



**DURHAM
DEAFENED
SUPPORT**
UNDERSTANDING • SUPPORT • SELF-HELP

IN THE LOOP
NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 2019

EDITORIAL

I am delighted to welcome all DDS members to the first edition of our new-look newsletter, 'In the Loop'. Hopefully, you will find it both informative and interesting, and perhaps entertaining as well! We would certainly appreciate your feedback on 'In the Loop' - let us know if you like it, or why you don't, and perhaps what you would like to see in future editions.

We would like to publish copies of *In the Loop* 3 or 4 times per year - but we need information and stories to keep it interesting. If you can help us by sending us your story, a joke or two, or anything you feel is important to share, then please contact us (*details at the end of this newsletter*).

Happy reading!

Julie Underwood, Editor

AN AMAZING LEGACY

Many of you may remember one of DDS's founding members, Sandra Cottrell who sadly passed away last year. She made a wonderful bequest in her will, leaving DDS a sum of money which will help us to do some amazing things.

The Management Board, in consultation with staff, have been considering different options of how some of this money could and should be spent, and recently some decisions were made. DDS will:

- Have a number of special remembrance activities, including:
 - *naming a training room after Sandra*
 - *commissioning a portrait, to be hung in this room*
 - *change the name of the annual 'Personal Achievement' award, normally presented at AGM, to the Sandra Cottrell Award*
 - *Hold an annual 'special day' that will include talks and activities, focussed on holistic therapies and techniques such as reflexology*



Sandra Cottrell

- Establish a bursary for potential lip reading teachers, whereby suitable applicants can receive money towards course fees
- Employ a new member of staff who will be focussed on attracting funding to ensure that DDS can continue to operate. This will be on a fixed term basis only, with a view to obtaining further funding for the job to continue thereafter
- Maintain a contingency fund that could help to support DDS if difficult situations arise.

In the future there may be other activities that some of the contingency fund could be used for, and you will be kept 'in the loop' when that happens.

If you have benefitted from the wonderful service that DDS provides, like Sandra, you may wish to think about leaving something to the charity in your will. Any and all contributions would be most gratefully received.



Heard the one about...?

What kind of ghost has the best hearing? - *The eeriest.*

***** HOT OFF THE PRESS *****

DDS has just signed an agreement with Durham County Council, and the NHS CCGs (Commissioning Groups) which will provide funding for a further 3 years. This is fantastic news that means we will be able to continue supporting our members right across County Durham and Darlington.

NEWS HEADLINES



TEMPORARY RELOCATION OF AUDIOLOGY AT DARLINGTON

From Friday 12th April 2019, the Audiology Department at Darlington Memorial Hospital has relocated onto **Ward 11** for approximately 10 months. This is due to building works which are taking place near to the department which will be very noisy and disruptive.

During the repair, opening times remain the same, as do contact phone numbers, but for any members who need hearing aid repairs they will need to make their way to Ward 11 instead of the usual location. Ward 11 is on the same floor (Level 1) as the Audiology Department is now but at the other end of the hospital corridor.

HEARING AID REPAIRS

Did you know that from 1 Jan 2020 the NHS hearing aid repairs service is moving to a booked repair system only and the open access sessions will cease.

Joanne Close, the Audiology Services Manager told us,

“A booked repair appointment will offer the user a more punctual appointment and will avoid long waits in the department as the current waiting times in an open repair session are now stretching beyond 90 minutes. This will also help users with their car parking costs as they will have a fixed appointment slot. We will still offer repairs at the same venues as we do now.”

She went on to say that the booked repair appointment can be arranged by phone or by e-mail which is the main preference for a lot of patients now.

The Repairs Service is also running a very successful tubing and slim tube replacement via post saving the user from attending at all.

To make an appointment, contact the Hearing Aid Repair Service on:

Durham: tel 0191 333 2305
or email:
cdda-tr.audiologyuhnd@nhs.net

Darlington: tel 01325 743153
or email:
cdda-tr.audiologydmh@nhs.net

Remember - you will not be seen unless you have an appointment.

HEARING AID BATTERIES

If you are having trouble obtaining hearing aid batteries from Peterlee Urgent Care Centre, then contact us or call in at our Horden office, as we can supply them for you.

Also, some of our members have asked if the changes at UHND have affected the issuing of batteries. The audiology department have assured us that batteries can still be obtained from reception and there is no need to make a specific appointment for this.



VOLUNTEERS' WEEK

The first week in June was the national Volunteers' Week, and to mark its occasion, we held a celebratory event for our own very hard working volunteers.

Our volunteers provide much needed help in all sorts of areas, from running groups, and providing transport, to being part of our Management Board helping to make important

decisions, attract funding and planning services for the future. Their hard work and time given are very much appreciated by everyone at DDS, so we thank you all once again.

If you would like to become a volunteer, or know more about it, please just get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

AROUND YOUR AREA



SEDFIELD CRAFT GROUP

The Sedgefield Craft Group meets every Wednesday, 1-3pm in Ceddesfeld Hall, Sedgefield, and is run by our hard-working volunteer, Linda Robinson. The group have been together now for nearly 3 years and have been producing some amazing work. From decoupage cards, to Christmas tree decorations, diamond pictures, and Powertex sculptures – you name it, they'll have a go at it!

I popped in to see them recently. Group leader, Linda, said *"This is a really talented group of people, and I'm really proud of them. They create some wonderful objects, but really the best thing is that these crafts give the group a great opportunity to socialise, spending time together doing something they love"*.

A recent success was this amazing 2 foot paper sculpture Easter Egg. It was made in only 2 hours, with all members of the



group contributing individual handmade flowers. And, it took 4th prize in a local competition – well done ladies!

I shall certainly be back to have a go myself!!

Julie Underwood

OTHER GROUPS

Did you know that DDS run a variety of local support groups around all of County Durham and Darlington? This is what we currently offer:

- Lip reading / clear speech
- Tinnitus counselling and support
- Cochlear implant friendship
- Balance
- Deaf/blind social

- Introductory British Sign Language
- Yoga
- Crafts
- Walking

Other organised social events include:

- Captioned theatre performances
- Subtitled cinema
- Visits to museums etc
- Christmas lunch

If you would like to know where and when any of these groups meet in your area, or know more about the organised social events, then just get in contact with us.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

DDS is often called to help people with one problem, and end up sorting out a host of other issues too. Pam Thirlaway, who is one of our Support Workers, was recently called out to help a lady with a listening device for her TV. Pam takes up the story:

"When I went to visit the lady her daughter was there visiting at the same time. I had a short conversation with them about the various illnesses this lady had and how she was finding it difficult to cope. She was about to give up driving because she didn't feel safe anymore. I asked if they had claimed Attendance Allowance at all, and the answer was no, never heard of it. I explained what it was and why I thought she should put in a claim. Both agreed and I ordered the claim pack. When it arrived I went back and filled in the questions. This lady had given up driving by this time and was feeling very isolated."



Pam Thirlaway

"After seven weeks I got a call from the lady's daughter who was really pleased she had been successful and was getting £57 every week towards any help she needed. The lady can now afford a taxi to get her to groups to meet her friends and some help around her home too. I received a thank you card for being so 'helpful and professional' from both ladies. It is a lovely thing when you know you have done something to help someone. That is why I love my job."

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 9TH JULY 2019



This year the DDS AGM was held at Hallgarth Manor Hotel, at Pitlington. It was attended by some 70+ people, who enjoyed a cream tea, bingo and raffle. A really interesting talk was given by Laura Fulco from the Menières Society, and the following people were elected to the Management Board:

- Chairperson:** *David Blackwell*
Vice Chairperson: *Jane Atkinson*
Board Trustees: *John Cauldwell*
Anne Fyland
Norman Smith
Sam Underwood

There are important vacancies remaining to be filled – both Treasurer and Secretary positions, and it is vital that we appoint people to these roles in the near future. If you are interested and think you have the skills, knowledge and experience to apply, please contact us to come and have a talk with our Chairperson, David Blackwell.

ANNUAL PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Each year, the Personal Achievement Award is presented at the AGM. This year, the award went to **Marjorie Wheatley**. The nomination for Marjorie to receive the award was put forward by 3 people who had recognised the change in her whole outlook on life since attending DDS. Marjorie was quick to state that the support she has had from DDS groups is what has made the difference to her life. She also said *“I wish I had known about DDS years ago; it would have made so much difference to me”*



Marjorie Wheatley's award

CHRISTMAS MEAL

Following receipt of some comments after our annual Christmas meal, we felt it was important to ask all members their opinion of it. Therefore, we carried out a survey, and many thanks to the almost 100 members who kindly responded to it.

As you will appreciate, the comments received were a mixture of negative and positive. On the negative side, the main problems were identified as: accessibility of the venue, the distance some people had to travel to get there, the food was cold and quality was poor, the raffle was far too big and took up too much time, and there were some people who felt it was expensive.

On the positive side, people welcomed the opportunity to socialise, and that the venue were good at meeting dietary needs and the serving staff were pleasant and courteous.



In terms of what people would like to have for future Christmas events, a lot of very helpful suggestions have been put forward. It seems that most people prefer a sit-down meal. The distance to travel to the venue was a problem for some, but clearly not for those who lived in that area. Therefore a number of people suggested changing the venue each year so that different groups of members got the chance to 'dine locally', and also having bus transport was put forward. The raffle is still popular, although a smaller activity would be preferred, and a significant number of people were interested in entertainment and singalong.

The clear message from all this is that people are keen for some

changes, and we will certainly keep your comments to the fore when organising the Christmas meal for 2019.

As a final note, the following comment received reflects the sentiment that many members expressed:

“I would like to comment on the fact how much of a friendly environment DDS have, and are extremely supportive”.

Thank you all again.

DDS Management Board

Contact information: Durham Deafened Support,
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 Horden, Peterlee Durham SR8 4LX
Tel: 0191 5183358 Email: admin@ddsupport.org.uk



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