

Hear For You

Autumn 2021



Sharon says...



Well Autumn is definitely here! As the rain and wind begins to blow the leaves around, it helps me reflect on what's been a bit of a 'blustery' old year! Despite the ongoing COVID situation and all of the other crises that seem to be cropping up, GDA is still going strong due to the fantastic work done by my hardworking team.

As for myself, well unfortunately, I've been going through my own bit of bad weather with a spell of ill-health but the GDA team have really pulled together in my absence. I am now back to work and raring to go!

Throughout the summer, GDA have been re-adjusting after the more serious lockdowns of the past year. The centre has thankfully re-opened and it has been so wonderful to see people returning after a long absence. Meeting up, sharing a cuppa and catching up in real-life is so important to our community and our wonderful volunteers and staff have worked hard to make sure this can happen safely.

Our work on well-being has been particularly satisfying, especially during this time. It's been great to see our community having fun strawberry picking and litter picking and enjoying the company of others. Well-being is so crucial at the moment for our community so well done to all involved!

Our interpreting service has been at full throttle throughout, providing excellent support by our many freelance interpreting friends. I say 'friends' because not only do they provide an excellent professional service but we also understand that their relationship with the Deaf Community and GDA is heart-felt and so I warmly thank them for their support.

Our Hearing Aid Maintenance Service is thankfully back to full strength, with visitors now able to come in to see us. For many hearing aid users, the service provided by GDA is of real, practical benefit and it is always an absolute delight to see the difference a serviced hearing aid has made to someone.

For many Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, the Gem employment project has been life-changing and we're proud of our work so far and excited to be able to deliver this into the future.

So, despite, COVID, rising gas prices and empty petrol pumps, be assured GDA will ride out the storm and still be here for you whatever the weather.

Introducing Joel & Anna

Hello! I'm Joël, and I am the new Wellbeing Assistant under the Kickstart Government scheme at the GDA. I'm most proud of having this excellent opportunity to work in this role at GDA. I am looking forward to working within a great team and with a range of clients, because it is very rewarding to help others and learn new things from this.

I have no fear in facing difficulties and I always have a positive attitude. I always enjoy working with a team and I'm passionate about my work. I enjoy learning new things and like to put my everything into being involved in tasks where I can achieve outcomes that are in the best interests of both the team and clients.

There are so many things that I like to do in my free time! Mostly, I love baking cakes and then decorating them, cooking, soap making (as I have my own company called Sweet Soaps), horse riding, spending time with my family and friends, having holidays to relax and shopping and eating out - which I am really good at! I look forward to meeting everyone at GDA face to face and working with you!



Hi everyone! My name is Anna and I'm a Deaf BSL user, and I'm the new volunteer coordinator at GDA. I joined in June 2021, so it's been a few months already! My role involves working with volunteers, managing regular clubs such as Lunch Clubs, and supporting people with their fundraising activities.

I was born in Barcelona, Spain, and then when I was 18 months old, my parents found out that both my sister and I are profoundly deaf and decided to move to England. While I was growing up, I lived in London, Yorkshire, the Midlands, and then finally Gloucestershire, where I found GDA. At the time, I was the chairperson of British Deaf Association Youth (BDAYouth) board.

During my time at BDAYouth, I became more involved in the Deaf youth community and organised events and activities to bring young Deaf people together. I found it enjoyable and rewarding! When my term at BDAYouth ended, I saw an advert for the post of volunteer coordinator through GEM Project and decided to apply. Talk about perfect timing! I'm glad I did because I'm really enjoying the work and the team is fantastic! If you're thinking about volunteering for GDA, come on and do it! It'll be fantastic!

We raised over £2,300 for GDA!

Reg and his mad friends climbed Snowdon, not once, not twice but THREE times in one day!!!

Just in!



First climb done!



Second climb...pew...!



Third climb done - yay!!

GDA Services Update

Fundraising

WINGWALK

Nic Hewlett, our previous Volunteer & Fundraising Officer, completed a wingwalk to raise money for GDA!



Scan this QR to see a video of her wingwalk!

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

Our Equipment Technician, Martha Avery, completed a challenging walk up the 2 peaks of our highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales - Ben Nevis (Scotland) and Scafell Pike (England).

Here's what she had to say about her experience: "Although I did not complete the three peaks challenge in one day (31st July), I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge. Ben Nevis is one of the most amazing places, with beautiful views. Scafell Pike was a true test to my body, as my legs began to ache and my knees were extremely painful. I then completed the 3rd peak, Snowdon (Wales), on 4th September. I also plan to complete the full challenge of walking up all three peaks in one day sometime next year. For this challenge I raised £555, so thank you all for supporting me!

The best part of the whole trip was the encouragement from others when nearing the top of a peak. There were so many different age groups, ethnicities, and lots of dogs. It was a great experience, and one I will do again."



Interpreting Services

Our service has been supporting a lovely gentleman from the Stroud area, who is profoundly Deaf and lives alone. We have been keeping in regular contact with him throughout lockdown, ensuring he was safe and well and that he was able to get food and medicines.

When the vaccine rollout started, we kept in touch with him and noted when he should be contacted by his GP surgery. His age criteria came and went, and he said he hadn't heard from his surgery. We contacted them for him, and they said that they had text and all he needed to do was click the link. Well, technology really isn't his thing, so he hadn't known what to do. We made the appointment for him and organised for a BSL Interpreter to attend as he was really apprehensive about it. He was extremely grateful that we had ensured he hadn't slipped through the net. He sent us this text;

"Hello Mary thank you so much for your help, you have helped me so much with NHS and vaccine, it happen quick and I thought it would take months! Thanks again for all your help and for getting me an Interpreter, really big help. There was a long line outside and I was worried I wouldn't know Interpreter so thanks for helping me to find her. GOD BLESS all at GDA"

If you or your organisation would like to book a BSL interpreter, please call us on 01452 37299 or email us at bslinterpreters@gda.org.uk



Hard of Hearing Services

We visited a client recently, and on arrival it was clear that he could not hear anything we were saying, even with his hearing aid

in. He was sat in his chair without the TV on. We started to ask some questions but he was not answering me. We gave him a personal listener to see if it would help. As soon as we spoke, once he had put the headphones in, we could see the surprise and joy on his face. He said 'It's like Christmas has come again'. We were able to complete the visit, and was able to have normal conversation which we think the client has missed out on for some time. Through the personal listener he was also able to hear his TV more clearly. These moments remind me of how much we can change someone's life.

We were doing a clinic at Rectory Court, in Cheltenham, a few weeks ago and a client came with his daughter. The daughter explained the client's hearing had recently deteriorated, and she was worried about him communicating with others. She was raising her voice quite loudly to be able to speak to him. We looked at the client's hearing aids and the tubing was solid, and looked as though they had not been serviced for a while. Once serviced, we gave the hearing aids back to the client. He was shocked at the difference and was able to hear much clearer. He even told his daughter to stop shouting.

If you would like to come along to speak to one of our expert and impartial technicians, please contact us on 01452 372999, text 07875 610860 or email admin@gda.org.uk to book your appointment.



Employment Services

Need help finding work? It doesn't matter if you are deaf or hearing. Please contact kate.ather@gda.org.uk or call 01452 372999

Our GEM project is going strong and we've recruited new participants onto the project. We're pleased to confirm that we've helped two more participants into work:

Roxana: Congratulations to our GEM participant for successfully achieving a great outcome, with a role as Health Records Clerk at NHS General Cheltenham Hospital in Gloucestershire. Roxana started her new part time job on 6th April 2021.

Kate has had the pleasure of supporting this individual in finding work since she joined the GEM project in February 2019. She was made redundant the month before from Yorkshire Building Society. It is great to see this individual's success story through GEM Project!



Kevin: Congratulations to our GEM participant for successfully achieving a great outcome. Kevin, who is hard of hearing, started his new part time job on 2nd August as a domestic cleaner for his nephew, funded via Direct Payments.

In 2002, Kevin worked as a glass and window maker, however he was then unable to work due to his health and faced barriers in getting a new job.

Kate has had the pleasure of supporting Kevin in finding work since he joined the GEM project in January 2021.

It is fantastic to see another success story through the GEM Project!



We're pleased to confirm that at the GDA we have offered three Kickstart posts to three young people and we will confirm their details in due course.

GDA WELLBEING SERVICE

NEWS...

Your Well-being is important! For well-being support please contact jennie.evans@gda.org.uk

The easing of the lockdown restrictions has meant that life at GDA is slowly beginning to feel more like the 'New Normal'. It has been delightful to see people back and enjoying life at GDA once again. We have lots of fun-filled activities, events and workshops planned and we'd love to see you all here - new faces and old!

We are excited to see what the summer brings and look forward to all we have planned at GDA for the rest of 2021. We hope you are as excited about the upcoming events, day trips and activities as us and will come and join with us!

Here's an update of what we've been doing and how our 'New Normal' looks...



ZUMBA

Our evening Zumba sessions started on Zoom with people joining from the comfort of their own home. It was tough and there was lots of sweating and dancing but also fun and laughter. It was nice to see familiar faces and new people joining us while we were stuck at home during the pandemic. I would like to thank Sharon Bryant our GDA CEO as a Zumba Instructor.

YOGA

Many thanks to our Yoga instructor Beth Mouzer for Sign Yoga classes. GDA hopes that these activities will re-energise our clients. Some of us may have lost confidence because of the struggle with communication barriers in hearing environments. Some of us needed to build our strength and stamina because our normal exercise routines stopped due to the pandemic! Beth helped our clients achieve personal goals, develop confidence and improve their wellbeing with her inclusive Sign Yoga. We're pleased to be helping clients become active again, boost their confidence and achieve.



SLIMBRIDGE WWT

On Tuesday 22nd of June, we had an amazing day trip to Slimbridge Wetland Centre to see lots of birds. We donated a small amount of money for a bag of seed which we were able to share amongst the many different birds we saw. There was lots of laughing and we made some great memories! We chatted so much and didn't even have the chance to finish the whole tour! That was because it was the first time we'd seen each other face to face, catching up in our beloved BSL after being stuck at home for a long time. This is what the Wellbeing service is for.

RELAXING EVENING CHAT

Our Relaxing Evening Chats have been a great opportunity for our clients to keep connected with others from the comfort of their own homes. We chat about all sorts of topics and it's great to be in regular contact with friends and we will continue to 'zoom' every first Tuesday of the month. If you wish to join please contact Jennie or Joel for Zoom's details.



COFFEE MORNING

During lockdown, we were able to keep some of our Coffee Mornings going via Zoom and it was so lovely to see everyone who wanted to talk, share their news and have a good laugh! We're thankful that GDA kept this going during lockdown life.

Now that the lockdown has eased, we've been able to meet at the Centre again where some GDA staff members made some cakes for us to share while we had a proper catch up with everyone. Meeting in person is so important for our clients' well-being and we're glad to see you all again and meet those of you who are new. Thank you Jennie, Joel and Anna for bringing the cakes and making it a great day for our clients!





SOAP MAKING WORKSHOP

Many thanks to Joel who taught our clients how to make soap using the cold process. It was her first time leading a workshop and she did a great job - the step by step instructions were clear and by the end of the session everyone had created something beautiful.

The most popular soap scents were Rhubarb and Black Plum and Lavender and Chamomile. "Everyone made their own soap. They looked amazing! People were really creative and it was so enjoyable! I am very proud of teaching the group step by step. I was so nervous at first, especially teaching a group workshop, but by the end I felt confident!" said Joel.

STRAWBERRY PICKING & HOMEMADE JAM MAKING

On Friday 16th July, the marvellous hot weather made for a fantastic day trip to Primrose Vale Pick Your Own Fruit Farm. Ready with our empty punnets, we set off to pick our own strawberries. There were several rows of bushes and plenty of juicy berries to choose from. The farm had a range of different fruit available to pick such as raspberries, tayberries, jostaberries and gooseberries. We took our lunch break at the farm shop, with some people bringing their own lunch. There was lots of chatting, laughter and sitting in the sunshine, enjoying the hot weather. But leaving Primrose Vale Farm was not the end of our day: we headed back to the GDA Centre to make our own scrumptious strawberry jam. What a fantastic day! Thank you, Jennie, for hosting the day trip and jam making event.



We also want to say a big thank you to the volunteers who were amazing as taxi drivers and befrienders.

Many more events coming up - please watch out for a free DAY TRIP. Grab your space to avoid disappointment. Please let us know if you need transport, I will arrange for the volunteers to collect and drop you off home.



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Dalmatians 2021



Hello everyone!

We are very excited to announce that Dalmatians Club is back, and we are meeting at GDA Centre on the first Saturday of each month from 9:30-11.30am. Sessions cost £1.50 per child, and children from 0-8 are very welcome, whether you have deaf parents and are hearing, or you are hearing parents with deaf children, or deaf families, everyone is welcome to come along and enjoy the fun. Why not bring along your brothers and sisters, and what about your grandparents too?

We have plenty of space to run around, lots of fun and games, we like making things, and we have loads of great activities going on, as well as snack time to look forward to. Sometimes we have 'Show and Tell'; last time we had someone come in with a huge slimy toad, and the children were very excited indeed!

Parents and carers can enjoy some down time while children are having fun too. We have lots of interesting training and discussions, or perhaps you could learn some sign language, and relax and enjoy a session with other grown ups while the children have a great time.

If you need any more information, please have a look at our website, or email us on dalmatians@gda.org.uk

We hope to see you all very soon!

Dalmatians Club is back!

Every month on the first Saturday

At GDA Centre
9.30 to 11.30am

DALMATIANS@GDA.ORG.UK

FUTURE DATES

6th November - Robinwood Hill with Wildlife Trust
4th December - GDA Christmas Party!

Keep these dates free

NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 2nd: Relaxing Evening Chat via Zoom
- Friday 5th: Bonfire night - Barnwood
- Wednesday 17th: Christmas Craft Day- GDA Centre
- Friday 26th: Ice skating day trip - Gloucester Quays
- Tuesday 30th: Length Swimming - Cheltenham Leisure

OCTOBER

- Thursday 28th: Allsorts - Fitness - GDA Hall, 6-7pm
- Tuesday 26th: Length Swimming - Cheltenham Leisure

DECEMBER

- Tuesday 2nd: Christmas Lunch Club
- Tuesday 7th: Relaxing Evening Chat via Zoom
- Enchanted Christmas Event at Westonbirt Arboretum Day trip (TBC)
- Christmas GDA Panto - GDA Centre (TBC)

More EXCITING events
upcoming in
November and December!
Watch this Space

All are Free!

For more information
Please get in touch with Joel
Text: 07927 444924
Email: joel.burgess@gda.org.uk

Fancy Volunteering?

GDA provides services and opportunities to deaf and hard of hearing people in our community, and we rely on volunteers from the same community to support us. Without them, GDA wouldn't have grown and thrived as much as it has over the past few years.

Because of our volunteers, we have assorted clubs (Lunch Club, Dalmatians, Hard of Hearing Club, etc.) and events, including day outings, workshops, and gatherings. These aren't the only things a volunteer can do; they can help with work at the office, visit isolated people for a cuppa, and carry out tasks for people who are unable to do them.

Volunteering does not only benefit us, it benefits you as well! It enhances your CV, allows you to meet new and old faces, develops your skills and confidence, and gives you valuable memories and experiences. We strive to find jobs to match people's interests and helps them to attain their aspirations.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of GDA, and we can never have enough of them! We're always looking for more to ensure that GDA can continue for many years more. If you're interested, please do contact Anna:

volunteering@gda.org.uk or text 07767 025044

Don't forget to
check out our
Social Media for
future events:
GDA Facebook;

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Website:
www.gda.org.uk

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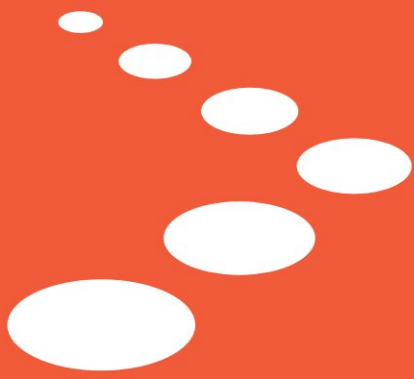
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CONTACT US

Tel: 01452 372999

Mobile/BSL: 07875 610860

email: admin@gda.org.uk



If you'd like to find out more about GDA's services and support or how you can get involved, please do get in touch on:

01452 372999 | 07875 610860 | admin@gda.org.uk

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