

Guide for Tourist Organisations

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 requires that organisations that are open to the public must make reasonable adjustment to accommodate disabled people. Deaf people are defined as a “protected” group in this category.

The British Deaf Association (BDA) exists to ensure that Deaf people who use British Sign Language (BSL) achieve equality. The BDA estimates that up to 80% of our beneficiaries struggle with English. Many official documents are difficult to read and many websites are difficult to navigate if the English is too complicated. Many Deaf people have therefore similar issues to foreign visitors who may also struggle with English.

Improving your accessibility for Deaf people will enhance your attraction to foreign visitors.

Access Guides

Does your organisation have an access guide? An example is “Improving Access for visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing” from Museums Galleries Scotland. Another is the “Disabled visitors to Tate Modern” which has a specific section for “Deaf and hearing impaired visitors” which includes BSL.

Multimedia guides

As well as audio guides, do you have guides in BSL? St Paul’s Cathedral has BSL guides that people can carry around in a similar fashion to audio guides. See:

<http://www.stpauls.co.uk/Visits-Events/Sightseeing-Times-Prices/Multimedia-Guides-Tours/BSL-Multimedia-Guides>

BSL Tours

Some museums and galleries have specific BSL Tours for Deaf people – these are often presented by Deaf people themselves – and set aside a date and time for this. Royal Palaces have regular BSL tours. See: <http://www.hrp.org.uk/accessibility/bsl>

Our vision

Deaf people fully participating and contribution as equal and valued citizens in the wider society



Website – Deaf-friendly

Is your website “Deaf-friendly”? Do you have BSL translations on the website so that Deaf people can watch the video and understand what your organisation is showcasing? Is your website easy to navigate if someone does not have good English? A number of museums have BSL videos – some are for specific exhibitions, others are for welcoming visitors or explaining access. An example is Sudley House, Liverpool which has a BSL video explaining access. See: <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/sudley/visit/accessibility.aspx>

Signage

Are your signs easily understood by anyone who does not have English? Are they strategically placed so that people can move around in an orderly manner?

For example, can you use both a word and a symbol like this?



Exhibitions including Deaf people

Some establishments have exhibitions that specifically include Deaf people or have a section exclusively about Deaf people. See:

http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/press/article/192/town_hall_hosts_exhibition_by_young_deaf_people

Staff training

Have you given your staff some training such as:

- BSL Taster or Entry Level BSL
- Deaf Equality or Frontline Deaf Awareness

This helps your staff to understand aspects of Deaf culture and how to communicate better with Deaf people.

Contacting your organisation

Can Deaf people contact you via: Text messaging; Emails. Video relay (as well as Text relay); Skype or Oovoo; as well as a voice phone?

*Interested in finding out more?
Contact us!*

To contact the British Deaf Association, please look at our website: www.bda.org.uk

Email: bda@bda.org.uk
OoVoo: bda.britdeafassoc
Skype: bda.britdeafassoc