



Worcester & Stratford  
Hearing Centres



# Your Guide *To Better Hearing*



## *Including*

The Ear - A Miracle of Nature

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Causes of Hearing Loss

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How We Look After Your Hearing

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Hearing Technology

# Why good hearing is so important in our everyday lives

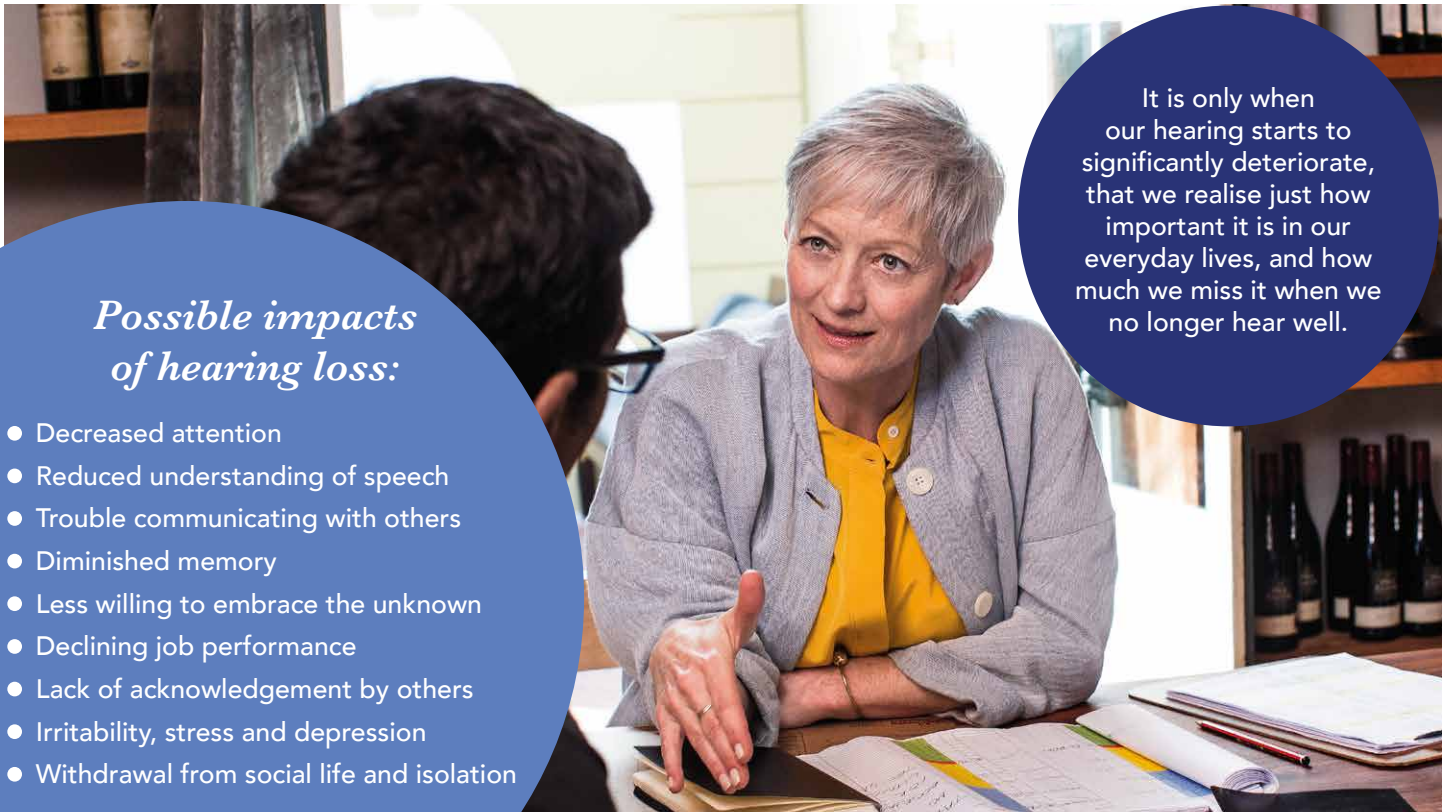
*Our hearing plays an important role in how we interact with the world around us. It facilitates the forming of relationships and opens up a wealth of sensory experiences. It is also very complex and extremely sensitive, so let's give it the attention it deserves...*

Those with good hearing, don't often think twice about what it means to possess this quality. Chatting with friends, listening to the sounds of nature, enjoying music or even hearing warning signals - they take it all for granted.

## *Possible impacts of hearing loss:*

- Decreased attention
- Reduced understanding of speech
- Trouble communicating with others
- Diminished memory
- Less willing to embrace the unknown
- Declining job performance
- Lack of acknowledgement by others
- Irritability, stress and depression
- Withdrawal from social life and isolation

It is only when our hearing starts to significantly deteriorate, that we realise just how important it is in our everyday lives, and how much we miss it when we no longer hear well.



# Only old people have poor hearing? *Not true!*

*It's untrue to say that only older people suffer from hearing loss, as poor hearing is prominent across all age groups*

Increasingly, more and more young people are suffering from hearing impairments. This is often caused by listening to excessively loud music through headphones.

Your profession can also impact upon your hearing; construction workers, ambulance drivers, engineers, agricultural and factory workers are all examples of professions where loud noise can have a lasting and damaging effect on your hearing.



More than 700 million people around the world have a hearing impairment. (2)



Only 35% of all people with hearing loss are over the age of 64. (1)



Only 5-10% of all cases of hearing loss in adults can be treated medically or surgically. (3)



## *Sources*

- 1 Better Hearing Institute
- 2 Global Burden of Hearing Loss in the Year 2000, World Health Organization (WHO, 2003);
- 3 Deafness and Hearing Impairment, World Health Organization (WHO, 2006)
- 4 Better Hearing Institute  
American Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland
- 5 hear-it.org



# What does hearing loss mean?

*No two cases of hearing loss are the same*

However, most often people with a hearing impairment are unable to distinguish soft tones and high pitch sounds, such as whispers, children's voices or bird song.

The understanding of speech also suffers because many of the sounds important for comprehending speech are soft and high-pitched, such as that of "s" and "th". These are sounds that help us determine the difference between "path" and "pass", and, however paradoxical it may sound, increasing the volume is of limited help. People with a hearing impairment require clarity and not volume.

Hearing impairments can occur in all parts of the ear. Dysfunctions of the outer or middle ear can normally be treated with medication or surgery. However, a good 80% of all hearing impairments are caused by dysfunctions of or damage to the inner ear.

***Today, modern hearing instruments can compensate for most inner ear damage.***



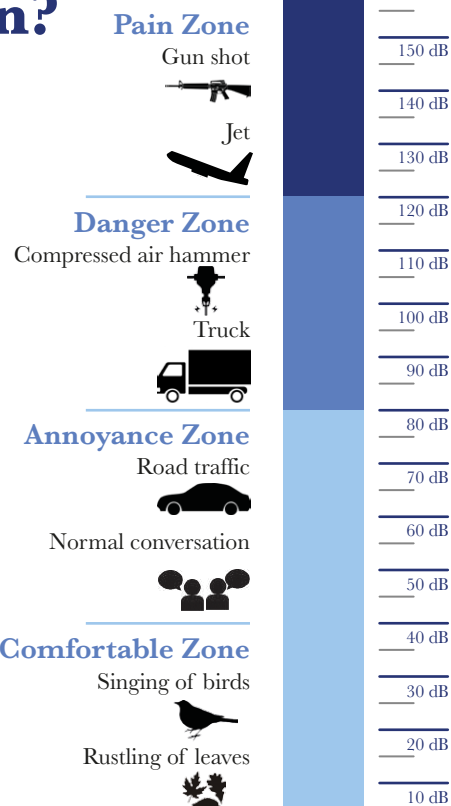
Worldwide, 8.5% of all people between the age of 20 and 30 suffer from hearing loss.

(4)



Many people with hearing loss wait as long as 10 years before they do something about it.

(5)



## Possible causes of hearing loss:

- Infections or chronic illnesses
- Injuries
- Genetic factors
- Medication that can damage hearing
- Exposure to ongoing or extreme noise
- General wear and tear

# Causes of hearing loss

*There are many factors that may affect your hearing:*

In many cases, hearing loss is just part of the ageing process

Long term exposure to noise

Hereditary factors

Illness/infection

Reaction/side effects to medication

Injury

Blockages of the ear, caused by issues such as wax

## Effects of hearing loss

*If communication is impaired through hearing loss, it can irritate you and those you're trying to communicate with.*

You might find that not being able to communicate clearly with those closest to you causes you both frustration and upset. Think about the people you communicate with in your day-to-day life. Who are the most important people you want to be able to hear and in which situations?

*Take a look at the examples opposite* which show a number of situations where hearing loss can put a strain on communication and relationships.

## How to recognise the first signs of hearing loss

*We are often unaware of how well or poorly we hear on an everyday basis*

To find out how good your hearing is, simply answer the questions opposite. In the next few days, pay particular attention to the everyday situations described.

	YES	NO
Do the people around you seem to mumble and not speak clearly?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has anyone ever told you that they often have to repeat things for you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is it hard for you to understand someone if they talk quietly or whisper?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does it take a lot of effort for you to understand someone if they talk quietly or whisper?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have trouble hearing high-pitched tones (music, birdsong, children voices, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is it difficult for you to follow other people's conversations in loud environments, for example, in restaurants?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you tend to go out less because it is hard for you to follow other people's conversations?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has anyone ever asked you to turn down the volume of your television or radio?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have difficulties hearing someone at the other end of the telephone?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you have trouble recognising the direction from which a car, for example, is approaching?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**If you have ticked "yes" four or more times, we recommend you contact a Hearing Care Professional at Worcester & Stratford Hearing Centres**



# Different types of *hearing technology*

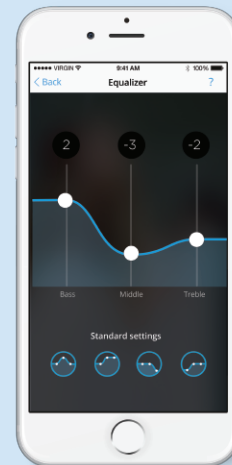
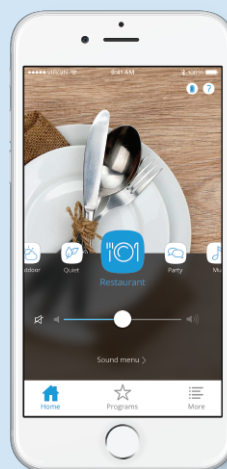
*Your guide to better hearing*

## Connected *Hearing*



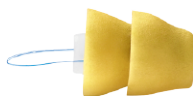
*With this new hearing aid technology,  
connected hearing never sounded better.*

The customizable app  
lets you design  
*your own hearing...*



...and it offers you  
**connectivity**  
anywhere and anytime.

## Invisible *Hearing Aid*



\* Actual size

## *The contact lens for your ear.*

100% Invisible  
Clear and natural sound  
No batteries to change

Completely invisible and the worlds  
first hearing aid which can be worn  
for extended periods of time.

**No one can see**  
how well  
you can hear  
24 hours a day,  
7 days a week.



# What do I *need*?

*Your guide to better hearing*

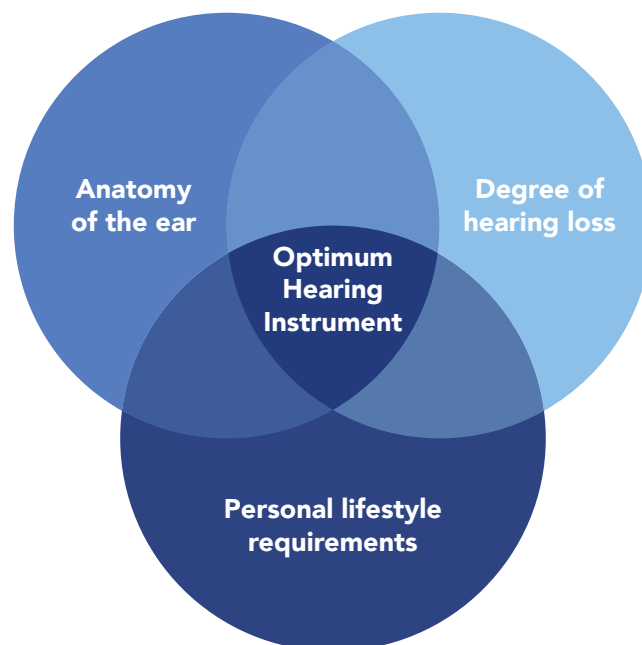
*There is no “one size fits all” answer to hearing loss, as each solution is as unique as its wearer*

When choosing a hearing instrument, there are many factors which have to be taken into account, for example:

*Do you have to attend lots of meetings?*

*Is discretion important to you?*

*Do you lead a particularly active lifestyle?*



*Compact*  
**Rechargeable**  
*System Solution*



**No more**  
disposable batteries

***Simplify your life***

Finally, a chance to free yourself from the hassles of disposable batteries, with a groundbreaking built-in lithium-ion battery technology.

# *Clinical Ear Care*

## *Ear Wax Removal*

**Ear wax is only a problem**  
*when there is too much*

*Ear wax is not actually a bad thing. In fact it is a protection mechanism for the ear canal. The issue only occurs when there is too much.*

As the ear wax builds up, it blocks the canal causing some issues with hearing. If the ear wax becomes impacted against the ear drum, it can even be painful.

Typically, the first time many realise they have a problem is when they have a shower or get out of a swimming pool. Suddenly, they can't hear out of one or both ears. This is because ear wax is like a sponge. It soaks up the water and expands within the ear canal, completely blocking it.

<i>Symptoms</i>	YES	NO
Feeling of fullness in the ear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sensation of hearing everything muffled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sudden hearing loss after showering or swimming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mild tinnitus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you have ticked "yes" to any of these symptoms you could have an excess of wax blocking your ear. We recommend you contact a Hearing Care Professional at Worcester & Stratford Hearing Centres

**Why you should have your**  
*ear wax removed professionally*

At Worcester & Stratford Hearing Centres we use all methods of ear wax removal which are very safe and very effective. We use the most appropriate method to suit our client's particular wax problem.

It is not advised that wax is cleared by the use of cotton buds, as this very often pushes it towards the ear drum and can cause even more problems and it is difficult to remove.



It is not advised that wax is cleared by the use of cotton buds, as this very often pushes it towards the ear drum and can cause even more problems and it is difficult to remove.

Once you have had your ears cleaned, we provide you with an ear health check every 6 months to monitor the level of wax, so that you can make an informed decision when you want the wax removed in the future.

Although a certain amount of earwax is necessary and healthy, it can also effect the wearing of hearing instruments, so we advise regular check-ups of both your ears and your hearing aids.

**If you have an ear problem *don't ignore it!***  
**It will only improve with proper treatment.**

**The *longer* you leave it**  
**the *longer* the treatment may take.**



## *Irrigation & Instrumentation*

Ear irrigation consists in pumping water into the ear canal at a controlled and steady rate, to dislodge and flush out ear wax. As the water runs back out, a metal basin is placed beneath the ear to collect it and any ear wax it has flushed out.

*A qualified audiologist can often clear ears without water irrigation by using instruments alone.*



## *Microsuction*

Microsuction is a safe and comfortable method of ear wax removal, no liquids are introduced during the procedure which is undertaken with a microscope and a finely balanced medical suction device.

*The fact that we can clearly see the ear canal and what we are doing makes it exceptionally safe.*

## *Endoscopy*

It is a newly introduced procedure that uses an endoscope that allows us a high definition extra wide view of the ear canal which makes the removal of ear wax even easier and safer.

*Wax removal is still performed using a suction method.*



# Our Practices

As a family run, premier, independent hearing centre, we have over 25 years' experience in hearing aid audiology. We offer professional advice and the very best level of bespoke hearing care, tailoring solutions to suit all hearing needs.

- Consultant approved state of the art full-time centre with highly qualified audiologists in attendance everyday.
- Technical staff for repairs and maintenance while you wait.
- Relaxed tranquil waiting area with tea, coffee and refreshments. Some of our appointments take time and we want you to be comfortable and enjoy the experience.
- Our interactive television also enables you to test our hearing technology and accessories.



## Our Services

Diagnostic Hearing Assessments

Ear Wax Removal

Tinnitus Advice & Management

ENT Referrals

Industrial Hearing Screening

Medico Legal Services

## We Provide

Digital Hearing Aids & Accessories

Bespoke Hearing Protection

Musicians In Ear Monitors

Custom Made Ear Plugs  
(Swim, Sleep, Music)

## Online Hearing Check

Now you can carry out a quick and easy hearing check on your computer. It will give you an indication of whether a full test in our practice is needed.



*Just visit*

**[www.worcesterhearingcentre.co.uk](http://www.worcesterhearingcentre.co.uk)**

***or* [www.stratfordhearingcentre.co.uk](http://www.stratfordhearingcentre.co.uk)**

# Our Team

## ***Victoria Dixon***

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Victoria is our Senior Hearing Aid Audiologist and Clinical Ear Care Practitioner. Victoria has over 20 years' experience in audiology, working for some of the leading British and International companies.

She is also a trainer in Clinical Ear Care for the British Society of Hearing Aid Audiology, and a lecturer on the HND Hearing Aid Audiology courses at Mary Hare Training School, Newbury. She is also creator and course leader of the new BSc in Hearing Aid Sciences. Victoria is a highly regarded Audiologist in the profession and is widely known in the private sector. Victoria has created many training courses for the Hearing Aid Profession.

She is passionate about keeping Hearing Aid Audiology at the forefront of professionalism with a rapidly changing environment. Continuing Professional Development is vital so that our patients receive the best care for their hearing health.



*“Our sole purpose is to help you hear better”*



## ***Thomas Dixon***

DIRECTOR OF AUDIOLOGY

Tom is a Clinical Hearing Aid Audiologist who qualified from Oxford Brooke's University with a distinction. He is experienced in all aspects of hearing healthcare and has worked in private practice since 2009.

In 2011, he became the Director of Audiology at the Worcester Hearing Centre and in 2013 Consultant Audiologist at the BMI Droitwich Spa Hospital.

He has experience in working with all the world's leading hearing aid laboratories and fits the latest in hearing innovation technology. As an Independent Registered Hearing Aid Audiologist he can provide advice on and fit a full range of high-tech, digital hearing aids and provide a wide range of customised hearing protection devices for work and leisure. Tom is a member of the British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists, The Health Care Professions Council and The British Academy of Audiology.

# Our promise to you

All of our hearing solutions are bespoke to you. We don't provide anything off the shelf. We perform a careful selection of the optimum hearing system to meet your needs.

*We offer so much more than just hearing aids.*

*We are the centre and the team that look after you.*



## Mission Statement

*We empower you  
to lead a socially active and engaging lifestyle.*

We give you the opportunity to enjoy conversation and interaction. To reconnect with the world of hearing and all of nature's wonderful sounds, enabling you to wholly appreciate our beautiful surroundings.

## Your journey to better hearing

### *Initial Assessment*

First of all, we want to get to know you. During your initial consultation, your audiologist will assess your hearing and your needs based on your evaluation results and your lifestyle.

*Our advanced diagnostic hearing evaluation includes:*

- Video view of the inside of your ear
- Tympanometry and middle ear anatomy test
- Pure tone audiometry
- Speech in noise testing
- Acceptable noise level testing
- Explanation of your hearing results
- Advice on a suitable hearing system if required.



# *Your hearing evaluation*

## *Real World Fitting*

We don't just fit your hearing aids in our quiet office, once we have performed our verification testing we take you outside into the real world to demonstrate how good they sound in a noisier and how they adapt to your current environment.

## *Real Ear Measurement*

We use Real Ear Measurement during your fitting to account for the individual acoustic characteristics of your ear canals. To ensure you are getting the optimum level of amplification, a special microphone analyses the sounds produced by the hearing aids in your ear canal. And because hearing loss occurs naturally in both ears, we make sure your hearing aids work together to provide the clearest stereo sound possible.

# *How we look after your hearing*

## *Discovering your needs*

Your hearing test results are crucial to making a diagnosis and designing a treatment for your hearing loss. That's why we offer a full and professional hearing test in a relaxed manner.

## *Understanding your needs*

In order to deliver a solution designed to meet all of your needs, we first need to understand what they are. Getting to know you and your needs is an important part of the process.

## *Customising your solution*

Your hearing aids and your treatment will be customised to you and your hearing loss. We will ensure that they will continue deliver the help that you need in the situations you need it.

## *Continuing care and support*

We have a firm promise, you will receive the continuing time, care and attention, that you need and deserve. We believe that better hearing and experiencing the simple joys in life are important. Our sole focus is to help you achieve both of these things through dedicated care.



# Rehabilitation Appointments

*As great as our hearing aids are,  
we can't just fit them and never see you again.*



We will need to adjust the hearing aids to your particular needs as you acclimatise to better hearing. It is our priority that you are happy with your hearing system.

## *1 Week Follow Up*

It is essential for us to measure how well you get on with your hearing in your own personal situations. So, after your fitting, we ask you to go out and try as many different situations and environments as you can.

Your feedback after the first week is very important, as we will have to make the necessary adjustments to enhance your experience with your new hearing system.



## *3 Week Follow Up*

After 3 weeks, we will continue to measure your hearing based on your feedback about how well you are getting on with your hearing system. We will also need to adjust the settings again as you continue to acclimatise to better hearing.

## ***5 Week Follow Up***

By this point, your rehabilitation process is nearly finished. During this appointment we will perform the necessary adjustments and we will make sure you are getting the maximum benefit of your hearing system.

*But it does not end there...*

## ***Final Follow Up***

This is a short appointment to make sure you are satisfied and happy with your system. We give you maintenance tips and instructions for you to keep your hearing system at its best and we will make sure you are confident with every aspect of it.

## ***Ongoing 6 Month Reviews***

We offer you a 6 month review appointment so we can re-test your hearing insitu through the system and make sure the hearing system is set up to the optimum level. We will perform a clean and service your system. Also, we will inspect the inside of your ears and remove any debris if needed.

Every 18 months you will receive a re-evaluation of your hearing as a course of good practice.



## ***Open Door Policy***

We also have an open door policy for all our clients. Our reception staff are trained to offer technical support. They can also look after minor repairs or issues without the need for an appointment.

*Just pop in and we will get it sorted for you.*

# Worcester & Stratford Hearing Centres

## Our Branches



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Stratford  
Hearing Centre

