

### **Cross Party Group on Deafness**

Cross Party Groups provide an opportunity for MSPs and members of the public and outside organisations to meet and discuss a shared interest in a particular cause or subject.

The Cross Party Group on Deafness (CPGD) was formally set up in October 2000. SCoD provides secretariat support to the CPGD.

### **Who are the members of the CPGD?**

*Apart from MSPs who are interested in deaf and deafblind issues, the non-MSP members are:*

- SCoD
- British Deaf Association Scotland
- Deafblind Scotland
- National Deaf Children's Society Scotland
- Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters
- Scottish Course to Train Tutors of Lipreading
- Scottish Sensory Centre, University of Edinburgh
- Sense Scotland
- RNID Scotland

### **Which issues does the CPGD discuss?**

Audiology services, Lipreading Courses & Tutors, BSL Interpreters, Deaf Education, Deafblind Guide/Communicators, Newborn Hearing Screening and many more.

### **Am I allowed to attend a CPGD meeting?**

Yes, as an observer. For dates and venues of CPGD meetings, contact SCoD.

### **Are CPGD meetings accessible?**

BSL interpreters and lipspeakers are provided.

### **Are there any minutes and briefing papers that I can read?**

You can either access the minutes via the Internet or contact SCoD for the hard copies.

### **Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) is:**

- The co-ordinating body for 90 organisations concerned with deafness and deafblindness in Scotland
- Working with adults and children across the deafness spectrum, their families, carers and associated professionals
- Committed to working with the Scottish Parliament, Statutory and Voluntary Organisations in the interests of \*deaf people

*\* The term "deaf" comprises all those, adults and children, with the full range of hearing loss and includes those who are Deaf, Deafened, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind*

### **SCoD's aims are to:**

- Enable deaf people to contribute in shaping the policies which affect their lives
- Work to challenge negative attitudes and to combat discriminatory practice
- Raise public awareness of issues affecting deaf people and their views and experience
- Campaign for equal opportunities for deaf people
- Improve the social inclusion of deaf people
- Support the recognition of British Sign Language
- Promote the rights of deaf people and encourage improved practice

Scottish Council on Deafness  
Central Chamber Suite 62

93 Hope Street  
Glasgow G2 6LD

tel: 0141 248 2474; fax: 0141 248 2479

text: 0141 248 2477; e-mail: [admin@scod.org.uk](mailto:admin@scod.org.uk)

website: [www.scod.org.uk](http://www.scod.org.uk)

Scottish charity number: SCO16957



**Scottish Council  
on  
Deafness**

**Your Access to  
Scottish Parliament  
and MSPs**

**.....the Lead Organisation  
for Deaf Issues  
in Scotland**

This leaflet explains ways in which you can have your views raised in the Scottish Parliament, plus some useful information on how to access your MSP and parliamentary sessions.

***How can I find out who my MSP is and how to contact them?***

You can find out via the Internet. The Scottish Parliament has its own website: [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk) where each MSP has their own parliament page containing contact details and e-mail addresses.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can ask us to find out for you.

***Will I be able to use my textphone to contact my MSP?***

Most MSPs have a textphone in his/her local constituency office. To find out their textphone numbers, contact SCoD.

***Can I ask my MSP to arrange communication support for my meeting?***

Yes, you have the right to let your MSP know what your communication needs are and then the MSP should book a BSL interpreter, deafblind communicator, lipspeaker or speech-to-text operator for the meeting.

***Can I ask my MSP to have a loop system available for my meeting?***

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, provision of a portable loop system is an example of your MSP making a *reasonable adjustment* to make his/her service accessible.

***I feel strongly about a particular issue, how can I make my views known?***

Your MSP can raise your issue in a number of ways:

- Asking a Parliamentary Question
- Initiating a debate
- Moving an amendment to a Bill
- Introducing a Member's Bill
- Writing to the Minister
- Meeting the Minister

***How do I submit a public petition?***

The Public Petitions Committee is another good way of raising your issue in the Scottish Parliament. You or your local deaf or hard of hearing group can submit a petition to this committee.

***Are we allowed to hold a public demonstration or event inside or outside the Parliament, or arrange a march?***

Yes, you can, but you must contact the Police to make arrangements.

***How can I find out how my MSP voted in a particular debate?***

Details of how MSPs voted, as well as what was said in debates, is available in the Official Report of the Scottish Parliament which can be accessed via the Scottish Parliament's website.

SCoD produces a weekly parliamentary report containing Parliamentary Questions and excerpts of debates and committee meeting minutes that are relevant to deaf people - see SCoD's website: [www.scod.org.uk/parliament](http://www.scod.org.uk/parliament)

***Where is the Scottish Parliament located?***

While the Scottish Parliament's permanent home at Holyrood is being built, the Parliament is using a range of buildings across the city centre of Edinburgh but mainly on the Royal Mile. The debating chamber is in the Church of Scotland's Assembly Hall.

***Can I visit the Scottish Parliament?***

Yes, you can:

- Attend a debate
- Attend a committee meeting
- Look around the Debating Chamber
- Come to the Visitor Centre

You may also wish to make arrangements to meet with an MSP.

On the Scottish Parliament's website, the Parliament Calendar is on the "what's happening" page. SCoD's **Bulletin** also gives details of debates and committee meetings that are important to deaf people.



***If I wish to attend a debate or committee meeting and require a BSL interpreter or Lipspeaker, what should I do?***

You should contact the Public Information service **at least 7 working days in advance** - Tel: 0131 348 5411 (voice) or 0131 348 5415 (text). You will be notified as soon as possible whether they are able to meet your request and give details of any ticket booking requirements, etc.