



# **Shetland's British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024**

## **Contents**

### **1. Introduction**

### **2. BSL Local Plan**

- 2.1 Across all our services**
- 2.2 Family support, early learning and childcare**
- 2.3 School Education**
- 2.4 Training, work and social security**
- 2.5 Health, social care, mental health and wellbeing**
- 2.6 Transport**
- 2.7 Democracy**

**Appendix 1 – Working with a BSL / English Interpreter – 10 things you should know!**

**Appendix 2 – Useful Information and Contacts**

## 1. Introduction

This is the BSL Local Plan for NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council, as required by BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. It sets out actions NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council will take over the period 2018-2024.

It follows the BSL National Plan, published 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive engagement with Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. It is framed around the same long-term goals as the BSL National Plan and sets NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council's context for the plan.

NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council are committed to protecting and supporting British Sign Language, including in its tactile form. NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council will contribute to national progress report in 2020.

## 2. BSL Local Plan for NHS Shetland and Shetland Islands Council

### 2.1 Across all our services

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users.”**

#### **Our actions - by 2024, we will:**

- Analyse existing evidence we have about BSL users in our organisation; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress.
- Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including making our website more accessible to BSL users.
- Promote the use of the Scottish Government's nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services (VRS) called

‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’ to staff and to local BSL users. This is a free service which allows BSL users to contact public and their sector services and for these services to contact them.

- Signpost staff who work with BSL users to appropriate BSL awareness training.

## **2.2 Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare**

We share the long-term goal for family support, early learning and childcare set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL.”**

**Our actions - by 2024, we will:**

- Provide early years staff with information about BSL and Deaf culture, and about resources that are available in BSL, so that they can meet the needs of families with a D/deaf or Deafblind child.

## **2.3 School Education**

We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child’s education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school”**

**Our actions - by 2024, we will:**

- Contribute to the Scottish Government’s investigation of the level of BSL held by teachers and support staff working with D/deaf and Deafblind pupils in schools, and take account of any new guidance for teachers or support staff working with pupils who use BSL.

- Take forward advice developed by Education Scotland to a) improve the way that teachers engage effectively with parents who use BSL and b) ensure that parents who use BSL know how they can get further involved in their child's education.
- Contribute to the SCILT programme of work to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 programme, including sharing best practice and guidance.

## 2.4 Training, Work and Social Security

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland's economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career.”**

### Our actions - by 2024, we will:

- Signpost pupils and students to a wide range of information, advice and guidance in BSL about their career and learning choices and the transition process.
- Work with partners who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability to help signpost them to specific advice on the needs of BSL users.
- Raise awareness locally of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' (AtW) scheme with employers and with BSL users (including those on Modern Apprenticeships) so that they can benefit from the support it provides.

## 2.5 Health, Social Care, Mental Health and Wellbeing

We share the long-term goal for health, social care, mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives.”**

### **Our actions - by 2024, we will:**

- Signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL and develop complementary information in BSL about local provision, as appropriate.
- Work with Shetland Islands Council and the Integration Joint Board, service providers and service users to improve the way that adult social care is delivered for BSL users, including how residential care is commissioned and how care and support is delivered to people at home.
- Signpost health and social care staff to an online learning resource toolkit to raise awareness of BSL and Deaf culture (this will be led by NHS Health Scotland and will be rolled out across Scotland by 2018).
- Improve individual patient health records so that they clearly show when the first or preferred language is BSL and a BSL / English Interpreter is needed.
- Through the Integration Joint Board, ensure that psychological therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users. Consider the treatment options and the access for those options.
- Support and work with NHS Health Scotland to implement a new national Interpretation and Translation Policy which includes BSL provision.

- Work with partners (Local NHS Boards & NHS Health Scotland) to deliver and evaluate two training programmes aimed at supporting BSL / English Interpreters to work within the Health sector, with a view to informing a longer-term approach.
- Work with Shetland Recreational Trust to take steps to improve access to information about sport, and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities.
- Ensure that any local work to tackle social isolation explicitly considers the needs of BSL users.

## 2.6 Transport

We share the long-term goal for transport set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“BSL users will have safe, fair and inclusive access to public transport and the systems that support all transport use in Scotland.”**

### **Our actions – by 2024, we will:**

- Ensure BSL users can participate in the on-going feedback process of the ‘Going Further: Scotland’s Accessible Travel Framework’ as individuals and staff.
- Research technological solutions for providing accessible information in transport hubs (for example bus stations, airports etc.) for patients and staff.
- Create guidance for passengers and staff who use BSL on how to contact local / national transport providers when things go wrong on a journey.
- Develop and provide training for transport providers which includes strategies for communicating with BSL users (patients and staff).

## 2.7 Democracy

We share the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: **“BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies.”**

### **Our actions - by 2024, we will:**

- Take opportunities to promote public appointments as a way of participating in public life by producing information about public appointments in BSL, and promoting public appointments specifically to BSL users. For example public appointments for Local NHS Boards / IJB Boards.
- Take opportunities to promote the Access to Elected Office Fund locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand for selection or election in local or Scottish Parliament elections.



## **Appendix 1 - Working with a BSL / English Interpreter – 10 things you should know!**

If you are working with a **British Sign Language (BSL) / English Interpreter** for the first time or it is something you're considering, read the **common top ten (10) tips** on what to do:

### **1. Book in advance**

Due to the demand and limited number of BSL / English Interpreters in Scotland, giving as much notice as possible is always really helpful. There are facilities for Online Interpreting which enables BSL users to communicate with staff while waiting for a face to face BSL / English Interpreter to arrive. (Check your Local NHS Board for Hospitals that provide Online Interpreting Services.)

### **2. Preparation**

When booking a BSL / English Interpreter, please provide as much information prior to the assignment as possible. Examples of preparation material – date, times, venue, context, people attending, etc. It is important that BSL / English Interpreters are as prepared as possible before going into an assignment, this allows the best possible service to be provided.

### **3. Duration of the meeting**

We understand that sometimes appointments and meetings can over run, but it's important to only use the time that you have booked with the BSL / English Interpreter as they usually have other bookings either side of the assignment.

### **4. One singer one song**

During the assignment, please try to ensure only one person is speaking at a time. The BSL / English Interpreter is only able to sign for or voice one person at a time.

### **5. Speed of speech**

Speak in your normal tone, at your normal pace. The BSL / English Interpreter will tell you if you need to pause or slow down.

### **6. Breaks**

If there is only one BSL / English Interpreter available (or booked), they will need breaks approximately every 30 – 45 minutes. However, this depends on the content of the assignment so it's always best to check with the BSL / English Interpreter.

### **7. Reading time**

If handouts or PowerPoint Presentation is being used it is impossible for the BSL user to read the handout and watch the BSL / English Interpreter at the same

time. It's helpful to give the BSL user a few minutes to read the information before you start adding or explaining the document.

## **8. Explanations**

Try to avoid Acronyms, Abbreviations, Idioms and Initials as this can be hard for the BSL / English Interpreter to interpret if the meaning is not clear, so explain them as you use them.

## **9. Setting**

Room setting can really assist in an interpreting situation. It's not something that people usually think about, but it's best if the BSL / English Interpreter is not sat or stood against any bright lights / windows, and that they are positioned in the best place for the BSL user to see clearly. The acoustics can also make a difference depending on the situation.

## **10. Eye contact**

It is important to look at the BSL user with whom you're talking, rather than the BSL / English Interpreter. The BSL user in this situation will be looking at the BSL / English Interpreter to receive information of what's being said.

## Appendix 2 – Useful Information and Contacts

### 1. See Hear Strategy

The **Scottish Government** is committed to **improving the services, support and care available to people who have deafness, sight loss, and dual sensory loss**. Our long-term strategy, '**See Hear**', commits to ensuring that children, young people and adults have the same access to opportunities and public services as everyone else, including health care, social care, employment, education, and leisure. The strategy was jointly endorsed by **COSLA** (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) and is being implemented through local partnerships of statutory and third sector organisations. Local See Hear leads are in place to identify priority areas and drive forward the delivery of the Strategy locally.

More information on the priorities and vision in the **See Hear Strategy** is available at this link: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/04/7863>

For further information, please contact **Jonathan Reid**, Sensory Impairment Strategy Coordinator at The ALLIANCE ([jonathan.reid@alliance-scotland.org.uk](mailto:jonathan.reid@alliance-scotland.org.uk)) and **Dr Julie Carr**, Care, Support & Rights Team at The Scottish Government ([Julie.Carr@gov.scot](mailto:Julie.Carr@gov.scot)).

### 2. contactSCOTLAND-BSL

- a) The **Scottish Government** has introduced and funded the **first nationally funded public sector online British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreting Video Relay Service (VRS)** called **contactSCOTLAND-BSL**, which provides **BSL users with access to public bodies and third sector organisations** including voluntary services – this includes services provided by **NHS Scotland and Local NHS Boards**. **contactSCOTLAND-BSL** enables BSL users to contact public bodies and third sector organisations, and for these services to contact BSL users.
- b) **contactSCOTLAND-BSL is delivered by Sign Language Interactions (SLi)** on behalf of The Scottish Government.
- c) **NHS services and professionals can use** **contactSCOTLAND-BSL** to contact BSL users, for example to set up and confirm appointments, confirm BSL / English Interpreters are booked for appointments, and discuss other relevant information that is appropriate for a telecommunication interaction.
- d) **contactSCOTLAND-BSL is designed for calls up to a notional 20 minutes in length.**

- e) contactSCOTLAND-BSL provides a **7 day a week service from 8.00am until midnight** (12.00am). It is **NOT** 24 hours.
- f) contactSCOTLAND-BSL is **NOT a replacement for face-to-face** or person-to-person interpreting / interaction.
- g) contactSCOTLAND-BSL is for **non-emergency calls only**. However, as the service accepts calls to NHS 24 and Police Scotland 101 these may be escalated by NHS / Police call handlers.
- h) Sign Language Interactions (SLi) can provide (on request) **training** on how to use contactSCOTLAND-BSL. There is an eModule learning resource being developed, this will be available from March 2018.

More information on **contactSCOTLAND-BSL** is available at this link:

<http://contactscotland-bsl.org>

For further information, please contact **Andrew Dewey**, Director at Sign Language Interactions (SLi) ([andrew@signlanguageinteractions.com](mailto:andrew@signlanguageinteractions.com)) and **Andy Irvine**, contactSCOTLAND-BSL Development Manager at Sign Language Interactions (SLi) ([andy.i@signlanguageinteractions.com](mailto:andy.i@signlanguageinteractions.com)).

### 3. Language Support Professionals (LSPs)

Language Support Professionals (LSPs) includes BSL / English Interpreters, Hands on BSL Interpreters, Deafblind Manual Interpreters, Deafblind Guide Communicators, Electronic Note-takers, etc.

Information for sourcing LSPs can be found on three websites:

- a.) The National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (**NRCPD**): [www.nrcpd.org.uk](http://www.nrcpd.org.uk)
- b.) Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (**SASLI**): [www.sasli.org.uk](http://www.sasli.org.uk)
- c.) The Association of Sign Language Interpreters (**ASLI**): [www.asli.org.uk](http://www.asli.org.uk)

Please consider using **registered BSL / English Interpreters** who have current membership (including current valid membership card with own photo ID) with either or both **NRCPD** and **SASLI**.

There are a number of agencies in Scotland that provides LSPs including BSL / English Interpreters, Electronic Note-takers, etc. – for further information, please contact **Scottish Council on Deafness** for a list of providers ([admin@scod.org.uk](mailto:admin@scod.org.uk)).

### 4. BSL Translation / Filming

There are a number of services in Scotland that provide BSL translation / filming work – for further information, please contact **Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD)** for a list of providers ([admin@scod.org.uk](mailto:admin@scod.org.uk)).

### 5. BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Partners

The **BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Partners** has been funded by the Scottish Government to support public bodies to implement the **British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015** for the **BSL National / Local Plans**.

The Partners are made up of five delivery partners and two support partners. The delivery partners are British Deaf Association Scotland (BDA Scotland), Deaf Action, Deafblind Scotland (DbS), National Deaf Children's Society Scotland (NDCS Scotland) and Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD). The Scottish Government Equality Unit directs the Partners and the Voluntary Action Fund (VAF) provides support and monitoring.

**BDA Scotland – Helen Morgans-Wenhold**, Access & Inclusion Officer was allocated the responsibility of focusing on **Local Authorities** for the BSL National / Local Plans supporting Local Authorities.

**Deaf Action – Alison Hendry**, Participation Officer was allocated the responsibility of focusing on **Colleges & Universities** for the BSL National / Local Plans supporting Colleges & Universities.



Please update your records

the Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) has changed name to '**deafscotland**'

**Our new contact details are:**

**Website:** [www.deafscotland.org](http://www.deafscotland.org) - **still under construction**  
[www.scod.org.uk](http://www.scod.org.uk) - still works!

**Email:**

Claire: [admin@deafscotland.org](mailto:admin@deafscotland.org)  
Derek: [BSL@deafscotland.org](mailto:BSL@deafscotland.org)  
Mason: [media@deafscotland.org](mailto:media@deafscotland.org)  
Janis: [chiefofficer@deafscotland.org](mailto:chiefofficer@deafscotland.org)

**Telephone:** 0141 248 2474

**Mobile:** 07925 417338



You can contact us through an online sign language interpreter via [contactscotland-bsl.org](http://contactscotland-bsl.org)

contact  
SCOTLAND  
BSL