

# HCA

UK  
HEARING  
CONSERVATION  
ASSOCIATION



NEWS, VIEWS AND UPDATES...

[hearingconservation.org.uk](http://hearingconservation.org.uk)



June 2021

## Welcome

Welcome to the June edition of the UKHCA Newsletter and a warm welcome to all our new members!

Since our last edition we have gained ongoing support from our previous and founding members – who we are eternally grateful to for helping to get us started on our exciting journey. We have also recruited over 20 new members who will help us to continue to drive change, innovation, and improvement in hearing conservation standards!

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In this edition we will update you on some important topics for our Association and ideas for us all to consider in terms of influence and improvements that can be made. We also share with you a couple of articles and updates from our members related to simple cost effective noise control methods, hearing protection fit testing and the difference a hearing dog can bring to the lives of those affected by hearing loss.

As ever we welcome comments, feedback and are always appreciative of any offers for articles or new stories for our future editions. Please contact us at [enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk)

## Turning up the Volume on Hearing Health



Since we were established in early 2019, the UKHCA have been proud of our multidisciplinary membership. The unique value of the UKHCA is to bring together a wide range of different perspectives, professions, knowledge and passion to be a force for change, influence and awareness raising.

Our members range from audiologists, acoustic engineers, music professionals, hearing protection manufacturers and suppliers, occupational hygienists, health and safety professionals and other professional bodies and charitable associations.

### **What are our priorities?**

Having consulted with our membership we have established a number of 'Special Interest Groups' to progress action in our priority areas for influence and change they are Hearing Conservation; ***At Work, At Leisure, In Educating Young People, In Music & Entertainment***. We are also reflecting feedback from members who have expressed concerns and ideas for progress in specific areas and will also be establishing groups to look at ***hearing checks and health surveillance, noise exposure in the military and opportunities to influence noise exposure and audibility issues through design***.

The link below is to a recent article for the BOHS which summarises the challenges, concerns and potential work that can be progressed by our Special Interest Groups. We hope these groups and your support, representation and expertise can promote and drive change in hearing conservation as a priority issue where our influence can ensure the required changes can and will happen. If you are interested in joining one of the SIGs contact us at [clare.forshaw@hearingconservation.org.uk](mailto:clare.forshaw@hearingconservation.org.uk)

<https://readymag.com/exposuremagazine/exposuremagazinemay21/10/>

[Read in full on our website](#)

## **Are all ear canals equal? Should we be Fit Testing for Hearing Protection Devices??**



Hearing Protection Devices (HPDs) are a common (too common for my liking!) solution to noise exposure in the workplace. They are relied upon to reduce exposures to noise levels which can cause irreversible hearing health harm.

The amended Personal Protective Equipment (EC Directive) Regulations 1992 which came into force on 21 April 2018 now identifies workplace noise as a significant health risk. Hearing protection was previously defined as category II, along with high-visibility clothing, safety eyewear and head protection. In the most recent revision to the regulations HPDs are now in category III, alongside PPE that protect against the most serious of risks such as falls from height, chainsaw cuts and contact with substances hazardous to health including respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

Those of us involved in promoting a higher profile for hearing conservation and calling for

better standards of intervention of course welcomed this escalation and increased level of recognition for the seriousness of the health impact from noise. However, you may have all missed the fanfare and rush to address noise control with a most pressing urgency – or maybe not much has actually changed!!

The UKHCA are working with our members to outline our position on this important matter. We will also be working internationally with our partners to agree and promote best practice in this area.

Read the full article [here](#)

## Meet Pickle; A Hearing Dog, A Hero and A Best Friend!

### "Pickle saved my life, no shadow of a doubt"

Kirsten Callander was woken by hearing dog Pickle when the flat's smoke alarm went off. When she looked through the front door peephole viewer, she saw smoke and flames billowing out of the neighbour's flat. Without Pickle, Kirsten is convinced that she would have perished.

This is Kirsten's story...

#### ***Life with deafness***

I was born hearing, but around 2013, towards my late 20s, I developed the ear condition Ménière's disease. This has caused me to be deaf in both ears.

It affected me in so many ways. I lost my friends because I couldn't be the 'fun' me anymore. I felt shunned by the community, because I couldn't hear what people were saying in shops or restaurants. They'd just stare at me because they didn't know I was deaf.

I was always scared that something would happen when I went out alone. I was afraid that I would be the last to know about something important – that I could even die. But I also couldn't be on my own in the flat, because I was constantly worried that a fire could start and I wouldn't be able to hear it.

Little did I know that a hearing dog would help me through this worst of fears...

Read the full article [here](#)

**Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and Hearing Link understand the impact hearing problems can have on your life. We are here to help and have a range of services to support deaf people, from our clever hearing dogs, to Helpdesk, and Support Group. For more information visit our website <https://www.hearingdogs.org.uk/helpingyou/>**



## Noise exposure: time for a new approach

Peter Wilson, Technical Director at INVC, has spent many years spreading the word about the benefits of self-financing noise control measures and improving hearing conservation in workplaces. We look forward to his contribution to our 'At Work' Special Interest Group.

In his latest article he highlights the level of unsustainable UK insurance claim payouts, which at over £400million in 2014 alone, illustrate just how ineffective current conventional noise risk reduction processes are. This unsustainable impact is down to the ongoing conventional approach to noise risk management which is to spend resources on repeated noise assessments coupled with recommending personal hearing protection for workers. Virtually no resources are spent on evaluating the effectiveness of the personal protective equipment (PPE) in practice (despite HSE research proving that hearing protection is not effective), or on modern, low cost (even self-financing) and highly effective noise control measures for plant and machinery. However, there is an updated best practice approach that can reduce NIHL risk within almost any organisation by 75–90 per cent. In most cases, this can be achieved at negligible cost or even at a profit when compared with current expenditure.

You can read the full article by following this [link](#)

## The 'Noise Oscar' nominations are now open



The prestigious **John Connell Awards 2021** from the Noise Abatement Society are now inviting entries for their awards to be held at an event in the Terrace Pavilion, **Palace of Westminster**, on Wednesday, **20th October 2021**.

Now in their 19th year, the **John Connell Awards** are open to local authorities, industry and organisations throughout the UK. The awards recognise innovative services, campaigns, products and programmes that are shining examples of community co-operation, education and creative solutions to solving noise pollution problems.

The UKHCA were extremely proud that the work of a number of their members gained recognition at the last awards held in 2019. It was great to see prevention of hearing loss being celebrated and we celebrated success for EAVE, HearAngel and the LOCHER project for their ground breaking efforts in changing attitudes and finding solutions to preventable causes of hearing health damage.

The UKHCA would be happy to support members looking to apply this year. You can email [johnconnellawards@noise-abatementsociety.org](mailto:johnconnellawards@noise-abatementsociety.org) to request an application or contact us directly to ask for our direct advice on applications and support

*If you feel you have a news story, innovative ideas or a challenge for others around hearing conservation and preventable causes of hearing health harm please contact us. We are driving forward work through our 4 Special Interest Groups - Hearing Conservation; At Work, At Leisure, Through Education of Young People and in Music and Entertainment.*

**The UK Hearing Conservation Association**

Email: [enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk) | Website: <http://hearingconservation.org.uk>

Sent by Fitwise Management Ltd on behalf of the UKHCA. Fitwise Management Ltd. Blackburn House,  
Redhouse Road, Seafield, West Lothian, EH47 7AQ. Co. registration number SC247380