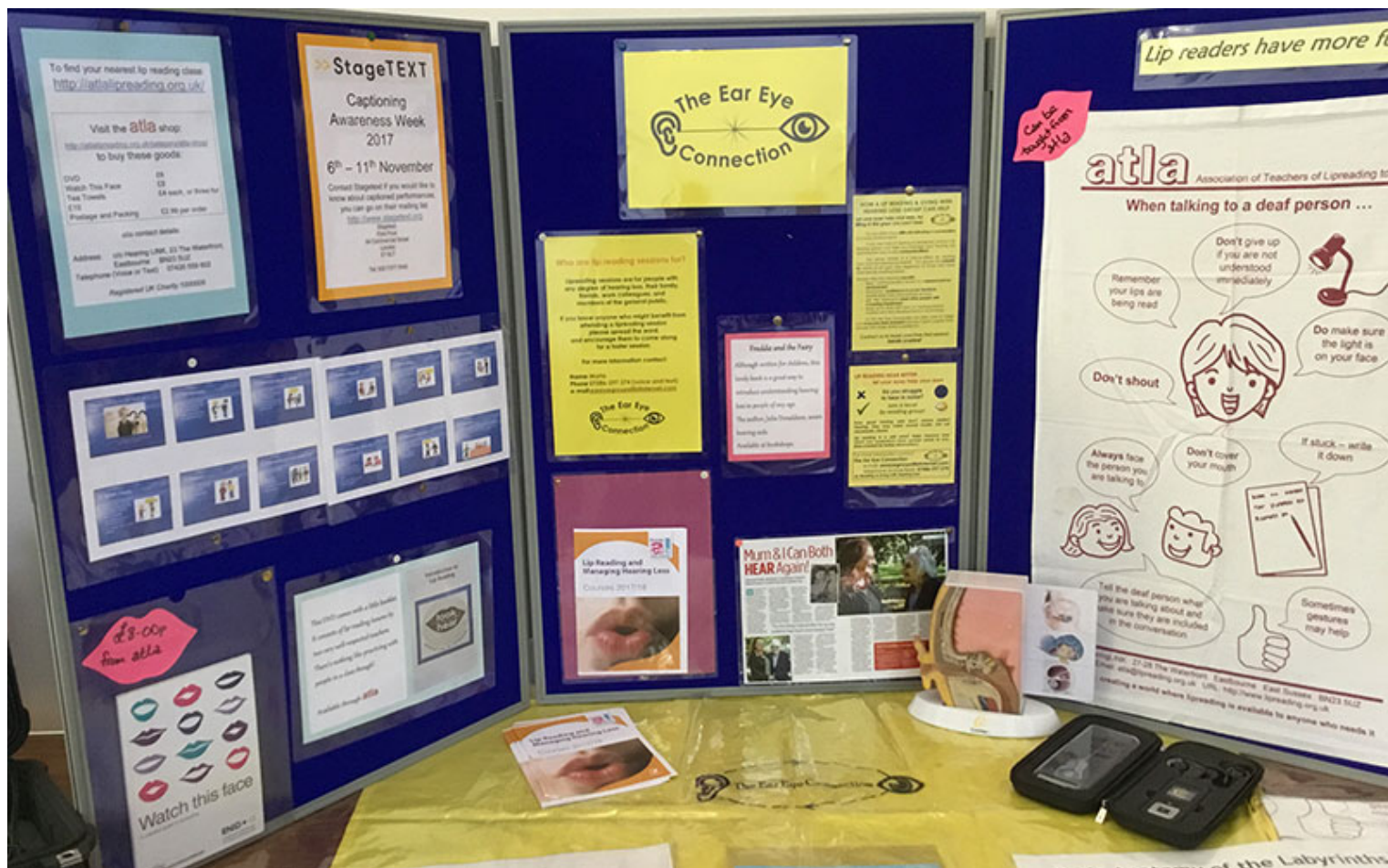




Hearing loss

- Moderate hearing loss is very common especially in the over 60s.
- It can destroy natural confidence and lead to isolation and depression.
- It can be compensated by hearing aids and other technical devices but most of all by sympathetic and knowledgeable support from peers.
- U3A activities are an ideal therapy for the social isolation which hearing loss can bring.

Making open meetings accessible

- Provide a well installed induction loop and PA system.
- Check the equipment before the meeting.
- Or consider purchasing a portable loop system such as a Conversor
- Use a room which is the right size for the numbers (not too big).
- Ensure that speakers understand the needs of members with hearing loss (See our Notes for Speakers).
- Display important information on a screen or provide printed handouts.

Making interest groups accessible

- The vital element is understanding and support from group leaders and members.
- Make sure hearing-impaired members can explain their needs, confident of the support of the group.
- Indoor discussion groups should use a room appropriate to the numbers and with good lighting.
- Technical aids such as portable induction loops and personal listeners can be useful but they should be tested first in a realistic situation before buying.
- U3As should share their experiences and successes in making their activity more accessible.

Useful Links

Action on Hearing Loss: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk; 0808 109 4320

Hearing Link: helpdesk@hearinglink.org; 07526 123255

Ideas for Ears: www.ideasforears.org.uk (interested in taking part in workshops)