

A stylized space illustration on a dark blue background. In the top left is a large yellow sun with wavy lines representing light. Several white elliptical orbits are shown. On these orbits are various celestial bodies: an orange planet with pink spots and a small light blue moon; a green planet with blue rings; a light blue planet with white diagonal stripes; and several small brown and orange spheres. A white rectangular box with a pointer is positioned in the center-right, containing the title and subtitle.

PLANET ACCESS BEDFORD 16/17

Annual Report



This year has gone so quickly and so many things have happened, not just within Bedford community but for deaf communities in other areas. This has made me realise how it takes just one person to start and then others will follow. If it needs support or fails then we are all here, here to help each other to succeed.

I have loved every moment with Access Bedford this year and everything we have done. It is very difficult to pick one favourite thing, but the Mental Health Conference was a great success and we made some useful contacts. There is still a long way to go to get support for Deaf people with mental health issues but we have made a start.

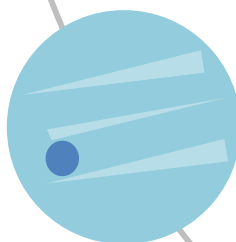
2017/18 will be another great year for Access Bedford. There will be some informative and amazing events coming up in the near future, all organised by members of the committee.

We still want feedback from the community as to what they would like to see more of, events they would like us to put on or any social occasions or ideas you have.

Access Bedford is here to support the community, please help us to help you!

CHAIRS REPORT

Suzie Sampson



John Smith
Comedy Night



ACCESS BEDFORD

The Charity

Access Bedford's aim is to work with the D/deaf and hard of hearing community to make Bedford more accessible. Access Bedford is set up to promote social inclusion among members of the D/deaf and hard of hearing community living in Bedford and the surrounding area. We will do this by

- 1 – Raising public awareness of the issues affecting D/deaf people
 - 2 – Campaigning for the promotion of British Sign Language to be on an equal footing to spoken and written English
 - 3 – Providing recreational facilities and opportunities for D/deaf people
- These are known as our Charity Objects.

We will empower, support and involve the D/deaf community to improve services locally.

The organisation started in April 2014 as a constituted group, moving to registered charity status in July 2015 as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

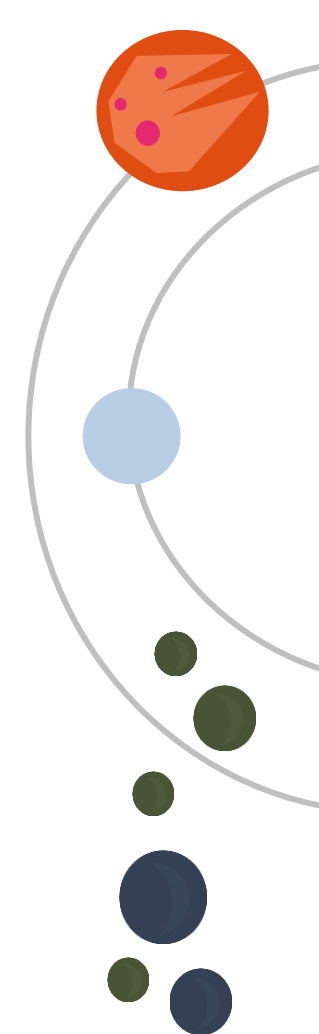
In 2016/17 Access Bedford had 3 trustees, who operate as voting members of the CIO.

Suzie Sampson	Chair
Catherine Wright	Treasurer
Alison Crook	Secretary

Within the CIO constitution for Access Bedford, the three trustees can serve until the AGM in 2019. They meet as a committee every 4 – 6 weeks and make decisions on the work of the charity to help meet the charity objects. There are no paid staff employed by Access Bedford.

During 2016/17, there have been four non-voting members who have supported the charity and their work by attending meetings and supporting events. They were Carla Chynoweth, Emma Sparrow, Michelle Raperport-Smyth and Peter Cooke. Non-voting members will be elected at each AGM.

Trustees and non-voting members are supported through induction and training. Meetings are in BSL with a voice over where needed.



ACCESS BEDFORD
in numbers

social media
sites with over
1000
followers

our newsletter
goes out to
300+ by email
30+ by post

4
committee
members

3
trustees

we have run 60+
Project sessions
Community activities
and events with...

0
Access
Bedford
staff

10
different
interpreters

35+
fantastic
volunteers

our website in
16/17 had over
3000
visits by 1200
individuals

Access Bedford

Deaf Ball 2016



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Alison Crook



This year has been a very different year for me in Access Bedford. Processes and relationships are established now, having focussed on getting more people involved in the committee and building connections with the Deaf community around us in Milton Keynes, Northampton, Luton and Cambridge. Thanks to new committee members and volunteers we have been able to arrange a children's Halloween party, an adult's make up party and support local organisations and events like BookFest, BedPop, The Higgins and Bedfordshire Deaf Children's Society.

Personally for me, seeing the recent announcement that a BSL equivalent qualification to English for students looking to do apprenticeships who use BSL as their first language was a huge achievement. It built on our meeting last year with the then Skills Minister Nick Boles and Richard Fuller MP in Westminster, where we discussed the issues for Deaf BSL users in accessing apprenticeships. We are very proud to have been able to contribute to that.

I learnt a lot from the mental health training that was delivered to our team by Sign Health in BSL. Not just about mental health issues in Deaf people but also about how much better it was having a course delivered directly to Deaf people (and hearing people that can sign) by Deaf people about Deaf issues! No interpreting was needed and information flowed freely backwards and forwards all afternoon. I'm very much looking forward to the same at our Dementia Chat in June.

My hopes for 2017/18 are that the Deaf community continues to grow in Bedford and that we have more committee members and volunteers to lead social events and information days. This will lead to more Deaf people being involved themselves in improving accessibility to information in the different ways that Deaf and Hard of Hearing people need.

I have been part of Access Bedford five years in July 2017, I am trustee and the treasurer. I have found Access Bedford has given me so much confidence and I love to see Bedford Deaf community so happy and making sure all the services meet their needs.

I am very proud of our Access Bedford volunteers who help in their own time and looking back to last year can see all the events we have done together with and for the community. All were very successful and there are still more to come!

I feel it is important that everyone has the right to equality and to have their need met at the doctor, hospital, police and through advocacy. We are still working on this and to focus on school, to help new parents with their deaf child/ children and to work with organisations to make accessible counselling services for deaf people locally.

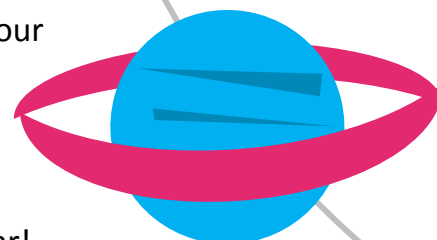
We have been lucky with a large donation from Bedford Deaf Association which has supported us to pay for our insurance, interpreters for events, venue hire and to support activities for the D/deaf community. We have also had donations from businesses to support events like the Winter Ball with prizes or the Children's Halloween Party with vouchers used to buy food and decorations. All profits from ticket sales have gone back into Access Bedford and are used to support our work year round.

We have also worked with a local accountant who have donated their time to support our first annual return to the Charity Commission and our first reviewed accounts. We have learnt so much from them – thank you to MHA MacIntyre Hudson for all your help.

Looking at the last year we have done so much with the D/deaf community, it's been lovely meeting new people, creating new events and seeing so much change. I look forward to the next year!

TREASURER'S REPORT

Catherine Wright

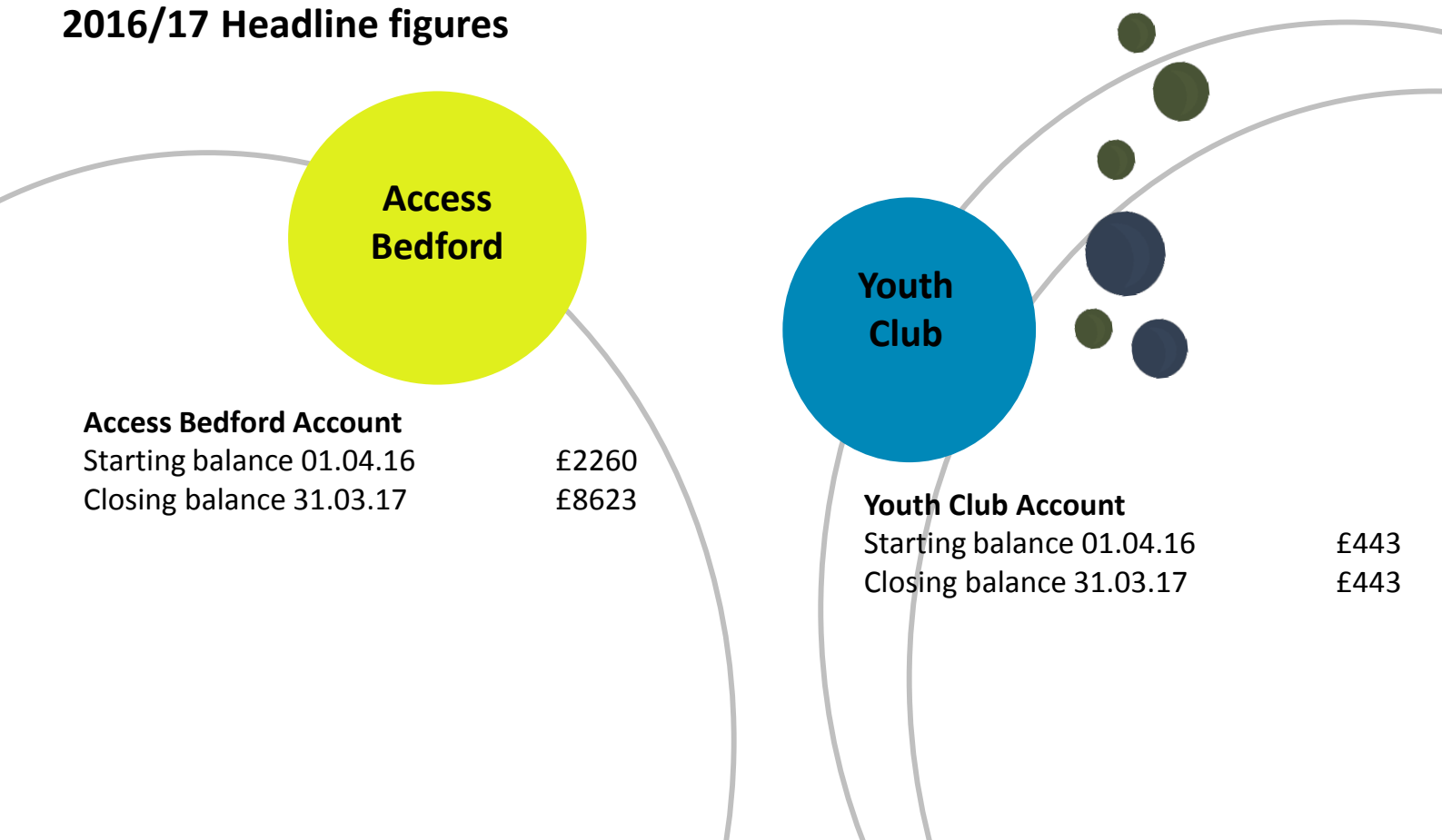


THE MONEY

Access Bedford does not have any debts, guarantees or liabilities. An asset log detailing equipment is maintained by the trustees. Charity trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the commission in exercising their powers or duties. Access Bedford does not have a reserves policy in place at present. The annual income does not meet the threshold for external auditing.

Detailed accounts can be shared on request. You can view the full account information at <https://accessbedford.wordpress.com/annual-accounts-and-return/>

2016/17 Headline figures



Thank you to our funders in 16/17

Bedford Association of the Deaf



Thank you to organisations who have made substantial in kind donations of time, equipment or venues in 16/17



MHA MacIntyre Hudson
GLOBAL EXPERTISE • NATIONAL EXPERIENCE • LOCAL EXCELLENCE®



Great Denham
PRIMARY SCHOOL
and family learning centre



BEDFORDSHIRE + MILTON KEYNES
COLLABORATIVE NETWORK

Thank you to organisations who have donated prizes or vouchers for events in 16/17

Sainsbury's, Tesco, Marks and Spencer's, Waitrose, Cineworld, Bedford Blues, The Bedford Golf Club, Sweet Treats, John Bunyan Barge.

THANK
YOU
Access
Bedford

OUR EVENTS & PROJECTS



John Smith Deaf Comedy Night organised by Jono a volunteer with Access Bedford, John Smith performed in April 2016 to a packed audience keeping us laughing all night! It was fantastic to see so many join the fun at our first Access Bedford Comedy Night!

The Police and Crime Commissioner elections took place with a hustings in April 2016 with full access thanks to Access Bedford. Deaf community members asked "What do you understand about deaf community communication issues and how will you improve it" bringing deaf issues straight into the discussion

Job Centre Plus support card was launched in June 2016 following discussions with Access Bedford and Spencer Clark. This helps deaf people to get the communication support they need to look for and be successful in finding work.

The Power in our Hands film was shown at a special screening in Bedford in July 2016 with support from The Bedford Film Festival. Alexy from the BDA explained the film history and why it was important to preserve Deaf history and culture for the future generations.

BSL access for Health and Social Care was an important issue for the deaf community, with a new law the NHS Accessible Information Standard starting in July 2016.

We provided lots of information with links to a video, print out card to take with you to appointments.



POWER IN OUR HANDS
July 5th Bedford 7.30pm <http://tinyurl.com/hy9c4>
The untold story of the British Deaf community's fight to be heard

John Bunyan Boat trip in August 2016 was another fantastic opportunity for the community to get together, to cruise along The Ouse, enjoy time with friends and find out about the History of Bedford.



Make Your Mark was supported by Access Bedford for all deaf young people in the UK in August 2016, with Sam, Rio, Alex, Oliver creating a BSL video explaining how young people could vote in the UK Youth Parliament national youth vote! Watch at our YouTube channel!

**Make
Your Mark**



The Mental Health Conference was held in Bedford in October 2016 on World Mental Health Day, bringing together over 50 professionals, deaf community members and local Councillors. The day focused on issues for deaf people in accessing mental health services, and suggestions for future services in Bedford Borough. You can read all the tweets from the conference at <http://tinyurl.com/hlzo4y6>

Deaf Packs were launched in October 2016 for new members to the Bedford Deaf Community with newsletters, support cards, useful contacts and local event information. You can request one from accessbedford@outlook.com

Halloween Party

Our first Halloween Party took place in October with deaf children from all over coming and enjoying games, a scary story in BSL and having fun with new friends. The event was well supported by committee and volunteers and our local businesses who donated to help the event happen.





The Deaf Ball had a fantastic 2nd year with a 1950s theme with some great outfits! Over 80 attendees enjoyed the food, fun, candy bar and even did a mannequin video where everyone had to hold a position! Everyone got a 1950s Access Bedford badge as a memory and professional photos!







BSL Deaf Led Art Tour preparation started with intensive training of two committee members to be official volunteer BSL Tour Guides for The Higgins Museum in Bedford. Our first tour took place in 17/18. This is a huge achievement both for the committee members as individuals and for increasing deaf access to local services.



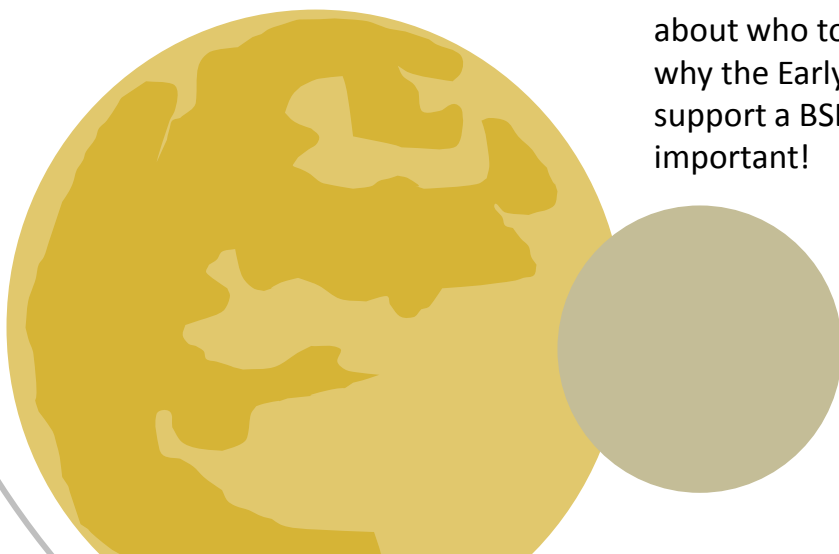
Richard Fuller Business School was a great example of inclusion where over 5 business master classes, the deaf community were full included by BSL interpreters, a hearing loop, reserved front seating, good lighting and subtitled videos.

Bedford Deaf was a new feature started in 2017 with 2 members of the deaf community interviewed each month in our newsletter with BSL videos on our website – have a look at www.accessbedford.wordpress.com/bedforddeaf/



A **Make Up party** was a new event for us in February 2017, with Karl coming from Arbonne to explain how to match the right make up to you, the importance of using natural products and he did it all in BSL for great access!

The **BSL Early Day Motion** was supported by Access Bedford in March 2017 with template letters for MPs, information about who to contact them and why the Early Day Motion to support a BSL Act for England is important!





REGULAR EVENTS

Quiz Nights take place every other month at The Bedford Golf Club where we join their regular quiz night which is made accessible by questions on a screen and a volunteer interpreter. It's a great night with 3-4 deaf teams showing off their general knowledge!



Young at Heart meet on the first Friday of every month at the Woolpack Hub run by the Salvation Army. Numbers are growing each month with the group enjoying their first Christmas Meal at The Bedford Golf Club in Dec 2016.



Deaf Socials have continued every two months at the Kings Arm Pub, where birthdays have been celebrated, new friendships have started and maybe even a romance or two!

Workshops have been a new area for Access Bedford this year with sessions taking place over the school holidays at The Higgins Museum, BookFest 2016, in the Library as part of their community programme, bookfest, and the BedPop Fun Palaces and Science lab events. Staff at The Bedford Golf Club also took part in sessions in preparation for the Winter Ball in 2016.

Sign Café continues to support the hearing community to develop their sign language skills and deaf awareness. Deaf teachers lead the informal meet up over coffee and cake, answering questions from parents of deaf children, brushing up signing skills of students and signposting to support.

Advocacy services have been a hot topic this year with visits to providers to understand what they do and discussions with the Bedford Borough Council to increase awareness of access issues and to develop a better approach. Going into 17/18 we will be working with Deafconnect and POHWER who are delivering support or advocacy services locally as well as promoting Bedford Parent Carer Forum and Bedfordshire Deaf Children's Society for family focused support.

Bedford Borough Council continues to be a key organisation to work with, with meetings about improving deaf education, committee members supporting the Equality and Diversity Group, Access Group, Community Networks and teams from across the council contacting Access Bedford for ideas, networks or advice on deaf issues or community signposting.



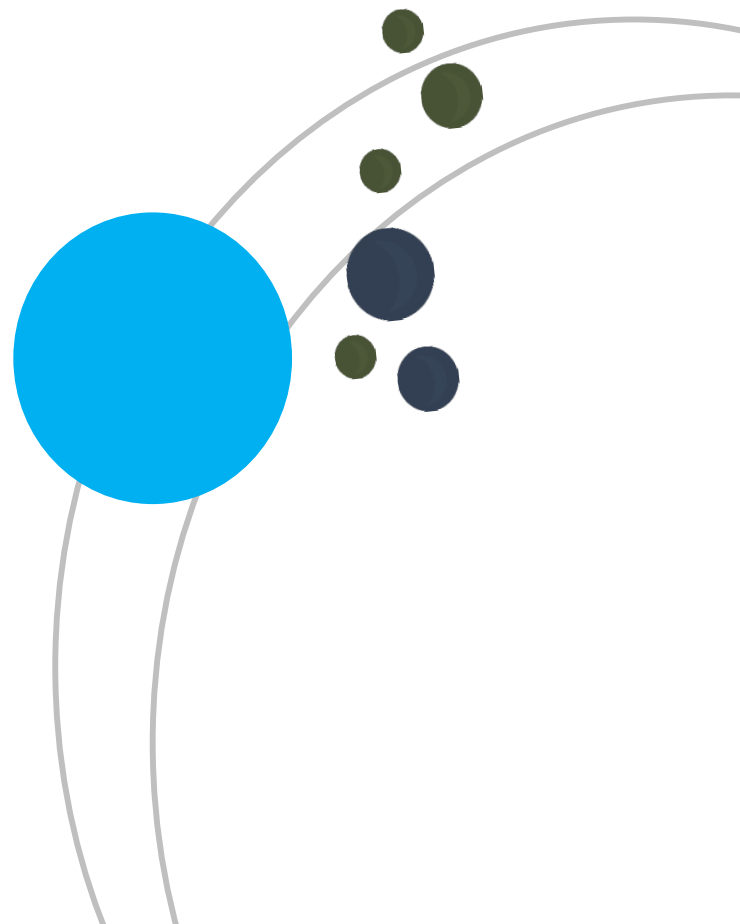
ONGOING
WORK



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Health services remain an important area of work with regular meetings with Bedford Hospital in developing their deaf access plan, attending the Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes Sustainable Transformation Plan stakeholder meeting, Sign Health providing Mental Health First Aid training for the committee and community member, a committee member being on the Bedford Hospital Patient Council, and two committee members running a deaf awareness training session at the Health and Education Training event for GPs and Nurses in Bedford.

Other areas of **work behind the scenes** include – meeting with Bedford Park Events to identify solutions for deaf access, hearing about the BDA Congress in Torquay from a committee member who attended, social media campaigns about Deaf Awareness Week, Sign2Sing, Sign Language Week, issuing 10 fantastic newsletters each year, website development, consultation responses about hearing aid frequencies, service delivery in Bedford Borough and apprenticeships and use of BSL, supporting Deaf access at Slimming World and working with an accountant on our year one annual return





OUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Michelle

My most magnificent times were the Halloween Deaf Children's party and Sign Cafe. It was a challenge to organise for Deaf children, especially to focus on their big strong Deaf culture. By the end of the night it was great to see the children had enjoyed themselves. It made me think about my Deaf son and the need to keep the Deaf community alive to support them to be positive in their Deaf identity.

I have enjoyed teaching BSL to hearing students in the Sign Café, as British Sign Language is my passion. It has helped them become confident in real conversation rather than learning in a BSL class. Some hearing people have not learnt BSL before so to help them to become aware about BSL communication has been great.

I have learnt to develop my skills to be organised, a good communicator and to face challenges. I have enjoyed meeting new people and I am happy to see deaf people enjoying the many events in the strong Deaf community. I look forward to seeing it develop to be better from now on and in the future.

**Peter**

The best thing about Access Bedford for me has to be both the Children's Halloween Party and preparing for the Picasso BSL Tour and workshop.

Both required total commitment and lot of preparation to carry them out successfully. It was well worthwhile to see such enjoyment by children from the Halloween surprises.

I have learned a lot this year about risk assessments and to be able to handle situations when they arise at events.

Carla

The best thing for me was the Workshops. It was a pleasure organising the events with The Higgins, BedPop and BookFest by Rogan's Books. I thoroughly enjoyed creating the resources, devising the word searches and the 'Mystery at the Higgins' Trail and designing the promotional material.

Seeing the thrill and pure joy on many children's faces when they learnt to spell their names using sign language was absolutely priceless! Equally special was witnessing the children's pride in the many bookmarks that they made using the wonderful BDA Fingerspelling Font.

Working with the support of the Access Bedford team, it has been a year of creative expression and development I did not expect and I would not have had the experience if it were not for Access Bedford. I learnt that there are people in Bedford who are extremely willing to learning British Sign Language. Many adults who brought their children to our workshops expressed a genuine interest in how the Deaf community communicate and expressed long held desires to join a course and find out what it's all about.

For 2017/18 I hope to continue to be a part of this rapidly developing and very necessary charity as a dedicated and committed volunteer. I look forward to helping to organise and deliver more social events and classes/regular workshops to increase an awareness of the wonders of British Sign Language; also to help strengthen the bridge between the Deaf and the Hearing worlds.





Emma

It has been a fantastic year for Access Bedford, with new people, new events and lots of new achievements! One of the best things for me was having 3 new committee members' join and 10 new volunteers. Having more people involved means that we can achieve more together which is what we are here for.

Personally I've increased my confidence in my sign language which has been through the support of the committee and our fantastic volunteers and members. They have helped me to pass my Level 4 BSL and to achieve my Level 7 leadership qualification which was based on Access Bedford – thank you!

My hope for 2017/18 is that we reach out to new D/deaf community members in Bedford Borough, that we continue to have successful events and that we include and involve more D/deaf people as volunteers and committee members going forward.

Our Volunteers

Access Bedford would like to say a massive **THANK YOU** to all of volunteers who have helped out over the last year at events, projects, on social media, fundraising, promoting Access Bedford and more!

Without YOU everything in this report would not have been possible so **THANK YOU...**

Liam, Valerie, Jamie D, Will, Lucy, Jamie H, Megan, Claire J, Rudy, Simon, Sam, Jess, Richard, Gemma, Dominic, Andrea, Jackie, Andrew S, Andrew W, Rio, Sam, Oliver, Alex, Chloe, Jono, Joanne, Quella, Flynn, Anneka, Maisy, Susan, Claire B, Michelle-Linda, Katherine H, Katherine F, Mia **and everyone who has helped no matter how big or small!**

We would also like to thank all the interpreters who have supported Access Bedford over the year!



Coming Up in 17/18

Priorities for 17/18

Access Bedford and the D/deaf Community

1. Sharing information with the D/deaf Community
2. Running events with the D/deaf Community
3. Improving services with and for the D/deaf Community with a focus on accessible health and advocacy services
4. Empowering the D/deaf community to create and lead projects
5. Supporting services at every level to be Deaf Aware

Develop Access Bedford as a Charity

1. Develop volunteer roles
2. Review policies
3. Increase funding

BSL 'Deaf Led Tours' Picasso and The Masters of Print at The Higgins

Peter Cooke and Carla Chynoweth organised and hosted the BSL Tour and linocut and print workshop on Saturday 8th April 11-1pm. We look forward to future Deaf Led tours in 17/18!



We are lucky that **Big Deaf Summer Picnic** have chosen to hold an event in Bedford on June 4th at Priory Country Park – pop along with your picnic blanket and food!



Afternoon Tea and Deaf Dementia Workshop by Dr Emma Ferguson-Coleman who is profoundly deaf and will be presenting for professionals on 24th June from 12.30 – 2.30 and for the Deaf community informally from 2.30 – 4.30pm (with afternoon tea!). .

Deaf History Workshop on October 14th led by famous Deaf historian Peter Jackson

Children's Halloween Party on October 28th – new venue, new games, new fun!

Casino Royale James Bond 007 Winter Ball on November 11th – new venue, casino included!

BSL Yoga Workshop on February 24th 2018 led by Lel Pender in BSL!



ACCESS BEDFORD PUBLICATIONS

Keep up to date with what is going on in our world with the publications and social media sites.

these include:

- **Newsletter**
- **Factsheets**
- **Facebook**
- **Twitter**
- **Website**
- **Event reports**
- **Interpreter cars**

.....and much much more!



Making Bedford accessible to the Bedford D/deaf community

Access Bedford

Registered Charity Number	1162947
Registered	Address 53 Bushmead Avenue, Bedford, MK403QW
Email	accessbedford@outlook.com
Facebook	Access Bedford
Twitter	@AccessBedford
Website	www.accessbedford.wordpress.com

Thank you to the University of Bedfordshire for
supporting our 2017 Deaf Day and AGM





Access Bedford

1 April 2016

to 31 March 2017

Receipts [In]

	This Year	Last Year
Bedford Deaf Club	£9,650.80	£0.00
First Give	£0.00	£0.00
Deaf Ball 2016	£2,670.00	£0.00
Camps / Outings / Events	£0.00	£0.00
Halloween2016	£386.10	£0.00
Christmas 2016	£558.80	£0.00
Boat Trip 2016	£292.50	£0.00
Ad hoc donations	£12.00	£0.00
Make Up Party	£232.00	£0.00
Business School	£1,200.00	£0.00
2nd Bank account (Manual)	£0.00	£0.00
Totals	£15,002.20	£0.00

Payments [Out]

AGM	£578.04	£0.00
Young at Heart	£656.43	£0.00
Training	£0.00	£0.00
Camps / Outings / Events	£1,575.78	£0.00
Youth Club	£240.00	£0.00
General Running Costs / Promo	£2,159.10	£0.00
Deaf Ball 16	£2,091.63	£0.00
Halloween16	£280.50	£0.00
Boat Trip 16	£337.51	£0.00
Mental Health 16	£914.35	£0.00
Deaf Pack	£65.50	£0.00
Make Up	£100.00	£0.00
2nd Bank account (Manual)	£0.00	£0.00
Totals	£8,998.84	£0.00

Surplus or (deficit) for the year

£6,003.36	£0.00
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Balances brought forward	Bank - 1	£2,559.51	£0.00
	Bank - 2	£444.49	£0.00
	Cash	£0.00	£0.00
		£3,004.00	£0.00
Balances in hand at year-end	Bank - 1	£8,562.87	£2,559.51
	Bank - 2	£444.49	£444.49
	Cash	-£0.00	£0.00
		£9,007.36	£3,004.00

Assets and Liabilities: In addition to the above cash balances the unit has equipment to the value of £0.00 and there are no other assets or liabilities.

Prepared by: _____ Signature & Date: _____

Reviewer's Certificate: The above statements agree with the records and vouchers of Access Bedford for the financial year ended 31 March 2017

Reviewed by: _____ Signature & Date: _____

Notes: