Annual Report 1st July 2025 – 30th June 2026

1. Governance and Strategic Development

Previously two potential partner organisations were in advanced discussions with BSL Celebration (BSLC) which would have enabled the Creative Director to become paid. An Away Day with the Core Team was held in July 2025 and strategic plans were developed for further BSL Fests in Worcester and Durham, partnering with Action Deafness.

Unfortunately, the funding and income sources the partner organisations were relying on for this partnership work did not materialise.

The Creative Director is in other paid employment, as are all members of the Core Team. Southampton and Leeds BSL Fests took a heavy toll on the volunteers so the decision was taken to pause operations this year (2025-2026) and have a fallow year.

2. Operations

Leeds BSL Fest took place in July 2025 alongside the BDA's BSL Conference. BSLC had very limited resources for this event and the level of support previously promised verbally by the BDA did not materialise. The BSLC team were exhausted from Southampton BSL Fest and Leeds was run on a damage limitation basis. There was not sufficient time nor resources to develop relationships with mainstream organisations in Leeds nor to build legacy foundations.

Despite the day of Leeds BSL Fest being windy and wet (in July!), very enthusiastic deaf participants stayed to enjoy the day and merchandise sold relatively well. The volunteers did a great job and the performers and MCs ensured the show went on.

3. Funding

Funding is harder to obtain now, due to the cost of living crisis. In addition, other deaf groups and organisations have been organising 'copycat' Deaf Fests in their regions (as 'deaf space' events and not public events to raise awareness as BSLC events are) which has further increased competition for funding.

However, BSLC was fortunate to receive funding from Wesleyan, CAF and private donors, plus a small monthly commission fromSignLive (now Convo). This covered Leeds BSL Fest

and basic housekeeping (website, email domain and PLI) costs, but did not stretch to covering the previous deficit owed to the Creative Director.

4. Reflections on previous events

4.1 Southampton BSL Fest

This was a well attended, successful week in the Cultural Quarter. However, as there was no strong local team in a position to take the raised profile of deafness and BSL further in Southampton, the opportunity to grow a legacy was missed.

4.2 Manchester BSL Fest

BSLC's most successful event to date. The Co-Directors of Manchester Deaf Centre (MDC), who worked in partnership with BSLC, really bought into the philosophy of reaching out to the mainstream community. After the BSL Fest, MDC's profile as a service provider for the deaf and BSL communities significantly rose, and continues to rise, across Greater Manchester. Interest in BSL classes has multiplied and MDC has partnered with local mainstream services and businesses, including Metrolink and Manchester City Council which funded basic BSL courses at MDC for Manchester residents. MDC has grown a strong relationship with the GM Mayoral Office and Andy Burnham was the first Regional Mayor in England to have live BSL interpreters at Mayoral public briefings.

The success of Manchester BSL Fest and its strong and continuing legacy shows the importance of having a strong local partner organisation that can take things forward on the back of a BSL Fest.

5. Numbers of attendees

Fest	Event	Number of attendees			Number of volunteers		
		Deaf	Hearing	Total	Deaf	Hearing	Total
Leeds	Core Team support	0	0	0	5	3	8
	Volunteer Training	12	6	18	4	2	6
	Party in the Square*	400	200	600	18	11	29
Total for Leeds BSL Fest		**412**	**206**	**618**	**27**	**16**	**43**
Core Team and Board activities		0	0	0	6	3	9
Cumulative total number of people BSL Celebration has reached							
Number of attendees in 2024-5		618	no. volunteers		52	Total	670
Number of attendees to date		**13,660**	**no. volunteers**		**324**	**Total**	**13,984**

* approximate numbers – attendees includes guests, stall-holders, performers, interpreters, people attending specifically and people passing through or by and taking notice.

6. What next?

BSLC’s position will be reviewed during the summer of 2026.

Claire Cummings, Creative Director 07/09/2026

Statement of Financiasl Activites						
Annual Account for the period between		2026				2025
1 July 2025 to June 30 2026		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total		
		£	£	£		£
Income						
Donations		3,155		3,155		3,152
Charitable Activities						10,500
Other Income		1,199		1,199		4,902
	1	**4,354**	**0**	**4,354**		**18,554**
Expenditure						
Raising Fund		460		460		5,017
Charitable Activities		4,981		4,981		27,325
	2	**5,441**	0	**5,441**		**32,342**
Net Income/(Expenditure)		(1,087)	0	-1087		-13788
Fund Balance Brought Forward		797		797		14,585
Fund Balance **Carried** Forward		**-290**		**-290**		**797**

Balance Sheet		2026		2025
		£		£
Fixed Assets				
Intangible Assets	3	200		1000
Tangible Assets		0		0
Current Asserts				
Debtors		0		0
Bank & Cash In Hande		188		1,317
				2,317
Creditors		0		660
Total Assets less Current Liability		388		1,657
Creditors - Amount falling due after more than one year	4	2,635		4,976
Net Assets		(2,247)		(3,319)
Income Funds				
Restricted				
Unrestricted Fund		-2537		-2522
		-290		**797**

	Notes	
1	Donations	3155
	Earned Income	1199.21
2		
	Contribution to the BDA Leeds Festival	£2,750.00
3	Saleable Mugs and Artworks	
4	Interest Free Loan from Ms Cummings	

The accounts are a true record

There will be a review to sort out the deficits

Barry Avison, Chair, 5 November 2026