

West  
Dunbartonshire  
Council

British Sign  
Language Plan  
2018-2024

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## Introduction

We are delighted to present our BSL Action Plan covering the period from 2018-2024. We want BSL users (those individuals whose first or preferred language is BSL) to be fully involved in daily and public life as active, healthy citizens able to make informed choices about all aspects of life.

When we say BSL users, this covers all people whose first or preferred language is BSL. This included people who receive the language in tactile form due to sight loss.

We understand and value BSL as a language in its own right, which enables our D/deaf and Deafblind citizens to fully engage in our communities as active citizens. We want to ensure that West Dunbartonshire is a great place to live, work and visit for everyone.

After consultation with BSL users in West Dunbartonshire in August and September 2018, we have developed this action plan.

Our plan focuses on what we can deliver in West Dunbartonshire to support the ten long-term goals of the national BSL plan, in the context of the [West Dunbartonshire Plan for Place 2017-2027](#) and the [Council Strategic Plan 2017-2022](#). Our plan also aligns with the West Dunbartonshire [Equality Outcomes and Mainstream Report for 2017-2021](#).

We will ensure our information provision and work takes account of BSL users, including staff training and Equality Impact Assessments. We are committed to protecting and supporting BSL, and will ensure that internal guidance sets our corporate standards for communication with all residents and stakeholders.

## Contact

For further information please contact the lead officer for this plan:

Ricardo Rea [Ricardo.rea@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Ricardo.rea@west-dunbarton.gov.uk) or 01389 737198

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

## **Executive Summary**

West Dunbartonshire Council wants to ensure our area is a great place to live, work and visit for BSL users; ensuring opportunities are available for full and active participation of all citizens.

To do this, over the period of this plan, we will implement a range of actions as described throughout the remainder of this document.

These actions are designed to deliver on longer term outcome improvements which:

- build understanding between BSL users and non BSL users
- increase understanding of the specific needs of BSL users
- better equip staff and services to meet any, and all, specific needs
- Increase participation of BSL users in important process that will involve and effect people across west Dunbartonshire
- better meet the needs or BSL users in terms of education learning, and attainment
- build the diversity of our workforce to make it as representative as possible of the people it serves

This plan was developed based on engagement and consultation with BSL users in West Dunbartonshire.

## **Our Action Areas**

### **1. Across all services**

We are committed to the long term aspiration of the National BSL action plan that, across the public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users. This includes improving access to information and services, including the accessibility of the Council website, for BSL users.

#### **By 2024, we will:**

- 1.1 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
- 1.2 Ensure all Council consultations take account of preferred communications methods
- 1.3 Ensure service monitoring activity takes account of communication preferences of citizens
- 1.4 Create a specific BSL information and contacts on the Council website
- 1.5 Promote use of the 'Contact Scotland BSL' service across relevant services and to citizens
- 1.6 Ensure that all relevant employees have access to appropriate BSL awareness training
- 1.7 Raise the profile of and awareness of the Council's 'Communicating Effectively' guidance
- 1.8 Ensure that customer services training includes content on needs of D/deaf and deafblind citizens

## 2. Family Support and Learning

We want to ensure that all of our children and young people, and their families, receive the information and support they require at the right time. This aspiration ensures that we are Getting it Right for Every Child in West Dunbartonshire.

### By 2024, we will:

- 2.1 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
- 2.2 Develop BSL resources and advice within key programmes such as 'BookBug' to ensure that parents can be supported to interact with their child during this critical developmental phase



### 3. School Education

We want to ensure that all 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 and that parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child's education. We will also work to ensure that more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school.

**By 2024, we will:**

- 3.1 Develop parental engagement and ensure family learning are key features of the Inclusion Fund
- 3.2 Carry out a staff survey with teaching and support staff and share findings with the Scottish Government
- 3.3 Identify actions to use skills and knowledge we have among staff to increase the overall breadth and depth of knowledge
- 3.4 Progress Education Scotland guidance on engagement with parents/carers who use BSL
- 3.5 Explore opportunities to support learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 Programme including sharing best practice and guidance

## 4. Training, Work and Social Security

We are committed to ensuring BSL users are 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.



### **By 2024, we will:**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 Promote Foundation Apprenticeships for school children who use BSL.
- 4.3 Work with partners, including SDS who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability to help signpost them to specific advice on the needs of BSL users.
- 4.4 Make full use of myjobscotland to raise awareness of the supports available to encourage BSL users into employment.
- 4.5 Improve the understanding of reasonable adjustments for BSL users throughout the organisation to enable BSL users to access the supports and opportunities available to all employees
- 4.6 Develop accessible BSL training in line with the workforce profile



## 5. Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are committed to ensuring that BSL users in West Dunbartonshire 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:

- 5.1 Signpost BSL users to health and social care information produced in in BSL by NHS Health Scotland and NHS24
- 5.2 Develop complementary information in BSL about local provision, as appropriate.
- 5.3 Ensure that any local work to tackle social isolation explicitly considers the needs of BSL users, in partnership with our community planning partners
- 5.4 Provide public protection information in BSL on our website
- 5.5 Produce video guides to major leisure centres, these will be spoken in English, sub titled in English and signed in BSL
- 5.6 Run leisure facility induction days for users with specific needs
- 5.7 Build awareness of activities on offer through increased linkages with wider community organisations and BSL users



## 6. Culture and the Arts

We will ensure that BSL users have full access to the cultural life of West Dunbartonshire, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with our wider community.

### By 2024, we will:

- 6.1 Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals
- 6.2 Improve accessibility to council and West Dunbartonshire Leisure premises
- 6.3 Improve the understanding of staff at these locations on Deaf awareness
- 6.4 Ensure supports are on offer through core services to promote career opportunities in culture and arts
- 6.5 Produce and publish increased information about the area in both English and BSL video
- 6.6 Explore opportunities for theatre access, and signed/subtitled performances
- 6.7 produce mobile library service displays for use at different venues across West Dunbartonshire



## 7. Justice

While there are no specific actions from the national plan in relation to justice which have a direct implications for local authorities, our work on Community Justice through Community Planning West Dunbartonshire is relevant in helping to contribute to ensuring BSL users have fair and equal access to the civil, criminal and juvenile justice systems in Scotland.



### **By 2024, we will:**

- 7.1 Take account of advice developed by BSL-led Justice Advisory group, to support and meet the needs of BSL users
- 7.2 Through Community Planning West Dunbartonshire, take steps to make Community Justice accessible to all including BSL Users
- 7.3 Ensure that partnership services take account of any potential impact on BSL users

## 8: Democracy

We will ensure that BSL users have opportunity to be fully involved in democratic and public life in West Dunbartonshire as active and informed citizens, as voters, and as elected politicians.



### **By 2024, we will:**

- 8.1 Promote the 'Access to Elected Office Fund' locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand for selection or election
- 8.2 Explore opportunities for local BSL users who are interested to take part in Political shadowing schemes, hustings, and Scottish Youth parliament events

## **How we will keep you informed on progress**

- By information on the Councils website and social media channels
- You can also agree to be emailed directly if you wish

Please contact [engagement@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@west-dunbarton.gov.uk) if you want to continue to be involved with the Council as we further develop/implement the actions in our plan.

**This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format on request.**

### **Arabic**

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضا بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة سمعية عند الطلب.

### **Hindi**

अनुरोध पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है

### **Punjabi**

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਰਿਕਾਰਡ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

### **Urdu**

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔

### **Chinese (Cantonese)**

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

### **Polish**

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formie audio.



### **British Sign Language**

BSL users can contact us via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://www.contactscotland-bsl.org), the on-line British Sign Language interpreting service.

Find out more on the [contactSCOTLAND](https://www.contactscotland.org) website

✉ **West Dunbartonshire Council, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton, G82 1QL**

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