

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015:

Perth & Kinross Council



BSL Plan 2018-2024

Rhona Pollok: Policy and Planning Officer

David McPhee: Equalities Team Leader

Email - equalities@pkc.gov.uk

British Sign Language users can contact us via:
<https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>

Phone: 01738 475000 (General Enquiries)

Text: 07824 498145



BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015:

Perth & Kinross Council

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2018-2024

SECTION 1:

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: Table of Contents	1
SECTION 2: Introduction	2
SECTION 3: Summary of the Plan	3
SECTION 4: BSL Plan for Perth & Kinross Council	4
4.1 Across All Our Services	4
4.2 Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare	5
4.3 School Education	5
4.4 Training, Work and Social Security	6
4.5 Health (including Social Care), Mental Health & Wellbeing	7
4.6 Transport	8
4.7 Culture and the Arts	8
4.8 Justice	9
4.9 Democracy	9
SECTION 5: What Happens Next?	10

SECTION 2:

Introduction

This is the British Sign Language (BSL) plan for Perth & Kinross Council. The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 says each local authority must make a local plan. This plan has to be started by 2017 and be delivered by 2023.

The Scottish Government BSL Plan 2017 – 2023, was developed with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and people who work with them.

The local plan contains actions for Perth & Kinross Council for 2018 – 2024. The local plan has the same long term aims as the Scottish Government plan. The plan aims to protect equal access to services and supports for BSL users in Perth and Kinross.

This local plan is also part of the Sensory Impairment Strategy in Perth and Kinross. The strategy is organised by the 'See Hear Steering Group' which meets regularly and includes people from the Council, NHS, Police, Fire Service and other public bodies, as well as people from local voluntary groups.

A working group was set up for a short time to write this plan. The group involved officers from different Council service areas and partner organisations. BSL users and people who work with them also took part to tell us what they would like in the plan. The local plan was finalised following further meetings with local groups and talks with BSL users. The final plan will be delivered with BSL users to help make sure that the actions are taken.

Perth & Kinross Council will make sure that updates on the final local plan are included in the National Progress Report on the BSL (Scotland) Act in 2020.

Name of Lead Officer/who to contact with any questions:

Rhona Pollok: Policy and Planning Officer

or

David McPhee: Equalities Team Leader

BSL users can contact us via <https://contactscotland-bsl.org>

Address: Perth & Kinross Council, 2 High Street, Perth, PH1 5PH

Email: equalities@pkc.gov.uk

Phone: 01738 475000 (General Enquiries)

Text: 07824 498145

SECTION 3:

Short summary – the aim of the plan and what is in it

This local BSL Plan for Perth & Kinross Council sets out actions to improve how BSL users find out about our services, and to make sure BSL users have equal access to them. The local plan also sets out the importance of working more closely with BSL users so they can tell us how to make our services more accessible to them.

The plan will help us work with partners such as Live Active Leisure, St. Johnstone Community Trust, Culture Perth and Kinross and Horsecross Arts to make sure BSL users can access and enjoy leisure and culture opportunities in Perth and Kinross.

Here are some of the things we plan to put in place, with the support of BSL users to make sure they are done correctly:

- Make sure BSL users know that they can use the contactSCOTLAND – BSL online interpreting service to contact Perth & Kinross Council, Live Active Leisure, CulturePK and St. Johnstone Football Club. This will be a first point of contact for people if they need it.
- Ask BSL users for feedback on the use of the contactSCOTLAND – BSL online interpreting service, and let us know if it works for them or not.
- Install new communication support signs, developed with BSL users, for public offices and reception areas.
- Train Council staff who work directly with the public on how to communicate effectively with BSL users. Starting with the services identified by BSL users as the most important.
- Train staff on the use of BSL translation and interpreting services so that they know when to use qualified BSL interpreters, or other appropriate support, for people attending meetings.
- Train school staff on how to communicate better with parents who use BSL, so they can be better involved in their child's education.
- Offer all Council staff opportunities to learn about BSL culture and deaf awareness.
- Work with BSL users to make the Perth & Kinross Council website and other digital methods of communicating with the Council more accessible.
- Find out about other options available to educate people out with the Council about BSL culture and deaf awareness.
- Take what has been learned from working with BSL users to develop this local plan into other plans developed by the Council in future.

SECTION 4

BSL National Plan for Perth & Kinross Council

4.1: Across All Our Services

We share the long-term aim 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 in this section are the same as actions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the National Plan. You can see these numbers alongside our actions.

255 BSL users in Perth and Kinross 2011 Census figures*

By 2024:

- [2] The following will help us look at existing information we have about BSL users in the Council. It will help us find out who might be using our services and where support might be needed.
- We will start to record information for Council house tenants who use BSL;
 - We will make sure that any information for BSL users of social care services is recorded properly;
 - We will make sure that any information for Council staff who are BSL users is recorded properly; we will make sure our School Hearing Support Service records information properly regarding children and young people who are BSL users.
- [3 & 4] The following will help us improve access to information and services for BSL users, including making our website more accessible to BSL users.
- We will work with BSL users to make the Perth & Kinross Council website and other digital methods of communicating with the Council more accessible.
- [5] The following will help us to 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. This is a free service which allows BSL users to contact and be contacted by public and third sector services.
- We will make contactSCOTLAND – BSL available in Perth and Kinross. This will be a first point of contact for people who use BSL if they need it.

We want BSL users to tell us whether this system works for them. We have put it [on the Council website](#) to start with.

[6] The following will allow us to offer staff who work with BSL users appropriate BSL awareness training.

- Staff in Council services who work directly with the public will be offered training courses to learn how to communicate effectively with BSL users. We will ask BSL users to tell us which staff we should be training first.
- All Council staff will be offered opportunities to learn about BSL culture and deaf awareness– sometimes this will be through online learning. We will ask D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users to tell us what should be taught to staff.

4.2: Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare



We share the long-term aim for all Scottish public services 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 in this section are the same as actions 10, 11 and 12 in the National Plan. You can see these numbers alongside our actions.

By 2024:

[10,11 & 12] Hearing Support staff in schools can provide staff working with younger children with information about BSL and Deaf culture. They can also help staff to find information that is available in BSL, so that they can meet the needs of families with a D/deaf or Deafblind child.

4.3: School Education



We share the long-term aim 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 in this section are the same as actions 17, 18, 20, 21 and 23. You can see these numbers alongside our actions.

By 2024, we will:

- [17 & 18] Help the Scottish Government with their work to find out the level of BSL held by teachers and support staff working with D/deaf and Deafblind pupils in schools. We will use any new guidance for teachers or support staff working with pupils who use BSL.

Currently within Perth and Kinross Hearing Support staff hold mandatory BSL qualifications at the required level. Education & Children's Services can provide appropriate BSL support to meet the needs of pupils using BSL. We note that BSL community members would like the level of qualification to be higher.

[20 & 21] Use advice developed by Education Scotland to:

- a) improve the way that teachers work better with parents who use BSL and,
- b) make sure that parents who use BSL know how they can be better involved in their child's education.

[23] Use information from our schools to help the Scottish Centre for Information on Language and Teaching Research (SCILT) programme of work to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 programme. We will also share information about what works well in other areas.

4.4: 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 in this section are the same as actions 28, 34 and 35 in the National Plan. You can see these numbers alongside our actions.

By 2024:

- [28] Hearing Support staff can help pupils and students with BSL find out about their career and learning choices and the transition process.

[34] The Employment Support Team in the Council and the Perth and Kinross Employability Network will work in partnership with Deaf Links, Tayside Deaf Hub.

Today Deaf Action delivers a range of services to the estimated 950,000 people in Scotland with sensory support needs, including those who are blind, partially sighted, deafblind and hard of hearing. The Deaf Links Employability Service is a one stop shop to employability and job retention for people with a sensory impairment throughout Tayside and provides:

- *One to one employment advise, job support and coaching.*
- *Information, advice and guidance for employers to support sustained employment.*
- *In-work support providing guidance on Access to Work.*
- *Interview techniques, volunteering, work placements.*
- *Building employability skills.*

[35] All employability partners in Perth and Kinross know about the UK Government's Access to Work scheme. The Perth and Kinross Employability Network meets every three months and Access to Work awareness sessions are part of those meetings. The local JobCentre Plus team are also able to provide information.

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



We share the long-term aim for health, 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 in this section are the same as actions 40, 45(a), 48 and 49 in the National Plan. You can see these numbers alongside our actions.

By 2024 we will:

[40] a) let BSL users know about health and social care information available in BSL (produced by NHS Health Scotland and NHS24) and,
b) ask BSL users to help us develop local information in BSL.

[45a] Through the Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Integration Board, make sure services like psychological therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users.

[48] Improve access to information about sport, and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities. We will do this by working with local sport and leisure sector organisations to raise awareness of BSL information for staff and service users. We will also provide contacts and information about community sport and leisure opportunities. We would like BSL users to help us with this.

[49] Make sure that any local work about social isolation includes the needs of BSL users. We will encourage people to use Self-Directed Support options in a way that might help them access appropriate supports, including translation services, to address social isolation.

4.6: Transport



Although none of the actions relating to Transport in the BSL National Plan have implications for local authorities, local transport issues were discussed by BSL users at our local meetings, and so we have agreed the following local actions.

By 2024, we will

Ensure BSL Users are aware of how to access Public Transport information locally.

Work with local transport providers to develop Deaf/BSL awareness training for their staff.

4.7: Culture and the Arts



We share the long-term aim for culture and the arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“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”

Our actions in this section are the same as actions 54, 55, 56 and 57 in the National Plan. You can see these numbers alongside our actions.

By 2024, we will:

[54] Help BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals. Culture Perth and Kinross will increase the use of volunteers trained in BSL and use signed video.

[55] Help and support BSL users who would like a career in culture and the arts with volunteering and work experience opportunities made available in Culture Perth and Kinross. We will also direct BSL individuals interested in theatre

work to Solar Bear who work with theatres to develop D/deaf Actors and backstage crew.

- [56] Put more information in BSL about culture and the arts on relevant websites and at venues run by Culture Perth and Kinross and Horsecross Arts. We will work with local networks such as Perth Deaf Circle and Listen Up schools group to help us with this.
- [57] Improve access to the historical environment, cultural events and performing arts and film for BSL users. We will look at different ways to do this including use of shadow interpreters, deaf presenters, captioning and signed videos in Culture Perth and Kinross and Horsecross Arts. We will work with the Council Events Officer to make our major events more accessible for BSL users. We will look at other opportunities which might make Perth and Kinross a good place to visit for BSL users. We will speak to the local cinema about options available for BSL users attending subtitled films.

4.8: Justice

None of the actions relating to Justice in the BSL National Plan have implications for local authorities so this section is not relevant to this local plan.



4.9: Democracy

We share the long-term aim 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 in this section are the same as action 65 in the National Plan as indicated by the number alongside.

By 2024, we will:

- [65] 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, including by-elections. Information on the Access to Elected Office Fund, which is run by Inclusion Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government, will be available on the www.pkc.gov.uk/elections webpage as well as being highlighted within nomination pack material. A link to the contactSCOTLAND – BSL service will also be available on this webpage.

We note that BSL users wish political parties to involve them more in local and national democracy and will let our Councillors know this.

SECTION 5:

What happens next?

- The final version of the plan will be published by October 2018.
- The final version of this plan is in Plain English and will also be available in BSL and Easy Read Formats. We would like BSL users to approve the BSL version before it is published.
- Please contact either Rhona Pollok (Policy and Planning Officer) or David McPhee (Equalities Team Leader) if you want to continue to be involved as we further develop/implement the actions in our plan. Their contact details are on the cover of this plan.