

The Elizabeth Foundation at 40



Celebrating four decades of helping young deaf children learn to listen and talk.

September 2021





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Inspired by our history to achieve in the future

This year marks a very special milestone in our history – it is our 40th anniversary!

As we celebrate this momentous occasion, we pay tribute to the commitment and dedication of all members of The Elizabeth Foundation family, both past and present. They have made the charity what it is today – a leader in providing excellent guidance, support, information and education for deaf children and their families.

The charity has a rich and vibrant history, and I am sure that you will enjoy reading about it – as well as some of our plans for the future – in this special commemorative 40th anniversary publication.

This is an exciting time and we have a number of initiatives and events planned in 2021 to commemorate this big landmark. In addition to this booklet, we have created a range of 40th anniversary memorabilia and have launched a **#40for40** fundraising campaign. We have also made a series of special videos, with representatives of each decade recalling their memories of their time as students at The Elizabeth Foundation. We have been releasing these videos throughout 2021 on our website and on social media. Our celebrations culminate in a special garden party event for friends and supporters in September.

During an online videocall recorded recently (and available on our website), our first children from 40 years ago reminisced on their memories of The Elizabeth Foundation – and all of them agreed that it was like an extended family. That ethos and commitment to family continues in all the services that we provide today – and all the services we aim to provide in the future.

On the following pages, you can read about how we have developed our services to support both local families and families who live further afield. You can learn about the partnerships that we have established and built that allow us to provide wrap-around care for deaf children and their families. You can also find out about how we have diversified our fundraising to ensure that we will still be thriving in another 40 years' time.

I have been privileged to be a part of The Elizabeth Foundation for more than half of its history. I would like to say what a pleasure it is to work with such a dedicated, passionate and talented team of people.

We are all so grateful to Shirley and David Metherell MBEs, our founders, and all the original families who – 40 years ago – had a vision and a passion that created what is now a UK leader in early years education for deaf children.

Looking back at how far the charity has come, I am inspired and motivated to help guide the charity's continued success into the future. I hope we can count on your support along the way – here's to the next 40 years!

**Julie Hughes, Chief Executive,
The Elizabeth Foundation**





Evolving our services to meet the changing needs of families

The changing needs of families and innovations in technology continue to drive change at The Elizabeth Foundation.

Forty years ago, The Elizabeth Foundation was started in a family's front room with five children. The parents of these children were determined to provide them with the support and skills they felt they needed to become effective communicators, and develop speaking and listening skills using their technology.

Fast-forward to 2021 and the charity is now the largest preschool provider for deaf children in the UK. Throughout the years, the charity has had to adapt, develop and modify its service provision to meet the changing needs of families.

Just over the last decade, we have enhanced our weekly education sessions, with in-house Speech and Language services and – most recently – consultancy from an external Educational Psychologist. For families unable to attend our Family Centre on a weekly basis, we have responded to their needs by starting monthly sessions, week-long intensive summer programmes, and a unique online support system.

The support that we are now able to offer to deaf children and their families reflects the ever-moving world we live in. We never stand still, and we will continue to evolve our services to meet changing needs in the future.



Enhancing our weekly education sessions

Our weekly education sessions for babies, toddlers and preschoolers are our longest-running services.

In our baby and toddler programmes, parents stay with their child for the sessions so that they can learn how to provide a language and listening enriched environment all day, every day.

The baby and toddler sessions focus on supporting parents and families in the early stages of a diagnosis, and then providing practical ways they can help their child make the most of day-to-day learning opportunities. We do lots of music, singing, talking and listening – but most of all we support each other and have fun while we learn.

The toddler groups are not only about language and listening, but also about exploring and learning in a relaxed atmosphere. During their sessions, the toddlers get a balance of exploring their world while also learning to focus and pay attention for longer periods of time.

The children coming to the preschool sessions have a busy and lively five-hour day that is jam-packed full of learning opportunities. The teaching team aims to make learning fun and motivating, and every activity has a speech, language, and/or listening component built in.

The preschoolers are having so much fun, they don't even realise how much they are learning, talking, listening and socialising.





Developing speech and language therapy services

In 2014, with funding from BBC Children in Need, we were able to introduce a specialist speech and language therapy service to benefit our children and families.

Our therapists observe each child in their classroom sessions, see the child for regular one-to-one assessments and therapy, support the family with advice, guidance and information, and provide practical resources, games and activities that support continued communication development.

By working with the teaching team collaboratively, our children and families get the benefit of a range of expertise to support them throughout their time at the charity.

Providing educational psychology support

No two children are alike, and it is critical to offer the best support possible for each individual child to optimise his or her learning in the early years. Identifying the needs of each child as an individual is sometimes difficult to determine, and it can be difficult to move forward without the help of a specialist Educational Psychologist being involved.

In March 2021, we secured initial funding to enhance our programme through the addition of an educational psychology consultation service. We will be developing this programme with Portsmouth Educational Psychology Service. We will engage an Educational Psychologist to identify and initiate specific and/or specialist interventions for children who require this service.

The Educational Psychologist, who also supports our Summer Residential Programme, will be collaborating with our staff over the coming year as we build this new service into our programme.

Being able to buy-in these services, as and when they are needed, will enable us to better support our families and provide a more equitable programme.

Offering monthly support groups

Research increasingly suggests that even a mild hearing loss can disadvantage a child in a busy mainstream classroom, particularly as class sizes increase.

In response to this growing need, we started running monthly support groups that focus on the development of good listening skills for babies and preschool children with unilateral or chronic conductive hearing loss. We also have 'Listen' groups for children with Down syndrome and hearing loss, and for children with complex needs and hearing loss.

The groups are very practical in nature and provide input to enhance listening skills, support spoken language development, facilitate communication, build focus and attention for learning, and improve confidence for socialising. The fun and interactive sessions include interactive games and activities, music and movement, opportunities to share experiences with other families, guidance and advice around early communication skills.





Running intensive week-long programmes

We created our Summer Residential Programme for families with preschool deaf children aged 3-5 years who are not able to access our weekly or monthly services.

The intensive week-long programme benefits the whole family by providing daily preschool sessions in our specialist nursery, a full and fun-packed sibling programme, an informative education programme for parents, and question and answer sessions with deaf young adults.

Alongside these services, each deaf child receives individual assessments and summary reports by skilled and experienced professionals, including an Educational Psychologist, Teacher of the Deaf, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist and an Audiologist.

Creating online resources for professionals and parents

For those families that are unable to physically get to us, we have developed a unique online home learning programme – Let's Listen and Talk www.letslistenandtalk.org. This programme benefits families across the UK who want to help their child develop listening, spoken language and communication skills during the early years, but who are unable to access our services in person. It also supports professionals working with these families. Let's Listen and Talk draws upon the charity's decades of experience working with parents of deaf children.

By joining the Let's Listen and Talk programme, families and professionals alike can benefit from: online information on a wide range of topics; clear, easy-to-use activities illustrated with sample videos of parents and children; dedicated teacher monitoring and feedback from the team at The Elizabeth Foundation; and telephone, Skype and email support. They also benefit from complementary information and activities in the technology and music strands of the programme.



Seeking external validation

We aim to keep providing the best possible services for young deaf children and their families. Achieving formal recognition of the quality of our services through external validation and accreditation is just one way we measure our success.

As an early years service, we are regularly inspected by Ofsted, who assessed our services as Outstanding in their last report. During 2021, The Elizabeth Foundation has also been accredited by the leading children's communication charity I CAN as an Early Talk Specialist Level Service – their highest level of accreditation.

Supporting children and their families into the future

In a time of so much change, some things continue as they are. The charity remains committed to the original philosophy on which it was built 40 years ago. Deaf children can learn to listen and talk, and with the right building blocks in place, this is becoming the norm.

We are still committed to providing early diagnosis, good technology and excellent early intervention that includes the entire family. 'Family' is at the heart of everything we do and we strive to develop our services to meet the changing needs of families over time.



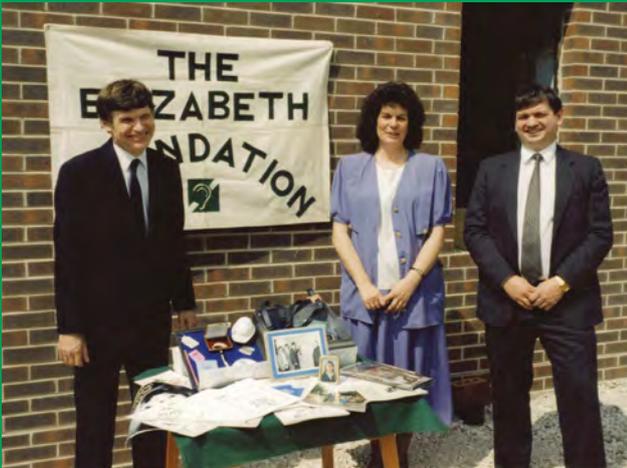


Our founders – inspiring our work then, now, and in the future

Our founders Shirley and David Metherell have been a key source of inspiration and motivation behind the success of The Elizabeth Foundation since our very earliest days.

Together they created an organisation that has changed the lives of thousands of children with hearing loss. Their outstanding achievements were recognised in 2014, when HM The Queen made them both Members of the British Empire (MBE) in her New Year Honours for services to children with hearing loss and their families.

We would like to pay a special tribute to Shirley, who sadly passed away in August 2021, and we would like to express our deepest condolences to the Metherell family. Shirley's remarkable achievements will always inspire and inform the charity's work.



Shirley Metherell – memories of the earliest days

'Elizabeth was born profoundly deaf. I was very sure that she was deaf but Elizabeth wasn't actually diagnosed until she was nearly two. We didn't know anything about deafness in children, and we had to search for help and support.

'Luckily, I found an amazing place called The John Tracy Clinic in America, heard that they helped parents of preschool deaf children. I wrote to them and said, 'Can you help me?' Letters flew backwards and forwards. We started their correspondence course. And when she was two years and three months we actually went to their first summer session in Los Angeles.

'I saw for myself what we needed here in the UK. I guess in business terms we identified a 'gap in the market'. So, I brought a little bit of that back with me.

'We started as a very small self-help group in my sitting room, with Elizabeth and four other babies.'



You can watch a video of this memory on 'The Elizabeth Foundation at 40' page on our website.



Partnerships – the crucial ingredient

Family-centred services

Looking back over our first 40 years, there have been so many changes over the years – as you will see throughout this publication. But the one thing that has remained constant is the power of partnerships: working together to provide the best possible care to deaf children and their families.

40 years ago, our founders endeavoured to create education and support services for children and families, from the time of a diagnosis of deafness. They started with just five families in their lounge at home.

Those same families went out, raised the money and then spent 18 backbreaking months of evenings and weekends building the facility with family, friends, colleagues and supporters in the local community (see photos above).

This was the start of what has grown to become our Family Centre (which we expanded ten years ago by 'raising the roof' to build a second floor and then add a baby / toddler classroom). It was also the beginning of partnership working with our families right at the core!

Audiology partners

Soon after we opened our Family Centre, The Elizabeth Foundation and the Audiology team at neighbouring Queen Alexandra NHS Hospital formed a unique partnership. This meant that the early diagnosis of deafness, subsequent audiological care, education and support for the child and their family could all happen in one place, under one roof – all professionals in different disciplines working together.

This also meant that the charity needed to raise more money to fund the construction of another building, the Test Centre. However, not ones to be daunted, the founders went out and raised the necessary funds to make it happen. They did not, however, build the building with their own hands this time – that might have been a step too far!

At the time we were a small local charity, and we built strong relationships with the local Teachers of the Deaf who had mutual families that we were supporting.

Elizabeth Metherell – building the Family Centre in the 1980s

'I remember when my parents decided that we needed to move somewhere a bit more permanent.

'All of our dads were then really busy. They were working all sorts of hours, after work, at the weekend, and holidays at The Elizabeth Foundation, building the new family complex. All those hours, all those tears, everything they put in.

'Our parents were a big part of that, a big part of building the Foundation from scratch.

'And I'm very thankful, because I wouldn't be the person I am if it wasn't for them. And The Elizabeth Foundation wouldn't be here if it wasn't for them!

You can watch this memory as a video on

'The Elizabeth Foundation at 40' page on our website.



In this way, the health, education and charity sectors were working together to support families. These strong bonds continue to this day, with additional relationships built with teams further afield across the South of England.





Wrap-around care with cochlear implant and ENT services

In September 2018, with funding from Ovingdean Hall Foundation, we were delighted to announce the official opening of our additional state-of-the-art test and consulting facilities called 'The Garden Suite'.

We are so pleased to have formed a partnership with The University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service so that we can have outreach cochlear implant support here on-site at The Elizabeth Foundation.

Paired with our partnership with the Audiology Department from Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust, this allows parents to receive a joined-up service from the time of diagnosis, through to receiving hearing aids / technology, cochlear implant assessment, (and device choice and eventual switch-on if appropriate), tuning, nursery provision for listening, language, speech and communication and family support.

Building on this, in January 2021, we introduced paediatric ear, nose and throat (ENT) NHS services into The Garden Suite here at The Elizabeth Foundation. We are so pleased to be able to bring this additional service into our purpose-built paediatric test facility, with families and children now able to benefit from the expertise that this team has to offer without leaving our buildings.

All this takes place on one site, with everyone working together. This is a unique combined service – bringing together a wide range of experts and specialists from across the statutory and voluntary sectors. We feel very proud and privileged to be able to offer this level of support with our partners.



Coming together as professionals

During the summer, our Residential Programme brings together an array of professionals to support families. The amazing input we get from our local professionals is crucial to the success of this valued service.

A host of professionals joins our in-house team to support families together – Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Music Specialists, Sensory Integration Therapist, Audiologists, CI team, members of the NDCS, and Occupational Therapists. NDCS, CICS, Phonak, Advanced Bionics and Cochlear support the sessions with resources. It is a fine example of partnered working.



Moving further afield

Our strong relationships continue with the Teachers of the Deaf from local authorities in the surrounding areas.

With the launch of our online Let's Listen and Talk programme, we have not only broadened our reach, but also the extent of our partnership working with Teachers of the Deaf from across the UK.

When the pandemic meant we had to temporarily stop providing face-to-face services in March 2020, it was more important than ever for us to work together to support families through the difficult times. We encouraged professionals – such as Teachers of the Deaf and Speech and Language Therapists – to access Let's Listen and Talk to use as a resource for families they work with.

Indeed, feedback from families indicates that the programme works most effectively when they are supported by their local professionals whilst using the resource.

We also have a dedicated Teacher of the Deaf at The Elizabeth Foundation who is helping families enrolled on the programme, and she also assists Teachers of the Deaf to ensure they can make the most of the resource with the families they work with.



All-embracing care

Working with approximately 80 families from across the south of England in our core services, 8 families from across the UK in our summer programme, and over 800 parents / professionals from across the world on our online programme, keeping in close contact and working together can be challenging.

But as Henry Ford once said, 'Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success'.

Collaborative working with other professionals, other authorities and other charities is definitely a very positive step forward for providing the best possible family-centred early intervention.



From our first Chair of Trustees...

When I got involved with The Elizabeth Foundation over 40 years ago, little did I know the adventure I would be embarking on.

Myself and my wife June were part of the group of 'colleagues, friends and family' that raised funds to send Shirley, David, Elizabeth and their family to The John Tracy Clinic in Los Angeles. This led to an embarrassing moment a few years later. On one of her visits to The Elizabeth Foundation, HRH Princess Anne asked me, 'When did you become involved?' For some unaccountable reason, I said, 'I was involved from the conception'. Shirley never let me forget!

I have been a member of the Board of Trustees since the start of the organisation. I was the first person to hold the role of Chair, and with all the decisions that needed to be made, there were certainly never any dull moments, I can tell you. Shirley and David were the driving force behind the charity, but we, as a Board, were supporting them every step of the way. When I relinquished my position as the Chair, I remained a member of the Board. With my wife June by my side (who was the first Secretary), we took part in charity fêtes, charity dinners, Balls, race nights, fancy dress, shaking tins for coins, runs, walks, challenge events – one time I even walked through fire to raise much needed funds!

I feel very proud and honoured that I have been a part of the development of such a fantastic charity that is still having a positive impact on so many children and families. Over the years, there have been so many difficult decisions involving finances, building work, extension work, refurbishment work, service development, outreach programme development, staffing and strategy. But throughout it all, our team of Trustees, staff and volunteers have worked together to establish this lasting legacy to the vision Shirley and David had all those years ago.

I found myself in the post of Chair once again from July 2016 to April 2021. I have been privileged to lead the charity into this next chapter of development. But after 40 years, I have decided to have a well-earned rest and step down as Chair, although I will remain a member of the Board. The charity is in a strong position and I feel that now is the time to hand over the reins to the next generation. Tom Holloway, who joined the board of Trustees in 2019, is taking over the role of Chair and I feel sure that he will lead the charity confidently through the next stages.

Watching the charity grow and develop over the past 40 years has truly been a pleasure and I look forward to an exciting time ahead – as there is never a dull moment in the life of The Elizabeth Foundation!

Peter Ardern, Founding Trustee and Chair



'I feel very proud and honoured that I have been a part of the development of such a fantastic charity that is having a positive impact on so many children and families.'



... to our current Chair of Trustees

I first became aware of The Elizabeth Foundation whilst in my first year as Chair for the Portsmouth Property Association.

In this position we support a charity for the year and I was made aware of The Elizabeth Foundation by a colleague. When I saw the work they did, and the impact they made to children's learning and life outcomes, I felt compelled to help in any way I could.

That year helped me get to know the team at The Elizabeth Foundation very well and it was this involvement that made me realise what a special organisation it is. I learned how the staff and volunteers went about their business and when putting this together with the charity's aims, this in my eyes was a winning combination.

Around 18 months later, I was approached by the Board of Trustees to consider joining, and of course my answer was yes. As a parent of three young boys, I can empathise with the parents of any child who is diagnosed with deafness. Combined with the charity's mission to support deaf children and their parents, this was an opportunity I was truly honoured to accept.

Since joining the Board of Trustees, I have got to know The Elizabeth Foundation even more closely. The Board itself is full of experience in many sectors, ranging from finance and accounting to law and medicine, and this gave me the comfort of knowing the charity was in good hands.

With the recent news that Peter Ardern, having been involved with the charity for many years, was stepping down as Chair, I was delighted to be asked to be Chair of the Board of Trustees, with Peter remaining as a Trustee. I accepted the role, even though Peter's shoes are big shoes to fill!

My approach moving forward for the charity is very much to pick up where Peter left off. The Board of Trustees and I are really there to offer our support to the Senior Management Team as and when it is needed, but given their experience and expertise this really is a good position for the Board to be in. I hope that the next phase for the charity is to continue to spread the awareness of its vital work to a wider national and even international audience.

I am really looking forward to meeting all the people involved in so many different ways with the charity and learning more about people's reasons for wanting to offer to help or even generously donate.

I genuinely cannot wait to get stuck in and watch the charity grow in this next phase of its development. These are extremely exciting times for The Elizabeth Foundation!

Tom Holloway, Chair of Trustees

'I genuinely cannot wait to get stuck in and watch the charity grow in this next phase of its development. These are extremely exciting times for The Elizabeth Foundation!'



Students' memories through the decades

Elizabeth Metherell – the 1980s

'My name is Elizabeth. I'm the one that The Elizabeth Foundation was named after.

'My earliest memories would be being at The Hut at the bottom of Solent Road Infant School.

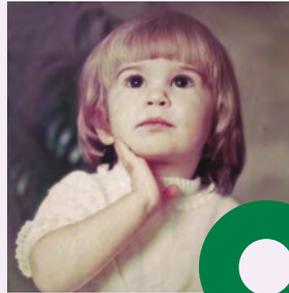
'There were five of us: Danielle, Oliver, Lucy, James, myself. I remember having lots of playing, lots of singing, lots of little games.

'What I didn't realise at the time is all of those things that we were doing were actually helping us to learn to communicate.

'But we didn't know we were learning, we thought we were just having fun – we were just playing with friends, just like any normal toddler.'

Elizabeth is now an educational assistant at the Royal School for the Deaf.

You can read Elizabeth's memories of how the Family Centre was built on page 9.



Imogen Manuel – the 1990s

'My name is Imogen and I'm a solicitor and also a Trustee of The Elizabeth Foundation. I support the main ethos of the charity because it's a place that I hold very close to my heart having been a past student here.

'A lot of my memories here are very happy – doing the activities, interacting with other children, and being told off from time to time, for doing things that we perhaps shouldn't be doing.

'There is such a good support system here of other children that are also deaf as well and they kind of 'get' each other and they don't have to explain themselves or why they're wearing a hearing aid or cochlear implant. I still keep in touch with children that I grew up with here.

'This is such a welcoming environment and it's inclusive of anyone and everybody. This is just a very relaxed environment, where children can be nurtured and grow into the adults that they're going to be.'

Imogen is now a solicitor.



Jodie Ounsley – the 2000s

'My name's Jodie and I'm a professional rugby player for England Sevens. I'm profoundly deaf, which means I've got no hearing in both ears whatsoever.

'My parents, they were just so worried and unsure about what it meant, me being deaf. When I was 14 month old, I got a cochlear implant fitted. Then turned to The Elizabeth Foundation – they just allowed me to learn to listen, to develop my spoken language.

'Without the Elizabeth Foundation – and the support from everyone – I wouldn't be the person I am today, and my journey could have looked very different.

'Young children with the time they're at The Elizabeth Foundation, you're helping them have the skills they need for their life and how they can be included in society.

'It's just unbelievable what this charity does.'

Jodie is now a professional rugby player.



Thomas Harvey – the 2010s

'I'm Thomas and I'm 12 years old and I'm in year seven now, my first year of secondary school.

'I am severe to profoundly deaf and I've worn hearing aids since I was nine weeks old. I like to swim and I like playing the piano, playing basketball, and I really love gaming.

'I started going to The Elizabeth Foundation when I was four months old until I started going to school.

'I'm really lucky because when I was at The Elizabeth Foundation, I had so many good friends who I'm actually still friends with now. Also, my mum is good friends with the other mums, too.

'My favourite memory from The Elizabeth Foundation is when we were all sitting around the table in Rachel's class and I got to wear the birthday hat when it was my birthday. And, also, all the very fun activities we got to do as well.

'Happy 40th birthday Elizabeth Foundation – maybe it's your turn to wear the hat.'

Thomas is now a secondary school student.



Fred Windridge – the 2020s

Fred talks to his mum:

FRED 'Hello, my name, Frederick'

MUM 'Hello, Fred. What do you like doing at The Elizabeth Foundation?'

FRED 'I want to play.'

MUM 'You like playing?'

FRED 'Yes, and painting.'

MUM 'Yes?'

FRED 'And lots of books'

MUM 'Lots of books?'

FRED 'And I eat some food.'

MUM 'Oh, you eat food? You have snack time?'

FRED 'Yes.'

MUM 'Cool. And who's your teacher?'

FRED 'Rachel'

MUM 'Do you like Rachel?'

FRED 'Yes.'

MUM 'Yes – is she helpful?'

FRED 'Yes.'

MUM 'Who are your friends at the Elizabeth Foundation?'

FRED 'Sophie.'

MUM 'You like playing with Sophie, don't you?'

FRED 'Yes – and Sophie is my best friend.'

Fred is starting primary school this year.



You can watch videos of each of these memories on our 'The Elizabeth Foundation at 40' page on our website.





From small acorns grow great oaks ...

... but only thanks to the incredible support of a huge network of organisations and individuals!

All of the charity's considerable successes could never have been achieved without the generous contributions of so many individuals, groups, associations, companies, trusts and foundations. Karen Vaughan, BEM, Deputy Chief Executive, tells us more...

Starting small

Fundraising has changed hugely over the past four decades and we have learned so much along the way – about our supporters and the difference we can make together. In its earliest days, the charity raised awareness and funds in the local community with street collections, stalls and carnival floats (see the photos, left).

As the charity grew, more parents became involved and fundraising became more ambitious. There was a 1,200-mile cycle from Portsmouth, UK to Portsmouth, Rhode Island, USA. There were fast-paced rowing challenges along Lake Windermere, greyhound racing nights, sailing regattas, art shows and 'get-your-cowboy-boots-on' barn dances!

Communities providing support

Our local communities have always supported The Elizabeth Foundation. We have developed and benefited from close relationships with Masonic Lodges, Rotary Groups, churches, schools and many other fabulous groups, providing practical support and raising awareness for us. They have made, and continue to make, such a difference.

Many loyal supporters began with one event, but then took on additional challenges for The Elizabeth Foundation for many more years to come. To give just one example, the Broadside Mummers, a sight and sound to behold, have been raising money through their entertaining Christmas sketches in local pubs since 1995!

The commitment of these individuals has enabled the charity to grow steadily over the years, extending its expertise and reaching an ever-widening audience.

Giving the gift of time

As you have seen, the support we receive comes in many different forms, but none is more important than the wonderful people who volunteer for us, coming back again and again to give their time to The Elizabeth Foundation.

Volunteers represent our community and provide a feeling of belonging within it. They are a lifeforce within the charity.

Whether they are supporting finance, governance and administration, giving time and energy to children in our nurseries, helping to ensure the smooth-delivery of our calendar of events, running their own fundraising activities, or helping to tell our story through photos and videos, we know just how fortunate we are to benefit from their boundless skills and talent.





Leaving a legacy

We have also been fortunate to have received legacies from people wanting to leave a gift to support our work in their will. Often, a member of their family has benefited from our services or the donor has personally known what it is like to live with hearing loss. These gifts are always very touching to receive because we know that they are always very personal to the individuals giving them.

Funding for growth

Over the years there have been a few particularly momentous developments that stand out as we have extended our facilities. These required major capital appeals, working with grant making trusts and foundations and individual donors to achieve our goals.

In 2007 we launched our 'Raise the Roof' project to expand all areas of our work by adding a second floor to our Family Centre, and then a new extension housing our Baby and Toddler unit in 2012.

During 2018, the charity set out its vision to secure major funding to complete the expansion of our Test Centre. It was truly ambitious, but we did it! Modern, well-equipped facilities have been in use ever since by a wide variety of relevant external professionals (as you can see on page 10 of this publication).

Companies getting generous

Companies, big and small, have increasingly played a central part in the development of The Elizabeth Foundation.

Employees have found imaginative ways to fundraise, such as company triathlons, football and netball tournaments, team parachute jumps, dress-up and dress-down days, quiz nights, raffles and auctions. Even doing company work days to improve our facilities with hands-on gardening, painting and carpentry.

Broadening our reach

We have always been aware of the fact that not all families are able to get to our Family Centre in Portsmouth. A few years after the charity started, we developed a paper-based home learning course.

Around five years ago, we undertook a major project to move this provision online, launching our Let's Listen and Talk programme in 2017. This unique combination of extensive online information, practical activities and personalised support is now being used by increasing numbers of families and professionals all over the UK. Our online provision of information and support using Let's Listen and Talk became particularly important during the COVID lockdowns. All thanks to the funding received from our vital supporters.





Grant funders making a difference

Trialling new services has been important too, allowing us to develop better understanding and drive changes to our core services to meet the needs of even more children and their families.

Funding from BBC Children in Need has been instrumental in introducing vital specialist one-to-one and speech and language therapy. Similarly, we have recently secured funding to provide expert educational psychology input.

Grant-funding has also enabled us to extend our reach to support children in the wider community with hearing loss but who might not otherwise have been able to access our nursery programme, including those with Down syndrome and children with more complex needs.

Fundraising into the future

1 to 2 children in every 1,000 are diagnosed with a hearing loss each year. And whilst technology is constantly improving, effective early intervention and family-centred support is still very scarce. So, we know the challenges ahead of us and we know that we have to find ways to meet the changing needs and lives of our families.

The Elizabeth Foundation never stands still. We have to adapt and evolve, extend our expertise and grow our networks with others. But most of all we have to be there for the families who need us – now and in the future. This takes commitment and expertise, but it also requires funding. So, we will continue to find ways to work closely with our wonderful existing supporters at the same time as seeking new sources of funding.

Special merchandise to mark 40 years

To celebrate our 40th anniversary, we have also commissioned some special commemorative merchandise.

There is something for everyone – including high-quality metal pens, porcelain mugs with a handy detachable silicone base and beautiful glass suncatchers individually handmade by a Portsmouth artisan.

We only have limited stock of each of these items - so when they're gone, they're gone! You can buy these products at our online shop at www.elizabeth-foundation.org/product-category/40th-anniversary





Help us flourish for the next 40 years

Take part in our #40for40 challenge

We are extremely proud to have been supporting families with young children with all degrees of hearing loss for 40 years, beginning with Elizabeth herself.

We want to celebrate this achievement by inviting all our supporters to join us in our **#40for40** Challenge this year.

Don't worry – you don't need to be a marathon runner! This challenge is open to all ages and abilities. The idea is simple, think of a challenge around the numbers 40 or 4, complete it during our 40th anniversary year, and ask your friends and family to sponsor you or donate.

How to join in:

To take part and support our work, here's what you need to do:

1. Think of your 40 or 4 themed challenge – we've got plenty of ideas, just ask us if you need any help on fundraising@elizabeth-foundation.org or **02392 372735**.
2. Go to www.justgiving.com/elizabethfoundation and set up your fundraising page with photos, text and pictures. Ask us for help if you need it and we'll send you our handy guide full of hints and tips to get you started.
3. Ask all your friends, colleagues and family to sponsor you – and share your efforts (and even videos!) on social media using the **#40for40** tag.
4. Don't fancy going solo? Think of a challenge friends can have fun with and tag them to complete it as well.
5. Complete your challenge and revel in your achievement!

By tackling your own **#40for40** fundraiser, you will be helping us continue to provide vital services to young children with all degrees of hearing loss and their families across the whole of the UK. You will be enabling us to provide the educational, emotional and practical advice needed when a child has been diagnosed with a hearing loss.

We hope that as many of you as possible will join our challenge this summer, but please do take care to observe any social distancing guidelines in your area.

We'd love to hear your ideas for your own **#40for40** challenge – tag us on social media and tell us and your friends all about your challenge.

Make a donation

If you do not feel like taking on a challenge, any donation you can make – whatever its size – will help us continue our vital work into the future. Together we can give even more children with hearing loss the best possible start in life by helping them learn to listen and talk.

To donate, visit www.elizabeth-foundation.org/donate or scan the below QR code with your phone.





To donate or support our work please visit our website

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Tel

023 9237 2735

Fax

023 9232 6155

Email

info@elizabeth-foundation.org

Website

www.elizabeth-foundation.org

The Elizabeth Foundation – helping deaf children learn to listen and talk.

Registered Charity No. 293835. A charitable company limited by guarantee, No. 1960980, registered in England.
Registered office as above. Incorporating The Beethoven Fund for Deaf Children.



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