

# LET'S HEAR IT!



NEWSLETTER OF  
DORSET DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY  
AUTUMN 2021



## DORSET DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY IS 50 YEARS OLD!

**This year is a milestone 'golden' year for Dorset Deaf Children's Society as we turned 50!**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1971 (when British money was still in pounds, shillings and pence!) an application to form a Dorset Regional Association was accepted by National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) at their National Council Meeting. The first meeting of the new Dorset Regional Association of NDCS took place on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1971. Dorset Deaf Children's Society (DDCS) later became an independent charity in July 1993 (along with all NDCS regional groups at that time). To this day, DDCS remains in association with NDCS and is supported by them but is an independent charity with its own membership, funds and registration. It's an amazing achievement and a testament to all those involved over the years, that the group is still going after 50 years!

The charity may have changed over the years - from a regional NDCS group to an independent charity and there have been ups and downs but we can safely say that Dorset DCS is now a thriving successful charity. The Trustees have worked hard to fulfil its aims in supporting hearing impaired children and their families in Dorset, by giving their free time as volunteers to ensure its success. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all trustees, past and present, for their time and commitment.

We haven't just survived though - we have thrived, and Shirley Sorbie, our long standing trustee and the heart of our charity, was once asked to speak (at what was then the NDCS National Council) about the success of Dorset DCS - a very proud moment for the charity. We have also been very fortunate to have a good relationship with Hearing Support Service and Audiology and have been able to work together to help our children. We thank them for their support in what we do. The charity goes from strength to strength and we consider ourselves so lucky to have such wonderful children and families as members.



To mark this special year we celebrated with our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Family Fun Day Party at The Orangery in Wimborne with its three acres of leisure garden. The day was attended not only by our current children and families but also by past members, teachers, audiologists and the children who are now grownups and some who now have children of their own!

What a day we had with 260 adults and children attending with plenty for everyone to enjoy including inflatables, mini golf, giant chess, table tennis, table football, basketball, beach volleyball, petanque, football, glitter tattoos, children's entertainer and more. For this occasion we even hired a photo booth. Everyone had a lot of fun trying on and swapping the props for the pictures! We also had a sweet cart with free sweets for all the children (and some adults) and of course we had our usual favourites, the Hog Roast BBQ and Ice Creams.



We also had a visit from Deb Fullbrook and her amazing hearing dog, Elmo from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. She talked about the charity and gave a brilliant demonstration of how Elmo helps her. We finished the day by cutting the cake and a speech from Robin Barrett, retired Education Audiologist.

We received so many messages saying how much everyone enjoyed the day and how special it was to meet up with old friends and celebrate the anniversary. The trustees are volunteers who give up their time freely to make these events happen, but it is all worthwhile to see everyone enjoying themselves so much! Please keep feeding back and letting us know if you are enjoying the events, it makes things even more worthwhile for our brilliant volunteers and also lets us know if we are on the right track.

**Here's to the next  
50 years!**





# NEWSROUND

## DDCS GRANTS

DDCS has funds available for grants and will consider contributing towards our member's costs or partial costs for deaf related equipment, activities or learning. We have in the past contributed towards signing classes and provided literature to support signing. We have also provided specialist alarm clocks for children to become more independent at getting up in the morning!

We may also be able to offer grants in certain circumstances for financial support with a deaf related project.

Please contact us in writing or by emailing [info@dorsetdcs.co.uk](mailto:info@dorsetdcs.co.uk)

Each case is considered on its individual merits.



Support DDCS by buying a lottery ticket from BH Coastal Lottery, If you buy a £1 ticket, 50p goes directly to DDCS!

There is a one in fifty chance of winning each week (that's better odds than the National Lottery and People's Lottery) and the top prize is £25,000!

So if you think you can be lucky and also support Dorset DCS then please log on to: [www.bhcoastalottery.co.uk](http://www.bhcoastalottery.co.uk)

Select buy tickets and then select Dorset Deaf Children's Society!

Thank you!

## PERSONAL MUSIC LEADS

DDCS provides personal music leads for any hearing impaired child or young person in Dorset.



The leads enable sound to go straight to hearing aids by a special shoe attached to the leads. DDCS provides these through the Hearing Support Service. If your child would like some leads please ask your Advisory Teacher who can then order them through the Hearing Support Service, Educational Audiologist.

## DDCS FACEBOOK GROUPS



DDCS has two Facebook groups one is for public which anyone on Facebook can access and one is a private group, only for our members. The Parent Forum group is private so that parents can keep in touch with each other, ask for advice or get information.

We have noticed that some members follow the public page but are not in the Parent Forum group and vice versa.

**Please join both.**

If you would like to join the groups they are easy to find just type "Dorset Deaf Children's Society" and "Dorset Deaf Children's Society"

## NDCS HELP LINE

Do you need help and advice about DLA claims or education for your child? If so please ring the NDCS help line number 0808 800 8880 or Email [helpline@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:helpline@ndcs.org.uk)

## DO YOU SHOP ON AMAZON?

IF YOU DO YOU CAN HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR DORSET DCS BY SHOPPING ON [SMILE.AMAZON.CO.UK](http://SMILE.AMAZON.CO.UK). JUST SELECT DDCS AS YOUR CHARITY AND PLACE YOUR ORDER AS NORMAL. IT' AS SIMPLE AS THAT!



## HEARING SUPPORT SERVICE UPDATE



Sue MacDermott

At the end of the summer term we said a fond farewell to Sue MacDermott who has retired after an amazing 23 years working for Dorset Hearing Support Service. Sue has worked with countless babies, young children and students over the years and has a passion for equality and inclusion for deaf pupils. She held a Senior Teacher role for many years and was the sign language co-ordinator before taking on the role of Principal Advisory Teacher 6 years ago. Since then Sue has guided the Hearing Support Service team through many changes and initiatives and her hard work was recognised with a Dorset Employee Award. All the Trustees and families would like to thank Sue for all the help and guidance she has given over the years.

**We wish Sue all the best for her retirement!**



Teresa McCabe

Welcome to Teresa McCabe who joined the Hearing Support Service this September. She is a qualified Teacher of the Deaf with 10 years primary teaching background. She gained valuable experience in Early Years Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 and various SEND settings and also teaching experience at the Elizabeth Foundation in Portsmouth.

## HELP AND CONTACTS

CHAIRMAN – Kevin Forbes, 11 Heather Road, Bournemouth, BH10 5EE 01202 510078

VICE-CHAIRPERSON, TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY - Shirley Sorbie, Touchwood, 9 Oakland Walk, West Parley, Ferndown, BH22 8PF 01202 571089 07765 304968

SECRETARY – Jessica Legg, 22 Lea Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 9HT 07444 788495 (text only)

Website – [www.dorsetdcs.co.uk](http://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk)

E-mail – [info@dorsetdcs.co.uk](mailto:info@dorsetdcs.co.uk)

NDCS FREEPHONE HELPLINE 0808 800 8880 (voice & text)



For more information, news, pictures and future events please visit our website.

[www.dorsetdcs.co.uk](http://www.dorsetdcs.co.uk)



# THE JENNY BARRETT DEAF CHILD ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2021

Every year, at our AGM, we present the Jenny Barrett Deaf Child Achievement Awards. The awards set out to reward achievements of hearing impaired children and they are split into two categories, the junior category which is for eleven years and under and the senior category which is for twelve years and above. In 2021 there were a total of eighteen children nominated.

The winners were announced at our AGM held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at Bournemouth Deaf Club. The awards were presented by Robin Barrett and the two overall age group winners received shields, certificates and cheques for £100 each. **JACOB SNEDDON** was the winner in the senior category and the winner in the junior category was **PHILLIPA GREEN**. All other nominees received £20 vouchers and certificates.

This year's winner of Bournemouth Deaf Clubs Special Endeavour Award was **ABIGAIL COOMBS** who received a cash reward from Keith Simmons.



**Jacob Sneddon**  
Senior Winner

**Phillipa Green**  
Junior Winner

All the nominees  
have done  
exceptionally  
well to be  
nominated.

Congratulations  
to all of them!

## SENIOR NOMINEES

Please note that the nominations below are a very short summary and only a part of the nomination as the nominations can include confidential and personal information.

**ABIGAIL COOMBS** was nominated by Tracey Henry, HSS Advisory Teacher, her mother Julie Coombs and Peter Lord her English teacher for the way she has responded in a mature and positive way to her recent diagnosis. She showed bravery and courage when diagnosed and was resilient whilst coming to terms with her deafness and wearing hearing aids. As part of her English GCSE she chose to talk about her hearing loss and her class were engaged throughout. She helped to create a deaf awareness PowerPoint which is now shared with the whole school. She is also doing a BSL introductory course online.

**SCARLET HENRY** was nominated by Melissa May, HSS Advisory Teacher and her mother Tracey Henry for being such an inspirational young woman and fantastic role model. Every year she does presentations to all her teachers about her deafness. She was part of HSS teenage group. Despite a difficult year she gained amazing GCSE results excelling in languages. She is part of the NDCS Youth Advisory Board and part of NDCS mentoring programme.

**ADAM HOLBROOK** was nominated by Melissa May, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his can do attitude and his resolve to learn and do his best. Despite overcoming physical challenges which meant he was in a wheelchair for a time he always had a positive attitude. He coped well when trialling a radio aid for NDCS and he was confident when transitioning between schools.

**HARRY LAKE** was nominated by his mother Judith Morris for how he has coped with changing schools and the COVID lockdowns. He was awarded the Head Teachers award and he has also done well in Science, PE and enjoys cooking. He has grown in confidence and has become more independent. He found all the changes over the last year stressful but has coped really well.

**SAUL PEARCE** was nominated by his brother George Pearce for dealing with his school anxieties, coping with assessments and for how he has coped with working since leaving school. Whilst working over the summer he overcame his anxieties engaging with adults and showed strength as a grafter.

**JACOB SNEDDON** was nominated by Sally Robinson, HSS Advisory Teacher, and his grandmother Fiona Arbuthnott for all the difficulties he has had over the past year and dealing with it all in a mature way. When he started secondary school he had problems with his radio aid, this was followed by problems with his cochlear implant resulting in long periods that he could hear nothing at all, this impacted on his wellbeing and being able to function in school. After some time not in school he returned with support. He has had to learn a different way of coping with his deafness and is now learning BSL. He is a very brave boy and he amazes us with his technical skills and willingness to help others.

**MOLLY STAGG** was nominated by Sarah Stobbart, HSS Advisory Teacher, for how she has embraced new challenges and grown in confidence and maturity. She finds new situations challenging however she has pushed herself out of her comfort zone in many ways which were major achievements for Molly requiring a great deal of self-motivation, determination and courage.

**CONOR TOBIN** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his excellent positive transition to secondary school. He has shown resilience and an ability to embrace change, demonstrate flexibility and develop different strategies to access the school curriculum and make positive new friendships.

**MCKENZIE WEBSTER** was nominated by Sarah Joiner, HSS Advisory Teacher, for how he has applied himself so well to online learning. His confidence and maturity have grown and he diligently completed his online work with very little support and his teachers commented on the high standard. He is a fantastic role model to all his peers.

## JUNIOR NOMINEES

Please note that the nominations below are a very short summary and only a part of the nomination as the nominations can include confidential and personal information.

**OWEN BRAY** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his resilience and extraordinary positive attitude to learning. He must be applauded for his 100% positivity and focus and his ability to interact positively with his peers and teachers.

**RILEY BRYSON** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for his resilience and extraordinary positive attitude to learning. He has taken all the recent big changes in his life in his stride and he has blossomed and shown maturity, sensitivity to his family and positivity to others around him.

**JOE CARTWRIGHT** was nominated by Ursula Murley, HSS Advisory Teacher and Nicki Paul, HSS Sign Language Support Worker for his hard work to develop his sign language skills and is now starting to read using a combination of BSL signs and Signed Extract English. Joe always has a smile on his face and is becoming more engaged in learning and communication and his signing is developing every day.

**EVIE FOLEY** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for her significant increase in confidence and maturity. This is visible in her ability to articulate and express what she needs to support her in school. She has increasing independence, a joy at being at school and increasing positive attitude to her learning.

**SAOIRSE GLENNIE** was nominated by Sally Robinson, HSS Advisory Teacher and Mr Beare her class teacher for how she has coped during a challenging time and come out smiling. She struggled to wear her hearing aids and was a reluctant wearer. She changed schools and started to wear them and use her radio aid. She has grown in confidence and she never makes a fuss and embraces everything with enthusiasm.

**PHILLIPA GREEN** was nominated by Ken Tucker, HSS Advisory Teacher, for promoting a positive deaf image which can benefit deaf children across Britain and the world! Her school uses Times Table Rock Stars on line for learning. This is used by many schools across Britain and in other countries, battling each other and in competitions. The children create their own avatar and when Phillipa discovered there was no option for hearing aids she was upset and angry because it is "part of who I am". With the help of her teacher she wrote to the company that produces TT Rock Stars to ask for it to be added and eventually hearing aids appeared as an option promoting a positive self-image for deaf children.

**HARRISON GREENHAM** was nominated by Sarah Joiner, HSS Advisory Teacher for how he adapted to online learning and on returning to school giving 110%. He helped to deliver deaf awareness training to key staff in school and he recently had his cochlear implant processors upgraded and he has been a superstar in school with the new processors.

**AVA HUFFMAN-RIHOY** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for her significant focus and maturity. She has shown independence and resilience regarding her school work and how her equipment best supports her in school. She was initially reluctant to use her radio aid but now is confidently telling staff if her equipment is faulty.

**POPPY PERKINS** was nominated by Dawn Wrench, HSS Advisory Teacher, for initiating and being the driving force behind a bespoke INSET training PowerPoint to present to her class, explaining her hearing loss. She was impassioned and forthright wanting her peers to know what it is like to be deaf. She answered questions intelligently and she showed maturity and extraordinary confidence.





**Ed O'Grady and his family are members of Dorset DCS. NDCS recently published this article about Ed and his experience going into the working world and starting his career in Accountancy.**

As Ed (20) discusses his plans for the next five years, it's clear he knows exactly what he wants from his career. But it hasn't always been so straightforward. Although Ed, who's severely to profoundly deaf and wears hearing aids, knew he wanted to become an accountant, his school pushed him to apply for university. "During our A-levels, we had PSHE sessions every fortnight and they were all about going to university," Ed recalls. "I don't remember anything specific about apprenticeships."

Ed applied to university and got offers from all five of his choices, but by then, he'd learned about the option to do an apprenticeship in accountancy. "I realised that if I wanted to study accountancy at university, I'd have to do the course I'm doing now afterwards anyway. It was quicker to do the apprenticeship and get paid while I'm learning. It was a no-brainer!"

Ed used his experience of applying to university to help with his apprenticeship application, although he wasn't sure whether to mention his deafness. "I felt universities would be obliged to help me out with my deafness, whereas apprenticeship employers might not be as understanding," he explains. "It was definitely a worry. But my mum said they'd find out at some point, and it would be better to be upfront about it."

In his application, Ed decided to frame his deafness in a positive light, by mentioning his experience of mentoring a deaf student at school in his CV. Although he didn't ask for any adjustments for his interview, it was held in a quiet room with one other person. "My parents were ecstatic when I got the apprenticeship," he says. "They supported me all the way."



When he first started the apprenticeship, Ed struggled to use the phone. "Being on the telephone is quite a big part of my job," he says. "I have to use the phone with people I don't know in other offices. Later down the line, I'll have to talk to clients on the phone, too."

Ed moved to a different audiology service and was fitted with new Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids. "They're great," he laughs. "If your parents are having a go at you, you just whip out your phone and play music through your hearing aids. Can't hear a thing!"

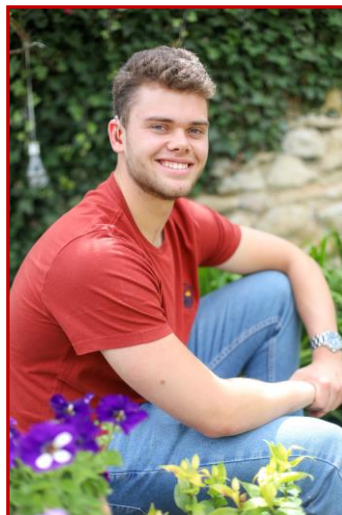
As well as helping him listen to music, Ed's new hearing aids allow him to use the phone. "The IT department connected my desk phone to my mobile, so I can do all my work calls through my mobile which then connects straight to my hearing aids," he explains. "I used to be terrified of using the phone. All my life I've never really used it. But since I got these hearing aids, I feel like I can use the phone to talk to people. I prefer to lip-read though, so since we started working from home, my preference is Zoom."

As well as making the phone work for him, Ed also had to adapt to working in an office environment and socialising with his colleagues. "Working while trying to hear people is really difficult because I can't work and listen to someone talking at the same time," says Ed. "I have to stop what I'm doing, turn around and look at them to lip-read."



"I don't feel insecure about my deafness, but on a practical level, my deafness makes it difficult to do two things at once without getting tired. I've explained that to my manager, who is very understanding. She's got better at stopping what she's doing, making eye contact and letting me see her lips before she speaks. "For example, there's a partition board between my desk and my manager's, so when she talks I can't see her lips. I just ask her to move so that I can lip-read. "It goes both ways. I'm still getting used to working in an office environment, and my colleagues are still getting used to working with someone who needs a bit of additional assistance."

There are still some scenarios where Ed struggles to communicate, such as in the pub after work. "Because of COVID-19, I've only been to the pub after work once. It was difficult. Talking in a busy pub is hard enough with my friends, let alone with people who I didn't really know!" However, after getting to know his team and becoming more comfortable at work, Ed thinks he'll find it easier in future. "I'm more confident in myself now," he says. "If we went to the pub now, I'd feel confident saying, 'I'll be honest, I can't hear you in here, is there any chance we could move outside?' Or I'd just try to speak to one person at a time."



"My advice to another young person starting a job would be to be confident in yourself and your ability. If you're struggling, talk to someone. The chances are they can help you. Most people in this world will help you up if you're down. "Be honest about your hearing and ask for adaptations if you need them. It'll make your life much easier, and make your employer's life easier too!"

Looking back now, Ed's glad he chose to do an apprenticeship instead of going to university. "I do think about what would have happened if I went to uni, and the social life I might have had. But I'd like to think I've got enough of that within our team. I'm part of the team now."

**We wish you well Ed and we are sure you have a bright future ahead of you!**

The original article is in the NDCS Families magazine:

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/media/7180/families-magazine-autumn>