

Review of “The Long and Winding Road: A Roadmap to British Sign Language & Linguistic Access in Scotland”: Five years on.

Summary of the Review Report

Summary

“**The Long and Winding Road - A Roadmap to British Sign Language & Linguistic Access in Scotland**” was published by the Scottish Government in 2009. The Roadmap was a collaboration between members of the **BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group** (BSLLAWG) and written by the Project Manager, funded by the Scottish Government Equality Unit. Members of the BSLLAWG included representatives of many deaf organisations, including those working solely in Scotland and UK-wide, and Scottish Government officials.

The Roadmap was developed to give the Scottish Government **information** so that it could make **informed judgements** about **linguistic access** in a **policy context**. It was written to be a resource for **central and local government** as well as other public bodies. The purpose was to **highlight the barriers** faced by Deaf and Deafblind people whose first language is British Sign Language (BSL) on a daily basis when trying to be active citizens in Scotland, and to suggest possible solutions to these barriers. The Roadmap also includes some of the barriers (and possible solutions) faced by people with an acquired hearing loss who have a spoken language as their first language and their need to access communication support in order to fully participate in Scottish society. The Roadmap does not, in the main, look at the needs of deaf people with additional physical disabilities, learning disabilities or learning difficulties.

From 2000 until 2011 the Scottish Government convened and chaired the BSLLAWG. Since 2011, the group has been convened and chaired by the Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD).

The group facilitates discussion of the issues at the heart of linguistic access for Deaf, Deafblind, Deafened and Hard of Hearing people with members of the Scottish Government.

In 2007, the **Scottish Government** set out **its purpose** –

“to focus the Scottish Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth”

And its five **Strategic Objectives** –

“Wealthier and Fairer; Healthier; Safer and Stronger; Smarter; and Greener.”

There were six specific national outcomes related to equality work and the Roadmap was written to help government better understand how to achieve these outcomes.

The Roadmap groups issues under the Scottish Government's strategic objectives, to deliver the national outcomes, which relate to the responsibilities of the then individual Directorates.

Since 2009, many of the desired outcomes in the roadmap have been achieved, if not in their entirety, then at least in part.

Wealthier and Fairer

Government Aim: to enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and more people to share fairly in that wealth

Recognition of BSL

The Roadmap outcomes for Wealthier and Fairer included **recognition of British Sign Language** by the Scottish Government in a similar way to that of Scots and Gaelic. The UK Government recognised the importance of BSL being recognised as a language in its own right in **2003**. Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health, formally recognised **BSL as a Scottish language** at the SASLI Building Bridges Project event in **2011**. Mark Griffin MSP lodged the British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill as a Private Member's Bill in the Scottish Parliament on the 29th October 2014. It is now under scrutiny by the Education and Culture Committee and is progressing through stage 1 of the parliamentary process. This bill's progression was started in **2010** by the former MSP Cathie Craigie.

Employment Data

In 2009 when the Roadmap was written, there was a **lack of national data** on the **employment status** of deaf people in the UK. The BSL and LA Working Group agreed to raise this as an issue. The 2011 Census and Scottish Household Surveys are moving towards collecting more meaningful data on Deaf and Deafblind people and employment but there is still a way to go.

Deaf awareness in mainstream employment

Due to the very nature of deafness, there will be situations where providing training to a workforce in deaf awareness and linguistic access will benefit both deaf people who are in the workforce and deaf people who use the goods and services that these workplaces provide. There are few workplaces that cannot employ people who have a hearing loss in some capacity, but too many continue to think that it is health and safety practices that restrict the roles that deaf people can play, rather than is with other employees, the ability to actually do the job.

It is recognised that there is a need for increased levels of training in deaf awareness and linguistic access in most employment situations, for staff who provide goods, services and information directly to deaf people; but also for

those who will have deaf colleagues, and those who are involved in strategic planning for the organisation/business.

At the University of Stirling in **2013**, all **student psychiatric nurses** received deaf awareness training as part of their course. While it is hoped that this will enhance their professionalism when they have the opportunity to support and tend to the needs of deaf people in psychiatric settings in Scotland, it should also enable these professionals to support **deaf colleagues** in the workplace.

In **2009**, **NHS Education for Scotland (NES)** commissioned a Deaf Awareness training pack and course, to be co-delivered by an approved Deaf trainer and a member of NHS staff.

NHS 24 provide an **e-learning deaf awareness course** for all their staff, call centre staff as well as HR and senior management so that deaf and hearing colleagues can enjoy the same levels of support as well as those who use the services provided.

Deaf Action and **Fife Society for the Blind** have developed a training pack and are co-delivering **“Just Ask” joint sensory awareness** training to a range of employers and service providers. It is hoped that this training will help to ensure that Deaf people have greater access to employment opportunities than previously.

Action on Hearing Loss (AoHL) has received funding from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) for the **“Managing hearing loss when seeking or in employment”** project. As part of the project, AoHL is conducting a survey and it is open to all people with a hearing loss, including Deaf and Deafblind BSL users, including those who live in Scotland.

Growing the numbers of appropriate professional registered language/communication support personnel available

Employers and employment services cannot access **appropriate professional registered language/communication support** when required. The BSL and LA Working Group was keen to support the training of more registered language/communication support professionals. **Heriot-Watt University** now offers a **four year undergraduate degree** in British Sign Language (Interpreting, Translating and Applied Language Studies). Students are trained to work as **BSL/English Interpreters and Translators**, and to use BSL proficiently in related professional areas. The first group of fully qualified interpreters will graduate in 2016; and will be able to register with Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (**SASLI**), and become full members of the National Registers of Communications Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (**NRCPD**). The course has been made possible by an initial investment from the Scottish Funding Council, which has been confirmed as indefinite.

SASLI and partners ran **an apprenticeship scheme** to encourage more people to become interpreters, funded by the Scottish Government. This was not sustainable due to the high cost. SASLI continues to provide CPD and support for its registered members as well as acting as the bridge between Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and the BSL/English Interpreters who provide linguistic access.

Post-school transitions

There is a significant attainment gap for deaf young people in Scotland today. The National Deaf Children's Society (**NDCS**) recently published their report on promoting positive post-school transitions for deaf young people in Scotland – **Close the Gap**. This illustrates that young deaf people are more likely to leave school with no qualifications and have more difficulty in accessing Higher Education and employment than their peers. These findings are based on research commissioned by NDCS from the University of Edinburgh. This study explored the experiences of young deaf people over the age of 16 years through their transition from school to training, further education and employment.

The "Close the Gap Report" shows that

- Almost 10% of deaf young people leave school with no qualifications
- Only a third of deaf young people qualifying for Higher Education
- Only a quarter of deaf young people entering Higher Education
- A quarter of school leavers moving into employment but only one sixth of deaf young people doing the same.

In **2012**, **NDCS** commissioned the **University of Edinburgh** to undertake a study of experiences of young deaf people over the age of 16 years through their transition from school to training, further education and employment.

There is a strong association for all young people between socio-economic background and educational outcomes. Young people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and from **socially advantaged homes** tend to do well in school and progress to **higher education**. These young people have high rates of employment after graduation, similar to those of non-disabled graduates. Young people from **less socially advantaged** backgrounds tend to move **into vocational education and training** where they have **less access to individualised support** and have poorer employment prospects.

Action on Hearing Loss is working in partnership with five other charities to support young people who have a disability into employment. The **Open Doors Scotland** project will support 350 young people aged between 16 and 24 years, who have a disability to get into the labour market and remain there. The project is being funded by Skills Development Scotland. This will give deaf young

people a further avenue to join the labour market with appropriate support. The project can provide up to £1,500 to employers who are recruiting a deaf young person to work at least 15 hours per week.

Action on Hearing Loss also provides a transitions service – **On the Move**, funded by The Big Lottery Fund, which supports deaf young people aged between 16 and 25 years in central Scotland to find work experience and move in to full-time employment, training or education.

Donaldson's School also has a transitions project that works with young deaf adults aged between 16 - 24 years – '**More Choices, More Chances**'. It began in 2007 and it means that their students have the best possible start in their post-school life. The project works in partnership with other agencies to support the young people into employment and training.

Online Interpreting

There are a number of organisations providing online interpreting in Scotland. These include partnership arrangements with both third sector and private sector organisations/companies. Many public bodies are accessing online interpreting services so that Deaf and Deafblind people can have access to more accessible services, especially at times or in places where it is more difficult to access face-to-face interpreting services. Some online interpreting services are also providing an online note taking facility for those who require this service.

In December 2014, the Heriot –Watt University Languages & Intercultural Studies Department in collaboration with the European Union of the Deaf and the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters completed a project – **InSign**- that put forward recommendations on good practice for video remote interpreting.

Teaching BSL as a career

In **2009**, when the Roadmap was published, there were 154 known **BSL tutors** in Scotland teaching BSL from Level 1 to Level 4 in 47 different centres.

Four agencies in Scotland were offering courses at Levels 3 and 4. Other BSL classes were known to be happening on a more informal basis as there were BSL tutors who were not registered with any organisation.

In **2007**, Heriot-Watt University ran a **Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of BSL Tutors**, the highest level course in the UK (SCQF level 10), with eight students achieving Graduate Diploma level outcomes and two achieving Graduate Certificate level outcomes. The initiative was funded by the Scottish Government through SASLI. With further government investment, a second group of students of a similar size graduated from the university.

This training of trainers course was designed as stage one of a cascade model and would have provided a career pathway for tutors if further government funding had been made available.

BSL Tutors in schools

In Scotland, there are a number of **part-time BSL tutors** who work in schools but these tutors are **not qualified as school teachers**. At the present time, there has been little capacity-building in the Deaf Community to enable more people to become fully-qualified teachers as well as BSL tutors. Initial discussions have taken place about introducing **BSL as a “1+2” language** for children in the same way that English, Gaelic and community languages (modern languages) are taught which would go a long way to making BSL accessible to more people and increasing the opportunities for linguistic access for Deaf and Deafblind people and the opportunities for more **first language BSL users to become tutors and teachers**. Teaching BSL to all children would also mean that should that deaf children would have equality of access to their entire peer group.

This level of **bilingual teaching** would need a financial commitment from the government to ensure that there is a year on year **increase in the numbers of BSL tutors** who increase their own skills base to become teachers as well. Any initial investment should be focussed on deaf children and their acquisition of language and teaching bilingually, before the introduction of bilingual teaching for all children.

BSL qualifications

The **ladder of BSL qualifications** needs to be built up to make progression easier. This was something that the Roadmap suggested be looked at.

SQA accreditation is the nationally-recognised route for most initial and further education in Scotland. An increasing number of approved SQA centres are delivering BSL and related topics as part of programmes of Community Based Adult Learning and vocational training.

In anticipation of the BSL Bill, SQA has undertaken **a review of its awards** - BSL Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher. These units have been revised and there are a number of Approved Support Packs to accompany the courses as well as an introduction to BSL, Deaf Awareness and Lip Reading Skills.

The **Graduate Diploma in Teaching BSL Tutors** course run by Heriot-Watt University in **2008** and **2011** has produced 20 Deaf trainers to train BSL tutors across the whole of Scotland. An organisation has been created to represent British Sign Language (BSL) teachers in Scotland and to support the existing graduates to contribute to advanced BSL tuition and to the training of other tutors most effectively - the **Scottish Teaching Council of BSL (STCBSL)**, which held its first conference at the end of April **2013**. The council is for tutors

in Scotland. A key aim of the council is to establish agreed standards for language teaching and set up on-going training and continuing professional development (CPD) events.

Smarter

Government Aim: Expand opportunities for Scots to succeed from nurture through to lifelong learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements.

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

The Getting it right for every child approach is about how practitioners across all services for children and adults meet the needs of children and young people, working together where necessary to ensure they reach their full potential.

GIRFEC and the **Early Years Framework** apply to all children in Scotland including deaf children and young people and take a more person-centred, rights-based approach to the education of Scottish children. This should mean that deaf children and young people are given the support they need so that they find their own “fit” in both the hearing world and the Deaf Community simultaneously.

Curriculum for Excellence and bilingualism in BSL

The Languages Working Group in the Education Scotland Curriculum Unit considered the rationale for promoting specific languages but decided not to set a hierarchy of languages to be learned by pupils in Scotland. The languages that are offered in schools are a matter for schools and local authorities to decide, taking account of the local context. However, **Local Authority language strategies** should acknowledge that for **some children their first or main language is BSL**. The opportunity exists for local authorities and schools to introduce BSL as a taught part of the curriculum. This is especially true as schools become aware of the new expectation around teaching an additional language from Primary 1 and another from Primary 5 and pupils continuing learning languages throughout their broad general education that is up to Secondary 3 at least.

Schools will need to decide which languages to offer that best suit the needs of their pupils and the wider community including minority communities such as the Deaf Community, as well as looking to issues of continuity and transition through primary and into secondary education. **Heriot-Watt University's Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies** has written to the **Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages** and to **SCILT**, Scotland's National Centre for Languages, based at the University of

Strathclyde, on the integration of BSL into the 1+2 approach to language learning.

Deaf adults view **education** as **the most significant influence** on their achievements and wellbeing in later life and they hold very strong views on the nature of education for deaf children. **Deaf children** are, however, much more likely to have **hearing parents (90%)** and they have a range of views about the education of their children.

Communication in families with a deaf child

In **2009**, a researcher, on behalf of the **Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC)** and in conjunction with **NDCS**, undertook a **mapping exercise on linguistic access and education for deaf pupils and students in Scotland**. It looked at the linguistic access arrangements for deaf children from diagnosis and in school and for deaf students in further and higher education. The report also looked at data collection across the education system for deaf children and young people, including that of Language Service Professionals (LSPs) working in education, and the level of BSL that associated professionals had gained; and produced a number of recommendations to improve the linguistic access for all deaf learners across all aspects of education.

If a family wishes to develop a knowledge and understanding of BSL, there is **no national system which can deliver BSL tuition suitable for families**. However, NDCS has produced a family curriculum and the BDA is in the process of developing one. These could form the basis of relevant tuition to families and if delivered by **Deaf adults** could also provide useful **role models** and sources of positive information on what it means to be Deaf. **Family friendly material in BSL** for has been developed mostly by deaf organisations in the Third Sector.

NDCS continues to deliver its **national family support service** as well as its **Your Child Your Choices project** which support families with deaf children from birth to age 8. This project has supported over 100 families and delivers regular training courses for parents in 'Family sign language', 'Communication is fun' and 'Parenting a deaf child'.

Scottish Asian families with deaf children

NDCS delivers support through its **Black Minority Ethnic Family Support Volunteer Network**, a group of parents of deaf children, trained by NDCS to provide informal emotional and communication support to **families who do not have English as their first language**. They work closely with statutory services to enable them to engage more effectively with these families. The **Ishara Project** hosted by Deaf Connections provides support for **Deaf adults** from the **BAEM communities in the west of Scotland**

Communication support in schools

According to **NDCS' Close the Gap** report, there is variation in the consistency and quality of support that deaf young people receive in schools across Scotland.

The “Count Us In” report is a valuable resource and the uptake of this is positive among education practitioners. However, NDCS recommends that this resource is updated, and its content extended to include support for deaf children and young people from their early years through to further education. In **2010**, **Education Scotland** published the **Journey to Excellence**.

Discussions about **linguistic access and language/communication support professional and workers** in schools included a broad spectrum of posts including Electronic Notetakers and Lip Speakers and those working exclusively in educational settings, such as Communication Support Workers and classroom assistants. These titles are applied to very different roles and it is often difficult to compare like with like. It has been suggested that part of the **role of the teacher of deaf children** is to co-ordinate these various roles to provide the optimum linguistic access for their pupils. There is some evidence that that level of BSL amongst teachers is not high. The consequence of this is that other professionals will require a higher level of BSL, if as a team, they want to be able to work successfully with deaf children who are in the process of acquiring a fluency in BSL.

Attainment of deaf learners

As a group, the academic attainment of deaf children continues to trail behind their hearing peers. According to **Scottish Government data in 2011/12**, in comparison to school leavers with no additional support needs, deaf school leavers who received support for learning:

- were more likely to leave school with no qualifications (9.8% vs. 0.9%)
- were more likely to leave school with Standard Grades at 3-4 (16.2% vs. 10.8%)
- were less likely to qualify for entry into higher education (36.3% had Highers and Advanced Highers, as opposed to 61.1% of school leavers who did not have additional support needs).

NDCS has asked the Scottish Government and Education Scotland <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/85486.aspx> to commit to a national review into education provision for deaf learners, including Deaf children and young people; to establish a set of recommendations to make progress in improving outcomes for this group. NDCS is committed to offering its expertise to support the facilitation of such a review, drawing together the contributions of skilled stakeholders from across the sector.

In **2010**, the University of Edinburgh, with funding from the Nuffield Foundation, carried out a piece of research that examined **the achievements of deaf pupils** in the UK, focusing on Scotland in order to make use of **a longitudinal database** which has detailed information about every deaf pupil from 2000 – 2005. This database is part of the legacy from the Mary Brennan study of **the Achievements of Deaf Pupils in Scotland**. The 2010 project looked at factors leading to success for deaf pupils, patterns of early support for deaf pupils in education which lead to success in later years, and how the academic, social, and vocational outcomes for deaf children compare to the wider population of children / school leavers.

Teachers of the Deaf

In **2013**, the **Consortium for Research in Deaf Education (CRIDE)** carried out a **national survey** that suggests that there has been a **15% decline in the numbers of Teachers of the Deaf** over the past two years. In addition, the survey raised concerns about the status and recognition given to professionals working with deaf pupils. According to statutory guidance, teachers working wholly or mainly with deaf children should obtain a mandatory qualification within five years of working within this role. However, CRIDE data suggests that the number of Teachers of the Deaf who are fully qualified in Scotland has declined by 23% in the past two years. More investigation is required to fully understand these figures within their local contexts. Any reduction in numbers or qualifications held by professionals raises serious concerns about how education services are supported to deliver effective services for deaf children. It is also important to note that within the context of mainstreaming deaf learners the decline in numbers of Teachers of the Deaf may also reflect increases in other support staff to meet additional needs such as Communication Support Workers, but there is little data in this regard as CRIDE does not ask what number of Teachers of the Deaf or support staff have BSL level 3 or above.

At the **Cross Party Group on Deafness** meeting held in the Scottish Parliament in June **2013**, two representatives from the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (**BATOD**) presented a paper about their concerns about the qualification routes that the Teacher of the Deaf had to take.

There is the legal requirement for teachers who teach deaf children have the appropriate qualification. However their data has shown that there is **a number of teachers still teaching deaf children for more than five years with no appropriate qualification**. The data also shows that only one teacher had gone through and completed the competency route at Moray House School of Education and that there is no one keeping the record of teachers and checking on their qualifications.

BATOD suggested three action points:

- a) A register of Teachers of the Deaf should be set up by GTCS;
- b) A review of qualification routes; and
- c) Teachers working with deaf children should be included in school inspections.

Mainstream education and special schools

Most deaf children are placed in **mainstream education** (estimates vary **between 80 and 97%**). Some members of the BSL& Linguistic Access Working Group felt that the roadmap should emphasise how important it is to have deaf schools and should make clear that **mainstream education does not work for all**. The Scottish Government currently funds **Donaldson's School**, following a decision made in 2003 to continue the funding stream to a small number of independent schools.

In **2012**, the Scottish Government commissioned the Doran Review (see page 59 of the full report), which sets the strategic vision for education provision for children and young people with additional and complex needs in Scotland. The Review outlined 21 recommendations which were all fully or partly accepted by the Scottish Government. Some key recommendations were made about the introduction of strategic commissioning which will change current funding models and ways of working. Work streams have been set up to prepare for the introduction of strategic commissioning and support current grant-aided institutions in preparing for strategic commissioning.

The government's strategy **Curriculum for Excellence** should actively support all children.

Curriculum materials in BSL

There is scant material available in BSL for any educational level, from nursery to higher education. Various projects have been funded to produce specific material; for example, **200 technical signs for scientific terms** were produced on DVD by the Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC) during **2007**. The SSC, working in partnership with Heriot-Watt University, **now has over 1,000 technical terms and definitions in BSL for science subjects**. The SSC raised the funding to produce this resource; it was not provided from the education budget. The SSC has not been able to persuade the SQA to produce exams centrally in BSL because so few candidates ask for signed papers each year.

The SSC would like to see more of the science syllabus covered as well as other curriculum areas so that Teachers of Deaf children are able to explain the necessary concepts in BSL. This should lead to higher achievement amongst BSL users in schools and colleges and encourage services for deaf children to consider the advantages of employing more bilingual and Deaf staff.

The impact could be a lifelong one as the deaf education system would be successful in producing bilingual students, ready for further and higher education where they would not need as many academic texts translated.

Transitions to adult life

Many Deaf adults believe the transition from school to work or to college was the most significant time in their life that greatly influenced everything that followed. While there are **support structures** in place for young people moving **from school to tertiary education or into work**, there are **gaps**. There is, for example no funding to access communication support if a pupil goes on a work placement or enters voluntary work, so deaf pupils are often denied the opportunity to learn about work and to demonstrate their practical potential for employment. **Access to Work** only applies to people who are in paid and contracted work, **not volunteering or work placements**.

Opportunities and risks for deaf students have been presented by the recent shift towards regionalised colleges in Scotland. The Association of Deaf Education Professionals & Trainees - **Adept** (formerly NATED- National Association for Tertiary Education for Deaf people) suggests that previously, it was unrealistic for all colleges to employ a qualified member of staff with a dedicated remit to manage support for deaf students. Now, they suggest that each regional college identifies such a person to fulfil that role in their institution. Adept has drafted a job description which acknowledges the diverse skills required to inform the sector.

NDCS has launched a **Statement of Intent (Appendix 15)** which is a vehicle through which local authorities, with the support of NDCS, can pursue a pragmatic approach to supporting deaf young people locally. The three principles of promoting positive post-school transitions below are intended to support deaf young people to become successful learners and effective contributors in their local communities.

- 1) Promote positive emotional health and wellbeing and peer support among deaf young people
- 2) Facilitate effective transitional planning for deaf young people
- 3) Promote effective local multi-agency working to facilitate smooth and positive transitions

Healthier

Government Aim: Help people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care

Despite a number of initiatives over the years, there is still a lack of **identification of language and/or communication preference** on health records. The NHS National Services Scotland Information Services Division did a piece of work with deaf organisations and deaf people themselves on what information should be included in the Emergency Care Summary for each patient. Not all health boards have adopted the recommendations. Part of this was to ensure that IT programmes to support the establishment of electronic patient records were able to record communication preferences across all health sectors. Another part of this work was to look at the GP Read Codes so that these were “fit for purpose”. The **Joint Sensory Impairment Strategy** will further develop this work.

An example of good practice that should be shared is the **NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde** Spoken Language, British Sign Language and Communication Support; Interpreting Policy. Several deaf organisations have worked with NHS GGC to ensure this is a comprehensive and robust policy.

NHS Health Scotland had a working group – the **TICS JAG** – the Translating, Interpreting and Communication Support Joint Action Group – which wrote and supported **2010/2011 Programme Delivery Plan for TICS in NHS Scotland**. This plan included signage, accessible appointments, communication support in its widest sense, interpreting procurement (including BSL and Deafblind Manual), use of technology, and stakeholder engagement. The group also proposed and organised an Interpreting Conference in November 2011. Part of the way forward for this plan was to improve the information available on the **NHS Inform** website.

NHS 24 has put an online interpreting pilot in place to ensure that Deaf and Deafblind BSL users can access their out-of-hours services. It is proposed that some form of “Webchat” is also put in place to ensure all people with a hearing loss can access the services without having a textphone. The NHS 24 **online interpreting service** is being used by several NHS Health Boards to provide language support for patients in a number of settings – Accident and Emergency, GP appointments, out-of-hours face-to-face services, outpatient appointments, and other areas where it is difficult to access BSL/English Interpreters in the short term. Three NHS 24 staff have been seconded as full-time students to Heriot-Watt University’s BSL/English Interpreting degree course.

Deafblind Scotland has a project that is working in partnership with NHS 24 to ensure that services are accessible to Deafblind people.

The Scottish National **Blood Transfusion** Service is looking at online interpreting services for their main centres so that Deaf people have the same options as their hearing peers as to whether or not they donate blood.

The Scottish **Breast Screening** Programme – which underwent a 10 year review in 2012 – is also looking at online interpreting in its hospital and clinic based services so that Deaf and Deafblind women and men have a better screening experience. It will not help Deaf and Deafblind women who live in more rural and remote areas and need to be screened in mobile units, but hopefully in time, these too will have access to online services.

The Scottish Ambulance Service is looking at an SMS service (mobile phones) for booking the **Patient Transport Service**. At a stakeholder engagement session especially for deaf people, this was identified as the easiest and most widespread way of making sure that deaf people can access this service for themselves if eligible or for other family members.

The BDA has **Deaf Health Challenge Project** that is working in conjunction with health providers and professionals to ensure Deaf people have equal and direct access to all forms of health care and health promotion across the whole of Scotland. A report on this work - Health Services Provision to BSL Users in Scotland – has been published.

Mental Health Services

Since the Roadmap was written, the Scottish Government has set up the **Scottish Mental Health Service for Deaf People**, hosted by NHS Lothian and based in St John's Hospital in Livingston.

The service, which opened in **2011**, is committed to providing **specialist support in Scotland for deaf people** with mental health problems across Scotland. They provide a high quality service for people who are deaf and are suffering from mental ill-health. In the main, they are a consultancy and liaison service.

In **2009**, a pilot project to give **Mental Health Officers** deaf awareness training was carried out by a deaf organisations partnership. This was a one-off that has not been repeated due to lack of funding.

There continues to be a lack of information about the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 in BSL. The Scottish Government's Communications Working Group that was set up in **2004** to produce the "purple booklets" had the production of all the booklets in BSL on its agenda until the group was disbanded, but as yet, apart from the CD produced by the **Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland**, there has been little information produced in BSL. With the publication of the **Principles of Inclusive Communication** - and the completion of the review of the Mental Health Act, this situation may change.

NHS Inform is the new national online **health information** service. This service has brought together many pieces of health information in BSL.

Breathing Space is a free, confidential phone and web based service for people in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. The service provides a safe and supportive space by listening, offering advice and information. There is a BSL service available two evenings per week.

Access to Independent Advocacy

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (**SIAA**) has been a member of the SCoD Mental Health and Deaf People Task Group for a number of years and is fully aware of the issues.

SCoD and the SIAA are in talks re partnership working to ensure advocacy organisations are deaf aware and deaf organisations understand what independent advocacy is. Advocacy money has been made available to Deaf Links and BDA Scotland to provide advocacy for deaf people Dundee, the Highlands and the South of Scotland. Some independent advocacy organisations in Scotland are providing advocacy for deaf people.

General Health Services

The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 was passed by the Scottish Parliament. The Act gives all patients the right that the health care they receive will:

- consider their needs
- consider what would most benefit their health and wellbeing
- encourage them to take part in decisions about their health and wellbeing, and
- provide them with the information and support to do so.

It also gives patients a right to give feedback, comments, raise concerns or complaints about the care they have received. The Act required Scottish Ministers to publish a **Charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities** which summarises the existing rights and responsibilities of patients using the NHS in Scotland and of people with a personal interest in such patients' health care.

Although work has been done to ensure health services are accessible to deaf people, there is still much to be done. In March **2013**, the **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman** found against NHS Tayside in a case where

“The complainant (Mrs C) raised concerns about the failure by Tayside NHS Board (the Board) to provide a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter for a patient (Ms A) in Ninewells Hospital (the Hospital).

The complaint which has been investigated is that it was unacceptable for the Board not to provide a BSL interpreter during Ms A's 12-day in-patient admission to the Hospital in July 2011 (upheld).”

Re-ablement and rehabilitation

In **2013**, eleven new **Lip Reading** tutors completed a one-year course which was designed by Scottish Course for Training Teachers of Lipreading (**SCTTL**) and resourced by the Scottish Government-funded Scottish Lipreading Strategy Group. This brings the number of qualified tutors in Scotland up to 31. SCTTL has launched its updated website with more information about the Lip Reading classes.

The Lip Reading Strategy Group is supported by a social researcher employed by AoHL who will produce a report based on the research being carried out into the significance that lip reading plays in the re-ablement of people with a hearing loss in Scotland.

Safer and Stronger

Government Aim: Help local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer place to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life.

In June **2010**, the **Justice Disability Steering Group** report was published. Capability Scotland had been tasked with consulting with disabled people and the organisations that support and work with them to establish what barriers disabled people face when involved in all aspects of the justice system in Scotland. In **2009**, Capability Scotland worked with other equality organisations to hold involvement events for disabled people to raise concerns about the justice sector and make suggestions for improvement to access. At the involvement events, five key topic areas were discussed:

- Physical access
- Access to legal advice
- Information barriers
- Communication barriers
- Attitudinal barriers and rights.

The **information** gathered from deaf people was **fairly negative**. There is an ongoing issue about deaf people accessing language/communication support when they need to see a solicitor in both criminal and civil circumstances. If the person is entitled to **Legal Aid**, then the solicitor can apply for financial support to pay for language/communication support for all appointments. But the problem is who pays for the language/communication support before the application for Legal Aid is processed and who pays if the person is not entitled to Legal Aid. Several deaf organisations/partnerships, including SCoD and the BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group have met with the **Law Society for Scotland** and the Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) to look at this issue, but no concrete decisions have been made re initial access. SCoD has joined a working group that is looking at this and other justice matters – the Law Society for Scotland and SLAB are members of the group.

In **2010**, the Governor of HMP Glenochil approached SCoD to have a discussion about **deaf people and access in prison**. This discussion resulted in the Governor working with Deaf Action to ensure all his staff received basic BSL training, deaf awareness training and communication skills training.

SASLI has worked closely with the **Scottish Court Service, the Judicial Institute for Scotland and Scotland's Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service** with the aim of raising Deaf and BSL/English interpreting awareness with legal staff. SASLI has also organised specialist training for SASLI registered interpreters to learn and practise court procedures. The aim of this was to **increase the number of registered, suitably experienced interpreters** able to work in court settings and increasing accessibility and equality for Deaf people.

A number of deaf organisations, on their own or in partnership with other organisations, have worked with the police and/or fire and rescue services to make sure local services are accessible for deaf people. One of the most pressing issues is that this learning is not lost now that both services are national – **Police Scotland** and the **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**. Prior to Police Scotland's inception, SCoD worked with the Communications Team on how contact with the new force could continue to be accessible for deaf people and others who cannot use a telephone. All **local accessible options** remain in place – including SMS contact and email contact. Police Scotland made a commitment to looking at how to make the **101 non-emergency service** accessible once they have updated their telephony platforms. Deaf people can access the **999 emergency service** by registering their mobile numbers so that in an emergency, they send a text asking for the police, fire and rescue, ambulance or coastguard.

SCoD continues to be involved in the Scottish Government **Building Safer Communities** Learning Network. This network gives an ongoing opportunity to work with the Police and Fire and Rescue services to ensure they become fully accessible for all deaf people.

Several deaf organisations throughout Scotland have become third party reporting centres for reporting **hate crime**. This means that deaf people get the support they need when reporting a crime against them.

The BDA has the **Empowerment and Campaigns Project** which provides opportunities for Deaf people to develop their own personal, social and community skills and knowledge, so enabling participation in wider society. The project also involves the Deaf Community in consultations by the Scottish Government and Westminster.

Greener

Government Aim: Improve Scotland's natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it.

Many deaf people miss out on the ability to influence the work done to improve Scotland's natural and built environments because without information that is both accessible and timely they are unaware of what is being done and what is going on.

The Government wants to increase accessibility, education and awareness.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has a responsibility for promoting understanding of the opportunities for outdoor recreation, including promotion of the Access Code. Scottish National Heritage is reviewing its website and SCoD took part in an interview (September 2014) to look at how accessible the website is for deaf people – it is not accessible at the present time and although SNH has taken the decision to have film clips on the website, it did not realise that the clips would have to have closed captions and a BSL translation to make them fully accessible for deaf people.

The Scottish Government's **Planning System** has no accessible information on it neither do **strategic planning authorities** – for example, Glasgow and the Clyde Valley.

The Scottish Government consulted on and has now lodged the **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill** with the Scottish Parliament. The purpose of this Bill is to help local communities to develop the places they want to live and work in – it will help everyone in Scotland to get involved in the decision-making processes at a local level. The government has published the Bill's policy memorandum in an Easy Read version and all the other papers including the Bill in English, but has not published anything in BSL as yet.

On the government website, there are a number of publications relating to community engagement. The page does not list the Principles of Inclusive Communication, but does have a link to the Australian Government Department of Social Services – nor does it have a link to the **National Standards for Community Engagement**.

The **Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF)** was funded by the government to provide guidance on how to produce accessible information for the people of Scotland. <http://www.saifscotland.org.uk/> Accessible information is not just for health and possibly social services. Public bodies and government itself need to be smarter when producing information for the people in Scotland. Without information on the environment, recycling, energy efficiency, public health, planning, and land and environmental services at a local level, deaf people cannot become **greener citizens** who are fully engaged with their local communities and communities of interest.

What are the similarities to the recommendations in the See Hear: Joint Sensory Impairment Strategy?

1. Local partnerships should consider options for the introduction of basic sensory checks for example for people of a certain age, and at agreed times in their care pathway.

This would help to add to the data collection for all deaf people, especially those who are losing their sight or hearing as they age. When compared to other data collected, it could also help to identify adult Deaf BSL users who are in good health and do not use social services.

2. At a national level, the Scottish Government should scope out the range of formal and informal training opportunities around sensory impairment awareness, and work with the relevant education, training and qualification bodies to explore opportunities to increase awareness and expertise in the area of sensory impairment awareness, building appropriate content into the core training regimes of different professional groups.

The Roadmap identified the need for deaf awareness and linguistic access training for employers as well as service providers. Although some work has been done on this – SQA review, for example, there is still a need to audit what is available and by which awarding body and to develop appropriate training for different work streams and professionals. There is also a need to look at how BSL is taught and what career pathways are open tutors. A further training regime needs to be clarified and that is for professionals working in schools as teachers of the deaf and communication support workers. Alongside this is a need to look at registration and CPD for those who are providing training especially to children and young people.

3. Local partnerships should audit their skills base in relation to awareness of sensory impairment in the workforce and take steps to address any deficits identified, targeted in the first instance at older people's services.

Again, this is something that the Roadmap identifies as a need – see point above. This is wider than covering service provision in that it should also cover mainstream workplaces as, hopefully, in the future, there should be more mainstream employment opportunities for Deaf and Deafblind BSL users, Deaf people whose first language is a spoken language, and

Deafened people. This wider employment awareness can also help those who start to lose their hearing as a result of age or illness to retain their employment for longer.

4. Local partnerships (in this instance, local statutory and third sector agencies) should be able to evidence that their service planning reflects the need in their area, and reflects appropriate responses to the hierarchy of need outlined earlier.

- i) They should audit current spend and service patterns on sensory impairment, including for carers, in relation to specialist provision and also to those elements of other service provision that impact on people with a sensory impairment. In the light of the findings, consideration should be given to options for service redesign as appropriate;

There has been little mapping of the deaf sector in Scotland and little or no evaluation on the central/local government spend on deaf projects, including those that have been funded to ensure increased engagement and participation by deaf people in policy development at a national and local level. There needs to be more research carried out on whether or not deaf people are fully engaged in the local planning partnerships and other bodies.

- ii) They should develop care pathways for people with a sensory impairment, which confirm the component parts of the individual's journey. In so doing they should assess performance against the care pathway and the key factors for effective pathways outlined earlier, and use this as the basis for service improvement, and identify the relevant responsibilities across agencies for the delivery of this;

This care pathway development should be able to show how BSL and linguistic access is being achieved at a local level, including access to information and services.

There also needs to be more done to ensure the necessary rehabilitation services are put in place to ensure that people who become Deafened (have an acquired hearing loss) are cared for using a rehabilitative approach. This would ensure that all people who are diagnosed with a hearing loss have access to all the information they need about language/communication support and how to access this.

- iii) Accessible local information strategies should be developed to include preventative measures and good self-care in retaining sensory health, but also providing information on how to access services.

If local information strategies follow the Principles of Inclusive Communication than they will be able to evidence how they ensure BSL and linguistic access for deaf people. This would then “fit” with the

Roadmap's expectation on access to information that is fully accessible to those who need it.

5. There should be robust systems for maintaining information locally, and sharing this between agencies, in relation to people who have received a diagnosis of a sensory impairment at any time from birth onwards.

Too often the linguistic and communication needs of Deaf, Deafblind and Deafened people are not recorded and so do not proceed them. For example, GPs refer people onto specialist services in hospital and when the person goes to their appointment, no language/communication support has been booked as their needs have not been passed on. Communication is a two way process and it is important that the health professionals can communicate properly with all their patients, more especially in times of cuts in services. With better electronic systems as well as the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, it should be much easier for agencies to share this basic level of information – what language/communication support do I as a professional have to make sure is in place so that I can communicate properly with my Deaf, Deafblind and Deafened clients and service users.

6. Agencies should review their compliance with the Equalities Act 2010 and the UNCRPD Article 9 in relation to sensory impairment, particularly in relation to communication, and give consideration to whether any future action may be required.

The Roadmap makes several references to the need to plan so that the linguistic/communication needs of deaf people are considered at the start of processes rather than left to chance. For example, when planning physical access in new health settings, the same consideration should be given to visual call systems in waiting areas as is given to the installation of ramps and lifts. But it goes further than looking at health and social care settings, all public buildings should be as easy for a deaf person to access as it is for a hearing person. More deaf people should be involved in the planning and design of public buildings so that they are deaf-compliant.

7. The Scottish Government should issue further guidance in relation to children and young people following the conclusion of work on the implications of the Doran review and the eventual enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill.

This ties in with the recommendations made in the Roadmap for deaf children and young people and reflect many of the actions asked for by children's services that work with deaf children and young people, and NDCS.

Areas of the Roadmap that are still to be addressed

1. There does not appear to have been any audit carried out on accessible information in Scotland, including the use of technology to increase the accessibility of websites. As the Digital Participation strategy is rolled out across Scotland there needs to be a baseline from which to start to ensure that Deaf, Deafblind and Deafened people and their families and carers are not left behind and left out.

The Scottish Government website is under review as information is transferred to scotland.gov.uk. This website is being populated by information in plain English, but does not appear to be using the SAIF guidance. This is something that needs more promotion. Other public bodies, including local authorities and health boards – all have websites that are WC3 accessible. Some do have some information in Easy Read and/or BSL but these are not the norm. Too often video clips do not have captions.

The Scottish Government now has a contract in place that allows consultations and other public documents to be translated into BSL and to be published at the same time as the documents are in English. There is little evidence of this facility being put into practice.

Some local authorities and health boards have accessible parts to their websites – information in BSL, English captions on video clips. But more could be done.

2. There is still a lack of statistical data. There has been no systematic approach to the collection of data in Scotland. There is work to be done with the “Beyond 2011” project (this project is looking at how government should gather statistical data in the future) to look at what questions should be asked to gather the necessary information about deaf people and their lives. More negotiation is needed on the questions used in the Scottish Household Surveys as well as the Scottish Attitudinal Surveys.

- Work has been done by NHS National Services Scotland Information Services Division on capturing data from primary care sources. The momentum on this has possibly slipped somewhat since the lead person retired.
- Individual Health Boards have been looking at how they capture data on patients and staff.
- Local authority sensory impairment strategy leads will be of particular importance in the gathering of data at a local level.

3. There are few public bodies in Scotland that have taken responsibility for the linguistic access for Deaf and Deafblind people whose first language is

BSL. The BSL and LA Working Group Consortium Project – Equality and Access for Deaf and Deafblind People in Scotland – is starting to address this within Education and Health settings. MSP Mark Griffin’s BSL (Scotland) Bill should address this across all areas of government at a national and local level if it is successfully enacted.

4. Again there appear to be few public bodies that have effective mechanisms in place for effective consultation and communication with Deaf, Deafblind and Deafened people to inform policy development and service planning. More needs to be done to show how public bodies are developing direct and stronger links with deaf people in their own communities, and how representative these deaf people are of their communities. It is considered that younger deaf people should be encouraged to become the community leaders of the future.
5. There is more work to be done on access for Deaf, Deafblind and Deafened people who are immigrants to Scotland and/or who come from BAEM communities. There is a specific issue with access to financial support through the welfare benefit system that is specific to immigrants at the present time, but may be extended to others, including Deaf and Deafblind BSL users. The UK Government has introduced an English “test” where immigrants need to prove they are learning to speak English. Does this mean that Deaf, Deafblind and Deafened immigrants cannot access the benefits system; and so cannot access employment search support?
6. There needs to be more capacity-building in the Deaf Community to enable more people to become fully-qualified teachers as well as BSL tutors. This would enable more deaf children to learn BSL in schools and with further investment, enable their hearing peers to learn BSL at the same time. BSL could then be taught in the same way that English, Gaelic and community languages (modern languages) are taught which would go a long way to making BSL accessible to more people and increasing the opportunities for linguistic access for Deaf and Deafblind people.
7. There is a lack of research being carried out on the deaf sector and how it supports both the private and public sector in providing opportunities for deaf people to access employment through volunteering and work placement, internships and apprenticeships; and how individuals get the support they need to develop their own businesses and enterprises.
8. Little work has been carried out in the deaf sector on the language used to define deafness, BSL and linguistic access and how this “fits” with the language used in government policy, at a national and local level. This can lead to misunderstandings and exclusion rather than inclusion across the

sector as well as across the Third, Public and Private sectors as a whole. There needs to be a move towards a more person-centred, rights-based use of language that is inclusive of all deaf people in Scotland including those with other disabilities and protected characteristics.

Recommendations from the Review of the Roadmap

Audit, Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The work of the BSL and Linguistic Access Working Group has not been evaluated since the Roadmap to see if the group remains “fit for purpose” and to see if the membership should remain as it is. This evaluation could be done by the group with an external facilitator or by an independent evaluator.
2. Website and Information Audit – Both the Roadmap and the See Hear Strategy call for more planning to ensure that information is fully accessible for all those who need it. Without an audit trail on what has been discussed and then put into practice, it is difficult to see where improvements have been made and how policies are being put into practice. It may be possible to audit some of the work done by local authorities and other public bodies who have signed up to the Public Services Improvement Framework (PSIF) and so should be using the Principles of Inclusive Communication. This could give a baseline for others to measure against.
3. Mapping of the deaf sector in Scotland and evaluation of central/local government spend on deaf projects, including those that have been funded to ensure increased engagement and participation by deaf people in policy development at a national and local level.
4. Audit of policies across all government – central and local - to show the impact the Roadmap has made to the inclusion of BSL and Linguistic Access for deaf people in Scotland.

Data Collection

5. There needs to be more planning on how and what data will be collected on deaf people and their linguistic access needs in Scotland. There have been many small pieces of good practice that have been allowed to disappear as the responsible personnel have changed jobs or retired. A more strategic approach needs to be taken across government to

ensure that this good practice is not lost and is replicated throughout all areas of the public sector.

6. The work begun by the deaf sector to change the way that Census and other government survey information is collected should continue. Consideration should continue to be given to the introduction of a deaf register for adults once the pilot register for children and young people has been completed.

Engagement, Involvement and Participation

7. There needs to be a clearer picture of what community empowerment and personalisation means for deaf people, their families and carers in Scotland, and how this increases the engagement, involvement and participation in community decision-making processes and planning.
8. More public bodies need to use the co-production model to ensure deaf people, their families and carers are fully involved in the planning and design of local and national services, including those that involve increasing BSL and linguistic access. This needs to happen across all areas of government, not solely in the more traditional areas such as health and social care.
9. More needs to be done to increase the inclusion across the deaf sector, which should identify those who are on the margins and not fully active in the design and development of the sector; and who by default are also on the margins of other services and sectors. The deaf sector needs to be fully inclusive of all deaf people, their families and carers so that good practice can be shared and other sectors can learn lessons. This may involve looking at the language used across the sector as a whole, including definitions and what is meant by linguistic access.

Sector Development

Deaf Sector

10. The deaf sector should lead the way in asking for an independent audit of awareness training – deaf, communication skills and BSL. This has been identified as a gap from the Roadmap and in the See Hear Strategy.

Any audit of awareness training should include an audit of the career pathways for those who deliver training along with registration, supervision and CPD.

Deaf organisations should lead the way in training needs analysis to show what level of training their staff and volunteers have; including hearing awareness for their deaf staff.

11. Market development – the deaf sector should be working with government and the private sector to move away from a grants-based culture to one of social investment. This may mean that the sector will have to work to look at possible duplication of work and greater partnership working between organisations to share skills sets and knowledge.

Private and Public Sectors

12. Training Needs Analysis (TNA) – for all front facing staff in the first instance. This could be similar to the “Social Work Skills Audit” that SCoD carried out on Social Work Services in Scotland in 2009/10. This will show the extent of awareness and BSL training that has taken place throughout the sectors as well as how it was delivered. From this, the deaf sector and government can put in place a comprehensive awareness raising programme.

There is also a need to carry out a TNA for strategic planners and those whose remit it is to design physical spaces and the delivery of services.

Linguistic Access

13. There needs to be a full and frank discussion across all the government departments that work to support deaf children and young people as well as those who work in the deaf sector doing similar work on what we mean by bilingualism and how this can be achieved for deaf children and young people. From this discussion, there needs to be a strategic plan in place which allows this to become a reality if this is what is decided.

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