

National Deaf Children's Society



Their vision

Their vision is a world without barriers for every deaf child.

Their mission

Together they overcome the social and educational barriers that hold deaf children back.

Their values



They're game changers: They innovate, push boundaries, and ask challenging questions. They try new things and we're not afraid to fail.

They champion every deaf child: They're people-centred and put deaf children's needs at the heart of everything we do. They're here for every deaf child with every level of deafness.

They make an impact: They're ambitious and they won't stop until they've broken down every barrier. They work fast to give families what they need and make a lasting difference.

They're united: They stand side by side with families, professionals, and supporters. Together they're an unstoppable force for deaf children's rights.

Their beliefs



1. Deaf children can do anything other children can do, given the right support from the start.
2. Effective language and communication skills lie at the heart of deaf children and young people's social, emotional, and intellectual development.
3. Families are the most important influence on deaf children and young people, and need clear, balanced information to make informed choices.
4. Deaf children should be involved in decisions which affect them as early as possible.
5. Deaf children should be valued by society and have the same opportunities as any other child.



9 Ways Life has Changed for Deaf People

We no longer have to make up what's going on, on television.

When television was introduced in the UK in 1936, there were no subtitles for deaf people. Until subtitles were introduced deaf people had to guess the storylines.

It wouldn't be until the 1980s when the first Teletext subtitles were introduced, and subtitles have only been more readily available over the past decade.

In the UK, the BBC was the first broadcaster to include subtitles in 1979, and since 2010 BBC has provided a 100% broadcast captioning service across all seven of its main broadcast channels.



We now have access to festivals and concerts.



Since 2009, DeafZone has been working to support Deaf Festivalgoers at Glastonbury Festival. It provides a team of British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters that cover music performances on the Pyramid and other stages.

In 2019 Tara St Clair's BSL interpretation of Stormzy's headline set at Glastonbury in 2019 went viral - her dextrous visualisation of the grime MC's rapid-fire lyrics took weeks to perfect.

As well as interpreting duties, the DeafZone Tent Crew also offer Deaf awareness information and BSL classes and perform BSL poetry throughout the festival. Wembley has now guaranteed BSL interpretation for every show, and guests who require interpreters no longer have to pre-book or attend on a specific night.

Deaf people are now in high flying jobs.

In the last 40 years, we've seen degrees and masters in deaf studies and sign language pave the way for sign language interpreters.

There are currently more than 1,600 language service professionals, including British Sign Language/English Interpreters and Translators, Lip speakers and notetakers.

In 1994, Access to Work began. This government fund helps pay towards the equipment an individual needs at work, such as a sign language interpreter.

This has meant that deaf people now, at last, have the access they need in the workplace and, as a consequence, there are more and more deaf people in high flying jobs.

We have qualified doctors, vets, chief executives, journalists, Paralympians, and actors - all are deaf and use sign language.

Gabriella Leone



We are now represented on screen.

With films such as *A Quiet Place*, *Sound of Metal*, and *CODA* being box office hits, and actors like Rose Ayling-Ellis becoming the first deaf contestant on *Strictly Come Dancing*, representation on screen has never been so good for deaf people. And it all began with the BBC's pioneering programme *See Hear*.

See Hear celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2021.

It is still a trailblazing series - both on and off camera - forty years on.

The first series launched on 11 October 1981 on BBC One and has been campaigning and entertaining Deaf and hard-of-hearing people ever since. It featured the first deaf soap series, *Switch*, partnered with *Newsnight* to expose shocking abuse in a deaf school, and *See Hear on Tour*, the first travel programme presented in BSL.

See Hear's Camilla Arnold is BBC Studios first female Deaf series producer: "*See Hear* records milestones in deaf history, highlights the issues we face and above all, shines a light where other mainstream programmes very rarely venture."

The British Sign Language Broadcasting Trust was set up in 2008 to offer a way for commercial broadcasters to meet their regulatory requirements to provide sign language on their qualifying channels. They commission programmes made in BSL by Deaf people for Deaf people and have been the springboard for many deaf media professionals.



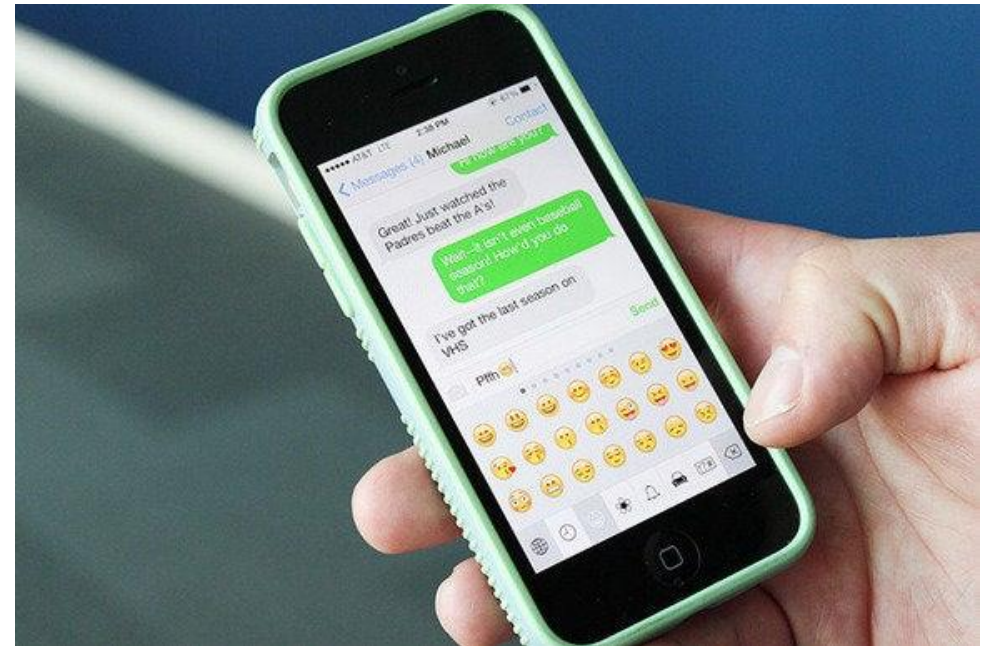
We no longer have to rely on relatives to make social plans for us.

Technology nowadays means we can contact our friends directly via video call or text to make plans.

Up to the 1990s, deaf people would have to ask their parents or relatives to make calls for them, but we've seen the rapid evolution of technology since then.

We can now catch up with friends via FaceTime, make a dinner booking via a video relay interpreter, use instant chat for customer services and be alerted to noises such as doorbells, fire alarms and babies crying via our phones.

We can even follow speech through speech recognition apps and identify music playing via music recognition apps.



We can 'hear' better.

Hearing aids have come a long way since the vacuum tube contraptions of the 1800s, but within the last few decades there's been a huge transformation.

In 1995 the first digital hearing aids were invented - making for clearer sound for the users. Now some hearing aids are so advanced that they have integrated sensors like accelerometers and gyroscopes to track the wearer's physical and mental health.

In 1993 we saw the first deaf-born UK child to have a cochlear implant. Instead of simply making sounds louder, like a conventional hearing aid would, the cochlear implant provides a sensation of hearing by directly stimulating the auditory nerve using electrical signals.



The introduction of newborn screening for deafness throughout the UK in March 2006 raised questions about how early babies should be implanted. Some research studies led some to advocate that the age of implantation should be before the age of two years.

The term, 'Deafhood', was coined.

In 2003, the book *Understanding Deaf Culture: In Search of Deafhood*, by Paddy Ladd, popularised the term 'deafhood', which Ladd had coined in 1990.

Deafhood is not seen as a finite state but as a process by which Deaf individuals come to actualise their Deaf identity.

In his book, Ladd describes how, as one of the first deaf children in mainstream education, he was not taught to sign but forced to use his eyes and common sense to work out what was going on.

What Ladd became was pioneering. He initiated deaf television programming in Britain in the 1980s; worked as a presenter of BBC television's *See Hear*, created the world's first sign language pop video; and devised the first master's course in deaf culture.



Sign language is now recognised as a language.

On Tuesday 18 March 2003, the UK Government formally recognised British Sign Language as a language in its own right. Yet despite this victory, BSL does not yet have any legal status, unlike the Welsh, Gaelic, and Cornish languages. The British Deaf Association (BDA) has an ongoing campaign for a legal status of BSL to give deaf people legal protection. Because of the BDA's campaign, in 2015, BSL (Scotland) Act was passed.



In June 2021, it was found that the UK Government breached the Equality Act 2010 when it failed to provide a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter for its scientific briefings on the coronavirus. The judgment is a victory for Deaf campaigners, who have called on the Government to provide an in-person interpreter for its press conferences since March last year through the #WhereIsTheInterpreter campaign.

Work is ongoing to implement a GCSE in British Sign Language (BSL) following a campaign by a deaf schoolboy, Daniel Jillings.