in a residential setting, is so powerful and enjoyable. I'm thrilled we can offer this service again."

**We're eagerly working to make more LinkUp groups available across the UK soon. Keep posted to [hearinglink.org](http://hearinglink.org) for further details.**

# Access: working with others



Find out more about the work Hearing Dogs is doing with other members of Assistance Dogs UK

**A**s mentioned in our last issue of *inTouch*, we wanted to take the opportunity to bring you some more information on the work we have been doing, as a charity, and with the other members of Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK).

ADUK is a voluntary coalition of assistance dog training organisations in the UK, who have all been accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) or by The International Guide Dogs Federation (IGDF).

This accounts for the majority of assistance dog organisations and partners across the UK, but this doesn't include those who train their own dogs or who are presently unaccredited.

## Evolution

ADUK was established in 1995 to champion a standards-based approach to the training and support of assistance partnerships, as well as educating the wider public and service providers.

Until 2020, it was run by a board of voluntary trustees and supported by membership fees, acting as an umbrella body to bring together like-minded people to discuss ideas and initiatives.

That year, ADUK ([assistancedogs.org.uk](http://assistancedogs.org.uk)) appointed its first staff member, who has been very successful in helping ADUK start to

achieve some of its strategic objectives. As such, ADUK now has 10 accredited members and 6 candidate members (working towards international accreditation through ADI).

ADUK is lucky enough to receive financial support each year, which has allowed the organisation to look ahead to new projects.

Here is what's currently happening, as well as plans for the future:

- Four video animations to be created to showcase the work of assistance dogs, focusing on school age education, access and identifying an assistance dogs.
- Production of door stickers.
- Production of ID cards and investment in a digital ID alongside ADI and IGDF.
- Staff and service provider training and information guides.
- Creating an advocate group to represent the assistance dog user community.

## Commitment

Our charity and ADUK remain committed to improving awareness and education about access and provisions for people using assistance dogs because we recognise the importance this has for everyone.

We also look to share great examples of accessibility. Here are just some recent examples that we've been made aware of and you may like to check out:

- M&S introduced staff training to better support customers with assistance dogs. Read the story: [hearingdogs.org.uk/mands-assistancedogs](http://hearingdogs.org.uk/mands-assistancedogs)
- Co-op retail group has produced their own in-house training guide on assistance dogs – A Guide to Understanding Assistance Dogs. Read more: [hearingdogs.org.uk/coop-assistancedogs](http://hearingdogs.org.uk/coop-assistancedogs)



Hearing dog assisting deaf partner on public transport

## The future

As the world continues to open up, and many people may be starting to think of booking a break, it may be that you encounter some great examples of kind and welcoming establishments.

We know that most access problems are often misunderstandings, but we can always help change perspectives and resolve these problems if they happen.

The Charity has a number of guides which help navigate access issues if they occur, as well as template letters and support materials. Just ask your Partnership Instructor or contact [angie.platten@hearingdogs.org.uk](mailto:angie.platten@hearingdogs.org.uk) for more information.

## USEFUL TIP

A great resource to use and share is the Equality and Human Rights Commission leaflet. Download your copy here: [hearingdogs.org.uk/assistancedogs-guide](http://hearingdogs.org.uk/assistancedogs-guide)

# Join our family

Show your support for the work of Hearing Dogs and Hearing Link Services by becoming a member and joining our wonderful charity family

**F**or many years, Hearing Link Services has run a membership scheme as a way for people with hearing loss, and their families and friends, to show support for the work we do and connect with others with the same experiences.

We'd like to thank all those – including a growing number of Life Members – who have continued to support us, even in recent difficult times. We appreciate it!

Last year, we reviewed our membership scheme with input from current members. And now we're pleased to announce that membership is bigger and better than ever.

You can join as an Individual Member (concessionary rate available), Life Member, or as a Group, Club or Organisation (with option of Public Liability Insurance).

By joining us today, members will receive a regular Hearing Link Services e-newsletter, our feature magazine *inTouch* and 15% discount on hearing loss products on our online shop. We're also working on a range of member initiatives for the coming months:

- A new distinctive Hearing Link



Membership is a chance to connect with others living with hearing loss

Services member badge.

- A new bi-annual e-newsletter and micro-website exclusively for members.
- An online community for members to access and share information, experiences and views with others.
- Priority access to events (online and in person) and videos.

All these plans are informed by feedback from our members. They've told us how

much they value the sense of community they get from their membership, as well as the practical help available in learning how to live with hearing loss. Now is an excellent time to join our membership community, so don't miss out!

To apply, visit [hearinglink.org/membership](http://hearinglink.org/membership) for further information or to download our membership application form.

## BSL now recognised in UK law



British Sign Language (BSL) was recognised by the UK Parliament as a language of Great Britain on 28 April and the BSL Act came into force on 28 June 2022. The Act's main provisions are:

- Recognising British Sign Language as a language of Great Britain in its own right.
- A duty on the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to report on the promotion of British Sign Language in Ministerial Departments.
- A duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance on the general promotion and facilitation of British Sign Language.

For further information and explanatory notes, visit <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2915/publications>. This follows the Scottish Government giving BSL full support under the BSL (Scotland) Act of 2015.



The BSL Bill has completed all Parliamentary stages



Sophie and hearing dog Rusty

“Life without Rusty by my side is tough, but not as tough as before I had him.”

Sophie and hearing dog Rusty were inseparable partners until he suffered a recurring shoulder injury. With Rusty in considerable discomfort, Sophie took the heartbreaking decision to end their seven-year partnership. Here, Sophie shares their story and how Rusty’s life-changing support has given her confidence to take the next steps in her hearing loss journey



Sophie and her family with Rusty

**H**ow could I have imagined the journey I was starting when my audiologist recommended Hearing Dogs for Deaf People to me?

I was 24 years old, suffering terribly with depression and anxiety, both of which were caused by sudden hearing loss in my early 20s.

I was struggling socially, and my work as a musician had become almost impossible to the point where I lost my career. It was causing me emotional and practical challenges and I wasn’t really coping.

From my first visit to a Hearing Dogs open day, I knew my life was about to change forever. My application for a hearing dog was accepted, and in January 2015, Rusty the Golden Cockapoo arrived in my life.

#### Rusty – the life-changer

I had always known Rusty could help me with the practical challenges – getting me to work on time every day because he woke me with the alarm, making sure I was safe and aware of my surroundings, and letting me know when the doorbell rang.

What I had underestimated was the amazing impact he would have on my social and emotional challenges. I immediately had confidence to talk about my hearing loss with him by my side.

He empowered me to take ownership of my disability, and enabled me to start conversations with people when out and about. I slept more soundly knowing he was there to keep me safe.

Suddenly, my world began to open up. I began to feel joy again, and for the first time in a long while, I never felt lonely. He quickly became my best friend, and opened up a world of possibility.

Fast forward through the next few years – I had the confidence to start a relationship with my now husband, to progress in a new career, and start a family.

I am now a proud mother and charity Chief Executive – not words I could imagine myself saying before I met Rusty!

I feel I owe so much to Rusty and to Hearing Dogs for the life-changing impact of their work. If I had not been introduced to its work, I am not sure I would still be here today.

#### Changing times

Last year, I realised that Rusty was struggling with a recurring shoulder injury, so I contacted Hearing Dogs to see what we could do to help him.

We discussed what he needed and knew his desire to alert me to sounds, and our routine working together was so strong, that he’d only get the rest needed by returning to their training centre. He spent several weeks away resting and receiving veterinary treatment.

I missed Rusty every day. I was eager for all the updates they provided for how he was getting on. As hard as it was being apart from Rusty, I had to think carefully about what was right for his health and future.

Rusty had worked for me for many years, and he wasn’t getting any younger. I could make many changes in my life to support him, but given his health needs, living with me would still put further strain on him. I just couldn’t do that to him. I wanted him to have a calmer and quieter life that supports his health for the longest time possible. After everything he has done for me, his needs deserve to be put before mine.

#### Difficult decision

Therefore, the decision was taken to bring our working partnership to a close.

We don’t yet know if that means Rusty will go on to be someone else’s hearing dog where he could have a calm and relaxed lifestyle or a well-earned retirement, but

what we do know is that he will continue to bring joy wherever he goes. Obviously I’m absolutely heartbroken, and finding many situations and practical aspects of life a little challenging.

Life without him by my side is tough, but not as tough as before I had him.

He’s given me so much and my life wouldn’t be what it is today without having been partnered with him.

#### Amazing charity

The power of Hearing Dogs never ceases to amaze me.

Not only was I lucky enough to have my life transformed by Rusty, but along the way met so many other wonderful deaf partners who have had their lives transformed by this amazing charity.

The confidence, companionship, and independence that Rusty gave me can never be celebrated enough. The education I received from Hearing Dogs, Hearing Link Services, and other partners has been hugely valuable in helping me to manage my hearing loss moving forward.

Now isn’t the right time for me to have another hearing dog, but as time passes and circumstances change, I know the Charity will be there and ready to support me.

“The confidence, companionship, and independence that Rusty gave me can never be celebrated enough.”

# Stables upgrade



In the last issue of *inTouch* we updated you on improvements to the training flats on our Buckinghamshire site, along with the installation of new perimeter fencing to ensure the safety of our dogs.

We also mentioned refurbishment work on our stables accommodation, funded by a generous supporter. We are delighted to share that these works have now been completed.

The stables accommodation, which comprises of six units, is for use by hearing dog recipients, applicants and Hearing Dogs staff as appropriate, so it's a crucial part of the site.

The refurbishment work has been a combination of:

- External – doors, windows and any problematic roof tiles replaced, additional loft insulation and a level accessible pathway as well as a ramp.
- Internal – redecoration, replacement of internal doors, new sockets and furniture, new disabled fittings



Our cosy stables are a welcome retreat for applicants and recipients

and retiling in the bathrooms and soundproofing of each room.

In addition, there has been an upgrade to the fire alarm system and the installation of a new hearing loop system ensures that the rooms are deaf friendly.

Angie Platten, Director of Hearing

Loss Services, said: "When our guests are onsite, it can often be quite intimidating, particularly when hearing loss makes communication so difficult. Knowing that they have their own, comfortable, private space to return to and rest between sessions is so important."

ARCHIE



COOPER



FUDGE

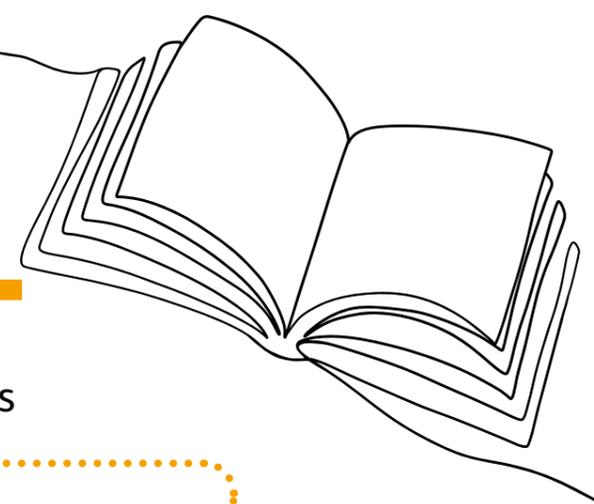


## Sponsor a puppy today

From just £3 a month, you could help another deaf person to leave loneliness behind by sponsoring adorable Spaniel Fudge, cheeky Cockapoo Archie 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 access to their online Puppy Pen. Visit [hearingdogs.org.uk/sponsor](http://hearingdogs.org.uk/sponsor) to find out more.

# In print



A selection of books with hearing dog and hearing loss themes for reading enthusiasts



**Sound:**  
*A Story of Hearing Lost and Found*  
By Bella Bathurst

The experience of a journey into deafness and back to hearing. Mixing memoir with interviews with soldiers, sign language experts, musicians and mental health workers, the author explores what it means to live with and without sound, uncovering a hidden world of sense and connection.

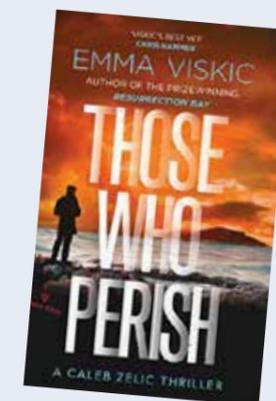
Available in our online shop: [hearinglink.org/sound](http://hearinglink.org/sound)  
Read our volunteer Sylvia's review: [hearinglink.org/sound-review](http://hearinglink.org/sound-review)

**Those Who Perish:**  
*Caleb Zelic Series – Vol 4*  
By Emma Viskic

Deaf PI Caleb Zelic has always been an outsider, estranged from family and friends. But when he receives a text that his brother Anton is in danger, Caleb senses a chance for redemption.

The author, an award-winning Australian crime writer, learned Auslan (Australian sign language) in order to write a series of thrillers featuring Caleb Zelic, of which this is the fourth and the finale.

Find out more about the series and the author: [hearinglink.org/thosewhoperish](http://hearinglink.org/thosewhoperish)



**Barkley the hearing dog**  
By Sonya Paige

This debut children's book by Sonya Paige guides young children through the jobs of a hearing service dog, based on the real-life experiences of Sonya, who has been deaf since childhood, and her assistance dog.

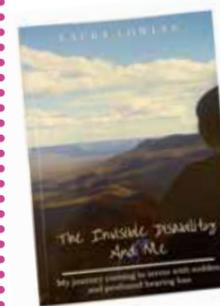
Available from our gift shop at The Grange or on Amazon.



**Invisible Disability & Me**  
By Laura Lowles

The author, a fundraiser and blogger, talks through her experiences and insight into living with hearing loss – full of tips and tricks for all sorts of situations, to help people feel more confident and enhance communication with those around them.

Available in our online shop: [hearinglink.org/invisible](http://hearinglink.org/invisible)



**The Island House**  
By Mary Considine

Mary and Patrick's dream was to live in London, have 2.4 children, the nice house, the successful jobs. But life had other plans, and in one traumatic year it all came crashing down. Mary finds herself pulled towards Cornwall and dreams of St George's Island. So, when they've an opportunity to become tenants if they renovate the old Island House, they grab it with both hands. The story features a hearing dog called Skipp.

Available from: [hearinglink.org/islandhouse](http://hearinglink.org/islandhouse)



# Linda's way

Hearing Link Services volunteer takes on 315km trek to raise vital funds



Linda took 24 days to complete her challenge with family friend Brian

**C**ongratulations to Hearing Link Services volunteer Linda, who completed the Camino de Santiago trek in Northern Spain to fundraise for our charity.

Along with her travelling buddies – husband Bill (who drove) and family friend Brian – she trekked for 24 days over April and May, spending nights in freezing temperatures, walking in pouring rain, battling bitterly cold winds and thunderstorms.

On other days the temperatures reached 26 degrees.

The pilgrimage walk included dirt tracks and riverbeds, as well as steep climbs up to hillside chapels and steep steps back down again. There were spiritual moments along the way too, as well as deep contemplation.

Linda says she felt particularly emotional when she reached the Iron Cross – the highest point on the route – after a long climb. However, she was disappointed to find that the iron cross

has now been replaced with one of wood.

During her journey, Linda also met some interesting people, including two men living in a cave and Kendra, who is from the Comanche tribe in Oklahoma.

She also met a group of 20 blind people with guide dogs who were tackling the Camino.

Linda says the whole experience was “euphoric” but left her “tired, exhausted and aching”. Her efforts have raised a wonderful £730 towards our range of services. What a fantastic achievement!

## National Paws Appeal collection raises over £21,600

The Paws Appeal, our biggest fundraising collection event, with 78 bucket collections taking place across the UK in May, has raised more than £21,600 to change the lives of deaf people and those with hearing loss.

Launching in Deaf Awareness Week (4–9 May) and running throughout the month, the Paws Appeal also gave us the opportunity to talk about the many different services we offer to provide help and support to anyone living with hearing loss, and their friends and families.

The collections were held by volunteers nationwide, who kindly gave their time to raise funds and awareness of Hearing Dogs and Hearing Link Services.

A huge thank you to everyone



Paws Appeal collections were held across the UK

who volunteered to collect for the Paws Appeal, donated to one of our collections or simply stopped for a chat

– you are directly helping to change the lives of deaf people and people with hearing loss.



The Great British Dog Walk returns to 14 venues across the UK this autumn

## Great British Dog Walk returns

The Great British Dog Walk returns to venues across the UK this September – and by taking part you will be able to help transform the lives of deaf people.

The Great British Dog Walk is a great way to explore a stunning location with your friends and family (with or without a dog!) and help deaf people to leave

loneliness behind. There will be 14 walks across the UK, with a virtual option for those who are not able to get to one of our venues. With our virtual alternative you can take part from anywhere you like.

The walks held at our venues will enable you to walk in just your family and friend groups or walk with new

friends, in beautiful locations. All tickets purchased come with a free dog bandana and everyone taking part will receive a certificate and activity pack to enjoy.

Tickets are now on sale. Please visit our website at [hearingdogs.org.uk/gbdw](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/gbdw) for more information about how to get involved.

## Calendar of events

Support Hearing Dogs for Deaf People by joining us at our upcoming events this year

### LATE SUMMER SHOW

**When:** 11 September 2022, 11am–4pm.

**Where:** The Grange, Saunderton, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9NS



**What:** Join us, with fun for all the family, for the highlight of our events calendar – the Late Summer Show. There'll be hearing dog demos, food stalls, fun rides, traditional games, a dog show and lots more.

### CHRISTMAS MARKET

**When:** 26–27 November 2022, time TBC.

**Where:** The Grange, Saunderton, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9NS



**What:** Explore our range of gift and craft stalls, Christmas chalets, Santa's Grotto, and tasty food including mince pies and mulled punch.

### VIRTUAL EVENTS

We will also be running two Facebook virtual events, **The Barking Bake Off** in October and **Santa Paws 12 Jogs of Christmas** in December. If you are interested, please email [events@hearingdogs.org.uk](mailto:events@hearingdogs.org.uk)

There are more ways you can support us in 2022. Please visit our website at [hearingdogs.org.uk/support](https://hearingdogs.org.uk/support) and take a look at what you could do. Thank you.



# Meet the Team:

Jane, Director of Operations at Hearing Dogs

**M**y name is Jane and I am the Director of Operations at Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. I am responsible for overseeing our canine services from dog breeding to dog welfare, logistics and training.

I live in the town close to The Grange, Princes Risborough, with my husband and our two girls – one of whom is at secondary school and one at primary. My mum also lives with us.

I am a dog lover, and particularly have a soft spot for Spaniels. Currently we share our home with hearing dog mum Pip.

I joined Hearing Dogs in 2000. Over the years, I have worked as Welfare Manager, Dog Supply Manager, and then later managed the volunteering, quality services and client applications areas.

Behind the scenes, I have also taken on the roles of volunteer in both training dogs and

**“I love following the individual journeys of the dogs and all the people attached to that journey...”**

rearing litters, so I am very lucky to know things from a volunteer perspective too.

Right now, rearing litters is very fresh in my mind because my family and I have waved goodbye to a bundle of fun loving puppies that make up our brood Pip's first litter.

I am based at The Grange (our Southern Training Centre). I also oversee the Beatrice Wright Centre in Yorkshire which is run by one of my team, Sam, so I can be found there too at times.

I head up a team of 95 staff, some of whom are based at either of these sites, or as an instructor in the community anywhere from Edinburgh to Exeter.

We have around 420 puppies and dogs in training at any one time and our Breeding Centre based at The Grange manages around 50 hearing dog mums that live in the local area. The team is also lucky enough to have around 1,200 volunteers who support our work in a variety of roles.

I am responsible for all aspects of the breeding, healthcare, wellbeing and training of dogs for placement in a role that best match their individual personalities.

No two days are the same, as the areas I support are so broad. I work with my team to develop our day-to-day practices to ensure the best possible outcome for each dog's training journey and for the wellbeing of our hearing dog “mums and dads”.

I also work to continually develop our support

infrastructures for all our volunteers and staff, and our training course experiences for our deaf partners in the early stages of developing their partnerships with their new dogs.

I love following the individual journeys of the dogs and all the people attached to that journey, helping to make that the best journey possible.

I also contribute to the creation of a long-term strategy. I aim to develop operations to provide the most successful and rewarding experiences for everyone helping each dog reach its potential, and most importantly to be sustainable so that we can reliably help new recipients year-on-year in the future.

As puppies leave litters, and dogs leave volunteers and staff, to go to their next trainer, or to their individual partners, emotions can feel very complex and these goodbyes can be painful. It can often feel surprisingly so for people, as everyone is aware from the start that it will come, and genuinely want to see their dogs finally connected to their carefully matched deaf partner.

**“We’ve been focusing on encouraging more engagement and sharing between the dog’s new partner and the volunteers involved in their journey. It is astounding the difference this can make...”**

This is an area I am very conscious of. This is why we have been focusing on trying to encourage more engagement and sharing between the dog's new partner and the volunteers involved in their journey. It is astounding the difference this can make to our volunteers and also to the new partners, and something we hope will become routine.

**S**truggling to hear conversations on the telephone is a common frustration for people with hearing loss. However, there are ways you can improve amplification and tone, depending on if you are using a landline or mobile device.

## Landline telephone

When you cannot hear properly on the phone it can increase feelings of anxiety, frustration and isolation.



© Courtesy of Connevens

To be able to participate in a phone call with confidence is important and there are many different types of landline telephones on the market which can help. It is worth looking around and testing products to find the best option for you.

Corded and cordless phones have lots of helpful features but, the important ones to look out for are – incoming speech amplification, tone and volume control, hands-free capability and visual call indicator (e.g. flashing light).

Finding a supplier or local service provider who offer a try before you buy service is recommended.

You can also contact the Hearing Link Services Helpdesk at [hearinglink.org/helpdesk/](http://hearinglink.org/helpdesk/) for friendly help and advice.

## Android user

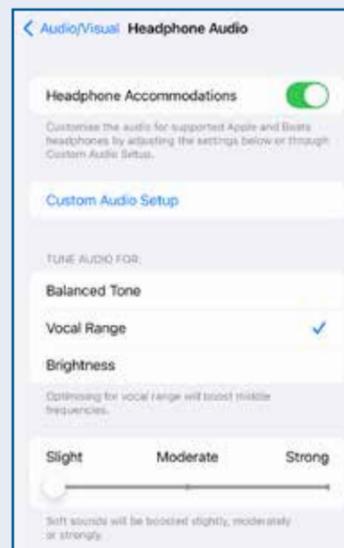
Android mobile devices can use Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) to stream audio.

This technology is usually used for data, rather than audio, and uses significantly less battery. Google has made this technology work for streaming audio to hearing aids. This allows much more confidence using this feature throughout the day without requiring to top-up charge in the phone's battery.

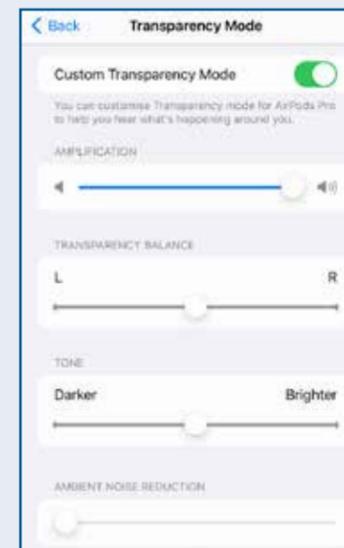
To connect your hearing aids, go to bluetooth in settings, turn off your hearing aids and turn them on again. Shortly thereafter, they should appear in the list of devices to connect with. Select them and they should compare. This will allow you to stream calls and audio from the phone.

Different Android phones and different versions of Android mean battery usage will vary, so it is best to test this feature at home, rather than out and about.

# Technology Corner



Screenshot from device running iOS 15.4.1



## Apple user

Mobile technology has advanced incredibly over recent years and if you are an Apple user, there is a new feature that could help you while making calls. Conversation Boost helps those who use AirPods Pro and struggle with their hearing, especially when communicating in busy or noisy places.

This feature focuses the AirPods Pro microphones on the person who's talking in front of you and boosts their voice and limits some environmental sounds. You can also change the tone of sound as it may prove better for your particular level of hearing.

To use this feature, take the following steps and refer to the screenshots above to assist:

1. Put your AirPods Pro in your ears to connect them to your iPhone or iPad.
2. Go to Settings > Accessibility > Audio/Visual > Headphone Accommodations > Transparency Mode.
3. Turn on Conversation Boost at the bottom of the page.

There are several options to note including tuning the microphones for vocal range, whether you want the transparency mode to play in your left, right or both ears, and whether you want the tone adjusting slightly higher (brighter) or lower (darker).

For more information about using Apple devices in this way visit: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT211218>



Jane with puppies from Pip's first litter  
© Photograph by David Moore

# Tributes

These pages are dedicated to the memory of the people and dogs who have helped shape Hearing Dogs for Deaf People into the successful and respected organisation it is today

## Remembering Fergus

Hearing dog partnered with Alison from Shotts, Scotland

Fergus had a lovely nature, very friendly, a wee character! I have so many lovely memories of him, he always made my day and cheered me up. He changed my life for the better, he made me feel confident when I was out and about. At home, he let me know if there was anyone at the door, also he alerted me to any danger. We had a strong bond. He was my ears. He loved to chase his favourite ball. Two years ago, he developed cancer. He had chemotherapy for five months. He was a favourite of the staff at the vets. Thankfully his last chemotherapy treatment was one month before the lockdown. He did very well, and much better than the vets expected. Sadly, I lost him on the 21 December last year. He was 10 years old. I was heartbroken and miss him every day.



## Remembering Heidi

Hearing dog partnered with Jacqui from Ringwood, Hampshire

Heidi and I had nearly 11 years together, but ultimately the kindest release and decision had to be taken. We bonded so well, and I miss her hugely, along with all her little traits. She made me, and many others, smile and laugh regularly. We were told that she wouldn't "bring" but she did, and loved her ball, walks, people, carrots and cuddles galore. She also worked tirelessly, above and beyond her training, making me feel safe, loved and needed. She was a reason to rise in the morning, and her empathy and loving nature was heart-warming, especially when I was unwell, or sad. Heidi just knew... It has been lonely and challenging again without her by my side, but I am grateful and privileged to have so many fond and happy memories of my "special girl" to take forward with me.



## Remembering Travis

Confidence companion partnered with John and wife Moira, Hearing Dogs volunteers from Abingdon, Oxfordshire

Travis was around one year old when he came to finish his training with us after a second operation on his front leg. With the help of trainer Tom Green, Travis did very well. When Travis failed his final physical health check, he was offered to us as a confidence companion to support John, who has vascular dementia. Travis was quick to learn that John had to use walking frames and a stairlift. He always sat at John's feet when I went out and would bring his toys to John in the lounge or garden and get John to throw them. Travis also knew when John was having a TIA attack, he would lie across John's feet; it was his way of letting me know. Travis was loved by everyone who met him. He was a gentle giant and is missed by all who knew him in his short life. He was just four and a half years old when he died in my arms at home.

## Remembering Yasmin

Hearing dog partnered with Matt from Derbyshire

It is with great sadness that, at the end of January 2022, I had to say goodbye to my beloved and faithful friend of nearly 15 years, my retired hearing dog Yasmin, three months off her 16th birthday. Yasmin, was one of the Charity's 'Dustbin Pups' who were found dumped in a rubbish bin in Southern Ireland. She went on to become the most wonderful companion and my best friend. Yasmin was adored by everyone who met her, she was a very gentle and loving soul and is missed by the whole family. I am left with so many happy memories and wonderful photographs of our time together. Over her lifetime, Yasmin has supported the Charity by attending many fundraising events. We have travelled the length and breadth of the country together on holidays. She loved to run on the beach, paddle in the sea and wander through forests. She loved her garden at home and enjoyed smelling the flowers and sunbathing. She always had one ear open in case she was needed or something exciting was happening. She was my loyal and faithful companion at work, loved by all the staff at school. She was even given her own retirement party. Goodnight my baby, we love and miss you so much, one day we'll be together again.



## Remembering Saxon

Hearing dog partnered with Christine from Grimsby, Lincolnshire

I collected Saxon from The Grange training centre in Buckinghamshire on 7 September 2007. He was lively and mischievous, but as soon as I put his uniform on he became calm, his ears and tail went up and he was very proud to walk beside me to perform his duties. Wherever he went he made friends – Church, supermarket, bank, hospital etc. No-one could resist him, and this love and friendship was returned by Saxon. As a hearing dog he did his job very well – apart from the fact that he did not like to respond to the alarm clock in the mornings! I know he saved my life at least a couple of times. It was a very sad day when he fell asleep for the final time, but I have very happy memories of a great little fellow and friend.



## Remembering Darren

Hearing dog partnered with Marjan from Sudbury, Suffolk

Darren, a Dachshund cross Poodle, came into my life 13 years ago after the sudden death of my husband. With his burgundy coat and long body, we were stopped many times by people curious to know his breed. The friends

I made during country walks and shopping because of Darren gave me the confidence to give talks to small groups interested in Hearing Dogs and the work they do enabling deaf people to interact again in the community. In later years Darren became deaf and had a few health problems but he still enjoyed his walks as well as helping me in the garden. He became adept at finding plums and raspberries, his favourite fruits! Darren died peacefully. He now sleeps in his happy place amongst the apple trees. I will always miss Darren, he gave me a purpose in life, he is forever in my heart.

## Remembering Benji

Hearing dog partnered with Verity from Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire

You started life as an unwanted Christmas present, but you ended having touched the lives of many with your presence. With thanks to Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, you were identified to be destined for something bigger and better. I had the fortune of spending the best years with you. You were superb at your work as a hearing dog (HD). You brought smiles and comfort to hundreds in your lifetime, and you were fantastic switching between work and play. You were excellent working alongside me with military veterans, many struggling with PTSD. Some told me: "I trust dogs, more than people", and that because you were calm, they felt assured there was no immediate danger around them. You taught them things, that I could not. You leave an irreplaceable Benji shaped place in my heart, and probably in many others too. Rest easy HD Benji 3778.





## Remembering Florence

Much loved friend to Hearing Dogs volunteer Bettina and family

Florence was a rescue dog from the streets of London. An unknown terrier, of unknown age, taken into the Hearing Dogs training scheme in 2007. She came to live in the Meller household for her socialising. Unfortunately, her role as a hearing dog wasn't meant to be, but she landed on her paws being rehomed as a pet with our family. For 15+ years she was friend to many more young dogs who stayed at Chez Meller for their puppy training, and more recently litters of puppies when our family started fostering broods. Florence has always been there, pitter patter around, minding her own business through all of the other dogs, puppies, cats, house moves and babies. She would put up with it all just as long as she was curled up on the sofa next to Bettina every evening – her favourite place to be. ❤️ We will miss you, Florence, our original golden girl.

## Remembering Hanson

Hearing dog partnered with Rosemary from Filey, North Yorkshire

Nothing could have prepared me for the loss of our beloved hearing dog Hanson. I had him nearly 16 years and it's hard to imagine life without him. Hanson was socialised by volunteer Dorothy Saunders of High Wycombe, before starting his training at The Grange. They loved him very dearly. Hanson came with me to work but the management were not accommodating so I left my job. Hanson and I had many favourite walks: St Albans Park, the cornfields behind Woodhall Farm, the Nickey Line, and Dunstable Downs. After we moved to Yorkshire, we discovered Sewerby Hall near Bridlington for our dog walks. Hanson put up with all our cats. They loved him and would rush to greet him, but he remained aloof with them. I don't think any dog will ever replace Hanson. He spent his whole life watching over me and I like to think that somewhere in Heaven, where he has to be, he will be waiting for me.



## Remembering Jeanette

Hearing Dogs volunteer from Botley, Hampshire

It is with great sadness that we notify you of the passing of our friend Jeanette Collett on 4 April 2022 after a long illness. Jeanette first joined Hearing Dogs as a volunteer puppy socialiser in 1988 and was an active member of the South Hants Fundraising Branch from its earliest days until her health deteriorated this year. She socialised 30 puppies, and later gave

holiday cover to recipients' dogs. She became a speaker and, through her talks, inspired many others to support the Charity – including one who left Hearing Dogs a very significant legacy gift. Jeanette was branch chairman for some years and an active fundraiser – at the age of 73 she did a sponsored abseil down the Spinnaker Tower and was awarded Hearing Dogs Ambassador of the Year. She was always very encouraging to new recruits and, for many years, ran a monthly dog walk for socialisers, recipients and supporters. Jeanette will be much missed by her family and all her friends. May she rest in peace.

## Remembering Joan

Hearing Dogs volunteer, partnered with hearing dog Clover (d), from Plymouth, Devon

We were saddened to learn of the death of Joan Broadway who died on 21 January 2022 after a short illness aged 82. She was a long-standing supporter of the Charity and was herself grateful for the life-enhancing work of a hearing dogs. Joan suffered a partial hearing loss in childhood, later becoming profoundly deafened as an adult. She was fitted with a cochlear implant and became quite accomplished at lip-reading but felt particularly blessed to welcome hearing dog Clover into her life. Clover was her companion, her ears, and an introduction to many new friends associated with the Charity. Joan chaired a local fundraising group and was always pleased to talk about Clover, even taking her into schools to tell the children about the useful work of a hearing dog. She will be missed by family, friends and fellow fundraisers.



## BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

To remember a special person please contact us on 01844 348148 or email fundraising@hearingdogs.org.uk



## Remembering Chris

Hearing Dogs volunteer puppy trainer from Waterlooville, Hampshire

Gill Webb pays tribute to a dear friend: "Chris passed away suddenly on 7 February 2022. Although he really wanted a dog of his own, he found it would be impossible with his travelling commitments. Being the kind, thoughtful person that he was, he wanted to be useful and help in some way. Chris enjoyed looking

after my dog when I was on holiday and offered the same short-term holiday cover to hearing dog pups. Chris found caring for a dog made a real difference when he was feeling a bit depressed, it would lift him up. Caring for the hearing dog puppies was an absolute joy for him. He enjoyed having a reason to get out, to walk the dogs, to keep them to their training regime, only giving them treats when they were allowed – unlike my dog who got treats often when he gave Chris the 'sad eye' routine! May he rest in puppy peace."



## Remembering Lego

Hearing dog partnered with Louise from Cambridge

It was love at first sight when I met this wonderful little chap in January 2007 – we were inseparable for the next 15 years. He loved coming to work with me. As a Deaf Specialist for the Sensory Support Service in Cambridgeshire, I have the privileged job of visiting deaf children in schools all over the county, advocating and celebrating deafness. The children range from birth–25, so you can imagine how many lives were touched by him. He was a source of comfort and inspiration for many. Some are now adults and still talk about how much seeing Lego helped them. I like to think I'd something to do with it too, but it's always been about Lego! And rightly so. He was a star. He knew the children he had to sit quietly for, those he had to cheer up, and those who needed a cuddle. What a life. What a legacy. Retirement came around the time of the first lockdown. It was lovely to still have him with me "at work" as I saw the children across the screens, from the comfort of home. I didn't have to face going to work without him, he was curled up at my feet, waking occasionally to greet a smiling face across the laptop. Lego went to sleep for the last time a month before his 16th birthday. A life well lived. Thank you, Hearing Dogs. Thank you, dear Lego. I'll miss you forever...



## Remembering Sam

Hearing dog partnered with Caroline from Sittingbourne, Kent

Sam was one of the millennium litter and we were partnered in March 2012. I was reluctant to consider a Spaniel at first, due to the nature of my job working in citizens advice, but Hearing Dogs persuaded me to meet Sam. It was love at first sight for the two of us. I had an amazing eight years with Sam as my hearing dog, he went everywhere with me, he came to training sessions and got his own certificates every time. Everyone who met him fell

deeply in love. Sam was my ears and my world, he loved to work and of course he loved his tennis balls. As Sam grew in my world, I grew in confidence knowing he was by my side. When Sam was diagnosed with cancer, in September 2019, he was retired but remained by my side until April 2020. Sam is now pain free and my love for that beautiful Spaniel will remain forever. Sleep well my beautiful boy.

## Remembering Pepsi

Hearing dog partnered with Jacqueline from Ballymena, County Antrim

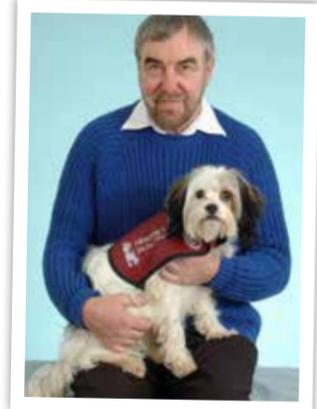
I remember when I got Pepsi in 2013. Pepsi was my lifesaver and hero; a super-special amazing hearing dog. Pepsi sadly went to sleep when he was 16 years and five days old. Pepsi was a wonderful dog who brought joy to my life. I was very lucky to get Pepsi. We went everywhere together and became well known in our local town. He made a lot of friends and was the first hearing dog in Ballymena, Northern Ireland. I miss him very much, every day, but I know he is walking beside me always and watching over me. Pepsi is in my heart forever. I love you Pepsi. Thank you for being my partner. Until we meet again.



## Remembering Chip

Hearing dog partnered with John from Wellingborough, Northamptonshire

My wonderful loyal companion Chip. Chip peacefully passed away 16 November 2021 aged 17 years. He was very active in fundraising for Hearing Dogs and was well known at events up and down the country. My wife Maggie and I were blessed to have him part of our family, he will be greatly missed. He touched many hearts. Everyone he met loved him. He was a star. He was a rescue dog from Battersea Dogs Home, adopted into the Hearing Dogs charity, matched and trained for me. He had a wonderful, happy life and had lots of love to give. A little cheeky chappie.





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for Deaf People

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