

ANNUAL REPORT



Deaflink North East

2022/2023

Chair Comments by Maureen McGarrity

Welcome to this year's annual report. I am pleased to report that Deaflink has enjoyed a great year supporting the D/deaf communities. It is so important that D/deaf people have the opportunity to meet and share experiences and it's lovely to catch up with you all. We even managed, working with Northumbria Deaf Church, to arrange a signed Christmas Carol service where we could all join the fun.

The Health Navigator service has been very busy, making sure that BSL users can access hospital treatment, that they have accessible information about their treatments and an interpreter is present at all of their appointments. We have been able to work with the hospital staff and encouraged them to understand more about the barriers to healthcare. We will continue to work together to try to remove the barriers.

The long awaited BSL Act became law in 2022 and we are hopeful that the Government will promote and include the use of BSL in all aspects of society. Soon, they will be teaching children BSL as a language option in schools and I understand that there are record numbers of people signing up to learn British Sign Language. Hopefully, this will lead to a more D/deaf friendly place to live.

There have been challenges, the cost of living crisis has impacted everyone and in many cases, Deaf people have been relying on Deaflink to provide information about grants and payments that can help.

In February, we were told that we needed to move from our offices because the landlord needed the space - we were able to move in May 2023 and the new address is on the back page.

I would like to thank the volunteers, the committee and the staff at Deaflink for their hard work over the last 12 months.



**This Report is
for April 2022
to March 2023.**

It includes:

- Chairs comments
- Services
- Finances
- People
- Statistics



Carol Service, December 2022

BSL Groups and Events

Mosaic Workshop (New)

BSL users went to the Mosaic workshop for 6 sessions to create mosaic pieces of art with Tyne Housing at Byker. We all enjoyed the experience of learning something new and found it very therapeutic and relaxing. It was interesting to create butterflies and others from just an idea in our heads to the finished piece of art. We had not had anything like this before and found it very interesting and astonishing the amount of work that goes into the Mosaics.



Deaf Forum

We have run several Deaf Forums on Saturday mornings for Deaf BSL users, 4 times a year, we covered topics about Health Navigators, the Macmillan Deaf Cancer project, Health access to hospitals and Electoral Commission to provide an opportunity for D/deaf people to learn more about the subjects and ask questions. The forums can be a vital way of providing information to the D/deaf community in an accessible format.

Drop in Chat

We run a drop-in and chat group once a month on Tuesday afternoons, the numbers have increased, and the group provides an opportunity for individuals to chat with their friends as well as the BSL Information Officer providing information on current affairs affecting the Deaf community. For example, we had a guest speaker from Newcastle Council talk about Newcastle Clear Air Zone.



3rd & 5th May Deaf Awareness Week

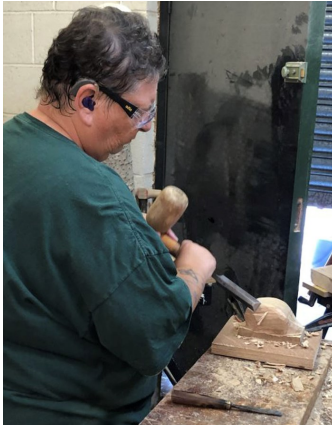
We displayed information and leaflets on our services including the types of support we provide, our various groups, the Health Navigator project etc. at the Monument Metro Station and Newcastle University for Deaf awareness week.

Ghost Walk (New)

We had eighteen BSL users come along to the Ghost Walk tour in Newcastle. We all enjoyed learning about the history of the city as well as the ghost sightings and the stories behind them. Some of us were surprised at what we learnt as we had no idea of the ghosts and the history around us. Thanks to Emma Watson for interpreting for us. It was a great tour.



In total Deaflink delivered **87 groups in 2022/23** and had **139 different people** attending. On average each person attended an event 5 times this year.



Wood Carving - 6 weeks sessions (New)

Six BSL users went to the wood carving for 6 sessions. At first, people were unsure about the wood carving but they loved it, creating their own animals like hedgehogs, rabbits, foxes, owls, red robins, and ducks. We were very impressed at the end of the 6th session to see the outcome of our hard work. A number of our clients found the sessions very therapeutic, taking their frustrations and stress out on the wood while creating an end product to be proud of.

Newcastle/Gateshead Top Bus

BSL users went on bus tour in Newcastle and Gateshead for an hour. They enjoyed learning more about the city they live in

watching the BSL interpreter explaining all the history around Newcastle / Gateshead. It was a nice ride out; the weather was lovely and dry for the afternoon day out.



Ten Pin Bowling

The group went to Eldon Square to have a game of ten-pin bowling for fun and catch up with friends. The event proved very competitive, with each team trying to win but in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. Everyone enjoyed the event stating they would like to do this again.

Taster Music Sessions (New)

Eight BSL users went to a Taster Music session with Tyne Housing. At first, they thought it was impossible because they can't hear the music. But it was not about listening to music, it was about the vibration of the musical instruments, tongue drum, xylophone, bongos, tambourine, D shape & sound therapy. We all took turns, playing different rhythms 1,2,3,4, 1,2,3,4 and we practiced. Some of the BSL users can hear with hearing aids or Cochlear implants. Some can feel the vibrations with their body feeling the different rhythms. They loved this new experience and want to do this again.



Christmas Carols (New)

This is the first time we held a Christmas carol service with Northumbria Deaf Church at St Andrews Church on Sunday 11th December 2022.

Twenty-four people attended. They were brave to come along because it was snowing. Several people came in Christmas jumpers or Christmas hats to get into the Christmas spirit. We sang Christmas carols in BSL then refreshments were provided at the end of the Christmas carols.



Walking Group

This group meet every month to go for walks, some bring their dogs, and everyone is welcome. If the weather is bad then we meet up for a chat.

Hard of Hearing work

Louise McGlen

Hearing Loss Support Group

We have become established in Shearers Bar upstairs. Group members are very happy with the location. Speakers have included Audiology, Phonak, Carers Centre and the Hatton Gallery. We arranged a visit to the Hatton to see one of the exhibitions mentioned during the session. Members commented that viewing art is an activity they can enjoy on an equal footing to others – there is no stress about missing anything as the exhibition information available throughout and is easy to read at the Hatton. One member commented that they may not have thought to go to an art gallery before but now felt it was an activity they could do.



Tinnitus Support Group.

Attendance has remained lower than prior to lockdown although 20 members requested to stay on the email circulation list, some in case they needed to attend others to stay connected to a source of support.



Hard of Hearing Group at Shearers Bar

Working with other agencies

It's important to work with other organisations to share information and gain better understanding. We work with the audiology team at NuTH. They have given us tips to share with our clients:

- Give them as much information as possible when requesting an appointment can help speed things up
- They cannot help with straightforward connectivity issues.

Many hard of hearing people have difficulties understanding the technology and they require support to use their new hearing aids.

RJs hearing had deteriorated a lot and she was quite distressed – we met up to see if we could work out some of her phone issues. We worked out that the text relay app needs better Wi-Fi connection than she has available at her house. She liked the look of live transcribe and we put it onto her phone. She started attending hearing Loss Support Group and has become a regular attendee – she likes that we have a Palantypist so she can read what she can't hear.

"I feel relaxed at the meetings because everyone is in the same situation."

For example, most GP practices rely on a telephone system for booking appointments. there are no alternative contact methods. This is impossible for a BSL user who then must lean on a family member or a friend. This compromises their independence and privacy.

Access to hospitals can be a challenge for Deaf BSL users. The provision of a BSL interpreter is essential for effective communication between the health professional and Deaf BSL users. If the patient does not understand fully their health condition/s and treatment plans this leads to health inequalities, inaccessible information, diagnostic issues, treatment and poor aftercare.

Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals, Northumbria Healthcare and Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Mental Health Trust recognised this and worked in partnership with DeafLink to launch the BSL Health Navigator project. The fundamental aim of this is to improve Deaf BSL users' access to health/medical services within the three trusts by supporting and advocating for them in their hospital 'journey'.

We are proud of the work we have done to make small but significant changes to Deaf people's health. We have worked in partnership with the hospital trusts to raise awareness within the hospitals, providing information around how to support Deaf people better.

We have supported and empowered Deaf BSL users to regain control, confidence and full knowledge of their health conditions and the implications of their treatment. This in turn will improve their overall health and wellbeing.



Statistics 2022 – 23

In this year we provided information, advice and support to **238** D/deaf people.

This work included **2989** meetings or contacts with our clients.



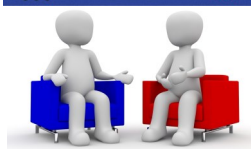
This involved over **1678** hours staff time.



There were **57** Home Visits



621 video meetings



And **64** office visits

Finances

Thanks to our Funders and contributors - Newcastle Fund, the People's Postcode Lottery, the Barbour Foundation and the Hadrian Trust. We very much appreciate the funding we have received from CNTW, Newcastle Hospital Charity and Northumbria Healthcare Bright Charity to help us to deliver the Health Navigator programme.

Also a big **THANK YOU** for the wonderful donations from members of the public. We would especially like to thank our former Chair, Jo Nicolls for her very generous donation.

All of the money donated goes towards the costs of delivering the Deaflink service in the North East.

Budget	2022/23
We Spent	£102,683
Our Income	£105,073

Contact Us:

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St Nicholas Hospital,
Jubilee Road,
Newcastle upon Tyne,
NE3 3XT



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0191 233 2128



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Website

www.deaflink.org.uk

www.facebook.com/deaflink

facebook

twitter

Deaflink_NE

We are a team at Deaflink and we are proud, committed and passionate about what we do - we bring together people, support each other and fight for the rights of people who have all levels of hearing loss. **THANK YOU TEAM**

Deaflink North East is a Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England and Wales;
Company No. 7982375; Charity No. 1147237. Registered address above.

Deaflink North East

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees Report and Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 March 2023

Charity No. 1147237

Company Registration No. 07982375

Legal and Administrative Information

Name: **Deaflink North East**

Reg'd Charity No: 1147237

Company no: 07982375

Trustees: Maureen Bonnie McGarrity (Chair)
Joyce Pennington
Rachel Ross
Laura McQuillan
Christopher Rowlands
Heather Thompson
Louise Borrell
Rachel Bell
Malcolm Bell
Geoff Bell

Address: 4 Glendale Terrace
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NE6 1PB

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Independent
Examiner: Mark Thompson MAAT
42 Lesbury Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE6 5LB

Trustees Annual Report
For the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023

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We encourage individuals and organisations to be aware of D/deaf people's rights and responsibilities. Our Forums and Focus groups for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people continued to provide invaluable support. This has been our first full year since the pandemic and people are starting to feel confident meeting with others, the numbers of people attending are returning to pre-Covid levels.

Access to services continues to be a significant barrier. Organisations have embraced technology and assume that the general population should too. Many BSL users and people who are hard of hearing do not have the access to or understand the technology and systems. A really good example is hearing aids that can connect to Bluetooth – this is wonderful for some people and horrendous for others.

Deaflink North East continues to build strong relationships with key partners in the city of Newcastle and the North East. In this year we have been able to launch Health Navigators, a unique programme working together with the 3 hospital Trusts in the north Tyne area- CNTW; NHCT and NuTH. They fund us to provide support to BSL users who are patients in their hospitals, helping them understand the process and information about their health. Most importantly we are assisting BSL users to have more choice and control over their health.

The trustees/directors have considered the guidance produced by the Charity Commission on the provision of public benefit and they confirm that public benefit has been provided by the range of activities as described above.

Matters Pertaining to Companies Act 2006

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 447 of the Companies Act 2006. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

Signed ... Position Trustee



Print Name...Louise Borrell

Date 7th December 2023

Signed Position ...Trustee



Print Name...Christopher Rowlands

Date ...7th December 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the
trustees of

Deaflink North East

On accounts for
the year ended

31 March 2023

Charity no 1106223

**Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and
examiner**

The trustees of the organisation are responsible for the preparation of accounts; they consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an Independent Examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act),
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of
independent
examiner's
statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

**Independent
examiner's
statement**

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:

- proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date: 21st November 2023

**Name:
Address:**

Mark Thompson MAAT
42 Lesbury Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE6 5LB

Deaflink North East

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
Receipts		2023	2023	2023	2022
				£	£
Grants	4	23750	76891	100641	87098
Donations		1063		1063	150
Training Income		2900		2900	5500
Sundry income		170		170	1478
Bank interest		299		299	59
Total Receipts		28182	76891	105073	94285
Payments					
Staff Costs		7450	79540	86990	73246
Sessional Workers			45	45	630
Stationery & Equipment		785	671	1456	2454
Rent, Heating & Electric		750	4668	5418	5478
Website & IT			647	647	690
Telephone			480	480	414
Postage & Printing			491	491	120
Legal & Prof. Fees		479	2403	2882	3747
Meetings, Events & Forums			760	760	164
Payroll, Accountancy & Bank Charges		125	165	290	385
Insurance			679	679	676
Communications			1830	1830	1734
Staff Travel & Training		155	202	357	463
User Travel			46	46	126
Independent Examination Fee			300	300	300
Other Costs		12		12	78
Total Payments		9756	92927	102683	90705
Surplus / deficit for the year		18426	-16036	2390	3580
Funds at 1 April 2022		72292	16036	88328	84748
Funds at 31 March 2023		90718	0	90718	88328

Deaflink North East

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank & in Hand	96943	106151
Total Cash Balances	96943	106151
Current Liabilities	7 6225	17823
Net Current Assets	90718	88328
Net Assets at 31 March 2023	90718	88328
Represented By:	8	
Restricted Funds	0	16036
Designated Funds	35622	35622
Unrestricted Funds	55096	36670
	90718	88328

For the year ending 31/03/2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors responsibilities:

- a) The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476, of the Companies Act 2006
- b) The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.
- c) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of the Companies Act relating to small companies.

Signed ... Position Trustee



Print Name...Louise Borrell

Date 7th December 2023

Signed Position ...Trustee



Print Name...Christopher Rowlands

Date ...7th December 2023

Deaflink North East

Notes to the accounts, 2022/23

1. Basis of accounts

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006

Deaflink North East meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

2. Trustees and Staff

No Trustees were remunerated or received expenses payments.

Total Salary Costs	£86,990
Average no of staff was	5

3. Costs of financial services

The cost for the Independent Examination for the financial period will be £400.

4. Funding

Grants received through the year:

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust	16000
Newcastle Fund	24891
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospital Trust	20000
Northumbria Healthcare Trust	16000
People's Postcode Lottery	23750

Total Grants Received	100641
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5. Fund Analysis

Restricted Funds	March '22	Income	Expend	March '23
National Lottery Fund - Deaf Rights	11266		11266	0
Sir James Knott Trust	4770		4770	0
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust		16000	16000	0
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospital Trust		20000	20000	0
Northumbria Healthcare Trust		16000	16000	0
Newcastle Fund		24891	24891	0
	16036	76891	92927	0

6. Related party transactions

There were no significant transactions between the project and any related parties during the period. No payments have been made to Trustees.

7. Current Liabilities:

Grants Received in Advance:

Barbour Foundation	5000
Hadrian Trust	500
Total Grants Received in Advance	5500

HMRC	725
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Total Current Liabilities	6225
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8. Designated Funds

Contingency Fund	35622
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Total Designated Funds	35622
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Notes:**Contingency Fund**

This is in place to cover closing costs for the organisation, so it can fulfil its legal obligations, e.g. Redundancy & leases.

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Total Designated Funds	35622
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Notes:**Contingency Fund**

This is in place to cover closing costs for the organisation, so it can fulfil its legal obligations, e.g. Redundancy & leases.