

West Norfolk Tinnitus Support Group

Presentation by David Baguley 4th December 2009

David Baguley is a Consultant Clinical Scientist (Audiology) at Addenbroke's Hospital, Cambridge. His main clinical interest is Tinnitus.



David studied Psychology (BSc and then Audiology (MSc) at Manchester University and became the head of the Audiology Department at Addenbroke's hospital, Cambridge in 1989. He has over 100 peer-review publications, and a PhD on tinnitus from the University of Cambridge, and has peer reviewed manuscripts for many learned journals.

David is co-author of the books, 'Tinnitus: a multidisciplinary approach' (Whurr, 2005) and 'Hyperacusis' (Plural, 2007), and edited the forthcoming 7th edition of Ballantyne's Deafness with John Graham.

In 2006, David received an 'International Award in Hearing' from the American Academy of Audiology, and in 2008 was awarded (with Don McFerran) the Shapiro Prize of the British Tinnitus Association for the second time. David was appointed Raine Visiting Professor at the University of Western Australia, and took up this three month post in early 2007, returning to Cambridge in Summer 2007. David is a Fellow of Wolfson College, University of Cambridge and holds an NHS East of England Senior Academic Clinical Fellowship.

On 4th December 2009, we were delighted to have a presentation by David Baguley at our Tinnitus Support Group meeting in Kings Lynn. The meeting was well attended with 39 guests, including staff from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Audiology Department.

David's presentation lasted nearly two hours and included an in-depth look at the auditory system and important inner ear structures for Tinnitus. He was keen to start his presentation by breaking the idea that nothing is available in terms of treatment for Tinnitus.

David discussed the medical causes of Tinnitus, such as middle ear fluid or the dislocation of the small bones inside the ear. He explained that many of the conductive causes of Tinnitus can be corrected by surgery or medicine.



In a research study described by David, 80% of people who have no Tinnitus will hear buzzing and whistling sounds when in a silent room. This shows that we have activity deriving from our inner ear which we normally would not hear. If this is the case, why is it that some people are distressed by this sound, and others are not?

David went on to outline the modern theory, brought together by Jastreboff and Jonathan Hazel. Their theory suggests that the inner ear signals are picked up by the danger detecting areas of the brain. These areas are paying more attention to the noises. This makes the person more sensitive to the Tinnitus, and therefore causes an emotional response resulting in the agitation and upset that many people with tinnitus report.

In contrast, when the brain is faced with a sensation input that it doesn't read as trouble, it filters it away. This he describes as habituation.

David explained that this theory is at the heart of Tinnitus therapy. If we make the brain understand the sound and stop it from reacting to it, the brain will stop listening to it. David went on to look at the ways in which Tinnitus Retraining Therapy, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, sound therapy and self-help methods, can teach people to habituate to their Tinnitus.

David answered questions from the audience which covered topics such as diet, drugs for the treatment of tinnitus, the affect of atmospheric pressure on tinnitus, and many more. The full list of questions can be requested as part of the speech-to-text report notes for the meeting.

Feedback received from the guests at the meeting was that David's visit was most inspiring and extremely beneficial to their understanding of Tinnitus. We would like to thank David for visiting our group, and for his involvement and hard work in Tinnitus research.

If you would like to receive a copy of the speech-to-text notes taken at the meeting, please contact Rachel at the Deaf Centre.