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Solutions to improve the quality of life



## George Major – The Pearly King of Peckham An Inspiration to all People with Hearing Difficulties

The Pearly Kings and Queens of London originate from the 19th Century following a tradition of 'Street Traders' who have been an important feature of London life dating back to the 11th Century. Wealthy West End Society of the 1800's developed a fashion for wearing pearls – the 'Street Traders' imitated their style and panache by sewing lines of pearl 'flashes' on their battered hand-me-down waistcoats, caps and working trousers! By 1880 the transformation to the Pearly suits as we know them now was complete with 'Kings and Queens' from London's 28 boroughs producing their own Pearly Costumes.



Angie Martin at Connevens helped George choose his 220Lite Radio Aid (seen in picture)

George Major, probably the most famous of all the Pearly Kings and Queens was born in 1938. He wore his first Pearly suit when he was seven, so carrying on a family tradition and was crowned the Pearly King of Peckham in February 1958. George has been deaf since childhood, a condition that was either caused by or made worse through repeated beatings at the hands of an abusive father. He was not diagnosed until he was 13 years old and so missed the benefits of an education while at school. George was not prepared to let his childhood or his deafness hold him back and has



George with Connevens Customer Service Team

made a success of his role as a Pearly King with the help of hearing aids, a talent at lip-reading and cheeky determination! However, George was finding it increasingly difficult to hear during interviews and respond to his audience when giving his numerous talks about the 'Pearly' tradition. His audiologist recommended a visit to Connevens for a solution.



George with Ken Robinson inspecting circuit boards in the factory



*George with Ken Robinson and 'Bertha' the machine that makes the circuit boards*

Connevans, who specialise in equipment for deaf and hearing impaired people, supplied George with a radio microphone system to use with his hearing-aids and George says his life has been transformed!

“When I give my talks on our Pearly history, I am full of confidence and in a world that I enjoy, until the end of the talk when its question time by the audience. I am then in a different world, of anxiety and fright within myself, due to my bad hearing; I would try to cover up that anxiety and fright by making some form of joke out of it. Then I was introduced to a friend that gave me all that confidence on the question times back again, a friend that took away that anxiety and fright. That friend was my 220 Lite Radio System from Connevans.”

George's role as a Pearly King keeps him very busy and he relies on his mobile phone to keep

in touch with his family and the organisations he visits. But as a hearing aid wearer it is not always easy to hear callers speaking clearly. George uses the T-Link hands free kit and is delighted at the difference in hearing callers to his mobile phone. He said “The T-Link is absolutely brilliant! The sound is so clear, with no interference. It's like the voice is right inside my ears and I'd be lost without it.”

In spite of a traumatic childhood and his profound deafness, George is an inspiration who has worked tirelessly to raise millions of pounds for charity. His book 'The Hidden Whistle and Flute', launched in February in aid of Capital Radio's 'Help a London Child' appeal, makes compelling reading. You can find out more about George and his Pearly history at [www.pearlykingofpeckham.co.uk](http://www.pearlykingofpeckham.co.uk).



*George with Les Dyson in Connevans despatch using 220Lite for easier communication*

*To find out more about the radio microphone system and T-Link that have transformed George's life, or for a copy of their Catalogue contact:*

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Or visit [www.DeafEquipment.co.uk](http://www.DeafEquipment.co.uk) and enter '220 Lite' in the 'Search' box.