

Annual Report



2015/16



Administrative Information

Charity Number: 1113882

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 2016

Raymond Abernethy – Belfast	Roma Parrick – Ashtead
Rosie Addis – Edinburgh	Heather Peachey – Barrow-upon-Humber
Mandy Buddle – Aldershot	Tom Pearson - Somerton
Gill Behenna – Bristol	Di Phaisey – Telford
Penny Beschizza – London	Kathryn Phipps - Leicester
Heather Carter – Oxford	Hannah Robinson - London
Catherine Carlyon - London	Sarah Salter – Ashtead
Trudy Field – Scunthorpe	Bob Shrine – Bradford
Ali Fuller – Harrow	Janice Silo – Derby
Jerry Hanifin – Derby	Anna Smith – Derby
Shaunett Harris – London	Mark Smith – Derby
Debbie Harvey – Camborne	Nicki Stevenson – Peterborough
Ros Hunt – Cambridge	Sarah Tupling – Derby
Sarah Haynes – Bristol	Mary Whittaker – Elgin
Thandi Jobson – Colchester	Rachel Williams– Cardiff
Liz Macartney – Birmingham	Chris Williamson – Birmingham
Catherine Moxon – Chorley	
Susan Myatt – Tamworth	

From the Chair

Signs of God, as an organisation, began preparation for a new transitional phase during the past year.

Three themes have been consistent and relevant during this particular year: Communication, Delegation and Transition.

Communication - social media is fast becoming an essential communication tool in the work of Signs of God, especially for Deaf people. Messenger, Twitter and Facebook provide instant two-way connections with pictures and videos - excellent for Deaf people, who use Sign Language. We are working on ways to improve our communication via social media.

Delegation - the trustees of Signs of God prepared to make structural changes within the organisation in order to move forward to meet increasing demands on its services and expertise. We now have efficient support with our workshop and CIN coordinators, both experienced in understanding and working with Deaf and hearing people when Signs of God's expertise was requested. The high quality support by our Signs of God's Christian interpreters' Network (CIN) has been seen more and more within the Deaf Community, as well as individual deaf children and adults in their local families and communities during weddings, funerals, training and other Church events.

Transition - the restructuring and delegation are the start of a new transitional phase in the lifetime of Signs of God, now in its 18th year since its foundation, and its 10th year as a Charity.

We thank God for the commitment, transparency and expectations of all who support us in the work we do, long may these continue to do so as we approach significant milestones in the next two years.

Thank you, and God bless.



Penelope Anne Beschizza

Report of the Activities of Signs of God

3rd March 2015 – 2nd March 2016

1 Structure and Governance

Signs of God was set up, by constitution, as a Registered Charity in 2005 with the following objects:

- 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

Its members are individuals who actively contribute to the objects of the Charity by

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

Trustees are elected from the members.

Charity Development during the year

The trustees met twice during the year, and kept in touch between meetings via email.

We have continued to consider ways in which the charity may be made more sustainable with less work being centred in the administrator. This is on-going work for the trustees. During the year, the trustees have reviewed a number of policies and procedures in order to ensure the charity is compliant and resilient. These have included our Terms and Conditions for workshops, the Reserves Policy and the formulation of a series of FAQs for the website to guide those wishing to offer themselves as trustees.

We started work on a Risk Register and a Safeguarding Policy and associated guidelines. All policies and documents are stored on a secure part of our own website so they are accessible to all Trustees.

Our experienced Treasurer, Rachel Smith, gave notice that she would be resigning at the end of the financial year, once the annual accounts were complete. The trustees started a recruitment process to ensure a new Treasurer was in place and a handover could take place. This was successful and Hannah Robinson will join the Board of Trustees as Treasurer.

2 Activities

The following paragraphs describe the activities we have undertaken in relation to our charitable objects.

2:1 Core Team changes

At the AGM we elected Tom Pearson to the Core Team. Tom brings considerable skills in digital technology and event organising. He is also a Trainee Interpreter who has volunteered at several Signs of God events.

2:2 AGM and Vision Day

Our 2015 Annual General Meeting was held in Bristol and incorporated time spent in discussing a vision for the charity and praying.

Notes from the Vision Day will form part of the agenda for on-going work and development of the charity.

2;3 Workshops and Professional Training

Workshops took place in Peterborough and Leeds

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, focusing on christenings, weddings and funerals took place in Derby, Sussex, Bristol, and London. Signs of God is building up a good reputation in the interpreting field for good professional training.

Gill Behenna gave a “Webinar” on Religious Interpreting. This resulted in the Agency “TerpTree”, which arranged the Webinar, donating a percentage from sales to Signs of God. We are very grateful for this generosity.

2:4 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 and it is evident that we are relying on the same few people all the time.

Unable to fill - 6 requests, amounting to 21 interpreting places.

Don’t know - 32 of the requests, amounting to 56 interpreting places.

We are very grateful to those who respond to interpreting requests, especially during the Summer months when demand is heavy.

2:5 Website and media

Our website continues to be used extensively, both by people wanting information, but also by people accessing training materials from events and booking to attend our workshops. We were pleased to be nominated as finalists in the Premier New Media Awards 2015. This brought us useful positive publicity.

Our Facebook page is well used to disseminate information, both about our own charity and other related organisations and we are looking at ways to use our Twitter account more effectively.

3 Finance

Total donations for the year amounted to £4233.60 this included a Gift Aid claim of £1,237.74

Individual donations rose following an appeal at the Vision day and now total: £3385

We were glad to receive donation of £508.60 from TerpTree as a percentage from sales of their webinars.

The Trustees maintain adequate reserves that they are satisfied would enable them to carry out six months’ normal activity, excluding the Summer School. Financial considerations have been noted on the charity’s Risk Register.

4 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.

There are over 250 people on the Christian Interpreter Network.

During the year there were 105 requests for interpreters, amounting to 230 interpreting places. Of these requests, 67 were filled successfully, amounting to 153 interpreting places

We provided interpreting teams at 6 National Christian events teams for national Christian events so enabling Deaf people to attend and access the events of their choosing
In addition we provided interpreters at the following one-off events:

- 33 funerals
- 7 Christenings, weddings, civil ceremonies
- 58 Day events/conferences/training

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 approx. 35 secular interpreters to enable them to offer a better service at community events such as weddings, funerals and christenings.

5 Into the future...

In 2016/17 we have workshops planned for Derby, Farnborough and Walsall.

Our 2016 Summer School will take place in August. This will be the 10th Summer School so the cause of celebration.

The AGM will take place during the Summer School and will include a presentation on progress of ideas from the 2015 Vision Day.

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.

Finally

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

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	030316	Charity no (if any)	1113882
Set out on pages	(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	<p>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.</p> <p>It is my responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<p>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.</p>		
Independent examiner's statement	<p>In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below*):</p> <p>(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</p> <p>* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.</p>		
Signed	M. Corcoran	Date	19/8/16
Name	MELVA CORCORAN		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any)	FCA		
Address	66 Pwllmelin Rd Cardiff CF5 2NH		

Signs of God
Accounts for the period 04/03/15 to 03/03/16
charity number 1113882

2014/15		2015/16
27,561.76	Balance bf Current account	11,163.75
10,490.30	Balance bf BMM account	10,497.60
100.00	PayPal account	100.00
	Incoming Resources	
33,459.20	Workshops & Training	18,361.24
605.00	Fundraising Merchandise	219.24
3,480.00	Donations	4,233.60
	Gift Aid	1,237.74
	HSBC	100.00
7.30	Interest	7.30
37,551.50	Total Income from 04/03/15	24,159.12
	Expenditure	
44,070.24	Workshops & Training	7,201.65
40.00	Admin Support	
308.22	Merchandise	185.16
769.42	AGM and Trustees meetings	611.14
100.00	Examiner Fee	100.00
491.93	Insurance	501.93
7,825.30	Website	786.00
120.00	Exhibition & Representation	23.00
124.00	CCL Licence	126.00
93.10	Paypal fees	186.57
	Stationery	15.00
53,942.21	Total Expenditure from 04/03/15	9,736.45
- 16,390.71	Balance during period	14,422.67
100.00	Total Paypal account	100.00
11,163.75	Total Current account	25,579.12
10,497.60	Total BMM account	10,504.90

Signs of God	Notes to the Accounts	Income	Expenditure	Surplus/Deficit
Training				
Summer school		16,475.00	5,000.00	11,475.00
Peterborough Workshop		425.34	234.90	190.44
Horsforth Workshop			80.00	- 80.00
Bristol Workshop			156.75	- 156.75
Professional Training Comm Unlimited		580.90	480.90	100.00
Professional Training ASLI		400.00	150.00	250.00
Professional Training Remark!			384.60	- 384.60
Professional Training BSL Link 4 Comm			404.50	- 404.50
Summer school 2014		480.00	310.00	170.00
		18,361.24	7,201.65	11,159.59
Donations				
Standing orders		3,385.00		
One off donations		808.60		
Donated back gifts and expenses		40.00		
		4,233.60		
AGM and Trustees meetings				
			611.14	
Representation and Interpreting				
Premier Awards			23.00	- 23.00
Stationery, printing, computer supplies				
			15.00	
Website				
			786.00	
Merchandise				
		219.24	185.16	34.08
Insurance				
			501.93	
Gift Aid				
		1,237.74		
CCLI Licence				
			126.00	
Independent examiner				
			100.00	
HSBC compensation for complaint				
		100.00		
Paypal Fees				
			186.57	
Net Interest BMM				
		7.30		
Total for period : 04/03/15-03/03/16		24,159.12	9,736.45	14,422.67