

SUSTAINABILITY: METALS AND HEARING AID RECYCLING

Hear Today Hear Tomorrow works with funeral firms to put hearing aids to good use



When Zoe Fawcett-Eustace began to lose her hearing at 14 years of age she was initially supplied with NHS hearing aids and then, as a relatively young adult, she invested in a pair of private ones.

On upgrading her private ones, a few years ago, she asked what to do with her previous pair. The audiologist explained that there wasn't really a viable next use. "This seemed to me to be a terrible waste," said Zoe. "Some hearing aids are so closely physically tailored to the individual that it is not possible to refit them to someone else, however, the standard 'behind the ear' (BTE) devices are easily reusable. This type of aid makes up a large

percentage of the aids dispensed in the UK meaning there are lots which are going into drawers and bins every day."

Hear Today Hear Tomorrow, the organisation Zoe went on to set up, is setting out to recover, refurbish and repurpose all redundant hearing aids so that they may be re-used where they are most needed.

"We are hoping, through our recycling programme, to transform lives both at home - where the very best technology can be prohibitively expensive - and abroad, where more than 360 million deaf people have no access to free hearing aids or hearing care," adds Zoe.

Funeral directors can play a key part in supporting the work of Hear Today Hear Tomorrow.

"There are many, many current hearing aid wearers and family members who don't know that re-use exists as a possibility. As key contacts with families at the time of the passing of a loved one, the funeral sector is ideally placed to help us spread the message; to incorporate the hearing

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Having participated in recent NAFD events, Zoe says awareness among funeral directors is already having a positive impact. "We are already receiving hearing aids from funeral directors we have met at the NAFD Conference and NFE 2022. We were overwhelmed by the interest in and support pledged for our mission.

"Some NAFD members have advertised their offices as 'drop off' points for anyone, not only their clients, who wish for their relatives' hearing aids to go forward and help transform lives. Others have started to explore ways of incorporating the subject of the hearing aids as part of the more general conversations they are having.

"The most common way suggested so far has been to ask the question about any hearing aids, either that may be still at home as well as any being worn, when they are discussing with families what they would like to happen to any jewellery the deceased person may be wearing."

To find out more, visit www.heartodayheartomorrow.org

CHILD BEREAVEMENT UK BENEFITS FROM £12,000 DONATION FROM ICCM METALS RECYCLING SCHEME



A chance meeting with a crematorium at the National Funeral Exhibition in June has led to a huge boost for Child Bereavement UK, the charity nominated by NAFD President John Adams.

Having been offered space to exhibit due to a late cancellation, the CBUK team jumped at the opportunity and quickly pulled together some information about their work and staff to cover the stand.

Says Wendy Bray, Corporate Partnerships Officer for Child Bereavement UK: "Thanks to the NAFD, we had the opportunity to meet the team from Reading Crematorium at the National Funeral Exhibition and tell them about our work.

"They have since been in touch to say that, as a result of the conversation we had on our stand, they have chosen us to receive £12,000 they've raised from the ICCM metal recycling programme."

Reading Crematorium is part of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium

Management's metals recycling scheme and was looking for a good home for its latest fundraising total. Based on the European scheme, Orthometals, initiated by the Royal Dutch Cremation Federation, the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management's recycling scheme continues to grow. Metals are recycled with the express consent of bereaved families and the resulting funds are distributed to charities across the UK.

"We're so grateful that, as a result of that meeting, they generously chose to donate to Child Bereavement UK," adds Wendy, "helping us to continue supporting bereaved families to rebuild their lives when a child grieves and when a child dies."

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