

DEAFBLIND SCOTLAND

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2015

BSL BILL



It was a historic day on 1st June when Mark Griffin's private member's Bill about BSL was debated in the Scottish Parliament at a meeting of the Education and Culture Committee. Two amendments about deafblindness were agreed by the committee. One said that "both the visual and the tactile form of BSL" are covered by the Bill. The second amendment said deaf and deafblind people must be included in consultation about the new National Plan and in new local plans about BSL. This means that for the first time Hands-on Signing and Deafblind Manual will be officially recognised as part of British Sign Language, and that Deafblind people will be consulted about the National Plan.

Dennis Robertson proposed the amendment to include hands-on signing, and Mark Griffin proposed the amendment ensuring that consultation about the National Plan is made accessible to deaf and deafblind people. Most of the nine committee members who agreed to the amendments were visited by a deafblind member who uses hands-on signing. The MSPs spoke of the huge effect these visits had on them. We are grateful to Robert Dillon, Frankie Thomson, George Simpson, Anne Dobbie, Clark Stevens, Angela Muir, John Dearie, Debra Wherrett, Stephen Joyce, and Desmond Smith for making the effort to visit their MSPs.

In late August there will be a final vote by the full parliament on the amended BSL Bill. We will let you know the date. You could ask your MSP



(Photo: Scott, Stephen, Robert, Ken, Willie, Desmond and Drena)

to support this Bill become law and you could attend the debate. The Bill will begin to have an impact only when the National Plan is published and this will not be until 2017. So don't expect miracles too quickly!

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the summer edition of the Deafblind Scotland newsletter. What do you have planned this summer? Whether you like walking, sport or theatre there should be something in this issue for everyone to enjoy.

My name is Stephanie and I am the new Information Officer at Deafblind Scotland. I would love to get to know you all more and to hear your suggestions for the newsletter. If you have any stories, pictures, recipes,

jokes or otherwise and wish to share them, then please let me know.

Stephanie

31 JULY LOCH LOMOND WALKING TRIP

Last year's trip to Loch Lomond was a great success so we will be putting on the walking boots again on Friday 31st July. There will be a choice of two walks.

For those who like a challenge there will be the Conic Hill Walk.

If you want to try something a bit easier then there is also the Millennium Trail Walk.

There will be a picnic at Balmaha Visitor Centre from 1pm onwards. There will also be time to look around the fully accessible visitor centre.

This is a fantastic opportunity to challenge yourself and enjoy nature and the great outdoors.



(Photo: Members and guides, Conic Hill, 2014)

WELFARE RIGHTS

The “Connect to Welfare Rights” project has continued to develop. We have been assisting more people each month with welfare rights enquiries, with a high rate of good outcomes.

We continue to raise awareness of the service through attending events, putting adverts in talking newspapers, sending posters and flyers to health centres and setting up information stands in local hospitals.

Please contact Helen or Chris on 0141 777 5828 or WR@deafblindscotland.org.uk if you have any questions or issues in regards to welfare rights, including benefits, money matters, access to information and information in different formats.

WELFARE RIGHTS INFORMATION DAY

The “Connect to Welfare Rights” project is holding an information day on welfare reform with guest speakers. The information day will be held on Tuesday 23rd June 2015 from 10:30am – 2:30pm at The Renfield Centre, 260 Bath Street Glasgow, G2 4HZ; lunch will be included.

Please contact Helen or Chris on 0141 777 5828 or wra@deafblindscotland.org.uk to book a place, limited spaces are available.

HEALTH PROJECT

As part of the Health Project the Guide Communication staff have been trained in Health Behaviour Management.

The benefits of this training are to enable staff to help members to access appropriate services when the members are ready to change health behaviour. Examples of health behaviour changes include stop smoking, lose weight and increase exercise as well as many more.

The Health Project continues to support members with health activities and health advice. The activities arranged by Deafblind Scotland are exercise classes, breathing and relaxation classes and walking group as well as activities arranged by other organisations.

There is representation from Deafblind Scotland at patient information sessions in Stobhill and the New Victoria Hospitals. This is in the foyer in both hospital areas on the second and fourth Thursday of each month.

The Health Project would like to remind members that if they have difficulties with health appointments, GP, Dentist, Hospital etc to contact them. All health leaflets, appointment letters and any other information sent by NHS must be in the correct format appropriate to your needs. If the information is not in the correct format please contact Mahri or Vijay.

HEALTH ACCESS PROJECT

The past few months have seen an increase in the number of focus groups and meetings that John Whitfield, Health Access Officer, has been attending to ensure that deafblindness is kept on the agenda and to persuade policy officers of the importance of including deafblind people in their policies, strategies and service provision.

John has had over 100 completed Health Questionnaires returned. From this information he hopes to gather shared problems that are experienced by deafblind people to feedback to the Scottish Government.

John has provided deafblind awareness training to over 500 people since January. This includes schools, access groups as well as health professionals. He has been involved with developing an online e-learning package for Deafblindness, so that professional staff can learn about severe dual sensory impairment, and how to recognise it, and hopefully make life better for deafblind people across Scotland.

HOLLYWOOD TO BOLLYWOOD LADIES LUNCH

The Hollywood to Bollywood ladies lunch was a fantastic success in Glasgow's Radisson Blu Hotel.

Over 300 ladies enjoyed exclusive fashion shows from choreographer Nadim Saleem and Rainbow Rooms International Director Suzie McGill. Music was provided by singers Thorburn and Farrell as they performed songs from the American Songbook while the Royal Dhol Force entertained with a lively Asian drumming show.

Over £8,000 was raised on the day for Deafblind Scotland.

Alison Hardie, Head of Fundraising, said "The fashion show by Suzie and Nadim was simply stunning and thoroughly enjoyed by all the guests. We knew bringing the glamour of both Hollywood and Bollywood would be unique and the show certainly didn't disappoint."



(Photo: ladies enjoying the event)

TECHNOLOGY - STOP NUISANCE CALLS

Computer Room Services are a company which develop technology to support visual impairments. They have developed the trueCall unit. This unit checks the caller's number and will allow the call if it is a number you trust or decline the call if it is on your list of nuisance callers.

The unit can be controlled through voice menus and prompts.

This unit can help stop scams too. For more information on scams then check out the next article.

For more information go to www.truecall.co.uk or mark on the reply sheet.

SCAMS

ARC Scotland has provided some good information on keeping safe from scams.

A scam is when you are tricked and you give money to the person who has tricked you. Scams can happen over the phone, by post, in person, or on the computer.

To help avoid scams:

- Don't spend too long talking to someone if you don't believe them
- If it sounds too good to be true it probably is
- Don't give your bank or credit card information to someone who calls you
- Phone companies will never ask for money over the phone
- Banks will never ask for your pin over the phone
- Hang up on any recorded messages which claim you have won a prize
- You can reduce the number of calls from people you do not know - by registering your phone number for free with the Telephone Preference Service at www.tpsonline.org.uk or by phoning 0845 070 0707
- If you receive a letter from someone you don't know or trust then don't answer it and show it to someone you trust to get advice.
- You can reduce the number of unwanted letters by registering free with the Mailing Preference System at www.mpsonline.org.uk or by phoning 0845 703 4599.
- Official visitors at your door should always arrange an appointment with you before.
- Keep your doors locked and don't let anyone in you don't trust.

- Ask for the person's ID and if possible call the company to verify this.

RESEARCH – CAN YOU HELP?

In a previous newsletter we mentioned a PhD student, Oliver, at Glasgow University who was developing a portable two-way communication device for deafblind people. In order to create the best design possible Oliver would like to get our member's opinions through a simple questionnaire. If you are happy to be contacted about this then please **mark on the reply sheet**.

SMART METERS

Smart meters are new energy meters which send electronic gas and electricity meter readings to your supplier automatically. They also have displays which show how much energy you are using and its cost. Your energy company will install your smart meter free of cost on a scheme which will be rolling out from this year. You can contact your energy supplier for more information.

Energy UK and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) are now working with in-home display manufacturers to develop an accessible device.

If you want more information on this please **mark on the reply sheet**.



ACCESS CARD

Academy Music Group (AMG) venues across the UK now support the national Access Card scheme from Nimbus Disability.

The Access Card scheme allows disabled customers to discreetly let businesses know any specific requirements they may have.

The individual requirements are assessed and entered into a secure database. This allows staff in venues to respond to the customer's needs.

The card is available at £15.00 for three years. Applications can be made online at www.accesscard.org.uk, by requesting or downloading a hard copy or telephone 01332 404040 (option 5).



SIM SPECS

The training department is missing a number of Sim Specs. If you have a pair or know anyone who does can you please return them or let us know if they require collected.

WIMBLEDON 2015

The Wimbledon Championships take place Monday 29th June to Sunday 12th July 2015. For anyone who is unfamiliar with tennis here are a few facts and rules to get you started:

- The best players from over 60 countries compete in the five main events.
- In the second week Junior, Veteran and Wheelchair competitors play in their own events on the Wimbledon courts.
- Wimbledon is the only major championship still played on grass.
- The match is divided into games and sets.
- To win a game you need four points but instead of counting from one to four the points are called fifteen, thirty, forty, game.
- In men's tennis you have to be the winner in three sets to win overall For women it's two.
- If you are tied on 40 points each this is called deuce.
- Love means zero points

The Championships 2015 will be shown on the BBC. For more information on accessibility on BBC programming please visit

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/>

If anyone has any interesting tennis facts or stories to share then please contact: information@deafblindscotland.org.uk

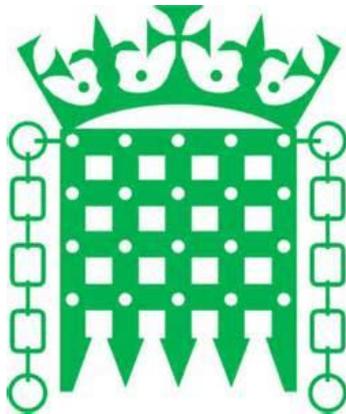


GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

On May 7 the General Election took place throughout the United Kingdom. The Conservative party, led by David Cameron, won with a majority.

- Conservatives 331 seats
- Labour 232 seats
- Scottish National Party 56 seats
- Liberal Democrats 8 seats
- Democratic Unionist Party 8 seats
- All other parties 15 seats

On Monday 18 May Parliament re-elected the speaker John Bercow. He will be a neutral member to preside over the House of Commons.



WEST NEWS

RNIB DROP IN SESSIONS

These are free sessions for people with sight loss, and will continue throughout 2015. The sessions are also open to anyone who cares for someone with sight loss. They can assist with:

- Discussing any concerns or needs
- Referral to other agencies
- Leaflets and information
- Trying equipment
- Hints and tips on living with sight loss.

If you need information on when these are, contact the project team on 01563 526 011.

NHS GREATER GLASGOW AND CLYDE

Patient feedback is being collected from people with hearing loss in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. If you have positive or negative feedback about doctors, nurses, health centres, receptionists, booking appointments, hospitals etc. then you can either:

1. Give feedback online on <http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/get-in-touch-get-involved/patient-feedback/>

Or

2. Contact Paul McCusker, BSL Mediator, by texting 079811994895. Paul will arrange to meet you face-to-face to assist with filling in the feedback form. This will be entirely confidential.

Paul can also arrange to visit Deaf Clubs or other organisations to talk about how he can help.

The first patient feedback surgery will be held in Deafblind Scotland's Lenzie office on Friday 26th June between 11am and 2pm.

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

Performances of The Curious Incident of The Dog InThe Night-Time are showing in King's Theatre, Glasgow. Audio description performance is on Sat 22 Aug 2015 2:30pm. Sign language interpretation performance is on Thu 20 Aug 2015 7:30pm. Loop system and wheelchair access available. Guide dogs are welcome. For more information call the access booking line on 0844 871 7677.

LANARKSHIRE HEALTH

NHS Lanarkshire is supporting Deafblind Scotland to assist members in improving their health and would like to encourage people in the Lanarkshire area to take up health improvement activity or exercise. Contact the guide/ communicator service to book a guide.

If you are a Lanarkshire resident then contact us if you want more information on any of the following:

Gyms

Walks

Swimming

Exercise classes

Weight loss

Stopping smoking

EAST NEWS

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THE DRIVER'S SEAT

This Muriel Spark novel has been adapted for the stage in The Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh. The production is a dark, comic thriller which questions if we are in control of our own lives. The following accessible performances are available:

Audio Described – Tuesday 23 June, 2pm

Touch Tour- Tuesday 23 June, 12:45pm prior to the 2pm performance.

BSL Interpreted – Wednesday 24 June, 7:30pm

Captioned – Tuesday 23 June, 7:30pm

Any audience member with a disability who requires an assistant to accompany them will get a free ticket for their assistant if you advise the Box Office when booking. Call the Box Office on 0131 248 4848 for more information.

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

The 2015 book festival will take place from 15-31 August. There will be British Sign Language interpreters available to offer signed events. The full details of the programme including interpreted events will be available from Wednesday 10 June at noon on <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/the-festival/whats-on/british-sign-language-events>

THE EDINBURGH FRINGE FESTIVAL

The world's largest arts festival is returning to the streets of Edinburgh 07 – 31 August 2015. The following events have wheelchair access, loop access, closed captioning, audio description and signed performances:

SCARFED FOR LIFE

Scarfed for Life is a funny and thought-provoking play about sectarianism in Glasgow. It runs from 14-22 August.

WENDY HOOSE BY JOHNNY MCKNIGHT

This comedy is about two twenty year olds searching for love. It contains strong language and scenes of a sexual nature. It runs 17-30 August.

Tickets for these and any other performances are available on edfringe.com or by calling 0131 226 0000 from 04 June.

HIGHLAND GAMES

Highland Games are taking place in North Berwick on Saturday 8 August. Pipe bands and highland dancers will be among many of the traditional attractions on these days. For more information contact Stuart Smith on:

Tel: 01620 893865

E-mail: nbhighlandgames@yahoo.co.uk

CENTRAL NEWS

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HIGHLAND GAMES AND AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

Highland games and events are taking place across central Scotland this summer. Pipe bands and highland dancers will be among many of the traditional attractions on these days.

Bridge of Allan games will be on Sunday 02 August. For more information telephone 07437 329827 or email info@bofagames.com.

Stirling games will be on Saturday 15 August. Visit <http://www.stirlinghighlandgames.com/> for more information.

Killin Highland Games will be on Wednesday 05 August. Telephone 01567 820342 or go to <http://www.killingames.co.uk/> for more information,

Strathardle Highland Gathering and Agricultural Show will be on Saturday 22 August in Kirkmichael. For more information call 0131 552 8563 or visit <http://www.strathardlehighlandgames.org.uk/>

Atholl and Breadalbane Agricultural Show and Highland Gathering will be on Saturday 08 August. For more information call 01887 820666 or visit <http://www.aberfeldyshowandgames.co.uk/>

NORTH NEWS

RNIB DROP IN SESSIONS

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GOLDEN GAMES 2015

Aberdeen's free sports and activities festival for over 65s will be taking place from Monday 8th June. Activities include Nordic walking, pilates, seated Zumba, Bennachie bird walk and many more. To book a place call 01224 522270.

OPERA TOUCH TOURS

Il Trovatore is an opera about jealousy, revenge, love, hate and superstition all set in the Dark Ages. Scottish Opera are offering audio description and touch tours for this performance in June.

13th June, His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, 6.00pm

The experience includes a CD, sent out in advance of the performance, which gives an introduction to the production, a Touch Tour of the set, costumes and props before the show and an audio introduction 15 minutes before the start of the main performance.

Call the Box Office for more information.

Eden Court Tel: 01463 234 234

His Majesty's Theatre Tel: 01224 641122

SOUTH NEWS

RNIB DROP IN SESSIONS

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- Leaflets and information
- Trying equipment
- Hints and tips on living with sight loss.

If you need information on when these are, contact the project team on 01563 526 011.

SEE HEAR SUPPORT GROUPS

There are a number friendly and informal groups across Dumfries and Galloway that give people the chance to get together and chat in a relaxed atmosphere.

Annandale and Eskdale Sensory Group

The group meets on the last Thursday of every month from 1:30pm to 3pm at Greencroft Cottage, Greencroft Wynd, Annan, DG12 6BG.

Stranraer Sensory Group

This group meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 2pm to 3.30pm at Custom House, North Strand Street in Stranraer.

Castle Douglas Sensory Group

This group meets on the third Wednesday of every month from 2pm to 3.30pm at the Community Centre, Cotton Street, Castle Douglas.

Dumfries Visual Impairment Group

St George's Church Hall, George St , Dumfries . Third Tuesday of every month. Time: 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Dumfries Social Club

Venue varies contact Andrea Houston tel 01387 263652. Last Friday evening of every month. Time: 7pm to 10pm

Newton Stewart Visual Impairment Group

Cinnamon Café, Victoria Street, Newton Stewart. Last Monday of every month. Time: 2pm to 3.30pm

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Folksy Theatre is performing a friendly, interactive outdoor production of The Wind in the Willows. It will take place Saturday 27th June at 2pm at Threave Estate in Dumfries & Galloway. Come prepared with a chair and blankets, protection from the sun or rain and any food or drink you want.

You can purchase tickets from

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1409816>

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter and we value your continued interest and support. This newsletter is available in various formats, including: audio CD, Moon, Braille, and via email. For info on any aspect of DbS contact: Deafblind Scotland, 21 Alexandra Avenue, Lenzie, Glasgow, G66 5BG / Phone: 0141 777 6111 / Fax: 0141 775 3311 / Email: info@deafblindscotland.org.uk.



DEAFBLIND
SCOTLAND

Scottish Charity
No. SC 031167