



WELCOME

Welcome to the spring edition of the UKHCA Newsletter.

As always, we welcome your contributions and feedback on our work. Please contact us with any thoughts or feedback at enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk.

UKHCA Annual General Meeting (AGM), 18th April 2024

The UKHCA will be hosting their AGM online on the 18th April 2024. We will be updating members on progress with the association in 2023 and plans for 2024. We will also update on work within the Special Interest Groups – namely the work on developing training and education materials and developments in noise health surveillance.

All members will shortly receive an invite to hold the date and we would like to see as many of you there as possible as we continue to raise the profile and make a difference to hearing conservation in the UK and beyond!

HSE to focus on Noise at Work during Inspections.

In April 2024, HSE will start a programme of inspections that include a focus on the Control of Noise at Work. This will be across most industry sectors that HSE enforces on, and the intention is to focus on the following:

1. How well is industry managing their hearing protection? This will be the focus for these noise visits. From the employer's perspective, this will centre around the CUEF program. Inspectors will be looking for employers to show they are

checking the **C**ondition, **U**se, **F**it and **F**itness for purpose of their hearing protection.

2. How widespread is the practice of buying quiet? HSE expect employers to look for ways to buy quieter machinery and power tools that are just as effective or better at the job than the equipment they already use.
3. Are employers looking for ways to control noise? Inspectors will be looking to see if employers hold a list of noise control measures that tells them, what controls have been implemented in the past, what controls they are working on in the present, and what controls they hope to put in place in the near and far future.

In addition to these focus points, HSE will be gathering workplace noise reports to review the quality of work being provided by 3rd party consultants. HSE wants to know if employers are getting good advice and if there are any problems in industry that need to be addressed.

While the focus for inspectors will be on the management of hearing protection, it does not mean that other parts of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations will be ignored.

It is anticipated that this is the first phase in a longer programme of inspections focusing on noise. HSE hope to be able to update industry on the findings of these inspections in about a year's time.

HSE would like UKHCA members to help amplify its message around CUFF. Chris Steel from HSE will be looking to meet with hearing protection manufacturers and suppliers to discuss messaging around CUFF and is hoping to present at the next UKHCA/BOHS joint meeting on workplace noise.

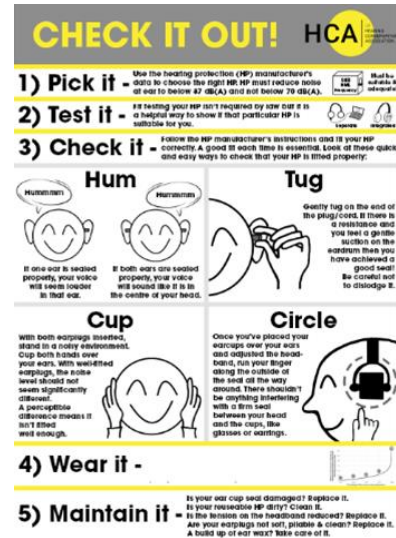
If you are a hearing protection supplier or manufacturer and you want to be involved, then please email Chris directly. chris.steel@hse.gov.uk

New publication on hearing protection fit checking

We have recently published a new poster guide to fit checking hearing protection. One of our members noted that there is very little information available in this area so we are sure our membership and interested parties will find this useful. Please spread the word far and wide – as we know hearing protection can be prone to failure so if we are relying on it let's make sure it is effective!

You can download the poster [here](#)

You can also find a link to our recent publication on the hierarchy of control related to noise [here](#)



Update from UKHCA Member Neal Hill on joining BSI committee PH/7

I am really pleased to report that I am now sitting on the British Standards Institute (BSI) PH/7 hearing protection standards committee as the UKHCA's nominated representative. This committee feeds into its European counterparts and covers several standards namely:-

- EN352, parts 1-10, Hearing protectors - General requirements
- EN458 Hearing protectors - Recommendations for selection, use, care and maintenance - Guidance document
- EN 13819 parts 1-3, Physical and Acoustic test methods
- EN 17479 Guidance on fit testing

However, a criticism often levelled at standards is, that their development is glacially slow and lags technology by a decade, which I want to use my Marketing experience to look at the mega trends and encourage my standards colleagues to get ahead of the curve.

Indeed, recognising these trends, the BSI convened a SMART PPE and Workplace Wearable Technology Roundtable meeting in January 2024 at their Laboratory in Hemel Hempstead, where professionals from various industries, including PPE manufacturers, academia, and government explored the realm of wearable devices. Their aim is to enhance personal well-being and workplace safety through tailored solutions that facilitate data collection for predictive and preventive risk management.

So, as we enter the 4th Industrial Revolution it is my opinion that we should take a new approach to noise induced hearing loss (NIHL) through technology-based, connected solutions such as but not limited to: -

- noise measurements incorporated into wearable technology.
- hearing protector fit testing (being as already championed by the UKHCA and BSIF)
- automated hearing protection wearer compliance monitoring
- routine workplace health surveillance using remote field audiometry.

And of course, existing standards need to 'acknowledge' these developments and/or new standards need to be created to ensure the validity of the data that is produced for obvious reasons.

I was musing that it is 50 years this year that I started work as an apprentice in a noisy factory and recall being told "don't worry son, you'll get used to it"! There have also been two iterations of noise legislation in the meantime. The current Control of Noise at Work legislation is approaching its own 20th anniversary and perhaps due for review given that NIHL has missed the RIDDOR cut.

Isn't it about time that NIHL was confined to history and I will be doing my bit through the standards committee - what are you going to do?

The Biophilic Effect

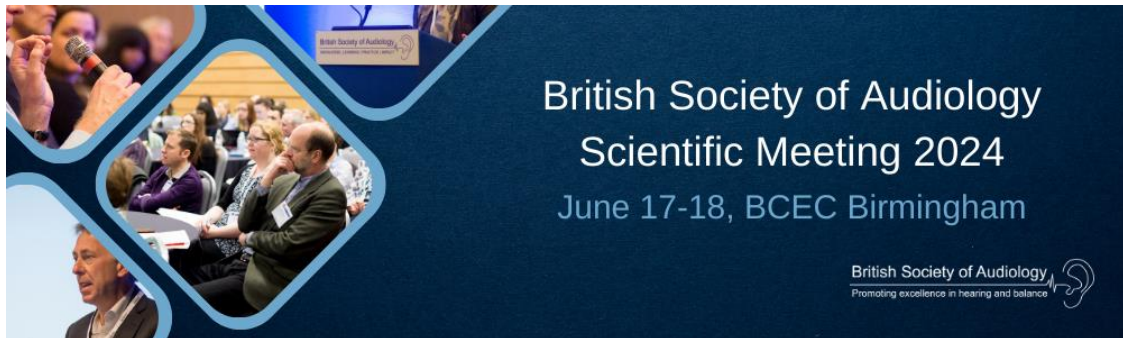
5 things you can do this year to improve workplace acoustics.

Vanessa Champion PhD

Biophilia refers to our innate connection and interdependency on the natural world and life around us and when applied to design, Biophilic principles aim to bring in as much direct nature connection as we can, from natural light, better acoustics, natural materials, zones for safety and respite, natural haptic experiences (like gravel underfoot, or wooden door handles). And that's before we even start looking at plants which most people think Biophilic Design is only about. Plants are natural air cleaners, Environmental psychologists have shown how having two big green leafy plants beside us when we are working helps us focus more, be more creative, reduces our cortisol and stress levels and ultimately encourages less presenteeism, absenteeism, less need for recruitment of staff because people are less likely to leave and the knock on effect is improved bottom line for the business. It also helps your ESG, BREEAM and WELL certification goals too.

[Read full article here](#)

BSA Scientific Meeting 2024 | 17-18 June 2024 | BCEC Birmingham

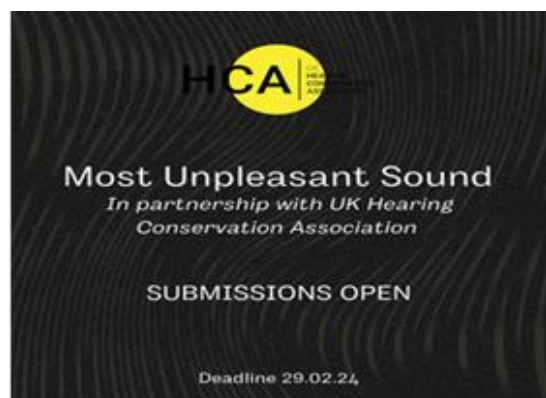


The British Society of Audiology have an upcoming Scientific Meeting taking place on the 17th and 18th June 2024 at the BCEC in Birmingham. You can take advantage of Early Bird Registration before 26th April; starting at £160 Inc VAT for members and £215 Inc VAT for non-members visit <https://fitwise.eventsair.com/bsa2024/delreg/Site/Register> Submission of abstracts is also open, closing date is 29th March 2024. [Submit an Abstract.](#)

The Roger Thornton Memorial Fund is open for applications from UK based students to support the travel and associated costs with presenting the findings of their research. Applications are open to both members and non-members of the BSA. [Find out more.](#)

Visit the [event website](#) for more information and to register. If you have any questions, please call the events team on 01506 292 042 or email events@fitwise.co.uk

Sound of the Year Award (SOTYA)



Submissions are now open for the Sound of the Year Awards 2023, which returns for its

third year, presented by [The Radiophonic Institute](#) and Museum of Sound.

From the everyday sounds that encapsulate the events of the past twelve months, to the year's most innovative and creative sound technology, SOTYA celebrates sound in all its forms and from all corners of the world.

Judged by a panel of leading lights from the international sound community, the winner of each category will receive a pair of basicUcho microphones - a set of phantom-powered, high-quality omni-directional electret microphones, courtesy of [LOM](#)

Category partners this year include, [Natural History Museum, London Accidental Records](#) , the [Southbank Centre National Poetry Library](#) , and UK Hearing Conservation Association.

Visit their website: <https://www.soundoftheyearawards.com/> for a complete breakdown of our categories, judges, and partners for 2023 and to make your submissions.

Deadline: 29th February 2024

Listen Up Conference



Save the date!

LISTEN UP CONFERENCE

HCA THE HEARING CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

2nd UKHCA Annual Conference

8th November
Mercure Sheffield
St Paul's Hotel

Programme and registration available mid June

hearingconservation.org.uk

£50 Members / £100 Non-Members

Our 2nd Annual conference took place on the 8th of November in Sheffield with the theme of; HearWELL - the role of hearing conservation in ensuring and driving good health & wellbeing for everyone. We had a fantastic line up of speakers and exhibitors and the day was both insightful and inspiring! We are already in the throes of planning our next conference in November 2024 so do let us know if you have any thoughts or ideas for this year's event at enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk

UKHCA continue to Collaborate with the Society of Occupational Medicine on Health Surveillance for NIHL

Work continues under this collaboration to develop specific criteria for detecting noise induced hearing loss. We will be publishing this guide in the next few weeks. Under this collaboration we will also be working with the HSE on future research and development in the area of health surveillance for noise. You can join our Special Interest Group on health checks and surveillance if you have a specific interest in this area. Contact us at enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk

If you have anything you wish to include in future newsletters please contact enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk

The UK Hearing Conservation Association

Email: enquiries@hearingconservation.org.uk | Website: <http://hearingconservation.org.uk>

Sent by Fitwise Management Ltd on behalf of the UKHCA.

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