



British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2018-2024

SECTION 1:

Contents

SECTION 2:

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Involvement & where to find the plan

SECTION 3:

Short summary of the plan

SECTION 4: DRAFT BSL NATIONAL PLAN

4.1 Across all our services

4.2 Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

4.3 School Education

4.4 Training, Work and Social Security

4.5 Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

4.6 Culture and the Arts

4.7 Democracy

SECTION 5:

What happens next

SECTION 2:

Introduction

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

It follows the BSL National Plan 2017-2023, published 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive engagement with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. The long-term goals of the national plan have been used to structure the Renfrewshire plan.

Renfrewshire Council provides a large variety of services. Some services are accessed by everyone who lives in Renfrewshire, such as bin collection, whereas others are for specific groups, such as primary schools. To develop this plan, different services have looked at what they are doing for BSL users and what they could do in the future. The draft actions were then consulted on with Renfrewshire's BSL users.

Renfrewshire Council look forward to contributing to the national progress report in 2020 and then the Renfrewshire Council progress report due in 2021.

Involvement & where to find the plan

Renfrewshire Council's draft BSL Plan was published in both BSL and English on the Council's website. Feedback was encouraged in any format, particularly BSL videos. Details were also provided for BSL users who wished to provide feedback individually. A joint engagement event was held with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership and the University of the West of Scotland. Contact was made with BSL users individually, through the local Deaf Club and on social media to encourage attendance. This evening event attracted 33 local BSL users and also produced the vast majority of the feedback. The feedback from local BSL users has been used to prepare this final version of the plan.

While the official consultation has closed, involvement and input from local BSL users is still welcomed to inform how the plan is implemented and adjusted as needed. You can email written comments or a video to BSLplan@renfrewshire.gov.uk if you are interested in getting involved in this next stage.

The BSL version of this plan can be found on Renfrewshire Council's website at <http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/7803/Renfrewshires-BSL-Plan>

If you want to discuss the plan please contact Caroline Tolan on 0141 6187154 via the Contact Scotland BSL relay service or email the above email address or write to Caroline Tolan, Chief Executive's Service, Second floor Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1WB.

British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#) **contactSCOTLAND-BSL**

SECTION 3:

Summary

This plan will raise the profile of BSL in Renfrewshire and ensure that BSL users have good access to Council services. While it is divided into sections related to long term goals for Scotland, it shows how these will work in a Renfrewshire context.

Some highlights ...

- Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including making our website more accessible to BSL users by including BSL videos and highlighting BSL accessible ways to get in touch.
- Promote BSL awareness in pupils, parents and staff by providing opportunities for raising BSL awareness and organising a visit from the NDCS Listening Bus.
- Include BSL content in the schools section of Renfrewshire Council's website, including key information on sending your child to school.
- The Paisley Museum redevelopment includes plans for BSL user involvement and plans for different sensory needs. This approach will be considered as part as other redevelopments, such as Paisley Library and Paisley Town Hall.
- Continue hosting weekly BSL learning sessions in Paisley Arts Centre, which are open to all and attended by many Renfrewshire Council employees.
- 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. We will do this by including information in our candidate packs and at our briefings for prospective candidates and agents.

SECTION 4:

BSL PLAN FOR RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

4.1: Across all our services

“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire Council has recently developed a Customer Strategy, based upon the needs of our customers. The Council’s approach is to involve our customers and make a difference to the service we provide for the benefit of our customers. Meeting the needs of BSL users is a part of this strategy.

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, including exploring ways to identify BSL communication needs on customer records.

Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including making our website more accessible to BSL users by including BSL videos and highlighting BSL accessible ways to get in touch on the front page of the website.

Promote the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’ to staff and to local BSL users. Promotion will take place through the Council web site and internally through staff communications and will be supported by setting up appropriate rooms for online interpretation (with screens and webcams) close to reception areas.

Reception staff and other customer facing staff across Council sites will attend further BSL awareness training and develop their knowledge of Deaf culture.

Further options for improving BSL users’ access across Council services will be explored in consultation with the local community.

4.2: Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

“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” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire’s approach to the design, delivery and evaluation of children’s services is robust and underpinned by the views and needs of our children and young people.

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.

Parents and siblings of d/Deaf children will be encouraged to access funding from Children’s Services to learn BSL. This funding and other resources available to support BSL learners will be publicised further.

4.3: School Education

“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” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire Council’s Teachers of the Deaf work with children across Renfrewshire and our schools are working to meet the needs of pupils and parents to raise awareness of BSL in different ways. The ethos of the Additional Support Needs Education Policy is to aim for mainstream schooling, where schools are responsive to the needs of individual pupils. Where BSL provision is needed, this is provided at Garvel Deaf Unit in Inverclyde, but there is parental choice to pick other schools.

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. Share good practice already in place in some Renfrewshire schools for BSL using parents’ involvement.

Work with Parent Councils to improve awareness of BSL and Deaf culture and encourage representation from BSL using parents through the Renfrewshire Parent Council Liaison Group meetings.

Promote BSL awareness in pupils, parents and staff by providing opportunities for raising BSL awareness and organising a visit from the NDCS Listening Bus.

Include BSL content in the schools section of Renfrewshire Council’s website, including key information on sending your child to school.

Contribute to the national language learning programme (1+2) to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils, including sharing best practice and guidance.

4.4: Training, Work and Social Security

“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” (BSL National Plan)

In Renfrewshire, our Invest In Renfrewshire team support many people with specific needs to access employment and our widening access work in schools supports pupils making choices about their future.

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, as part of our widening access work in secondary schools.

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. Invest In Renfrewshire also provide money management and financial capability support to individuals as part of a package of support.

Claimant Support Officers (employed by Renfrewshire Council and based in Job Centres) will be provided with BSL and Deaf Culture Awareness training.

4.5: Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

“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” (BSL National Plan)

The Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership work to deliver adult social care services and all community health services for adults and children in Renfrewshire. The partnership brings together staff and services from Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The sensory impairment team is part of the Health and Social Care Partnership.

By 2024, we will:

a) Signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL (to be produced by NHS Health Scotland and NHS24), and b) develop complementary information in BSL about local provision, as appropriate.

Through the integration joint board, ensure that psychological therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users.

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.

These actions are joint with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

4.6: Culture and the Arts

“BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of Scotland” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire makes a significant contribution to culture and the arts, with so much going on, from large projects, such as the redevelopment of the museum to small group work, such as the BSL sessions at Paisley Arts Centre. The legacy of the 2021 City of Culture bid is a vibrant arts and cultural scene.

By 2024, we will:

Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals.

Encourage and support BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts.

Increase information in BSL about culture and the arts on relevant websites and at venues.

Improve access to the historical environment, cultural events and performing arts and film for BSL users.

The Paisley Museum redevelopment includes plans for BSL user involvement and plans for different sensory needs. This approach will be considered as part as other redevelopments, such as Paisley Library and Paisley Town Hall.

Continue hosting weekly BSL learning sessions in Paisley Arts Centre, which are open to all and attended by many Renfrewshire Council employees.

4.7: Democracy

“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” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire Council has 43 elected members who make decisions across a variety of Boards and committees. Local people are also encouraged to get involved in decisions about their communities.

By 2024, we will:

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. We will do this by including information in our candidate packs and at our briefings for prospective candidates and agents.

Have BSL interpretation support in place for result announcements at election or referendum counts.

The review of community level governance has shown that local people want easier ways to share in setting local priorities and input into local decision making. Improving access is a theme of this work, which will support BSL users to contribute.

SECTION 5:

What happens next?

- This final version of the plan is available in BSL and English. It was approved by Leadership Board on 19th September 2018.
- Please contact Caroline Tolan if you want to continue to be involved with Renfrewshire Council as we further develop and implement the actions in our plan on 0141 6187154 via the Contact Scotland BSL relay service or email BSLplan@renfrewshire.gov.uk or write to Caroline Tolan, Chief Executive's Service, Second floor Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1WB.
- Some of the actions within this final plan will require further discussion to inform the detailed implementation. This will take place with those BSL users who have agreed to continue their involvement with the plan. Progress will be measured and reported on annually, with feedback provided for local BSL users.
- While Health and Social Care Partnerships were not listed in the BSL (Scotland) Act to produce BSL plans, collaboration with the Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership has taken place in developing this plan. As BSL users, particularly those in older age groups, may have a need to access Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership services, this collaboration will continue. It is planned that in the design, delivery and review of health and social care services, BSL users will be consulted, as part of the mainstreaming approach.
- Renfrewshire Council look forward to contributing to the national progress report in 2020 and then the Renfrewshire Council progress report in 2021.