

Easy access to listed buildings in Wales

National Deaf Children's Society Cymru

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About Us

The National Deaf Children's Society Cymru is the national charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

We support deaf children and young people with all levels of hearing loss from mild through to profound, including those with a unilateral (a hearing loss in one ear only) and a temporary hearing loss.

Response

Deaf children and young people may use a range of different communication techniques and as such, access requirements among the deaf population can vary. Some deaf young people may use assistive technology such as hearing aids and cochlear implants, others may not. Some deaf young people use oral communication and lip-reading, some sign, and others may use a mixture of both.

The National Deaf Children's Society Cymru is pleased that the Welsh Government is creating guidance on Easy Access to Listed Buildings in Wales. In the past, deaf young people that we have worked with have highlighted the need for improved access to museums and attractions in Wales.

Although we are pleased that the guidance specifically references the need to consider access requirements of the deaf population, we believe that more information around the needs of deaf visitors would be helpful and would strongly urge the Welsh Government to include more information in this regard. In particular, the National Deaf Children's Society Cymru wishes to highlight the following points:

- Deaf young people often tell us that the biggest barrier they face is a general lack of deaf awareness. Awareness of basic communication tips can make a big the difference in accessibility. We were pleased to see the Future Generations Commissioner identify this important point in her recommendation that frontline staff receive deaf awareness training. This recommendation forms part of the Commissioner's "Simple Changes" project (see [here](#)). We would urge that this important point is also reflected with this guidance.
- The Future Generations Commissioner's "Simple Changes" for public bodies also highlighted that training frontline staff in British Sign Language (BSL) can make a big

difference in inclusivity of deaf people who sign. BSL is a language in its own right with its own grammatical structure. It was formally recognised by the Welsh Government in 2004. As such, we strongly believe this document should highlight the language and the access requirements of BSL users.

- We would welcome reference to environmental adaptations such as hearing loops and acoustics.
- It would also be useful to outline the importance of subtitles/transcripts for audio exhibits.
- If the Welsh Government would like to add the National Deaf Children's Society to the list of organisations at the end of the document, our website is www.ndcs.org.uk.

Further Information

If you would like any further information about the points raised in this response, or more generally about access requirements for deaf children and young people, please do not hesitate to get in touch at Campaigns.Wales@ndcs.org.uk.