

Annual Report 2022/23



Email: info@accessbedford.org.uk
Website: www.accessbedford.org.uk
Charity Number: 1162947



Catherine Wright

Chairperson of Access Bedford, Founder and Trustee since 2014.

Looking back over the last 12 months I'm very proud of the continued support and activities that Access Bedford has provided to the D/deaf community in and around Bedford Borough, such as our popular deaf fit club which takes place on a Tuesday evening. This was initially funded by UK Deaf Sport but is now generating an income of its own and we are soon to be starting a low-impact class for our senior or less mobile members. Our one-off activities such as archery, paddle boarding, bowls & pool remain popular and we continue to provide regular social meet-ups, like our Deaf coffee club.

It is important to us that we continue to work with businesses and service providers that our members access every day, to ensure that barriers to information are removed and a greater understanding of the needs of our community are met. We have taken part in events such as:-

- **Digital Strategy Forum (BLMK ICB)**
- **Keech Hospice BSL guided tour**
- **Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service Station tour**
- **Providing volunteers for Bedford Park Concerts**

We have also delivered Deaf awareness training to

- **Local School Staff**
- **BLMK GP practices - Non-Clinical Staff**
- **BLMK GP practices - Clinical Staff**



As the Chair of Access Bedford, I feel that it is important for us to attend Deaf events nationally and this year we were able to join the BDA at their Deaf Conference in London. The event was an opportunity to build relationships and learn from our peers.

After decades of campaigning, the British Sign Language Act finally passed into law on 28th April 2022. It was a truly historic moment. It's time for us to come together, to work together, to discuss how the Government and Public Authorities consult with the Deaf community to ensure they are fulfilling their legal obligations.





Trustees & Committee 2022/23

We are delighted that the following members will remain in position for the next term:



Catherine Wright – Chairperson & Trustee
Helene Bolton – Trustee



Emily Andrews – Chair of Committee
Sadika Shahjahan – Secretary for Committee
Lisa Charlish – Committee Member
Bob Rose – Committee Member
Ciaran McCarthy – Committee Member



And we give a warm welcome to our incoming Trustee & Committee Members



Becky James
Trustee



Valerie Morris
Committee Member



Lissy Malt
Committee Member



Helene Bolton

Trustee & Treasurer of Access Bedford since 2018.

Our bank balance remains healthy, and this money has come largely from fund raising donations and community grants. Some of our income has come from activities and services that we provide.

- We continue to hold a contract with the NHS CCG to create BSL Translated videos, which are posted on Social media and provide information and accessibility to our Deaf community.
- We provide BSL interpreters for local businesses such as Specsavers, Solicitors and events that take place county wide.
- We deliver 6-week Basic BSL taster courses face to face and will be offering a Level 1 Qualification later this year, in partnership with Remark!
- We deliver Deaf Awareness Training.
- We operate a weekly Deaf Fit Club.
- We are introducing a new Low Impact Fit Club.



We have been a **Charity Partner** with Bedford Running Festival for 5 years and each year this is an opportunity for us to raise money for Access Bedford.

This money goes directly back into Access Bedford and pays for things such as interpreter fees at our Deaf Space drop in service, and the costs associated in booking rooms for BSL events.



We have 7 runners taking part this year whom are hoping to raise over £1200 on our behalf.

The Numbers 2022/23

		This Year	Last Year
Receipts [In]			
Outreach		16,080.57	£2,515.54
Deaf Space		2,095.00	£2,572.64
Together fund		2,490.00	£0.00
Just Giving			£0.00
BSL Café			£0.00
BLFT		6,872.00	£0.00
Translation Services		3,359.00	£1,800.00
Education		640.00	£500.00
NHS Beds CCG		-	£2,875.00
BSL Taster			£0.00
Deaf Club (009)		680.07	
Fit Club		1,373.50	
Totals		£33,590.14	£10,263.18
Payments [Out]			
AGM			£0.00
General Running Costs / Promo			£0.00
BLFT		1,672.09	£0.00
Together fund		2,490.00	£0.00
BSL Café			£0.00
Deaf Space		3,535.00	£5,433.88
Ad Hoc			£0.00
Outreach		9,294.59	£6,246.46
Education		841.65	£405.00
Hidden Disabilities			£0.00
NHS Beds CCG		-	£550.00
Translation Services		3,102.02	£2,436.20
BSL Taster			£0.00
Deaf Club (009)		-	
Fit Club		320.00	
Totals		£21,255.35	£15,071.54
Surplus or (deficit) for the year		£12,334.79	-£4,808.36
Balances brought forward	Bank -1	9,135.14	£13,943.50
	Bank -2	44.49	£44.49
	Cash	0.00	£0.00
		£9,179.63	£13,987.99
Balances in hand at year end	Bank -1	21,514.42	£9,135.14
	Bank -2	0.00	£44.49
	Cash	0.00	£0.00
		£21,514.42	£9,179.63

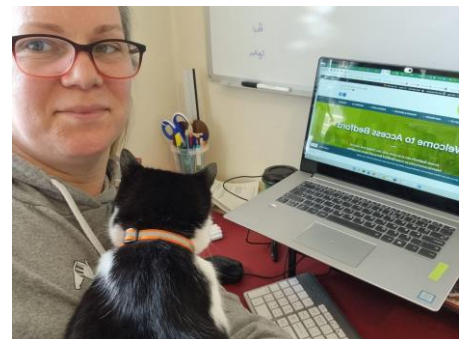
Here are the main funders we have received donations and grants from.



Thanks to Grants received from Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation, we have been able to appoint our first ever paid member of staff, Jo Emmerson. Jo's role is currently funded up until October 2024.

She joins us as Administrator but has quickly become so much more to Access Bedford.

Jo's knowledge, work background and lived experience of being parent of a deaf child puts her at the heart of the charity. If we could clone her, we would!



*Jo Emmerson - Administrator
(The cat doesn't work for Access Bedford)*



We have received two grants from UKDeafSport this financial year, the first of which was used to set up Deaf Fit Club, a circuits-based exercise group. The second grant has funded the new Low Impact Fitness Club for our less mobile and older service Users.

We have also been kindly remembered by members of our community who are no longer with us. We continue to remember our much-missed friends and wish to thank their friends and family for their generosity in supporting our ongoing work.

Both Jill & Carol were members of our Young at Heart Group, renamed last year as Deaf Coffee Club. Their families were kind enough to remember Access Bedford through funeral donations. After discussions with their families, it was agreed that the money donated in their names would be used solely for the benefit of the members of Deaf Coffee Club.



Jill Arnold (Palmer)



Carol Jarrold



Dorothy Violet Boyd

Access Bedford was lucky enough to be gifted a donation which had been left in trust by Dorothy Violet Boyd. Dorothy was not known to Access Bedford or the wider Deaf community. The money gifted to us has been allocated to our outreach project, which allows us to use this money in a variety of ways. We can provide subsidised activities to our Deaf community and also offer British Sign Language learning opportunities to parents of Deaf children who may otherwise not be able to afford to pay for courses. This money allows us to bring our Community together, reduce social isolation and remove barriers.

Achievements & Highlights

Through the employment of a member of staff dedicated to planning and managing activities and relationships, we have been able to do the following:

- Increase attendance to our regular coffee morning, from 6-8 people to a regular turnout of 20+ people through outreach and improved communication to the community.
- Moved a previously grant-funded Deaf exercise club into a self-funding state, benefitting 7-10 Deaf people every week.
- Set up and deliver a low-impact fitness class for older Deaf people. This has recently launched and is attended by 10 people per week so far.
- Set up a Saturday morning BSL Cafe, attended by over 30 people, including hearing families with deaf children, older deaf people and working-age deaf people.
- We have delivered Deaf Awareness training to over 100 GP surgeries across the Borough as a result of strengthened relationships with NHS partners.
- We have supported the NHS to run a BSL focus group to explore barriers to access. Feedback from this session has been included in a report to senior policymakers.
- We have delivered Deaf awareness training in a school to support a deaf member of staff.
- We have organised a visit to the local Fire station to share fire safety information, and we are in talks to deliver BSL training to the staff there.





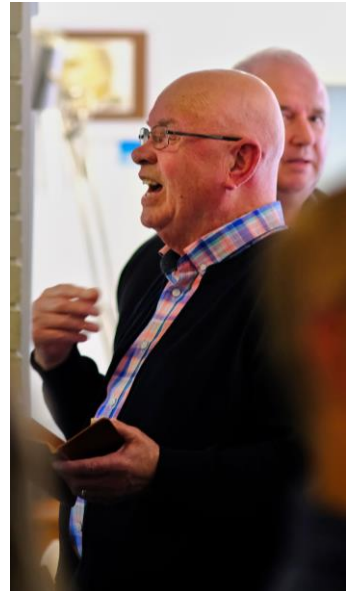
Achievements & Highlights

- We have delivered BSL Foundation Courses, face to face, to over 66 people in Bedford since February 2023.
- We have partnered with Remark! to bring Face to Face BSL qualifications back to Bedford and have 15 people enrolled in the current course.
- We have supported two members of the Committee towards gaining the skills needed to teach BSL and Deaf Awareness training.
- We have been invited to take part in an exhibition and The Higgins, and have provided BSL commentary to accompany our chosen image.
- We have set up a parent and child network group to support parents of Deaf children.
- We have provided BSL volunteers to support the Deaf audience at the Bedford Parks Concerts.
- We have set up systems and processes to improve our feedback collection and impact monitoring.
- We have refreshed our website and newsletter to ensure better reach into our community.
- We have recruited new a Trustee and two new Committee Members.





Achievements & Highlights



Access
Bedford

Our Partners 2022/23



What we need in 2023/24

**We need more Trustees, Committee Members and Volunteers!
Will you join us?**

We need support in the following areas:

- **Finance**
- **IT**
- **Marketing & PR / Social Media**
- **Event Planning & Support**
- **BSL Translation & Interpreting**



Email info@accessbedford.org.uk for details on how to join the team!

Access Bedford will continue to support, advocate for and promote the D/deaf Community in Bedfordshire through our:

- **Events & Activities**
- **Deaf Space**
- **Social Media Campaigns**
- **Interpreting and Translation services**
- **Outreach project**
- **Family Support**

We will Continue to educate and work with the hearing community to break down and remove barriers, through our:

- **BSL courses**
- **BSL Tasters sessions**
- **Deaf Awareness Training**
- **Networking and Outreach projects**

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[Click](#) or Scan to find out why...

We



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