



Hear Here Project

NHS audiology trained volunteers providing community-based hearing aid maintenance through 'Hear Here' Drop In Clinics. A project funded by Together in Sussex, within the Diocese of Chichester, in partnership with the NHS.

The Together Network

The Together Network is a union of 20 independent charities joint ventures, linked by faith and driven by the desire to tackle social inequality across England. We help communities build local partnerships and create projects to improve neighbourhood life.

Our values...

Relational

We work with others, building trust and respect. We believe that meaningful relationships of equality are the basis of real and sustainable change. We work to inspire, inform, and support others and we do this through the quality of the connections we build.

Effective

We want to create tangible, significant, and sustainable change for the better. We seek and share solutions, building local capacity, and ensuring our work and impact are evidenced and evaluated.

Inclusive

We believe diversity is to be celebrated. Everyone has a part to play in growing flourishing communities. All the projects and services we provide in communities are open to people of all backgrounds, regardless of their beliefs. These are inspired by our Christian values.

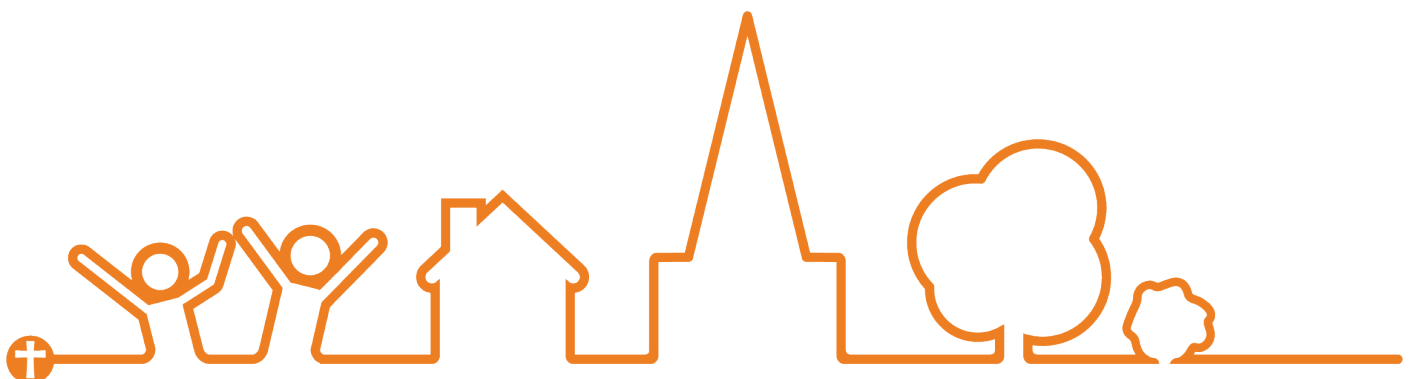


Together in Sussex is one of twenty faith-based joint ventures in the Together Network.

We are developing and enabling communities to build local partnerships and create projects to improve neighbourhood life throughout the Dioceses of Chichester.

Our vision is churches working together to tackle issues such as poor mental health or social isolation.

We are committed to growing strong links with individuals and groups across Sussex to build flourishing communities.



The Hear Here Project



What is the Hear Here Project?

This is an initiative to support those with hearing loss being run throughout the Diocese of Chichester. Our church buildings must be able to welcome and accommodate those with hearing loss, especially among our increasingly older population.

Hear Here Clinics offer simple but essential drop in hearing aid maintenance, at existing church social events; coffee mornings, lunches or foodbanks. Some Hearing Champions also provide these services to communities in sheltered housing, nursing and residential homes, or even offer home visits.

Hear Here clinics provide a much needed local service to the community which otherwise may not be available. Hearing aid users often have to travel long distances or have difficulties accessing hospitals due to health and/or transport.

Hearing Champions

Hearing Champions are volunteers trained by the NHS in this essential maintenance of hearing aids. Training includes:

- a.** checking the hearing aid is working
- b.** replacing and providing new batteries
- c.** re-tubing hearing aids
- d.** ear mould cleaning
- e.** hearing aid controls
- f.** information and signposting to other services and useful equipment.

To book onto a training session and become a Hearing Champion, please contact Amber Jackson (contact details on page 4)



Why is it significant as an outreach and ministry tool?

Hearing aid users may have difficulty in communicating and hearing people. This can lead to a sense of isolation.



Isolation

Hear Here drop in Clinics allow churches to meet people who wouldn't typically come through their church doors, with many attendees coming back for companionship.

Building community

The initiative brings the community together. Not only does it support people from churches to take an active role in their community, it also allows the community to come together for a shared and common purpose.

Support

If hearing aid are not maintained, they won't work as effectively. Trips to the audiologist can be saved by going to a Hear Here clinic instead. Clinic users can also be helped with the emotional side of hearing loss, improving well-being.

"Without aftercare for hearing aids, this wonderful tool that can help people stay engaged is useless. Some people also struggle with the emotional side of hearing loss – and that support doesn't necessarily come from the hospital. **Hear Here** shows how a partnership with other organisations like churches can work in practice to improve wellbeing"

Tracy Wade, Hearing Advisor for Dioceses in Guildford

Costings

The service is free and available to anyone with a 'behind the ear' NHS hearing aid.

Training and the provision of sundry supplies is funded by the local NHS audiology departments in partnership with Together in Sussex.

Hearing Champions need to purchase a Tool Box to provide this service. The average cost is £25, usually reimbursed by their church. A list of items is available from Amber Jackson, Hear Here Co-ordinator.



Why is it beneficial for the NHS

For audiology teams, the project reduced the number of attendees at repair clinics, which frees up time for them to deal with patients with more complex issues.

At one of the hospitals in Surrey, the Hear Here Project has saved the equivalent of approximately 12 repair and maintenance clinics over the past year.

Further Information

Support

Amber will provide marketing support and any further, ongoing support for Hear Here Clinics.

Approval from the PCC

Hear Here Clinic must be agreed by the PCC for insurance purposes. The PCC should consider:

- a.** Where the clinic will take place - e.g. café, home visits, other parish venues
- b.** Safeguarding DBS checks - If volunteers are practising once a week, volunteers need a DBS check. If volunteers are practising less than once a week they do not need a DBS check.
- c.** Where will donations go? You will find people will like to donate money, therefore decide if you would like it to go to a charity or to fund the café (cake and coffee/tea) etc
- d.** Who will the primary contact between the church and Amber? (project co-ordinator)
- e.** Team Leader for the drop in clinic?



Contact



Amber Jackson

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Communications Officer*

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I would be delighted to hear from you!

Further links

Together in Sussex Website

www.togetherinsussex.org.uk

Together in Sussex Monthly eNews

<http://bit.ly/subtis>

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IN SUSSEX⁺**