

Update of British Sign Language (BSL) Plan

Public Consultation

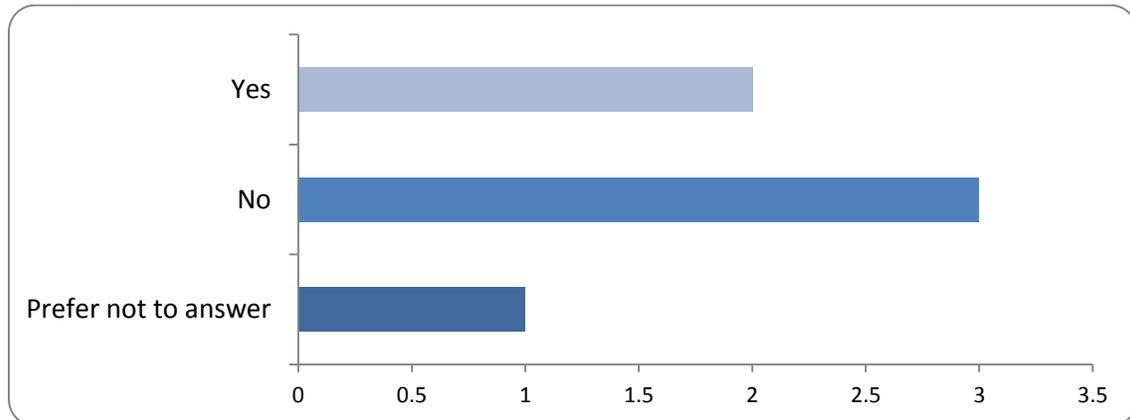
The online questionnaire was open from 30/01/2026 to 06/03/2026

Responses to the online questionnaire: **6**

Three support agencies submitted comments. No public agencies.

Two in-person sessions were held . One on 18th February in Forth Valley Sensory Centre and one on 9th March in Alloa Comments from in-person engagement sessions appear at the end of this document.

Are you a BSL user?



Do you live in Clackmannanshire?



If you are commenting in a professional capacity / as an employee of a relevant support organisation, please state the name of the organisation.

Deafblind Scotland
Citizens advice
BDA

Do you think we have the right action for the next 6 years? What should we focus on for the next 6 years instead / as well?

BSL accessibility

1. These actions seem helpful and cover a good range of areas. It would be important to also mention Tactile BSL as Deafblind people are amongst those most excluded such as by stating Deaf/Deafblind awareness of BSL/Tactile BSL awareness. training will be provided to frontline staff. Equally interpreter access is even more challenging in relation to key forms of Deafblind adapted BSL - visual frame BSL and Tactile BSL. Often there can be very low levels of competency amongst interpreters in this regard. This access to appropriate forms of BSL can be even more challenging in rural settings. Some areas such as Fife have purchased DbS online awareness training and worked with this to modify for their staff. Others such as Highland have developed their own with this been mandatory training for social care staff.
2. Yes the priorities are good, I would also like to see BSL classes in the area. I am hard of hearing and my hearing will get progressively worse. There are social BSL classes but none that lead to a qualification of BSL level 1,2,3 etc. I am also an employee of the council and I would like to see a better understanding of hearing impairment and its impacts across the county
3. I think even this survey is not very BSL friendly.. the plan is a good plan. More Deaf awareness and alert systems in public buildings etc
4. I think the first most important thing is to train staff on the ground. There are so very few of these and if more were trained (even if their main job every day isn't to engage with BSL users) then they could be utilised as a 'back up' when needed and to be inclusive in the community. This is a MUST.

2 Children, Young People & their Families

1. The inclusion of BSL in the national curriculum would be very welcome. This mainstream approach will help to create an environment that is inclusive for Deaf/Deafblind children at school with peers that can sign. In priority 1 the support should also include BSL acquisition for families. This is particularly need for children who have Usher Syndrome and will become Deafblind. It is much easier to acquire tactile or visual frame BSL skills once children already have some BSL.
2. Great that children will be taught BSL and not Makaton
3. More BSL classes for families in the area is essential. Please contact forth valley sensory centre for more input
4. I believe point 4 is critical. Children and young people being included in BSL through the curriculum is forward thinking as they are the (hopefully) inclusive adults of tomorrow.

3 Access to Employment

1. These are strong actions. One aspect that could be drawn out further to strengthen is around employment support organisations and ensuring that they also work with employers to support communication related reasonable adjustments. Rather than only supporting the potential employee. Again mention of Deafblindness or tactile BSL users would be appreciated. For Deafblind people conditions often deteriorate then stabilise then deteriorate again causing need for continuous approach to reasonable adjustments.

2. More in person interpreters, Deaf awareness training to staff

4 Health & Wellbeing

1. Strong actions however again building Deafblind awareness amongst health visitors such as through DbS online training or SHHELs training both on TURAS would go a long way to prevent children who are born deaf or hard of hearing being missed as actually having Usher Syndrome. Great to see mental health recognised as this is a critical service for many Deafblind people who describe their experience of acquiring a dual or second sensory loss as traumatising. In relation to sport Scottish Disability Sport has an inclusive club toolkit with strong sections on Deafness, BSL and Deafblindness that we helped write. This can be drawn upon to ensure strong implementation in Clackmannanshire
2. Trying to access, particularly mental health support needs much more investment. Counselling for example, there is very few BSL sources for such an important area
3. I do but again this comes back to staff on the ground being trained effectively.

5 Culture

1. To strengthen this added arts and culture organisations unless you also mean deaf and Deafblind organisation as well. Might read stronger as build links with and strengthen partnerships between arts and culture and Deaf/deafblind organisations but definitely an important area that can enrich the lives of deafblind people and provide emotional alternative non verbal expression.
2. Raising support and awareness to the Deaf community is so important. Please contact forth valley sensory centre to discuss
3. Linking with the Sensory Centreore closely should be considered by clacks both in the education sense and community sense.

.6 BSL data

1. Perhaps a stronger action would be to bring together existing local evidence and data to establish data gaps. Then (later of course) to address these. I suspect quite a lot is known around the BSL and tactics BSL community but not all in the one place but there are gaps. We know from the alliance report that not all boards are collating inclusive communication adjustment requests. Linking the data around PSED related to inclusive communication is a thought. I'm also wondering about the emerging Inclusive communication guidance related to the PSED. It calls for better data too. Might useful in earlier sections to mention aligning with this BSL planning work. DBS along with the National sensory hub have been on the advisory group reviewing this toolkit and have been working to ensure it aligns with BSL NP. I'm sure the commissioned org would give you early sight so that you can align not potentially just mentioning alignment would be sufficient for now.
2. Having plain English documents not only help Deaf community but those with intellectual disability or struggle with English. More bsl videos for all areas explaining information.

7 Democratic Participation

1. These are good actions and the electoral commissioning has been working with us and others such as Forth Valley Sensory Centre to put in place additions such as Guide Communicators being allowed in voting booths.

2. Having more information online in BSL videos, contacting Deaf clubs etc would be beneficial. Most information regarding politics is not in BSL

13: General comments.

Questionnaire:

1. Our only general comment is easily on mentioning that by Deaf you are also including Deafblindness and by BSL you are considering all forms including tactile. This is covered well in the national plan. Also aligning with the inclusive communication toolkit being developed to guide public bodies in undertaking their public sector equality duty.
2. The access to BSL support in Scotland is till so lacking. Hopefully changes come quickly to help support the deaf community. Funding will be needed though for these steps

Community Engagement Sessions:

1. The plan is ambitious in relation to the available resources at Clackmannanshire Council and should be scaled back to only include more realistic goals.
2. We don't feel we are missing out on services, we have always managed to work around any potential barriers when accessing council services. The council building accessibility is not great and we struggled to report a street light issue. We believe youth BSL users in Clackmannanshire may have different needs and ways of engagement, but we don't use the internet or social media. We also have good support from our social worker who helps us deal with and resolve any council matters.
3. A text method of communicating with Council Services would be better than online reporting.
4. Add the 999 BSL link to info on webpage and link to NHS health info
5. Ensure there is a system that can clearly show if someone is deaf/deafblind and requires an interpreter for council services
6. Manifestos and election materials need to be in accessible format
7. Contact Scotland interpreters wear white uniforms on a white background which makes it hard to understand.