

Annual Report



2014

Administrative Information

Charity Number: 1113882

The Objects of Signs of God

To advance the use of British Sign Language in Christian settings

To promote and enable full participation in the Christian faith of people who use British Sign Language

Trustees

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Penny Beschizza | Chair |
| Trudy Field | Secretary |
| Rachel Williams | Treasurer |
| Sarah Haynes, Janice Silo, Sarah Tupling, Roma Parrick | |

Registered Office:

1 Saxon Way, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS32 9AR
tel/fax/minicom 01454 202483 sms administrator: 07715 707135
email: info@signsofgod.org.uk Website: www.signsofgod.org.uk

Administrator: Gill Behenna

Bank: HSBC 259 Cowbridge Road East, Canton, Cardiff CF11 9TN

Independent Examiner: Melva J Corcoran BA MBA FCA CTA
Cunningham Wishart business advisers and chartered accountants
"Pren Ceirios", 66 Pwllmelin Road, Cardiff CF5 2NH

Members

Members will be individuals who actively contribute to the objects of the Charity by

1. Teaching
2. Interpreting
3. Consultation
4. Administration
5. Developing training

Members at 2nd March 2015

Raymond Abernethy – Belfast
Rosie Addis – Edinburgh
Mandy Buddle – Aldershot
Gill Behenna – Bristol
Penny Beschizza – London
Heather Carter – Oxford
Catherine Carlyon - London
Trudy Field – Scunthorpe
Ali Fuller – Harrow
Jerry Hanifin – Derby
Shaunett Harris – London
Debbie Harvey – Camborne
Ros Hunt – Cambridge
Sarah Haynes – Bristol
Thandi Jobson – Colchester
Liz Macartney – Birmingham
Catherine Moxon – Chorley

Susan Myatt – Tamworth
Roma Parrick – Ashted
Heather Peachey – Barrow-upon-Humber
Di Phaisey – Telford
Kathryn Phipps - Leicester
Hannah Robinson - London
Sarah Salter – Ashted
Bob Shrine – Bradford
Janice Silo – Derby
Anna Smith – Derby
Mark Smith – Derby
Nicki Stevenson – Peterborough
Sarah Tupling – Derby
Mary Whittaker – Elgin
Rachel Williams– Cardiff
Chris Williamson – Birmingham

From the Chair

The past twelve months saw the committed continuation of Signs of God's work across strands – supporting access at events, training and church services; day training for CPD (continuing professional development) for both Deaf and hearing participants; day workshops in various parts of the UK and our new structuring of Signs of God's Core Team.

Of course, the highlight of the year was the 9th Signs of God Summer School. Based within a University campus, vast spaces were quickly filled with signing arms/hands by hordes of signing people swarming around in mid-August. The Summer School gained an International flavour from several of our invited presenters, from North America and Europe, adding spice to the diversity and variety in the week-long programme.

As we move onwards and upwards with our two objectives, promoting and training BSL in Christian Settings and increasing active participation – and leadership – of Deaf People within the Church, we are acutely conscious of the rapid pace of technology in both the Deaf and hearing worlds. Social media has proved to be an efficient promotion tool in informing, encouraging and sustain interest of people about events Signs of God participated in; we learnt, and followed through, the necessity of online E-Safety. Signs of God values having a diverse Core Team with skills including information technology, and retaining the good old-fashioned face to face support / training, essential where Sign Language is concerned.

We at Signs of God welcome our new Deaf & hearing Core Team members and appreciating the gradual delegation of our activities – like the Christian Interpreters' Network and our workshops.

We continue to offer heartfelt thanks to everyone on the Board, CIN, those who led and participated in Signs of God's many activities and bookings throughout the past year. We continue, too, to be aware of concerns such as recruiting more Deaf teachers in our Core Team and be more available for workshops.



The illustration best depicts our philosophy and continuing development. We still grow like plants and trees, but also, in quiet ways, in other ways, we nurture each other, be flexibly available for moral support, advice and guidance, trusting our God in these verses:

Acts 20:34-35 Lexham English Bible (LEB)

³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands served *to meet* my needs and *the needs* of those who were with me. ³⁵ I have shown you *with respect* to all *things* that *by* working hard in this way it is necessary to help those who are in need, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Penny Beschizza

Report of the Activities of Signs of God

4th March 2014 – 3rd March 2015

Core Team changes

Jo Lindley resigned from the Core Team in 2014. At the AGM we expanded the Core Team considerably, electing the following: Mandy Buddle, Catherine Carlyon, Heather Carter, Shaunett Harris, Heather Peachey, Liz Macartney, Kathryn Phipps, Hannah Robinson, Bob Shrine, and Mary Whittaker. This expansion of the Core Team was key in our strategy for expanding and developing the work of Signs of God.

Charity Development

The Trustees met 3 times during the year, took part in training for Charity Trustees, and kept in touch between meetings via email.

Two distinct pieces of work have been taken on by Core Team members, which has enabled more people to be involved and also helped to mitigate the risk identified by the Trustees of all the work being centred in one person ie the Administrator.

Liz Macartney has taken over administration of the Christian Interpreters' Network, including handling all the requests for interpreters. Interpreting requests may now be emailed direct to: interpreting@signsofgod.org.uk

Roma Parrick has taken over arrangements for Signs of God workshops and may be emailed on: workshops@signsofgod.org.uk

Our new website: www.signsofgod.org.uk was launched in August and has proved invaluable in providing easy access to event booking, and access to follow-up materials such as hand-outs and "Powerpoint" presentations for participants. The transfer of our mailing list to a secure on-line location has meant a reduction in work for our Administrator and volunteers and ensured that our data is kept safe.

Workshops and Professional Training

Workshops took place in:

Bristol and Enfield

The workshops were well appreciated by participants with a wide range of skills and experience.

Signs of God is always open to invitations to run workshops and professional training.

Professional Training for interpreters took place for members of the South Wales Region of the Association of Sign Language Interpreters (ASLI) in July. The day focused on community events such as weddings, funerals and christenings.

Summer School

Our 2014 Summer School took place in August at a new venue: The University of Wolverhampton Telford Campus. The new venue enabled us to expand the work of the Summer School, which attracted 87 students who made use of the excellent teaching and lecturing facilities of the campus.

Highlights included international visitors – both tutors and participants – from America and Germany as well as our own very experienced trainers from Signs of God. In total, a teaching team of 21 tutors and presenters. An innovation this year was the use of two experienced interpreters as mentors to the intern team.

Christian Interpreters' Network

Signs of God continued to provide good quality interpreting teams to a wide range of Christian holidays and conferences thus enabling access for Deaf participants. In addition, many people now contact Signs of God for interpreters for single events such as weddings and funerals. Whilst we try to fill all requests, sometimes we are unable to find interpreters for short notice requests.

A Team Away Day was held in October 2014 for those who had volunteered their skills and time at Christian events during the year. This enabled people to reflect on their experiences and share ideas for development.

A Team Leader Training Day was held in February 2015 for those who are involved in leading teams of interpreters at Christian events.

Support and information

We are pleased to be part of the "Churches for All" coalition and provided interpreting support for their "Enabling Church" Conference in June in the Midlands

We also provided interpreters and exhibited at the Go! Sign Festival Day in Cardiff in October 2014. This included the launch of the revised "Sign Me In!" Policy Document, produced by Signs of God, Go! Sign and Deaf Anglicans Together.

Summary of achievements

The summary of achievements below outlines the ways in which Signs of God demonstrates its public benefit

Approximately 80 of the general public attended Signs of God Workshops. These included a number of participants with no previous knowledge of the Deaf community or BSL. Including this group of people ensures a greater awareness of Deaf people in the general population.

87 students (at all levels of BSL) and 25 staff (tutors, pastoral staff and admin staff) attended the Summer School.

The Christian Interpreters Network stands at 206 members of which 120 are trained interpreters.

Christian events interpreted by Signs of God teams enabled Deaf people to attend and access events of their choosing.

Approximately 70 interpreting places were filled at these events. A further 90 interpreting requests were sent out to the network. Most of these were successfully covered.

Skilled Christian interpreters have enabled and supported Deaf presenters and speakers to contribute to major Christian events, raising the level of Deaf awareness at the events and helping to promote a positive view of deafness.

Professional training was given to 6 secular interpreters to enable them to offer a better service at community events such as weddings, funerals and christenings.

The website has enabled more user-friendly information to be made available to organisers of Christian events, Deaf people and the general public, enabling Deaf people's access to a variety of events.

Information about Signs of God was made available at the Go! Sign Festival Day to enable Deaf people to access the services we provide.

Into the future...

In 2015/16 we have a workshop planned for Peterborough in October.

Professional Training Days are planned for Derby and Haywards Heath.


Sign Language Interpreters will once again be provided at major Christian events.

Our "Building Capacity" work will continue with active recruitment to the Core Team and Trustees.

An interpreters' team Away Day will be held in the Autumn of 2015.

Finally

As always, we give thanks to God for calling us all to share in the work of His Kingdom.


**CHARITY
COMMISSION**

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

Section A
Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/members of

Charity Name

Signs of God

On accounts for the year ended

030315

Charity no (if any)

1113882

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

**Respective responsibilities of trustees
and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's
statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below*):

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed

M. Corcoran

Date

17/9/15

Name

MELVA CORCORAN

 Relevant professional qualification(s)
or body (if any)

FCA

Address

 66 Pullmelin Road
Cardiff CF5 2NH

Signs of God
Accounts for the period 04/03/14 to 03/03/15
charity number 1113882

| 2013/14 | | 2014/15 |
|------------------|--|--------------------|
| 17,082.30 | Balance bf Current account | 27,561.76 |
| 10,483.00 | Balance bf BMM account | 10,490.30 |
| 100.00 | PayPal account | 100.00 |
| | Incoming Resources | |
| 18,394.60 | Workshops & Training | 33,459.20 |
| 480.88 | Fundraising Merchandise | 605.00 |
| 3,258.44 | Donations | 3,480.00 |
| 592.80 | Representation and Interpretation | |
| 7.30 | Interest | 7.30 |
| 22,734.02 | Total Income from 04/03/14 | 37,551.50 |
| | Expenditure | |
| 5,490.10 | Workshops & Training | 44,070.24 |
| 57.00 | Admin Support | 40.00 |
| 370.32 | Merchandise | 308.22 |
| 100.30 | AGM and Trustees meetings | 769.42 |
| 100.00 | Examiner Fee | 100.00 |
| 462.16 | Insurance | 491.93 |
| 426.00 | Website | 7,825.30 |
| 997.86 | Exhibition & Representation | 120.00 |
| 120.00 | CCL Licence | 124.00 |
| 210.12 | Paypal fees | 93.10 |
| | Assets | |
| 907.85 | Equipment | |
| 9,241.71 | Total Expenditure from 04/03/14 | 53,942.21 |
| 13,492.31 | Balance during period | - 16,390.71 |
| 3,005.55 | Prior year adj re Paypal | |
| 100.00 | Total Paypal account | 100.00 |
| 27,561.76 | Total Current account | 11,163.75 |
| 10,490.30 | Total BMM account | 10,497.60 |

| Signs of God | Notes to the Accounts | Income | Expenditure | Surplus/Deficit |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Training | | | | |
| Summer school | | 31,010.00 | 43,163.72 - | 12,153.72 |
| London | | 250.00 | 40.00 | 210.00 |
| Bristol | | 580.00 | 331.20 | 248.80 |
| ASLI | | 400.00 | 190.00 | 210.00 |
| Away Day | | | 131.42 - | 131.42 |
| Trustee Training | | | 155.90 - | 155.90 |
| Terptree Webinair | | 175.00 | | 175.00 |
| BSL Tutors | | | 58.00 - | 58.00 |
| Remark! | | 1,044.20 | | |
| | | 33,459.20 | 44,070.24 - | 11,655.24 |
| Donations | | | | |
| Standing orders | | 2,265.00 | | |
| One off donations | | 1,115.00 | | |
| Donated back gifts and expenses | | 100.00 | | |
| | | 3,480.00 | | |
| Stationery, printing, computer supplies | | | | |
| Admin Support | | | 40.00 | |
| Telephone & internet | | | | |
| Website | | | 7,825.30 | |
| Insurance | | | | |
| | | | 491.93 | |
| Merchandise | | | | |
| General | | 311.00 | 5.82 | 305.18 |
| Go Sign DVDS | | 294.00 | 302.40 - | 8.40 |
| | | 605.00 | 308.22 | 296.78 |
| AGM and Trustees meetings | | | | |
| | | | 769.42 | |
| Representation and Interpreting | | | | |
| ECG Conference | | | 120.00 - | 120.00 |
| | | - | 120.00 - | 120.00 |
| Misc | | | | |
| CCLI Licence | | | 124.00 | |
| Independent examiner | | | 100.00 | |
| Assets | | | | |
| Paypal | | | | |
| Paypal Fees | | | 93.10 | |
| Net Interest BMM | | | | |
| Total for period : 04/03/14-03/03/15 | | 37,544.20 | 53,942.21 - | 16,398.01 |