

ReSound

For people with Cochlear Implants

Autumn 2025

Issue 87



Autumn near Abney in Derbyshire



This newsletter has been produced on behalf of Manchester CICADA

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Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Resound for 2025.

As we run up to Christmas it's a time to celebrate and also reflect on the past year. I think I can say that our program of events has been successful in the main, barring the occasional travel chaos on motorways! I am really pleased with the the growth in the membership of the club and the enthusiasm of new people, those about to have an implant or those just starting the new life with one.

It's a time when we all have lots of questions and lots to learn, even those who have had a CI for some time are discovering new ways to improve their use of the technology, which as all things is constantly evolving.

Meeting up is one of the key objectives of the club so that we can help each other and improve communications skills so even a few of us getting together informally is productive.

All ideas about activities and events are more than welcome as are friends and family.

Many of our group are also involved in other activities, from lipreading support to raising money for charities and helping each other with our own technological issues! Links to our online sites are on the back page of the issue.

Our website is also still available for those without Facebook access for news, events and links to many helpful websites and organisations. Back copies of Resound and useful information about accessories also on the website for your use.

Enjoy this issue and as always any feedback is appreciated.



We wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.



Kevin Williams - Editor

*(ps. Copies of the paintings used on the front page of any edition of Resound are available to raise money for Macmillan Cancer support.
Email: celtictyke@gmail.com for details)*



“OH WAD SOME POWER THE GIFTIE GIE US TO SEE OURSELS AS ITHERS SEE US”

So said the Scottish poet Robert Burns. Do we think much or even care about the effect our deafness has on others? I hope you are not obsessed or inhibited by that thought and that you retain a lively sense of your own rights as a disabled person to reasonable consideration for your hearing problem. Nevertheless you will obviously realise that your hearing difficulty does affect the people around you and sometime must be annoying or inconvenient for them.

I asked my son and daughter-in-law about this with this question.

“What is your immediate reaction when you meet a deaf person or when someone tells you they are deaf?”

One said “you”, which is not very enlightening! The other said that she needed to know “how deaf?”, the degree of hearing loss, which is an important point, in fact, I think a vital one.

It must be very difficult for a hearing person to imagine what deafness is like, sometimes it can be an absolute conundrum. Like many deaf people, I can communicate quite fluently, one to one in a quiet place, If I’m talking to a stranger, as a matter of policy I usually tell them about my deafness as soon as it is appropriate. When I do this, I often wonder whether they actually believe me. Here we are chatting away happily, “how can this person be deaf?, they are asking themselves.

In recent years there has been much more publicity about deafness mostly via TV programmes such as “Strictly Come Dancing” where deaf people are featured, and that is an obviously good thing. However because every deaf experience is different the celebrity deaf person can sometimes sow even more confusion. There is a widespread belief for example among the general public that British Sign Language (BSL) is a solution to deafness and this notion is often reinforced by stories in the media. In fact we know that only a small minority of deaf people are fluent in BSL. Recently I asked another relative, who is a hospital nurse, how she would cope with a deaf patient. The only solution she was aware of was that she could call on a BSL interpreter.

The ignorance is a shame but the solution is down to us, the people with hearing loss. We must be prepared to explain ourselves and tell people what we need. In my own recent spell in hospital, I find myself repeating as a sort of catechism, “I’m sorry, I am deaf, come a bit nearer, I need to see your face, don’t shout, just talk normally”.

(Almost all the people I talked to responded positively but I must admit, I was shocked that a few responded by leaning towards me and shouting into my ear from the side. I am afraid I think there should be some special penalty for people who do this.)

Of course we are guilty too. Can any deaf person lay their hand on their heart and say they never pretend to hear? We nod and smile, laugh at a joke we haven’t heard. We go further and insist that our hearing aids should be vanishingly small. If you take any notice of adverts for hearing aids, their invisibility is a major selling point. The obvious conclusion is that we are ashamed to be deaf. We think it diminishes us in some way. I don’t have a solution to this attitude although perhaps the celebrity deaf people help to overcome it.

But, as in every part of our lives, we have to strike a balance between worries about the effect we have on others and our own needs to hear and to be involved. I suppose it’s a choice, a compromise between empathy and assertiveness. Dealing with organisations, for example, shops, local government, service providers like insurance companies, even the Church, if it is part of our lives, it’s reasonable to remind them of their legal obligations under the Disability Act to “make reasonable adjustments” on our behalf.

We also have to decide how much emotional energy we want to expend on this, we don’t want issues around deafness to take over our lives. Another poet Thomas Grey said “When ignorance is bliss, tis folly to be wise”, another mantra to be observed carefully!

The Secret to Making a Reliable Cochlear Implant

Safety and reliability are at the heart of our cochlear implant systems. Our state-of-the-art technology is designed to provide you with dependable access to sound, keeping you connected with the world around you.

Our comprehensive view of reliability means hearing solutions you can count on. And that means more peace of mind for you. Read on to discover five ways we ensure our cochlear implants offer outstanding reliability.



1. Implant Reliability

When you choose a cochlear implant, you want a device you can count on for years to come. We maintain the highest standards of European quality and engineering by producing all our cochlear implants at our headquarters in Innsbruck, Austria.

They are handmade in our state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities located just next door to our research and design offices. Each implant goes through rigorous testing to ensure that it is free from defects and ready to provide reliable hearing.

2. Electrode Array Safety

The key to closest to natural hearing is the design of the electrode array. The electrode contacts in the array stimulate the cochlea, sending signals to the brain that you perceive as sound.

Some people with hearing loss are still able to hear some sounds. With the right electrode array design, they can keep this remaining hearing—known as

residual hearing—while benefiting from the additional access to sound a cochlear implant can provide.

Our soft, flexible electrode arrays make this possible by preserving the delicate hearing structure in the cochlea. The wave-shaped wires in the arrays and spacing between the electrode contacts make the arrays flexible, enabling reliably safe insertion.

3. Safe Stimulation

The independent safety capacitors for each electrode channel ensure safe, precise, and fast stimulation. They block the flow of harmful direct current and balance the flow of alternating current—the safe current used to stimulate the cochlea.

There are 14 capacitors, one for each independent electrode channel and two more for the reference electrodes. Almost half the space inside each cochlear implant is dedicated to independent safety capacitors because they are so important.

4. MRI Safety*

An MRI is a standard medical procedure that most people will need at some point in their life. Some magnets can pose a problem for MRI machines—but not the ones in our cochlear implants. MED-EL cochlear implants are made for MRI.

With our outstanding MRI safety, you can have an MRI without worrying. The unique design of our magnets enables them to rotate, so they don't need to be removed before a scan. No surgery,** no hearing downtime.

Our audio processors are also designed for outstanding reliability. They go through rigorous testing to ensure they can withstand the challenges of daily life.

And they are designed to stay in place securely—our single-unit processors have strong magnets, and the design of our latest behind-the-ear processor, SONNET 3, features a flexible earhook.

SONNET 3 Audio Processor

[Learn More About SONNET 3](#)

RONDO 3 Audio Processor

[Learn More About RONDO 3](#)

We prioritize safety and reliability so that nothing gets in the way of your hearing life.

Want to Find Out More?

To find out more and to download a copy of our latest reliability report please visit our website: <https://www.medel.com/hearing-solutions/cochlear-implants/reliability>

* MED-EL cochlear implants since 1994 are MR conditional. Recipients with a MED-EL cochlear implant may be safely MRI scanned following the conditions detailed in the [instructions for use](#).

** Unless required for diagnostic reasons.

Out and about



A quick catch up on recent events around the region

In September we decided to try somewhere new to meet up in the Manchester area and chose Worsley Old Hall.



This old building, so full of character and exquisite wooden furniture and decorations was like stepping back in time.

As a bonus for the event we had our own private dining room upstairs and we were seated at a square table.



This proved to be excellent in allowing easier communications, something that is not possible to do at the usual long tables of some venues.





October saw us meeting near Chester at the Cheshire Cat establishment on the banks of the Shropshire Union Canal.

Nobody as it happened volunteered for a trip on a barge!

A star studded ensemble of CICADA members including Alison, who wrote an article for the previous issue of Resound and was testing her new implant, Norah came along as well and we had another new member, Dorothy, joining us with her husband.

A great meal was had and plenty of discussions between those who have new CI's and others with years of experience.





In November we went back to our old favourite near Dunham Massey park, the Swan with two nicks.

However despite having been before some of us took a wrong turning and ended up doing a tour of the local countryside before managing to arrive.

My face was as red as my car!



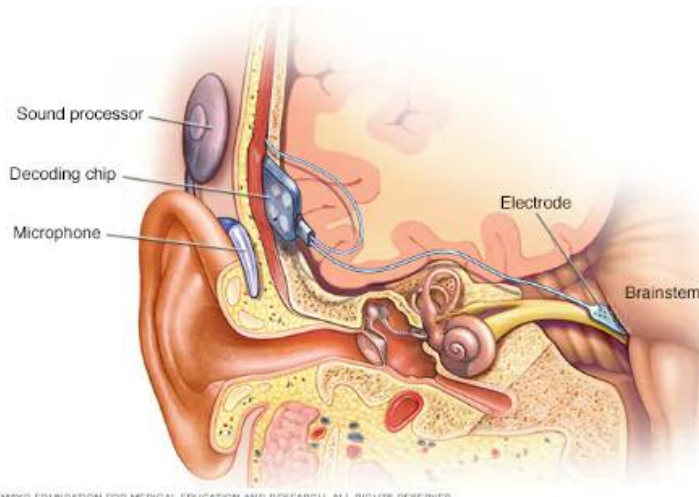
We eventually all arrived and enjoyed a great meal and lots of chat about entertaining issues like 'How do I get rid of this app on my phone' as well as news about other members of Cicada.

Some of us actually celebrated with a sweet!



Auditory Brainstem Implants

If your auditory (hearing) nerve isn't working, hearing aids or a cochlear implant won't help. But an auditory brainstem implant that directly stimulates the auditory brainstem may be beneficial.



Auditory brainstem implants (ABIs) are still relatively near technology. They work by bypassing the ear and auditory nerve and stimulating the auditory brainstem directly to provide a sensation of hearing.

Why an might auditory brainstem implant help.

ABIs are mostly used by adults whose auditory nerve has been damaged, or children born without a working auditory nerve.

If the auditory nerve does not work, it cannot send information from the ear up to the brain. Hearing aids and cochlear implants which rely on a working auditory nerve do not help in this case.

An ABI can bypass the missing or damaged auditory nerve and stimulate part of the area at the base of the brain responsible for hearing directly (the auditory brainstem).

How an auditory brainstem implant works

An ABI has several different parts, some of which are external (worn on the body) and some of which are internal (cannot be seen):

- the external part consists of a microphone and a speech processor (which either sit behind your ears or are body-worn), a lead and a transmitter coil.
- the internal part includes a receiver and a number of electrodes that directly stimulate your brainstem to provide a sensation of hearing. It's surgically implanted directly on to your brainstem. It therefore bypasses the inner ear and auditory nerve.

What to expect from an auditory brainstem implant

A few weeks after the operation to insert the internal part, the external parts are fitted, and your implant is switched on. The speech processor is tuned over several appointments to meet your needs. Following implantation, long-term support from professionals is crucial to help you to learn to listen to and understand the new signals from your implant.

The results of the operation vary from person to person. ABIs may give you some sensation of hearing.

Who can benefit from an auditory brainstem implant

ABIs are suitable for only a small group of people for who hearing aids and cochlear implants are not effective.

ABIs have been used for adults who have damaged their auditory nerve, or who have Neurofibromatosis Type 2 (NF2). NF2 is a condition which causes tumours to grow on the hearing nerves. If the auditory nerve has been damaged, hearing aids and cochlear implants are not helpful because sound information can't be transferred from the ear to the brain along the nerve.

To find out more about auditory brainstem implants, see the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines for auditory brainstem implants.

(Information from RNID)

Dancing brainwaves: How sound reshapes your brain networks in real time

What happens inside your brain when you hear a steady rhythm or musical tone?

What happens inside your brain when you hear a steady rhythm or musical tone? According to a new study from Aarhus University and the University of Oxford, your brain doesn't just hear it--it reorganizes itself in real time.

Listening to sound doesn't just trigger brain activity it reshapes your brain's internal networks in real time. Scientists have unveiled a powerful new imaging method, **FREQ-NESS**, that traces how different sound frequencies ripple through brain regions like shifting waves.

This discovery could revolutionize how we understand perception, attention, and even consciousness

What happens inside your brain when you hear a steady rhythm or musical tone? According to a new study from Aarhus University and the University of Oxford, your brain doesn't just hear it -- it reorganizes itself in real time.

Every beep, tone and new sound you hear travels from the ear to registering in your brain. But what actually happens in your brain when you listen to a continuous stream of sounds? A new study from Aarhus University and University of Oxford published in *Advanced Science* reveals that the brain doesn't simply register sound: it dynamically



reshapes its organization in real time, orchestrating a complex interplay of brainwaves in multiple networks.

The research, led by Dr. Mattia Rosso and Associate Professor Leonardo Bonetti at the Center for Music in the Brain, Aarhus University, in collaboration with the University of Oxford, introduces a novel neuroimaging method called **FREQ-NESS** -- Frequency-resolved Network Estimation via Source Separation. Using advanced algorithms, this method disentangles overlapping brain networks based on their dominant frequency. Once a network is identified by its unique frequency, the method can then trace how it propagates in space across the brain.

"We're used to thinking of brainwaves like fixed stations -- alpha, beta, gamma -- and of brain anatomy as a set of distinct regions," says Dr. Rosso. "But what we see with **FREQ-NESS** is much richer. It is long known that brain activity is organized through activity in different frequencies, tuned both internally and to the environment. Starting from this fundamental principle, we've designed a method that finds how each frequency is expressed across the brain."

Opens the door to precise brain mapping

The development of **FREQ-NESS** represents a major advance in how scientists can investigate the brain's large-scale dynamics. Unlike traditional methods that rely on predefined frequency bands or regions of interest, the data-driven approach maps the whole brain's internal organization with high spectral and spatial precision. And that opens new possibilities for basic neuroscience, brain-computer interfaces, and clinical diagnostics.

This study adds to a growing body of research exploring how the brain's rhythmic structure shapes everything from music cognition to general perception and attention, and altered states of consciousness.

"The brain doesn't just react: it reconfigures. And now we can see it," says Professor Leonardo Bonetti, co-author and neuroscientist at Center for Music in the Brain, Aarhus University, and at the Centre for Eudaimonia and Human Flourishing, University of Oxford. "This could change how we study brain responses to music and beyond, including consciousness, mind-wandering, and broader interactions with the external world."

A large-scale research program is now underway to build on this methodology, supported by an international network of neuroscientists.

Due to the high reliability across experimental conditions and across datasets -- **FREQ-NESS** might also pave the way for individualized brain mapping, explains Professor Leonardo Bonetti.

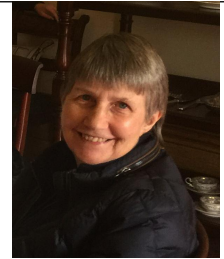
Story Source:

Materials provided by Aarhus University. Original written by Vibe Bregendahl Noordeloos. Note: Content may be edited for style and length.

Lip reading corner

'Deaf Gain'.

In October I went to the Lipreading Teachers Conference. One of the speakers, Nicola Hicks, talked about 'Deaf Gain'. This is a phrase coined by D/deaf people, and refers to the advantages of being deaf.



Having a hearing loss can be frustrating, and sometimes distressing, but can there be some advantages? For example, being able to 'switch off' can be helpful - on the train, at night when the weather is bad, or just when tired. We can use our hearing loss to avoid certain unpleasant situations. We may have better visual and situational awareness.

These are just some examples - you may be able to think of others. It doesn't make the frustrations go away, but it was a thought-provoking talk, that made me think I should appreciate the advantages too.

Barbara Hitchins

The 'Hear to Meet' Group.

We continue to meet twice each month at the Warrington Gateway for lipreading practice, the sharing of experiences, deaf related information and ideas, but largely for social interaction with other people with a hearing loss.



Our 2-hour sessions are held on the first Tuesday of the month from 10.30am and on the third Thursday from 1pm. We always make time for a refreshment break in the café where we can have a natter.

If you're interested in joining us or would just like to know more, please send a text message to Alison on 07828173063.

Or email Ali - alijc27@hotmail.com or Barbara - barbara1810@icloud.com

News from the 'Hear to Meet' group –

Carl is not a cochlear implant wearer but has a rare brain tumour called an acoustic neuroma which compresses the vestibulocochlear nerve causing unilateral hearing loss, tinnitus and balance issues tumour.

He has been inspired by The Beyond Recovery Project (CIC) which supports the physical and mental health and overall wellbeing of brain tumour survivors through the provision of outdoor and nature-based activities and therapies, inspiring and empowering individuals to move forward "beyond recovery".

So much so, that in November 2025, Carl took part on a fund-raising expedition with other brain tumour survivors. They trekked 100km in the Sahara Desert!

Carl has been training all year to prepare for this physical challenge. The trek went well and Carl raised £2,500 for the charity.

Alison Cookson



Rail travel for deaf people

Deaf passengers help Thameslink and Great Northern overcome barriers to travel



In transit: Deaf passengers join Thameslink on the return trip between Cambridge and the Great Northern station of Stevenage to give feedback to the rail operator GTR

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), which operates Great Northern and Thameslink trains, took deaf passengers from Cambridge on a return trip to Stevenage to gain feedback on what needs to be done to make independent travel easier.

Accessibility Improvement Manager Vincent Duffy joined five members of the Cambridge Deaf Association and their interpreters, its CEO

Andrew Palmer, and Damian Brewer, Training and Consultancy Manager at the British Deaf Association.

Vincent Duffy of GTR said: "At Great Northern and Thameslink, we want everyone to have the confidence to travel with us which means doing everything we can to remove the barriers that exist for disabled people.

"We learned a huge amount from the members of the Cambridge Deaf Association; it was a real eye-opener. For example, people who use British Sign Language (BSL) may not readily understand the message screens that describe trains 'calling at' or 'terminating at' stations because these aren't phrases used in BSL. 'Stopping at' or 'finishing at' would be easier."

At Stevenage ticket office, the group tried out the use of 'Convo', which is an app GTR pays for across its entire network. Convo allows passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing to dial up a trained agent on their smartphone who then uses British Sign Language to interpret what staff are saying.

GTR has also installed interactive smart screens at Brighton, Gatwick Airport, East Croydon, Finsbury Park, Enfield Chase, Blackfriars, City Thameslink and Stevenage

stations, that feature a British Sign Language departure board – so that passengers with hearing loss can understand station announcements and navigate stations with confidence. Similar screens can also be found at London Bridge, King’s Cross and St Pancras.

Andrew Palmer of the Cambridge Deaf Association said: “We really welcome Govia Thameslink Railway’s efforts to make the railway more accessible for deaf people. The group from Cambridge who took part had a fascinating and valuable day sharing their experiences and ideas for improving accessibility for deaf travellers.

“They felt their views were taken onboard, and we look forward to seeing how Govia Thameslink builds on the great work already being done to make train travel more inclusive for everyone.”

Damian Brewer of the British Deaf Association said: “We’re pleased to work alongside Govia Thameslink Railway and see them taking meaningful steps to improve access for deaf signers, especially through the use of British Sign Language.

“Inclusive communication is vital, and innovations like BSL smart screens and Convo show what’s possible when opinions from deaf signers are truly listened to.

“We’re also grateful to the Cambridge Deaf Association (one of our British Sign Language Alliance partners) for their support in engaging with local deaf people, ensuring that community voices were central to this work.”

Further feedback sessions are going to be run with deaf passengers at Brighton and London Blackfriars.

>> StageTEXT

Latest News

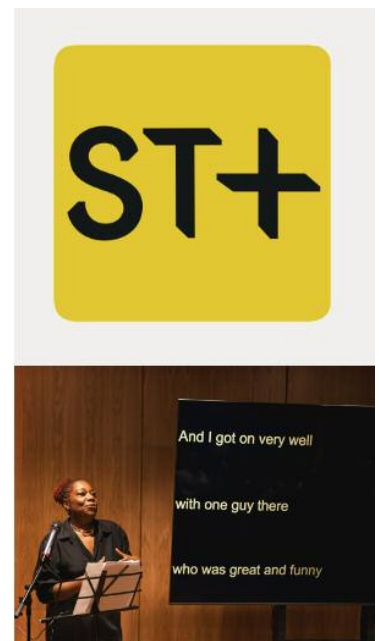
Stagetext+ is here!

After 25 years of championing deaf access, we're excited to introduce Stagetext+, our new captioning software built with deaf audiences in mind.

Following a successful trial at the Mercury Theatre, we're rolling out Stagetext+ from 2026. It can display captions simultaneously on caption boxes, TV screens, tablets and phones, giving audiences choice while maintaining our quality standards.

The software makes captioning more affordable and flexible for venues, which means more performances, more often, for deaf, deafened and hard of hearing audiences.

Those who attended our launch event at Sohoplacé experienced a captioned excerpt from 'The Effect' by Lucy Prebble, performed by the wonderful Michele Austin. We're thrilled to say the feedback was overwhelmingly positive!



A historic estate in York has been recognised for its efforts to improve accessibility.

Castle Howard has been awarded the Deaf Awareness stamp of approval after completing training delivered by Doncaster Deaf Trust.



The training involved 20 staff members who learned about d/Deaf culture and effective communication with d/Deaf visitors.

Hannah Anderson, who led the session for Doncaster Deaf Trust, said: "It was a fantastic session with such an amazing team who are passionate about accessibility."

"The tips and techniques shared will help them confidently communicate with d/Deaf customers."

"We are very happy to award them with our official Deaf Awareness stamp of approval."

Chris Convery, head of people at Castle Howard, said the training was both valuable and enjoyable.

He added: "We thoroughly enjoyed the training and learned so much from Hannah."

"This recognition reflects our commitment to welcoming and supporting the Deaf community."

The Deaf Awareness stamp, created by students from Communication Specialist College Doncaster and Doncaster School for the Deaf, represents a growing movement toward making Yorkshire more inclusive.

Castle Howard joins a network of more than 19 other organisations, schools, and businesses across Yorkshire to receive the stamp in 2025.

Other recipients include Grimm & Co, Wales High School, and NHS Audiology at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital.

Hopefully some of these stories may show that gradually deaf awareness and access to public services is being addressed in several areas but in many cases only by being prompted by local organisations and support groups. Having had variable experiences when travelling by train, ranging from trying to pick up sudden changes on platforms, departure times, change of train notices and the like I can understand the extra stress of trying to travel when deaf. Let me know your experiences of travel and if you have been involved in trying to persuade organisations to improve.

Kevin Williams:secretary@manchestercicada.org.uk

Notes

As well as the published list of planned events, we would also welcome any ideas of local events/gatherings that you think would be of interest to other members and we will circulate it around the group.

Feedback is always welcome, both on the content of this Resound or items you would like to see featured in future issues.

We especially would like to hear your experiences with the Implant itself or the process of qualifying for one.

If you have been through a particular situation and have come through it and have knowledge that might help others then let us share that within the club.

Either email
secretary@manchestercicada.org.uk

Or write to me at the address below, all submissions are welcome.

CICADA

Website: www.manchestercicada.org.uk

Facebook group: Manchester CICADA club

Secretary direct contact: Text 07533217730

Main contacts for Cicada listed at the bottom of this page.

Manchester Implant Centre

The Richard Ramsden Centre for Auditory Implants, Peter Mount Building, Manchester Royal Infirmary, Oxford Road, Manchester,

M13 9WL

Main Contact Details:

Tel: 0161 701 6931 (Appointments)

Tel: 0161 276 8079 (repairs and spares)

<http://www.manchestercicada.org.uk/implant-clinic/>

National Support organisations

British Tinnitus Association:

<https://www.tinnitus.org.uk/>

Hearing Link:

<https://www.hearinglink.org/>

RNID (Action on Hearing Loss):

<https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/>

Disabled Travel Advice:

<http://www.disabledtraveladvice.co.uk/>

Meniere's Society:

<http://www.menieres.org.uk/>

National Deaf Children's Society:

<http://www.ndcs.org.uk/>

National Association of Deafened People

(NADP): [http:// www.nadp.org.uk/](http://www.nadp.org.uk/)

Equipment Suppliers for Deaf People

Sarabec: <https://www.sarabec.com/>

Connevans: <http://www.connevans.co.uk>

Hearing Link UK: <https://www.hearinglink.org/>

RNID (Action on Hearing Loss):

<https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/>

Accessory help

The accessory help page has links to videos about how to connect your processor to different accessories, such as remote microphones, TV support etc. that may be supplied to you by the implant centre.

<https://www.manchestercicada.org.uk/accessory-help/>

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