

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PLAN 2020-24



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

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SECTION 1

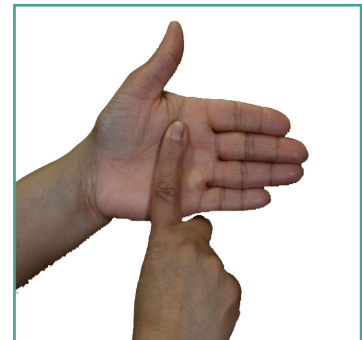
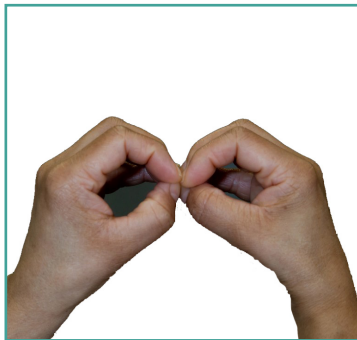
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Historic Environment Scotland's British Sign Language (BSL) Plan.

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is committed to making our information and services accessible for the Deaf¹ and Deafblind communities.

As an organisation which protects and promotes our heritage, we want to be able to reach out to all BSL users² so that we can work together to promote Deaf history and culture across Scotland.

A BSL video of our plan will be available on our website and Facebook page.



¹Deaf people see themselves as members of a cultural and linguistic group, who use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first /preferred language. Deaf people share a language and a sense of identity.

²Wherever we refer to BSL users we mean Deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL)

WHAT IS HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

Historic Environment Scotland is a public body and charity. It is responsible for protecting, valuing and helping people understand Scotland's historic environment.

We identify the places and sites that are most important to our history and culture so that they are legally recognised. We help to make sure that our historic places can be enjoyed now and in the future.

We care for over 300 of Scotland's most important historic sites and places from Edinburgh Castle to Maeshowe Chambered Cairn, in Orkney. We care for photographs, plans and other records of historic places.

We work with different communities and groups. Some, we give financial help to if they are working on a project of national or local interest. We also have a learning and outreach team who work with communities and schools where we can support BSL learners and educators through HES learning programmes. We put on BSL deaf led tours and special events (with BSL/English interpretation) for visitors to our sites.

We employ nearly 1500 people doing jobs like gardener, stonemason, archaeologist, architect, tour guide, steward, or ranger. People are working in IT, human resources, finance, learning and development, and community work.

Our Corporate Plan promotes 'heritage for all' and our aims are to:

- make a difference to people's lives,
- protect our buildings and ancient monuments,
- contribute to the Scottish economy,
- inspire a creative and vibrant Scotland and,
- make sure we have the best people working for us in the best way so that we are the best at what we do.

WHY OUR BSL PLAN IS IMPORTANT

We want to make sure that our BSL plan reflects the goals of the Scottish Government BSL national plan 2017-2023, our Corporate Plan and the views from BSL users.

It is important that Historic Environment Scotland has a BSL Plan because we have an influential role in looking after and celebrating Scotland's history and heritage.

We will ensure there are adequate resources to meet the actions over the life of this Plan and Directorates will allocate annual resources to ensure that the actions outlined in this plan are achieved by 2024.

Our plan will set out our actions from 2020 to 2024 and will reflect our four Equality Outcomes.

Outcome 1 - encourages us to promote Historic Environment Scotland to people, groups and organisations who don't know about us.

Outcome 2 - having clear strategies and policies to make sure our decision making is fair.

Outcome 3 - that our workforce, our volunteers and our Board members reflect the people of Scotland.

Outcome 4 - that everyone who works for us promotes a sense of belonging within Historic Environment Scotland.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT OUR PLAN

We want you to keep in touch with us as this Plan rolls out. We want you to be able to feel that this Plan is making a difference to your life as a BSL user. You can keep in touch and tell us how we are doing by:

Email:

Please put BSL Plan in the subject title and send your email to - equality@hes.scot

Facebook:

Send videos of your comments to us via our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/HistoricEnvScotland/>

Post:

BSL Plan, Historic Environment Scotland, Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh. EH9 1SH.

Telephone:

BSL users can contact us using contactScotland-BSL on the number: 0131 510 4555.
BSL Video Relay Service: <http://contactscotland-BSL.org/>



SECTION 2

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND – BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) PLAN

The Scottish Government's National BSL Plan wants to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit. Historic Environment Scotland wants to play its part in this by making a real difference to people's lives.

Our work at Historic Environment Scotland fits with the specific Scottish Government National BSL Plan goals listed below:

- **Across all our services**
- **Training and Work**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Culture through Scottish history and heritage**

ACROSS ALL OUR SERVICES

We support the Scottish National Plan long term goal that 'across the Scottish public sector information and services will be accessible to BSL users'.

By 2024 we will:

Expand our knowledge of the Deaf community across Scotland to improve our services:

- Improve our understanding of BSL use across Scotland
- Monitor the take up of our BSL services by the Deaf community
- Improve our understanding of the different education, work and life experiences from different BSL users across Scotland



Improve the accessibility of our website information, our corporate documents, public information, consultations, events and onsite property interpretation:

- Promote contact SCOTLAND – BSL through our website and corporate communications
- Use our website/social media (Facebook page) as a channel of communication to the Deaf community
- Provide BSL interpretation at HES corporate events to enable involvement of BSL users where requested
- Market our BSL events to the Deaf community
- Identify and develop pre-visit information for key sites in BSL
- Identify and test methods of providing BSL interpretation at Properties in Care.
- Where owners of designated assets are BSL user's information will be provided in BSL to enable understanding of regulations
- Produce summaries of key documents in BSL where there is benefit to HES and the Deaf community

TRAINING AND WORK

We support the long-term goal set out in the BSL National Plan that:

‘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’

By 2024 we will:

Ensure that routes into work and volunteering with Historic Environment Scotland account for the needs of BSL users:

- Continue to partner with InclusionScotland, Deaf Action and others to offer training opportunities for BSL users
- Develop work experience opportunities for school/college BSL users
- Use career pathway programmes as a route to employment for young BSL users
- Ensure that our managers know about Access to Work funding to support BSL users at work
- Offer coaching/mentoring for managers supporting Deaf staff in the workplace
- Establish volunteer opportunities for BSL users as part of our volunteering programme
- Review and adjust our recruitment process in relation to accessibility for BSL users
- Offer relevant BSL training and Deaf cultural awareness for our staff and volunteers
- As our Board vacancies arise, we will promote these to BSL users
- Develop a ‘shadow’ opportunity for a BSL user to attend relevant Board/management meetings to learn how decisions are made

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We support the long-term goal as 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’.

By 2024 we will:

Contribute to addressing social isolation within the Deaf community.

- Better understand the potential for the historic environment to deliver health and wellbeing benefits
- Understand the importance of Deaf identity on individual wellbeing
- Recognise and celebrate intersectional Deaf identity for different groups e.g. young and old; women and men; different ethnicity and multiple disabilities e.g. Deafblind community.
- Promote the positive social impact of the historic environment to offer spaces for education, recreation, reflection, inspiration and entertainment to BSL users, Deaf communities and organisations



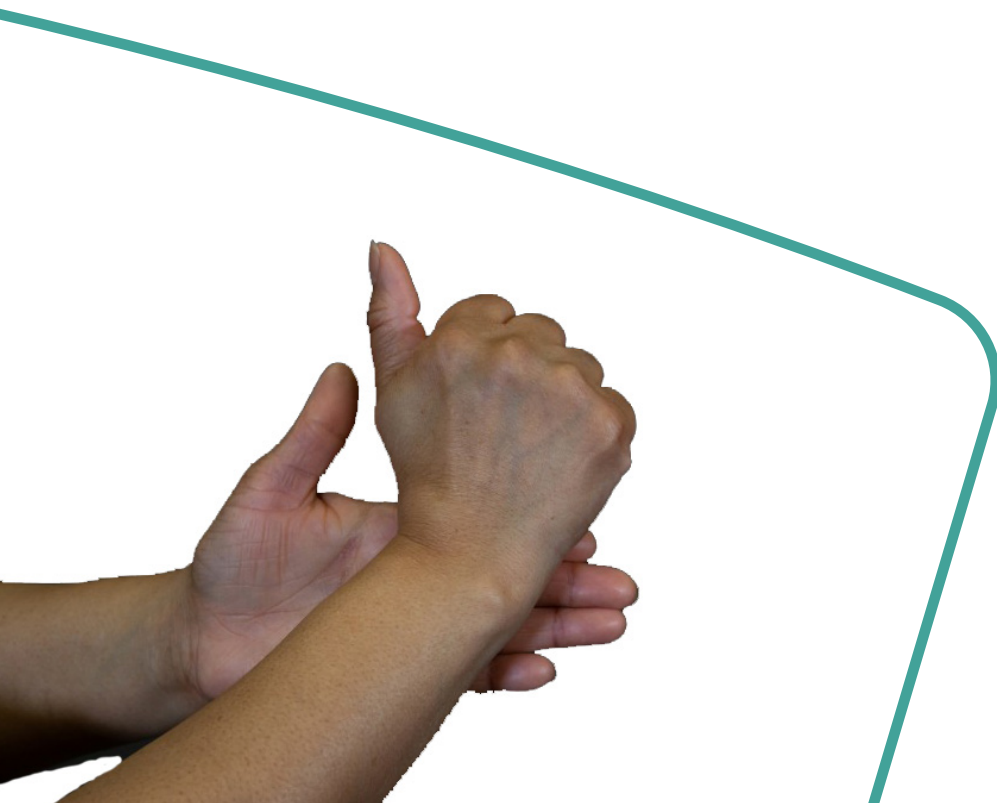
CULTURE - SCOTTISH HISTORY AND HERITAGE

We support the long-term goal as set out in the BSL National Plan, which is: ‘BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, and 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.’

By 2024 we will:

Work with others in culture, heritage and arts to recognise the Deaf heritage and culture in our records as well as provide opportunities for BSL users to participate in and enjoy the cultural life of Scotland.

- Our work on Deaf heritage projects will involve the Deaf community by partnering with Deaf organisations and individuals
- Promote and communicate climate change issues within the historic environment with the Deaf community
- Provide a greater range of experiences for BSL users visiting our properties, using a variety of tour guides, sites, and digital resources.
- Explore and develop opportunities to support BSL learners and educators through HES learning resources and programmes
- Through our research programmes, explore and share ‘hidden histories’ within Deaf heritage as a core component
- Explore different access routes to heritage information through our online archives and engage the Deaf community in the redevelopment of our websites
- Survey and record historic buildings and information important for the Deaf community in Scotland
- Encourage all our functions to use BSL to promote their work.



SECTION 3

CONTINUING CONSULTATION

Who did we speak to when developing our BSL Plan?

In 2019 we created a 6-month Internship and welcomed Manjeet Cross, a deaf BSL user to assist us in developing and consulting on our plan. We are very grateful for her involvement in producing this plan and the information and advice she has given across our different services as a BSL user.

During her internship Manjeet has learned more about Historic Environment Scotland and she will put this to good use for BSL users within the Deaf community.

We have produced and consulted on this plan by speaking to individuals who are deaf BSL users, Deaf community groups and organisations. We also involved our staff who deliver services for Deaf people and BSL users.

When will we review our BSL Plan?

We want to encourage people to give us feedback during the life of this plan from its launch in April 2020 to its formal review which will be due by March 2024. The different ways BSL users can feedback are listed in page 6 of this plan.





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We are the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment.

We want to make sure Scotland's heritage is cherished, understood, shared and enjoyed with pride by everyone.

We are committed to ensuring this publication is accessible by everyone. If you need it supplied in a different format or language, get in touch.



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