



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

Historic Environment Scotland

British Sign Language Plan 2024 to 2030



Easy Read



Introduction



British Sign Language (BSL) is a recognised language in Scotland.

It is the first or preferred language of many Deaf or Deafblind people.



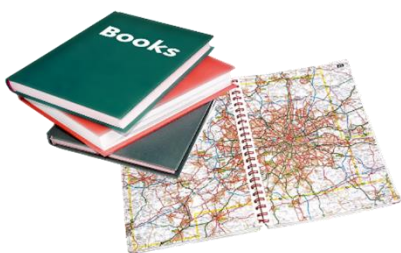
The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 says we must publish plans every 6 years, showing how we will tell more people about BSL in Scotland and encourage them to use it.



Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is the main organisation that looks after Scotland's **historic environment** and tells people about it.

The **historic environment** is:

- places and things that show us what happened in the past, like a castle or garden, or things like books or maps
- **cultural heritage** like stories, crafts, and traditions – thinking or behaviour that has happened for a long time





We are committed to making our information and services accessible and **inclusive**.

Inclusion means everyone can take part and have the same chance.



We want to involve and **engage** all BSL users so that we can work well together to promote Deaf history and culture in Scotland and beyond.

Engagement means communicating with people to find out what they think and what their experiences are.



Our BSL plan links with the work of the Scottish Government's [British Sign Language \(BSL\) national plan for 2023 to 2029](#).



Our [Heritage for All](#) plan sets out our **vision** that Scotland's historic environment is looked after, understood, shared and enjoyed by everyone.

Our **vision** is what we want to happen.

It sets out our work from 2024 to 2030 and links with our 2021-25 [Equality Outcomes](#).



Equality means giving people the same choices and chances.

An **outcome** is something we want to happen.

Our Equality Outcomes are:

- our **society**: we make a real difference to people's lives

Society is all the people living in a community.

- our services: we have services that give **diverse** groups what they need and want

Diverse means having a mix of different kinds of people.

- our people: we attract, recruit and develop a diverse **Board**, workforce and volunteers

Board members look at the work an organisation is doing and check it is working well.

A BSL video of our plan is on our **website** and **Facebook page**.



About us



[Our Past, Our Future](#) is a national strategy from 2023 to 2028 for all the organisations that work on the historic environment in Scotland.

A **strategy** is a big plan.



We work with diverse communities and groups.



We give money to some groups if they are working on a project of national or local interest.



We have a team who work with communities and schools supporting BSL learners and teachers through HES learning programmes.



Visitors to our sites can access:

- BSL tours led by deaf people
- special events with BSL/English interpretation

Consultation and engagement



Consultation is when we ask you what you think about something and listen to what you have to say.

Over the last few years we have:

- built good relationships with communities and community-led organisations
- strengthened partnerships with organisations including Inclusion Scotland and Deaf Action



During the development of this plan, we:

- had consultations and engagement events with adults, children, and young BSL users and their representatives
- used information and knowledge from our colleagues
- did a survey and consultation with our colleagues



Historic Environment Scotland – BSL Plan



The Scottish Government's national BSL Plan aims to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

HES is committed to play its part in this by making a real difference to people's lives.

BSL accessibility



A **goal** is what we want to happen.

We support the BSL National Plan **goal** to make sure services are accessible for BSL users and knowing the importance of:

- having accessible information at the right time
- using **technology** - machines, equipment and information that use scientific knowledge
- making sure more people know about ways to communicate



We will:



Make sure there are enough resources - money, materials and staff - to do the work in this Plan.

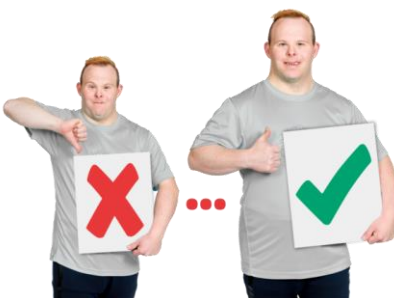
Our departments will put resources aside each year to make sure the work in this plan is done by 2030

Find out more about the Deaf community across Scotland to make our services better



- check how many people use our BSL services
- improve our understanding of:
 - BSL use
 - the different education, work, and life experiences of BSL users

Improve the accessibility of our:



- website information
- corporate documents
- public information
- consultations
- events
- onsite property interpretation



- look at adding BSL translators to our online information
- use BSL videos on our website and social media to promote important information and raise awareness



- have BSL information for people to look at before they visit our main sites
- test ways to have BSL interpretation at the buildings and sites we look after
- make **summaries** – short versions - of documents in BSL



- include contact SCOTLAND – BSL information on our website and the way we promote HES



- promote our BSL events to the Deaf community



- have BSL interpretation at HES company events

Access to employment – ways into work

We support the BSL National Plan goal that:



BSL users will get support to:

- develop their skills
- find the right route to employment
- get a job
- be the best they can be
- progress in their job

We will:

Make sure that ways into working and volunteering with Historic Environment Scotland include the needs of BSL users:



- continue to work with Inclusion Scotland, Deaf Action, and others to offer training opportunities for BSL users



- make sure the way we advertise jobs and choose people to do them is accessible for BSL users



- use **apprenticeships** and work experience as a way into work for young BSL users

An **apprenticeship** is a real job where you learn, gain experience and get paid.



- make sure that our managers know about Access to Work funding to support BSL users at work



- give support and advice to managers supporting Deaf colleagues in the workplace



- offer BSL training and Deaf cultural awareness for our workforce, including our volunteers

- start ways for BSL users to volunteer

- have ways at HES sites for deaf children at schools and colleges to:

- understand more about heritage
- have work experience opportunities with BSL interpreters for communication support





- have opportunities for Deaf BSL users to be trained and to give guided tours at our sites

Health and Wellbeing



We support the BSL National Plan goal:

BSL users can get the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make choices at every stage of their lives.

We will:

Be part of wider work to deal with social isolation in the Deaf community

Social isolation means not having much contact with other people.



- understand more about how the historic environment can help people's health and **wellbeing** - feeling comfortable, healthy and happy



- understand the importance of Deaf identity on a person's wellbeing

An **identity** is how you see yourself.



- recognise and celebrate intersectional Deaf identity for diverse groups

Intersectionality means looking at how things affect people and their different identities.



- tell BSL users, Deaf communities, and organisations about how the historic environment can offer spaces for:

- education and learning
- spending time doing things you enjoy
- having time to think about things
- encouraging you to do something or to try something new
- and entertainment



Celebrating BSL culture



We support the BSL National Plan goal that BSL users:

- will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland
- will have equal chances to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts
- are encouraged to share BSL and deaf culture with the people of Scotland



We will:

Work with others in culture, heritage, and arts to recognise Deaf heritage and culture in our information.

Provide opportunities for BSL users to take part in and enjoy the cultural life of Scotland.



- our work on Deaf heritage projects will involve the Deaf community
- tell people about our use of BSL Tours, new technology and other creative ways of working





- tell the Deaf community more about **climate change** issues in the historic environment

Climate change is the way the world's weather and temperature are changing because of things like pollution from cars and factories.



- use our research programmes to explore and share stories that people do not know much about including Deaf heritage



- give a greater range of experiences for BSL users visiting our properties by having more tour guides and ways to get online information

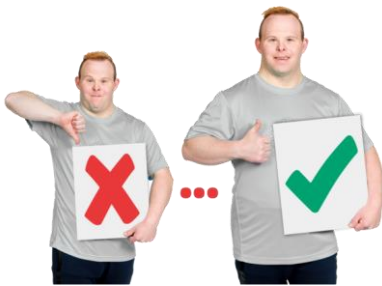


- look at different ways to get heritage information through our online site Trove
- include information important to the Deaf community on Trove
- encourage all our services to have BSL information

How we will make this plan happen



- we will tell people about the plan using our website and social media
- we will include the BSL plan in our Equality Outcomes and Corporate Plan



- we will continue to engage with Deaf or Deafblind communities and their representatives to make sure that this plan makes a difference in their lives



- we will make a report in 2026 to say if work is going well



- we will continue to give BSL training and awareness to our colleagues, volunteers, and Board
- we will keep telling our colleagues about the plan

Tell us what you think about our plan



Tell us how we are doing by:

- Email: equality@hes.scot

Please put **BSL Plan** in the subject title



- Facebook: send videos of your comments to us on our [Facebook page](#)



- send a letter to:

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



- telephone

BSL users can contact us using Contact Scotland BSL Video Relay Service:

<http://contactscotland-BSL.org/>

using the number: 0131 510 4555

