

Welcome to our March newsletter

HAPPY WORLD HEARING DAY

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Practice Update:

The route out of lockdown has been announced as the Prime Minister unveils the plan to end England restrictions by 21st June. As he explained the four-step plan to ease lockdown he talked of spring and summer as being “seasons of hope”. The cautious easing of restrictions allows 5 weeks between each of the steps with decisions being led “by data not dates”. The vaccination programme remains the key to meeting the requirements of each stage and enabling a lockdown exit plan.

For us at Aston Hearing the vaccination programme now available means we can get more of our frontline staff back to work as healthcare workers can book and manage their coronavirus vaccination online. Our practices are back to normal opening hours and we are welcoming clients for all types of appointment once more. We adhere to strict COVID-19 protocol throughout our practices, but we totally understand if you would prefer to rearrange your scheduled appointment until later in the year. Just give us a call and we can help you find a suitable alternative date. Please bear with us though as our phone lines are likely to be very busy.



March 23rd The Anniversary of a year like no other

For all of us the year 2020 will invoke memories of a troubled year where freedoms were restricted and life under lockdown rules became the norm.

No-one anticipated the impact the new Coronavirus would have on a global scale as the crisis quickly became one of mankind's biggest challenges of the 21st Century.

At a local level here in the Chilterns, as we observed the guidelines and stayed at home, we saw the emergence of a true community spirit. Groups of people came together to support the most vulnerable and social networks were quickly formed to keep people safe, fed and remembered. Here are a few key moments from the year.

March 23rd 2020 National lockdown



Strict new curbs were introduced as handwashing, hand sanitizer and the 2m rule became key measures for public safety. We were warned against panic buying of groceries to keep supplies stable and every week a nationwide 'clap for the NHS' was held to mark the dedication of our healthcare staff and support teams.

Parents were suddenly required to home school their children as schools everywhere were closed and we all had to learn to use online forums like ZOOM, FaceTime etc if we wanted to see friends and family.

The Aston Hearing team and everyone else quickly adapted to working from home.

April 2020

The national lack of PPE for healthcare staff made headlines as hospital deaths reached 10,000. Local sewing groups evolved to hand-make scrubs for NHS and care workers. The "For The Love of Scrubs" movement was started and became a national success in providing additional scrubs uniforms for key workers to change into. Loosely Row sewing group was set up, and all over the Chilterns there was an army of sewers and helpers to make scrubs, bags and even cookies to support the NHS. Furloughed staff from Aston Hearing were involved and it felt good to be doing something positive in the midst of the pandemic. You may recall some of the various brightly coloured ensembles our own Audiology staff were wearing!



May 2020

'Masks for May' – the month when face coverings were recommended for indoor spaces and all public transport. The sewing groups turned their skills to providing masks as well as scrubs as demand increased and everyone was required to comply. Some outdoor sports facilities tentatively opened up again with social distancing rules enforced. Hopes for some normality resuming were high.



June 2020

Non-essential shops and catering outlets were allowed to re-open with strict social distancing and face coverings. The summer weather lifted spirits and crowds flocked to beaches and the countryside. At last we were all able to get a haircut again!

July 2020

The late Captain Sir Tom Moore was knighted by The Queen for his contribution to the pandemic and raising so much for the NHS and associated groups. As we all know, he raised spirits too as he became our beacon of hope that the pandemic would one day be over and there would be better days ahead.



August - September 2020

The Government 'Eat out to help out' campaign encouraged us all to venture back into cafes, pubs and restaurants and help get the hospitality industry back on its feet. The Rule of Six was introduced allowing no more than six people to meet up in a group setting.



October 2020

As the summer ended and universities and schools returned, a new three tier alert level system was unveiled as the UK reported over 1 million lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19.



November 2020

A second national lockdown was introduced and talk started to turn to what measures to put in place for Christmas eg. the possibility of "Christmas bubbles". News of a mutant variant of the virus emerged.



December 2020

The UK approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for use and the first jab was given to a 90-year old grandmother. Christmas bubbles were banned and all celebrations were cancelled as a rise in cases occurred.



January 2020 - February 2021

The new year crept in quietly without the usual fanfare celebrations of a typical New Year's Eve but hopes were raised with a new year, new vaccines, new presidency and for Aston Hearing the promise of new puppies!



March 2021

As we now all eagerly look forward to June 21st, what has the last year really shown us? The value of a simple hug, the luxury of being able to travel where and when you choose, the importance of socialising and being together, the need to look out for one another, to value our teachers, health workers, food providers, support staff and to treasure our health.



World Hearing Day - Wednesday 3rd March 2021

Happy World Hearing Day

Today we join the World Health Organization in a celebration of hearing. The theme this year is:-

Hearing Care for All

Screen . Rehabilitate . Communicate

Hearing is something that we, at Aston Hearing think about more than most! Hearing is one of those things that does need to be celebrated. It is something that we take for granted until the moment it is challenged and ironically, that is the time when we start to wonder and appreciate it most.

Our celebration of the day is focused on the hearing care services we provide. Our newest member of the team, Charlotte Scott, has enlisted her family to help us make a covid-safe fun video to showcase our award-winning hearing care.

Click on the video link, like, comment and subscribe to celebrate with us.

A special big thank you to Paula, Michael, Adam and Mollie Scott who gave up their Saturday to be involved.
#hearthon2021 #worldhearingday2021 #takinghearingseriously

Click below to watch our video:-



World Hearing Day 2021 Continued:-

In further celebration we throw back to a year ago (just before the world turned on its head!) and read Lynda's story.

Dr Lynda Shaw kindly shared her hearing journey with us.

"I can honestly say that outside of my family and close friends, my relationship with my audiologist, is one of my most important relationships. It helped me beyond anything I can imagine, it literally was life changing. I hear well, I have strong relationships, a successful business as a professional speaker and mentor to CEO's across the country, I am extremely active, and I love life." Dr Lynda Shaw



Speen Helping Hospices (SHH)

Aston Hearing has many connections to Speen and North Dean and regularly sponsor the Speen Festival. We held our 30 year anniversary there in 2019 and are very proud to share the latest information from the group, Speen Helping Hospices.

SHH is a small voluntary group run by a team from Speen and North Dean to fundraise for four local hospices - **- Helen House for Children, Rennie Groves Hospice Care, South Bucks Hospice at Home and Florence Nightingale in Aylesbury**. The hospices provide essential palliative and end-of-life care services. All the money raised goes directly to the charities and to date SHH have raised over £108,000. Even in the challenging year that was 2020 SHH raised over £17,000.

Lockdown 2 forced the group to rethink fundraising options and an online market shop was formed. For Mother's Day March 14th they have a fantastic offering – Afternoon tea Boxes.

They offer boxes for 1 to 4 people ranging in price from £10 for a Tea Box for one person to £40 for a Tea Box for 4 people. Each box will contain finger sandwiches, scones with jam and cream, a selection of homemade cakes and mini bottles of Prosecco. You can order your box now from grainnesuter@btconnect.com or on 07778803260 or through shh-shop.org.

They also have a range of gifts that you might like to buy for Mum or a special person in your life. The website is evolving and new lines coming on board on a regular basis.

[Speen Helping Hospices \(SHH\) website](http://shh-shop.org)



March in the Garden

This month we turn to our very own resident gardening expert, Karen Galvin for some advice.

“Spring has arrived full of fresh hope and newness, birds are singing and busy making nests, lambs are springing, new buds are forming on trees and shrubs and the ground is a sea of yellow daffodils, colourful crocuses and polyanthus.

If you can get on top of things in early spring then the rest of the year runs smoothly.

So dust down those tools, put your boots and gloves on and get stuck in.

Here are some quick tips and ideas to get you going:



Give the borders a fork over and tidy up, divide and replant perennials then, as mentioned last month too, give the borders a good layer of mulch.



Prune roses when you see new side buds forming but watch out for any frosts that might nip the new shoots though!



Divide Snowdrops (in the green)

Sow hardy annuals and wildflowers.



Give your lawn some TLC, rake out any moss, make the first cut and edge the lawn this can really make a difference to the whole look.



Plant up a patio container using plants such as daffodils (tête-à-tête), Hellebore, Heuchera, Heather, Bellis Daisies, Ranunculus and Variegated Ivy.



The Power of Poetry

"Poetry: the best words in the best order."

Samuel Coleridge

Poetry is celebrated internationally on various dates throughout the year with our own UK National Poetry Day falling in October, but Sunday 21st March is regarded as World Poetry Day. It aims to remind us that humanity is the same the world over.

Looking back over the past year we have used poems in our newsletters to help lighten the mood of lockdown, to lift the spirits and add some humour to the new situations we all faced due to COVID-19. For this we thank our very own poet, Pat Aylett. Some of us also found home schooling re-kindled an appreciation of poetry as classic and modern poems were read and critiqued as part of the school syllabus.

Poetry is a means of expressing thoughts and feelings on a subject and can have a positive impact on the social and emotional learning of children. It can offer a new way of thinking about something and help put into words our worries and concerns, feelings and imagination. Reading and writing poetry can have highly therapeutic effects on the mind.

Poem structure favours brevity but the detail they capture can be an incredibly powerful means of conveying a message to the reader.

We often turn to poetry in times of emotional need, for eulogies, bereavement etc. and poetry's powerful healing qualities during and after both world wars are well documented. Poems were often read to soldiers to help them cope with the trauma and brutalities of war and we still turn to famous poems to be read aloud at Remembrance Services worldwide.

Often the best poems are written from the heart. They are raw, emotional, succinct and to the point. They can sum up a wealth of feeling in just a few well-chosen words. They can also entertain and provide humour, fun and of course, romance.

So why not select a few of your own personal favourites and read them again, or maybe write a poem of your own – just let your thoughts wander and write what comes to mind. Happy World Poetry Day.

To finish, here is another poem to start you on your way.

The Lockdown Roadmap

There's a roadmap out of lockdown!
Set the satnav! Off we go,
Pack a picnic for the journey
As our progress will be slow.

We will pass a few big milestones
Driving through the sun and rain.
Each mile brings our freedom nearer
'Til we can celebrate again.

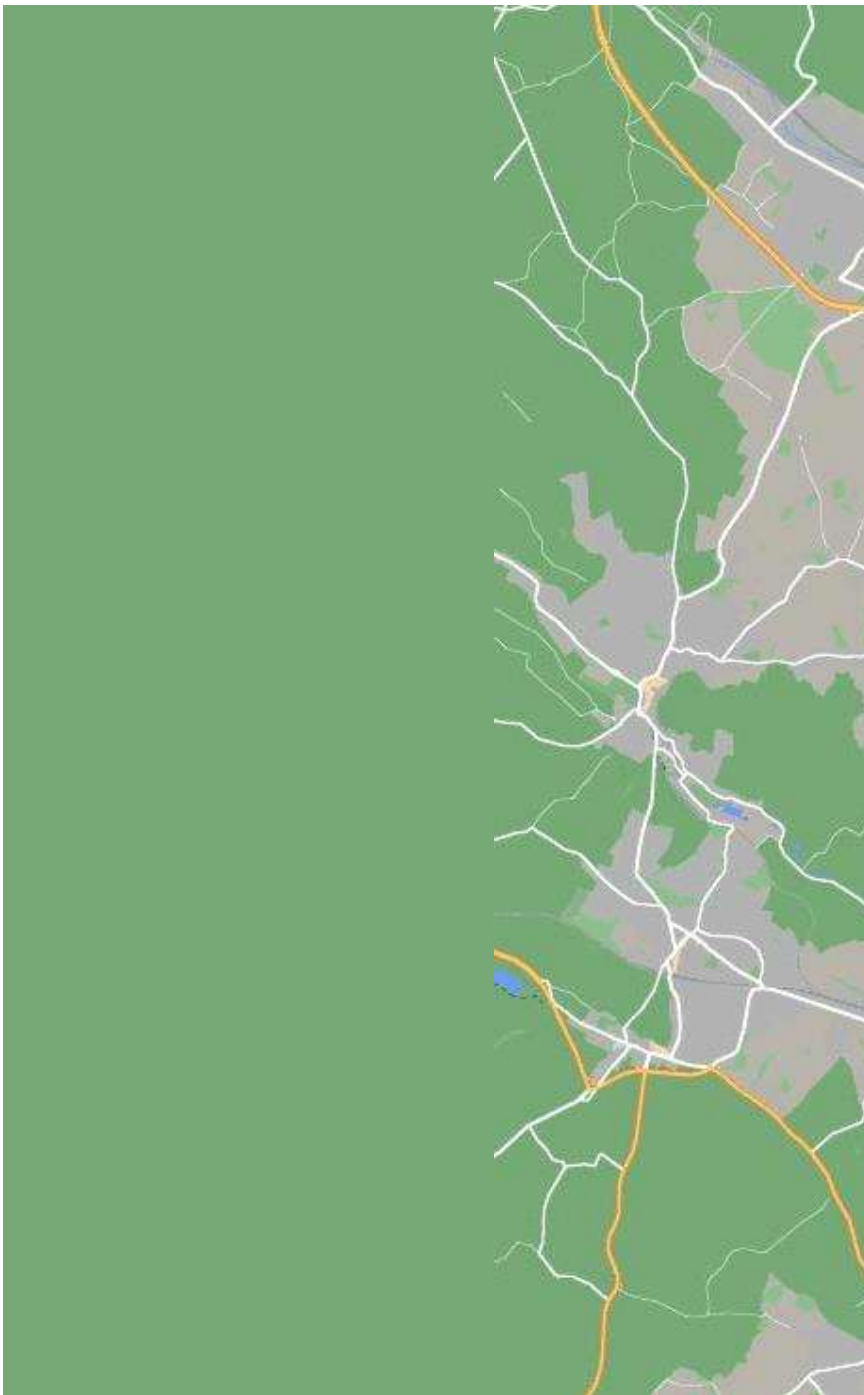
Past the school – the gates are open
Children going in and out,
No home-schooling to contend with,
Everyone is pleased, no doubt.

Look! There's people meeting friends here!
Socialising in the park,
Not yet hugging, keeping distant,
Staying out until it's dark.

Further on the queues are forming
Outside shops in every town,
Sadly some have gone forever-
The casualties of this lockdown.

Now we're nearly at the seaside,
And our holiday is near,
Sun and sea and lots of ice-cream,
No more sadness, no more fear.

Pat Aylett



Aston Hearing Services

Tel: 01494 733840

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