

Guildford Hard of Hearing Support Group

A Brief History

After the Second World War many returning servicemen suffered from hearing loss caused by loud noises from explosions and bombings. From the experience of the previous generation who suffered similarly after the First World War, a number of self-help groups were set up to improve the lives of those affected and to make the authorities and society aware of the difficulties that they encountered.

The various support groups in Middlesex and Surrey joined together to form the Middlesex & Surrey League for the Hard of Hearing in 1947. The League joined the British Association of the Hard of Hearing (BAHoH), a national organisation which concentrated on the needs of the Hard of Hearing as opposed to the Deaf who were represented by the RNID.

Our own group was initially established as District 5 of the Middlesex and Surrey League with 21 members. The earliest record we have are minutes of meetings held on the 4th March 1978. Meetings were held twice monthly at St Nicolas Church Centre with a lip reading session followed by a speaker or social activities.

In 1999 the Middlesex and Surrey League was dissolved, and the Guildford Hard of Hearing Support Group was established as an independent charity to support the local community.

The group continues to evolve to meet the needs of its members. Most recently we have moved our venue to our present home at St Catherine's Hall. Membership thrives and we now have approximately 60 members.