The magazine from Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

How Indie learned to be a hearing dog

The Great British Dog Walk 2016

What to do if your dog starts to go deaf

Spread the word
Find out why it’s good to talk

Angellica Bell on learning to sign and her ideal dog-walking companion

“This little dog transformed our lives”
Malcolm & Anne launch our Hope for Hearing Dogs Appeal

“I’ve met many adorable dogs in my line of work”

Issue 53
SPRING 2016
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Welcome!

We’ve put together a feature-packed issue of Favour full of inspiring stories and great ideas for how you can get involved with Hearing Dogs. In this issue we look at the telltale signs that your dog might be losing his hearing (p28), and ways to keep communicating if he does go deaf (p18). Turn to page 16 to find out if you could train to be a puppy socialiser, or help us spread the word by becoming a registered speaker (p26). Spring is just around the corner, so have a look at our Great British Dog Walk round-up on page 24 to find out how to take part. Finally, it’s our Awards issue and on pages 10–13 you can meet our inspirational winners – both human and canine. Enjoy!

Gill Lacey Editor
A dog’s life

News  ☀  Views  ☀  Updates  ☀
We sniff out the stories that matter to you...

LISTENING PROJECT

Back to school
Do deaf children learn better when there’s a dog in the classroom? The Listening Dog Project aims to find out...

Ambassador hearing dog Lily spent three months in the classroom with 12 children learning to read at a primary school in Doncaster. The children all had severe or profound hearing loss and some had special needs due to dyslexia, attention deficit disorder or learning difficulties.

The Listening Dog Project wanted to examine whether pupils with hearing loss would be more motivated by the presence of a validated dog and handler.

Angie Platten, head of Hearing Dogs partnership services, who launched the pilot project last year with the help of two charity volunteers, says: “Evaluation of this preliminary project was very encouraging, suggesting that the presence of a hearing dog has significant potential to improve a deaf child’s learning experience. “The improvements were particularly marked for a subgroup of children who had the most complex and significant educational challenges.”

The latest phase of the project started in January. Working in collaboration with a deaf school and a mainstream school with a deaf unit, the team is measuring the motivation and engagement of pupils over a longer period of time and in different learning situations.

There will be more on The Listening Dog Project in future issues of Favour.

“This project suggests the presence of a hearing dog has significant potential”

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FAVOUR ☀ Spring 2016

www.hearingdogs.org.uk
SUPPORTER PROMISE

We promise that we won’t let you down

HEARING DOGS for Deaf People is launching a Supporter Promise that sets out clearly our promise to you and what you can expect from us in terms of our values and how we operate.

Our relationship with you, our supporters, is critical to the work we do. We’ve included a copy of our Supporter Promise with this issue of Favour magazine, alongside a ‘keepsafe’ poster pin-up of our beautiful hearing dog Bond, so that you can reference it any time.

Our Supporter Promise is also live on our website for all to read.

Volunteer chairman of Hearing Dogs Faith Clark says: “Your support is vital. Your generosity and kindness has allowed us to help thousands of deaf adults and children live more fulfilled and independent lives.

“Every week 1,750 volunteers around the country give us their time because they believe in what we do. We want people like you to go on supporting us year after year because you know that we consistently and transparently make an impact with the funds that you entrust to us.

“With some charities receiving bad press for poor practices, we want each and every experience with Hearing Dogs to be enriching and positive. This is where our Supporter Promise comes in.”

www.hearingdogs.org.uk/supporter-promise

Thank you for recycling your used stamps. The total raised from stamp donations in 2015 reached £11,848.49! This has helped us train more dogs like little Penny to be hearing dogs. It’s easy to do...

ORDER We can send you boxes or envelopes
TRIM Stamps should have a paper border about 1cm wide
SORT Take out any preprinted postage marks or labels, they add weight but we can’t claim anything back
PACK The trick is to get as many stamps in without it bursting
ENJOY Recycle knowing the impact you are making on a deaf person’s life

Every little helps and they all add up to so much. Email jessica.grant@hearingdogs.org.uk or call 01844 348135

Penny gets stuck into stamp recycling

TRIBUTE

IN MEMORY OF BEN

LOUISE AND JEREMY Pocock lost their son Ben when flight MH17 was shot down over the Ukraine in July 2014.

Ben was studying International Business at Loughborough University and was on his way to complete a study abroad programme at the University of Western Australia in Perth.

Louise and Jeremy, who are both deaf, had lost their hearing dog the previous year and Ben’s university friends, Jamie, Will and David, wanted to raise money for Hearing Dogs in Ben’s memory.

Jamie explains: “Without dwelling on the sadness of the situation, it’s important for us to focus on how truly inspirational Ben’s parents have been.

“Louise has since been partnered with her new hearing dog, Tapper, who has proved to be an enormous support. We’ve managed to raise over £5,500 so far, but we’re aiming for £10,000 so we can name a hearing dog in memory of Ben.”

To support their fundraising go to: www.justgiving.com/ben-pocock-LDNtriathlon
FRIEND FOR LIFE

Hearing dog Spotty retires

WHEN THE Hearing Dog Friend scheme was launched by Phillip Schofield in 2004, Spotty quickly gained 477 Friends who made monthly donations to help support her training and partnership. This cheerful black and white crossbreed, adopted by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People from a rescue centre, became the hearing dog of Sara Head, a teacher of deaf children in Hertfordshire.

Spotty’s Friends continued to receive regular updates until 2011 when the new puppy sponsorship scheme was introduced.

Now aged 13, Spotty was retired from her working role in November but continues to live with Sara and her successor hearing dog Tandy. Sara says: “I’m so grateful to all the Friends who made it possible for Spotty to come into my life – she’s been the perfect hearing dog. I teach in a primary school and Spotty came in with me every day. She won the hearts of all the deaf pupils who passed through my classes.

“Spotty still dashes around with as much enthusiasm as she ever did and no loss of stamina. Only her greying muzzle and slightly cloudy eyes give her away as an old dog.

“Although I now have Tandy to alert me to sounds, Spotty is and always will be my very dear lifelong friend. Thank you.”

You can sponsor a hearing dog puppy by completing the enclosed form, or find the form online at: www.hearingdogs.org.uk/puppy

TEAM EFFORT

TIGERS SPONSOR PUPPIES

HULL CITY TIGERS had their training interrupted by a special visit from two hearing dog puppies. Manager Steve Bruce was particularly taken by Sophie, a 16-week-old Labrador pup.

The Tigers have teamed up with Hearing Dogs to sponsor Sophie and Isla, a Cocker Spaniel puppy, who live with local volunteers for their early training and socialisation.

Press officer Luke Cash said: “It was great to meet Isla and Sophie and it’s amazing to think these puppies will go on to change a deaf person’s life.”
You’re my best friend: Brian May and Anita Dobson called in to meet our dogs

I’m in: Dragons’ Den star Deborah Meaden helps promote our access campaign

Trust me: The One Show’s Dr Sarah Jarvis made friends with Selwyn in December

You’re my best friend: Brian May and Anita Dobson called in to meet our dogs

Having fun: Marc the vet, Pam St Clement and Tim Vincent at our late summer show

This gorgeous image taken by Paul Wilkinson of demo dogs Buffy, Rory and Robyn was posted on 11 November. It simply read: “Our hearing dogs are wearing their poppies in recognition of Armistice Day.” This post got 3,114 likes, comments and shares and reached 49,935 people.

Don’t let your purse get weighed down with your leftover holiday coins, donate them to Hearing Dogs instead. We now have a neat little box available for collecting foreign coins. Alternatively we have a box in reception at The Grange that you can pop coins into if you’re passing by. To find out more or to request a box, please call 01413 289357 or email hearingdogs@exchange-master.co.uk

www.hearingdogs.org.uk
Tegan has made a huge difference to Anne’s life: physically and emotionally.

Please support our Hope for Hearing Dogs Appeal.

I lost my hearing when I had surgery

Anne Pickett regained her confidence and her happiness when Tegan joined the family.

MALCOLM PICKETT describes his wife Anne as an independent, strong and confident woman. Even when an MRI scan in 2004 revealed an acoustic neuroma, he says she met her diagnosis with courage and resilience.

It was only after she had surgery to remove the tumour that Anne says the full extent of it began to sink in. “I had my surgery only about two weeks after I was diagnosed, so it came as quite a shock. Initially I think you’re elated to be alive but a month or two down the line you realise what you’ve lost. As well as the hearing loss there was my facial palsy.”

For Malcolm, the relief of having Anne home after two weeks in hospital gave way to a feeling of helplessness as he watched his wife become more and more withdrawn: “She was so pleased to be home – and in time to share Christmas celebrations with everyone. But that was when she first felt the isolation of it; how deafness cuts you off, even when you’re with family and friends.”

Anne still finds it upsetting to talk about how she felt: “The facial palsy and the
“We have a special bond, Tegan and I”

In November last year Anne and Tegan were presented with the Royal Canin Life-Changing Partnership of the Year award.

TURN TO PAGE 10 to read more heart-warming stories from the inspirational Hearing Dogs Awards 2015.
The inspirational Hearing Dogs Awards 2015 were a chance to celebrate the achievements of our incredible dogs and their recipients.

“Cola is my best friend”

A hearing dog has had a dramatic effect on young Esmee’s life: with Cola by her side she feels safe and secure.

ESMEE DRAKE lives in Brighton with her mum, her twin sister Eliza and her older brother Arthur. The twins were born six weeks premature and it was a difficult start for them: both had hearing loss but Esmee was born profoundly deaf, with an under-developed oesophagus and a hole in her heart. She was so fragile she needed ten operations and spent the first eight months of her life in intensive care.

Mum Louise says: “I knew from about two months that Esmee was profoundly deaf but she was about two and a half before I got a second opinion. We were referred to Manchester Cochlear Implant Centre, and to be told that she would need yet more surgery was really scary. “Esmee was fearful in bed at night, in the dark and unable to hear. She was scared of being alone and would spend hours getting out of bed to check where everyone was. The lack of sleep meant she was unable to concentrate in school, which affected her confidence.”

Love at first sight

Louise describes the first time Esmee met Cocker Spaniel Cola. “We really wanted a Labrador and we weren’t convinced that a Spaniel was right for us, but the moment Esmee laid eyes on Cola she fell in love.”

Since the arrival of Cola, who sleeps at the end of her bed, Esmee now feels safe and secure. She says her life has changed so much. “Before I had Cola, I couldn’t sleep or had bad dreams. When I went to school I was so tired that I couldn’t do any work. Now Cola sleeps next to me and it makes me feel safe.”

“Before I had Cola, I had bad dreams. Now Cola sleeps next to me and it makes me feel safe”
“My loyal protector”
Faced with imminent danger, plucky Joe leapt into action

MATTHEW LUNNEY and his Golden Retriever Joe are winners of the Specsavers Heroic Partnership of the Year 2015 award.

The award, which recognises heroic acts of courage and bravery, was presented to Matthew and Joe at the Charity’s star-studded awards ceremony.

Matthew, 37, who is profoundly deaf and uses sign language, describes the life-threatening event that prompted him to nominate Joe for the award.

“It was a dark evening back in September 2014,” says Matthew, who lives in Northampton. “I had just parked my car and was waiting for my friend when a man dressed in dark clothing jumped out from the bushes and tried to break into my car. Joe leapt into the back, barking furiously to scare the intruder away.

“This was completely out of character for Joe – I don’t think he has ever barked like that before – but the intruder was so shocked that he let go of the door and ran for cover. That gave me the opportunity to make quick our escape.

“I was very shaken by the experience, but now I’m even more grateful for my loyal hearing dog Joe. He went above and beyond the call of duty.”

Have-a-go Joe
“It dawned on me that if Joe hadn’t been there, that man would have got into the car. Anything could have happened. I never expected this from my hearing dog – I was so shocked that he let go of the door and ran for cover. That gave me the opportunity to make quick our escape.

“I was very shaken by the experience, but now I’m even more grateful for my loyal hearing dog Joe. He went above and beyond the call of duty.”

Esmee and her mum, Louise, enjoying the ceremony, far left; receiving her award from Dame Esther Rantzen, left; and Esmee with her mum and her twin sister Eliza, above

“It was really hard trying to communicate before but Cola gives me confidence. She’s my best friend.”

Louise adds: “Esmee feels that people are more aware that she’s a deaf person due to the identifiable coat that Cola wears, and as a parent I now feel more confident about my daughter’s future and her ability to become an independent person.”

Esmee’s twin sister Eliza has also noticed the difference: “Cola is always there for her no matter what’s going on. I’m quite proud of her. I feel the same sense of accomplishment that she feels. It makes me happy that she’s happier.”

Louise agrees: “Cola has brought complete joy to the whole family. She has opened up Esmee’s world. She feels so special having a hearing dog – it just fills her with confidence. All the issues and problems Esmee had before have been resolved now that she has Cola. We love her to bits.”
Future hearing dogs are in safe hands with Annette

During volunteer Annette Pollock’s 18 years of dedication to Hearing Dogs she has helped to train nearly 50 puppies.

ANNETTE POLLOCK from Epsom has been awarded the Desmond Wilcox Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of her tireless hard work and dedication as a volunteer for Hearing Dogs.

Annette, 73, has been a registered volunteer for the Hearing Dogs charity for more than 18 years. During that time she has helped at the births of more than 60 future hearing dogs and looked after and trained nearly 50 hearing dog puppies in her own home.

Former breeding scheme supervisor Nicola McLure said: “I nominated Annette for the accolade because she embodies everything that makes the perfect volunteer. Annette will happily take on the task of raising litters of puppies for the Charity, which is not an easy task, and you can just tell how much she loves dogs. We simply couldn’t continue our life-changing work without the efforts of such fantastic volunteers, and Annette really is a wonderful asset to the Charity.”

There are more than 1,750 volunteers working for the Charity across the UK and Annette has been involved longer than most so her experience is invaluable.

Annette says: “It’s very rewarding when you hear that the dogs have actually passed as fully qualified hearing dogs. You meet the recipient and some will keep in touch to say how their dog is doing. It’s very, very satisfying.

“We are only small cogs in the big wheel. It’s just lovely to see what hearing dogs can do, and how they can change deaf people’s lives.”

The award was presented by Dame Esther Rantzen in memory of her TV producer husband Desmond Wilcox, who suffered from hearing loss.
More than 120 guests, including many of our celebrity ambassadors and friends, joined us at the Hearing Dogs Awards 2015. The glamorous event, which celebrates the achievements of deaf people and their hearing dogs as well as our volunteers, was hosted by Dame Esther Rantzen at One Marylebone in London. A special award was also presented to Sainsbury’s – named as our Accessible Company of the Year.
From cuddly puppy to life-changing hearing dog

There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a sponsor pup being transformed into a working hearing dog. Here is Indie’s story...

“...In small steps he begins learning about the big wide world and how to become a confident young dog”

Indie’s journey to becoming a fully qualified hearing dog starts at just eight weeks old when he goes to live with Sue Cooper, his volunteer puppy socialiser. In small steps he begins learning about the big wide world and how to become a confident young dog.

Every other week Indie and Sue attend puppy classes with puppy training instructor, Elin Dobson.

First Indie needs to learn the signs for ‘sit’, ‘wait’ and ‘lie down’. He also learns to walk nicely on the lead. Sue helps him explore different places and environments, such as towns, shops and public transport, to help build his confidence. Elin monitors their progress over the next 12 months.

Soon after Indie’s first birthday Elin decides he is ready for his advanced training at The Grange. Sue feels reassured by Indie’s happy and confident handover to soundwork trainer Claire McNespiey.

For the next 16 weeks Indie spends the day with Claire learning how to nudge for important sounds, and evenings and weekends with his B&B volunteers, the McTavish family.

A vital part of Indie’s training is learning to differentiate between a normal sound and a danger signal. Indie learns to drop down to the ground for a danger signal, rather than leading his trainer to the sound.
“Everything we learn about Indie helps us to create the perfect match for him”

Everything we learn about Indie, from volunteers and trainers, helps us to create the perfect match for him — something that is just as important for the dog as it is for the deaf person.

Indie successfully passes his hearing dog training assessments and is ready to be partnered with his new recipient Jo Setchfield from Norfolk. Jo and her family arrive at The Grange and Claire watches Indie slip calmly and confidently into the life-changing role he has been preparing for all his life. It’s a magical and very satisfying moment.

“ALMOST 18 MONTHS on, has Indie made a difference? We hear from Jo...

“...I completely lost my hearing six years ago, which meant I had to give up work; I was devastated. I didn’t want to go out at all, not even to the shops. I felt lethargic and didn’t want to communicate with anyone. Indie has totally changed that. He has given me back my confidence and independence. Indie loves responding to sounds and always makes sure he gets his treat when he tells me that the doorbell has rung! I can go to the shops with Indie by my side and I know people will realise I’m deaf and that I’m not being rude if I don’t hear them. My family tell me I’m much happier and a lot more positive now.”

So that’s a yes from Jo! What about you Indie? Well, there’s no mistaking the happy face of a dog who is completely fulfilled...

“JO’S STORY”

SPONSOR A PUPPY

Victor

Victor is a black, get-up-and-go Cocker Spaniel pup with a white chest and paws that look like he’s been dipped in paint. His favourite games are jumping in and out of cardboard boxes and attacking shoelaces. He’s a bit of a show-off in puppy training class. He likes swishing his tail proudly, especially when he gets things right — something he’s doing more and more often.

Zara

Zara is a beautiful dark yellow Labrador puppy with bright, brown eyes that catch the sunlight. She just lives for fun. Grab her favourite snake toy and she’ll happily join in a tug of war. She doesn’t really mind whether she wins or loses, as long as she has fun. Being a Labrador, she will also do anything for food. So, food and fun are making her a fast learner.

“Why I sponsor…”

Audrey Bishop from Gidea Park, Essex, sponsored a pup in memory of a dear friend...

“Our family has always loved dogs so after the loss of my husband’s closest friend, it was a simple decision to set up a direct debit to Hearing Dogs.

“My husband Stan met David when they were evacuated to Ipswich in 1939 aged 13. They kept in touch for 74 years until David died in 2013. We decided to sponsor a hearing dog puppy as a lasting confirmation of this lifelong friendship.

“Stan passed away last year and the sponsorship continues to be a great comfort to me. Jess and Asian, our first two pups, are already making a difference and I know that our current sponsor pup Berry will soon be doing the same.”

www.hearingdogs.org.uk/puppy
Could you help to train a puppy?

It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to create exceptional hearing dogs for deaf people and volunteers play a vital role in this process.

"Of the Charity’s 1,750 registered volunteers across the UK, around 208 are currently socialising puppies. It may sound a lot but we still need to find more," explains volunteering manager Victoria Leedham.

Victoria is leading a recruitment drive to find new volunteers by widening the area around some of our well-established locations, as well as setting up a brand new puppy satellite area in Tyne and Wear."

"These lovely people all have one important thing in common – a great passion for spending time with dogs."

For most of their early lives, pups live with dedicated volunteers who care for and train them on a daily basis, gradually getting them used to the big wide world. "If you live near our puppy socialising areas, you may well have seen our volunteers having a great time teaching their dogs to ‘settle’ in various cafes and restaurants," Victoria continues. "Everyone’s different but these lovely people all have one important thing in common – a great passion for spending time with dogs."

**What’s involved?**

**Victoria explains...**

"Once you’re registered and approved you’ll be able to take home one of our gorgeous eight-week-old pups, such as Buzz the Cockerpoo for example. Over the following 14 to 16 months, he will look to you for guidance. In a gradual and gentle way we would help you to give him all the obedience and skills training he needs, as well as build his confidence out and about."

"For the first four months, volunteers follow our step-by-step training guide and attend weekly puppy classes. When the pup has reached a certain level, generally around six months old, you’ll attend weekly or fortnightly training sessions either in a local hall, town or park."

"Our puppies stay with their socialisers until they’re ready to move on to the next stage, usually at one of our centres in Buckinghamshire and Yorkshire. Here one of our professional trainers will polish off the pup’s skills and teach him to nudge or tap with a paw when he hears one of his important sounds."

"Puppy socialising is an exciting and varied role but it can also be challenging at times, so our expert training instructors are always on hand to provide help and support – whenever and wherever it is needed."

**View from a happy puppy socialiser**

Clare Coote, who became a puppy socialiser just over three years ago, agrees: "I have wonderful support – help is only a phone call away – and my trainer comes to the house regularly to check on how the training is going. Being a puppy socialiser has really enhanced my life. I have become much more confident when a hearing dog puppy is with me. I really enjoy it when people stop to talk and I can tell them what these clever dogs can do, and how they change deaf people’s lives."
Pam and Geoff Harper from Cambridge have been puppy socialisers for more than six years. “We were recently retired and looking for something active to do when we heard the appeal on our local radio station. We were particularly interested because our son is profoundly deaf, and we hadn’t heard of Hearing Dogs before.” Pam and Geoff are now training their seventh puppy, a Labrador named Solo. “He is delightful! We are hopefully going to train him right the way through to his partnership. “We would definitely recommend volunteering to others. Our time with Hearing Dogs has changed our lives as well as changing the lives of the deaf people who receive these lovely dogs. We couldn’t think of a better way to spend our retirement.”

Email volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk

“Hearing Dogs has changed our lives”

Find out more about puppy socialising

If you would like to find out more and live close to one of the following hubs we would love to hear from you:

- Devon & Somerset
  Exeter, Taunton
- Hampshire
  Southampton, Fareham
- Buckinghamshire & Berkshire
  Reading, High Wycombe, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes
- Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex
  Bedford, Hitchin, St Albans, Saffron Walden
- Cambridgeshire & Lincolnshire
  Cambridge, Huntingdon, Peterborough
- Cheshire & South Manchester
  Stockport, Macclesfield, Warrington
- East Yorkshire
  Harrogate, York, Beverley
- Newcastle upon Tyne & Northumberland
  Newcastle, Blyth, Sunderland
- Edinburgh
  Central Edinburgh

Would you like to care for and train a puppy? If you live in or close to any of the locations mentioned above, have a suitable home with a private, secure garden, as well as the time to dedicate to training a puppy on a daily basis, then our volunteering team would love to hear from you. Please call Lisa Meller on 01844 348129 or email volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk

www.hearingdogs.org.uk

www.hearingdogs.org.uk Spring 2016
COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Silent orders

Hearing dog trainer Nicci Cross explains how you can communicate with your dog if he loses his hearing.

DEAFNESS IN DOGS is very common and usually harder on you than it is on your dog. Like humans, some dogs are born deaf due to congenital defects, while others will start to lose their hearing as they get older. Whatever the cause of the hearing loss, there are still lots of ways to communicate with your dog, as Nicci Cross, herself an owner of a deaf dog, explains...

1 Try using hand signals with your dog. Even with dogs that can hear, people usually use hand signals on a regular basis. Hand signals are an easy way to let your dog know what is happening. For example, when you’re ready to take your dog for a walk, take out the leash and show it to him; when you are ready to feed him, point to the bowl to eat (although most dogs will smell it first). You can also show he is a ‘good dog’ by giving him a treat after showing a hand signal, such as a thumbs-up.

2 Take control and be attuned to your surroundings. With a deaf dog, it is critical you become your dog’s eyes and ears. You need to be extra aware of the environment around you. Appreciate that your dog is more likely to be startled. For example, dogs that are able to hear know there may be a stranger coming into the house when they hear a knock on the door but deaf dogs don’t. So give your dog a signal when someone is coming in, for example, ask them to wait in a certain spot in the hallway so they can see who the person is and greet them.

3 Make your dog extra visible, as well as easy to hear. A bell on your dog’s collar can help people find him if he escapes or runs outside. It may also help around the home. A flashing disc or collar will help you locate him in the garden if it is dark.

4 Be patient and extra loving with your deaf dog. Try not to get too frustrated or upset when your dog doesn’t respond to you in the same way he used to. You need to treat your dog with extra kindness and compassion. Your dog can and will be happy and fulfilled if you treat him with plenty of love, patience and understanding.
BELLS, BALLS AND BEAU

COCKER SPANIEL BEAU was born deaf. Her hearing was tested at eight weeks because she wasn’t responding normally to sounds and she was behaving in an unusual way. The test showed she had been born totally deaf in both ears, ruling out any hopes of a career as an assistance dog. But her outgoing character and loving nature meant that with careful handling and thoughtful training she could grow into a wonderful dog.

Beau found her permanent home with experienced hearing dog trainer Nicci Cross. Nicci knew it wouldn’t be easy but the challenge appealed to her.

“I began teaching Beau basic obedience commands using sign language,” she explains. “She settled in really well at home and befriended my Springer Spaniel, Bruno. Being deaf makes Beau very tactile and she quickly developed her own awareness strategies. She likes to sleep with one paw touching me, or cuddled up to Bruno, so she knows immediately if we move.

“My main concern was that she’d become distressed if she suddenly felt she was alone. To overcome this I adopted the routine of always giving her a visual cue whenever I left the room. Having clear visual cues helped her to understand what to expect and to feel secure and comfortable on her own. This is very different to the methods we use for separation training with a dog that has normal hearing. I also bought her a canvas den that she feels safe in, so she can retreat to it if ever she feels insecure. I take this everywhere we go so that her secure space, and the routine when I leave, are the same wherever we are.”

“Because Beau can’t hear people coming, she could easily be startled or frightened if someone touches her unexpectedly, especially if she’s asleep. So I made sure that whenever she was woken up

“It can be challenging owning a deaf dog but Beau’s deafness has made her who she is” she always had a positive experience. Now she is always happy to be woken and usually expects a cuddle at the very least.

“It can be challenging owning a deaf dog but Beau’s deafness has made her who she is. She has always been very outgoing and shows no fear. This has given me many heart-stopping moments throughout our training process. Putting a bell on her collar has been a godsend. She was such an escape artist as a young pup. I thought my garden was completely puppy-proof, but Beau took every opportunity to prove otherwise – there were many times when I had to search my village in the middle of the night in my pyjamas listening out for her collar bell.

“Beau is now three years old and has become a very settled but active dog – much like any other happy Spaniel. To many people’s surprise I can also allow her off the lead for walks. With Beau a tennis ball is the key to her soul and helps to keep her focused on me at all times.”
Acoustic neuromas are rare but can cause a variety of distressing symptoms, including hearing loss. A groundbreaking study sheds new light on how they can damage your inner ear.

An acoustic neuroma, also known as a vestibular schwannoma, is a tumour that develops on the main nerve leading from your inner ear to your brain. The tumours are rare, affecting just one in 100,000 people, but they can cause hearing loss and tinnitus, make you feel dizzy and affect your balance.

The tumour is non-cancerous and usually slow-growing, but because the eighth cranial nerve directly influences your balance and hearing, pressure on it can cause symptoms such as hearing loss, ringing in your ear and unsteadiness.

Although slow-growing, acoustic neuromas can eventually become large enough to press against neighbouring cranial nerves.

In about 95% of cases, the cause of acoustic neuromas is unknown but research has looked at possible links to prior exposure to radiation in the head and neck area, or prolonged and sustained exposure to loud noises.

“Our findings suggest there may be a pharmacologic way to maintain hearing in some patients with vestibular schwannoma”
research is under way to try to identify specific causes and risk factors.

Toxic secretions
In December a research team from Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary investigating vestibular schwannomas discovered that in some cases damage to the inner ear was caused not by pressure on the auditory nerve but by toxic secretions from the tumour.

This helps to explain why some tumours cause hearing loss even though they are not large enough to compress nearby structures.

“What’s written in textbooks is that these tumours cause hearing loss by growing to the point of compressing the auditory nerve,” said senior author Konstantina M Stankovic, an otologic surgeon and researcher at Massachusetts Eye and Ear.

“We knew that it couldn’t be as simple as that, because there are large tumours that do not cause hearing loss and little ones that do.”

Common factor
Within the toxic molecules, scientists identified TNFa, a compound that has been identified in other forms of hearing loss.

This offers hope to sufferers because there are known ways to inhibit the body’s production of TNFa.

“Our findings suggest there may be a pharmacologic way to maintain hearing in some patients with vestibular schwannoma,” said Dr Stankovic.

- Research into the causes of acoustic neuromas continues. For more information please go to www.bana-uk.com
- Sources: British Acoustic Neuroma Association (BANA); and Action on Hearing Loss; www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

“More research is under way to try to identify causes and risk factors”

ACOUSTIC NEUROMA: EXPLAINED

SYMPTOMS
In about 90% of cases, the initial symptom is usually gradual hearing loss in one ear. As hearing gets worse it also tends to become distorted and there may also be ringing in the ears (tinnitus) or a feeling of fullness.

While the tumour is growing it can lead to balance problems and later symptoms can include headaches and facial numbness.

About 5% of acoustic neuromas are caused by a hereditary condition called neurofibromatosis type II. People with this type of acoustic neuroma are usually younger and may also get other types of neuromas.

TREATMENT
The course of treatment will depend on the size of the tumour, its location and the symptoms.

Wait and watch
Research has shown that two in three small tumours (less than 1.5cm) do not grow, and therefore may not need to be treated. If there are few symptoms and the tumour is small or growing at a slow rate it may just be carefully monitored over a period of time. This generally means having an MRI or CT scan once every one to two years.

Radiation therapy
(Radiosurgery or Radiotherapy)
Radiotherapy involves using carefully controlled doses of radiation to damage cells within the acoustic neuroma and stop it from growing.

Radiosurgery is a specialised form of radiotherapy that precisely targets the acoustic neuroma, limiting damage to surrounding nerves and tissue. Radiation therapy won’t remove the tumour, but it can result in shrinkage over time and it is often the preferred option for treating deep-seated tumours that may be difficult to reach surgically.

Microsurgery
Microsurgery allows physicians to perform surgery on very small body parts. In almost all cases the tumour can be completely removed and no further treatment will be needed. Several surgical techniques are used depending on the size of the tumour, its location and whether the hearing in the affected ear is still good. Even when the acoustic neuroma has been removed completely, it could grow back again, though this is very rare. Most surgeons recommend having one or two MRI scans after surgery.
Get involved Gifts in Wills

To get involved, call 01844 348133 or email legacy@hearingdogs.org.uk

Get involved Gifts in Wills

Diane and Keith Pickford are supporters of Hearing Dogs. They explain why they have decided to leave a gift in their Wills

Sit down with Diane and Keith Pickford soon brings a smile to your face. They are clearly content in their retirement, finishing each other’s sentences, with their two dogs winding around their legs. You wouldn’t know it, as she can lipread and speaks so well, but Diane has been profoundly deaf since contracting meningitis aged four.

Close to the heart

The couple has a strong personal connection with the Charity and they regularly volunteer to garden at our training centre in Buckinghamshire. That’s one of the reasons why, when they drew up their Wills, they decided to include Hearing Dogs.

“This is a wonderful community. We’ve made so many friends through the Charity, so we felt we wanted to give something back.”

Their heads also played a part in the decision. Keith continues: “We have no immediate family, so our estate is split between a few charities, with one being Hearing Dogs. I was surprised when I found out Hearing Dogs is supported entirely by public donations, so we thought a gift in our Wills would help, especially as it enables them to plan for the future.”

Over half of the hearing dogs we train are thanks to gifts that have been left in Wills, so they are a very important source of funding for the Charity. And as deafness is on the increase, demand for our hearing dogs is only going to grow.

Diane sums it up. “Hearing Dogs really helps deaf people. I know from experience how isolating and frustrating deafness can be. So we wanted to do something to help too. Helping people and giving something back - that’s what it’s all about really, isn’t it?”

Thank you!

“We’d like to say thank you to the Pickfords and the many other kind people who leave a gift in their Wills to Hearing Dogs each year. If you’d like to know more about including Hearing Dogs in your Will, please get in touch with Steve Heyes on 01844 348133 or email legacy@hearingdogs.org.uk"
Smart dog!

Make a stylish bandana for your dog

**You’ll need**
- Sheet of greaseproof or tracing paper
- Pen or pencil
- Pinking shears/scissors
- Fabric: minimum size 25cm x 20cm
- A few pins
- Needle and cotton (approx 1m)
- Your dog’s collar

**What to do**
1. Using the pen and greaseproof paper, trace the bandana template from this page.
2. Cut out this shape to make your bandana paper pattern.
3. Pin the pattern onto your fabric and cut round it with the pinking shears (these zigzag scissors make a neat edge and stop it fraying).
4. Remove the pins and pattern. Place your fabric right side down. Lay the collar flat along the top edge and fold the top edge over it so the corners meet (see diagram).
5. Pin together along the join and then slide the collar out.
6. Thread your needle, tie a knot at the end of the cotton and sew along the join. Two rows of stitches will make it stronger. Remove the pins. Slide the collar back through the finished bandana and you’ve made your dog a very stylish accessory.

This size will fit most dogs.

In ancient China, people used to keep warm by putting dogs up their sleeves

Dalmatians are often deaf – 30% of them cannot hear in either one or two ears

A typical dog has the same brain aptitude level as a toddler. Dogs can understand about 250 words and count up to five

A dog’s sense of hearing is over 10 times stronger than a human’s

Contact us!
Send all your funny captions, stories and pictures to: kidscorner@hearingdogs.org.uk

FANTASTIC FUNDRAISERS

**LITTLEHAMPTON**
River Beach, a huge 800-pupil primary school, has raised £10k to sponsor a hearing dog puppy named Anya. The children wanted to raise funds to help a deaf child and are looking forward to news of Anya’s partnership in the summer. It was the initiative of Johnan Bannier, teacher of the deaf. Some of the staff abseiled in the summer but most of the fundraising has been from the pupils themselves.

**SOUTHAMPTON**
Pupils at Springwell School (for children with special educational needs) have chosen Hearing Dogs as their Charity of the Year. They’ve already raised £5k during their first term and hope to raise enough to sponsor a puppy from September.

**HUTTON**
7th Hutton Brownies raised £422 for Hearing Dogs after a visit and talk by Sophie Biebuyck with her hearing dog Rusty. Sophie says: “It’s an amazing effort by a small group of youngsters – I was overwhelmed.”
Here are just some of the things you can look forward to during one of our events:

- Meet a hearing dog
  Get to know some of our amazing hearing dogs and find out how they change the lives of deaf people.
- Kids’ educational activities
  Our fun activity booklet will help children learn about deaf awareness, explore the world of dogs, and have fun with nature.
- Spot the dog
  Enjoy meeting fellow dog lovers and spot lots of different dog breeds along the walk.
- Free gift
  Preregistered walkers will be presented with a limited edition Great British Dog Walk bandana for their dog to wear (or see p23 and make your own!).

Don’t forget you can set up a JustGiving page and ask your friends and family to sponsor you or your dog.

THE GREAT British Dog Walk is a fun event that takes place all across the UK at various times of the year depending on where you are. The events are held at beautiful dog-friendly National Trust sites and are free for kids and dogs! Adults pay just £10. All venues offer two routes, either 3km or 6-8km. For further information go to www.greatbritishdogwalk.org

**2016 EVENTS**

Find a local event! Just visit the website for more details and to book your place.

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More than 2,250 people took part in walks last year

Stowe
BUCKINGHAM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
15 MAY

Ickworth Park
BURY ST EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK
22 MAY

Foxbury Common
NEW FOREST (NEAR WEST WELLOW), HANTS
22 MAY

Osterley Park & House
WEST LONDON
4 JUNE

Hill of Tarvit
FIFE, SCOTLAND
5 JUNE

Get involved The Great British Dog Walk

Making a difference

Find out how one of our trained puppies helped change the life of Eva and her entire family

WHEN 11-YEAR-OLD Eva from Sheffield was born six weeks prematurely by emergency Caesarean section, she wasn’t breathing, but a team of doctors worked tirelessly until she was able to breathe on her own.

Due to this traumatic start, Eva has suffered severe hearing loss from birth. Eva’s mum Nichola said: “I felt heartbroken. I felt as though I couldn’t do anything to help her. Eva used to have such trouble sleeping, and would often sleepwalk.

She really struggled with confidence and found it hard to make friends.

But then Gwinie entered their lives and changed things. “Gwinie is truly amazing,” says Nichola. “Eva now feels safe, and her confidence is through the roof. She is now an independent 11-year-old just like all her friends.

“The friendship between Eva and Gwinie is beautiful. Gwinie helps us understand what Eva is going through. She has brightened up our future as a family, and we all work together now. Having Gwinie has brought us closer together.”

Eva and Gwinie have formed a beautiful friendship

“Gwinie has brightened up our future and we all work together now”

www.hearingdogs.org.uk
Spreading the word

Discover why volunteering to speak out could be a boost for both the Charity and your confidence

Public speaking is a role you associate with confident and outgoing people, but it may surprise you to learn that many volunteers say they’ve only discovered their confidence since becoming a speaker for a cause they feel passionate about.

We spoke to some of our volunteer speakers to find out what encouraged them to have a go, despite their nerves, and what they’ve gained from the experience.

Volunteer speaker

Sarah Hennessy

SARAH BECAME interested in Hearing Dogs for Deaf People when she started learning British Sign Language. She was encouraged to have an understanding of Deaf culture and learn more about the impact of deafness on people’s lives.

“After a couple of years of being a collection-tin coordinator and participating in sponsored walk events, I felt that I wanted to become more involved,” says Sarah.

“Speaking in public was never something that was natural for me but I thought that speaking on behalf of the Charity was something I could participate in. I’ve met some really interesting people and it’s important that I can share my passion for Hearing Dogs.

“You don’t need a large network of contacts. I send out emails to colleagues and friends telling them about Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and what I do for them. The fantastic thing about doing these talks is the feedback you receive afterwards.

“I’ve had to increase my IT skills. I have to use my laptop and projector to display films, which was something I had never done before, so it’s another string to my bow!”

“I wanted something to increase my confidence and this was the role to do it” Sarah Hennessy wanted to share her passion for Hearing Dogs

SIX FACTS ABOUT SPEAKERS

Registered speakers are our community ambassadors...

1. Registered speakers spread the word to groups and organisations in their area, following guidelines and principles set by the Charity.

2. We have nearly 300 volunteer speakers across the UK.

3. There are no qualifications or requirements for this role, just willingness and a bit of free time.

4. We ask speakers to provide feedback from each talk they give, creating a small amount of admin work.

5. The Charity provides training and resources to aid you in your talks.

6. Speakers should be able to give at least six talks per year.

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Our speakers become ambassadors for Hearing Dogs. Not only is the time they give invaluable, their words are too; what they say could shape someone’s opinion, leading to life-changing donations.

If you are interested in learning more, or joining our team of speakers, we would love to hear from you. Email volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk or call Lisa on 01844 348129.
Volunteer speaker

Mike Coote

LIKE SOME of our speakers, Mike has a professional speaking background. After learning about Hearing Dogs when his wife Clare became a puppy socialiser, he saw it as a natural role to take on.

Although he has the skills and experience from speaking in business and for other charities, he says he has still gained a lot from being a speaker for Hearing Dogs.

“I have met some really interesting people, as well as Charity staff and volunteers – many of whom are now friends. I’ve learnt to be adaptable as often things don’t go to plan! And that’s useful and valuable life skill.

“Sometimes I’m contacted directly by someone wanting to organise a talk for their group but I also get requests referred via Hearing Dogs’ community fundraising managers (CFMs).

“The talks are always different as I try to tailor each to the audience and the time available. Afterwards I complete a talk form to give the Charity feedback and ensure the talk organiser receives a follow-up message.”

“I have met some really interesting people, as well as Charity staff and volunteers – many of whom are now friends”

“WE’VE BONDED OVER A COMMON CAUSE”

Being a speaker for Hearing Dogs doesn’t have to be an individual volunteering role. The North Hampshire and Surrey Borders Fundraising Group includes three volunteer speakers – Malcolm, Irene and Tania – and it’s a great example of how mutually interested people have bonded and become friends.

One of the trio, Malcolm Pickett, says: “My wife Anne has a hearing dog called Tegan who has given her the confidence to come with me to talks when she can, and everyone enjoys that.”

Irene Rich became a volunteer speaker after early retirement. “I wanted to find something useful to do,” she explains. “As I suffer from hearing loss I decided to register as a volunteer for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

“I had to familiarise myself with the workings of a projector. I also had to become more organised – although not everyone would agree I have succeeded!”

Tania Leman says the role has boosted her confidence. “I am now willing to talk to anyone or any group about this amazing charity, when previously I would never stand up and talk to a group. I’d encourage anyone to get involved because it improves your confidence and you get so much satisfaction knowing you’ve informed people about the work Hearing Dogs does.”
Questions about your dog’s welfare

Ask the experts

How can I tell if my dog is losing his hearing?

As our dogs age, they sometimes lose their hearing. It can sneak up on you (and your pup) suddenly and it can be hard to tell if your dog’s hearing is impaired or something else is happening. You should consider hearing loss if:

1. Your dog doesn’t know you’re in the room until you physically touch him or he sees you
2. Your dog turns the wrong way when you call him
3. Your dog does not respond to outside stimuli, such as the doorbell ringing or other dogs barking
4. Your dog shows no response or seems confused when given familiar vocal commands
5. Your dog barks excessively
6. Your dog paws or rubs his ears or appears to have itchy, painful ears.

If you see any of the above signs, you should take your dog to the vet.

How will my vet diagnose deafness?

Your vet will examine your dog’s ear canal for wax accumulation, infections, inflammation, injury or foreign objects. The definitive test for hearing in pets is the so-called Brainstem Auditory Evoked Response (BAER) test. During the procedure, small electrodes are placed under the skin of a dog’s scalp to measure the electrical
activity in the brain. With normal hearing, electrical spikes are seen when a sound is made beside the ear. This test provides a good, objective way of checking the hearing in one or both ears.

Q **What are the causes of temporary hearing loss?**

Temporary hearing loss can be caused by a wax build-up in your dog’s ear canals. This is especially common in dogs with narrow ear canals, such as poodles. Dogs with lots of hair around their ears have a tendency to have their ear canals blocked by hair, which collects wax and eventually forms a plug. Or a foreign object in a dog’s ear canal can also impede the ability to hear.

Q **Can temporary deafness be improved or reversed?**

Just as in humans, only temporary deafness can be reversed. If it’s due to a build-up of wax, your vet may have you clean his ears daily with a prescription wash. If the hearing loss is caused by a build-up of hair, a vet or professional dog groomer can remove it. Infections that cause hearing loss should be treated with appropriate medication.

Q **What causes permanent hearing loss?**

Permanent hearing loss can be caused by old age, drug toxicity, injury or untreated ear infections. A dog can also be born without the ability to hear, because of a genetic or anatomical problem. Permanent hearing loss cannot be reversed.

Your pet can still have a good quality of life if he is deaf. You should keep your dog safely on an extending lead while outside and teach him hand signals so that you can communicate with him. Be patient and use rewards that your dog really values. Hearing impaired dogs can still live a long fulfilled life.

Q **What causes genetic deafness in dogs?**

Coat colour and the colour of the back of the eye are both caused by pigment-producing cells, known as ‘melanocytes’. If the genes to produce these cells are absent, a white coat and blue eyes are the consequence. Hearing is made possible through a layer of specialised cells in the inner ear. These ‘hearing’ cells originate from the same stem cells as pigment-producing cells. Therefore if an animal has no pigment in its body, it’s likely that it will also be deficient in the specialised ‘hearing’ cells, resulting in deafness.
Presenter Angellica Bell shares her biggest TV challenge, as well as her experience with the Charity's Let's Hear It campaign...

Are you a tea or a coffee person? Neither! I don’t really drink tea or coffee so I would probably go for some obscure herbal tea. However, if I had to choose, it would be a loose leaf Earl Grey as it reminds me of my gran.

You have a degree in Politics. How did you get into TV? By chance! I was temping at the BBC and heard they were looking for CBBC presenters. I kind of edged my way in, as well as being aided by some inside information and advice. I’ve always been chatty, which helped me in my audition!

Has your degree influenced any of your television jobs? I did present a show called Election alongside Jonathan Dimbleby, which focused on empowering young people. Whether or not we study it, politics influences all of us.

Following your early career on CBBC you are probably best known for being a presenter on The One Show. What do you enjoy most about your job? I love being part of The One Show team. I get to meet amazing, inspiring people who are given a chance to tell their story.

Back in 2011 you took part in ITV’s most challenging snow-covered reality series 71 Degrees North and made it all the way to the final. What did you learn from this incredible experience? Being part of that show was the hardest thing I’ve ever done. My other half and an executive at ITV persuaded me to take part after I said no. I don’t swim and I hate the cold! The experience changed me and I realised I could overcome any challenge if I focused – I had to face many fears and was completely out of my comfort zone.

Last year you became an ambassador for Hearing Dogs’ Let’s Hear It campaign – an educational resource for schools including a video teaching the alphabet in British Sign Language (BSL). Was this your first experience of learning sign language? Yes, it was my first experience learning to sign and it was fascinating to see how BSL works and allows people to communicate. It was a privilege to be part of it.

Have you or someone close to you ever experienced hearing loss? Nobody close to me has experienced hearing loss and neither have I myself, but it’s important to be aware of how different people live their lives and the sacrifices they make, as we never know what lies ahead for any of us.

Have you ever had a dog of your own? I’ve never owned a dog but I’ve met many adorable dogs because of my work if I had to choose, it would be a loose leaf Earl Grey as it reminds me of my gran.

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Have you ever had a dog of your own? I’ve never owned a dog but I’ve met many adorable dogs in my line of work.

The charity’s Great British Dog Walk events take place between March and June. Who would you most like to go on a fantasy dog walk with and why? If it’s fantasy, maybe Snoopy! I used to watch that show when I was little. The Queen and her corgis would be fun as there’s bound to be a stupendous afternoon tea for one after the walk! Good luck to everyone taking part.
“It’s important to be aware of how different people live their lives and the sacrifices they make, as we never know what lies ahead for any of us”

Angellica: Close-up
Angellica Bell is an award-winning TV presenter. In 2000 she made her debut on CBBC where she stayed for just over six years. She has since presented Weekend Kitchen with Waitrose on Channel 4, Police Interceptors on Channel 5, is a regular face on The One Show on BBC1 – often covering as main host – and voices a BBC daytime show called Family Finders. Angellica recently embarked on a BBC Sport Relief challenge ‘Hell on High Seas’ where she sailed around the British Isles. She likes to keep active and has started to learn to swim. Angellica and her husband, presenter Michael Underwood, have two children.
Join us at 20 beautiful National Trust locations across the UK
Find your nearest walk at www.greatbritishdogwalk.org

Adults £12 (£10 online) Children and dogs FREE

The Great British Dog Walk

www.greatbritishdogwalk.org

Raising funds for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

Registered charity in England and Wales no: 293358 and in Scotland no: SC040486