

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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Administrative Information

Trustees

Ms R Pickup	Chair
Mr R Bounds	Vice Chair
Ms J Barron	Secretary
Mr J Goucher**	Outgoing Treasurer
Ms Lu Zhang	Incoming Treasurer
Ms B Davies***	Trustee
Mr H El-Madani*	Trustee
Mr S Lewis*	Trustee

*Deaf

**Hard of hearing

***Child of a Deaf Adult

Key staff

John Hesketh Chief Executive Officer

Registered office and principal place of business

Bolton Deaf Society, Bark Street, Bolton, BL1 2AX

Independent Examiner and Accountants

Matthew Whiteley FCA
Whiteley Accountancy Services LLP
14, Warwick Road
Stockport
SK4 4LY

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland PLC
De Havilland Way
Bolton
BL6 4YU

Investment Managers

CCLA Fund Managers Limited
Senator House
85, Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4V 4ET

Solicitors

Brabners LLP
Horton House
Exchange Flags
Exchange Street East
Liverpool
L2 3YL

Trustees' and Directors Annual Report

Objectives and Activities

Charitable objects

Times change. Deaf community needs and preferences change. Opportunities for work in value-adding partnership present and then run their course leading to collaborations' conclusion. Pressures around income generation grow greater and then dissipate. The over-arching primary purposes of Bolton Deaf Society have remained fairly consistent over the last 154 years though – to support, promote, empower and protect the interests of people who are D/deaf, hard-of-hearing, resident in Bolton and the surrounding areas, with a view to enhancing the quality of their lives; optimising their learning outcomes/skills for life and work, capacity for self-advocacy and fulsome community participation as active citizens and social action pioneers; enhancing their health, wellbeing and connectivity with supportive peers and professionals all keen to help them achieve their personal and professional potential. We grow self-confidence; social, economic, legal, political, cultural, equality and diversity awareness; knowledge, understanding and motivation towards navigating the largely hearing-led world to find financial independence, social content and professional fulfilment in spite of continued shortfall by many public service providers and employers when it comes to ensuring equitable access as required by the Equality Act 2010, the Accessible Information Standards 2016 and the BSL Act 2023 for example.

In 2023, we updated our charitable objects to reflect the breadth of need we respond to, the increasing variety of works our organisation is called to get involved in, our growing reach and impact. These were duly embedded in our governing document and a revised constitution was 'signed-off with' the Charity Commission. Bolton Deaf Society's approved charitable objects are now as follows:

"To promote social inclusion among Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing individuals who are socially excluded from society or parts of society, as a result of being Deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing by (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing):

Providing education and information to support and enable D/deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to learn, understand and use British Sign Language

Providing access to educational resources, including schooling, in British Sign Language; also communications support for those who use Sign Supported English or Lip Read

Providing Sign Language interpreters as and when may be required

Raising public awareness of the issues affecting Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing individuals, both generally and in relation to their social exclusion

Providing workshops, forums, advocacy and general support

Providing visits to Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people in their homes

Providing such other services and assistance for Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people as will protect, empower and promote their interest with a view to enhancing their quality of life

To advance education by (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing):

The provision of advocacy support services and skill-building for self-advocacy, life skills courses and communications support so as to enable access to education and training providers

The provision of British Sign Language and Lip-reading courses

The provision of professional development programmes in Deaf Awareness and Interpreter Awareness, Inclusive Employment and Basic British Sign Language for public sector professionals

The prevention or relief of poverty amongst Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing individuals by (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing):

Providing advice and guidance around and skill-building for employment and enterprise of Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people

The advancement of health of Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing individuals by, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing:

The provision or arrangement of access to inclusive physical activity and sporting opportunities

The provision of British Sign Language Interpreters so that Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing individuals may access health care in sign language

The promotion of religious harmony for the benefit of the public by, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing:

Providing a multifaith sacred space and multifaith religious services for Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people as well as promoting knowledge and mutual understanding and respect of the beliefs and practices of different religious faiths”

Significant changes in D/deaf and hard-of-hearing need and demand or partnerships for the long-term may require that these objects are revisited and further revised in years hence, but it is within the parameters set by these charitable objectives that we will go on with our development, delivery and continuing improvement work for the foreseeable future.

Activities

Our Accessible Information and Advocacy Service has continued to develop this year.

As regards making information accessible for starters....

Our Advocates have produced scams awareness videos in British Sign Language, working in close consultation and collaboration with National Trading Standards and Closha Associates to educate and enable Deaf people to protect themselves and those close to them from falling victim to doorstep, postal and email scams. Most public information material on this subject is in dense written text and lost on a great many Deaf adults because the average reading of a Deaf adult in the UK is 9 years due to shortfalls in communications and study support through the ‘inclusive education system’. Their first language is visual, not written or spoken.

Advocates have also:

- i. made a series of self-help Cost of Living videos covering digital device access and how to grow ICT literacy; energy conservation and domestic tariff-switching in the home; affordable food-sourcing, low-energy, low-waste cooking; buying pre-loved, recycled or upcycled items; living on a budget; and how to access bespoke support around debt, financial hardship, employment, enterprise start-up, housing, health or whatever else Deaf people might be struggling with in these difficult times through Bolton Deaf Society
- ii. prepared and delivered BSL briefings on changes to benefit regulations
- iii. hosted Crystal Life Planning drop-ins – and made information, advice and guidance on private pensions, power of attorney, wills, inheritance tax and similar accessible to profoundly Deaf BSL users
- iv. worked with Victim Support to make their public information more visual, integrating process maps as reference points for Deaf people wanting to access their services, and establish Bolton Deaf Society as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre, the only one accessible to Deaf people in Bolton and surrounding areas
- v. introduced and made information on services available at Bolton Library accessible to Deaf people, creating a BSL map that intersperses fairytale stories
- vi. provided 1-to-1 support in translation of written correspondence received from benefits administrators, employers, banks, building societies, housing providers, landlords, health services, utility service providers, tradespeople and so on – none of which are equipped to make reasonable adjustments in their communications with Deaf people whose first language is not written and structured completely differently to English

Video production has enabled our service to reach more people than before and videos shared through our social media platforms have achieved an average 450 views each. As Bolton Deaf Society digests the findings of our Social Media Audit and begins to find traction with our new Social Media Strategy, our hope is that future videos, visual documentation and anonymised case studies/service impact indicators shared by consent will reach still larger audiences further afield.

Our discrete Advocacy Service has been as active as ever and in the lines that follow our Accessible Information and Advocacy Service Lead, Michael Stead, has offered some reflections on ground covered through 2023/24¹.

¹ Michael is Deaf and his first language is British Sign Language (BSL) not English. Changing his writing would take away from its authenticity though, so please look past spelling, punctuation and grammar issues that you might otherwise pick-up.

"Bolton Deaf Society has successfully sustained our Advocacy Service this year, offering assistance to Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing residents with:

- i. application for benefits and travel passes
- ii. representation at employment tribunals
- iii. works to resolve system blockages and social injustices, and
- iv. lots besides

Our team can communicate using Sign Language, Sign Supported English, spoken English and – with assistance through our networks – by Lip Speaker and Deaf Relay Interpreter as well. Three experienced advocates bring a combined 50 years' experience to our organisation, and work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, providing both client drop-in, appointment-based and home visit services.

Statistics:

Through the year, our Accessible Information and Advocacy Service saw 638 Deaf people, breaking down over the year as follows:

April 2023 – 57
May – 60
June – 40
July – 54
August – 58
September – 40
October – 71
November – 62
December – 43
January – 66
February- 47
March – 40

Within the last 12 months our service has been accessed for the following:

- Personal Independent Payment (PIP) Applications - clients have come to us to seek guidance and support in inputting information on forms
- Benefit applications – for Universal Credit (UC), Carers Allowance and the Family Fund – again as above, clients have needed both translation from written English and help to fill in the application
- Housing applications – we have helped clients register on the appropriate lists and enabled them to bid on properties
- Arranging appointments – we helped clients make appointments with their GPs, Dentists, Banks and other services that they require access to
- Changing energy/insurance suppliers - we have supported clients filling in the applications in for them to change to a cheaper supplier
- Debt Management – we supported clients to set up payment plans for their current debts
- Referrals – we have made referrals to local Independent Living Services so that our clients are able to access services such as disabled bus passes, assistive technology etc...
- Cost of Living – we have supported clients who are struggling to make ends meet by providing support in budget planning and management
- Booking interpreters – when asked, we have ensured that British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreters have been booked for client appointments
- Housing support – we have supported clients to be able to phone housing associations for repair requests, and on occasions the housing association has said that it is the client's responsibility to sort out the repair. When this has happened we have, when possible (or equally, if requested), signposted clients to Deaf professionals who can provide such services for example, painting and decorating or repair services

Our service has been and continues to be an invaluable lifeline for the Deaf community and because of its reputation, we find that people are coming from Bradford, Bury, Wigan and Manchester in order to seek guidance and support through our service. We have provided an example of the work we have done for one client to show the importance of our work (see the case study to follow).

Case Study- Client E

"I live in private housing and have been for some time. I do not work and I am claiming benefits. My income is already low. When the cost of living started to increase, I have started to struggle with heating and cooking as it was becoming

too expensive. I receive PIP, which is still not enough. I have decided to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment via Bolton at Home but the waiting time can be up to 3 months.

The property I am living at has dampness on the walls and I was also experiencing issues with the boiler. The communication has been poor between the landlord and myself which has added time and stress. The reason for this is because BSL is my first language and I struggle to understand messages from them. I rely on the advocate from Bolton Deaf Society.

I have always paid for the electricity and gas with the 'Boost' prepaid method. I would go to the shops and purchase a top up there which has been part of the normal routine. However, the company has made changes which has caused some confusion. Firstly, you can only contact them via a phone call which is not accessible. They have asked me to use a new card to top up with.

I am not happy with the whole situation specifically with what has happened, and I did think it would be better for me to move to council housing, this also means more time will be added on.

Few months ago, I fell ill and was taken to hospital due to breathing difficulties and ended up staying for a while. I think with me being constantly cold, has caused my illness. One of the reasons why this had happened could be because the house was cold and damp and I couldn't afford to have the heating on.

In conclusion, the cost of living has affected me mentally and physically because it was getting too expensive to run the heating. I am grateful for having the advocacy support as they have helped with communication with the landlord. They have also helped me with the new change that 'Boost' has implemented."

Partnerships

We are working closely with various organisations/services within Bolton in order to improve relations and raise awareness of our services. We are continually finding organisations that are not aware of us, and/or what we can offer, equally, there are many of these organisations that believe we work exclusively with Deaf BSL users, when in fact, we support people with all ranges of hearing loss.

We have also worked to maintain existing relationships and continue to offer them support to make their services and events more accessible. For example, at Bolton Food and Drink Festival, Bolton Pride as well as other events, we have organised and provided BSL interpreters as well as promoted these events within the Deaf Community, making them more accessible to Deaf People.

From existing and new partnerships, we ensure that the Deaf community are part of that partnerships where they have opportunities to present their views or concerns. This is where we invite them to forums in which they can meet Deaf people who uses services.

Forums

We have arranged for professionals to attend and talk to BDS beneficiaries every two months from different services and here are some examples: In the last 12 months we have catered to several different services, eg.

- Healthwatch
- Bolton Police
- Deaf Cancer Support
- Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
- Money Service
- Sign Health

They have attended and provided presentations to the social groups within Bolton Deaf Society and this has given the providers the opportunity to explain about their service and gain feedback from the Deaf community on how to make their service more accessible.

"This was good as I have learnt about other services in Bolton that I did not know. It is nice to know Bolton Deaf Society work with them to help me to ensure my communication needs are met"

It has been beneficial for the Deaf community to learn about other services that are in Bolton and gives them an opportunity to provide feedback. For example, the organisation 'Healthwatch' asked for feedback on what current issues Deaf people face when accessing health services. This gave those involved opportunities to raise their concerns regarding a lack of BSL interpreters, having to request to book BSL interpreters despite going to their GP for many years and lack of Deaf Awareness. The Deaf community felt they were finally being listened to.

"It was nice for someone to come and ask about our experiences in health as we have so many issues for so many years but no one seems to listen – they seem shocked by our experiences and hopefully this will improve our experiences."

Training

Our Advocates worked hard in setting up more Deaf Awareness Training over the last six months of the year as well - providing hearing professionals with the skills and knowledge needed on how to communicate with Deaf people. Our training is always led by Deaf trainers who are able to provide first-hand accounts of their experiences as a Deaf person.

Examples of services that we have provided training for are as follows:

Colleges
Eye Diabetes Team
Girl Guides
Schools
MBDA
GP Federation

'Feedback: - 'The training was excellent and the trainers were really fun which made the session all the more enjoyable. Would definitely book them again!'

Summary

We have made significant progress in providing better accessibility for the Deaf community within Bolton despite only operating on a two-day basis. We feel we could have further impact if we were able to provide support on additional days but we are very proud of the achievements we have made so far and will carry on."

Through 2023/24, our 2 Deaf, bi-lingual Employment and Enterprise Advisers – funded by Bolton's Fund, the Inman Charity and a generous legacy gift (all supporters being secure in the knowledge that much infrastructure and many running costs were covered by the National Lottery Community Fund) – were very busy in development and on-going delivery of our specialist Deaf Employment and Enterprise Service:

- i. For 15 un/underemployed Deaf people, our Advisers delivered a course at our Bark Street base covering low confidence and low self-esteem, anxiety and low mood or depression, OCD, low aspiration, risk-taking behaviours, and disabling communication barriers evident in crossover from Deaf to hearing worlds – and also how self-care, healthy recreation, volunteering, active citizenship and social action can positively impact feelings and outlook; build wider Deaf awareness and understanding among hearing professionals around the modest adjustments they can make in day-to-day process to make services (relating to finances, health, housing, insurances, the environment, leisure, public transport, routine maintenance and repair, sports, retail, utilities and so on) accessible to the Deaf community in Bolton (comprising 47,500 people and 15.7% of the local authority area population here); and open new doors to educational achievement, fulfilment of career potential and realisation of financial independence
- ii. They also delivered skill-building workshops covering job search and application; preparation for interviews and assessment centres; creative and critical thinking; problem-solving; hearing workplace culture; self-awareness/interpersonal/relationship management skills; independent travel skills; money management; career planning and Deaf-inclusive vocational training, employment and enterprise – legal rights, self-advocacy and similar. On occasion these workshops were more 1-to-1 coaching, but on half a dozen occasions groups of between 3 and 5 came together to learn together and work hard on building a sense of common purpose and shared commitment to mutual support
- iii. 4 successful Deaf entrepreneurs from across Greater Manchester – an Electrician, a Fashion Designer, a Photographer and a Bathing Products business lead – led workshops telling their stories of market research and testing, business planning, pursuit of start-up funding, marketing, overcoming communication obstacles, continuing their learning and sustaining their business development momentum... and, in follow-up, one of our Employment & Enterprise Advisers, who is Deaf and has run her own Disability Inclusion consultancy business in Greater Manchester since 2013, duly led 1-to-1 works with the 4 aspiring Deaf entrepreneurs that came forward and her development work with them is on-going: our hope and expectation is that we will have some fledgling enterprises to showcase soon

Of the 27 people seen through the course of the year, 7 are now volunteering, 9 have taken-up further education/training, 3 are on work placement and 8 are continuing to work with us to address their multiple and complex issues and get themselves closer to the labour market. Amongst this 8 are the aspiring entrepreneurs we saw.

Unfortunately, we could not engage a SFEDI-accredited Enterprise Coach to lead the enterprise elements of this programme but the Enterprise masterclasses and 1-to-1 works that took the place of Coach-led workshops were very well-received.

Over the year, our Employment & Enterprise Advisers have grown quite a network locally and they remained in on-going dialogue with several contacts as the year came to an end:

i. volunteer involving organisations including:

- Bolton Advice Centre
- Bolton CVS
- Bolton Leisure Trust
- Bolton Wanderers in the Community
- Bury Met
- Eccles College
- Girl Guides

ii. further education and training providers including:

- Alliance Learning, and
- Bolton College

iii. local employers with a keen interest in providing equitable access to work experience placements including but not limited to:

- Age UK Bolton
- Bolton at Home
- Bolton College
- Bolton Council (more particularly Active Lives and Public Health)
- Bolton CVS
- Bolton Film Festival
- Bolton Hive
- Bolton Hospice
- Caritas
- Coffee House
- DES
- Howorth Air Technology
- MBDA
- Royal Bolton Hospital
- The Octagon Theatre Bolton
- The University of Bolton
- Thomasson Memorial School
- Trafford Deaf Society
- UCLAN

(DWP will now accept Access to Work funding applications to cover communications support for Deaf people being placed, and Bolton Deaf Society are naturally keen to make the most of this and take away any communication concerns prospective placement providers might have.)

iv. employment and enterprise support service providers now switched-on to the disproportionately higher incidence of un/underemployment in Bolton's Deaf community (running at around 30% on average, but up to 40% among Deaf BAME cohorts):

- Bolton News
- Bury Hearing Hub
- National Careers Service
- SEA
- Wave (John Holt Centre)

With all, we are talking Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic British Sign Language training for frontline staff and hope to get professional development courses set in the diary soon with a view to their beginning

to adapt day-to-day ways of working – around applications, induction, support, progression and so on. Conversations are also started in parallel around making their website and social media content more visual and incorporating BSL; similarly around building modifications (visual information rather than requirement of audio engagement at car park entrance points and in lifts, flashing alarm beacons, visual wayfinding signage etc) and more Deaf-aware risk management plans; and also on longer-term possibilities around growing Deaf representation in the workforce.

Though our Employment and Enterprise Service did not engage with great numbers last year, it was highly impactful and in strategic landscape terms there are very promising discussions on-going.

In sport and physical activity terms, the last 5 months of 2023/24 were something of a mixed picture for Bolton Deaf Society. Our Deaf-inclusive Sport and Physical Activity Service is still very much in its fledgling development period.

There were several positives worthy of note:

- i. our Deaf Asian Women's Group got active and completed a walking programme – and both Deaf Sport UK and Transport for Greater Manchester produced success videos such have been their funding and strategic support
- ii. the Colony Gym (Bolton town centre) and Bolton Arena (Horwich) both put reception and fitness staff through Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training before going on to accommodate 6-week fitness activity classes led by Level 3-qualified, BSL-proficient Instructors – serving as pilot activities and enabling staff in situ to consolidate their understanding of the reasonable adjustments necessary in a fitness class to enable equitable Deaf inclusion and begin preparing the way for more
- iii. Bolton Rugby Union Club started a Deaf-inclusive, mixed-age, mixed-ability team incorporating 4 Deaf players and they have begun building this; the Club Chairman and team coaches are now working towards British Sign Language Level 1 qualifications with a view to progressing from there
- iv. Bolton Deaf Society was approached by Horwich Harriers (running club), Westhoughton Lions (community rugby league club), Astley Bridge (football club) and the local Boccia Group about delivering training for them in Deaf inclusion and then walking with them/doing our hand-holding/coaching until they have grown their membership

Moving these still-forming working relationships forward has huge potential to open activities previously closed to the Deaf community – strength and fitness training, tennis, badminton, gymnastics, rugby union, running over a range of distances, rugby league, football, Boccia, male/female variants and, in some instances, wheelchair variants; begin growing trust and confidence in local sports and physical activity leads; and start increasing participation, redressing stark health inequalities in the Deaf community locally and realising savings for the public purse.

It has not always been the case, however, that we have met with a positive/easy reception:

- i. Two local Leisure Centres expressed interest in training and modifying their service offer to make it more Deaf-inclusive and impactful; also in learning more about how to make their buildings safer for BSL-users and how to make equipment safe to use/self-directed learning through QR codes and BSL content accessible - but in the end they were unable to make any meeting/training dates and times we offered
- ii. Another Leisure Centre articulated that they want to make their Spin Studio fully accessible to Deaf people, but the action planning meeting was not possible due to their wi-fi failing and remote Interpreter support not being possible
- iii. At an early March 2024 meeting a local football club-related charity agreed to progress a number of initiatives:
 - o scheduling Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training for all frontline staff, possibly Club reception, shop, hospitality, ground safety, stewarding and matchday kiosk staff as well – to make community sports and physical activity programmes more accessible: mixed ability and walking football, employability skills with a sports and leisure emphasis, sporting heritage reminiscence, team talk and extra time both focused on activities promoting good mental health, friendship and peer support; also to ensure that watching matches and attending events at the stadium are accessible
 - o modifying pre-match activities at the Wellbeing Hub to make them Deaf-inclusive
 - o producing captioned, BSL messaging for the big screens inside and outside at the stadium so that information on activities, catering, toilets, first aid, emergency procedures and so forth is all fully accessible
 - o making the Sensory Room, changing places/hygiene suite and Supporters' Pack information visual and fully accessible – again to make the matchday/event day experience more equitable
 - o getting Deaf representation on to their Disabled Supporters' Group
 - o organising a Deaf Futsal/Football Taster Tournament

Efforts to follow-up were frustrated by competing priorities and conflicting priorities getting in the way over the final weeks of the financial year, but efforts will be re-doubled in 2024/25 assisted by additional, incoming members of staff at Bolton Deaf Society.

- iv. A training company from Manchester have shown keen interest in working with Bolton Deaf Society to recruit Deaf people on to accredited, BSL-led training courses to qualify as Personal Trainers with a view to growing Deaf representation in the sports and leisure workforce locally. Their visibility, communication competencies, role-modelling and story-telling could combine to draw new participants from the Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing community into participation – but interest generation and securing returns on recruitment efforts has proven difficult.

In 2023/24, Bolton Deaf Society's Interpreter Bookings Service grew our database of qualified, experienced and NRCPD-registered BSL Interpreters, Deaf Relay Interpreters, Lip Speakers, Notetakers, Speech-to-Text Reporters and Deafblind Interpreters, and in addition now to booking communication support professionals for GP Surgeries and Optometrists across the Borough, we receive and service requests from the following as well:

- Bolton at Home
- Bolton Council
- Bolton CVS
- Bolton Food & Drink Festival
- Bolton Pride
- Bolton Winter Festival
- Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
(where we now sit on the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Working Group)
- The Octagon Theatre
(for whom we now deliver Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training on an annual refresher basis, produce captioned BSL films for social media, and arrange performance Interpreters where required)
- The Quakers Meeting House

.... and so our reach is growing; Deaf and Interpreter Awareness are increasing and maintaining this momentum is important to Bolton Deaf Society from a Deaf inclusion/social impact point of view; so also from an unrestricted revenue generation perspective given the increasing cost of insurances, utilities, office running costs, building cleaning/maintenance/repair, equipment inspection and certification, third-party HR, ICT and financial management support services. It is our intention to keep pushing our Interpreter Bookings Service outwards through 2023/24 hopeful that we will start to break down barriers to Deaf engagement with services and events.

Arising at the year-end were two potential opportunities of extending this service – through discussion with Independent Living Services at Wigan Council, and through formative dialogue with the Lloyds Bank Foundation. The former are keen to explore Bolton Deaf Society's prospective commissioning as Interpreter booking leads to help with advocacy work and adaptive assessments in the home where their citizens (resident in one of our neighbouring Boroughs) live with hearing loss; and the latter want to explore possibilities around making their grant application process and associated support services fully accessible to Deaf grantees in light of their recent Deaf-themed funding round. Much work remains to be done with both Wigan Council and the Lloyds Bank Foundation, but affirmative and encouraging for Bolton Deaf Society is that both organisations approached ours having learned of the increasingly impactful work we do in breaking down communication barriers in Bolton. There is much potential in Wigan for extension beyond the Interpreter Bookings brief as well it would seem. Formative discussion has been wide-ranging.

To help strengthen Wigan Council's service offer to Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing citizens, Bolton Deaf Society could (beyond the present third-party service contract):

- i. continue with Deaf-inclusive independent living assessments, competency visits and skill-building in use of new equipment and assistive technologies issued to the best possible effect
- ii. set-in place a general Deaf support service drop-in once a month at Hindley Library – utilising this as a means of ensuring timely and impactful assistance short-term (with equipment or whatever it might be) and consultation around medium to long-term service development: reinforcing the message that Wigan Council are committed to Deaf inclusion
- iii. provide Deaf and Interpreter Awareness training, Basic BSL and Access to Work funding courses for key staff members
- iv. offer a close-at-hand bookings service for qualified, NRCPD-registered BSL Interpreters and Communication Support Workers to aid any aspect of Wigan Council, primary and acute health and social care, GMP and/or GMFRS service provision and breakdown hearing professionals' communication barriers with Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing citizens
- v. broker links with senior Customer Service and Public Health management colleagues at Bolton Council who have recently embedded Sign Live (online Interpreter access) in their One Stop Shop at the Town Hall to make frontline services Deaf-accessible, and the HR team with whom work is just started to make job vacancies accessible to Deaf people whose first language (BSL) is visual and not written or spoken (through adaptation of adverts,

- application, interview and assessment centre procedures, induction, training, support/supervision and appraisal arrangements)
- vi. create captioned, BSL content for Wigan Council and sensory service web pages, social media output and so on – on services it is considered helpful to profile
 - vii. advise and guide public communication materials' design to ensure visual journey/process maps and infographics feature to ease Deaf people's understanding (given that, due to shortfalls in the education system, the average reading age of Deaf adults is 9 years)
 - viii. deliver Accessible Information and Advocacy Support Services helping Deaf, BSL-users:
 - understand written correspondence received from banks, building societies, employers, landlords, benefits administrators, education, training and health professionals, housing associations, utility companies, tradespeople etc – in order that they can make timely and well-informed decisions on what's necessary and best in response for them
 - tackle public service providers' failure to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the Accessible Information Standards of 2016 and the BSL Act 2022; make representations, remove system blockages and secure equitable access to public services and amenities, employment and opportunities of active citizenship/community development and improvement
 - assist people in benefits/housing applications and appeals, employment tribunals and with many other everyday issues to their potential detriment if managed without system knowledge and communication barriers in place
 - ix. lead on specialist capacity-building around legal rights and self-advocacy among Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people locally
 - x. deliver employment and enterprise start-up support for Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing Wiganers, and work in parallel to improve employers' capacity for Deaf-inclusion – possibly even including Wigan Council as an exemplar on the grounds that more Deaf representation in local workforces will grow Deaf service take-up and reduce the probability of issues escalating in the background because of Deaf access/discrimination fatigue, confidence and trust gaps, cynicism and reluctance: emphases in this instance being upon empowerment, progression and self-help
 - xi. start capacity-building Be Well services to optimise Deaf access and begin minimising Deaf health inequalities – physical and mental
 - xii. help make Wigan Council's public consultation exercises Deaf-inclusive
 - xiii. help bring together and facilitate a Deaf reference group for Sensory Services (comprising Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people of different age, faith, gender, race, sexual orientation, with and without disabilities and in varying degrees of financial hardship and independence) – to inform continuing development and improvement

Regardless though, we will keep all key funders and stakeholders fully up to speed as we go forward with our efforts to build these socially impactful enterprising relationships.

Project Work

In last year's project report, we reflected on numerous works having been completed to conclude refurbishment of the first floor in our small, town centre building – and maintenance works this year have continued with the replacement of two rotten wooden windows to the rear, with just one now outstanding and a gutter repair due before all will be UPVC and fully modernised. Wheelchair lift upgrades and replacement equipment and furniture for our games room (pool, snooker and darts) will be fundraising subjects in 2024/25. Reference was also made last year to growing the accessibility of services for those unable to engage online, unable to afford travel into and/or parking in town, and feeling unsafe with the anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, skip-dipping, sex work and rough sleeping that goes on in close proximity – and we're pleased to report here that we have successfully established a presence at Horwich Community Centre where our Accessible Information and Advocacy Service hold drop-ins and Lip Reading courses go on. Trialling works in Great Lever over on the East of the Borough have not met with such success just yet on the grounds that there has been a significant delay in building handover to Endeavour, close friends and intended partners of Bolton Deaf Society, but when this provision does come on stream it will again be subject to test and trial – giving our organisation profile, growing reach and impact in neighbourhoods that we have not historically connected with.

In 2023/24, there were a further handful of projects on which we set for betterment of the organisation's infrastructure:

- i. through Roebuck Digital, we commissioned a social media audit and developed a social media strategy for activation – with a view to helping grow reach, profile and engagement, and we must now seek to earn budget into existence through our socially impactful enterprise work (training, captioned bsl videos, bespoke consultancy and room hire) to enable the deployment of human resource to lead implementation, and
- ii. we completed a short programme of work with the social enterprise development programme, Proper Good and set on exploring further learning courses to guide our thinking on the optimisation of business development opportunities for Bolton Deaf Society
- iii. through Eleven Accounts and Whiteley Accountancy Service we have commissioned invoice/credit control management, payroll, Xero and book-keeping co-ordination, management accounting, year-end accounting and

independent examination services – and as the year came to a close our Trustees were each completing the necessary Anti-Money Laundering checks to enable transition from the previously disparate arrangements shared between four parties/streamlining and the relief of pressures on our Projects Lead in order that she can focus fully on projects' management for Deaf community benefit

Worth reporting here too is that in lead-up to the end of the financial year, Bolton Deaf Society were approached by Bury Hearing Hub Trustees (formerly Bury Deaf Society) on the prospect of our organisation taking over theirs and extending our reach to Bury, their working relationship with the Deaf community in Bury having broken down in light of their last Director's retirement, due rebrand by a hearing Board and struggle to find funds to grow staffing, lead consultation, create service redevelopment plans and funding strategy. The two other options their Board are considering are charity closure (and this would be a great shame after the recent demise of East Lancashire Deaf Society and Genie Networks in Trafford), and downsizing subject to being able to recruit a full new Board of Trustees to take the confidence and trust rebuild/organisational reinvigoration forward.

Trustees' initial thoughts at Bolton Deaf Society are that it is nice to be approached and have another organisation give such complementary feedback; our organisation already attracts service-users from Bury; Bury Council's Domestic Abuse Team have recently approached Bolton Deaf Society on the prospect of our providing training in Deaf inclusion; and Bolton CAB have recently taken a similar path and merged with Bury – there may be learning opportunities there. They (our Trustees) are further minded to seek legal advice on rigorous due diligence, present employee exit/redundancy/TUPE transfer arrangements, and any restrictions/difficulties that may come with funds/liabilities transferred to Bolton IF our organisation were to proceed with a growth plan. There's much to consider and one of the key considerations is how to guard against focus on the Borough of Bolton being compromised in the event a decision is made to go-ahead.

In 2023/24, Bolton Deaf Society have continued to support the work of the Deaf-led, independently constituted groups meeting in our Bark Street building. With our continuing group development work, we have again made good progress:

- i. Darby and Joan Group brings together older people who are Deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing, often living alone and without nearby family. They busy themselves with social chatter, board games, bingo, trips out locally and not so locally through the Spring, Summer and Autumn, and often leave Deaf customer service reviews for organisations/amenities they visit in order that they can optimise Deaf visitor experiences and premises' safety going forward for people whose first language is visual and not written or spoken... ; people who are unable to hear emergency fire alarms and so on.

Working with our team of Advocates this year, they have integrated visiting speakers into their meeting schedule to add value to their work on countering loneliness and sustaining good mental health. Visiting experts have walked and talked through:

- Changes in voting requirements/arrangements
- Deaf fire safety in the home – and adaptations/assistance that Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service can offer
- Financial Planning, Family Asset Protection Trusts, Lasting Power of Attorney, and Wills
- Accessing advice and assistance around Cancers in BSL
- Online support available with Mental Health through Sign Health
- Accessible Hate Crime Reporting
- Accessible Victim Support
- Low cost, nutritious food-sourcing, and low energy cooking
- Neurodiversity awareness
- ... and more

And feedback has been consistently positive. Opportunities of incidental learning through radio, newspapers, passing conversation and similar are usually closed-off to Deaf people who cannot hear, converse with hearing people that do not sign, or read dense, detailed text when the average Deaf adult reading age is 9 years. Having their awareness and understanding grown through inputs in their first language has been very helpful to them. Numbers within this group run up to 70 a week now, and on occasion, for joint events with the Deaf Social Club from Manchester Deaf Centre, they will use other larger buildings – which is great from a profile and relationship-building point of view. These joint events bring together 130/140 people each time.

- ii. Handmade Sign Language Choir

The British Sign Language Choir that meets in our building goes from strength to strength. Between 30 and 40 attend for practice each week. In September 2023, they travelled to Jersey to be part of an International Sign Language Choir Festival, and in December 2023, they were invited to perform at Bolton Town Hall on the occasion of the

Mayor's Charity Fair. As the year drew to a close, they were planning to host a UK-wide BSL Choir Festival in July 2024, Hand Song – and this was expected to bring together more than 500 people from across the country to perform at Bolton Deaf Society and the much larger Victoria Hall around the corner; Deaf people from Aberdeen, Dundee, Derby, Halifax and Plymouth among other places. All the while their stock is rising and their bringing Deaf, deafened, hard-of-hearing and hearing people together to share their love of BSL and performance will doubtless have a big impact on Deaf awareness locally with much interest before tickets went on sale, and Bolton News wanted to run a story.

- iii. Deaf Sports and Social Club are continuing to engage with up to 40 people a week – playing Darts, Dominoes, Snooker, Pool and Crown Green Bowls. They host visiting groups and go to other locations to practice and compete in North West Deaf Sports competitions, and were set as the year ended on outreach and consultation through the Deaf Studies Unit at Bolton College hopeful of learning more about activities that would appeal to a younger demographic and grow their numbers further.
- iv. The Sign-Inn Café and Craft Group put on tea, coffee, biscuits and light refreshments every Wednesday morning for Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people from all backgrounds, and they busy themselves with crochet and knitting, decoupage, candle and pot-making, painting and much besides. They have started to explore levels of interest in rotating meetings between our town centre base and outreach centres, also in visiting and skill-sharing at other Deaf venues in Greater Manchester: Walthew House in Stockport, Oldham Deaf Club and Manchester Deaf Centre among them.
- v. The Deaf Asian Women's Group that meet in our building have grown quickly this year and now number up to 20 each week, and in activity terms they continue to further their knowledge of the Islamic faith and practice the same in one another's company through services, study and fellowships; they go on cooking and meal-sharing... building their knowledge of nutrition and realising the benefits of social eating²; and they continue with their mindful walking in the beautiful countryside surrounding our town. In 2022, they started with walks of 1 to 2 miles in length but these are now stretching to 4 and 5 miles, reflecting group growth in confidence and fitness, and adding still to their knowledge of local history, flora, fauna and biodiversity otherwise.

New this year for the Deaf Asian Women's Group have been visits to the female-only Changing Life Directions Gym where they build their strength and aerobic fitness through self-directed activity and inclusive gym induction, and their running in collaboration with an Indian female-led, Bolton-based group called Midlife Runners. Members of the group are beginning to jog now too and it's great to see.

Through the year their respective committee representatives attended a number of courses organised by Bolton Deaf Society in their continued empowerment:

- First Aid
- Mental Health First Aid
- Fire Marshal Training
- Emergency Evacuation Chair Training
- Safeguarding

Remaining on the list are Confidentiality & Data Protection, Equality & Diversity, Food Hygiene and General Health & Safety, and then they will be repeated on a 12-18 month cycle to help ensure their safe, legally compliant and equitable practice.

Though not independently constituted, there have been 3 other groups coming together monthly at Bolton Deaf Society in this last year as well and in the interests of providing a rounded picture, they should be referenced in this year-end report as well:

i. Bolton Adult Autism Support

There is a disproportionately higher incidence of Autism in the Deaf community compared to the hearing community³ and local charity BASS now do targeted work in our building. Arts and crafts frequently feature in their life and social skills sessions. They also hold information sessions for those in attendance covering the likes of Personal Budgets, support services available in Bolton (eg. through GPs and the Trafford Extended Services – encompassing Clinical Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Social Work and Community Nursing; a Coping Skills Group etc), and development of the Autism Strategy in Bolton.

² Reduced anxiety, alleviation of depression caused by isolation, greater social confidence and brighter outlook, friendship-making, emotional/practical/peer support to call on when needed, improved sense of connectivity/belonging/self-esteem etc.

³ 1 in 59 Deaf people live with Autism as compared to 1 in 100 hearing people.

ii. Enabling Technologies Drop-in

On pre-set dates through the year, this involves Audiologists bringing a range of assistive equipment for people living with hearing loss to view and test before buying independently – eg. vibrating alarms to wake Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people from their sleep; telephone, tv and radio amplifiers; bluetooth hearing aids able to assist with phone calls. The technical team also help with hearing aid battery replacement, adjustment and so on.

iii. Tinnitus Support Group

Convened and facilitated by the Audiology Department at the Royal Bolton Hospital, this group meets monthly and around 40 attend each time. In part it is about peer support, sharing experiences and coping mechanisms between people living with Tinnitus. In part it is about medical professionals and research leads sharing progress in their collaborative research projects as well – giving insight into prospective treatments under development.

As time allowed, Bolton Deaf Society went on through 2023/24 developing courses for public benefit. Quite a lot of time went into training course development this year:

Basic British Sign Language

Our Deaf Advocate, Erika, continued to lead on her 10-week Introduction to BSL course and delivered three rotations of the same course through the year to 12 learners each time – covering:

- everyday greetings
- fingerspelling
- numbers
- colours
- time
- money
- days
- months
- seasons
- food
- drink
- relationships
- animals
- clothing
- descriptions
- directions
- general Deaf awareness and conversations

As last year, Erika has received some brilliant feedback on her teaching. What's significantly different to last year, however, is that Bolton College now deliver British Sign Language Level 1 qualifications on site at Bark Street here meaning that there is now a progression pathway for learners from the introductory courses. This BSL 1 course was running with two separate groups of 14 as the year ended and receiving very good reviews. It covers:

- understanding and using simple words and sentences in BSL
- taking part in simple, everyday conversations in BSL
- giving and following simple directions or instructions in BSL
- giving and following familiar statements or descriptions in BSL

Learners include hearing citizens presently losing their hearing, Deaf residents and hearing people with caring responsibilities towards others that are Deaf or losing their hearing.

In 2024/25, our hope is that partnership development with Bolton College will enable delivery of BSL Level 2 and Deaf-inclusive adult courses too – further broadening social and cultural awareness, and growing skills for life in the Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing community in Bolton. Courses in which expressions of interest have already been received from Deaf and hearing learners include Community Interpreting, Volunteering and British Culture; Digital Skills; English and Maths; Health, Wellbeing and Confidence; and Sports and Fitness.

Lip-Reading

Following on from previous introductory courses, we had an Advanced Lip-Reading course start with 6 learners in March – and it is our hope and that of our tutor that we will be able to have this grow and run on a roll-on/roll-off basis moving forward. With the proportion of Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people in Bolton set to grow to 1 in 5 by 2030, we recognise that there's need of people on the hearing loss spectrum growing their competencies and confidence in lip reading – and as the still to be appointed Community Engagement Lead gets to work at Bolton Deaf Society, we expect the profile of this course will build and that more learners (not necessarily in receipt of our web-based and social media communications to date, possibly sitting on the wrong side of the digital skills/device access gap) will take-up the opportunities of learning through Bolton Deaf Society and in building their communications capacity, grow their readiness to navigate their way through a largely hearing world on a day-to-day basis.

Managing Deafness in a Hearing World

Aimed at deafened and hard-of-hearing people coming to emotional and practical terms with their hearing loss, this one-day course introduces Deaf culture and shares experiences of charting a path somewhere between hearing and Deaf communities. It grows awareness of basic BSL, lip reading, communications support professionals and services, welfare benefit entitlements, legal rights to request reasonable adjustment in employment and public service settings, caring for any residual hearing, ensuring that one is fully understood in communications with others and similarly that they make themselves fully understood to ensure against ill-informed decision-making and harm.

To add to the knowledge and skills of hearing professionals working with Deaf people, Bolton Deaf Society continued in the development and delivery of in-work training courses through 2023/24:

Deaf Awareness

Our Deaf Awareness course covers:

- Deaf community numbers
- Deaf culture
- Different means of Deaf communication
- the human consequences and public purse costs of Deaf exclusion
- the business case for Deaf inclusion – and legal vulnerabilities against the backdrop of the Equality Act 2010, the Accessible Information Standards 2016 and the BSL Act 2022
- adjustments that hearing people can make in their working and personal lives when it comes to Deaf inclusion
- a brief introduction to British Sign Language

Our qualified Deaf trainers delivered this course to a number of employers this year – including but not exclusive to:

- Bolton Council who are making small but helpful steps in making their Deaf recruitment and selection processes as Deaf-inclusive as possible
- Bolton GP Federation – keen to enrich their professional development courses and learning exchange workshops
- MBDA who now have 2 Deaf interns in situ and a Deaf communications training programme in place for the whole of their workforce with the stated intention of growing Deaf representation among their company employees going forward
- Eccles College who are working to increase their Deaf student intake

Approaches have been received from Bolton Dentists and Blackburn Carers Centre on the possibility of this course being rolled-out to them and delivery arrangements need to be finalised. Word is spreading on the value that we're adding through our training and there is a sense of building momentum, even a real sense of professional excitement building as to what could be achieved in system/process change and social impact terms if Bolton Deaf Society can continue to deliver this course. As we expand our team and relieve pressures on our Projects Lead, our monitoring, measurement, evaluation and reporting capacity will grow.

Interpreter Awareness

This short online course covers:

- how to book a qualified, experienced, NRCPD-registered BSL/English Interpreter
- the role of the BSL/English Interpreter
- BSL and English Syntax
- the domains BSL Interpreters work in

- how to work effectively with Interpreters
- Interpreter booking and payment
- case studies featuring failure to book Interpreters, legal breaches and personal consequences
- additional barriers the Deaf community face
- the business/ethical/moral case for Deaf inclusion

Aimed at organisations unaware of how their reliance on family members/friends interpreting can adversely impact understanding, decision-making, outcomes, costs and more, this course was delivered for the first time this year to representatives from the 49 GP Surgeries and Optometrists whose operations are overseen by Greater Manchester Integrated Care and it met with some brilliant reviews. Numbers of surgery requests for interpreters and communication support professionals have grown significantly in light of the course. We now receive and process around ten a week, and these reasonable adjustments will begin to reflect in reduced Deaf health inequalities in time. The challenge for Bolton Deaf Society is to grow the capacity and methodology required to measure and report on these differences made, and these are the current subject of discussions with the School of Health at the University of Bolton. A collaboration with their research leads may be possible here.

Inclusive Employment and Access to Work

Covering a number of subject matters, this course is intended to grow readiness for Deaf inclusion in recruitment, the workforce and service/product delivery. It:

- provides insight into the incidence of hearing loss, and more specifically the human consequences, public purse and tax-payer costs associated with Deaf exclusion from the workplace (acute financial hardship and mental ill-health in the Deaf community, the loss of £25 billion a year to the UK economy through lost tax revenues, mental health treatment costs and benefit payments etc)
- offers guidance on growing the accessibility of recruitment, selection, support/supervision/appraisal processes, in-house training and career progression arrangements
- informs employers on Government funding available to employers to help make reasonable adjustments to their online and frontline communications, purchase assistive technologies, fund Interpreters and so on in order that Deaf employees can function fully and on an equitable basis to hearing peers, adding the most value they possibly can
- gives food for thought on the benefits of engaging Deaf employees and growing capacity to connect with an audience, prospective service-users and customers across Greater Manchester numbering 185,000 in total and 11 million across the UK

In our experience, Deaf employees are well-placed to advise on Deaf-inclusive system change and external communications; very good at reading body language; respectful, but determined, tenacious and super resilient; superb problem-solvers; very loyal and hard-working employees receptive to personal and professional development opportunities and always inclined to make the very most of them. There is much value Deaf employees can add to any business operation.

Benefitting from the Inclusive Employment and Access to Work courses we delivered in 2023/24 were:

- Bolton Council (HR)
- Ingeus (employment support services)
- Places for People (the social housing provider)

As the year ended, we also had a request from The Growth Company (education, training, employment, business development, net zero and consultancy leads working across GM but headquartered in Manchester) – and this lead is to be followed-up.

If, through delivery of this course, Bolton Deaf Society can continue to open employer minds and hearts to the importance of Deaf inclusion in their workforces then we will be doing the Deaf community, businesses and the public purse/everyday taxpayer a good service.

Enterprising Development and Financial Diversification

Within the bounds of our 3 days a week capacity, Bolton Deaf Society have worked hard this year to sustain the importance of good work from last year and maintained several business development leads previous:

- working with Bolton Libraries and Museums to make their services, events and activities accessible to Deaf people – by producing captioned, BSL video content and booking BSL Interpreters

- ii. the Head of Digital Customer Service at Bolton Council wanting to commission Bolton Deaf Society to make their cross-sector service directory accessible through visual design and the incorporation of captioned, BSL content with their online version to ensure equitable access to all residents of our Borough
- iii. discussions with the Council about collaboration in making the public realm easier to navigate – the Albert Halls, public health settings, shopping centres etc

Public sector wheels sometimes turn very slowly, but Bolton Deaf Society are definitely into Deaf inclusion for the long-term.

We have also opened doors afresh:

- i. Adult Education and Domestic Violence teams at Bury Council have been in touch seeking bespoke advice, guidance and assistance around service adaptation to optimise Deaf access
- ii. Smile Dental Care, Blackburn who want Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training
- iii. Public Health Bolton, Sign Live and Transport for Greater Manchester want to take dialogue forward around making public information on bus and train services fully accessible to Deaf BSL users at the Bolton Transport Interchange
- iv. Public Health Bolton want to talk around collaboration in growing a Deaf needs data repository and integrating this with the Borough's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- v. The Met (Theatre), Bury - around front of house staff training in Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL; captioned BSL content for their website; and Performance Interpreter Booking

Once we have our new Business Development Lead in situ we expect that we will have much more capacity to make the logistical arrangements necessary; optimise efficiency in the collection of value-added evidence and sharing of good news stories; build our freelance pool of trainers and business development consultants; and go on growing new surplus-making activity. This work will be crucial indeed as we strive to earn into existence the necessary budget to help cover the cleaning and maintenance of our building, repairs, insurances, utility costs, telephone, broadband bills, ICT/HR/Financial support services through third parties, equipment, materials and aspects of our advocacy, employment and sports & physical activity services – and begin to reduce our overall reliance on fixed-term grant funding.

Learning

Bolton Deaf Society remains committed to learning and through 2023/24, two of our still new-ish managers (our Projects Lead, Zienna and Accessible Information & Advocacy Service Lead, Michael) completed Leadership Development Programmes with People Matters HR covering:

Leadership

The concepts that drive business
 Leadership v Management
 Leadership Styles
 Problem-solving and Decision-making

Team Leadership

Being an Authentic Leader
 Communication
 Diversity
 Leading Teams
 Silo Mentality
 Wellbeing Assurance

Leading Change

What is change?
 Readiness for change
 Change Leadership
 Overcoming Barriers

Employment Law Quiz and Time Management

Employment Law Quiz
The Eisenhower Principle – Urgent v Important
Delegation
Time Management Tips

Managing People Issues

Nipping things in the bud
Managing under performance
Giving feedback
Managing absence
Capability
Investigations
Discipline
Grievance
Hearings

Performance Appraisals

Options for managing performance
The basics
Preparation
Feedback
Objective setting
After the appraisal

Recruitment

Job analysis
Job descriptions and person specifications
Shortlisting
Effective interviewing
Making the decision
Pre-employment checks
Induction and probation management

Our enabling this learning and development activity by SMT colleagues should help ensure consistency in their application of policies and procedures, so too in the experiences of Bolton Deaf Society employees as they increase in number and our organisation grows.

Through the year, others in our team took-up on learning and development activity as well:

- 4 additional staff members took and completed Level 3 Safeguarding qualifications
- 4 did Fire Marshal training
- 2 completed First Aid at Work refresher courses

.... and again we expect this learning will serve the organisation well.

Planned for early in 2023/24 are still additional courses:

Level 3 Youth Work training for our 2 new youth workers – to be accessed free of charge to Bolton Deaf Society through the Community Futures Trust CIC

With the independent, Deaf-led Groups meeting in our building, the following courses will be delivered with BSL communications support on hand to ensure they are fully accessible:

- Data Protection
- Equal Opportunities
- First Aid
- Food Hygiene
- Health & Safety

- Mental Health First Aid
- Safeguarding

They will educate, empower and ensure that independent group leads are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to care for those engaged with their activity in their time on Bolton Deaf Society premises, complying with charity policy and procedure.

From a broader organisational point of view, Bolton Deaf Society has reflected and learned much as well:

Internally

- our specialist HR Trustee returning from a long sabbatical has brought fresh eyes and proposals to routine policy and procedural reviews, and she has always helped step-up Board recruitment efforts with safeguarding, health & safety and marketing & communications skill gaps ones we are keen to fill still
- the importance of maintaining routine and fiercely protecting time for Senior Management Team, wider team meetings, support, supervision and appraisal sessions – we have started to realise real benefits from the sense of common purpose, accountability and milestone pushes grown
- the value in giving more time to volunteer recruitment, induction, supervision, recognition and reward, training and provision of shadowing opportunities on site and off site
- that formal meetings with agendas don't work for our building users; informal conversation is much more effective
- that a mix of visual, BSL communications in our foyer, noticeboards and meetings work best on internal communications

Externally

- that we are making gradual inroads on the Deaf awareness of many across the public, private and third sectors of Bolton – many organisations now reaching out to Bolton Deaf Society for information, advice and guidance, but equally that there is much ground to make-up still after our organisation spent much of its first 153 years looking inwards
- that we very much need additional community engagement capacity to spread the Bolton Deaf Society word on present facilities and services (advocacy, employment and enterprise, and sports and physical activity), and those in the pipeline/early development (children and young people's services, domestic abuse support, and mental health support) breaking down barriers to engagement, and that we could benefit greatly from a business development lead to help build Deaf/hearing community bridges and grow hearing professionals capacity to grow services' accessibility
- that sometimes we need to go slower with development works than we might like to enable the growth and maintenance of shared understanding among staff, volunteers and stakeholders all engaging with Bolton Deaf Society across different schedules; all with different communication preferences and learning styles

As a Senior Management Team, we also reflected regretfully at the end of 2023/24 on not having managed to find the time to sustain a focus on/positive momentum with

- work towards Trusted Charity Mark accreditation
- stakeholder mapping and strategic relationship-building with referral agencies
- cost benefit analysis and social impact assessment

to the extent we would have liked. However, all are firmly baked into our development plans for 2024/25.

We expect that the external scrutiny Trusted Charity Mark opens us to will improve our governance and operational management, and are confident that the external coach and assessor we work with will bring invaluable experiences from work with other organisations to bear around governance; planning; leadership and management; user-centred service; managing people; learning and development; managing money and resources; external communications; work with others; assessing outcomes and impact.

Stakeholder mapping will give all in our team greater visibility on where our organisation fits in the wider strategic architecture of Bolton; several points of reference for receipt of and onward referral, also indeed plentiful food for thought on Deaf awareness and inclusion works' training/bespoke system change consultancy.

Cost benefit analysis, social accounting and visual minuting will enable Bolton Deaf Society to tell more compelling stories and evidence the impact of our varied works.

Additional core funding secured through the Garfield Weston Foundation, Lloyds Bank Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund for 2024/25 and beyond will help us ensure that some of the operational responsibilities and everyday tasks taken by the CEO and Projects Lead previously may now be delegated, freeing-up time to focus on

strengthening infrastructure, adding to connectivity and doing better, more rigorous and systematic justice to the challenge of copper-bottomed reporting on differences made and returns on investment delivered.

Public benefit

The Trustees of Bolton Deaf Society consistently have regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in determining services and activities.

Achievements and Performance

Governance

The Bolton Deaf Society Board of Trustees have continued to meet this year and reflect on and share a few 2023/24 positives here:

- ✓ our being in a place where more than 77% of our Trustees are Deaf, hard-of-hearing and/or disabled⁴, and a third are of ethnic minority origin – together bringing much life experience (of exclusion, marginalisation, prejudice and overcoming obstacles) to their roles as well as their professional expertise
- ✓ our having engaged a new Treasurer bringing much experience of senior financial management practice from the private sector, and enjoyed the benefit of a handover from our outgoing Treasurer with all his experience in the not-for-profit sector
- ✓ our having explored scope to add further to our Board through the engagement of Deaf health and safety, safeguarding, marketing and pr professionals – without success as the year end approached, but with several new ideas
- ✓ our having started to discuss and plan for a thematic Board meeting cycle covering finance, strategy, wider operations and Deaf community involvement on a rotational basis

In honest, 360-degree reflection they also recognised in March that they hadn't come as far as they'd wanted with senior staff in:

- opening our governance, leadership and management operations to independent scrutiny, stretch and challenge test through pursuit of Trusted Charity and Bolton Mark accreditation – with a view to improving policy, procedure and practice related to governance and the charity code, planning, leadership, management, user-centred service, people management, learning and development, managing money and resources, external communications, work with others, outcomes and impact reporting: all recognised as important priorities for the organisation with its future operations and social impact in mind
- pursuit of Matrix IAG accreditation for the Advocacy team
- creation of a ground-breaking Deaf Inclusion/Deaf Able recognition mark for employers
- establishing a Building and Service-Users' Forum to critically review new Bolton Deaf Society policies and plans, help guide decision-making, direction-setting and cautious, sustainable growth within the parameters set by our organisation's charitable objects but with a clear view to enhancing the place of Deaf voice in our continuing development still further

These delays were put down to unexpected, highly time-consuming occupation with a difficult staff exit; degrees of financial uncertainty for a period and scenario planning in the last 4-5 months of the year; also to degrees of employer capacity/budget constraints and reluctance; and to requirement of greater building and service-user capacity-building in preparation to take on responsibility of the sort we hope to delegate/empower/entrust them with in time to enrich our governance and leadership but the commitment to progressing these priorities is not lost only delayed.

Plus points: strategic and operational

At the end of 2023/24 Bolton Deaf Society was pleased to have grown trustee, staff and volunteer numbers as the organisation pushes forward with its needs-led development work, recognised the hard work of staff by granting additional leave to bridge the Christmas/New Year gap and giving notice of a 4% pay increase, and both provided training for and awarded certificates to volunteers. We were proud to have retained the support of Bolton's Fund, Bradshaw Gass Trust, Eric Wright Charitable Trust, Sobell Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund as well as winning the support of new core funders including Garfield Weston and Lloyds Foundation – both keen to invest in our impactful work and need-led plans for organisational and service development. We were also very thankful to Bolton Council for their opening so many doors and possibilities for the future around, for example, growing the accessibility of the recruitment and selection process for Deaf job candidates, making their cross-sector service directory available in captioned BSL format, having Interpreters make the flagship Food & Drink Festival Deaf-inclusive, enabling input on their public/VCSE leadership

⁴ Disabilities and health conditions include ADHD, Autism, Chronic and frequent migraines, anxiety and depression, Dyspraxia, Gastroesophageal reflux disease, and irritable bowel syndrome.

team days possible, allowing direct dialogue with their CEO and having the Mayor adopt us as one of his charities of the year. Their level of support has been remarkable and in years to come we have great hopes for this strong working relationship's potential. Healthwatch Bolton have shared our commitments and ambitions to encourage local health professionals' reflection on the inaccessibility of their services and unintended exacerbation of Deaf health inequalities at great social cost and expense to the public purse, working alongside the GPs Federation to make representations for change informed by Deaf Boltonians that Bolton Deaf Society has identified and empowered. And, at sub-regional level, we are pleased to have started dialogue with Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Disabled People's Panel and Transport for Greater Manchester's Disability Reference Group, also with Greater Manchester Integrated Care and the Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. Much as we continue pushing on with locally relevant and impactful service development work so we also commit more time as our staff/volunteer/confident service-user numbers grow to trying to inform and influence change.

Our Board of Trustees ended the year with much positivity and considerable anticipation, thankful for the organisational and service development progress that funders and the Deaf community in all its diversity continue to enable; grateful for the hard work of staff and volunteers; and looking forward to seeing new children and young people's services come on stream; new time-limited education and empowerment projects around hate crime and self-help through the cost-of-living crisis find traction and optimise their impact; new partnership/collaboration/merger possibilities explored further with Bury Hearing Hub and others; and new socially impactful enterprising opportunities (training and bespoke consultancy for example) made the most of as we strive to generate gradually greater unrestricted income and cover increasing insurance, utility service, office consumable, HR, financial management and administration, building maintenance and repair costs that result from the bigger picture of economic hardship and inflation with which the country contends and our growth responsive to need in a county and region where the number of specialist Deaf service providers is small and the Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing community crossing all the social intersections it does is growing in size year on year with hereditary and work-related hearing loss cases continuing to rise.

Performance reporting

Looking ahead, our organisation hopes and intends still to review and create over-arching and service/project-specific targets afresh; also to embrace and make more of cost benefit analysis and social accounting looking forward (to make reports like this more visual and impactful, easier to navigate and consider) – and yet at the same time, the need is recognised to create and embed more data collection systems and establish increased strategic management capacity if these opportunities are to be taken for public, partner, stakeholder, present and prospective funder/commissioner benefit and this is a challenge that trustees were giving much thought to in March 2024.

Funding

Grants have been secured in 2023/24 from numerous sources for several different purposes:

Towards organisational development and running costs

- Bradshaw Gass Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation

Towards core salaries and remuneration associated with new posts, and associated organisational/service development

- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- National Lottery Community Fund: Reaching Communities Programme

Towards children and young people's services

- Birkdale Trust for Hearing Impaired
- The Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
- The Inman Charity
- Toy Trust

Towards accessible information and advocacy services for adults

- Bolton's Fund
- GP Federation
- Sobell Foundation

Towards employment and enterprise services for adults

- Bolton's Fund
- The Inman Charity

Towards health and wellbeing services for adults – including sports and physical activity, and the Deaf Asian Women's Group

- Bolton's Fund
- The David Family Foundation
- Ford of Britain Trust
- GMCVO/Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
- GP Federation
- Marsh Charitable Trust
- Salford CVS/Greater Manchester Moving
- UK Deaf Sport
- Zochonis Charitable Trust

All grants are listed in notes 2 and 3 of the Accounts.

The support of all these funders is hugely appreciated, and as in previous years emails and letters of thanks, update reports and/or invitations to visit, see and understand the difference they have enabled were issued.

Special thanks are also due this year to Revd David Evans, his bereaved family and parish in Halliwell, Bolton for his generous legacy gift.

Returns/interest payments on investments this year were up by more than 39% on last year, and though the monetary return of £6,853 was quite modest still, this increase in return was a positive reflection on investments being managed well, largely by CCLA.

Looking ahead, we anticipate challenges in sustaining organisational/service development and wider-ranging operations at the level required by the Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing communities across Bolton and surrounding areas, also by the public service providers in the areas we serve as they continue to grapple with training budget cuts but also continue in too many instances to fall short in fulfilment of their legal duties towards Deaf inclusion and compliance with requirements of the Equality Act, Accessible Information Standards and BSL Act. The irony is that failed provision of accessible, equitable Deaf community support leads to issues' escalation and greater public purse costs than would have been incurred had the resourcing of earlier intervention been possible, and in this difficult context Bolton Deaf Society are fully committed to enable public/third sector service providers to do more and be more for the 15%+ of the local population that live with and too frequently have their lives limited by facility/service inadequacies. These income generation and system change challenges will be tackled in parallel through focused financial diversification and continued growth and training of the staff team as budget allows. Pushing to win more contracts and greater corporate support are big priorities for 2024/25 as we redouble our efforts to get closer to sustainable operations.

Capital works

The Deaf Centre on Bark Street remains Bolton Deaf Society's largest asset in financial and practical terms. Without it, service delivery would be so much more difficult. Following on from substantive refurbishment works over the last two years, we have this year replaced rotten first floor windows and foyer flooring, also getting air conditioning quotes for the first floor and the Board and Senior Management Team are both committed to continued incremental improvements as unrestricted funds allow, so also to ensuring that staff and volunteers delivering on outreach work are properly equipped. Funds for capital expenditure are often hard to come by, but as our organisation starts to earn more and raise more so we hope that we will be able to stay ahead with all that's necessary.

Financial review

Overview

Through 2023/24, Bolton Deaf Society continued on its positive organisational development trajectory:

- ✓ foundation-laying for a solid start in pre-school, Bright Start Play Group and Futures Youth Group delivery by securing funds for and filling 4 new, part-time, term-time roles
- ✓ extending wider-reaching and more impactful Deaf-inclusive sports and physical activity options to the Deaf community in all its diversity

- ✓ empowering Deaf-led groups in their more effective, efficient and transparent governance and book-keeping/accounts' production, enhanced operations/policy and procedural regulation, profile-building, interest and income generation – with a particular focus on the Darby & Joan and Sports & Social Clubs to start
- ✓ increasing income marginally, catching-up with restricted expenditure and reducing losses
- ✓ securing an extension on our interim interpreter and communications support bookings contract with Greater Manchester Integrated Care (Bolton), and beginning to secure bookings from a number of other public and third sector service providers in our Borough as Deaf awareness and understanding of legal and ethical importance around reasonable adjustment grows
- ✓ starting to build a repository of quantitative evidence of impact through service and contract delivery, supporting case studies and testimonials – in preparing the way for new and additional tenders, hopeful of winning other local, Deaf community experience and prospect-enhancing contracts in Bolton and surrounding areas
- ✓ starting to get smarter in additional evaluation and reporting methods' deployment that do not rely on participant/respondent reading and writing capacity
- ✓ re-organising staffing commitments by reducing Advocacy and Employment & Enterprise teams in size (and at the same time growing scope for freelance, sessional staff and volunteer involvement when needed), and creating budget capacity for an Office Manager to oversee the work of our Business Administrator, add to website and social media, and wider buildings (Bark Street and outreach base) and operational management capacity
- ✓ creating new Community Engagement and Business Development roles to grow Bolton Deaf Society's reach into Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing communities, increasing service/project take-up and impact, and also to create additional business/employer/community supporter involvement capacity as we strive still further to grow local capacity for Deaf inclusion and begin onboarding corporate and community supporters to help add to the unrestricted funds generated to support infrastructure and operating costs through a period of growth
- ✓ bringing on board extra book-keeping, credit control, management control, budget planning and cash flow projections management capacity
- ✓ engaging a new, third-party HR company to provide support
- ✓ reviewing our computer network's capacity to support growth and beginning to explore options alternative to our established technical support service provider and the pros and cons associated with each – again in anticipation of growth

The biggest financial successes of the year were, however, in securing 3 years' support from both Lloyds Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund's Reaching Communities programme and we are both hugely grateful for their assistance and excited by what Bolton Deaf Society can achieve before the end of March 2027.

Details of the grants secured in 2023/4 are given in notes 2 and 3 to the accounts and expenditure against funds and balances carried forward are shown in note 15.

Principal funding sources

In 2023/24, Bolton Deaf Society was funded principally through charitable grants again:

Charitable and other grants	85.1%
Donations and legacies	4.1%
Investment and other income	10.8%

Through the year, however, Bolton Deaf Society was very pleased to begin booking Interpreters, Lip Speakers, Communication Support Workers and similar for the 49 GP Surgeries and Optometrists across the Borough of Bolton. Servicing this interim contract with Greater Manchester Integrated Care will begin to diversify our organisation's income streams, and all the more so as the profile of this service builds and ad-hoc bookings from across Bolton start to grow in number – from the Council, the NHS Foundation Trust, The Octagon Theatre, the College and University, and institutions/service providers aside.

As 2023/24 ended, moreover, the charity was beginning to build good, strong working relationships with sensory/adult services/early intervention teams in the Borough of Wigan – one of our neighbouring local authority areas. Our Advocates were getting increasingly busy in servicing referrals from Wigan, there being no specialist Deaf service provider in those areas; invited to deliver Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training to frontline colleagues in independent living; and requested to assist Deaf people in safe familiarisation with adaptive equipment and enabling technologies given for use in the home and community settings. Going forward, our hope is that there will be chance to do more in Wigan for the betterment of Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing citizens' lives. Doing greater social good in line with Bolton Deaf Society's charitable objectives and increasing unrestricted incomes earned for investment in strengthening our core functions would clearly be good all round.

Investment policy

The Trustees remain cautious around Bolton Deaf Society's investments and lower yield for greater security remains a compromise with which the Board are content at the end of 2023/24.

Reserves policy

It is the policy of Trustees to hold not more than 6 months' running costs in free reserves (unrestricted funds not invested in fixed assets or otherwise designated). Free reserves as at 31st March 2024 were £140,472 against an agreed budget of £343,878 for 2024/25, which equates to c. 5 months' operational costs. It is our expectation that as we onboard our new Business Development Lead and she begins to generate income through commissioned service delivery, training and community fundraising that we will begin to build Bolton Deaf Society's reserves again and if the proposed merger goes through with Bury Hearing Hub, then we will be able to grow unrestricted revenues further as our organisation's reach increases and scope for wider-ranging business development and community fundraising presents. At the same time, it is not lost on anyone at Bolton Deaf Society that as our organisation grows so governance, office running, building maintenance/repair, insurance, interpreter, rent, bookkeeping, accounting and other costs will increase so some of these increased revenues will need to be ringfenced.

Going concern

The Trustees believe that Bolton Deaf Society remains on a positive trajectory, and at the financial year end have no concerns to report on the organisation's viability going forward.

Future plans

Bolton Deaf Society is pleased with progress made this year towards/in bringing new, needs-led services on stream, not least:

- i. our *Bright Start* pre-school, play and early years education group for Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing 0-5 year olds – building communication, fine and gross motor skills, independent toileting capacity, hand-washing and maintenance of basic hygiene skills, eating and drinking skills, friendships, comfort in play, expressive arts and design skills, very basic literacy/numeracy/ICT skills, group work skills and emotional resilience
- ii. BSL Level 1 courses in close collaboration with Bolton College
- iii. captioned, BSL video-making for Bolton Council and other public service providers in the Borough
- iv. Deaf Asian Women's exercise and walking groups
- v. Deaf-inclusion training – take-up having surpassed expectations in 2023/24 with a large number of organisations benefitting including:

- ✓ Bolton College
- ✓ Bolton Council
- ✓ Bolton St. Catherine's Academy
- ✓ Bolton Leisure Centres
- ✓ Bolton Sixth Form College
- ✓ Bury Brownies and Girl Guides
- ✓ Carrs Pasties
- ✓ Eccles College
- ✓ GP Federation
- ✓ Greater Manchester North Diabetes Eye Screening Programme (In Health Intelligence)
- ✓ MBDA
- ✓ The Met
- ✓ National Lottery Community Fund
- ✓ Places for People

and

- ✓ Wigan Council

Due to the year being such a busy one, appraisal of the social enterprise start-up option with a view to channelling socially impactful enterprise activity through it and this, in turn, supporting Bolton Deaf Society was deferred but with a clear intention to revisit this option in 2024/25 in which we will engage several new staff and free-up SMT members' time to move such strategic options forward.

A handful of other priorities were agreed by the Board as needing to be carried forward to 2024/25 as well, time having run away with our part-time staff team and other pressures and priorities having occupied intended production partners:

- i. work with expert partners including MHIST and 1Point to make talking therapies, behavioural, cognitive, holistic and complementary therapies accessible to and culturally inclusive of Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people across the Borough of Bolton and surrounding areas – also relationship-counselling and support for Deaf victims of domestic violence
- ii. work to develop children and young people's service provision offering:
 - healthy recreation, personal, social and emotional development among Deaf 11-16 year olds
 - opportunities of social action, informing service and community development for Deaf 16-18 year olds plus chance to train and work towards accredited youth work qualifications as prospective Deaf leaders of services at Bolton Deaf Society going forward
- iii. age-appropriate domestic and community safety courses for Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing adults, children and young people

Through quarter 4 of 2023/24, conversations also started with the Board of Trustees at Bury Hearing Hub, formerly Communi8 and Bury Deaf Society – these about the position in which the organisation found itself: pleased by the 'new Board's' debt clearance and maintenance of sound meeting facilities, active, mostly self-directed groups furthering their learning around ICT skills, crafts and lip-reading, and enjoying light-hearted recreation; and at the same time tired by the challenge of building confidence and trust in the Deaf community, clarity afresh on Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing needs, priorities and preferences, and pushing forward to bring new projects and services to life, to inform and influence strategy and budget development work across the public and third sectors in Bury. At the end of March, it was hoped that a merger might be agreed with inaccessible, expensive to run property sale the plan and a shift in emphasis towards tangible, impactful service delivery led by Bolton Deaf Society with all its experience. Other options were being considered including property sale and reversion to a small, volunteer-led operation in a less expensive location away from the town centre and straight closure, but our charity expressed keen interest in sustaining and building needs-led provision there – across the Borough of Bury. Discussions were expected to continue in the new financial year and conclude by Summer 2024. All at Bolton looked forward with some excitement to the possibilities and potential presenting in Bury with chance to save and build back impactful services there rather than allowing them to run down or disappear as in East Lancashire, Trafford and numerous other locations over recent years.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

Bolton Deaf Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), registered charity number 1191838, and is governed by its foundation constitution dated October 15th 2020, as amended on 15/12/2021 and a Board of Trustees. The assets, liabilities and operations of the previous unincorporated charity (registered number 215340) were transferred to this CIO on 15th October 2020.

Appointment of trustees

Following a comprehensive recruitment process, Trustees are appointed by the Board of Trustees at their meeting and serve for a period of three years before being subject to re-election. Through quarters 2, 3 and 4 of 2023/24, Bolton Deaf Society was actively trying to recruit new, additional Trustees with expertise in Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Deaf-inclusive Marketing, Communications and PR, but attracting interested and suitably well-equipped is a challenge with which the organisation must push forward to strengthen its self-regulation and quality assurance capacity.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees receive a full induction and training appropriate to their portfolio of responsibilities, as well as regular refresher training on good governance and peer support. Business and training calendars remain Board commitments.

Organisation

The Bolton Deaf Society Board of Trustees must have no more than eight and no fewer than three trustees. The charity's governing document does not specify how often the Board should meet, but in practice meetings are held monthly, with the day-to-day management of the charity delegated to the CEO, Projects Lead and Accessible Information and Advocacy Service Lead (the SMT). Once the new Officer Manager and Business Development Lead are in place – early in 2024/25 all being well – they will join the SMT as well and grow its membership to 5.

Co-operation with other organisations

Keen to maximise reach, effectiveness and efficiency, Bolton Deaf Society goes on linking with public, private and third sector organisations active across the Borough and surrounding local areas and through 2023/24, we established a number of value-adding working relationships:

Accessible Information and Advocacy

Particularly pleasing this year is that in addition to working with Deaf people to relieve stress by making representations and breaking system access/progress barriers, our Advocates have been able to help a number of local service providers improve first-time, day-round, year-round accessibility for Deaf, BSL-users:

- ✓ Bolton GP Federation on their on-going journey to Deaf inclusion
- ✓ Boost Electric and Gas who now recognise that a telephone helpline is inaccessible to Deaf people, as are complicated, text heavy guidance notes and application forms – actively seeking to make changes to the way they work and improve their customer services for Deaf people
- ✓ DWP/Job Centre Plus who have now committed to planning Deaf Awareness, Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training to improve the accessibility of their communications and service delivery
- ✓ MBDA, one of Bolton's largest employers who are now committed to delivering a Deaf-inclusive apprenticeships programme
- ✓ Nationwide Building Society who now provide BSL Interpreters in-branch in Bolton
- ✓ Trading Standards' Friends Against Scams Team on a Bolton's Fund funded video series centred on self-help through the cost-of-living crisis
- ✓ The University of Bolton who are keen to work with our charity on growing the accessibility of their external communications, teaching and learner support arrangements for Deaf learners mindful that no other institution in Greater Manchester or the wider North West currently makes this commitment to enabling and empowering profoundly Deaf BSL-users to fulfil their educational potential

Employment and Enterprise

Through 2023/24, restricted funding constraints meant that we needed to reduce from two to one Employment and Enterprise Adviser with new emphases on partnership working and opening doors to service capacity-building with a view to enabling employer and training provider compliance with their equitable access duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Accessible Information Standards 2016 and the BSL Act 2022 (also freelance and volunteer involvement options to the fore); reducing the incidence of Deaf unemployment and associated costs to the public purse in the form of welfare benefit claims, lost tax revenues and mental health treatment costs; and growing financial independence in the Deaf community. Bolton at Home have been particularly pro-active this year in working with Bolton Deaf Society to create Deaf-inclusive work experience placements and progression pathways. Their support has been greatly appreciated and they have now set a bar that other employers in the Borough of Bolton – home to 47,500 Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing people – can hopefully step-up to.

Sport and Physical Activity

In 2023/24, we extended our Deaf and Interpreter Awareness and Basic BSL training to Bolton Arena, Farnworth and Horwich Leisure Centres, and secured 18 Deaf sign-ups to fully-inclusive Deaf fitness sessions – and looking ahead to 2024/25, we plan to build on these foundations in working to grow participation still further through collaboration with Vector Training in delivery on a Level 2 qualification for Deaf Personal Trainers to get them employment ready and establish a cohort of role models that will further encourage Deaf participation in gym-based activity and open eyes, hearts and minds to badminton, football, tennis, running and all manner of other activity options on site at Leisure Centres across our Borough, an area in which Deaf health inequalities are stark:

- D/deaf people are twice as likely to have high blood pressure which has not been diagnosed, also more likely than hearing people to have undiagnosed diabetes, high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease
- D/deaf people are put at greater risk of preventable heart attacks and strokes, and diabetic complications such as kidney failure and blindness (strokes adversely impact life experience and personal capacity often, but also cost the NHS £48,725 per person according to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Unit Cost Database; other treatments put additional demands on the already over-stretched public purse)
- Almost a third of D/deaf people report depression such are the inequalities they encounter in education/training, the barriers in health care, the blockages in recruitment and selection processes, and the lacking D/deaf awareness and equitable communications provision in many public and private sector amenities. Barrier fatigue is dispiriting and often leads to social withdrawal and inactivity

- 71% of the D/deaf population are overweight; 30% are obese – both disproportionately higher percentages than in the hearing population due to inequitable education, reduced opportunities of incidental learning through written and broadcast media/passing conversation, inaccessible public health information and GP advice etc etc

Growing participation in sport and physical activity is clearly not the only answer, but local works do go on in parallel to grow the accessibility of Public Health materials and campaign messaging, so the inclusivity of GP and acute health care services.

More widely, we were fortunate enough to work this year with:

- ✓ Bolton Council – to whom Bolton Deaf Society provides support in making public consultation exercises accessible to Deaf people whose first language, BSL, is visual and not written or spoken; the One Stop Shop who have integrated Sign Live into their service delivery this year to make frontline information, advice and guidance around neighbourhood management, community safety, public amenities, births, marriages, deaths and much besides; and the Community Safety Team who have trained Bolton Deaf Society staff around hate crime and duly accredited Bolton Deaf Society as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre
- ✓ Bolton Council of Mosques who refer into our Deaf Asian Women's Group
- ✓ Bury and Bolton Citizens Advice Bureau who have shown keen interest in working with Bolton Deaf Society through 2024/25 to maximise Deaf awareness and Basic BSL competencies among their staff
- ✓ Closha Associates and Trading Standards around optimising conference accessibility and raising awareness of the importance of making consumer safety guidelines and scam/self-protection toolkits Deaf/BSL-user inclusive
- ✓ Deaf Sport UK and Transport for Greater Manchester on film-making that features our Deaf Asian Women's Group
- ✓ Bolton Food & Drink, Film and Pride Festivals to arrange Interpreters and Performance Interpreters – increasing programmes' accessibility
- ✓ Crystal Life Planning to make their advice on estates, trusts, wills, funeral planning and more accessible to Deaf people – also gifting Bolton Deaf Society a generous contribution this month
- ✓ Greater Manchester Police to make their Victim Support Services Leaflet accessible to Deaf, BSL-users whose reading capacity is often low due to shortfalls in communications and study support in the 'inclusive', mainstream education system
- ✓ The Office for Product Safety and Standards in Central Government with whom we have made self-help product safety videos
- ✓ Pheniks Division who have provided First Aid and Safeguarding training...
- ✓ ... and many besides

Trustees and senior staff would like to thank all for their continued support in 2023/24. You have enriched our service provision considerably and from working with you our organisation has learned a great deal.

Strategic and operational management

The day-to-day running of Bolton Deaf Society is devolved to the Chief Executive Officer, John Hesketh, and in setting-out and progressing development plans this year, he has again been keen to align activity with need. From a strategic point of view, he has:

- ✓ helped on onboard two new Deaf Trustees
- ✓ grown the charity's HR management capacity overseeing the refresh of contracts, terms & conditions; policies and procedures; and difficult case management arrangements
- ✓ engaged Eleven Accounts to grow book-keeping capacity and Whiteley Accountancy Services to add capacity around budget planning, management accounting, cash flow projection, annual accounts' production and independent examination
- ✓ secured core funding and created new Office Manager, Community Engagement Lead and Business Development Lead roles to help create new operational management, outreach and involvement, and financial diversification capacity
- ✓ committed to completion of a School for Social Entrepreneurs course in Trading and Sustainability with the organisation's future financial wellbeing in mind
- ✓ started to appraise the prospect of a merger with/takeover of Bury Hearing Hub
- ✓ started to prepare the way for pursuit of Trusted Charity Mark and Bolton Mark accreditation (after significant delay caused by competing priorities and pressures), opening different aspects of our governance, leadership and operational management arrangements to independent scrutiny and assessment in the interests of improvement – governance in practice, leadership development, management, user-centred service development, people management, learning and development, managing money and resources, external communications, work with others, and assessing outcomes and impacts

... all to help underpin and support growth in activity on and off site with direct benefit for the Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing communities we serve and growth of hearing professionals' capacity for Deaf community inclusion in mind. New people and arrangements are bedding-in but getting all working to full potential and benefit will take a short while.

In operational terms, 2023/24 sadly saw Bolton Deaf Society lose a Buildings Lead (and at the year-end efforts were on-going to recruit a successor), Employment & Enterprise Adviser and Deaf Advocate (due to requirements of budget trimming and a resignation respectively), but on a positive note these staffing losses have necessitated more creative thinking and given rise to peripatetic, freelance engagement where needed and more partnership-working. Volunteer numbers grew from 2 to 9 in year, new colleagues assisting with visitor reception, office administration, caretaking, outreach, consultation and promotion – and supported by the new Volunteer Co-ordinator role we have created.

As the financial year drew to a close, plans were being made for Trustee training in safeguarding as part of the Board's on-going refresh, learning and development programme, also for staff away days to aid future plans' enrichment, agree and start embedding refreshed values and quality standards across increasingly far-reaching operations.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees are required to:

- ✓ select suitable accounting policies and apply them appropriately
- ✓ observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) (second edition – October 2019)
- ✓ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- ✓ state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements
- ✓ prepare the Financial Statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with the Charities Act 2022. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by



Ms Rebecca Pickup, Chair of the Board
Bolton Deaf Society
2nd October 2024

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Bolton Deaf Society (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name: Matthew Whiteley FCA

Professional Body: ICAEW

Whiteley Accountancy Services LLP
14 Warwick Road
Stockport
SK4 4LY

Date: 3rd October 2024

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including the Income and Expenditure account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
INCOME					
Donations	2	44,621	3,000	47,621	32,070
Charitable activities	3	34,922	102,584	137,506	150,518
Other trading activities	4	15,639	-	15,639	10,018
Investment income	5	6,853	-	6,853	4,896
TOTAL INCOME		<u>102,035</u>	<u>105,584</u>	<u>207,619</u>	<u>197,502</u>
EXPENDITURE					
Cost of raising funds	6	61,100	-	61,100	4
Charitable activities	7	19,624	157,709	177,333	182,363
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>80,724</u>	<u>157,709</u>	<u>238,433</u>	<u>182,367</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	12	(3,201)	-	(3,201)	(13,537)
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) BEFORE TRANSFERS		<u>18,110</u>	<u>(52,125)</u>	<u>(34,015)</u>	<u>1,598</u>
Transfer between funds		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>18,110</u>	<u>(52,125)</u>	<u>(34,015)</u>	<u>1,598</u>
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		<u>247,749</u>	<u>94,336</u>	<u>342,085</u>	<u>340,487</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>265,859</u></u>	<u><u>42,211</u></u>	<u><u>308,070</u></u>	<u><u>342,085</u></u>

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY**BALANCE SHEET****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible Assets	11		125,388		122,918
Investments	12		72,472		75,673
			<u>197,860</u>		<u>198,591</u>
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	13	18,479		5,375	
Cash at Bank and in Hand		117,488		152,654	
		<u>135,967</u>		<u>158,029</u>	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	14	<u>25,757</u>		<u>14,535</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			<u>110,210</u>		<u>143,494</u>
NET ASSETS			<u>308,070</u>		<u>342,085</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted	15		265,859		247,749
Restricted	15		42,211		94,336
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>308,070</u>		<u>342,085</u>

The notes on pages 33 to 41 form part of these financial statements.

For the year ending 31/03/24 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

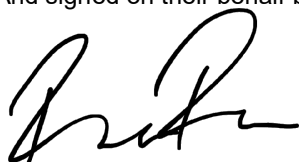
- The Trustees have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,

- The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 2nd October 2024

And signed on their behalf by:



Ms Rebecca Pickup, Chair of the Board

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. Accounting Policies

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Basis of preparation

The Financial Statements have been prepared: under the historic cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments (as set out below) through the statement of financial activities; in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts and with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) effective January 1 2019 (second edition – October 2019); and the Charities Act 2022 and UK Generally Accepted Practice.

The accounts (Financial Statements) have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

The financial statements are prepared in £ sterling, the functional currency of the charity.

Estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably. The following applies to particular types of income:

Grants, whether of a capital or revenue nature, are recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions have been met and it is probable that the income will be received.

Donations from individuals and other bodies (not being of the nature of a grant) are recognised when receivable.

Earned income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable for services and goods supplied, net of discounts and VAT.

Deferred income

Income is only deferred and included in creditors when:

- ✓ The income relates to a future accounting period
- ✓ A sales invoice has been raised ahead of the work being carried out and there is no contractual entitlement to the income until the work has been done
- ✓ Not all the terms and conditions of the grant have been met, including the incurring of expenditure and the grant conditions are such that unspent grant must be refunded

1. Accounting Policies (continued)

Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds - including those associated with fundraising activities and managing investments

Charitable activities - costs of undertaking the work of the charity.

The charity is not registered for VAT and cannot recover any input tax charged. Costs are stated inclusive of VAT were charged.

Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions which assist the work of the charity either by supporting the delivery of charitable activities or by supporting the generation of funds. They include back-office functions, staff costs, management support, insurance and professional fees.

Pension contributions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees, agreeing the contribution rates with each individual. The contributions are paid to a third party (NEST Pensions) who invest the contributions in a money purchase plan. Contributions are charged to the SoFA as they become payable.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Individual fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful lives on a straight-line basis as set-out below.

The leasehold land and buildings are held on leases dating from 19th century which are exceptional in that they are for 5,000 and 4,900 years. The Trustees have taken the view that given the length of the leases the cost effectively represents the value of the land on which the buildings sit. As land does not itself depreciate, and given the unexpired terms of the lease, it is currently equivalent to holding a freehold title, and therefore no depreciation should be charged.

Depreciation rates for other assets are as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	25% reducing balance

Investments, gains and losses

Fixed assets investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recorded at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. The SoFA includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluation and on disposals throughout the period.

Gains and losses are taken to the Statement of Financial Activities as they arise. Realised gains and losses are calculated as the difference between sale proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the opening carrying value or cost, if acquired during the period.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due and prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1. Accounting Policies (continued)

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement account.

Financial instruments

The charity has only basic financial instruments which are initially recorded at cost, and with the exception of investments (as set-out above) subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Statement of cashflows

Advantage is taken of the exemptions in SoRP not to present a statement of cashflows.

2. DONATIONS & LEGACIES

	Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	2023 Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Other revenue grants						
Bradshaw Gass Trust	1,200	-	1,200	1,200	-	1,200
Garfield Weston 24/25	10,000	-	10,000	-	-	-
Lloyds Bank 24/25	25,000	-	25,000	-	-	-
	36,200	-	36,200	1,200	-	1,200
Grants – refurbishment & furniture						
Bradshaw Gass Trust	-	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
Clear Futures	-	-	-	-	500	500
Ford Britain Trust	-	3,000	3,000	-	-	-
Kirby Foundation	-	-	-	-	14,610	14,610
Liverpool & Skelton Charity	-	-	-	-	1,680	1,680
Manchester Guardian	-	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Screwfix Foundation	-	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
The Albert Hunt Trust	-	-	-	-	2,000	2,000
	-	3,000	3,000	-	29,790	29,790
Donations & legacies						
Donations – General	2,421	-	2,421	1,080	-	1,080
Legacies	6,000	-	6,000	-	-	-
	8,421	-	8,421	1,080	-	1,080
TOTAL	44,621	3,000	47,621	2,280	29,790	32,070

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Big Lottery Community Fund	-	25,000	25,000	-	88,372	88,372
	-	25,000	25,000	-	88,372	88,372
Accessible Information Service:						
Axis Foundation	-	-	-	-	3,500	3,500
Bolton's Fund	-	11,220	11,220	-	-	-
Eric Wright Charitable Trust	-	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
GM High Sheriffs Police Trust	-	-	-	-	3,516	3,516
Sobell Foundation 24/25	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
The John Slater Foundation	-	-	-	-	1,500	1,500
The Peter Kershaw Trust	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,500
	-	21,220	21,220	-	26,016	26,016
Health and Wellbeing (including Sports and Social Activities):						
Bolton Fund	-	8,541	8,541	-	15,000	15,000
Forever Manchester	-	-	-	-	900	900
The David Family Foundation	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-
The John Slater Foundation	-	-	-	-	1,500	1,500
GMCVO	-	1,322	1,322	-	3,000	3,000
Marsh Charitable Trust	-	500	500	-	-	-
Provincial Walsh Trust	-	-	-	-	500	500
Salford CVS	-	2,000	2,000	-	1,980	1,980
UKH	-	-	-	-	3,000	3,000
UK Deaf Sport	-	3,000	3,000	-	-	-
The Zochonis Charitable Trust	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	-
	-	21,363	21,363	-	25,880	25,880
Other grants:						
Birkdale Trust	-	3,000	3,000	-	-	-
Bolton CVS: Employment	-	1,000	1,000	-	10,250	10,250
Bolton CVS: Scams Awareness	-	6,300	6,300	-	-	-
The Postcode Neighbourhood Trust	-	16,749	16,749	-	-	-
The Inman Charity	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	-
Toy Trust	-	2,952	2,952	-	-	-
	-	35,001	35,001	-	10,250	10,250
Other income:						
Interpreting	34,921	-	34,921	-	-	-
Café	1	-	1	-	-	-
	34,922	-	34,922	-	-	-
TOTAL	34,922	102,584	137,506	-	150,518	150,518

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
4. INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES						
Courses Provided by BDS	9,495	-	9,495	2,080	-	2,080
Room hire	3,995	-	3,995	2,085	-	2,085
Other income	2,149	-	2,149	5,853	-	5,853
TOTAL	15,639	-	15,639	10,018	-	10,018
5. INVESTMENT INCOME						
Income from listed investments	5,464	-	5,464	4,896	-	4,896
Bank interest	1,389	-	1,389	-	-	-
TOTAL	6,853	-	6,853	4,896	-	4,896
6. COST OF RAISING FUNDS						
Direct staff costs	15,620	-	15,620	-	-	-
Freelance	2,178	-	2,178	-	-	-
Other fundraising costs	5,535	-	5,535	4	-	4
Professional fees	200	-	200	-	-	-
Support costs	37,567	-	37,567	-	-	-
TOTAL	61,100	-	61,100	4	-	4
7. CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE						
Salary costs	50,998	-	50,998	67,248	-	67,248
Freelance costs	13,555	-	13,555	-	-	-
Interpreters	42,934	-	42,934	3,404	-	3,404
Other direct costs	3,551	-	3,551	2,041	-	2,041
Premises	26,871	-	26,871	85,205	-	85,205
Volunteer expenses	490	-	490	23	-	23
Depreciation	(206)	-	(206)	2,996	-	2,996
Support and governance costs	39,140	-	39,140	21,446	-	21,446
Allocated to restricted funds	(157,709)	157,709	-	(261,606)	261,606	-
TOTAL	19,624	157,709	177,333	(79,243)	261,606	182,363
8. SUPPORT & GOVERNANCE COSTS						
Support costs						
Staff costs	37,567	-	37,567	-	-	-
Insurance	-	5,218	5,218	-	3,959	3,959
Office costs & other costs	-	20,749	20,749	-	11,199	11,199
TOTAL	37,567	25,967	63,534	-	15,158	15,158
Governance costs						
Professional fees	-	13,173	13,173	-	6,288	6,288
TOTAL	-	13,173	13,173	-	6,288	6,288
Total support costs	37,567	39,140	76,707	-	21,446	21,446

Costs that can be wholly attributed to either support or governance are allocated directly to those functions, and other costs are allocated either on the basis of the estimation of time spent (freelance staff) or consumption of resources (office costs).

Support and governance costs are then allocated between costs of raising funds and charitable activities on the basis of the estimation of the use of resources, using a standard percentage method.

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

9. NET INCOMING RESOURCES AFTER TRANSFERS

	2024 £	2023 £
This is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Accountant/Independent examiner's fees (inc VAT)		
Report	1,320	1,000
Accountancy (including charges for prior year)	7,074	3,947
Depreciation charged on fixed assets	(207)	2,997
Directors' remuneration & trustees' expenses	<u>78</u>	<u>-</u>

10. STAFF COSTS

	2024 £	2023 £
a Staff costs		
Salaries and wages	101,663	65,928
Social security costs	492	-
Pension costs	1,553	1,875
	<u>103,708</u>	<u>67,803</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 in either year

b Key management personnel

The key management personnel comprise the trustees and Chief executive. The trustees do not receive any remuneration for their services.

The average number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Average Number	2023 Average Number
Charitable	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>
	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Long leasehold land & buildings	Fixture & fittings	Computer equipment	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
As at 1 April 2023	120,000	7,105	5,938	133,043
Additions/(Disposals)	-	1,115	1,149	2,264
As at 31 March 2024	<u>120,000</u>	<u>8,220</u>	<u>7,087</u>	<u>135,307</u>
Depreciation				
As at 1 April 2023	-	5,501	4,625	10,126
Charge for the year	-	(41)	(166)	(207)
As at 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>5,460</u>	<u>4,459</u>	<u>9,919</u>
Net Book Value				
As at 31 March 2024	<u>120,000</u>	<u>2,760</u>	<u>2,628</u>	<u>125,388</u>
As at 31 March 2023	<u>120,000</u>	<u>1,604</u>	<u>1,313</u>	<u>122,918</u>

An over depreciation in the accounts ending 31 March 2023 was identified and has been corrected in this year's depreciation figure.

12. INVESTMENTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Market value brought forward	75,673	89,210
Additions at cost	-	-
Net gains/(losses)	(3,201)	(13,537)
As at 31 March 2024	<u>72,472</u>	<u>75,673</u>
Investments are represented by:		
COIF Charity Funds	72,472	75,673
	<u>72,472</u>	<u>75,673</u>

13. DEBTORS

Debtors receivable	15,165	5,375
Prepayments & other debtors	3,314	-
	<u>18,479</u>	<u>5,375</u>

14. CREDITORS falling due within one year

Social security and other taxes	2,156	220
Accruals	23,597	14,313
Rounding	4	2
	<u>25,757</u>	<u>14,535</u>

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

15. STATEMENT OF FUNDS	Balance 01/04/23	Income	Expenditure	Gains & Losses	Transfers	Balance 31/03/24
Unrestricted Funds:	£	£	£	£	£	£
General fund	247,749	102,035	(80,724)	(3,201)	-	265,859
	<u>247,749</u>	<u>102,035</u>	<u>(80,724)</u>	<u>(3,201)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>265,859</u>
Restricted Funds:						
Refurbishment & furniture:						
Other funding	500	3,000	(3,500)	-	-	-
Big Lottery Community Fund	38,829	25,000	(63,829)	-	-	-
Accessible Information Service	16,667	21,220	(27,887)	-	-	10,000
Health and Wellbeing	24,730	21,363	(45,593)	-	-	500
Other grants	13,610	35,001	(16,900)	-	-	31,711
	<u>94,336</u>	<u>105,584</u>	<u>(157,709)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>42,211</u>
Total Funds	<u>342,085</u>	<u>207,619</u>	<u>(238,433)</u>	<u>(3,201)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>308,070</u>

Restricted funds carried forward

Accessible Information Service	Future costs of service
Health And Wellbeing	Health, Sports, Social and Deaf Inclusion Projects
Other grants	Bolton Fund £3,550 for Scams Awareness
	Axis Foundation £3,500 for Scams Awareness
	Bolton Fund £1,960 for making the most of your hearing
	Toy Trust £2,952 for Youth Services
	Birkdale Trust £3,000 for Youth Services
	The Post Code Neighbourhood Trust for Youth Services £16,749

For the prior year	Balance 01/04/22	Income	Expenditure	Gains & Losses	Transfers	Balance 31/03/23
Unrestricted Funds:	£	£	£	£	£	£
General fund	288,783	17,194	(44,691)	(13,537)	-	247,749
	<u>288,783</u>	<u>17,194</u>	<u>(44,691)</u>	<u>(13,537)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>247,749</u>
Restricted Funds:						
Refurbishment & furniture:						
Loops	698	-	(698)	-	-	-
Other funding	-	29,790	(29,290)	-	-	500
Big Lottery Community Fund	14,220	88,372	(63,763)	-	-	38,829
Accessible Information Service	27,416	26,016	(36,765)	-	-	16,667
Health and Wellbeing	1,166	25,880	(2,316)	-	-	24,730
Other grants	8,204	10,250	(4,844)	-	-	13,610
	<u>51,704</u>	<u>180,308</u>	<u>(137,676)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>94,336</u>
Total Funds	<u>340,487</u>	<u>197,502</u>	<u>(182,367)</u>	<u>(13,537)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>342,085</u>

BOLTON DEAF SOCIETY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

16. ANALYSIS OF COMPANY NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	125,387	-	125,387
Investments	72,472	-	72,472
Net current assets	68,000	42,211	110,211
	<u>265,859</u>	<u>42,211</u>	<u>308,070</u>
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	122,918	-	122,918
Investments	75,673	-	75,673
Net current assets	49,158	94,336	143,494
	<u>247,749</u>	<u>94,336</u>	<u>342,085</u>

17. TAXATION

The Company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

18. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

There were no capital commitments authorised and contracted for at the end of the year (2023 £Nil).