



Distinctions

news from

Seaford Hearing Centre & Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centre

Seen and heard – the award winning hearing garden

Our Managing Director Robert Davies had good reason to be celebrating Seaford and Sevenoaks Hearing Centres involvement with the Widex Hearing Garden at the recent Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. The exhibit scooped a Gold Medal and the Best Small Garden award at this prestigious event on the horticultural calendar.

So what exactly makes a hearing garden - as opposed to, well, just a garden?

Of course, all gardens are as much about sound as well as sight. But sometimes we overlook - or we are physically unable to appreciate - the audible pleasures that our gardens bring to the senses.

Through special sound-based effects including an interactive sound wall, water features and sound sculptures, the Hearing Garden at the show offered visitors the unique opportunity to experience the sounds as well as the sights of a courtyard garden – to understand their hearing ability and the pleasures it brings to them.

Sponsored by hearing aid manufacturers Widex, the garden was supported by the Association of Independent Hearing Healthcare Professionals. Robert and his Sevenoaks-based colleague Matt Cannon are both full members of the association and were proud to be in attendance at the Hearing Garden, showing visitors the important contribution that sound makes to our natural environment.



Matt (left) and Robert at the Widex Hearing Garden

Robert commented: "From a hearing aid specialist's viewpoint this was the best possible demonstration of the potential for

appreciating and recapturing the sheer pleasure of the sounds typically found in an English garden.

Recommend a friend for Christmas – it'll cost us!

Earlier this year we launched a new reward incentive to our existing patients. It works like this – for every person you recommend to us who then purchases a hearing system, we will dig into our pockets and send you a Marks & Spencer voucher worth £50.



So if you have a friend or family member showing signs of hearing loss (you should recognise the symptoms!) or know of someone with an underperforming or unsightly hearing aid, tell them about us – and reap the rewards!



ReSound turn back the clock

page 2



Hearing better than ever

page 3



Kenya – latest

page 4

ReSound turn back the clock

The word on the street was that ReSound were planning something spectacular by way of a new hearing aid – but it was all kept tightly under wraps until the launch in Sorrento in September.

Now the news is out! 'be by ReSound' is the name of an all-new instrument which the manufacturers claim (and who are we to argue) has the power to turn back the clock on your hearing to the days when you – and your hearing – were in your prime.

The world's smallest hearing instrument, it's the first product in a brand new category known as Invisible Open Technology, comprising:

- A unique design that's invisible in the ear with nothing behind the ear.
- Absolute comfort - in both wearing and listening
- Brilliant clarity of speech understanding
- Advanced elimination of whistling
- No wind noise
- The most natural listening experience available

All these benefits add up to a hearing aid that's ideal for those who like the outdoor life - including golfers, walkers, cyclists, hikers and sailors. No prizes for guessing where to find out more about be by ReSound!



Return of the 'Oscars' at AIHHP conference



Cambourne will be a fitting location for the Association of Independent Hearing Healthcare Professionals (AIHHP) annual conference to be held later this year.

Cambourne is a newly-built community 9 miles from Cambridge – so where better to showcase all that's new in the rapidly evolving world of digital hearing aid technology!

Last year saw the launch of the first ever AIHHP awards scheme – and manufacturers are already looking ahead to this year's awards and hoping that their products and achievements receive this prestigious recognition.

Robert Davies and Matt Cannon are both proud members of the AIHHP and are looking forward with anticipation to the conference.

Membership of the AIHHP is by invitation only to those independent hearing aid audiologists who represent the highest standards of quality and ethics. So the advice is - for excellence in ear care, look out for the AIHHP logo at their practices.

'Raising the walls' for global charity project

Robert Davies, accompanied by fellow audiologist Matt Cannon, recently joined hearing care professional volunteers from across the USA to help construct a Habitat for Humanity home for a needy mother and her four children in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Robert and Matt were in Charlotte at the time, attending the annual convention of the American Academy of Audiology. (See story on back page).

The wall-raising for the home was sponsored by leading hearing aid

manufacturer Oticon, Inc. in association with Habitat for Humanity, a global charity working to help a million people to have a simple, decent place to live.

"It was exciting to see what could be accomplished in such a short time with everyone pitching in," said Robert. "But nothing matched the excitement we saw on the family who watched the wall raising."

Robert, Matt and other volunteers also used their time at the Habitat construction site to raise awareness about the importance of hearing protection. "It gets pretty noisy on the worksite - we wanted to demonstrate the importance of hearing protection during

construction or any noisy activity around the house, such as mowing the lawn or using a leaf blower," Matt explained. "During the construction, we distributed hundreds of ear plugs and information on the importance of protecting your hearing."



Robert (left) with Matt – getting across the importance of hearing protection

Wet behind the ears?

If your lifestyle puts you into contact with water, then the new Zon instrument from Starkey Laboratories is definitely worth thinking about. The water resistance of Zon means that you can safely wear it when sailing, swimming or powering across the waves on your new jet-ski! A cautionary note – it's water resistant, not waterproof – so using it whilst scuba diving is just not on.

Even if the nearest you get to water is feeding the fish in your tank, Zon boasts enough



sophisticated digital features to be the equal of the finest hearing aids on the market. This receiver-in-canal aid boasts a signal processing feature which provides

more clarity, greater directionality and better speech audibility in all kinds of challenging conditions – in restaurants, in your car or listening to children.

So, if your appetite is whetted by the new Zon by Starkey, get in touch with Seaford or Sevenoaks Hearing Centres – we'll be pleased to tell you more!

Hard of hearing – or is it just wax?

With the Christmas social season round the corner, it could be a good idea to call in for a free check up if you've got the feeling that your hearing isn't all that it should be. After all you don't have to be at a disadvantage in those animated situations at parties or restaurants.

Your problem could be as simple as a build-up of wax. We can find out by taking a look inside your ear with a tiny camera called a videoscope – and if wax is the problem it can be easily treated by purchasing a liquid cleanser called Audispray.

Made from purified sea water, it is easy and comfortable to use and highly effective in our opinion – regular doses will keep your ears in pristine condition. Hearing aid users should also apply a cleanser as part of their regular ear hygiene regime.

Finally...never, never, never (plus a few more nevers) use cotton buds! They're ineffective and can cause permanent damage to your ear. Ignore at your peril!

Diagnosed in Sevenoaks... fitted in Nairobi

Patient Alwyn Smith has lived in Nairobi since 1971 – although he returns to the UK regularly to visit his family. Having noticed a deterioration in his hearing, he visited Matt Cannon at Sevenoaks Hearing Centre. Following the test and diagnosis, Matt recommended a pair of ReSound Dots – a tiny hearing instrument which combines near invisibility with lightweight comfort – and incomparable audio quality across the broad spectrum of listening environments.



Alwyn – hearing better than ever

Matt was not in the slightest bit fazed when Alwyn told him that he needed to return to Nairobi imminently. Matt was able to supply the aids with temporary soft domes, took ear impressions for permanent acoustic seals – and sent him on his way back to Kenya!

Matt was aware the Robert Davies was soon to pay one of his regular visits to the Reverend Muhoro School for the Deaf in a remote part of Kenya (see back page) – so armed with Alwyn's permanent micro moulds, Robert travelled to Nairobi to complete the fitting. No problem!

We think that Alwyn must have been ever so slightly impressed with the service – and his new ReSound Dots. He told us: "Despite our shortcutting the normal fitting procedure the hearing aids are working perfectly and my hearing is better than ever I remember. The biggest benefit is restoration of personal esteem which is one of the worst afflictions of deafness."



ROBERT'S COLUMN

Am I becoming a bore? Or perhaps it's just an age thing? But once again I'm going to harp on about a familiar subject... noise. It's just



that with every passing year the threat to our hearing of noises from different sources is literally growing to a crescendo. Make no mistake, I know just how serious and widespread the problem is.

The latest butt of my wrath is the MP3 player – yes it can pose a threat to the health of your ears if played too loudly for any great length of time. Happily, with every new threat, usually comes a solution. We've just started stocking a new product – special ear defenders for MP3 players. They are near invisible moulds made of hi-tech soft silicon that clip into your MP3 to give a really good acoustic seal. They cut out ambient noise, so that not only can you enjoy your favourite music even more – but also there is less need for volume. And of course helping you keep your hearing perfect for longer.

At £95 a pair, money well spent – and also one less thing for me to get on my high horse about!

Be green with your batteries

What do you do with your spent hearing aid batteries? Whilst it's true that they do not contain harmful mercury, please don't just throw them in the bin. If you're in any doubt about what to do, bring them in to Seaford or Sevenoaks Hearing Centres – we will ensure they are disposed of responsibly.

Conference fever

It's a fact that you don't keep up with the latest developments in the fast moving world of audiology by sitting on your backside and waiting for the brochures to come through the door. Or by scanning the magazines of the profession. Which is why both Robert Davies and Matt Cannon – unlike many hearing aid practices – invest a considerable amount of time attending the major conferences and conventions throughout the UK and abroad.

Matt says: "Attending these events is the only way to find out what's happening – as it happens, and sometimes before it happens. The pay-off in terms of patient benefit cannot be overestimated - we have even had situations where we have advised patients to hang fire for a while because we know of a product that will suit their needs even better, coming on the market soon."

The conference season is upon us now and soon we'll be packing our bags for:

- The Association of Independent Hearing Healthcare Professionals (AIHHP) conference in Cambourne, Cambridgeshire – see story on page 2.
- The British Academy of Audiology Conference in Liverpool – an opportunity to spend a little time in Europe's Capital of Culture
- The American Academy of Audiology – in our opinion this is the event showcasing all the latest and upcoming developments in hearing aid technology. For the next AAA conference we'll be heading for the land of 10-gallon hats and oil barons – Dallas, Texas.

We promise you a full conference report in the next issue of Distinctions. Patients visiting our practices will get to know even sooner!

Kenya – latest

Regular readers of Distinctions will be aware of Robert Davies' visits and ongoing support to the Reverend Muhoro School for the Deaf in a remote part of Kenya. In our last issue we reported that the baton had passed temporarily to his nephew Justin who has been teaching and helping with a building project at the school.

Justin has now returned to the UK and Robert has since made a further visit, armed as ever with more aids and equipment. Whilst there, he held an ear clinic for local villagers. The queue started forming at 5.45am and Robert was kept busy for almost 11 hours!

He recalls one encounter with a villager who had not heard a thing for years: "It quickly became clear to me that the man's ears were totally blocked with wax. I was able to deal with his problem on the spot – and his gratitude at having his hearing restored almost instantly made the long day incredibly rewarding and worthwhile."

Back in the UK, both Robert and Justin have been in demand, giving talks about their experiences to local Rotary Clubs.



Pupils at the Reverend Muhoro School for the Deaf

Seaford Hearing Centre 4 Dane Road, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 1LL Tel. 01323 899655
Sevenoaks Hearing Care Centre 73 London Road, Sevenoaks TN13 1AX Tel. 01732 741486

Services also available at

East Grinstead McIndoe Surgical Centre, Holtye Road Tel: 01342 315111

Goring-by-Sea Bateman's Opticians, 48 Goring Road Tel: 01903 247042

Hailsham Mark Soper Opticians, 72 High Street Tel: 01323 841699

Farnborough Common Princess Royal University Hospital Tel. 01732 741486

Tunbridge Wells McIndoe Surgical Centre, 6 Mount Ephraim Tel: 01892 616100

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