InformationNOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

British Sign Language and subtitles

Sign language is a visual means of communicating using gestures, facial expressions and body language. Sign language is used mainly by deaf people and people with hearing difficulties.

Within Britain the most common form of sign language is British Sign Language (BSL). BSL has its own grammatical structure and syntax. It is currently the preferred language of approximately 50,000 to 70,000 people within the UK.

The following information and organisations may help you to find a local BSL interpreter or a course where you can learn BSL.

- **Communication Support Service – Newcastle City Council** for deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind people.
- **North East BSL English Interpreters** is a regional website which gives contact details for freelance interpreters in the north east who are trained bilinguals and can interpret quickly and effectively between spoken English and BSL. They work in a variety of situations (for example medical, legal, workplace and conferences). They may also have trained in a specialist area.
- **Signature** is a registered charity that is raising standards of communication between deaf and hearing people. It is the UK recognised awarding body for qualifications in British Sign Language (BSL) and other methods of communication used by deaf people. To find a registered BSL interpreter or a BSL course near you, contact Signature.
- **Becoming Visible – in the heart of the Deaf Community** offers a deaf-led interpreter booking service and training agency. As an agency it can book BSL/English interpreters, lip speakers and note-takers. It runs courses in deaf awareness and BSL including: Introduction to BSL, Foundation Level BSL, Intermediate Level BSL and Advanced Level BSL. If you are interested in any of these courses, contact Becoming Visible.
- **The NHS 111** service now has a **British Sign Language interpreter**, provided by InterpreterNow, available via computer webcam from 8am to midnight. Using your computer and webcam, you make a **video call to a BSL interpreter**. The interpreter telephones an NHS 111 adviser and relays your conversation with them. The NHS 111 adviser will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straightaway to the local service that can help you best.

Subtitles and live captioning

Some television programmes have subtitles or text on screen which describes the spoken word and sounds taking place during a programme. This helps to convey the meaning of the programme. Most televisions have a subtitle facility. You can activate subtitles on a number of programmes by pressing the ‘text’ button on your television remote. Please refer to your television manual for more information and to check if your television can display subtitles.

The BBC have a helpful online guide which explains how to switch on subtitles on BBC programmes and when using the iPlayer or YouTube.

STAGETEXT is a charity which provides captioning and live speech-to-text services in theatres and other arts and cultural venues, such as museums. Captioning is a way of converting the spoken word into visible text to give deaf, deafened and hard of hearing theatre or museum goers access to live performance. They provide information on captioned performances or exhibitions close to you.

Relay UK provides an app to help you communicate with NHS and all other services.

See the Information NOW film in British Sign Language and with subtitles developed with **Deaflink**.

Last updated: September 20, 2022

Useful Organisations

Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)

Email: contact@rnid.org.uk

Website: https://rnid.org.uk/

Address: RNID, Brightfield Business Centre, PE2 6XU

Becoming Visible

Email: hello@becomingvisible.org.uk

Website: www.becomingvisible.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 233 0999

Address: Becoming Visible, SR5 1AH

Sensory Support Service – Newcastle City Council

Email: communication.support.service@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/care-and-support/adults/adult-care-services/sensory-support-services

Telephone: 0191 278 8377

Address: Sensory Support Service, Community Health and Social Care Direct, NE4 9LU

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council

Email: ASCP@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/AdultSocialCare

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Adult Social CarePoint Newcastle City Council, NE4 9LU

Deaflink

Email: admin@deaflink.org.uk

Website: https://www.deaflink.org.uk/

Telephone: 0191 233

Address: Deaflink North East, NE3 3XT

Disability Equipment Service

Email: team@disabilityequipmentservice.co.uk

Website: https://disabilityequipmentservice.co.uk/

Disability North

Email: reception@disabilitynorth.org.uk

Website: www.disabilitynorth.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 2840480

Address: The Dene Centre, NE3 1PH

Disability Rights UK

Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org

Website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Telephone: 0330 995 0400

Address: Plexal, 14 East Bay Lane , E20 3BS

Ear, Nose and Throat Services (ENT) at The Freeman Hospital

Email: tnu-tr.audiology@nhs.net

Website: https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/ear-nose-throat-service-ent/

Telephone: 0191 213 7633

Address: Freeman Road, NE7 7DN

Relay UK Emergency SMS Service

Website: https://www.relayuk.bt.com/how-to-use-relay-uk/contact-999-using-relay-uk.html

Telephone: 18000

Hearing LINK

Email: helpdesk@hearinglink.org

Website: http://www.hearinglink.org

Telephone: 01844 348111

Address: The Grange, Wycombe Road, HP27 9NS

NHS 111

Website: www.nhs.uk/111

North East British Sign Language English Interpreters

Email: paulhann@me.com

Website: http://www.northeast-bslenglish-interpreters.co.uk

Telephone: 07790 959 884

Address: 24 Henry Street, NE3 1DQ

North Regional Association for Sensory Support (NRASS)

Email: office@nrass.org.uk

Website: www.nrass.org

Address: The Pinetree Centre, DH3 2TD

STAGETEXT

Email: enquiries@stagetext.org

Website: www.stagetext.org

Telephone: 020 7377 0540

Address: Stagetext, CO1 1PT

Signature

Email: enquiries@signature.org.uk

Website: www.signature.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 383 1155

Address: Mersey House, DH1 1TH

The British Tinnitus Association

Email: info@tinnitus.org.uk

Website: http://www.tinnitus.org.uk/

Telephone: 0114 250 9933

Address: The British Tinnitus Association, S8 0TB

InterpreterNow

Email: support@interpreternow.co.uk

Website: https://interpreternow.co.uk/

Telephone: 0333 344 7712

Address: Victoria Court , DN3 3YA

Relay UK

Website: https://www.relayuk.bt.com/

Telephone: 0800 7311 888

Address: Relay UK Team, PR1 1BA

Related Articles

Deaf and hard of hearing

Interpreting and translation