



## **STANDARDS COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PLAN**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This is the British Sign Language Plan for the Standards Commission for Scotland (Standards Commission), produced in accordance with the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 1.2 In preparation of its Plan, the Standards Commission has had regard to the published National Plan. It also has had regard to:
  - the extent to which its functions are exercisable using British Sign Language (BSL);
  - the potential for developing the use of BSL in the exercise of its functions;
  - any representations made to it in relation to the use of BSL;
  - such guidance, relevant to the preparation (or revision) of Authority Plans, as may be issued by the Scottish Ministers.
- 1.3 The Plan outlines the actions the Standards Commission will take between 2025 and 2031 to improve access to information and services for BSL users. The Plan follows on from the previous plan developed under the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015, which was created with input from the Scottish Parliament and other parliamentary officeholders and from feedback gathered from Deaf and Deafblind BSL users.
- 1.3 The Standards Commission will publish a progress report in 2028. It will review the Plan at that stage and revise and reissue it as necessary to include any further actions to be taken by 2031.
- 1.4 Any reference in this Plan to 'BSL users' includes Deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss), whose first or preferred language is BSL.

### **2. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN**

#### **Scottish Public Services**

- 2.1 The Standards Commission shares the long-term goal, as outlined in the BSL National Plan, which seeks to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work, visit and learn.
- 2.2 To support this, the Standards Commission will:

- Review any feedback from the BSL community about the role and work of the Standards Commission;
- Adopt suggestions and best practice guidelines where possible;
- Provide information in BSL video format for the BSL community on the Standards Commission’s website and social media pages on the:
  - Councillors’ Code of Conduct
  - Model Code of Conduct for Members of devolved Public Bodies
  - Complaint process under the ethical standards framework
- Ensure that BSL user functionality is considered and applied as a matter of course when planning new videos for publication on the Standards Commission website and social media platforms.
- Ensure that non-accessible content on the current website is upgraded or adapted, where these activities do not place a disproportionate financial burden on the Standards Commission to resolve, that the website is fully accessible to BSL users.
- Ensure all Standards Commission staff receive BSL awareness training;
- Promote the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay service ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’, which allows BSL users to contact public and third sector services and for these services to contact them; and
- Make appropriate access arrangements and adjustments for BSL users who, as officers, councillors or members of devolved public bodies, attend the Standards Commission’s training and outreach events.

## **Justice / Democracy**

- 2.3 The Standards Commission shares the long-term goal, as outlined in the BSL National Plan, for BSL users to have fair and equal access to the civil justice systems in Scotland and to be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of public bodies.
- 2.4 The Standards Commission will:
- Take steps to ensure details about the Hearings to be held and the procedures to be followed at Hearings are accessible to BSL users;
  - Respond promptly to requests from BSL users about interpretation facilities and access for Standards Commission’s public Hearings when required; and
  - Make appropriate access arrangements and adjustments for BSL users who are parties to, or witnesses at, Hearings.

## **3. TIMESCALES AND CONTACT DETAILS**

- 3.1 The Standards Commission will review this Plan in 2028 and report on the progress made against the actions outlined previously. The Standards Commission will seek and use feedback to further develop the Plan and identify any further steps or actions to be taken before 2031.
- 3.2 The Standards Commission welcomes comments on the Plan. Lorna Johnston, the Executive Director, is the lead officer for this Plan and can be contacted with any questions, comments, ideas or suggestions.

Any feedback, including video clips or written comments, can be sent to by email to [enquiries@standardscommission.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@standardscommission.org.uk).

Any postal responses should be sent to:  
Executive Director  
The Standards Commission for Scotland  
T2.21, The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP  
Tel: 0131 348 6666

- 3.3 BSL users can contact the Standards Commission via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://contactscotland-bsl.org/)

Data control and version information				
Date	Action by	Version Updated	Current version	Brief Description
27/08/2018	LJ	N/A	V0.2	Publication of Draft Plan
17/09/2018	EM	V0.2	V1.0	Publication of Standards Commission's BSL Plan
10/09/2020		V1.0	2020 v1	BSL plan reviewed and updated to include actions to be implemented by 2024
05/06/2025	SN	2020 v1	2025 v1	BSL plan updated to include actions to be taken from 2025 to 2031

