



Annual Report

For the year 01/10/2018 – 30/09/2019

Mission Statement

“MSDP working in partnerships, bringing together Deaf* and hearing communities to create more accessible services.”

**Deaf=Deaf, deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-blind*

The Board of Management, staff and volunteers are committed to upholding the organisations Core Values.

The values of MSDP have recently been reviewed and the values highlighted below will provide a foundation for successful growth and development of services in the future.

- Equality
- Communication
- Trust
- Respect
- Quality
- Sustainability

Chair's Letter

This year at MSDP has been a year of change and achievement. The charity has made some important decisions about infrastructure, with the proposed sale of Grange Road West in the Wirral, and the temporary relocation to Matrix House and the Welcome Centre in Birkenhead. Changes of this nature ensure MSDP works in the most efficient manner, maximising the value of our assets for the charity whilst also creating a modern, agile working environment and culture for our staff. It also ensures we provide better facilities for members of the Deaf community and people accessing MSDP services.

MSDP have parted company with its CEO and Chair. Updates on the departures have been discussed with staff members and the Deaf community. The Trustees and the senior management team working in partnership have ensured that MSDP continues to operate effectively and meets its various contractual obligations.

Some of the achievements this year are as follows;

- Liverpool Council contract won by MSDP for 3+2 years
- Wirral Council contract extension until September 2020
- Training & Development team continues to provide training to organisations and individuals
- Development of the Review/Assessor roles to improve duty sessions
- Improved finance systems and reporting processes
- Development of a business plan and business continuity plan

MSDP would not be able to deliver services to make the impact that we do, without the skill and dedication of its staff, volunteers and without the support of individuals and organisations that made donations and funded our work.

Future plans

Plans for the immediate future include raising our profile across the Merseyside region, especially promoting what we offer in terms of sign language and Deaf awareness training to continue to improve access for our beneficiaries in the wider society. We also intend to develop partnerships with other organisations as well as increasing our community engagement so that we are all working together to improve quality of life and opportunities for our community. Finally, we aim to improve our use of technology, to improve the provision of accessible information for the Deaf community. We will also be looking to provide new facilities on the Wirral for the Deaf, Deaf Blind, Hard of Hearing and deafened people to meet in a safe and accessible location.

Bob Davies, Chair.

Governance

The charity is governed by a memorandum of association, 13th June 1997, Revised and approved by Board and Members of the Deaf Community 31st March 2017.

Trustees and Board members in post during this year.

Name	Role	Dates active (if not for whole year)
Louise Reecejones	Chair (until July 2019)	Ended October 2019
Andy McLoughlin	Vice Chair (until August 2019)	Ended August 2019
Barry Avison	Trustee	
Bob Davies	Trustee (Chair from August 2019)	
Kathie Hare-Cockburn	Trustee	Ended March 2019
Hannah Lewis	Trustee	
Sandra Scott	Trustee	
Andrew Goodwin	Trustee	Started October 2019

Our **Patron** is Lord Salisbury

He says “I am very honoured to be a Patron of MSDP, particularly in view of my family’s long connection with the City of Liverpool, and it is a privilege to be a supporter of such an effective organisation. I wish MSDP the very best of good fortune in the years to come.”

Trustee Selection and Development

The charity recruits Trustees onto the board who can contribute to the achievement of the charity’s objectives based on their skills, experience and knowledge. We actively seek to recruit Trustees with lived experience of d/Deaf issues from a variety of perspectives. Prospective Trustees are asked to fill in an application form which covers the skills and experience they can offer and their reasons for wishing to be a Trustee. After receiving the form, the prospective Trustee then meets with representatives of the management committee and staff. The appointment of the prospective Trustee is discussed at the next board meeting, and if approved by a majority of Trustees present, is invited to join the board.

Any new Trustee is verbally inducted at their first few meetings, so they become familiar with the charity and are encouraged to take advantage of occasions to meet staff and community members.

All Trustees are expected to participate in relevant planning/training events with management staff and to undergo any necessary training in issues specific to their role.

Understanding and reporting on Public Benefit

The Trustees of the Merseyside Society for Deaf People are fully aware of and understand the requirement to report on the charity's activities in relation to Public Benefit, as set out in the Charity Commission's guidance. The Trustees have paid due regard to the guidance when managing the activities of the charity and in reporting on its activities in this annual report.

Summary of objectives and activities of the Charity

- From the Memorandum of Association, the main object of the charity is, in the old-fashioned language “the relief of persons who are Deaf, Deaf Blind and hard of hearing (“The beneficiaries”)
- This is carried out in MSDP through: -
 - Providing support and equipment to beneficiaries in their own homes, to enable them to live independently and have good quality of life.
 - Providing British Sign Language (BSL) and Deaf awareness training to a wide range of individuals and organisations to promote and encourage better treatment of (e.g. communication with, attitudes towards) the beneficiaries in the hearing world.
 - Providing employment and volunteering opportunities for beneficiaries in the Charity where they can receive training and development in an accessible environment.
 - Creating and maintaining effective partnerships to deliver our objectives in the service of our beneficiaries.
 - Facilitating social interaction and recreation amongst beneficiaries and between them and hearing people through the provision of a community space and supporting community activities in a variety of ways.
 - Raising funds to carry out the activities of the charity.

Achievements and Performance

Premises

MSDP maintains two premises to help achieve the purposes of the charity; one in Liverpool, a new building on the Queens Drive retail park and one on the Wirral. For many years the Wirral building has been at Grange Road West, but due to the fact it no longer meets the current needs of the charity a decision was made in late 2018 to put it up for sale and move into temporary offices (at Matrix House) and rent rooms for community use (at the Welcome Centre) while the sale went through and a longer term decision could be made regarding premises on the Wirral. At the end of the financial year there had been a level of interest such that we confidently hope to sell the property within the coming 12 months.

The Queens Drive building rents space to a number of outside organisations (when it is not in use by our own departments and community) to help raise funds towards the maintenance of the building and thus support the charitable activities of the organisation.

Training and Communication department:

We were delighted to move into our new premises in November 2017 and deliver our training in the purpose-built classrooms. It makes such a difference!

The training team consists of two tutors – me, Stephen McKenna, and Ian Cockburn, supported by our administrator, Jan Green.

Our aim is to improve communication through training. During the past year 270 students have enrolled for BSL courses at MSDP. Applications to learn BSL at all levels have increased and the students have worked extremely hard to achieve their results.

Course	Number of courses	Students	Pass Rate	Signature (Awarding Body) Pass Rates 2018
BSL Level 1 Unit 101 Full course	12	172	100% 76%	98% 76%
BSL Level 2	6	71	90%	80%
BSL Level 3	4	27	Awaiting results	60%

Signature pass rate averaged across three units

Whilst fees are competitive, we recognise it can be difficult to meet the costs all at once. We therefore accept payment by way of instalments to spread the cost. We also offer a discount for deaf students and their immediate family. To help with costs, we were delighted to receive a grant from Morrisons to help with course fees for children of deaf adults and the immediate family and another from West Derby Waste Lands towards Level 1 course fees.

In February 2019, the NVQ Level 6 Language and Interpreting courses started with 8 students enrolling for the Language programme and 9 students for the Interpreting programme, which included 4 students taking both courses. The timescale for the programmes has been shortened due to changes in the Signature qualification, which makes it more difficult, but we are working with the students to achieve the qualification.

In addition to BSL classes, we deliver half day Deaf Awareness and Introduction to Sign Language training courses. During the past year we have held 24 sessions for many organisations; including City of Liverpool College and Morecrofts Solicitors. Many delegates have joined courses to learn BSL following the training.

We have continued to deliver bespoke Deaf Awareness training for University of Liverpool medical students and enjoyed a celebration lunch with the University to mark our contribution to the teaching and training of Year 3 Medical Students.

The interpreting service continues to grow, and we appreciate the support of our interpreters who try to be flexible to meet the needs of the deaf community.

Over the next year we hope to increase our courses and improve deaf awareness in the wider community. As the training needs grow, we hope to be able to employ an additional tutor and continue to offer BSL for many years to come.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Ian and Jan for their hard work throughout the year, and everyone who has supported the training team.

Stephen McKenna
Training & Communication Manager

Community Support Service department

Prior to 1st October 2018, the support services have been a team of 9 plus me as the manager. We covered Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral. This has been challenging covering a lot of clients due to lack of resources. In October, interviews took place for a Duty Officer for Liverpool and Mark Hart was appointed. The Deaf community value being able to drop in to see the Duty Officer and receive support with a wide variety of issues. A similar post was also created for the Wirral and Adam Brennan has been appointed. Again, the Wirral Deaf community value his support.

We have Sefton duties which are held in Southport Deaf Centre and Crosby Library. This has worked really well as it provides consistency. We also attended Southport Deaf Centre open day where we had a stall to advertise MSDP. I attended a meeting at the Little Theatre to support the Deaf community with regards to improving their access for communication and the placement of the interpreter on stage. This issue has now been resolved.

We have had interviews for bank staff and still continue to advertise for more, due to the service demand. The spot purchase (support packages) have increased with more referrals coming to us.

The support service now has a Coffee morning, which started on 5th July 2018 and is held every Thursday 10-12pm. We have Lyn Ealey as the main lead with a volunteer, Sue Maine supporting her too. Other staff occasionally support if both are absent. The coffee morning has attracted a good number of people and provided a variety of activities and opportunities for sharing information; for example, arts and crafts, presentations on Health and Wellbeing, LIPA-The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, making a Will, Dementia and DWP benefit Universal Credit. We held a coffee morning to raise money by everyone making or providing cakes for the MacMillan cancer research. Clients have participated in exercise groups and attended a trip to the St George's Hall.

Staff have participated in refresher training which is vital for their roles.

Janice Connolly, the Community Liaison Officer and I have raised Deaf awareness by attending various meetings with groups such as Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) from Liverpool, Wirral, and Sefton, DWP Disability confident, Liverpool Council for Voluntary Services (LCVS) and the Women's organisation.

In the next year we plan to continue to provide an excellent service to support our clients, raise wider awareness of their needs in a variety of organisations and provide more opportunities for the d/Deaf, deaf blind and hard of hearing community to participate in activities to learn new skills and receive information in an accessible environment.

*Dawn Dignam
Community Support Service Manager*

Environmental Aids department

The Environmental Aids department continues to work across Liverpool City and Wirral Borough Council areas to assess the needs of clients, installing equipment where required to maintain independence in their homes. Two Technical Officers, Chris Hopwood and Glenn Cockburn work with me to visit, assess and install equipment. We are supported by our two administrative staff, Georgia and Chanelle who ensure our diaries are kept busy.

Activities of Environmental Aids department over the past year		
	Liverpool	Wirral
Number of Assessments for Equipment	207	152
Number of Pieces of Equipment Issued	278	245
Number of Repairs	153	265

Our clients are always keen to show their appreciation for the service, sending cards and donations in recognition of the difference the service has made to theirs and their loved one's lives.

As we move into the next year, the department continues to provide an excellent service ensuring our clients are comfortable and safe in their own homes.

Jeanette Tiernan
Senior Rehabilitation Officer

Deaf Community Liaison.

The Community Liaison Officer role has two main parts. The first part is acting as 'go-between' between the members of the Deaf Community and external agencies to work on resolving problems Deaf people have in accessing services. For example, this year I was made aware of issues Deaf parents have with the provision of communication services at Alder Hey hospital, so I arranged a meeting (with BSL interpreters) between representatives from Healthwatch and Deaf parents to enable Deaf parents to make a formal complaint about this issue. I work with DWP, CCG's etc. in similar roles, sometimes setting up focus groups from Deaf community members to examine proposals from external agencies.

Another key achievement this year was working in partnership with Liverpool CCG and the Deaf Community to create 'Deaf ID' cards which Deaf people can show to health care providers to explain about the need to book BSL interpreters for appointments. This means that Deaf people are more aware of their legal right to an interpreter and the provider understands that this is their legal duty to book interpreters, and that all GPs and NHS trusts have arrangements in place for this.

The second part of the role involves updating the website, maintaining MSDP social media and creating and editing videos to share so that Deaf people have full access to essential information in an accessible format with BSL, subtitles and voiceover.

Janice Connolly

Deaf Community Liaison Officer.

Liverpool Deaf Community and Joes Bar

MSDP provides a room for the use of community groups, which includes a bar. "Joes Bar" funds itself and is run by Liverpool Deaf Community committee with the help of 14 volunteer bar staff. Groups who have taken advantage of these facilities over the year have included a wide variety of social and church groups. Those who attend these groups include hearing BSL learners and Hard of Hearing people as well as D/deaf people who come for bingo, chat, to watch football on the big screen, or to practise their BSL. We even have a Bagpipe group who use our room to practise in return for a donation. There have also been one off visits through the year from a variety of groups; the North West Deaf Sports Society and other Deaf clubs.

The community and bar help to contribute towards the costs of the charity (e.g. they funded air conditioning for the community room and paid for the tables, chairs, TVs and TV packages) and they also fundraise for the charity through their gala ball in November 2018 and through an annual donation of half of their membership fees.

The Deaf Community and MSDP make a good partnership, and the Deaf community appreciate the building and the support of a place to meet.

Wirral Deaf Community

Wirral Deaf Community covers several Deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind user groups who meet for social contact and support. MSDP have provided space for these groups to meet, first at Grange Road West and then at the Welcome Centre. In September 2019 community consultations were held to keep members informed of what is happening regarding the Grange Road West property and to hear their views of what they would like for the future. One of the results of this meeting was the formation of a Wirral Deaf Community committee and improved communication with and support from the well-established Liverpool Deaf Community committee to help and advise them in achieving their aims.

Fundraising activities

Fundraising activities during the year have included Christmas and Summer Fayres, organised by volunteers and members of staff, which were well attended. We also received generous donations from the Liverpool Deaf Community who donated a percentage of their membership fees and profits from the gala ball and from the Wirral Hard of Hearing Club.

We are also grateful to the many people who give up time to fundraise for MSDP through activities such as participating in the abseil, signing choir, Bike Ride and other sponsored events.

Finally, we receive donations from outside organisations, clients and legacies and we are always thankful for these contributions to our work. Every donation, whether small or large, is appreciated and makes an important contribution to our work.

Volunteers

MSDP provides several volunteering opportunities and currently has 20 registered volunteers.

Without these volunteers, who give up their free time to support the Charity, we could not operate and organise the events we do. Some of the roles supported by our team of volunteers included; Reception, Coffee Mornings and Fundraising events. The volunteers are ably managed by Karen Devlin.

Financial overview

At present MSDP is in a stable financial position.

The total income for this financial year is £981,004 which has increased by £96,787 from the previous year. This is due to an increase in the unrestricted funds of £88,247 and an increase in restricted funds of £8,540.

The total expenses for this financial year are £894,067 this has increased by £64,248 from the previous year.

The big news this year was winning the Liverpool contract for Support and Equipment services. This, together with the Wirral and Sefton service level agreements make up most of the Charities income.

In addition to the Local Authority Contracts, the main income for the Charity comes from:

- Training Courses
- Interpreting Services
- Rental of space
- Donations and legacies

Although in a stable financial position, MSDP still face challenges over the coming years. This is due to several factors;

- Potential cuts to social care funding
- Local Authority Contracts due to end, and be sent out for tender

Financial reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed the Charity's need for reserves in line with guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees agree to the aim of holding at least six months running costs in free reserves on the understanding that the charity's funding is not certain and to ensure that the charity can run effectively and continue to meet the needs of its beneficiaries.

Accountability

The charity must comply with legislation and regulation in many areas of its work, including: -

data protection, staffing issues, selection, conditions, remuneration, discipline, grievance, Income Tax, National Insurance, health and safety, equality issues, race, gender and disability.

Annual Accounts

In accordance with Section 47 of the Charities Act 1993, copies of the Trustee's Report and a full set of audited Annual Accounts are available from the registered office of Merseyside Society for Deaf People.