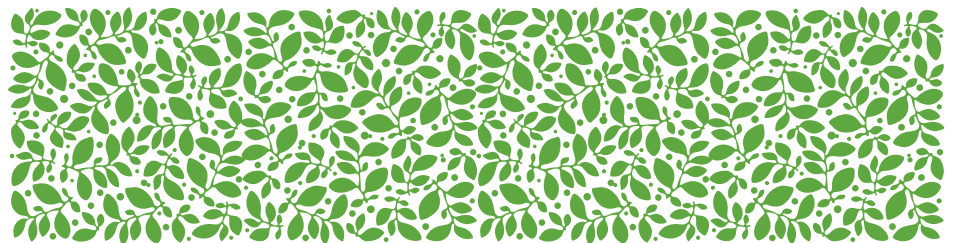




Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba



Signs Seeds and Woods



Contact dates: December 2014 - April 2015

Venue: Various inc. Hermitage of Braids, Edinburgh

Event duration: 5 months

Report published: 11th June 2015 (abridged)

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Signs, Seeds and Woods

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1. Introduction

“Little did we know how this project would take off in such a way and has proven to be full of surprises”

There were two complimentary strands to the project, which will be referred to as:

- The Himalayan Garden (Project A).
- BSL Botanical Vocabulary (Project B).

Many of the individuals involved in the delivery of these projects are experts in their chosen field(s) of study (arts, science, environment) and have a personal interest/background which spans across both projects. So whilst at first glance Projects A and B may seem divergent and will ultimately progress in different directions, there is a continuity and synergy that was realised, by combing the two projects into a one day event.

The project was split over two financial years 2014/2015 and 2015/2016.

The project was managed by Lindsay Snedden (Lunaria Ltd) and the Community Coordinator was Joanna Boyce (Creative Art Works). Project design and delivery was led by both Joanna and Lindsay with input from other professionals, volunteers, academic institutions and community groups as listed below.

Project A - The Himalayan Garden

A previous FCS funded project (Ban Ra Vataravan) involved the construction of a stone built raised flower/plant bed intended to contain a selection of Himalayan plants. This was very successful and involved capturing expert knowledge which resulted in the construction of a raised flower bed, and consequently the project required an additional and ongoing commitment to see it through to fruition. The groups involved in the original project included:

- Central Scotland Deaf Community (CSDC)
- Edinburgh Nepalese Community
- Nepal Scotland Association
- Gurkha Association Scotland
- Royal Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh
- City of Edinburgh Natural Heritage Service

Several of the groups and individuals that participated in the previous project expressed a desire to see the work continued and were keen to be involved again. New organisations that expressed an interest and participated were:

- The Himalayan Centre of Arts and Culture, Edinburgh
- Women and families from Edinburgh’s Bangladeshi and Indian communities recruited via MEHIS (Minority Ethnic Health Inclusion Service)

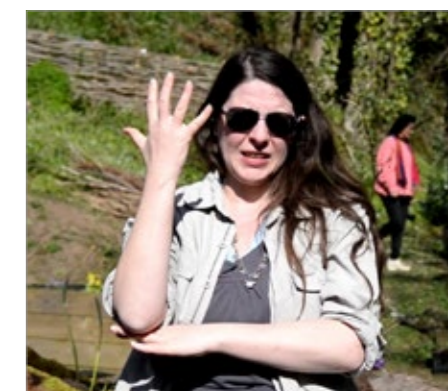
Whilst the focus of the day was to continue the work on The Himalayan Garden it was proposed to provide other activities such as “pond dipping”, mini-beast spotting and “nature inspired art activities” for the families and friends of those actively engaged in planting etc.

As this was be a “shared” day we anticipated a high degree of interaction with the participants (and their families) involved in Project B.

Project B - BSL Botanical Vocabulary

At present BSL (British Sign Language) has only a limited number of signs relating to commonly used botanical words, phrases and concepts. This strand of the project was intended to provide a “pilot” which would look to expand this vocabulary by creating new signs. In addition the findings of the pilot project would be used as the basis for putting together a more expansive funding proposal (to be submitted to FCS) which would look to extend upon and formalise what has been achieved to date. The new signs will be used in schools, colleges and universities. Examination boards such as SQA can utilise the new signs for their exams/tests because the signs will be listed in the Scottish Sensory Centre’s BSL glossary at Edinburgh University.

The project will directly contribute to official recognition of deaf education. It will have a big impact on the Central Edinburgh Deaf Community and beyond.



Existing BSL sign for “tree”

“The enthusiasm and positive energy of all the participants have brought the garden to life and visitors to the Hermitage could not resist coming in and get involved in the various activities”

“It was a great day, with a great cultural mix allowing all to gain something from the days activity”

“Have told quite a few people about the project. It was such a lovely generous sharing environment”

The translation/interpreting training/education aspect of this project is vital. The Deaf Community is viewing FCS in a very positive light and many are barriers are being broken down. The Deaf Community have expressed huge interest in promoting work within the woodlands.

As part of this overall proposal we facilitated an initial consultation meeting to discuss the strategy for carrying forward this work. The meeting was attended, and supported, by academics and scientific experts from (but not limited to) the following:

- Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh (RBGE),
- Edinburgh University (UoE)
- Napier University
- Central Scotland Deaf Community (CSDC)
- Deaf Action
- Artiscience Library

2. Project Time Table

	Title	Date	Location	Main Activities
i	Project B initial BSL Glossary Meeting	Friday 17th Dec 2015 11.30am - 1.30pm	University of Edinburgh, Moray House	Initial meeting to gauge to support and scope initial project outline.
ii	Projects A & B Deaf Awareness day	Friday 20th Feb 2015 10.00am - 4.00pm	TCV, Mortonhall	Discussion and practical exercises designed to provide a greater understanding of deaf issues.
iii	Project A Himalayan Community Garden Preparation Day	Wednesday 4th March 2015 10.00am - 4.00pm	Hermitage of Braid, Edinburgh	Pre event preparation to Walled Garden
iv	Project B Second BSL Glossary Meeting	Monday 30th March 2015 10.00am - 4.00pm	RBGE, Edinburgh	Discuss, plan and create pilot for BSL Glossary project, and agree and plan activities for Himalayan Garden Family day.
v	Projects A & B Himalayan Garden Family Day	Thursday 16th April 2015 10.00am - 4.00pm	Hermitage of Braid	Plant garden, artwork activities, BSL glossary pilot.
vi	Project B Final BSL Glossary Meeting	Tuesday 28th April 2015 10.00am - 4.00pm	ArtiScience Library, Summerhall	Feedback results from pilot project and discuss recommendations for full funding proposal.
vii	Project B Final Submission	-	-	Submit project proposal to FCS

3. Project Delivery

i. Initial Meeting, First BSL Glossary Meeting

Date: 17th Dec 2014

The first full meeting was held at University of Edinburgh and had the support of two BSL interpreters (supplied via Heriot Watt University)

The meeting was designed to introduce the scope and content of the proposed project to the academics, linguists, and community representatives who we would like to become involved. The concept was well received by all those attending and agreement to either participate and/or lend support was given by all parties.

The following is an outline of the meeting circulated to and agreed by all the participants.

The Meeting was attended by:

- **Tania Allan**
Biologist/Zoologist and BSL tutor. She was involved with Heriot Watt working with their interpreter students remodelling and sharing her experience from a Deaf perspective. She was a BSL tutor at Queen Margaret University and has worked in mainstream education as a BSL tutor and educator /teacher to Deaf children giving language development support and providing and one to one science and Maths tuition. Tania is also a Health project Co-coordinator at Deaf Action, Deaf Action volunteer and freelance BSL teacher, deaf awareness provider, and works with BSL interpreters to give them support and mentoring.
- **Audrey Cameron**
Deaf Chemist (Ph.D.), Doctor of Chemistry and teacher of mainstream education in High school. Now doing child protection research part-time at Moray House and also is a freelance worker developing science signs for “Scottish Sensory Centre’s BSL Glossary”. She has been touring round the UK doing Science demonstrations in BSL.
- **Rachel O’Neill**
Teacher of deaf children and works in Deaf Education and is a lecturer/ researcher at the University of Edinburgh, Scottish Sensory Centre.
- **Gary Quinn**
BSL linguist, working at Heriot Watt University, doing research in sign language. Also lecture and tutor. He is working on BSL development for science. He has been touring round the UK doing Science demo’s in BSL.

“The day quickly passed with families, dog walkers, runners and tourists all popping in to see the space and help add something to the days activity”

“Well done again for all you’re hard work in organizing such a successful event!”

“It was a great day, with a great cultural mix allowing all to gain something from the days activity. The good weather helped and the lunchtime chat all helped make the day a huge success”

“I think it would be great to link up and introduce more young people to the beauty of outside and to break away from the technological lifestyles of today”

- **Joanna Boyce**
Artist/Art Project Coordinator – has been involved in two Forestry Commission Scotland projects involving the Central Scotland Deaf Community and has attended two deaf awareness days and one day in basic sign language.
- **Lindsay Snedden**
Project Manager, Graphic designer/photographer and web designer. Lindsay has worked closely with Joanna Boyce/Creative Art Works ON the creation and delivery of several art/community projects.

Full minutes of the First BSL Glossary meeting can be found in Appendix 1.

ii. Deaf Awareness Training Day

20th February 2015

Joanna Boyce and Lindsay Snedden attended the Deaf Awareness day organised by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). This was funded by FCS.

iii. Himalayan Garden Community Preparation Day

Date: 4 March 2015

In 2013/14 the Edinburgh Nepalese Community worked with a Horticulturist and Gardener Sherpa Dawa as part of a FCS funded community outreach project. Working together men, women, teenagers and children built a Nepali style raised stone bed within the Hermitage of Braid Community Wildlife Garden. Families then prepared the bed with soil and fertilizer ready for planting.

As well as engaging with the Deaf Community The **Signs Seeds and Woods** project is following up on this project by organizing an inter-cultural community-planting day to create the Himalayan Garden.

In order to ensure that the Himalayan Flowerbed and the Community Garden would be ready for our “Himalayan Garden Family Day” we decided to have “Preparation Day” at the community garden. This involving approximately 10 people.

The Preparation Day was important for a number of reasons:

- Re-connect some of the original participants to the project;
- Engage some of the Movers and Shakers of target communities with the aim of getting them to get others on board;
- Ensure that the flowerbed was weeded and prepared to receive bedding plants by the 16th April;

“It was the first event I had been to where provisions were put in place to include the Deaf Community and it occurred to me how important this is”

“The day was well thought out and organized and I especially enjoyed the multicultural aspect as members of the Nepalese and Deaf communities enjoyed the day together”

- Generate community ownership of the garden space;
- Create some first ripples of excitement among local communities;
- Work with the Friends of the Hermitage of Braid;
- Fit with the Himalayan Centre of Arts and Culture engagement and climate change remit (i.e. their Green Champion scheme);
- Give the Natural Heritage Service Rangers an opportunity to talk directly with the communities regarding activities required on the family day;

After a meeting with the Natural Heritage Service Team a community Garden Preparation day was planned for Wednesday 4th March. This date was arranged to coincide with a visit to the Walled Garden by judges from the Scottish Civic Trust My Place Awards, giving maximum exposure and showing the garden to be a thriving community concern.

The Preparation Day was well attended by representatives from both Edinburgh Nepalese and Indian Communities including members from:

- The Nepal Scotland Association
- The Gurkha Association Scotland
- The Himalayan Centre of Arts and Culture

Activities included:

- Weeding, raking and preparing the Himalayan raised flowerbed;
- Replacing current laminated plant signs with attractive painted slate plant markers;
- Using the skills of two ex-Gurkhas to build a dry-stane wall to support the Garden’s raised water garden/pond;
- Stitching tarpaulins on the “Bug Hotels” so that they would be ready for using traditional Nepali thatching techniques on the family day;
- Cutting back shrubs and tending to the herb garden;
- General Garden Maintenance and clearing boulders and logs.

It was agreed by all participants that the Himalayan raised flowerbed within the community garden would provide a meaningful way for otherwise isolated groups to meet, share and exchange. Additionally the woodland setting would provide a refreshing and peaceful backdrop and many opportunities for natural healthy play and exploration for all ages.

As planned the 5 judges from The Scottish Civic Trust My Place Awards came to visit the Walled Garden and were able to see the **Signs Seeds and Woods** Community Group working in the garden. It was a beautiful Sunny Spring day and the judges were impressed by the team spirit and were very interested in hearing about the FCS funding and Engagement Programme.

My Place Awards was established by the Scottish Civic Trust in 2010. The scheme is unique in Scotland as it is a national celebration of good local design and conservation as nominated and evaluated by local people.



Its aim is to identify and commend individuals and projects that have had a positive impact in a local neighbourhood and have delivered positive benefits to that community. Supported by the Scottish Government, The My Place Awards celebrate and honour those who commission, design and build quality places in Scotland.

iv. Second BSL Glossary Meeting

30th March 2015

The meeting took at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh. Use of Lecture Room 1 was kindly donated by RBGE. The meeting was led and reported by Fay Purves (What's Next! Business Consultancy Ltd). BSL Interpreter Paul Belmonte (Deaf Action) assisted during the first part of the day. Fay produced the following summary of the meeting.

Meeting led by Fay Purves (What's Next! Business Consultancy Ltd) and attended by:

- Audrey Cameron
- Tania Allan
- Joanna Boyce
- Lindsay Snedden

With Additional Input from

- Dr Bhaskar Adhikari (Plant Agronomist Researcher and Editor, RBGE)
- Dr Mark Watson (Botanist and Editor in Chief RBGE Publication Flora of Nepal, Director Himalayan Centre for Arts and Culture Edinburgh)

Minutes from this meeting can be found in Appendix 2.

v. Himalayan Garden Family Day

Date: 16th April 2015

The date of the Family day fell within the 2015/16 funding period however work to organize and promote the event was underway during the 2014/15 periods. In addition to organizing the event work to date has included creating promotional materials including an event poster/leaflet, Facebook page and promo sign language videos. The videos can be viewed at www.facebook.com/signs.seeds.and.woods

The **Himalayan Garden Family Day** brought both projects, The Himalayan Garden (Project A) and the BSL Woodland/Botanical Vocabulary (Project B) together into one event. Whilst both of these projects had a distinct agenda of their own the day successfully provided a shared experience for all involved. For clarity however it is easier to detail the days events in terms of activities

that can be identified as belonging to either Project A or Project B.

The Himalayan Garden (Project A)

The **Himalayan Garden Family Day** brought the North and the South of the city together through initiating an on-going gardening project. This will bring together individuals from the Nepalese, Indian, Bangladeshi and Deaf Communities to work together to bring the Himalayan raised flower bed to life. FCS supplied the core funding for the event whilst RBGE agreed to donate some plants to the value of £250 and The Friends of the Hermitage of Braid kindly donated another £100 towards the cost of plants. The Himalayan Centre for Arts and Culture donated a total of £500 to be used for the engagement of art workers and a horticulturist/gardener. We also sought a further £500 through Sainsbury's Community Fund however the application was unsuccessful.

We were able to gain the help of horticulturist Dawa Sherpa, a freelance Nepalese gardener who is responsible for creating and maintaining the Himalayan Sherpa Garden at Craigieburn House near Moffat. Dawa was able to supply appropriate plants from his private collection many of which were sourced from his trips to Nepal. (Note all plants selected were on the list of plants approved by NHS). Dawa, his son and other volunteers from Edinburgh Nepalese community laid out and planted the garden as planned. All the plants featured are species that are native to Nepal although many of the plants included in the garden are now commonly found in Scotland. In addition they were able to finish of the stonework to the adjoining water garden and add decorative roofing to the existing "mini beast hotels" using traditional Nepali methods of thatching. The finished garden was decorated with Nepalese Buddhist prayer flags. This was a temporary addition as the garden is intended as a "secular" space.

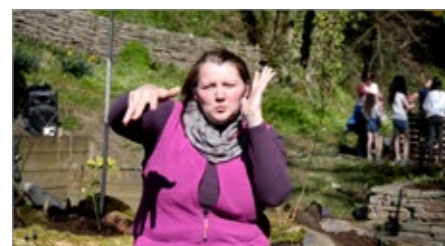
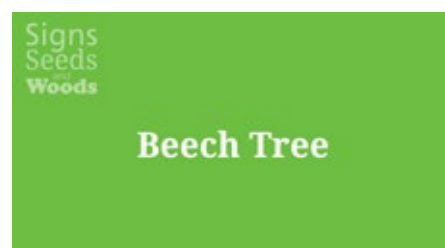
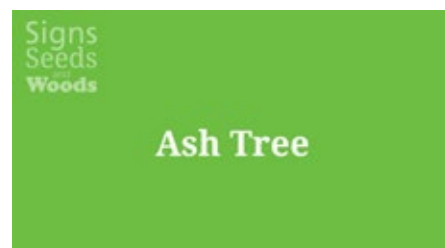
The day also included various artwork activities for children. These included: making "dream catchers" and "magic wands", face painting, den building and other simple nature inspired arts activities for under 5's.

The willow "dream catchers" were made using willow and organic material collected on site, such as feathers and sycamore sticks combined with colourful threads and wools. These were used to decorate the garden once the "prayer flags" had been removed. Snacks were provided throughout the day. Lunch was provided by Edinburgh Nepalese Restaurant "The Khukuri" and gave everyone, from both projects, a chance to come together to enjoy some shared time.

Participants were encouraged to take ownership of the garden and this project was designed to kick-start an on-going and sustainable programme of regular visits to the Himalayan Garden by all the communities involved.

The day's events were photographed and hi-res version of all the images captured on the day can be made available.





BSL Botanical Vocabulary (Project B)

We planned the day to be an opportunity to trial some of the ideas that had been discussed at the previous BSL Glossary Meetings. This proved to be invaluable, with many practical lessons being learned. To facilitate this it had been agreed that the participants in the project would work towards producing nine new BSL signs for the following trees:

Ash	Yew	Oak
Beech	Horse Chestnut	Sycamore
Elm	Lime	Wild Cherry

It is important to note these were not intended as “finished work” but rather to ascertain the feasibility of our agreed approach.

The day started with a guided walk led by Jessica Morgado of the City of Edinburgh Natural Heritage Service and supported by FCS Conservator for Central Scotland Keith Wishart. They explained the physical and botanical features of the individual trees and how they relate to other trees, plants and animals in a woodland environment. This provided the group with valuable background information that they were subsequently able to utilize when devising the BSL signs. The group had the assistance of two BSL interpreters who ensured that everyone was able to participate. Following on from the guided walk the group spent time agreeing what they felt were the key characteristics of each tree then worked together to devise a new sign. The resulting signs were tested, agreed, rehearsed and then recorded onto HD video for wider distribution, discussion and approval.

vi. Final BSL Glossary Meeting

28th April 2015

The Final BSL Glossary meeting was held at the Artiscience Library, Summerhall, Edinburgh. The use of the Library was provided as an in kind contribution with special thanks to Colin Sanderson.

Attending:

- Audrey Cameron (Chemist)
- Tania Allan (Biologist, Deaf Awareness Training and Deaf Community Project Coordinator)
- Joanna Boyce (Creative Art Works)
- Lindsay Snedden (Lunaria Ltd)
- Alex Furneaux (Deaf Action)
- Colin Sanderson (Artiscience Library)

- Fay Purves (What’s Next Business Consultancy Ltd)
- Paul Belmonte and Sheena Macdonald (Interpreters)

The meeting provided an opportunity to review the **Himalayan Garden Family Day**, and in particular the BSL Glossary pilot. Building on this the group discussed how best to move the project forward based on the findings to date.

In brief the structure of was agreed as follows:

Native Scottish Trees should form the focus for the first stage of the proposed project. This model could then be rolled out over time to cover additional topics, e.g. native Scottish plants and flowers, Scottish insects and mini-beasts, Scottish landscape etc.

This gives the opportunity to: grow community interest over time; include different groups in each topic; approach relevant sponsors for each different topic.

It was also recognised that input from other organisations and in particular from groups and individuals from the Deaf Community will be essential for the success of the project.

Minutes from the meeting are attached as Appendix 3

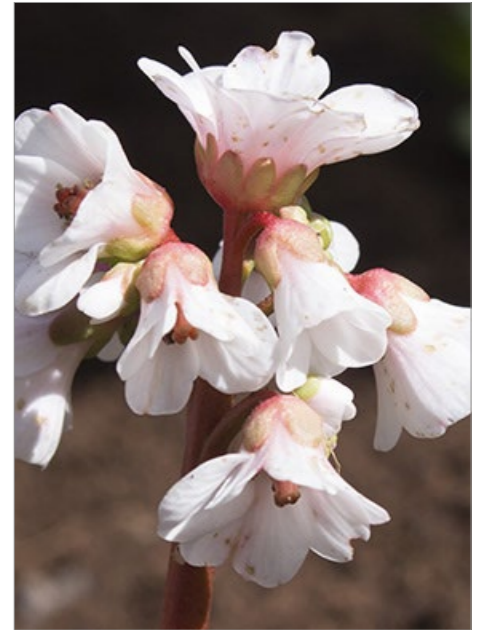
vii. Final Submission

At the time of writing the formal submission for funding for the full BSL Glossary project is being compiled. It will draw on the outcomes of the BSL meetings, suggest a proposed structure and time-scale and give indicative costings. It will also show how the project relates back to the policies and aims of FCS. Early drafts have been circulated round the project team for final comments and approval.

In order to facilitate the delivery of this project and others like it, Lindsay Snedden, Joanna Boyce and Fay Purves have decided to set up a Community Interest Company (CIC). As the CIC will be the body applying for the funding for this project, formal submission will be made on completion of the CIC’s set-up.



4. Image Gallery



5. Participant Monitoring

Himalayan Garden Family Day
Date: 16th April 2015

Age and Gender of those involved		
	Male	Female
0 - 4 years	3	7
5 - 11 years	7	9
12 - 15 years	4	3
16 - 25 years	4	8
20 - 60 years	2	16
+ 60 years	12	14
Total male/female	32	57
Overall total	89	

Numbers of those who are registered disabled		
	Male	Female
Physical disability	2	-
Visual disability	-	-
Hearing disability	-	3
Mental disability	1	1
Learning disability	1	1
Other disability	-	-
Total male/female	4	6
Overall total	10	

Participants ethnic background		
	Male	Female
White British	1	20
White E. European	1	1
Mixed Race	2	-
Asian/British Asian	4	3
Black	1	3
Nepalese	9	25
Other	3	5
Total male/female	21	57
Overall total	78	

Staff ethnic background		
	Male	Female
White British	1	3
White E. European	-	-
Mixed Race	-	-
Asian/British Asian	-	-
Black	-	-
Nepalese	2	-
Other	2	-
Total male/female	5	3
Overall total	8	

6. Feedback

"I found this to be a hugely valuable session. It's always a privilege to work with members of the Deaf Community as signs are developed and I found it enormously helpful also to my work as an interpreter. I am now more aware of botanical signs being used, but more importantly, of the process for creating signs visually in BSL, rather than relying on borrowing terms from English. The day was well thought out and organized and I especially enjoyed the multicultural aspect as members of the Nepalese and Deaf communities enjoyed the day together. Look forward to doing more work on this project."

Paul Belmonte (BSL sign Interpreter)

"I felt that the afternoon I spent at this session was great! What a lovely set up and so much potential to use again in the future. I feel that for future events, information could be shared among the Deaf Community and Deaf Organizations more in advance, as this would allow us to get the information out, to share it through social media and our contacts with families and young people. I think this day was a great success and a lot of fun was had by all, learning about different cultures and getting involved in creative activities. I just feel that it would be even better to have seen more of the Deaf Community there on the day. As we discussed, very often we have to repeat information before this community gets involved, and I am happy to work alongside you all in order to share these details and make future events even more successful! With our new youth service starting up soon, I think it would be great to link up and introduce more young people to the beauty of outside and to break away from the technological lifestyles of today. I look forward to linking these projects in together again."

Alex Furneaux
Youth Work Co-ordinator, Deaf Action

"Having visited the Hermitage of Braid Himalayan garden project recently, I was really struck by the enthusiasm of the participants in contributing to the construction of this beautiful multi-purpose garden. Not only our beautiful Himalayan flowerbed but also the rest of the garden. The terraced slope containing medicinal, culinary and wildlife friendly plants as well as the pond, the raised beds and the insect sanctuaries are the result of hard work by the team. Well done and looking forward to visiting on a regular basis."

Albert Harris

"Have told quite a few people about the project. It was such a lovely generous sharing environment. Ben loved the feather stick he helped make. As a mum I go along to these things, thinking I will stand in the background and watch him have fun, but I got intrigued by the creation of a leaf thatch for the Bug hotel shelter that was going on, and before I knew it was learning and doing myself with some very gentle patient teachers - four generations of Nepali women and girls!. It was a really lovely day, can't say how much of a boost it gave us. We would love to learn and do more with the Nepalese and Deaf communities and help with the garden any way we can."

Beth Cross (Storyteller)

"While the sun shone down on the Himalayan Garden family day & first BSL Woodland Flora Glossary "pilot", it was apparent there was a real keenness from people to get together and develop this space. It was great to see a diverse group mucking in and learning about different aspects of the garden. It was the first event I had been to where provisions were put in place to include the Deaf Community and it occurred to me how important this is. It is a huge shame when important projects such as these, which empower and inspire people to learn new skills and reconnect with nature, are not accessible to everyone. So the BSL Glossary project would be a big step in the right direction."

Harriet Cross
Community Engagement Officer, Himalayan Centre for Arts and Culture

"We are delighted that the Nepalese community have decided to create a beautiful Himalayan flower bed in the Hermitage Walled Garden. The enthusiasm and positive energy of all the participants have brought the garden to life and visitors to the Hermitage could not resist coming in and get involved in the various activities. We were impressed at how everyone helped out to make this event a celebration. The other fascinating part of that day was to be involved in the discussion surrounding the creation of new BSL signs for trees. We were surprised to learn that such signs did not exist already and the discussion we had that day was a real eye-opener."

We would be very keen to provide further assistance in the future. When the Natural Heritage Service created this unique garden at the Hermitage of Braid there was always the risk that it would not succeed in attracting a sustainable number of groups to take ownership of its care and maintenance."

Little did we know how this project would take off in such a way and has proven to be full of surprises and this particular event is a reflection of the "soul" of this particular garden: a place for groups to use and explore for the enjoyment of visitors and wildlife."

Natural Heritage Service Team

“Well done again for all your hard work in organizing such a successful event! I don’t think Joanna and Lindsay got enough credits for this! It is a relief to hear a clear answer from SNH on what can and cannot be planted in LNR and I will keep all that information in my files in case we get challenged later on. This will help with the development of the tree area of the Walled Garden in the future. Well done!”

That plant in the Himalayan bed has now unfurled further and it almost look like it likes its new home so much as it started to grow right away from it being planted there! Great timing I think and a great teaser for visitors to observe!”

Jessica Morgado
Natural Heritage Service Ranger

“Great photos. It’s wonderful to see such a super community use of the Walled Garden. Truly remarkable weather for such an event - one of the best days of the year so far.”

Goff Cantley
Friends of the Hermitage of Braid

“The Himalayan Centre for Arts & Culture was asked to participate and contribute to funding a small part of this project at The Hermitage of Braid in Edinburgh. The day started well with glorious sunshine and a busy mix of adults and children mixing in the Himalayan Walled Garden, all working together to develop the space. Flowerbeds were designed and created with the help from the Nepali community, with young and old working together to complete the space.

From face painting to creating wooden animal creatures the day quickly passed with families, dog walkers, runners and tourists all popping in to see the space and help add something to the days activity. It was a great day, with a great cultural mix allowing all to gain something from the days activity. The good weather helped and the lunchtime chat all helped make the day a huge success.”

Grant Williams
General Manager, HCAC

“We read about the woodland flora BSL glossary proposal with interest and we would like to be included in any way the development of this new piece of work with our deaf Gardener Barry Fraser. I have spoken to Barry and he would love to help out in any way he can, Please forward us any new developments or info as you get it and we will see what we can do to help”

Robert Harden
Head Gardener, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

Its Important to have Deaf people in a leading role when creating a proposal for a project aimed at the Deaf Community – because they can advise from their experience and perspective. Here is feedback on behalf of our community: Regarding the Signs Seeds and Woods Project Phase1.

We want to emphasize how important it’s been to have this valuable time around the table with the Project designers and the BSL interpreters during the planning process. Together we have had opportunity to have real dialogue and time together to agree on, develop and write up the application. Without this funded time together, neither we, as Central Scotland Deaf Community reps, nor the Hearing Project facilitators could have created the BSL glossary proposal. This planning phase has ensured that: Deaf individuals have been included from the start of the project; our communities needs and desires have been properly considered; and that Deaf Professionals have been given a chance to use and share their skills from the design stage through to the delivery. This type of involvement with proper funds for the concept through to design stage along with practical and realistic BSL Interpretation consideration has meant that the project has never had that feel of having just been “plonked” on the Deaf Community, rather it has meant that we have given the project the best chance of succeeding, because this way of joint working sets the project up for real community buy-in and sustainability with integrity;

Regarding the Himalayan Garden Day:

Although we had only a small turn out on the day from deaf participants – it must be emphasized that it is a drip-drip situation so far as getting the Deaf Community to gain confidence and feel respected and welcomed at a mixed community event in a public woodland setting. Jessica Morgado from the Natural Heritage Service was brilliant! She was totally involved on the day. Also FCS representatives Romena Huq and Keith Wishart were very supportive as well. Jessica with back up from Keith were in role as our “Tree guides”. With the support of BSL interpreters they helped us understand Tree biology, behaviour and characteristics so that we could identify the gaps in BSL glossary around the subject of trees. Together we managed to create 6 new signs to identify 6 Native Scottish trees. We all felt that having the Ranger and the FCS conservator being involved in this way was very important. They were very understanding and patient. We need more service providers to work together like this, backing each other up and making us feel welcome and included. We cannot say enough how really important it is that organizations such as FCS, TCV and the Natural Heritage Service continue to work this way to encourage more shy deaf people to come out of their comfort zone and explore the woodland environment.

Tania Allen on behalf of Central Scotland Deaf Community

7. Recommendations and Action Plan

Our full recommendations and a proposed action plan will form the basis of a costed funding proposal, which will be produced as a separate document and presented to FCS for consideration. Submission of the proposal will mark the completion of this project.

In addition to this we have some general recommendations regarding engagement with the Deaf Community. These recommendations are based on experience gained via the project by both hearing and deaf participants..

- Communication is a big challenge faced by the Deaf Community and we found this to be a barrier in a range of situations during phase one of the project. It's of utmost importance that to have deaf people's experience and perspective at top level when creating a proposal for a project aimed at the Deaf Community and ensuring this through:
- Ensuring that all hearing people involved in project facilitation participate in a deaf inclusion and awareness programme. It was a truly insightful and enriching experience for all who attended and we were able to learn about different challenges and discrimination faced by deaf individuals and the Deaf Community on a daily basis, and how people are working towards eliminating these barriers, fighting discrimination and empowering the Deaf Community.
- Managed time with deaf representatives and BSL interpreters around the table at the planning stage
- Involving deaf professionals and Deaf Community representatives in the project design and facilitation.
- Tapping into existing services for Deaf people such as deaf Action and their Youth Group.
- On going Deaf Community consultation and updates.
- Creating a robust platform for disseminating information through the community using Facebook, Twitter and other forms of e-communication.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1. Minutes of Initial Meeting, First BSL Glossary Meeting

Date: 17th Dec 2014

Attending:

Tania Allan

Biologist/Zoologist and BSL Tutor.

She was involved with Heriot Watt as a working with their interpreter students remodelling and sharing her experience from a Deaf perspective. She was a BSL tutor at Queen Margaret University and has worked in mainstream education as a BSL tutor and educator /teacher to Deaf children giving language development support and providing and one to one science and Maths. She is also a Health project Co-coordinator at Deaf Action, Deaf Action volunteer and freelance BSL teachers, deaf awareness provider, and working with BSL interpreters to give them support and mentoring.

Audrey Cameron

Deaf Chemist (Ph.D.), Doctor of Chemistry and teacher of mainstream education in High school. Now doing child protection research part-time at Moray House and also is a freelance worker developing science signs for "Scottish Sensory Centre's BSL Glossary" She has been touring round UK doing Science demonstrations in BSL.

Rachel O'Neill

Teacher of deaf children and worked in Deaf Education and a lecturer/researcher at the University of Edinburgh, Scottish Sensory Centre.

Gary Quinn

BSL linguist, working at Heriot Watt University, doing research in sign language. Also lecture and tutor. He is working on BSL development for science. He has been touring round UK doing Science demo's in BSL.

Joanna Boyce

Creative Art Works - Artist/Art Project Coordinator - has been involved in two Forest Commission Scotland projects involving Central Scotland Deaf Community and has attended two deaf awareness days and one day in basic sign language.

Lindsay Snedden

Lunaria Ltd - Project Manager Graphic designer/photographer and web designer - Has worked closely with Joanna Boyce/Creative Art Works with the creation and delivery of several art/community projects.

Background to Meeting:

Rachel, Audrey and Gary worked together since 2007 on expanding the BSL glossary – collecting and developing new signs for in various science topics such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths and recently Astronomy.

Tania was involved in developing new signs for Biology: <http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/bsl/list.html>

Tania and Audrey first worked together on collecting signs for a biotechnology project in 2004 <http://www.biology.ed.ac.uk/public/sibe/signingbiotechnology>

These signing Science experts, all based in central Scotland would like to continue to expand sign language vocabulary in other science subjects such as botany and nature study. Currently there is not enough BSL vocabulary to describe different plants, forest ecology and environmental issues. In order to make these subjects more accessible for deaf people it's important to compile more BSL vocabulary to help Deaf Community enjoy and learn about the environmental issues and plants. In order to do this, deaf scientists and sign linguists would like to combine their experience and expertise. They would also like to meet and share with Environmentalists, Botany experts and Botanical artists.

Lindsay and Joanna first worked with Tania Allen on the Forestry commission Scotland funded project called Signs in the Woods delivering a be-spoke programme of nature inspired art sessions in the Hermitage of Braids woodlands. They worked with over 50 Children, Parents and Volunteers from the Edinburgh and Central Scotland Deaf Community. Report attached.

Joanna Boyce (Creative Art Works) and Lindsay Snedden (Lunaria) have received a small amount of funding from FCS to support experts from the Central Scotland Deaf in making an FCS seed corn funding application to creatively compile some woodland botany related vocabulary while engaging with families in local woodlands. This is due to be done via a meeting with experts followed by a Family engagement day in the woods

A copy of the proposal/tender was circulated at the meeting and a .pdf version is attached.

In summary the proposal is broken down into two distinct (but not unrelated) projects:

- Project A - BSL Botanical Vocabulary
- Project B - The Himalayan Garden

The initial monies involved are not huge should allow for “seed-corn” funding for Project A, and Project B (already started) to move closer to completion. As outlined in the proposal there is degree of cross-over/common interest between the two projects.

Suggestion that there may already be experts/interest groups who are already in the process of creating an “unofficial” sign language to name/describe botanical subjects.

E.g.: There are many deaf gardeners and horticulturists working in the UK. It is suggested to work with them because they may already have the BSL signs for specific botany terms.

It would make sense explore this possibility. Establishing a Facebook Page (or similar) could provide an initial point of contact/collaboration.

At this stage the project would concern itself would limit its remit to a woodland/forestry vocabulary. It is believed that Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) already has a list of written/spoken words that they use and that this could form a starting point for the project.

Discussion touched on the British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill going through parliament at the moment (Dec 2014). This should give added impetus/interest in the BSL Botanical Vocabulary project.

Discussed possible creative ways to engage with the Deaf Community in the woodlands.

Discussed locations for future work. Mugdock Park was suggested; located between Edinburgh and Glasgow would allow participation from groups/individuals across the central belt (and beyond).

Tania had previously made the following suggestions;

RBGE experts could bring their materials and show us their work and to see images, pictures and info. OHP/PowerPoint? Experts would explain what they would do with the Himalaya project and plant Himalayan plants at Hermitage.

They could explain plants, their functions, and their structure and how they spread by pollination? Botanical artists could help community observe and enjoy the stories behind the plants?

Then deaf experts could designate/develop signs and then check with the linguists and RBGE experts.

Two interpreters would be needed for any consultation.

New signs can be tested out through deaf outdoors projects at Hermitage and other woodlands over the next year, doing educational activities with deaf families.

Appendix 2. Minutes of Second BSL Glossary Meeting

30th March 2015

Attending:

- Audrey Cameron (Chemist)
- Tania Allan (Deaf Awareness Training and Deaf Community Project Coordinator)
- Joanna Boyce (Creative Art Works)
- Lindsay Snedden (Lunaria Ltd)

Additional Input from

- Dr Bhaskar Adhikari (Plant Agronomist Researcher and Editor, RBGE)
- Dr Mark Watson (Botanist and Editor in Chief RBGE Publication Flora of Nepal, Director Himalayan Centre for Arts and Culture Edinburgh)

Meeting led by Fay Purves (What's Next! Business Consultancy Ltd)
BSL Interpreter Paul Belmonte (Deaf Action)

Background and Objectives

The official British Sign Language (BSL) glossary has gaps in some areas, such as some botanical names. There is enthusiasm to work to populate these gaps and bring unofficial existing signs and newly created signs into the broader BSL community.

Session 1 – define the scope

The broad objective of the project is: "To make plants, forest ecology and environmental engagement more exciting and accessible to the Deaf Community through the expansion and compilation of BSL vocabulary, so that through education they can be introduced to the wonders of plants and nature."

What is used at the moment?

Currently there are projects such as Signs in the Woods and the Woodland projects. Initial response can be quiet, but interest has been shown to grow over time.

Currently there are signs out there, but they need to be formalised.

There are different dialects in sign language so a decision needs to be made on which version of a sign to use in a glossary.

The University of Edinburgh (UoE) Glossary is in place already, covering other branches of science.

It is important to collect what is already out there first.

The process needs to be collaborative.

What are the shortcomings at the moment?

Education is lacking for adults, children and in schools. Joanna and Tania have previously compiled a paper on issues for the Deaf Community – copy to be circulated.

Who is the audience for this project?

- Deaf Community
- Educators
- BSL interpreters
- Hearing people
- Service providers (e.g. Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish National Heritage...)
- It will help them with their engagement remit
- MSPs (particularly in light of the Parliament Bill)
- Science community/ science communicators
- Heriot Watt students
- Other linguistic minorities

Where should it be implemented?

Whilst the project has UK-wide implications, the project activities will be focused on central belt Scotland

It will also have a web presence

- Facebook
- Website (linked to existing UoE online BSL glossary)

When will it take place?

Start times and progress will be dependent on availability of the people involved.

Expect a 6-9 month project

- Collecting signs
- Team discussions
- filming
- sharing the outcomes...

Session 2 – exploring ways of addressing the scope

It was agreed that it is important to first understand the Deaf Community wants (in terms of vocabulary and approach).

Questionnaires have not been found to be engaging at previous events. Filming is suggested as a better idea collection method than form filling.

The project plan is, broadly:

- Collect existing signs relevant to plants and nature
- Looking at the gaps or where there are multiple regional signs, Deaf experts to designate/ develop signs and check these with linguists and RGBE experts
- Present the outcomes across the Deaf Community, to share knowledge, test out and refine new signs in the community, build interest, engagement and excitement about the natural world. Examples of activities include:
- RGBE experts to present their work, talking about plants, their structures and functions (this could tie in with the Himalaya project)
- Francis Buchanan story used to illustrate plant history and introduce new signs
- Botanical artists helping the community to observe and enjoy the stories of the plants (e.g. Pictures & Signs).
- N.B. Garry Quinn (Heriot Watt University) is a linguist and storyteller.
- Could tie in the development of signs with the development of icons that is currently underway through Dr Bhaskar Adhikari at RBGE – both are creating a simple visual language to use in science, education and engagement. Bhaskar talked about creating icons that tell a story, e.g. how to make compost. They are creating a guidebook in Nepal that uses icons to easily explain the properties of each plant]. The RBGE project first went to the Nepalese community and asked them for their top of mind associations with each plant (medicinal properties, characteristics, uses, etc). Working with a graphic designer, that information was then fed into the design of the icons. Bhas would be happy to work with the Deaf Community in the same way. Once the Glossary is started it becomes a living document that can be built up over years. It creates public engagement and can be used by schools, deaf kids, deaf parents, teachers, and interpreters...

Barriers to the project – and their solutions

Barrier	Solution
Money	Several funding sources Commitment
Time	Commitment
Lack of Audience	Using different routes to get their attention
Project management and communication	Clarify roles Use technology better

Barrier	Solution
Interpreter availability	Plan ahead Use the same (interested and engaged) interpreters and make agreements with them (diary)
Capturing Deaf Community feedback/ responses	Facebook Video responses Use tablets/ laptops Creative consultation Sweets

What needs to happen?

The first stage is to collect existing terms. How will that be done?

- Filming
- Note-taking
- On the 16th
- Joanna will design a means of encouraging people to identify what is missing from their vocabulary and what those using BSL need.

The grant application will explain what the Deaf participants will be doing on the 16th and how that feeds back into the BSL vocabulary project.

- Use planting the garden as a starting point for the discussion.
- We need a sign to show that a term is missing at the moment
- Could we have a board in the garden where people could write terms they identify as missing a BSL sign?
- Joanna to design this bit

Project outline:

There is an established process for collating and developing BSL vocabulary which is detailed on the UoE Glossary website:

- Meet people
- Ask what they want to know
- Collect terms
- Invite a group of linguists and biologists to discuss

- Weekend workshop to discuss what is already there – is it appropriate/ visual/ does it explain the concept? And then develop new signs, trying to link them together (base sign with variations to account for nuances)
- Evaluation by team
- Film the signs
- Meet the Deaf Community – with new signs via ‘public engagement activity’
- E.g. introducing plants at RBGE, plus introducing the signs. People get bored! So need to show them the plants to help them to understand the signs and design creative workshops to keep groups focused and engaged. Feedback from the audience gives their reaction to the news signs. If it’s a negative response, go back and start again. However, to date the signs for the UoE glossary have been well received because of the experts and linguists involved in the process
- Make films of the definitions in BSL as well (as is the case in a dictionary, you need a definition)
- Make demonstration videos. Telling the audience about the definition and supporting this with showing them what it means aids learning and helps with independent learning.
- Pilot the format at the Himalayan Garden Day (roughly 25 people including children)
- Refine format and repeat across other Central Belt locations
- E.g. Botanic Gardens, Donaldson’s School, Glasgow venue, Heriot Watt University
- Consider the reach – if we do the 16th and get Sign in the Woods families, would it be the same people who would come along to the other locations, e.g. if it was in Glasgow/ Stirling/ Callendar Possibly Mugdock Park
- The Facebook page widens the reach
- Could a case be made for coverage by, e.g. BBC See Hear to reach an even wider group, with a link on the BBC website to the Glossary and the Facebook page?

The aim is to run 3-5 sessions in all.

Mixed locations, some aimed at institutions (Heriot Watt, Donaldson’s School, UoE, Oakridge Agricultural College) and others open to the public (Deaf Community and others) in more public locations (RBGE, FCS woodland).

Naming the project

We looked at names that played on the mutual feedback loop in the development of icons and BSL:

- 1st Signs of Nature
- Signs & Seeds
- Signs in the Great Outdoors
- Natural Signs
- Signs of the Woodland Garden
- Signs of Nature
- Green Fingers
- Growing Signs
- Woodland Signs
- Growing Language
- Signs in the Woods (2.)
- Sowing Signs
- Signs of Life
- Signs, Seeds and Woods

Discussed that the project name should:

- Make sense in BSL first, and then be translated into written English
- Include some reference to trees/ wood/ woodland or similar to meet the needs of FCS

Creative Engagement Element (Creative Art Works)

- The public engagement activity needs to keep individuals/ families engaged and involved.
- Create a short story/ performance using all the new signs
- Possibly based on the story of Francis Buchanan (Scottish explorer and plant collector).
- His team included Indian artists, scribe, etc.
- Story performing, then kids and adults make teams with allocated roles such as artists, scientists, plant collectors, classifiers, explorers etc.
- This should involve other creative specialists-such as Performers, storytellers, Botanical Artists (- can’t underestimate the importance of involving creative folk – and this also makes a strong ART-SCIENCE crossover/ focus).

Additional notes

Census 2011 identified 12,300 BSL users in Scotland.

N.B. – SSC Glossary already has 99 terms in sign that are relevant to this project (in the Biology glossary).

Last year at ROE - 7000 people were impacted by the astronomy project with a year of public engagements. They had interpreters for public lectures, outreach, and science festivals – with deaf people attending.

Signers involved to date:

- Paul Belmonte
- Mark Sherwin
- Mary Dunlop
- Rachel Mapson
- Linda McKenzie (Glasgow)
- Brenda “Just Signs Limited” – works with NHS Fife

Should they be booked through Deaf Action or paid direct? Find signers who can be involved in regular events.

A Follow-up meeting has been timetabled for the 28th April and two BSL interpreters have been booked.

SSC Biology signs relevant to this project

Adaptation	Cell wall	Fertiliser
Abundance	Cellular processes	Fungal cell
Adapted	Chlorophyll	Fungicide
Absorption	Chloroplast	Fungus
Anther	Clone	Germinating pea
Aphid	Conservation	Germination
Artificial propagation	Cultivation	Greenhouse
Atmosphere	Cytoplasm	Habitat
Atmospheric pollution	Nucleus	Hybrid
Biodiversity	Daisy	Insecticide
Breeds	Dandelion	Lettuce Lichen
Broad bean	Diffusion	Light intensity
Bud	Dispersal	Leaf
Buttercup	DiseaseDNA	Loam
Cabbage	Ecosystem	Living organism
Carpel	Environmental factor	Malted barley
Cell membrane	Environmental impact	Mutation
Cell structure	Fertilisation	Nectar

Nutrient	Plant plankton	Seasonal
Oatmeal	Plant propagation	Seed
Osmosis	Plantation	Seed coat
Ovules	Plantlet	Seed mass
Ovum	Pollen	Selective breeding
Oxygen	Pollination	StamenStigma
Pea plant	Punnet square	Transport system
Pea pod	Quadrant	Ungerminated
Peat	Roots	Vacuole
Phloem	Root cell division	Variation
Photosynthesis	Rooting	Wheatmeal
GlucoseStarch	Rooting compound	Woodland
Pigment	Runner	Xylem
Plant cell		

Appendix 3. Minutes of Final BSL Glossary Meeting

Attending:

- Audrey Cameron (Chemist)
- Tania Allan (Biologist, Deaf Awareness Training and Deaf Community Project Coordinator)
- Joanna Boyce (Creative Art Works)
- Lindsay Snedden (Lunaria Ltd)
- Alex Furneaux (Deaf Action)
- Colin Sanderson (Artiscience Library)
- Fay Purves (What’s Next Business Consultancy Ltd)
- Paul Belmonte and Sheena Macdonald (Interpreters)

The structure of the project was agreed as follows:

Native Scottish Trees are the topic for the first stage. This model could then be rolled out over time to cover additional topics, e.g. native Scottish plants and flowers, Scottish insects and mini-beasts, Scottish landscape...

This gives the opportunity to: grow community interest over time; include different groups in each topic; approach relevant sponsors for each different topic.

Other notes from the meeting:

We need to report back to FCS on the 2 meetings and the Himalayan Day in relation to the funding received for this pilot. Lindsay/ Joanna will create a written report.

Tania mentioned Deborah who had funding for a Health project initially. When they looked at what worked and what didn't they changed the scope.

It was agreed that Alex (Deaf Action Youth Coordinator) would be good to have on board. It can be difficult to identify/ contact Deaf families now as so many children go through mainstream education. Alex has a Deaf Youth Club starting on 13th June and contacting families through that should reduce the problems of access.

In addition, we need contacts who can cascade information.

- Facebook is of limited use as it is easily ignored.
- Alex can be more direct and persistent
- We want to reach a spread of generations (with the caveat that different project design is needed for different age groups). So the design can be aimed at teens and adults if that is who we can access. Stories work for all ages; art activities are more age specific.
- The National Deaf Children's Society focuses on parents

For participants, look at:

- Deaf Youth Club
- Forest Schools
- Windsor Park
- Scouts

...and look for a tie in to the Curriculum For Excellence (Audrey will do this).

Colin suggested that there may be some overlap with the Sylva Caledonia project at Loch Rannoch – an opportunity to visit native Scottish woodland?

There may be a shift in balance as we progress, from collecting ideas to disseminating them.

Interpreters:

Participation can be linked to their CPD

It helps Rangers etc. learn how to work with interpreters too

BSL Bill mentioned

Audrey emphasised the importance of the Social Capital of the project. It opens up children's horizons, giving them real life experiences rather than just what they see through books/ online/ on TV. Funders are familiar with the term 'social capital'. A lack of communication between deaf children and their hearing parents means they don't have an understanding of the outdoors. Hearing people have so many more options for things to do. If there is no communication support, choices are more limited. It should be remembered,

though, that just because interpreters are there it doesn't make it mandatory for Deaf people to attend! It just gives them the choice. Deaf people can be reticent about getting involved beyond their comfort zone. The whole approach has to give them the confidence to participate. The first step to developing opportunities is to learn.

The Deaf Youth Club should have around 20 children when it starts in June, aged 10-15. Of these around 4 are Deaf. It runs weekly on a Saturday (1:30-4:30pm) during the summer holidays and fortnightly during school term.

Appendix 4. Location Plan

Creative Art Works

Lunaria