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Our e-newsletter provides a regular monthly service update and important practice information for our clients. We use our monthly newsletter update to keep you informed on how to access our services with information that we hope you find interesting and useful. We feel it is our duty of care to keep in touch with you in this way, if however, you no longer wish to receive these updates please click on the unsubscribe option at the bottom of this email.

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Dear Philip,

Welcome to the
Aston Hearing Newsletter
January 2023

Happy New Year and welcome to our January newsletter and predictably we cannot resist focusing our attention on new healthy habits to help us all live our best lives! But just how hard is it to kick unhealthy habits whilst hopefully developing and adopting some healthier ones on the way?

This is always my struggle. I know what I should do and why I should do it but what stops it from happening? Surely as evolutionary beings we should be good at this stuff?

So poor old January '23 gets to burden the responsibility of trying to 'put things back on track' or even more optimistically to a new realm of possibilities of healthier, happier outcomes! Surely that is too much to expect from a month that sees us still reeling from a challenging 2022!

Taking heart from Dr Mike Mosely's podcast Just One Thing we thought we would share some ideas with you and look forward to hearing your ideas too. Please do not take them too seriously though– if any of them grab your fancy then go for it but be gentle and forgiving and kind to yourself (and others) and celebrate the small wins along the way. Pat's poem, as always, sums it up perfectly!

Kate Collet-Fenson

Editor of Newsletter



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Practice Update:

Busy diaries in Amersham and Thame but still lots of opportunities for catch up appointments so don't hesitate to get in touch. We have reduced hours at The Grange due to staff shortages so please bear with us for the time being.

We have some great New Year technology offers due to a consolidation of our stock so if you are looking for a bargain please email richard@astonhearing.co.uk and he will be pleased to make you an appointment.

[Click Here to Email Richard for Appointments](#)

Goodbye and Thank You for Many Years of Dedicated Service

Nikki Magrath & Jo Green



Nikki Magrath

After many years of dedicated service we are reluctantly saying goodbye to lovely Nikki who is needing more time to dedicate to her family and interests outside work including time spent on the Sustainable Amersham project.

Nikki has had more impact on all of the team and so many clients at Aston Hearing than she can ever realise. She passionately and selflessly shared her hearing loss story with everyone and anyone who would listen. Nikki has an amazing positivity about living well with hearing challenges and has over the years made such a difference to so many people - including our team whose have all benefited from Nikki sharing her experiences with us, so that we can then share with others.

Nikki's legacies at Aston Hearing are multiple and she needs to be fully credited for the national awareness of Sudden Hearing Loss and its impact, including helping us to launch unique hearing saving emergency protocols. We also credit her for the speedy development of this practice update which she put in place as soon as Covid hit in order to keep in touch and communicating with our clients, who she was so worried about becoming isolated. She was also dedicated to the success of our HearToday events, including the hearing friendly cookery courses and the amazing Deaf Tennis event. We hope one day to be able to re-launch these events after they were so abruptly interrupted due to the pandemic.

We hope to encourage Nikki back occasionally to continue to share her positivity of living well with hearing challenges - Thank You Nikki you are a superstar!

[Click Here to remember Nikki's Story that helped so many come to terms with their own hearing challenges](#)



Jo Green

Another stalwart of Aston Hearing is moving on to pastures new - Jo Green has been an amazing asset to Aston Hearing, particularly her impact in the early days of our original Thame Branch.

Jo joined Aston Hearing in 2016 as Front of House Manager in Thame. Her career as a nurse with her specialism as a qualified Ear Wax trainer for the NHS stood her in great stead to be an amazing asset for us across the whole of Aston Hearing.

Jo has routinely 'stepped up' and helped us out whenever she possibly could, at any of the three branches - even at short notice. She has been an amazing mentor to all our trainee Audiologists and Clinical Ear Care Practitioners. Her stand out skill though is putting clients at ease with kind and caring nature. She will be dearly missed by many of her regular clients and the whole team at Aston Hearing.

Thank you Jo for your kindness and dedication, often above and beyond the call of duty and for being such an amazing member of the team - we look forward to keeping in touch and as a long-term Thame resident, we hope you will call in for coffee and cake whenever you are passing.



Learn Something New to Boost Your Brain

We are all encouraged to learn a new skill be it learning a new instrument, joining a choir, learning a new language. Since the success of Rose Ayling-Ellis' positive attitude towards being deaf and using BSL there has been a huge surge in demand for Sign Languages classes. According to research the benefits of learning a new skill go beyond the skill itself but have measurable positive effects on brain health too.

So, for 2023 Duncan and I have challenged ourselves to dig a little deeper and learn something in more depth. Our daughter Luci is embarking on completing the WSET qualifications (Wine and Spirit Education Trust). We have all got involved in learning more about wine and it has us hooked so we have decided to take the WSET Level 1 too! There is a good free app by Decanter – Know Your Wine – which throughout the day delivers information in bite size chunks and keeps repeating until the knowledge is secure and easily recalled.

As your knowledge develops you test yourself with a daily quiz – it is surprising how satisfying it is to move through the levels.

Currently I am at 'Wine Dilettante' stage – whilst Duncan is still at 'Wine Rookie' level. We are all booked in on the WSET level 1 qualification next month – fingers crossed we will pass the exam and it will be a great start to a lifelong interest that we can all share and enjoy. We will keep you posted!



[DOWNLOAD WINE LEARNING APP](#)



ANOTHER NEW SKILL IDEA -

Why not try Lip Reading?

We had a good response to our call out in the December newsletter for interest in a new lipreading class. We are hoping to run a few FREE taster sessions throughout February.

[Click here to find out more and to register your interest.....](#)



Small Mindset Changes

Over the past year I have noted that my weight has crept up and it is presenting itself in finding certain favourite clothes items no longer fitting well anymore. So, my decision to do something about it followed quickly after New Year's Eve – which happened to also be my 50th birthday! I really could not face the usual calorie counting and ritual weighing and dieting that does little other than make you constantly think about the food you are not allowed to eat anymore. **This time something different happened. I decided to reframe my outlook. The differences are slight and what I would describe as a mindset change.** Something just clicked. I suddenly did not worry about it anymore, I just started to feel more in control. I no longer felt the need for 2 slices of toast for breakfast but found I was not hungry and instead was enjoying my cup of coffee and the conversation. By lunchtime I was drawn to soups and salads instead of sandwiches. I genuinely started to make better choices – not to lose weight but because it is what I wanted. My energy levels have increased, and I have more of a spring in my step than before. The results are so positive – but I cannot put my finger on what it is that has changed other than a slight reframing and a tweak to my mindset. The results are real and not easy to explain but I have a feeling it is all to do with the brain. **My brain is completely in control of what I do and feel, so a real, genuine change in the way I think, is having a much more positive impact physically than I could have believed.**

Mindset Changes To Help Your Hearing

We have for years encouraged mindset change related to management of hearing. The recognition that your brain plays a much bigger part in hearing ability than might be realised. A person who has a positive mind-shift to listening via their hearing aids and a genuine acceptance of an alternative way of listening, results and outcomes become much more positive. This, on the surface, might seem like an obvious conclusion – but what we are saying is that the sounds presented are the same but your ability to hear can be either helped or hindered by your brain's acceptance. In other words, **the brain can have a significant bearing on how well you hear but it takes a genuine positive mindset shift to make the new sound acceptable and without that shift the brain could be putting up barriers to better hearing.**



Volunteering

The world in 2023 certainly seems to be very unsettled and troubled now. This can be very upsetting and disturbing, and become overwhelming, hearing all the news and upset that constantly fills our 24-hour rolling news programming that becomes difficult to avoid. There are no easy answers or fixes to the challenges facing so many. I personally have found becoming involved with the Ukrainian refugee programme to be positive and have taken heart in hearing all the good work happening all around us - communities coming together to run food banks and warm spaces etc. **One good news story last week was 100-year-old Peter Davis who became a reading volunteer at the local primary school after his wife of 72 years died. Peter says that when the youngsters call out to him in the street he feels '10-feet tall'.**

Keeping busy, meeting people and being useful are all such positive outcomes of volunteering your time. There are so many ways to volunteer in whatever way suits and interests you. From being part of the gardening team at Hughenden Manor or a greeter at The Hearing Dogs restaurant, helping at the Ukrainian Clothes Barn or becoming a food bank volunteer.

One of our clients, Philip Suter from Speen, became involved with the village charity 'Speen Helping Hospices' that has been raising thousands of pounds for local hospices since 2001. Philip explains how he became involved 'My involvement with SHH arose because of Covid and they needed a website very quickly to sell face masks and items from the 2020 Christmas market that went virtual' - it is so rewarding to be more actively involved, particularly at a time when it really feels like we are making a difference.



Click here for details about the up-and-coming events Speen Helping Hospices have planned and an appeal for fundraising ideas so they can continue to support the vital work of our local hospice network that provide such an incredible service at a point in people's lives when they really need it.

Supporting Helen House for Children, South Bucks Hospice, Florence Nightingale and Rennie Groves Hospice Care



And finally: A celebration of a National Treasure – Quentin Blake celebrated his 90th birthday last month.

Quentin Blake has always meant a great deal to us since our early days in our Great Missenden shop opposite the Roald Dahl Museum but more recently we have chosen his work to add colour, humor and joy to both our Thame and Amersham branches. His joyous work celebrates life in all its glory – with his quirky illustrations that can't help but make you smile!

[Quentin Blake at 90: celebrating the joy and magic of the illustrator of Matilda, The BFG and beyond \(theconversation.com\)](http://theconversation.com)



PAT'S POEM

As always Pat has her finger on the nation's pulse – her January poem completely rounds up this newsletter perfectly as always.....

New Year Resolution

I start with good intentions every New Year's Day.
"This year I will stick to them" is what I always say.
"Try to be realistic, don't set your sights too high,
You won't succeed at everything no matter how you try".
This year I'll get fitter, this year I'll lose weight.
Cut down on the alcohol (This might be a bit too late!)
I won't eat too much chocolate I'll cut out starchy food,
And all the cakes and pastries I know they are no good.
That's enough for starters, I'll leave my list right here,
And if I don't succeed this time, there'll always be next
year!

Pat Aylett

January 2023



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