

Revenue Scotland
Draft British Sign
Language (BSL) Plan
2018 -24

Section 1: Introduction and Context

1.1 Introduction

Welcome to this draft of Revenue Scotland's British Sign Language Plan. (A BSL version of this draft plan is available [here](#)).

This plan is a requirement under the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015, and sets out how Revenue Scotland will improve the accessibility of our services to British Sign Language Users¹. It is important to us that our information and guidance is accessible to all and that there are no barriers for BSL users accessing our services.

This plan contributes to the delivery of the Scottish Government's [BSL National Plan 2017-23](#) through establishing the actions that Revenue Scotland will take in the period from 2018-2024 to contribute to the goals set out in the National Plan. We will also contribute to the national progress report in 2020.

The development and implementation of our British Sign Language Plan is a key part of a wider programme of work to achieve our equality outcomes:

- All information and external communications provided and delivered by Revenue Scotland are transparent, accessible and easily understood to all service users.
- Revenue Scotland is an organisation which demonstrates an inclusive culture with all members of staff having clear understanding of and commitment to equality and diversity within our organisation.

Originally, Revenue Scotland was erroneously omitted from the schedule of public bodies required to publish a BSL Plan. However, Revenue Scotland recognises the importance of British Sign Language and D/deaf Culture to Scotland and we are committed to ensuring that BSL users¹ are easily able to access our information and services. Therefore, we have committed to prepare our plan while the schedule is amended.

¹ Wherever we refer to BSL users we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL)

1.2 About Us

Revenue Scotland was established in 2015 by the Revenue Scotland and Tax Powers (Scotland) Act 2014 and is the tax authority responsible for the collection and management of devolved taxes in Scotland.

At present these taxes are Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) and Scottish Landfill Tax (SLfT). We undertake compliance activity to ensure that the right amount of tax is paid. In the future, Revenue Scotland will be responsible for the collection and management of Air Departure Tax once a new date is agreed between the UK Government and Scottish Government for its introduction.

To ensure that the administration of tax is independent and impartial, Revenue Scotland is directly accountable to the Scottish Parliament, rather than to Scottish Ministers.

We have a board of five Non-Executive Directors who are responsible for the strategic direction, oversight and governance of Revenue Scotland. The Board is supported by an Audit and Risk Committee and a Staffing and Equalities Committee.

The money we collect is transferred to the Scottish Government through the Scottish Consolidated Fund and used to fund public services for the benefit of everyone in Scotland, for example, through the provision of health and education services, housing and transport infrastructure.

Revenue Scotland provides information and guidance on our website and tax calculators to help taxpayers and their agents work out how much tax is due. We also have a support desk and can provide an opinion on specific cases in certain areas.

1.3 Name and contact details of lead officer

If you have any questions about this draft plan or our consultation please contact Leticia Martinez Garcia at BSL@revenuescotland.gsi.gov.uk or 0131 244 5835. If you are a BSL user you can contact us through Contact Scotland: <http://contactscotland-bsl.org/>.

1.4 Giving us your feedback

We welcome your feedback on our work and on our draft BSL Plan, and we aim to ensure that your views are reflected in the plan and in the actions we take to implement the plan. The consultation runs until the 23 November 2018.

You can give feedback in the following ways:

Events: We are running four consultation events:

- 3 October 2018 in The Credo Centre, 14 John Street, Aberdeen, AB25 1BT, 11:15 - 13:30
- 9 October 2018 in Deaf Action, 49 Albany Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3QY, 09:40 - 11:45
- 11 October 2018 in Deaf Connections, 100 Norfolk Street, Glasgow, G5 9EJ, 11:15 - 13:30

These events will be supported by both BSL and Tactile BSL interpreters.

Email: BSL@revenuescotland.gsi.gov.uk please put BSL Plan in the subject line. We are happy to accept video responses in BSL via email.

Post: BSL Plan Consultation, Revenue Scotland, PO Box 24068, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 9BR

Telephone: 0131 244 5835

BSL Users can contact us via the Contact Scotland BSL Video Relay Service: <http://contactscotland-BSL.org/>.

Section 2: Our Draft British Sign Language Plan

Our draft British Sign Language Plan sets out how we will contribute to the goals set out in the Scottish Government’s BSL National Plan 2017-23. Our works aligns with the goals:

- Across all our services
- Democracy

2.1 Across all our services

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

- Develop evidence about BSL users² in our area so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress. Including:
 - monitoring uptake of our BSL services and use this to inform future developments (by the end of 2019);
 - improving our understanding of BSL use and using this to inform implementation of our plan (by the end of 2019); and
 - improving our understanding of diversity of experience for BSL users, for example the difference in experiences for younger and older BSL users.
- Improve the accessibility of our website, guidance and information and events through:
 - including information about who Revenue Scotland are and what we do in BSL on our website (by April 2019);

² Wherever we refer to BSL users we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL)

- improving our guidance by including information in plain English; large format and BSL (by end of 2021);
- producing a summary of our Annual Report in BSL each year (starting with the 2018-19 report); and
- providing BSL interpretation at Revenue Scotland events when required.
- Raising awareness about what we do and the fact we are BSL friendly using platforms popular with BSL users such as social media.
- Promote the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services Contact Scotland for access to our services. We will do this through:
 - including information about Contact Scotland on our website and twitter account (by April 2019).
- Develop awareness of BSL amongst our staff through:
 - BSL and D/deaf awareness training for staff.

2.2 Training, Work and Social Security

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users³ will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

Ensure that BSL users have equal opportunity to join the Revenue Scotland workforce by:

³ Wherever we refer to BSL users we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL)

- Ensuring recruitment campaigns are accessible to BSL users and providing tailored and personalised support to them; and
- continuing to support those appointed in their respective roles by making reasonable adjustments and providing specialist equipment when required.

2.3 Democracy

We share the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users⁴ will 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 our public bodies”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will:

Ensure that BSL Users have equal opportunity to join the Revenue Scotland Board and participate as members of the Board through:

- Working with the Scottish Government Public Appointments Team to ensure that recruitment campaigns for new Board members are accessible to BSL Users; and
- ensuring that BSL Users sitting on the Revenue Scotland Board would be supported in doing so.

⁴ Wherever we refer to BSL users we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL)

Section 3: What happens next?

We will consider all of the feedback we have received and use this to develop our final BSL Plan.

The final version of the plan will be published in January 2019 in BSL, English (including large print and Braille).

We will continue to engage with BSL Users as we implement the plan to ensure that we are providing the best service.

Please contact BSL@revenuescotland.gsi.gov.uk if you would like to be involved in the future.