

Executive Summary

The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 came into force in October 2015. It aims to make Scotland the best place in the world to live, work and visit, for people whose first or preferred language is BSL.

Now that the Scottish Government have published their second plan for 2023-2029, local authorities and other public bodies must publish their own BSL plans in 2024, outlining how they will promote and raise awareness of the language.

This is Edinburgh's second plan, which will cover the period 2025-2030. The plan builds on the progress made in Edinburgh since 2018 when the first plan was published. During this period, partners have focused on the delivery of actions to:

- Improve awareness of BSL among managers and staff.
- Improve accessibility for BSL users.
- Improve communications to BSL users.

The plan sets out our ambitions and broad actions for this second phase to 2030.

Our ambition is for BSL users to be fully involved in daily and public life in Edinburgh, as active, healthy citizens, and to be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives.

We have developed the plan around nine themes, in line with the national plan, to help us to achieve this ambition. These themes are described below, along with what we are aiming to achieve:

1. **Delivering the BSL Plan.** Making real improvements for BSL users by collaborating with them and with partner organisations to deliver our plan effectively and developing data and evidence to shape services.
2. **BSL Accessibility.** BSL users will have access to the right information at the right time so that they can take full advantage of opportunities for learning, work and leisure, and getting any help or advice they need.
3. **Children, Young People and their Families.** Our aim is for every child who uses BSL to reach their full potential.
4. **Access to Employment.** BSL users will fulfil their potential by having the support they need to progress in their chosen career.
5. **Health and Wellbeing.** BSL users will have the relevant information and services they need to make informed choices about their health.
6. **Celebrating BSL Culture.** BSL will be recognised and celebrated as a language and a rich culture, and for BSL users to have full access to the cultural life of Edinburgh with equal opportunities to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts.
7. **Transport.** BSL users will have safe, fair and inclusive access to public transport, and the systems that support transport across the city.
8. **Access to Justice.** BSL users will have fair and equal access to the civil, criminal and juvenile justice systems across Scotland. This would include BSL users as perpetrator, witness, or victim.
9. **Democratic Participation.** BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Edinburgh, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians, and as board members of our public bodies.

The plan will be reviewed and revised throughout its lifespan, through ongoing engagement with key BSL stakeholders, to make sure that it is as effective as possible, responding to developments and challenges as they emerge.