

Shaping Futures

Impact Report 2019/2020

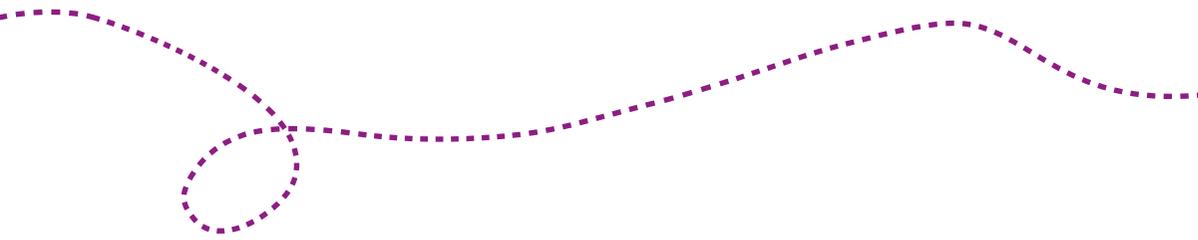




Our vision is of a world without barriers for every deaf child.

We focus on overcoming barriers:

- **to language and communication**
- **to local and national services**
- **to independence.**



Welcome	5
How you helped deaf children shape their futures	6
Core services	8
Overcoming barriers to language and communication	10
Overcoming barriers to services	14
Overcoming barriers to independence	18
Deaf Child Worldwide	22
Support during the pandemic	26
How we're fundraising	28
Thank you	30
Finance and governance	32
How we're learning and improving	33
Our plans for next year	34

Welcome

The events of recent months have meant huge changes for everyone, not least for the charity sector. For the National Deaf Children's Society it's meant we've pulled together like never before, pivoting our services to support deaf children facing unexpected challenges. The landscape has altered considerably since the last financial year that this report covers. But while we look to the future, it's important we don't lose sight of what we achieved in the previous 12 months.

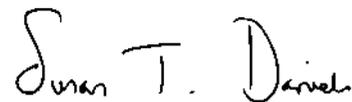
From our long-running support for families, to our first ever children's book competition, we're here to challenge assumptions about what deaf children's futures can look like. We showcased this message with the launch of our Deaf Works Everywhere campaign film, which shows almost 40 deaf people working in a range of careers from driving instructor to DJ and NASA engineer. The film was viewed almost 25,000 times in just three weeks and feedback from deaf young people shows it has transformed their ideas of what they can achieve.

Members of our Young People's Advisory Board understand better than anyone the barriers that deaf young people face. They were involved in every key decision about the Deaf Works Everywhere campaign and made sure the end result was authentic, impactful and resonated

with their peers. Throughout this report you'll hear from extraordinary deaf young people who are fighting against inequality and shaping brighter futures for themselves and others. Alongside that there are stories from dedicated parents and carers, who are working with us to make sure their children get the best start in life.

Coronavirus has caused a seismic shift in the support that families need, and we're working harder than ever to overcome the very different barriers they now face. You can see how we're tackling these issues – by offering virtual events, campaigning for accessible online education and much more – on page 26.

We get very little support from the Government and the pandemic has hugely limited our ability to fundraise, at a time when, more than ever, we need help. We can't thank you enough, our amazing funders, for your generous support. You are helping deaf children to shape their futures, and seek out the adventures and experiences they deserve.



Susan Daniels OBE
Chief Executive
National Deaf Children's Society



“You are helping deaf children to shape their futures, and seek out the adventures and experiences they deserve.”

6

How you helped deaf children shape their futures

240

deaf children took part in our confidence building events

98%

of professionals rated our conference on mental health as good or excellent

93%

success rate in appealing against decisions on deaf children's education

23,400

views of our award-winning film for deaf young people

11,700

people learned more about deafness on our Roadshow bus

200

deaf young people shared views on our new youth website

10,000

people fought for change through our Campaigns Network

2,600

deaf children and young people supported in developing countries

Core services

The most important early influence on a child is the support they receive from loved ones. But for parents of deaf children this can prove a real challenge. More than 90% of deaf children are born into hearing families who may not know how to communicate with a deaf child, or what to expect for their future.



96% of families said they now knew how to support their child's early learning.

Shaping futures together

We're here for families from the moment they find out their child is deaf so they can learn how to be a champion for their child. With the right support there are no barriers to what a deaf child can achieve.

Our **Freephone Helpline** is often the first port of call for worried families, and last year we received 4,035 enquiries via email, phone and live chat.

We supported families with issues including communication, technology, benefits and education, giving them the confidence to plan for the future. Of the 191 people who answered a follow-up survey, 89% said the information they were given through the helpline was helpful or very helpful.

Before the pandemic hit, our **face-to-face events** were another vital way for families to get expert information and meet others facing similar challenges. We delivered 43 events, covering key moments such as diagnosis and starting school, to 472 parents and carers. After attending an event for families of newly diagnosed deaf children, 96% of attendees said they now understood how to support their child's early learning.

Ros is mum to Lola (2), who is profoundly deaf. Attending one of our events for parents of newly diagnosed children has helped her see that Lola has a bright future ahead.

When Lola was born, like every parent, I imagined her life unfolding. I pictured her as a singer or dancer, following my love of amateur theatre.

When Lola failed several newborn hearing tests, nurses told us not to worry and that it was probably just fluid in her ears. I was devastated when we found out she was deaf. It felt like we were grieving for the child we'd imagined – I cried for a week.

Then I discovered the National Deaf Children's Society. They offered us 10 Family Sign Language sessions and we were thrilled when at six months Lola made her first sign, 'milk'.



When Lola turned one, we attended one of the charity's events for parents of deaf children, and it was brilliant. Here, we discovered things no one else tells you – for example, about applying for disability benefits or pushing to see a paediatrician. We were inspired by parents who talked about their deaf children achieving well at school and living full lives.

Lola's now two and is a prolific signer. She knows over 100 signs, her speech is developing really well, and she loves dancing to music!

At first, I didn't know what life she would lead, but now I know Lola will be confident and strong and succeed at whatever she chooses to do.

“We were inspired by deaf children achieving well at school and living full lives.”



Overcoming barriers to language and communication

Did you know that British Sign Language is the first or preferred language of around 70,000 deaf people in the UK? Yet many sign language users are still at a disadvantage and don't have equal access to information and support.



100% of parents were more confident about signing after going on one of our courses.

Shaping futures together

Families who decide to use sign language with their child often have to pay thousands for these classes, and as a result some can't afford to learn how to communicate in this way with their children. This injustice and discrimination is putting thousands of children's futures at risk.

Our free **Family Sign Language classes** teach families how to use sign language with very young children at key moments including mealtimes, during storytelling and play. We delivered Family Sign Language classes to 326 people and feedback was very positive, with 100% of parents saying their confidence had increased.

We were able to run these courses mainly as a result of funding received from amazing charitable trusts and foundations. We are so grateful for your support.

We're improving access to services for people who sign, through our support of the **British Sign Language Act** in Scotland which aims to raise awareness of British Sign Language (BSL). We advised parent campaigners, supported our Young Campaigners programme, and advised public bodies on implementing BSL plans.

Case study

11

Omar and Nour are parents to Yasmin (4), who is profoundly deaf. Learning Family Sign Language has meant Yasmin has been able to communicate with her family for the very first time.

We always knew Yasmin wanted to communicate but she would become upset and stressed when we didn't understand or when we got it wrong. We needed to know that we could understand her and that she could understand us.

It wasn't until we got in touch with the National Deaf Children's Society that we got support to communicate with our daughter. We thought learning sign language might be difficult, especially as we didn't know English, but we found that we learned faster if we signed the words too.



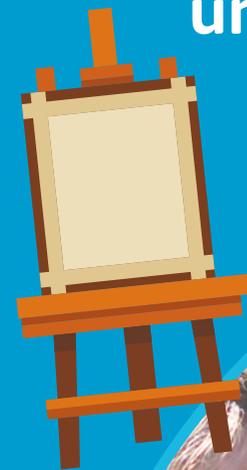
Our tutor Agnes was the first deaf adult we'd ever met. She made us feel relaxed and we felt better about our daughter's future. During the sessions, Agnes signed, Paula [Language and Communication Officer] spoke in English, and then the interpreter translated into Arabic.

Agnes was very patient with us and she made videos to help us if we forgot the signs.

Now Yasmin signs to us when she wants something or to tell us that she's feeling sad. Before it was always guessing but now we can understand Yasmin more. She likes drawing and painting and she's very happy. She is calmer and is concentrating more.

We'd love Yasmin to become a doctor when she grows up. We never thought it was possible, but thanks to Agnes, she can have a good life and be a happy girl.

“ We needed to know that we could understand Yasmin and that she could understand us.”



Overcoming barriers to language and communication

Learning to read is one of the biggest milestones in any young child's life. It's an opportunity to discover new worlds, and develop a life-long love of language. Our aim is to make sure deaf children get the right support to develop these essential skills, and that there are more deaf characters out there to inspire them.



159 deaf children submitted stories to our first ever book competition.

Shaping futures together

We were so excited to launch our first ever **children's book competition** in 2019, where we asked budding young deaf writers to create a story with a deaf character. We also worked with the National Literacy Trust to create activities and tips to get children's creative juices flowing.

We received an amazing 159 entries from writers aged 7–11. The stories featured a range of deaf characters including mermaids, explorers, superheroes and ninjas!

Judges, including Julia Donaldson CBE and actress Rachel Shenton, helped us choose the winning entry, *The Quest for the Cockle Implant*, an underwater adventure story written by the talented Maya (11).

Maya has been working with author Sarah Driver to further develop the story, and with a young deaf illustrator to bring her vision to life. The book will launch in 2020/21 and is a fantastic opportunity for children to see more deaf characters in print, to encourage deaf children to read and write stories, and to showcase deaf young people's creative talents.

Jeff and Jessica are parents to Maya (11), who is severely to profoundly deaf. She is the writing talent behind our soon to be published children's book, *The Quest for the Cockle Implant*.

Maya's always been interested in reading. We've read to her since she was little – and then, as her hearing loss has progressed, reading has become even more important. It's hard for Maya to follow a conversation, especially in loud places, so she always has her nose in a book.

Maya loves mermaids and that's how she came up with the idea for the *Cockle Implant* story. When we found out she'd won the competition, it took a while to sink in. We were thrilled and really moved because the story is so caring.

We were worried when we found out that Maya's deafness was progressive, because we didn't know how bad it would get. But we're already so proud of all the things she's done. Our biggest hope for Maya is that she's happy in whatever she does. She changes her mind about what she wants to be all the time – one minute it's a dancer, then a movie star, but right now it's a writer. Winning this competition has really inspired her.

It was Maya's dream to write a book and get it published, and she loved working with Sarah [Driver, author] and Lucy [Rogers, illustrator] to bring the story to life. Through the National Deaf Children's Society we've discovered a whole deaf community and Maya has been able to achieve her dreams.

“Winning this competition has inspired Maya – it was her dream to write a book.”



Overcoming barriers to services

School is a vital stepping stone for children to achieve their ambitions for the future. But deaf children are falling behind at every key point in their education, even though deafness isn't a learning disability. Urgent action is needed to make sure they get the same opportunities as their hearing peers.



We stopped reductions to education support affecting 548 deaf children.

Shaping futures together

One key factor impacting on education is sweeping reductions to services that deaf children rely on. These include time with a Teacher of the Deaf, who has been specially trained to support deaf pupils, and access to essential technology like radio aids.

Losing such vital support can threaten deaf children's futures. So we've **campaigned** alongside passionate parents to successfully challenge reductions to funding affecting 548 deaf children in local areas including Barnet, Wolverhampton and Dorset.

We also provide one-to-one help for parents who are concerned about the support their child is getting at school. This can include supporting families to appeal against decisions made about their child's education and accompanying them to a Tribunal. We had a 93% success rate in our **education appeals**, ensuring that many more pupils got the support they needed.

We are so grateful to Fieldfisher for their pro bono support for our education appeals work. They donated 899 hours of support last year, with 11 legal volunteers supporting seven cases.

Case study

15

Kam is mum to Marissa (8), who is profoundly deaf. We supported the family when it looked like Marissa's school would have to reduce staffing and support for deaf pupils, causing a devastating impact on her future.

Marissa attends the only mainstream primary school in the borough with a deaf unit. She's surrounded by deaf peers and the whole school is deaf aware, with all the children learning British Sign Language for assemblies. This is all achieved with the amazing support of specialist communicators, Teachers of the Deaf and a deaf tutor. This specialist support helps Marissa, not only in her education, but in her confidence as a young deaf person.

The proposed cuts would have meant the loss of an entire staff member,

within an already small team and would have had a hugely negative impact on Marissa's education and confidence, and the future of deaf children attending the school.

When we found out about the cuts we were devastated and knew we would need more help. The National Deaf Children's Society were amazing. Hazel came to help us and the school, and she also wrote to the council to challenge the consultation. Thanks to the charity's support the council then announced that it would stop the cuts.

Marissa is thriving with the support she has and is a confident character who educates us as a family with all she is learning. She will definitely be able to achieve anything she wants. We are very grateful to the National Deaf Children's Society for all their support.

“Marissa is thriving with the support she has.”



Overcoming barriers to services

Trying out new activities and spending time with friends is vital to any child's wellbeing. But our latest membership survey showed that 77% of parents thought there were barriers to their child accessing activities in their local area.



Through our local groups, we brought 4,230 families together.

Shaping futures together

Our local groups bring deaf children and their families together to support one another and have fun. We have 93 formal **local groups** across the UK and 10 informal groups, which connect around 4,230 families.

Last year, we awarded grants worth more than £25k to 52 local groups. These funded social activities, including swimming lessons, a family bowling night and a parents' social. We also reached 24,101 people through our local Facebook groups – that's almost double last year's figure.

Going to the cinema is another great way to spend time with family and friends. But sadly, in 2019, over half of UK cinemas didn't offer subtitled screenings during the opening week of a big film release.

In response, we launched our **Lights, Camera, Captions! campaign**, which asked cinemas to make subtitles available on demand for all children's films. We captured media attention, reaching 10.8m people and leading 617 people to sign up to the campaign.

The campaign has been paused because of the pandemic but we hope to relaunch it when possible.

Case study

17

Holly (18) is profoundly deaf. Her love of the cinema meant she jumped at the chance to support our Lights, Camera, Captions! campaign.

The campaign attracted my attention because accessibility is so bad at the cinema near where I live. Missing out on cinema screenings has had quite a big impact on me, especially my social life. My friends have left me out because they don't want to wait for a subtitled screening.

I passionately believe that there needs to be more subtitled screenings, and that if a cinema advertises a subtitled film, the subtitles must actually come on. I went to see a subtitled performance of a new Star Wars film, but when it started, there were no subtitles.

Everybody was so upset they got up and protested.

I supported the National Deaf Children's Society's campaign by raising media awareness on the issue. I spoke on BBC Radio 2 and BBC Cambridge and appeared in newspaper articles.

The experience was amazing because so many people who'd been unaware of the issues were now really interested. My involvement elicited a brilliant response from my sixth form, family and friends, and even reached a few of my local cinemas.

As a result, one cinema in my area is testing glasses that caption any film, and I've heard about a younger boy who was inspired by the campaign and decided to take it even further. I'm very proud that Lights, Camera, Captions! has had an impact and that I've inspired others to campaign too.

“ My local cinema is now testing glasses that caption any film.”



Overcoming barriers to independence

As we're only too aware, the job market is uncertain for everyone right now. But it's even more worrying for deaf people, who are already twice as likely to be unemployed as their hearing peers. That's despite being able to work almost everywhere with the right support.



Our Deaf Works Everywhere video was viewed more than 23,000 times.

www.ndcs.org.uk/deafworkseverywhere

Shaping futures together

Even before the pandemic hit, 90% of parents said they were worried that their deaf child's career options would be limited. So we created our **Deaf Works Everywhere campaign** to challenge expectations of what deaf young people can achieve. Our aim is to get more deaf young people into work – and into jobs that inspire them.

Our Young People's Advisory Board was involved in every key campaign decision, and in February 2020 we launched an ambitious short film aimed at 13–17 year olds. It showed deaf people bossing it in a range of careers – from makeup artist, to driving instructor and NASA engineer.

We are so proud of the film – it received fantastic feedback and reached over 23,400 views in just three weeks. It's also changing attitudes. In testing, double the number of deaf young people now believed that 'deaf people can do any job,' and 72% of deaf young people saw jobs they didn't know deaf people could do.

Lockdown paused our campaign, but in 2020/21 we're planning to build on this momentum and make sure deaf young people aren't left behind during the pandemic.

Case study



Liz is mum to Emma (13) who has moderate hearing loss. She and her daughter have been inspired by the Deaf Works Everywhere campaign, and hope it will change attitudes about what deaf young people can achieve.

Emma will be choosing her GCSEs this year, and watching the Deaf Works Everywhere film has helped her see how those choices would carry her into really interesting and wonderful careers.

When Emma watched the film for the first time her exact words were: "I only thought there were a couple of jobs for deaf people, but not as many as that!" She didn't know that deaf people could be voiceover artists, MPs and newsreaders. If Emma can say that, imagine how many other people will feel the same way.

Emma and I hope the video will be available for many people to watch, not just deaf people. It would be wonderful if schools and colleges show it as part of their career guidance. We've shown family, friends, Emma's Teacher of the Deaf and three deaf friends who were absolutely amazed.

I want Emma to be happy and confident in who she is and in whatever choices she makes in life. She has always wanted to be an actress and will be studying drama next year. She's already achieved her Acting Grade 1.

The Deaf Works Everywhere film has showed Emma how many jobs are out there for deaf people and made her realise that by working hard at school, she can achieve anything she sets her mind to.

“The film has made Emma realise she can achieve anything she sets her mind to.”



Overcoming barriers to independence

Lack of deaf awareness can mean that deaf children are left out by friends and left behind at school. Our programme of outreach and activities is all about educating communities and empowering deaf young people to make positive change.



Young people led on 10 projects creating positive change in their area.

Shaping futures together

Pre-lockdown our **Roadshow bus** travelled the country, visiting schools and community groups. Our Roadshow staff, many of whom are deaf themselves, run workshops aimed at increasing deaf awareness among hearing children, and developing deaf young people's knowledge and confidence. In the last 12 months we welcomed 11,770 visitors on board.

This year we launched our **Make a Change Fund**, which encourages deaf young people aged 8–25 to dream up projects that will drive positive change in their communities. So far we've funded 10 fantastic ideas through young people's schools and colleges, including a sign language club, a project to improve deaf awareness at leisure centres, and some new communication tips for bus drivers and emergency services staff.

We're delighted that some of the young people involved in these projects have won the Sheila McKechnie Foundation Young People's Award for their game-changing idea.

Case study



Layla (15) started learning British Sign Language (BSL) when she was five, after her hearing deteriorated. With a grant from our Make a Change fund, she was able to set up her own sign language academy.

I wanted to raise deaf and BSL awareness in a fun way through signing popular songs. BSL has a massive impact in my life, so it's extremely helpful if people know some basic signs. I wanted to help my community by teaching signed songs and running weekly BSL classes for both deaf and hearing young people.

I applied to the National Deaf Children's Society's Make a Change Fund and received my grant in December 2019 through my National Deaf Children's Society project officer. It meant so much to me!

I was able to get hoodies, flyers, speakers, folders and other things. I was super excited to start up my classes in February 2020.

During lockdown, the National Deaf Children's Society asked if I'd like to do signed song sessions online. It was amazing. I loved every second – I'm so lucky they asked me.

The best thing was seeing the end results; it was so emotional to see the young ones learning the song in their own time and doing the signs all by themselves at the end.

Through the Make a Change Fund and setting up my classes, I have gained so much confidence in myself. I'm proud that I can run classes where young people have fun and enjoy themselves. I've also inspired them to apply for the fund and set up signed song groups in their own schools!

“I've inspired other young people to set up signed song groups.”



Deaf Child Worldwide

Overcoming barriers to language and communication

Through our international arm, Deaf Child Worldwide, we support deaf children facing challenges in some of the poorest communities in South Asia and East Africa. Working locally with partner organisations, we support projects which aim to tackle the significant barriers that deaf children face in developing countries.



In Uganda,
229 parents took
part in training
on how to use
sign language.

Shaping futures together

Families face an uphill struggle to support their children with nearly two-thirds saying that a lack of communication is the biggest barrier to their child getting a good education. Reasons for this include late diagnosis, few opportunities to learn sign language, lack of specialist support, and poor quality hearing aids.

This year, 15 of our projects focused on language and communication, and in **South Asia** we supported almost 1,500 deaf children and young people. In India we mainly focused on teaching deaf children and young people to use Indian Sign Language (ISL). With our partner SAMUHA, we've also taught 52 siblings to use ISL so that families can communicate together.

In **East Africa**, we've been working with our partner, the National Association of Parents of Deaf Children (NAPADEC) to train 229 parents to use sign language. This is part of a three-year project to improve communication between deaf children and their families in Uganda. Many of the families are now able to communicate with their deaf child for the first time.

Case study

23



Florence (17) grew up in a village in Uganda. She was unable to communicate with her family until they learned sign language through our partner, National Association of Parents of Deaf Children (NAPADEC).

I caught malaria when I was five – I was given tablets and injections and when I recovered, my hearing had gone. My mother cried all the time. Accepting that I was deaf was a dark moment in my life, but I was lucky that my parents did not neglect me, unlike other deaf children.

I went to a school with deaf peers and life became brighter, but home remained cold and silent because no one could talk to me and I couldn't talk to anyone.

Then my mother started going for meetings and workshops with NAPADEC. She did this for a long time and one day she came home and signed something to me. I was shocked but happy at the same time. My siblings also began using sign language – I felt overjoyed because I didn't know if I would ever get close to them like we are today. I was used to people pointing and barking at me.

I now feel more comfortable at home than I am at school, and local people have stopped verbally abusing me because I'm deaf. The communication gap that NAPADEC bridged in my family brought back stability, love and happiness at home.

“ Before, I couldn't talk to anyone – now I have stability, love and happiness at home.”



Deaf Child Worldwide

Overcoming barriers to independence

Preparing for adulthood is challenging at the best of times, but in communities where there is little deaf awareness and unemployment is high, deaf young people face huge barriers to achieving independence.



In South Asia, we supported around 500 deaf young people to be more independent.

Shaping futures together

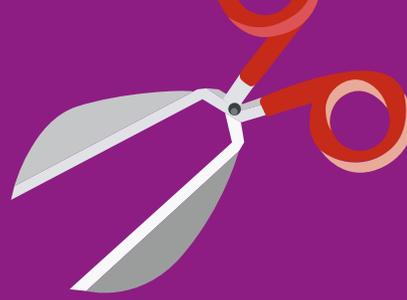
Independence is a major concern for families, with 94% of parents that we surveyed saying they had big worries about their deaf child growing up. That's why we're working with partner organisations to help deaf young people to develop the skills and confidence to shape their own futures.

In **South Asia**, seven of our projects focused on independence and employment. We supported around 500 deaf young people to improve their language and communication skills as well as facilitating life skills training, linking deaf young people up with vocational training opportunities, and supporting them to search for work. One of our key partnerships is with the Graham Bell Centre for the Deaf in India, who we've been working with for 16 years to give deaf children the training and education opportunities they deserve.

In **East Africa**, a highlight has been working with our partner Deaf Empowerment Kenya (DEK) to reach 93 deaf young people. We've run training on life skills, employability and sexual and reproductive health. We've also linked up deaf young people with local businesses, colleges and internship programmes.

Case study

25



Priya (25) is profoundly deaf and lives in West Bengal, India. She set up her own tailoring business after receiving training from our partner, Graham Bell Centre for the Deaf (GBCD), and is now making face masks for people in her community.

Priya was diagnosed as deaf at the age of two and attended a mainstream school, but without any specialist support she couldn't hear or communicate with her teacher, and found it impossible to learn or make friends.

Attending school left Priya frustrated, angry and incredibly lonely, and after four years she decided to leave. She didn't have the confidence to go outside and instead spent her days at home. Her parents were desperately worried about the future.

Then Priya's neighbours got in touch with GBCD. Support workers visited the family home and after a few months they were able to gain the family's trust and persuade them to attend a meeting at the centre. They provided counselling for Priya and advised her parents on how they could support her at home. Priya has made brilliant progress and she's now learning Indian Sign Language and how to read and write.

When the centre started a course on tailoring, Priya jumped at the chance to get involved, and GBCD sourced a sewing machine so she could start her own tailoring business in the local community.

When the pandemic hit, Priya started sewing cloth face masks for the people in her village and is now helping her community stay safe because of the skills she developed through the project.

“Priya is learning sign language and has started her own tailoring business.”



Support during the pandemic

Since spring 2020 the coronavirus pandemic has turned everyone's lives upside down. The impact on deaf children's futures could be catastrophic – so we've been taking urgent action.



Get the most recent information on how we're supporting families through the pandemic at www.ndcs.org.uk.

Shaping futures together

Prior to the pandemic we'd been developing videos to teach **Family Sign Language**, and online events for families. We accelerated these initiatives to make sure families didn't miss out on support, particularly if their child had been recently diagnosed.

COVID-19 had a huge impact on our **campaigning work**, and from February 2020 we focused on making sure online lessons were accessible for deaf pupils so they didn't get left behind in their education during lockdown.

With face-to-face events cancelled, we continued our support for deaf young people by developing content for our **new youth website** (launching 2021). We also started planning how we could offer some of our services for young people online, including workshops normally provided on our Roadshow bus.

Our partner organisations in **East Africa and South Asia** continued to operate, communicating with families where possible via phone and socially distanced visits. Our immediate priority was supporting partners to ensure that deaf children and their families had access to important health messages.

Case study

27



Emma is mum to Bobby (1) who has mild to moderate hearing loss. We were a lifeline to her during lockdown when other services were forced to close.

When I found out Bobby was deaf I was upset but I half expected it. I was worried about the future and I was desperate to do everything I could to help him.

I met some mums at a playgroup for deaf children who told me about the National Deaf Children's Society. I jumped at the chance to attend one of their events, desperate to learn all I could to help Bobby.

Along came COVID and the event was cancelled; so was everything else. We'd had two months of fortnightly playgroup, meeting other parents with deaf children before it stopped.

Then I saw that this amazing charity was putting loads of events online – including the cancelled one, so I enrolled straightaway. It was fantastic, full of information about deafness, technology, and so much more.

I signed up for everything! Workshops and coffee mornings were a wonderful way to share worries and concerns; we were able to talk openly and honestly and bounce ideas off one another. I learned that being deaf isn't the end of the world, and it doesn't need to have a negative impact on Bobby.

This incredible charity is a real game changer. The level of support they give is phenomenal, and in the middle of a massive pandemic where everyone was lost, we still had this fabulous bunch of people supporting us. I will forever be grateful.

“In the middle of a pandemic we still had this fabulous bunch of people supporting us.”



How we're fundraising

In these difficult times, we are more grateful than ever to the amazing people and organisations who so generously support our work. Last year, thanks to you, we raised more than £24m in charitable income.



You raised more than £24m to help deaf children shape their futures.

Whether you ran a marathon, awarded a grant, fundraised with your company or pledged a gift in your Will, we think you're amazing.

Last year our loyal supporters really pulled out all the stops, raising £189,869 through community events like cake sales and our popular Fingerspellathon – a 27% increase on the year before. Participants in the 2019 London Marathon, traditionally one of our biggest events, raised more than £125,000 – a massive £9,000 over target. We've set up an amazing new corporate partnership with The Access Group. And grants from charitable trusts and foundations have allowed us to fund events, and support our Family Sign Language courses (see pages 10–11).

We get very little support from the Government and the pandemic has hugely limited our ability to fundraise, at a time when, more than ever, we need help. But innovative ideas for lockdown fundraising, and long-term grants and partnerships give us hope for the future.

Together we're making sure deaf children aren't forgotten during this pandemic – and beyond.

Case study



Kayleigh is mum to Henry (3), who is profoundly deaf. Our support was life-changing for the family when Henry was first diagnosed, and she and husband, Adam are now fundraising for us through The Access Group, the company they both work for.

When we found out Henry was deaf it was such a shock. It broke my heart that Henry hadn't heard my voice while he was in my tummy. That he'd never hear me tell him I love him.

After a painful few weeks, I started bonding with Henry and made sure he wore his hearing aids. Then, I remembered a leaflet about the National Deaf Children's Society and called their Freephone Helpline. The lady at the other end was so

kind to me, I just sobbed down the phone. She sent lots of articles about deafness and what to expect.

The company we both work for, The Access Group, sponsors a charity of the year and after the impact that the National Deaf Children's Society has had in our lives we wanted to give something back. We're now hoping to raise over £300,000 to support families like ours. It's a privilege that two fantastic organisations can come together to change the lives of deaf children and their families for the better.

I think back to when Henry was first diagnosed and how frightened and sad I felt, but he has amazed me with his strength and determination. I'm not saying it's always easy and we still have bumps in the road, but the good days completely outweigh the bad.

“ We wanted to give something back to the National Deaf Children's Society.”



Thank you

You're helping to shape deaf children's futures.



Key funders

A M Pilkington Trust
 Barbara A Shuttleworth Memorial Trust
 Birkdale Trust for Hearing Impaired Ltd
 Briess Rayner Charity Trust
 Brownlie Charitable Trust
 Careers and Enterprise Company
 Charities Aid Foundation
 Charles Brotherton Trust
 David Lister Charitable Trust
 Davis-Rubens Charitable Trust
 Dentons UK and Middle East LLP Charitable Trust
 Department for Communities
 Elsie Lawrence Trust
 Frogna! Trust
 Hemby Charitable Trust
 J Reginald Corah Foundation Fund
 James T Howat Charitable Trust
 Joseph and Annie Cattle Trust
 Lord and Lady Lurgan Charitable Trust
 Lord Belstead Charitable Settlement
 Masonic Charitable Foundation
 Miss Anne R Jolly's Trust
 Miss Caroline Jane Spence's Fund
 Miss J K Stirrup Charity Trust

Mrs M A Black Charitable Trust
 Mrs P. C. Gluckstein Charity Trust
 Murphy-Neumann Charity Co Ltd
 Next Plc
 P F Charitable Trust
 Quest Joinery
 SCVO
 Scottish Government
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 Sir Jeremiah Colman Gift Trust
 Sir John Sumner's Trust
 The Access Group
 The Brock Webb Trust
 The Buffini Chao Foundation
 The Cecil Rosen Foundation
 The Chalk Cliff Trust
 The Chillag Family Charitable Trust
 The Christopher Laing Foundation
 The Constance Travis Trust
 The Elaine Barratt Charitable Trust
 The Finderman Charitable Trust
 The Geoffrey Berger Charitable Trust
 The Helen Jean Cope Charity



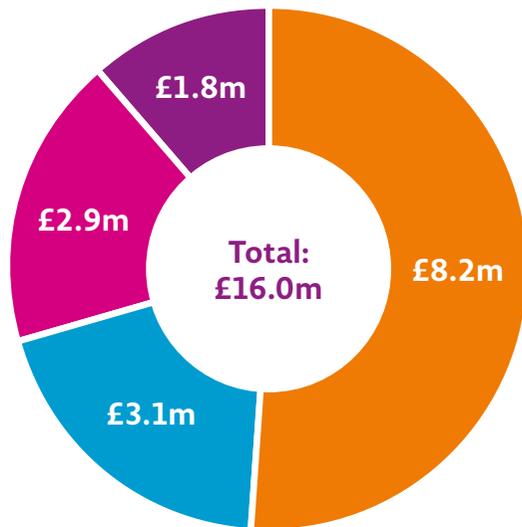
The Helianthus Charitable Trust
 The Hon A.G. Samuel Charitable Trust
 The Jake Memorial Trust
 The Jenour Foundation
 The Jessie Spencer Trust
 The Joseph and Mary Hiley Trust
 The Lady Hind Trust
 The Linden Charitable Trust
 The Multithon Trust
 The Nancie Massey Charitable Trust
 The Robertson Trust

The Souter Charitable Trust
 The Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust
 The Susanna Peake Charitable Trust
 The Sydney Black Charitable Trust
 The Sylvia and Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust
 The Veronica Awdry Charitable Trust
 The White Family Charitable Trust
 Thomas Lilley Memorial Trust
 William Allen Young Charitable Trust
 Worshipful Company of Lightmongers
 Charitable Trust Ltd



Finance and governance

Summary of charitable expenditure



Overcoming barriers in
local and national services

Overcoming barriers in
language and communication

Overcoming barriers to independence

Other charitable activities

Board of Trustees

Our Trustee Board governs the charity and has a maximum of 12 trustees, all volunteers. The majority of our trustees are parents or carers of deaf children and members of the charity. Trustees can serve on the Board for a maximum of nine consecutive years.

Thanks to all of our trustees for their service over the last year:

Lisa Capper (Chair, resigned 10 December 2019)

Tim Polack (Vice Chair to 10 December 2019, Chair from 10 December 2019)

Dominic Holton (Vice Chair from 10 December 2019)

Helen Selwood (Treasurer)

Sheila McKenzie (Deputy Treasurer)

Suzanne Beese

Jennie Rayson

Jan Rutherford

Lorraine Wapling

Gerard Featherstone

(resigned 10 December 2019)

Lynn Gadd (appointed 19 July 2019)

Damian Proctor (appointed 19 July 2019)

Altaf Kassam (appointed 21 March 2020)

Katherine Binns (appointed 21 March 2020)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

The annual report and financial statements were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf on 12 November 2020.

The statutory financial statements, on which the auditors Crowe UK LLP gave an unqualified audit report on 13 November 2020 have been submitted to the Registrar of Companies, the Charity Commission and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

You can get the full trustees' report, statutory financial statements and auditors' report from our Freephone Helpline on **0808 800 8880** or from our website www.ndcs.org.uk.

How we're learning and improving

We aim high but there's always more we can do to improve support for deaf children and their families. We want to develop new areas of work, learn from things that didn't go according to plan and make sure we do better in the future. We owe it to you – our funders – and to the families we support.

- We made good progress this year but we need to do more to increase opportunities for families and deaf young people to share their experiences, and provide peer support to others. Our new family blogs and user-generated videos have helped us to reach wider audiences; this success has been encouraging and we plan to explore further opportunities in 2020/21.
- We weren't able to launch our Deaf-friendly Standard this year as planned because of capacity issues. We'll award the standard to organisations and leisure providers that demonstrate inclusivity and good communication, and have agreed a new timeline for launch in 2020/21.
- We've been exploring how we can make our services more relevant and accessible to the families we support, in particular by launching more online services and support. Our work in this area has included finalising the development of a new online community, and producing more online events and webinars for families. This approach will only become more important in light of the coronavirus pandemic, and we plan to increase our focus in this area, including launching the Your Community forum in summer 2020.
- Attendance has fallen at our face-to-face training sessions because professionals are finding it more difficult to take time away from their duties and source funding for a place. To address these issues we've started to create some free online training modules that better fit with professionals' busy schedules and budgets. This work has been accelerated due to COVID-19.
- We need to offer more opportunities for deaf young people and their families to get involved and make a difference, through activities like volunteering and campaigning. Over the next 12 months we'll examine how we can support and empower passionate activists who can inspire change, rather than leading every campaign ourselves.

What we'll do next year

Area of focus 1:

Local and national services

We will refocus and increase our reactive influencing and campaigning to advocate for the rights and needs of deaf children and young people at this time, particularly with regard to education and audiology.

Measure: Evidence of how we have influenced services to make sure that the rights of deaf children and young people are upheld and their needs are met now and as services recover.

Area of focus 2:

Language and communication

We will help families to support the language and communication skills of their deaf child, particularly focusing on the home environment and home learning, and we will focus on understanding the impact of late diagnosis and support.

Measure: Parents have increased ability to communicate with their deaf child and report their child is more confident in communicating.

Area of focus 3:

Independence

We will support deaf children and young people by developing digital support, including opportunities for them to connect with each other, and information and support related to careers, transitions and independence.

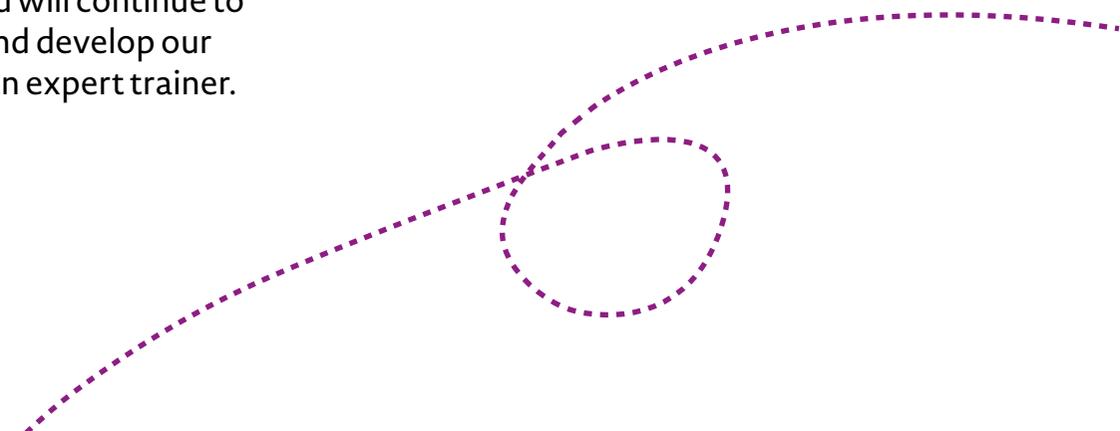
Measure: The take-up and feedback on these activities, including evidence of how they support independence.

International

We will continue to work with partners in East Africa and South Asia, supporting deaf children internationally in our three strategic areas of focus. We will prioritise ensuring that those we support through our partners have access to appropriate health messaging, and will continue to increase our profile and develop our international role as an expert trainer.

Underpinning activities

We will continue to develop the support we give to our members, providing them with information, support and advice, and will continue to protect the rights of deaf children and young people in line with our strategy. In particular, we will accelerate our digital offer, expand our user-generated content, increase opportunities for peer to peer support, and continue to grow our activism work. We are aware that a digital offer is not appropriate for all of our beneficiaries and we will seek to reintroduce some limited face-to-face support later in the year, but only when it can be done safely.





**Thank you for
helping deaf
children to
shape their
futures.**

**We are the National Deaf Children's Society,
the leading charity for deaf children.**

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